ACGNJ HAS AUGUST ACTIVITIES!

While many of our meetings shut down for the summer, others **don't**. Some of our Special Interest Groups have meetings scheduled. Have you been curious about one or more of the groups on the right, but just haven't found the time to "drop in"? When you're not "riding the wild surf" or "catching some rays", maybe you might consider attending a few. Then, there's our annual Planning Meeting on August 17th. In many ways, this can be considered our most important public meeting of the year. You want to affect the direction the club is taking? That's where it happens. Have a great summer, full of fun, adventure and relaxation; and computer stuff **too**!

REMEMBER THESE DATES:

July 16, 2012 was the nineteenth anniversary of Slackware Linux, first released in 1993 by Patrick Volkerding. Slackware is the *oldest* surviving Linux distribution. (There are many Linux variants derived from Slackware).

August 16, 2012 is the nineteenth anniversary of Debian GNU/Linux, first released in 1993 by Ian Murdock. Debian is the *second* oldest surviving Linux distribution. (Ubuntu is based on Debian, as are many other "flavors" of Linux).

September 27, 2012 will be the *twenty-ninth* anniversary of GNU (GNU's Not Unix), first announced in 1983 by Richard Stallman. This is the *true* date of origin for the operating system that we now call Linux. (In its name, Debian GNU/Linux acknowledges its GNU "roots". Slackware Linux, like most others, does **not**).

ACGNJ Meetings

A summer schedule is even shakier than usual. For the latest ACGNJ meeting news, please check the ACGNJ Website (*www.acgnj.org*) before you leave.

Lunics (Linux/UNIX): Monday, Aug 6, 8:00 PM
Andreas Meyer (lunics (at) acgnj.org)

Java: (No meeting in August)
Mike Redlich (mike (at) redlich.net)

Mobile Devices: Wednesday, Aug 8, 7:30 PM
Brenda Bell (mobdevsig (at) acgnj.org)

Investing: Thursday, Aug 9, 8:00 PM
Jim Cooper (jim (at) thecoopers.org).

NJ Gamers: Friday, Aug 10, **6**:00 PM
Gregg McCarthy (greggmajestic (at) gmail.com)

Planning Meeting: Friday, Aug 17, 7:00 PM
(Please see page 3 for further details).
Evan Williams (president (at) acgnj.org)

Lunics (Linux/UNIX): Monday, *Sept* 3, *Canceled*
(Because it's Labor Day)

The following *do not* hold meetings in the summer: C/C++, Firefox, Hardware, Layman's Forum, Main Meeting, WebDev, Window Pains.

All meetings, unless otherwise noted, are at the Scotch Plains Rescue Squad, 1916 Bartle Ave, Scotch Plains, New Jersey. Directions and map on back page. 💻

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Founded 1975

In This Issue

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Vice President	(Open)		Through 2012	Brenda Bell	
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Java	Michael Redlich	(908) 246-0410	Financial	Evan Williams	(908) 359-8070
Layman's Forum	Matthew Skoda	(908) 359-8842	Historian	Lenny Thomas	
LUNICS	Andreas Meyer		Membership	Bob Hawes	
Mobile Devices	Brenda Bell		Newsletter	Bob Hawes	
NJ Gamers	Gregg McCarthy		Publicity	Gregg McCarthy	
WebDev	Evan Williams	(908) 359-8070	Trenton Computer Fest	Mike Redlich	(908) 246-0410
Window Pains	John Raff	(973) 992-9002	Vendor Liaison	Arnold Milstein	(908) 753-8036
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ACGNJ News

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Submissions: Articles, reviews, cartoons, illustrations. Most common formats are acceptable. Graphics embedded in the document must also be sent as separate files. E-mail submissions to newsletter@acgnj.org preferred. **Always confirm**. Date review and include name of word processor used, your name, address and phone and name, address and phone of manufacturer, if available.

Tips for reviewers: Why does anyone need it? Why did you like it or hate it? Ease (or difficulty) of installation, learning and use. Would you pay for it?

Advertising: Non-commercial announcements from members are free. Commercial ads 15 cents per word, $5 minimum. Camera ready display ads: Full page (7 x 10 inches) $150, two-thirds page (4.5 x 10) $115, half-page $85, one-third $57, quarter $50, eighth $30. Discount 10% on 3 or more consecutive insertions. Enclose payment.

Publication Exchange: Other computer user groups are invited to send a subscription to ACGNJ at the address below. We will respond in kind.

Address Changes should be e-mailed to *membership@acgnj.org* or sent to ACGNJ at the address below.

Membership: Regular (now includes *all* family members who reside at the same address): 1 year $25, 2 years $40, 3 years $55. Student: 1 year $20. Senior Citizen (over 65): 1 year $20, 3 years $45. Send name, address and payment to ACGNJ, PO Box 135, Scotch Plains NJ 07076.

Typographic Note: This ACGNJ News was produced using Scribus 1.3.3.13. Font families used are Times New Roman (TT) for body text, Arial (TT) for headlines.

E-Mail Addresses

Here are the e-mail addresses of ACGNJ Officers, Directors and SIG Leaders (and the Newsletter Editor). This list is also at (*http://www.acgnj.org/officers.html*).

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TCF Will Return!

We've been informed that the 38th Annual Trenton Computer Festival will be held on Saturday, March 16th, 2013, from 9:00 AM until 5:00 PM (The flea market opens at 8:00 AM, rain or shine). As usual, it will be located at The College of New Jersey in Ewing, NJ. Once again, it will be a one-day Festival, with compelling talks and great presentations. We hope to see you there!

In its honor, we are printing this picture, which unfortunately had to be bumped from earlier newsletters this year. In it, Bob Hawes (on the left) and his cousin (also named Robert Hawes) are shown taking care of the ACGNJ table at TCF 2012. (Photo by Eric Haffler). 🖳

Please Come To Our Annual Planning Meeting!

You are invited to attend our Planning Meeting on Friday, August 17th 2012 at 7PM where this year's slate of talks for the Main Meeting and hopefully also for the bulk of the Window Pains meetings will be established. The meeting will be a dinner meeting at Scotch Plains Rescue Squad (SPRS), in Scotch Plains, NJ. Please RSVP. We need to know how many are coming!

Your price for admission is two topics of discussion for one of the 20 meeting nights (Main and Window Pains). It will be your responsibility, should your topic win by a vote of those attending the planning meeting, to make arrangements to either provide a speaker or be the speaker yourself on the approved topic the night that it will be scheduled. You will be expected to host the meeting, meaning you will provide introduction of the speaker and see to it that the speaker gets whatever assistance he or she may need to give the talk. The time for a talk should be about 45 minutes to an hour plus a Q & A session. Any topic beats none at all, so don't think it has to be rocket science level stuff. Actually, the simpler a

topic, the better public appeal will probably be. This is the single biggest thing you can do right now to help the ACGNJ.

Guests are welcome as long as they join ACGNJ for at least 2yrs. prior to or at the meeting.

