



READLINE

FEATURING ARTICLES BY COMPUTER CLUB MEMBERS

"GETTING MORE OUT OF YOUR COMPUTER"

CD-RW Drives Unseat Other Media

By Ken Fermoyle

The king is dead! Long live the king! (Until a successor ascends the throne.) The "dead king" in this case is the traditional 3.5-inch floppy disk drive and its cousins: Zip drives, Super Drives, tape backups and other removable storage media.

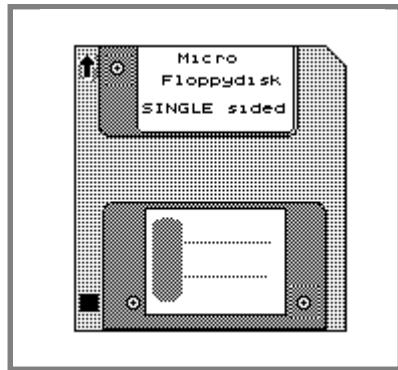
The new king is the CD-RW (Compact Disk-ReWriteable) drive. The successor, already waiting in the wings, is the DVD-RW (Digital Versatile Disc or Digital Video Disk, depending on your orientation). Portable USB hard drives may be pretenders to the throne.

Of course I'm exaggerating a bit. You can't count out the lowly 1.44-mega-byte floppy drive just yet. It is adequate for typical word processing and other applications that don't produce big files. Prices are low enough for both drives and diskettes to keep them alive for the near term. Shipments should peak in 2001, then start a slow decline.

Iomega's Zip and Jaz products, Super floppies, tape drives and their kin won't disappear overnight either, but they all have drawbacks that will make it hard for them to compete with CD-RW drives in the long term. Generally, they have more limited capacity, higher media costs, and aren't priced all that much lower than the CD products. (Note that Iomega recog-

nizes the inevitable and introduced its own CD-RW drive, the ZipCD, in June 1999.)

For example, a 100MB Zip drive costs



about \$100 to \$130, depending on type (internal, external, SCSI, parallel, USB). Disk prices range from about \$8 to \$15 as this is written in mid-January, 2000. A 1GB Jaz drive costs about \$200, with disks going for \$90 to \$100.

By comparison, CD-RW drives hold 650MB and sell for anywhere from \$170 to about \$400, with most in the \$200-250 range. That means their disks hold as much as 6.5 Zip 100 disks and roughly 66% as much as the 1GB Jaz disk. The kicker is the cost of media.

CD-R disks cost just \$1 to \$2 each. You can only write files to them once,

no rewriting, but you can write to them in increments; adding files until the disk is full. This makes them ideal for permanent backup or archiving files. They are easily portable, since they are compatible with all CD-ROM drives of recent years. And they're so cheap you can use a lot of them without busting the budget.

CD-RW disks cost more, about \$5 to \$6, but you can write and rewrite to them just as you would a floppy or Zip drive. Generally there are more compatibility issues than with CD-R disks; they may not be readable in any CD-ROM, or even other CD-RW, drives. They are best used for day-to-day backup.

The nice thing is that a CD-RW drive gives you the best of both worlds, since you can burn CD-R disks or use CD-RW disks in one.

Let me tell you about my experiences with two quite different types of CD-RW drives I've been using for four months, since Sept. 1999. One is a Verbatim brand, Model 4420a (4X Record, 4X Rewrite, 20X Read): the drive itself is made by Mitsubishi. The other is more exotic: a Compro external drive from ACS Innovations. Made specifically for use with note-book

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FEBRUARY 15TH MEETING

The February 15th General Meeting sees the return of Myles White speaking on "What to look for when buying a *new* computer", a seminar topic for which he is much sought after and has an in-depth knowledge of.

Many members will know Myles from previous PCCT and ComputerFest talks. However, he also a notable author and regular columnist in the *Toronto Star's Fast Forward* section and a contributor in the *Your Office Magazine* and *Small Business Canada Magazine*.

His two books, *How to Buy a Computer* (two editions!) and *How to Avoid Buying a New Computer*, are very readable and a fantastic source of information for both computer neophyte and the most knowledgeable expert. Both are published by McClelland and Stewart. Unfortunately the latter title is now out of print.

Mr. White's most recent assignment is as associate editor of www.canadacomputes.com. He was associate editor of *We Compute* from April 1997 to December, 1999 and of *Canada Computes!* for 10 years prior to April 1997.