Unfortunately the club has suffered a loss in active membership because of frequent lack of scheduled and announced topics of discussion listed in the newsletter and on the web-site calendar. We must try to make this a successful meeting so that we may get the ACGNJ back to its previous status as a well recognized and respected source of information for the computer user.

Please mark your calendars, Friday, August 17th 2012 at 7PM and bring at least two topics for a meeting night.. Please respond to both John Raff (facilities (at) acgnj.org) *and* Evan Williams (president (at) acgnj.org) ASAP so that we can get a head count for final reservations at Scotch Plains Rescue Squad (SPRS). For further information and for the RSVP form, see:

http://www.acgnj.org//pm/pma.html 🖳

Foreign Imports

(Part 1 of 2)

Bob Hawes, ACGNJ

So far in 2012, the subjects of my own articles have been fairly evenly split between backup programs and newsletter construction. Here's another one about newsletters; and quite possibly it'll be the *last* one, since it covers the only part of my current monthly routine that I haven't mentioned before: articles written by people who are *not* me. Although a few arrive as RTF (**R**ich **T**ext **F**ormat) files, the vast majority of articles written by "outside" authors come in as Microsoft Word DOC files. That could cause a problem, since there was a bug in OpenOffice.org involving DOC files; and I'm unsure if LibreOffice (which I'm using pretty much all the time now) fixed it completely.

Therefore, I've been taking extra precautions, "just in case". First, I open all DOC files with AbiWord (my "backup" word processor) instead of LibreOffice. Then I immediately save them again as RTF files and exit AbiWord. Essentially, I'm just using AbiWord as a file converter, because I *know* for an absolute fact that AbiWord *doesn't* have the DOC bug. (I *will* be describing this bug in detail, but *not* right now. Please be patient until we get to Appendix I below). Next, I open all RTF files with LibreOffice, and immediately save them again as ODT (**O**pen **D**ocument **T**ext) files. Thus, we wind up with DOC files (which will be avoided from now on as "unclean"), RTF files (which will be kept as "start from scratch" backups, in case I later do something *so* catastrophic that it's beyond the power of Undo to fix), and ODT files (which will become my "work" files).

After that, I split my ODT files in two, because our newsletter's page format pretty much *always* requires that each article's header be given its own separate text frame. The first file, called "*<original filename>*.odt", contains most of the article; but *not* the header information. The second file, called "*<original filename>* (header).odt", contains just the header information. Here's the general format that I

follow for most headers: The first line contains the article's title (in Arial Bold 13 to 15 point type, whichever fits best). The second line contains the author's name and the club's name (in Times New Roman Bold Italic 12 point type). The third line contains the newsletter's name, the club's website address, and (if given) the author's e-mail address (also in Times New Roman Bold Italic 12). All of the lines in the header are centered.

Technically, I'm *not* supposed to edit an article that's already been edited by another newsletter editor; but due to those aforementioned header conditions, plus our paragraph separation and column justification requirements (which we'll get to soon), I *have* to. So while I'm at it, I look for a few other common (and annoying) errors as well. The first thing I look for is unwanted "hard returns" in the middle of a paragraph. Now, I suppose that I could show the LibreOffice control codes and hunt them down that way; but there's a quicker and easier method. In LibreOffice, I press Ctrl-a to select *all* of the text in the article, and I press Ctrl-c to copy that text. Then,

I open a plain text editor, make sure that line wrapping is turned *off*, and press Ctrl-v to paste that text there. If I just see single text lines, each separated by a single blank line, then everything is OK.

Each single line is the start of a paragraph, most of which is *way* off screen to the right, since the lines are *not* being wrapped. The blank lines between the single lines are the blank lines between the paragraphs. Two lines *without* a blank line between them signify an unwanted hard return. The first word in the extra line is the word that comes immediately *after* said return, so I don't have any trouble finding and removing it. (*More* than two lines without blank lines between them indicate more than one unwanted return. The repair technique is the same. Each return comes before the first word in each additional line).

Next, we come to the **_ONLY_** area where, in my opinion, MS Word is still superior to LibreOffice: Grammar Checking. A few years ago, OpenOffice.org changed its Spelling Checker to a Spelling and Grammar Checker; but as far as I could

tell, they did that by simply adding the words "and Grammar" to its name. I've never detected any increase in function, either in OpenOffice.org Writer then or in LibreOffice Writer now. Technically, what I'm looking for are actually punctuation errors, but the fact remains: Microsoft Office will automatically detect them, while LibreOffice *won't*. I have to use the Edit > Find & Replace function instead.

The errors that I search for are: two spaces in a row, two commas in a row, two periods in a row, a space followed by a comma, and a space followed by a period. There **are** others that I could include; but practically, you have to set a limit, and these five are the ones that I've chosen to pursue. However, there *are* legitimate uses for two of these configurations. Two periods in a row might be part of an ellipsis (…), signifying a pause or an omission; and a space followed by a period could be part of a measurement (such as .3 GB/sec). Personally, I'd write that as "0.3 GB/sec"; but I'm *not* the author here, so I leave any of those the way they were. In actual practice, I've most often found two spaces in a row (which I

always change to a single space). After that, I've found unwanted hard returns (which I always remove). I've hardly ever turned up any of those other punctuation errors.

Now we come to matters of "look and feel". First, our newsletter uses Times New Roman as its body text font. Most outside articles use something else (often Arial). So after I've taken care of any punctuation errors, I press Ctrl-a to select all of the text in the article, and I use the LibreOffice drop-down boxes to change the font to Times New Roman 12. (I *can* use a smaller size than 12 if necessary, but I try not to). Then I run my Spelling Checker on the entire article, just in case. In my experience, there is absolutely *nothing* that turns a reader off faster than a misspelled word. Unfortunately, not everyone out there agrees with me.

Following that, I highlight, italicize, and *disable/remove* all hyperlinks. Usually, articles that come in as DOC files *don't* have their links set in advance. Since I can be almost completely certain that the word processor I'm using is *not* the same as

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whatever was used to create those articles, maybe that's why. No matter the reason, that *is* the way that I want it. So all I have to do is make sure that I *don't* accidentally activate them as I change them all to *blue italics*, the ACGNJ News default color/font selection for hyperlinks. (Those links will later be activated using my "wacky kludges". However, we won't get to those until next month in Part 2).

Next up is paragraph separation. To start, I select *only* the first paragraph (by highlighting it). Then, from the Menu Bar, I choose Format > Paragraph. The window that pops up has seven tabs; but I'm only interested in the first one: Indents & Spacing. At the top, under Indent, there are three drop-arrow boxes containing measurements: (Before text, After text, and First line). I make sure that they're all set to 0.00 inches. Below that, under Spacing, there are two more drop-arrow boxes containing measurements: (Above paragraph and Below paragraph). I make sure that they're both also set to 0.00 inches. Beneath that, under Line spacing, there's one final drop-arrow box, which contains seven selections:

(Single, 1.5 lines, Double, Proportional, At least, Leading, and Fixed). I make sure that it's set to Single. Then, I click on the OK button to exit.

After that, I highlight all the other paragraphs in the article (but *not* the first one). Then, I choose Format > Paragraph again, and I make sure that everything is set as before, *except* that I set Above paragraph to 0.0**4** inches. Following that, I delete *every* single blank line in the article. This gives me an article that's just about as short as possible, yet there are still perceptible gaps between the paragraphs. If necessary, I can make those gaps even smaller; but usually, if I change them, I make some or even all of them bigger, until I get the article to end *exactly* where I want. (Actually, this explanation is an oversimplification. There *ARE* instances, such as lists, where I have to set Before text and/or Above paragraph differently. However, those situations are beyond the scope of this article).

Coming into the "home stretch", I add the following sentence to the end of the article (as a separate paragraph, in italics as shown): "*This article was*

obtained with permission to reprint by non-profit or other user groups, with credit given to the author, the publication and the user group”. Finally, we come to column justification. This is a matter of taste, and *I* like the text in my newsletters to line up evenly on **both** sides of their columns. So as my more or less last act before moving an article from LibreOffie to Scribus, I press Ctrl-a to select **everything** in the article, and then I change the text setting from Align Left (the default) to Justified. And that's it. Except for minor tweaks that can only be made “after-the-fact”, my outside articles are now ready to be imported into my newsletter.

This seems to be as good a place as any to pack it in until next month. So now, as promised, here's the DOC bug:

Appendix I: Suspicious Characters

Each month, I send my brother a copy of the new article that I've written for our latest issue. He's my proof reader; and partly due to that fact, I ran into this bug almost immediately when I first started using OpenOffice.org as my primary word processor.

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paragraph, as it was typed into OpenOffice.org, and Figure 2 is what it looked like when it was “Saved As” a DOC file. After that, I would exit from OOo, and e-mail the DOC file to my brother. Now we get to the fun part.

In the past, my usual e-mail practice in this situation had been to CC a copy to myself as well. That gave me a version of the DOC file that had, in fact, been transmitted over the Internet, which I could then check for corruption. (This wouldn't **absolutely** guarantee that my brother had received an undamaged copy, but it **would** mean that my outgoing file **hadn't** been corrupted. Besides, it was the best I could do with what I had). Unfortunately, the first time that I did this after I'd switched from MS Word to OpenOffice.org, I **did** find damage. Wacky oriental-looking characters had appeared. (See Figure 3).

After I'd finished panicking, I did some experimenting. First, I found that if I used OOo to open my original DOC file (which **hadn't** been sent out over the Internet), I got the same result. So I

Although I **did** make him a home desktop computer (on which I'd also installed OOo), he mostly used the laptop provided by his job, which only had Microsoft Office. So I had to convert my articles into the MS Word 95 DOC format before I could send them to him. (I picked the 95 version as the “lowest common denominator” of all the myriad Windows file variants).

I've tried to record an example of this problem several times, with **less** than stellar results. For my latest attempt, I modified a paragraph that I've used several times before, about a *Star Trek* cliché. Success at last! (Or maybe “Failure at last!” would express my sentiments better). The following illustrations are screen shots. (To make them as small as possible, I used an image editor to cut out **lots** of irrelevant details). Figure 1 is the original
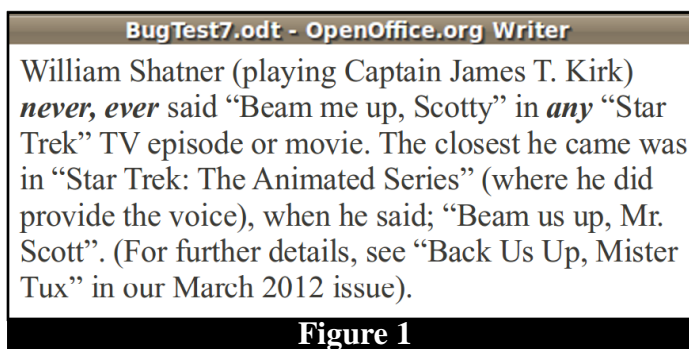
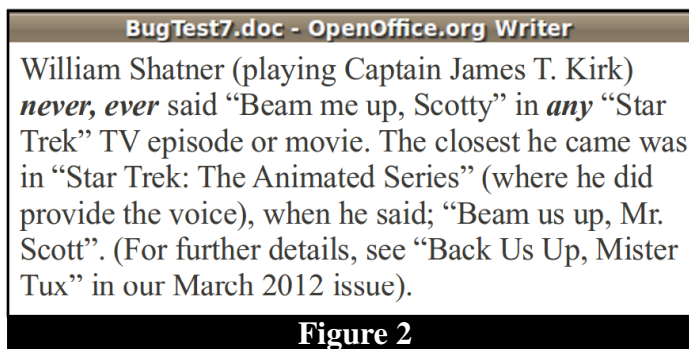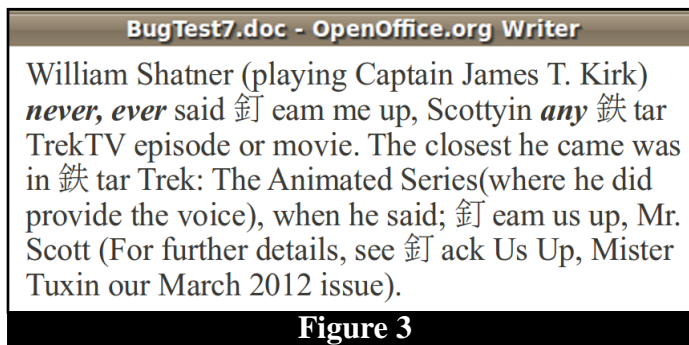*(Continued Below Left)*

Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3

wasn't looking at transmission damage. Next, I discovered that the file *hadn't*, in fact, been corrupted at all. If I opened it with good old AbiWord (or bad old MS Word), I saw the proper letters, totally *un*changed. As Strother Martin (playing "the Captain") said in the 1967 Paul Newman movie *Cool Hand Luke*: "What we have here is a failure to communicate". OpenOffice.org was somehow reading my file incorrectly, so it was simply *displaying* the wrong characters. Only if that file was saved *again* by OOo would those characters actually be written to the hard disk. *Then*, the corruption became real.

I also did some investigation of the characters themselves. I noticed that the "open quote" character and the character immediately following it had been changed, but the "close quote" character and the character immediately following *it* had simply vanished. In the first, second, third and fifth quotations in Figure 3, that following character was a space, so two words now ran together; but in the fourth quotation, it was a period, so the space that *followed* the period was still there. Also, though you can't tell from this screen shot, what looks like a

space after each pair of oriental-looking characters is *not* a separate space. It seems to actually be a *part* of the second character. Ultimately, I had to drop my investigation and move on.