For those in the market for a new computer, February's meeting is a can't miss date! Dave Hanson

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February 2000



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SIG Attendees please note: the entrance we should use for meetings at Beth Torah is at the back of the building off the Parking Lot.



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General Meeting February 15th, 2000

Admission for non-members – \$5.00

6:30pm: Meet and discuss—your ideas for PCCT with some of our Board members and volunteers.

7:00pm: General Meeting—starts with a Question & Answer session.

The Personal Computer Club of Toronto



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The Personal Computer Club Of Toronto (PCCT) is an independent, not-for-profit association for people who use PC microcomputers. Our philosophy: *Users helping Users.*

"read.me" is the newsletter of the PCCT, published 11 times a year, featuring articles by club members and members of other user groups from around the world. Opinions expressed are those of the writers and not necessarily of the PCCT.

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Please note: Fees, dates, and specifications are subject to change without notice.

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Special Interest Groups

The Basics SIG

Leader: Frank Latchford (416) 340-0999

Learning Windows 95/98 SIG. This SIG is intended for those who are new to Windows 95/98. We will discuss how Windows works and how to use it on a daily basis. The intention of this SIG is to teach—not to entertain. We will start at the beginning and go to the end. You should have learned to use some aspect of Windows by the end of the evening.

DayTime SIG

Leader: George Chambers (416) 751-7559

This is a discussion group that covers a wide range of topics relating to IBM and compatible computers. It is for novice, intermediate and advanced users.

Digital Imaging SIG

Leader: Ron Caine ron_caine@msn.com

Interested in scanners, photography, digital cameras and the software to run all that? Then this SIG is for you. We will go over all facets of manipulating pixels to give you the results you want.

Investment SIG

Leader: Ken Morgan (416) 491-1932

Analytical techniques, use of spreadsheets, graphical display of investment analysis all play an important part in these meetings. Also, considerable use is made of video training tapes on investment subjects.

Internet SIG

Leader: David Paikin (416) 225-1057

This SIG concentrates on how to access and utilize the various resources of the Internet. If you are having difficulties using the Internet or simply wish to learn more, then this SIG is for you. The first 15 minutes of the SIG are used to answer general communications issues.

Linux SIG

Leader: Avnish (Kash) Kashyap (905) 677-8337

Linux for Beginners, How to Install, Configure, Use and set up a Graphical user interface. It is almost free, robust and reliable. Come on in and have look see.

New Users SIG

Leader: Henry Crane (905) 884-5443

This is a group arranged specifically for novice computer users. It holds informal friendly discussions on the essentials of personal computing. You will get clear concise explanations of computer terms on your personal level of understanding, help with what to learn and how to learn it quickly and cheaply, purchasing, upgrading and problem solving advice that can save you many hours and dollars.

Office SIG

Leader Andy Hagan ad.hagan@sympatico.ca

Learn how to use the Microsoft Office suite of programs: Word, Excel, Powerpoint and Access. A SIG geared to helping small business make effective use of this software.

Visual Basic SIG

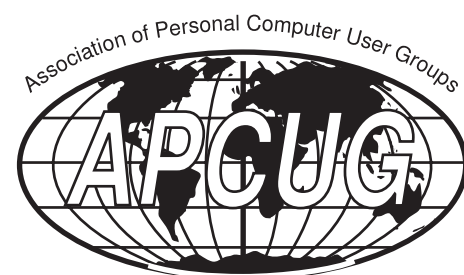
Trevor Pedley 416-751-2396

Learn Visual Basic, a popular programming language. This group follows a beginners' level text with a structured learning environment. Easily learn sophisticated ways to program applications in the Windows environment by attending this group.

Windows SIG

Leader Steve Rakus src@tnt.net

Here is where you can learn how to get and use the maximum from MS Windows. You will enjoy an information-packed, entertaining evening while you learn how to use all the Windows tools, and make Windows run more efficiently on your machine. You can participate in the monthly training session and become an expert user in less than a year. You will learn tips and tricks that will save you hours. You will meet many power users, see the latest Windows products and perhaps win a valuable door prize.



What do I want? Don't

do I really really want; do I really really really really want?

By Karl Stanley (PCCT)

Thus sang the Spice Girls, one of my current singing and dancing favourites.

I started to think of this as a lead for the Club in the Newsletters; but also in getting our point of view over to software developers.

When I purchase new software; I am always annoyed that the license agreement is not available to me before I open the package. When installing the program, I must agree to the license before completing the install. Once opened, the store says I cannot return it to them; but to the developer for refund.