From that point forward, I opened any DOC files that I got with AbiWord. After my switch to LibreOffice, it seemed that this particular bug had finally been fixed. (See Figure 4). However, shortly after I

William Shatner (playing Captain James T. Kirk) *never, ever* said "Beam me up, Scotty" in *any* "Star Trek" TV episode or movie. The closest he came was in "Star Trek: The Animated Series" (where he did provide the voice), when he said; "Beam us up, Mr. Scott". (For further details, see "Back Us Up, Mister Tux" in our March 2012 issue).
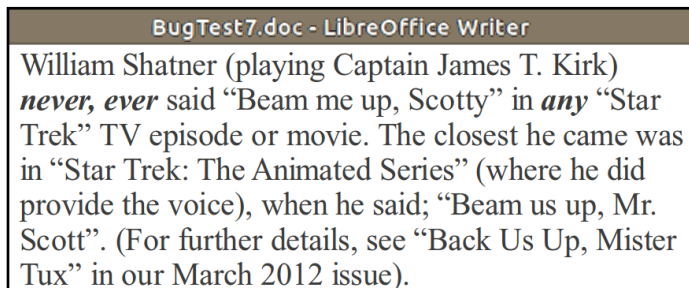
Figure 4

became full-time newsletter Editor and began to routinely open "foreign" DOC files with LibreOffice, *another* oriental-looking character showed up. (Unfortunately, I *didn't* take a screen shot of it at the time. Excuse me while I kick myself). After that, I adopted the Abiword-to-RTF routine that I described above. So far, so good. See you next month. 💻

Turn Your PC into a 3-D Game Machine

Vinny LaBash, Regular Columnist, Sarasota PCUG, Florida
Newsletter: Sarasota Monitor (www.spcug.org) labash (at) spcug.org

3-D has been around for almost as long as photography. The general public's first major exposure to 3-D was the 1952 motion picture *Bwana Devil*. It wasn't the first 3-D movie, but it was the first to be shot in color and receive wide exposure. The film didn't win any awards, but the novelty of 3-D was a hit with big screen fans. People became enamored with the illusion of depth for several years, but the thrill eventually faded, and 3-D was essentially gone from movies by 1960.

3-D was by no means dead; it bounced around development labs for years until it was combined with wide screen technology and ultimately merged with the incredible IMAX experience. You're not going to get IMAX on your PC, but you can get a solid 3-D effect in most of your games with a little effort and small expense. It might be fun too.

Several weeks ago I received an interesting email

from Roy R. who is well aware of my fondness toward high end games. He told me about a web site that claimed to turn a PC into a platform that could display most games in 3-D even if they were designed for 2-D.

Since the process appeared both relatively uncomplicated and inexpensive, the only thing to do was to see if it really worked. The first thing was to go on Amazon and eBay and search for a pair of two color 3-D glasses. They can be red/blue or yellow/blue. You could probably make a pair yourself with colored cellophane. A few minutes of searching came up with an acceptable pair of glasses for $2.00. For that amount of money I almost didn't care if they worked or not. Whatever the outcome, it certainly beat spending $200 for a 3-D hardware accelerator, that much or more for a 3-D monitor, and up to $200 for a pair of 3-D shutter glasses.

The next step is to go to *http://iz3d.com*. From there, download the free driver for their unique 3-D monitor. Here's how it's done.

Step 1: From the iz3d.com home page, click the **Get Software** page

Step 2: From the dropdown menu, select **Anaglyph**.

Step 3: When the download screen appears, select the **Current version Download** button.

Step 4: After the software has been downloaded to your system, choose **RUN** to install the program.

Step 5: Follow the instructions on the dialog boxes or simply select the defaults.

Step 6: On the setup dialog box be sure to check the **Run Control Center** box. Accept whatever defaults the process offers, and then click **Finish**.

Step 7: The Direct X dialog box will appear. In the **Output** section select **Anaglyph (free)** and the option matching the 3-D glasses you have. Click **Apply**.

Step 8: Examine the selections under Direct X in the left side of the dialog box.

Step 9: If you know what you're doing, change whatever is appropriate, otherwise close down the dialog box by clicking on the red X in the top right corner.

Install the driver on your machine.

Step 1: Close any open applications or browser sessions.

Step 2: Go to your Downloads folder and look for a file named iZ3DDriverSetup.1.12(4016).EXE. If the numbers at the end of the file name are different, don't worry about it. All it means is that the driver has been updated since I wrote this.

Step 3: Double click on the file name to begin the installation process.

Step 4: You may get a Security Warning dialog box stating that the publisher could not be verified. Click the Run button.

Step 5: The Account Control dialog box may also make an appearance. Give permission to continue.

Step 6: You will get several more dialog boxes. Accept the defaults to continue.

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Step 7: On the Select Destination Location dialog box either accept the default location for the installation files or choose another location. Click Next.

Step 8: On the Select Components dialog box, choose Full Installation from the drop down menu.

Step 9: Click Next on the Select Start Menu dialog box.

Step 10: Click Install on the Ready to Install dialog box.

Step 11: Accept the defaults on any dialog boxes that may appear.

Step 12: Click Finish when the installation is complete. See illustration above.

Step 13: On the DirectX dialog box select the Anaglyph (free) and Red/Cyan or Yellow/Blue depending on what kind of 3-D glasses you have.

Step 14: Click Apply.

Step 15: Close out the dialog box by clicking on the red X in the upper right corner of the dialog box.

Load any of your DirectX games and you will see a menu that will walk you through the steps to initialize the 3-D settings of the game. You may have to shift the focus by holding down the Shift key and pressing the + or − key on the numeric keypad. There are directions in the menu that refer to the "Num" key. This is not the Num Lock key, but a reference that the instruction refers to the numeric keypad.

The process worked with Mass Effect and Mass Effect 2, Call of Duty, Left for Dead, and World of Warcraft, an online game. I couldn't get it to work with Fallout New Vegas, so there's no guarantee it will work with all of your games, but for $2 it's certainly worth a try.

3-D technology has changed and improved considerably over the years, but one thing remains constant. 3-D glasses still make you look like a dork.

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USB 3.0 - The Super-Speed Bus

Andrew Petrovic, Ottawa PC Users' Group, Canada
Newsletter: PC News (http://opcug.ca/public/index.htm) opcug-webmaster (at) opcug.ca

I thought that it would be a good idea to introduce to you a new and upcoming development - the USB (Universal Serial Bus) version 3.0, as this technology will become mainstream in a fairly short time.

USB version 1.0 was created in 1996, but was more widely available in 1998 as version 1.1, superseded by version 2.0 in 2000. Over the next few years this will be replaced by version 3.0, already released and now being used by some consumers.

A quick overview of USB

The reason that USB was created all those years ago was in order to provide an interface for computers and peripheral devices that was easy to set up and use, as well as being low-priced. Actually, the USB data protocols used are very complex, but fortunately the USB controller chips take care of these details, so users don't have to be concerned. USB is designed to be 'Plug and Play' without the user having to set up parameters such as interrupt requests, addressing, etc. as well as not having to reboot the computer after adding a peripheral.

In USB versions up to 2.0 there are only four wires that are connected: power; ground; data - and data +. An 'A'-type connector (rectangular) is usually found on a computer interface or hub, and a 'B'-type connector (square) is often found on the USB peripheral; but there are various other 'mini' and 'micro' connector types as well. When we talk about USB components, we call a peripheral that plugs in to a computer port a 'device' and the port and controller associated with the port on the computer is called the 'host'.

Each device has a 'descriptor'. When a device is connected to a computer, the descriptor tells the host what kind of peripheral it is. From the product IDs it provides, the computer then knows what type of driver to load for that device. A driver is a small piece of software that interfaces between a hardware device and the operating system.

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Other information passed to the computer includes the device's power requirements; protocol settings; etc. When a USB device is unplugged, the host instructs the operating system to unload the driver for that device.

As far as the user is concerned, the most important element of the upgrades to the USB technology is the increasing speed of data transfer. The following table shows the differences in data transfer speed between the versions. The theoretical speed quoted by manufacturers would, in reality, not be possible to achieve and is based upon operations that include extra packet transfer overheads, as well as a few other things. The real life actual maximum speed is likely to be between 30% and 60% of the quoted theoretical speed.

Version 1.1 had two speeds, 'Low' and 'Full'. Version 2.0 just bettered the 1.1 version 'Full' speed. (See Figure A). Note the difference between Mbps (Mega**bits** per second) and MBps (Mega**bytes** per second). There are 8 bits in one byte, so when comparing speeds take note of which terminology you are using.

USB Version	Designation	Theoretical maximum speed
1.0	"Low speed"	1.5 Mbps = 190 KBps
1.1	"Full speed"	12 Mbps = 1.5 MBps
2.0	"High speed"	480 Mbps = 60 MBps
3.0	"Super speed"	4.8 Gbps = 600 MBps

Figure A

Limitations of USB 2.0

So if USB 3.0 is appearing on the market, it must be because previous versions are not able to do the job. Well, this is partly true. Version 2.0 will be able to be used for quite a lot of devices for a while, but as peripherals get faster and require faster interfaces, so USB 3.0 will become more desirable to end users. The sort of devices that are likely to require the faster data transfer speeds are external USB disk drives and components that deal with video.

It's not just speed that is a limit. Each USB 2.0 host port can provide up to 1/2 Amp (500 mA) of current to power a device that does not have its own additional power supply. Often this is simply not enough. Some external disk drives may require up to

900 mA of startup current and that is why they are often supplied with a 'Y' cable that plugs into two USB ports in order to feed enough power (for those portable drives that don't use an external power supply).

USB 2.0 data only moves unidirectionally. In other words, data can be sent to a device or from a device but not both at the same time. This cuts down the overall speed attainable.

Introducing USB 3.0

Whereas the upgrade from USB 1.1 to USB 2.0 used the same connectors with the same four wires, the upgrade from USB 2.0 to 3.0 is very much different.

Take the USB 2.0 configuration and add another entire set of connectors to it and call it 'Super speed'. This is how USB 3.0 has been created. The original USB 2.0 wires are still in place and the USB 3.0 adds five more wires (two pairs of data wires and a signal ground cable).

Figure B shows how a USB 3.0 'A'-type looks (Female - Receptacle), with pins 1 to 4 being identical to the original USB 2.0 specification.
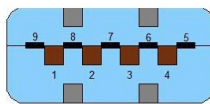
Figure B

Cables and connectors are backwards compatible as well, so you can plug in a USB 2.0 device to a USB 3.0 port - you just won't get any extra speed advantages because only the USB 2.0 connectors will be used, though the power pins are the same so more available current should be available for USB 2.0 devices.

How is USB 3.0 better?

Apart from being fully compatible with previous USB versions, the faster data transfer is quite a dramatic improvement for USB 3.0 compatible devices because of a faster clock control speed; the use of asynchronous signaling for simultaneous sending and receiving; and an interrupt mechanism that does not use the time-consuming polling that USB 2.0 used.

One area where USB 3.0 may fall down is with the length of the cable that can be used. It could be limited to 3 meters if high throughput devices are used, as compared to the 5 meter cables possible with USB 2.0.

The limitation could be overcome using USB hubs or extenders and perhaps fiber-optic cabling might

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be possible in the future.

Is it worth upgrading?

USB 2.0 will likely be around for the next few years anyway, but in time newer computer motherboards will provide USB 3.0 ports as standard.

If you want to try out the technology now, there are add-on adapters available that plug in to a spare PCI-Express slot on your PC and provide two or more USB ports. There are also a few USB 3.0 external disk drives available, as well as hard drive enclosures with USB 3.0 interfaces where you can put in your own internal drive.

If you only have slow devices on your USB connections, it's no great advantage to upgrade. For example, keyboards and mice only require the slowest USB version and will not work any better on faster USB ports.

If you must have the faster transfer speeds for storage or video devices, then you should consider some form of upgrade. There are alternate interface types, such as eSATA and FireWire, but they are a less common interface type than USB and they also

require a separate power line, as well as not always being 'hot-swappable'.

Other things that will benefit from the USB 3.0 interfaces are card readers and connections from digital cameras, when transferring pictures to the PC, though not when you plug in the current 'slower' devices. USB 3.0 thumb drives will be faster on a USB 3.0 interface but the current USB 2.0 thumb drives will be no faster on a USB 3.0 port. Interestingly enough, USB 3.0 thumb drives will be faster on existing USB 2.0 ports because the whole USB 3.0 flash drives had to be redesigned with faster chip access in order to take advantage of the USB 3.0 port speed.

Later versions of Windows and Linux should natively support USB 3.0 at some point. Windows XP will not, but USB interface and peripheral manufacturers should be able to supply suitable drivers for XP systems.

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Too Scared to Buy Anything Online?

Lee Seidman, Vice President, Business Professional Microcomputer UG, CT
Newsletter: The Help Key (www.bpmug.org) Lseidman (at) yahoo.com

Lots of consumers find purchasing goods online intimidating; news reports of identity theft, online piracy, and privacy concerns only deteriorates people's confidence in buying things on the Internet. Using free software tools combined with some education and common sense is all one needs to build to become a savvy and safe e-consumer.

The secure e-consumer first needs to recognize when a web site represents a reputable merchant. Using online reviews from epinions.com, bizrate.com, resellerratings.com, or even just a search on Google will help one gauge a vendor's trustworthiness based on the experiences of others. Peruse the commentary and read what people say and how they rate their transactions with that supplier; what may initially be perceived as a negative review may be little more than someone griping about something irrelevant or inconsequential (like it was delivered a day later than expected, which may be the responsibility of the transporting service instead). If there appears to be a

pattern of complaints about a particular vendor, it is sensible to take that into account before ordering anything.