What do I want: The store should have available a copy of the agreement for me to read before I buy. Alternatively, the agreement could be made available on the Internet. If the terms were unacceptable, I could choose not to buy. Also, a standard form would be sufficient providing users' rights were taken into consideration. We should take this issue to C.A.S.S.T.

When I install a new program, a DLL is often updated. Some times existing programs require the old DLL. Don't ask me why.

What do I want: I want a new folder created by the install program called "OldDLLs" if it does not already exist, and the DLL replaced put into this file with it's old name. I want the program to give me a written report of all such action as part of the install process. Most importantly, the new DLL should be backwards compatible with the old file.

For a long time, when I have installed programs; I have to disable my antivirus programs. Now I find that I have to terminate most programs in the tray as well. As this requires extensive use of the three fingered salute, one for each item in the tray for gator, real player etc. etc. etc.

What do I want: I want the install program to terminate these programs for the install process; and ensure that they resume operation on reboot. I will continue to disable the antivirus programs myself.

There are many more things that I want. But I am sure that you have gotten the message. What it really comes down to is a lobby group for the users. The PCCT could become this for all Canadian Users. We need some one to head this project for a 2-3 year period. They would have to contact the various software developers asking for their support.

This could become a section of **read.me** with reports on responses from the developers. If developers ignored or refused requests, we could make our members and readers aware of their response.

If you have something that you really really really really want; let me know so that we can add to the list. <{:~}>

Karl Stanley, CGA President, The Personal Computer Club of Toronto Bus: 905-853-5339 Fax: 905-836-5421 Res: 905-836-5222 593 Holgate Circle, Newmarket, Ontario. L3X 1V8

boot without it!

By Andy Okany (PCCT)

The best thing in my directory is CLIP MATE.

The version I am using is 5.1. Their home page is: <http://www.thornsoft.com> .

The essence of this program is that it enables you to put on your clipboard more then one independent item. You can then choose which one to paste later or you can manipulate them to "glue" selected ones together. The items will be saved even when you close your computer and they will be there when you reboot.

You can group copied items into separate folders to retrieve them easily. It serves as a handy storage for frequently used codes, serial numbers, account numbers, or reference numbers. (Call me careless but I even save passwords here). When you need them you can paste them with a few keystrokes and: *no spelling mistakes* (if you saved them with the correct spelling!) which is particularly useful when handling URLs which are notoriously easy to misspell.

There are a lot of other features, actually more then I use myself, but that is a pattern with most of the useful programs.

You can download it from the site above, you can try it out for a trial period and subscribe if you want to. To download it from the site will cost you \$20 (US) if you order it you can obtain it for \$25 (US) which then will include a manual and will be mailed to you. Have fun! ❖

anok@home.com

The ant can lift 50 times its own weight, can pull 30 times its own weight and always falls over on its right side when intoxicated. (From drinking little bottles of...?) (Did the government pay for this research??)

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Special members only price \$10.00. If you would like to pay in advance for the next 9 editions \$75.00. The next 9 editions will include 3 ComputerFest Shows and COMDEX in July.

Payment must be made to the Treasurer, cash or cheque for PCCT. You may also pay month by month. Please let me know which payment option you have chosen.

Content should be forwarded directly to the Editor. Deadline for each edition is the general meeting prior to publication.

Confirm that it is your intention to advertise in each edition and your preferred payment option.

Seagate Tape Backup Support

Karl Stanley (PCCT)

A little over two years ago, I purchased two new computers with a Seagate Tape Backup. We added this to our existing network of two 486 computers with a Panasonic KXP1624 Printer and a HP 5L Laser printer.

Thus we had four computers networked with 2 printers. Life was wonderful. We could send a print job to either printer from any of the computers. No cables changed or switches thrown. (We had started with an AB box to share just the Panasonic printer with the 486s' some years ago. We could back up all four of the computers from the one network location.

In November of 1999, we encountered difficulty with one of the Pentiums and took it into the shop for repairs. During the interval, we moved the HP 5L to the plug-in on the tape drive attached to the other Pentium. At this point our tape drive ceased to function. It was time to re-read the manual. It seemed that our HP 5L printer was incompatible with the tape drive because the printer talked to the computer i.e. paper jam, paper out etc.

Reading the manual disclosed a recommendation that a second parallel port card was required for the tape drive was required. We purchased and installed a Lava Parallel enhanced PCI card. The manual suggested uninstalling the tape software and re-installing with the new card. Thus the manual proclaimed—thus we followed the instructions.

Y2K Problems Encountered

By Jim McIntosh (PCCT)

I spend something like 90% to 99% of my time in MS-DOS 6.0, so I use a lot of old software, and have noticed some year 2000 'bugs' in these old packages.

Major Failures in Processing:

1) GlobalSCAPE's CuteFTP 2.0 for Windows 3.1: When uploading to a web site, it destroys web pages, text, and graphics files exceeding 1,460 bytes, and then 'hangs'; it handles files smaller than 1,460 bytes successfully.

Support: I talked to several technical support representatives. They mention that they cannot be bothered to support or debug software written for Windows 3.1. The company policy appears to be that they will accept payment for registration, but will not support any software able to run on Windows 3.1. For your payment, they will let you use the software, and let you upgrade to Windows 95 versions. The upgrade from version 2.0 to 2.8 is free, and the upgrade to 3.5 costs \$9.95 US.

Their web site does not describe explicitly how this software is not year 2000 compliant.

The software encourages you to register by gradually 'self-crippling' itself. I suspect that the logic to support 'self-crippling' is non-compliant, interacting with dates such as PC date, ISP server date, and registration date, so that a date past December 31, 1999, whether on the ISP server, or in the registration software, will somehow erroneously trigger the logic for extreme 'self-crippling'.

Minor Errors in Display or Reporting:

1) MS-DOS 6.0: The directory listings display the year as ":0". This is only a display error. The files are sorted into correct sequence by DIR /O:D.

2) Ample Notice 3.00 for DOS: In the lower right corner, it displays the year as 100. In the upper right corner, it displays the year correctly.

Support: I telephoned the software developer several years ago. He has given

To our horror, we found that the tape back up software had somehow become corrupted sitting in a storage box these past two years. Thus we could not install from the disk; nor could we restore from the backup.

We logged on to the Seagate Web site; and explained our problem. Very promptly, they sent me replacement install software for the backup drive. I sent my request in the evening and the response was there next day. (Good Service !) I printed out the instructions for installing and proceeded. After installing, and the required reboot, I could only reboot in "Safe Mode". The only way to resolve the problem was by uninstalling the back up software.

I went back to Seagate on the Web. They immediately provided me with a higher level back up software. I installed the software and encountered the same problem on the reboot. I contacted Seagate and they recommended that I uninstall the software and move the tape back up to the first port from the second port where it was installed; and move the printer to the second port and install it there. By this time, the other computer had returned and the printer was reinstalled on that machine.

There I was with two parallel ports and only a tape back up to install. I did the physical change to the cables reattaching the tape to P1, I then place the required telephone call to Seagate. Their representative very quickly walked me through the required device settings required for compatibility to the drive; and within minutes, I was backing up one of the drives. When I rebooted, I encountered no problems. The rep stated that we had to install on P1. (Why ?)

I was able to double back up all four computers prior to Y2K. Life was wonderful! The people at Seagate were faster than a speeding bullet in response to my cries for help. They rate six cows in my mind. What I don't understand is why the Tape Drive would not install on the second Parallel port. Why did the settings on P1 have to be changed for the second install ?

At Christmas I received an IBM Scanner. I had trouble installing on P2. It wanted to install on P1. That is a story for another time. We have acquired a HP colour printer; stay tuned. ❖

up on this product, due to the competition from Windows-oriented products.

3) EasyDial 4.5 for DOS: Its dialling event log reports the year as "100" (3 digits); it reported 1999 as "99" (2 digits). Columns after the date are now shifted one character right. **Support:** The software developer seems to have gone out of business. Their telephone, fax and BBS numbers have been re-assigned. They seem to have no site on the Worldwide Web.

4) Microsoft Internet Explorer 3 for Windows 3.1: Its mail subsystem reports any dates after 1999 as invalid or missing, and inserts them at random locations in the list. To reposition them, sort by a different key, then again by date, and they will go to the bottom of the list of invalidly-dated messages, before the list of validly-dated messages. **Support:** Microsoft would probably advise upgrade to version 5, their latest. ❖

Jim McIntosh, e-mail: mcintosh@worldy.com



THE PCCT HARDWARE/SOFTWARE BARGOON AUCTION TABLE

Do you ever ask yourself the question.... "what can I do with my used equipment now that I have upgraded?"

Well, here at PCCT we have an answer to that, the PCCT Bargoona Auction Table.