In the above example, we are "window shopping" on a popular technology vendor web site called newegg.com. Pretend that the unseen address bar at the top reads: *http://www.newegg.com*. This means the site offers no security presently; no sensitive information is being exchanged at this time.

When we decide on an item to procure, most web sites (like newegg.com) will request for the purchaser to sign in (some sites will offer an opt-out area for this, but many do not). IF YOU CREATE AN

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ACCOUNT ON THESE SITES, DO NOT USE THE SAME PASSWORD AS YOU WOULD USE TO ACCESS YOUR E-MAIL. The address bar will have changed to read https:// and a lock appeared in the browser as well (at least with Internet Explorer).

Clicking on that lock reveals information about the web site and its security.

This tells the consumer that this web site has been verified as who they say they are and that the connection is encrypted (we are no longer just "window shopping"). VeriSign and a handful of other similar companies are the Internet's certificate authorities (CA), which substantiate the identities of companies on the web. By viewing the certificate (which is how the web browser on your computer knows to trust the web site it is displaying), you can see its validity and when it expires. Once that certificate expires, your web browser will alert you that the site is no longer trusted as it once was (this should rarely happen with the big-name sites). Note that web sites that request any form of identification (like logging into a webmail, bank, or paystub account) or financial transaction should use https://

and certificates.

When it comes time to actually buy an item online, a credit card offers the best peace of mind available. Most of the major credit card companies offer "zero liability protection" for unauthorized purchases (read the fine lines carefully, MasterCard states on its web site that one's account must be "in good standing," the consumer "exercised reason- able care in safeguarding" the card from unauthorized use, and that there must not be more than two unauthorized events reported in the past twelve months). While the legal verbiage may present a chill, many issuers offer temporary credit card numbers specifically for use online (Citigroup calls their "Virtual Credit Card" while Bank of America markets it as "ShopSafe"). These temporary credit card numbers expire quickly or have whatever transaction limit you wish to assign. When it is time to purchase an item from an online merchant, open another web browser, log into your credit card issuer's web site, and look for the section to open the tool for a virtual credit card.

This virtual card number appears and functions as an

authentic credit card to the vendor; its purpose is to keep its use limited to that particular transaction and to keep your actual credit card number a secret from that vendor. If the virtual credit card is compromised by an unscrupulous third party, it is not as much of an intrusion into one's financial existence as if the actual credit card number was used (there is no need to replace a credit card, change accounts, etc.) Using this tool satisfies the card issuer's requirement for

"exercising reasonable care in safeguarding" the authentic credit number, limits the amount of uses it can be tried (usually just once), and makes online shopping less frightening. The web may present dangers, but using your savvy skills and online tools should take the fear out of shopping!

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LXDE

Cal Esneault, President of the Cajun Clickers Computer Club, LA
(And leader of many Open Source Workshops & SIGs http://cccclinuxsig.pbwiki.com)
Newsletter: Cajun Clickers Computer News (www.clickers.org) ccnewsletter (at) cox.net

The Linux OS (Operating System) permits users to select from many front-end desktop environments (the interface software that controls mouse, touch screen, icons, etc.). Popular interfaces such as GNOME and KDE are powerful but can require high system resources. LXDE (Lightweight X11 Desktop Environment) is a simpler approach more suitable for netbooks, mobile devices, or older PC's.

It is designed to be faster, more energy efficient, and be a better fit for the future of "cloud" computing. Since LXDE open-source software is based on X-windows, the commonly used system and network protocol that provides the basis for graphical user interfaces (GUI's), it can be used with all the popular Linux and BSD distributions (distro's) – Ubuntu, Fedora, OpenSUSE, Debian, etc.

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LXDE originated as PCMan in 2006 by Hong Jen Yee with the file manager PCManFM as the first component.

This community backed distro with OpenBox as the window manager has risen rapidly in popularity.

In May 2011, Lubuntu (the Ubuntu derivative using LXDE) was made an official Canonical distro and has surpassed the KDE-based Kubuntu in active downloads. On my system which has Ubuntu 11.04 as the main OS, I downloaded the LXDE desktop.

Note the traditional tree-and-branch menu system arising from the bottom panel. This reminds me of the older KDE 3.x family. There are no extra "widgets" or desktop panels now common in current KDE 4.x releases. Also, there are no side panels of "tiles" and pop-out icons present in the newer Unity or Gnome 3.x desktops. LXDE has a simple, clean interface which should be comfortable for traditional users, such as those familiar with Windows XP.

Since I also have Gnome 3.x and KDE 4.X programs on my system, I have access to all of them through LXDE. If you want to have a less sophisticated

system that runs on older equipment with minimum software overhead, do a fresh install of a dedicated LXDE distro.

For example, a Pentium II processor with 256 MB of ram that was used for Windows 98 could work, or a later 600 MHz Pentium III with 512 MB of ram should run well. Several major distro's provide a wide choice for your selection. For instance, the software provided by Lubuntu includes (among many others):

GPicView (photo viewer)
Leafpad (text editor)
LXTerminal (command line access)
OpenBox (window manager)
PCManFM (file manager)

Most distro's also have versions to work with their latest versions. For example, Lubuntu 12.10 will be offered as one of the versions to be released this October. Check all this out at the *LXDE.org* website.

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SIG News

LUNICS (Linux/Unix)
Andreas Meyer (lunics@acgnj.org)
http://www.acgnj.org/groups/lunics.html

LUNICS is a group for those who share an interest in Unix and similar operating systems. While we do quite a bit with Linux, we've also been known to discuss Solaris and BSD as well. Recent meetings have followed a Random Access format. See our web page for further information. (We meet on the first Monday of each month, at 8:00 PM). ⌨

Main Meeting
Evan Williams (president@acgnj.org)
http://www.acgnj.org/groups/mainmeet.html

We meet on the first Friday of the month, at 8:00 PM. Each December, this meeting includes our Annual Business Meeting and Officer Elections. *No* meetings in July or August. ⌨

Layman's Forum
Matt Skoda (som359@aol.com)
http://www.acgnj.org/groups/laymans.html

This SIG discusses issues of interest to novice users or those planning to get started in computing. Watch our Web page for updates and announcements. We meet at the same time as the Hardware Workshop. (On the second Monday of the month, at 8:00 PM). *No* meetings in July and August. ⌨

Hardware Workshop
Mike Reagan (hardware@acgnj.org)

This group is dedicated to repairing, refurbishing and/or recycling older computers. Ten people attended the first meeting, so there is still a market for this type of event. Although we looked at some of the older equipment stored in he back room, most of our time was spent in talking about ast experiences and planning for the future. Hopefully, we can establish a viable long-term schedule of projects, and keep the interest of those who attended this inaugural meeting. If you have a hardware problem, bring it in and we can all help fix or demolish it. (No guarantees either way.) We meet at the same time as the Layman's Forum. (On the second Monday of each month, at 8:00 PM). ⌨