"Can I bring in my old XT as well as my Pentium III 800mhz?" The answer is always YES! "What is it worth?" I have a good handle on what it is worth and offer my advice.

It makes money for the club as a whole as well as the individual member selling his/her own "old" equipment or software. Please see me, Martin Moss, for details. smarty@3web.net

Publicity! Publicity! Publicity!

By Steve Morgan (APCUG)

What are the big 4 positions that should be in every user group? President, Editor, Program Chair and Publicity.

Which position is the most important to growing your group? For many groups, Publicity should win hands down! Too many user groups out there are just too small! Computer sales are booming, there are 80 million people on the Internet, several countries have fully half of the population with access to a computer.

With the exception of the Apple owners, who can pretend that owning and operating a computer is easy? I daily learn something new about computers, and I have 25 years experience in using them! With the kind of numbers above, every computer user group should have people pounding down the doors trying to learn how to use their computers.

Unfortunately, most user groups have less than 75 members. What are we doing wrong?

A major reason for the lack of growth stems from a lack of information. The general public does not realize that user groups are a great place to get help with their computer problems! Ever wonder why \$150.00 computer training classes are booming, libraries are packing in members to use their computers and vocational schools are now offering adult computer classes? They are successful because they concentrate on letting people know how the classes will help them!

So what to do about it? Make Publicity the most important person in the user group! Find someone who likes to talk and get everyone else in the club behind them! Here are some ideas that various user groups are using to jumpstart the publicity bandwagon.

1. Newspaper Articles With Club Information Attached—Here is one of the easiest ways in the world to get some publicity. Go to the local newspaper and ask if you can submit a weekly or biweekly article about computers. Most newspapers are starved for good articles about computers; their readers are demanding good information to help them use all the computers they are buying! An excellent resource are the monthly articles that the APCUG Editorial Committee sends out, but even better are good articles written by your members! Promote your group by writing a brief commercial at the end of every article like this, “The xxy computer club will be meeting Thursday, the 19th of January from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Vocational School in Scottsdale. Everyone is welcome to attend this month’s program on connecting to the Internet. Call 456-0000 for details!” Not every newspaper will agree to do this, but it doesn’t ever hurt to try! If you are in a large metro area, do not forget the many smaller newspapers that serve a suburb or ethnic group, these can be great ways to reach people that you do not often see.

2. Morning, Afternoon and Weekend Radio Shows—Ask to be on the local morning show of popular radio stations that reach your target audience. Call

Best Member Tips

Tip 1:

I was having problems installing a program on Income Tax. I had disabled my Norton Anti-Virus and closed the programs showing on the task bar but not the items in a tray. After contacting the Tech Support for the program and I was asked to use the “three finger salute” and then “end task” for all programs except “explorer and systray” Somewhat hesitantly I did so and the program installed without further problems. Now my question is: Is it possible to end more than one task at a time?

Yes, but not by using the Shift key as is common for many Windows applications. You have to hold Ctrl and then you can select as many tasks as you wish, and hit the delete key. *Karl Stanley*

Tip 2

Win98 includes a useful utility that just might help when you run into trouble. But please be careful and don’t change anything unless you know what you are doing, or at least, a knowledgeable person tells you it’s OK. The program is MSCONFIG and its easy to start. Just click your mouse on Start and then on

up the station and tell them about your club, and ask to be interviewed by the “personalities” of the show. Don’t just stop at one show either! Try to hit the different music formats such as rock, country, easy listening, etc. Try to be on the show the day before, or the day of your club meeting. My favorite airtime is from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m., this is great for getting the ears of many drivers and also people at work. And hey, it doesn’t ever hurt to bring goodies to the interview! Donuts, juice, bagels, even some software disks are great ice breakers and will help you become a “regular” on the show.

Many talk radio stations now have regular computer information shows. These shows have hosts, guests and take calls from users having problems. If there is one near you, beat down the doors in order to get on the show, send goodies to the host along with information on the club activities. If there is not a show near you, think about starting one up. Often radio stations just charge a small fee for the engineer that keeps the show going. User groups can even make money if they sell the advertisements that are used during the program. Community service announcements! Most radio stations make these announcements at regular times during the day, find out who is in charge and get a copy of the meeting information out to them 2-3 days before the meeting.