Java
Mike Redlich (mike@redlich.net)
http://www.redlich.net/javasig/javasig.html

This SIG covers beginner, intermediate, and advanced level Java programming. Primary focus is on developing useful/practical applets and applications. (We meet on the second Tuesday of each month, at 7:30 PM). ⌨

Mobile Devices
Brenda Bell (mobdevsig@acgnj.org)

The Mobile Devices SIG focuses largely on current-generation cellphones and smart phones (such as Blackberry, Android, iPhone) which bridge the gap between basic cell phones and traditional computers, and how they can help you manage and organize your life. Our membership ranges from those who have recently acquired their first, basic cellphone to those who develop applications for today's modern smart phones, iPods, and ultra-portable computers. While we expect to spend much of our time investigating the built-in features and specialized applications available to modern smart phones, if you bring your basic (or multimedia) cell phone, iPod, or other mobile device with questions on how to use it, where to find applications, or what features they have, we are always happy to help! Meet and greet and plan where this event goes. Bring all your ideas, PDAs, fancy phones, etc. (We meet on the second Wednesday of alternate months (we get the even ones), at 7:30PM). ⌨

WebDev
Evan Williams (webdev@acgnj.org)

This SIG is an open forum for all Website Development techniques and technologies, to encourage study and development of web sites of all kinds. All languages will be considered and examined. The current project is a CMS for the club. Anyone interested in starting a new project, come to the meeting and announce/explain. Provide as much detail as possible. WebDev should be an all-encompassing development and examination forum for all issues, applications, OS, languages and systems one can use to build Websites. We currently

have two web development language SIGs: .NET and Java; but other languages and OS need to be investigated, examined and tested; Windows, Linux, UNIX, DEC, Vax, HP etc. Intel-PC, Motorola - MAC etc. (We meet on the second Wednesday of alternate months (we get the odd ones), at 7:30 PM).

Investment Software
Jim Cooper (jim@thecoopers.org)
http://www.acgnj.org/groups/sig_investment.html

The Investment SIG continues with presentations on how to use analysis programs TC2000 and TCNet. Large charts are presented on our pull down screen and illustrate the application of computer scans and formulas to find stocks for profitable investments. Technical analysis determines buy points, sell points and projected moves. Technical analysis can also be used on fundamentals such as earnings, sales growth, etc. We're no longer focusing on just Telechart. If you are using (or interested in) Tradestation, eSignal, VectorVest, or just in learning how to select and use charting and technical analysis, come join us!! (We meet on the second Thursday of the month, at 8 PM).

NJ Gamers
Gregg McCarthy (greggmajestic@gmail.com)
http://www.NJGamers.com
www.lanparty.com

The Friday Night Frag starts at 6:00 PM on the second Friday of each month, and keeps going until 12 Noon on Saturday - 18 hours for 5 bucks!
BYOC - Bring your own computer.
BYOF - Bring your own food.
And if you don't like sitting on metal folding chairs...
BYO chair!

Firefox
David McRitchie (firefox@acgnj.org).

This SIG is an open forum for all Firefox and Mozilla techniques and technologies, to encourage study and development of web sites of all kinds. All browsers will be considered and examined. All members and guests are invited to check out the design concepts and voice their opinion. (We meet on the third Monday of each month, at 7:30 PM).

C/C++ Programming
Bruce Arnold (barnold@ieee.org)
http://acgnj.barnold.us/index.html

This is a forum for discussion of programming in general, beginning and intermediate level C, C++, C-Win programming, hardware, algorithms, and operating systems. We demonstrate real programming in a non-intimidating way, presenting complete code for working programs in 3-5 sheets of paper. (We meet on the third Tuesday of each month, at 7:30 PM). *No* meetings in July or August.

Window Pains
John Raff (jraff@comcast.net)
http://www.acgnj.org/groups/winpains.html

Intended to provide members with Windows oriented discussions, Microsoft and Linux style. Directed to more technological level of attendee, but newbies are welcomed. (We meet on the third Friday of the month at 8:00 PM). *No* meetings in July or August.

37th Anniversary Newsletter CD Now On Sale
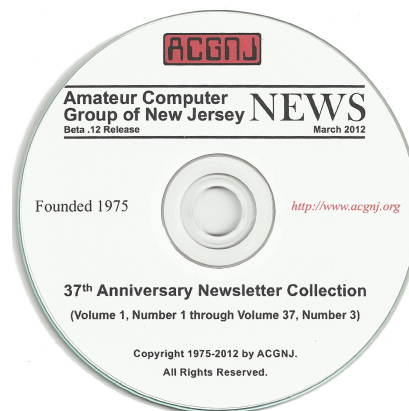
Beta .12 Release.

$8.00, including postage.

($7.00 if you pick up a copy at a meeting).

Get yours today!

Back Issues *Still* Needed

Our collection remains incomplete. Below is a list of missing newsletters. Anyone who lends us one of these (or supplies a good clear copy) will receive the next CD as our thanks.

1975: #2 and #3 (dates uncertain).
1976: January.
1984: August.
1985: June, July, August, September.

Guru Corner

If you need help with any of the technologies listed below, you can call on the person listed. Please be considerate and call before 10 PM.

Software

HTML	Mike Redlich	908-246-0410
	Jo-Anne Head	908-769-7385
ColdFusion	Jo-Anne Head	908-769-7385
CSS	Frank Warren	908-756-1681
	Jo-Anne Head	908-769-7385
Java	Mike Redlich	908-246-0410
C++	Bruce Arnold	908-735-7898
	Mike Redlich	908-246-0410
ASP	Mike Redlich	908-246-0410
Perl	John Raff	973-560-9070
	Frank Warren	908-756-1681
XML	Mike Redlich	908-246-0410
Genealogy	Frank Warren	908-756-1681
Home Automation	Frank Warren	908-756-1681

Operating Systems

Windows 3.1	Ted Martin	732-636-1942

Discount Computer Magazine Price List
As described by the DealsGuy

	1 yr	2 yr	3 yr
Computer Games	$10.95	20.95	29.95
Computer Gaming World	14.95	28.95	41.95
Computer Shopper1	16.97	32.95	47.95
Dr. Dobbs Journal	15.95	30.95	
Mac Addict	10.97		
Mac Home Journal	15.97	29.97	
Mac World	12.95		
Maximum PC	9.95	18.95	27.95
Microsoft System Journal	21.95	39.95	
PC Gamer	12.95		
PC Magazine (22/44/66 Issues)	25.97	48.95	68.95
PC World	16.95		
Wired	6.00	12.00	17.00

These prices are for new subscriptions and renewals. All orders must be accompanied by a check, cash or Money Order. Make payable to Herb Goodman, and mail to:

Herb Goodman, 8295 Sunlake Drive, Boca Raton, FL 33496

Telephone: 561-488-4465, e-mail: *hgoodman@prodigy.net*

Please allow 10 to 12 weeks for your magazines to start. For renewals you must supply an address label from your present subscription to insure the correct start of your renewal. As an extra service I will mail a renewal notice about 4 months prior to their expiration date. I carry more than 300 titles at excellent prices — email for prices.

ACGNJ MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Sign up online at *www.acgnj.org/membershipApplication.html* and pay dues with PayPal.

Dues

	US/CANADA	STUDENT	SENIOR CITIZEN (Over 65)
1 Year	$25	$20	$20
2 Years	$40		
3 Years	$55		$45

Mail this application and your check to:
AMATEUR COMPUTER GROUP OF NEW JERSEY, INC,, P.O. BOX 135, SCOTCH PLAINS, NJ 07076

☐ New Member ☐ Renewal ☐ Address Change

First Name _____ Last Name _____ Phone _____

Mailing Address _____ E-Mail _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ URL _____

What topics would you like to see covered at club meetings? _____

Other Local Computer Groups

Princeton Macintosh User Group: 7:15 pm 2nd Tuesday, Jadwin Hall, A-10, Washington Rd, Princeton, (609) 252-1163, *www.pmug-nj.org*	**Linux Users Group in Princeton**: 7 pm, 2nd Wednesday, Lawrence Branch Mercer Library, Rt#1 & Darrah Lane, Lawrence NJ *http://www.lugip.org*	**New York PC**: 3rd Thurs, 7 pm, PS 41, 116 W 11th St. For info call hotline, (212) 533-NYPC, *http://www.nypc.org*
Computer Education Society of Philadelphia: Meetings & Workshops at Jem Electronics, 6622 Castor Ave, Philadelphia PA. *www.cesop.org/*	**Brookdale Computer Users Group**: 7 pm, 3rd Friday, Brookdale Community College, Bldg MAS Rm 100, Lincroft NJ. (732)-739-9633. *www.bcug.com*	**NJ Macintosh User Group**: 8 pm, 3rd Tuesday, Allwood Branch Library, Lyall Rd, Clifton NJ. (201) 893-5274 *http://www.njmug.org*.
PC User Group of So. Jersey: 2nd Mon., 7 pm, Trinity Presb. Church, 499 Rt 70 E, Cherry Hill, NJ. L. Horn, (856) 983-5360	**Hunterdon Computer Club**: 8:30 am, 3rd Sat, Hunterdon Medical Center, Rt 31, Flemington NJ. *www.hunterdoncomputerclub.org*, (908) 995-4042.	**NY Amateur Computer Group**: 2nd Thurs, 7 pm, Rm 806 Silver Bldg, NYU, 32 Waverly Pl, NYC. *http://www.nyacc.org*
Morris Micro Computer Club: 7 pm 2nd Thurs., Morris County Library, Hanover Ave, Morristown NJ, (973) 267-0871. *http://www.morrismicro.com*	**Central Jersey Computer Club**: 8 pm, 4th Friday, Rm 74, Armstrong Hall, College of NJ. Rich Williams, (609) 466-0909.	**NJ PC User Group:** 2nd Thurs, Monroe Rm at Wyckoff Public Library, 7 pm. Maureen Shannon, (201) 853-7432, *www.njpcug.org*
Philadelphia Area Computer Society: 3rd Sat, 12 noon Main Meeting, groups 8 am-3 pm. Upper Moreland Middle School, Hatboro PA. (215) 764-6338. *www.pacsnet.org*	**NJ Computer Club**: 6:15 pm, 2nd Wednesday except Jul & Aug, North Branch Reformed Church, 203 Rt 28, Bridgewater NJ. *http://www.njcc.org*	**Princeton PC Users Group**: 2nd Monday, Lawrenceville Library, Alt Rt 1 & Darrah Lane, Lawrenceville, Paul Kurivchack (908) 218-0778, *http://www.ppcug-nj.org*

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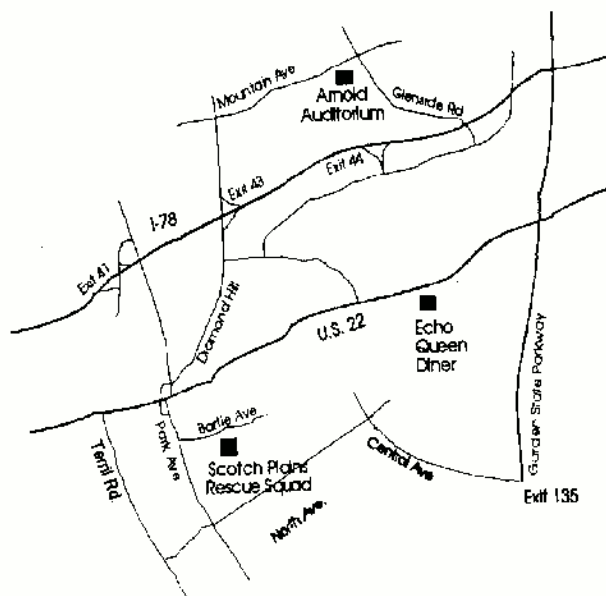*http://www.apcug.net*

Radio and TV Programs

Computer Radio Show, WBAI 99.5 FM, NY, Wed. 8-9 p.m.

Software Review, The Learning Channel, Saturday 10-10:30 p.m.

On Computers, WCTC 1450 AM, New Brunswick, Sunday 1-4 p.m. To ask questions call (800) 677-0874.

PC Talk, Sunday from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m., 1210 AM Philadelphia. 1-800-876-WPEN

Directions to Meetings at Scotch Plains Rescue Squad, 1916 Bartle Ave., Scotch Plains NJ

From New York City or Northern New Jersey

Take Route 1&9 or the Garden State Parkway to US 22 Westbound.

From Southern New Jersey

Take Parkway north to Exit 135 (Clark). Stay on left of ramp, follow circle under Parkway. Bear right to Central Avenue; follow to Westfield and under RR overpass. Left at light to North Avenue; follow to light in Fanwood. Right on Martine (which becomes Park Ave). Right on Bartle Ave in middle of shopping district.Scotch Plains Rescue Squad (2-story brick) is located on the right. Do not park in the row next to the building — you'll be towed.

From I-78 (either direction)

Take exit 41 (Scotch Plains); follow signs to US 22. Turn right at light at bottom of hill and use overpass to cross Rt. 22. Follow US 22 Westbound directions.

From US 22 Westbound

Exit at Park Avenue, Scotch Plains after McDonalds on the right, diagonally opposite Scotchwood Diner on the left, immediately before the overpass. After exiting, turn left at the light and use overpass to cross US 22. Bear right at bottom of ramp to continue south on Park Avenue. Turn left at the second light (a staggered intersection). Scotch Plains Rescue Squad (2-story brick) is on the right. Do not park in the row next to the building — you'll be towed. We meet on the second floor, entering by the door at the right front of the building.

From Western New Jersey

Take US 22 Eastbound to the Park Avenue exit. The exit is about a mile past Terrill Road and immediately past the overpass. Exit onto Park Avenue South and follow the directions above to the Rescue Squad building. 🖥