3. Posters, Posters, Groups Really Need Those “Stinken” Posters! There are few jobs more intimidating than asking merchants and building supervisors if you can hang up a poster. The good news is that if the poster looks good, many of them will be glad to let you do it! Wal-Marts, supermarkets, computer retailers, libraries, copy centers, universities, high schools, shopping malls, they have all let us put up posters. Here are 5 commandments for putting up posters! (a) Make it look appealing! Bright colors, large print and nice graphics will attract attention. (b) Try to give information for several month’s meetings, this will show people that you are well organized and will also appeal to a wider range of people! (c) Keep checking the signs and replace those that are looking bad (d) If you have the capability, make it tabloid size (11 by 17), put it on heavy stock paper and waterproof it! (e) Do not forget to include a map! Have good directions to the meeting, and put the dates and times in big letters!

4. Increase The Circulation Of Your Newsletter!—If your group has more than 200 members, think about changing your club newsletter to tabloid size and use newspaper stock for the pages. Believe it or not, the cost of 3000 tabloid newsletters is not that much more than 400 regular newsletters that you take to a copy center to have put together. And the mailing cost is often dramatically lower! When you have 2600 extra newsletters, nicely folded in half, clubs also have a gigantic marketing opportunity. Many of the computer hardware, software and consumables retail outlets in your area might be willing to spend some money on advertisements in your newsletter! In fact several user groups make more money from advertisements than they spend on printing costs! Buy some wire holders, and start leaving 100 newsletters at every place that you are able to have a poster. Take 5-10 of the extra newsletters and drop them off to the businesses in your area. Yes, some will just get thrown away, but many of them will be read! If you have any questions about this, please check out an excellent article by Don Singleton, Tulsa Computer Society, at this web address <http://www.apcug.org/events/comdex/tabloid.htm>. There are many ways that your user group can grow, and now is the very best time to do it! Implementing any of these suggestions will help; all they need is a dedicated person willing to put 10-15 hours a month into helping out the user group. Find that person, and treat them well! ❖

This article is furnished as a benefit of our membership in the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization to which this user group belongs. The author, Steve Morgan, is a member of the APCUG Board of Advisors. He represents Region 5, which covers AK, ID, MT, OR, WY, ND, SD and WA. Steve is also a member of the APCUG Editorial Committee. He’s one busy guy!

Run. Next, enter “msconfig” in the dialogue box and then click on OK. The screen you get displays the following tabs: General, Config.sys, Autoexec.bat, System.ini, Win.ini, and Startup. Click on the tabs and you’ll learn a lot about what your system loads when it boots up. Recently, a pesky update program kept loading every time I booted up After a few minutes delay, it would start checking my drive every 5 minutes for software that needed upgrading. It was more than just a nuisance because it caused problems—especially with programs such as my backup. So how could I stop it? Well, first I went to the program’s options and tried to delay the starting date and to increase the time between intervals. But the changes I made were effective for that session only. Second, I looked at my Win98 StartUp folder. I figured that if I removed the program from the folder, it would stop loading automatically every time I started my computer. But the program was not even in the folder. Last, I contacted Microsoft’s support and found out about the MSCONFIG program. I ran it, clicked on its Startup tab, and there, in front of my eyes, was the pesky program listed with its radio button turned on. So I turned it off by clicking on it, shut down my computer, rebooted and, low and behold, the program had not loaded. My problem was a Microsoft one. It began when I inadvertently downloaded the pesky program from Microsoft’s Web site while updating my WIN98 files. *Lloyd Lindsay* ❖

Note by Steve Rakus: These tips will not work in Windows NT4 or in the original version of Windows 95. <http://drtips.com/faq.html>

Pic'O Month by Trevelyan Beard (PCCT)

Snappy 4.0 has just come out —

This new Snappy, being twice as comprehensive as the original one is a virtual studio for people owning a camcorder. Version 4.0 also contains two other Play products—'Performer' and 'Picture Explorer'. It also ships with Adobe Photo-Deluxe 4.0. A pretty good value.

Snappy 4.0 is designed to take any single frame you select in your video tape and digitize it in such a way that you get an enhanced picture of high quality. You can do the same thing with a digital still camera but there is one huge difference—the selection capability and this is why you should consider adding Snappy to your arsenal. Snappy is a piece of hardware that plugs onto the parallel port. You connect the video cable from your camcorder or VCR to this module. The audio cable goes straight to your sound card connection.

The Snappy "raison d'être"

Let's say you are videoing your granddaughter—a close up of her face. There is a split second when her face tilts towards you, her smile appears and at the same time her eyes twinkle. 'Hey Presto' the unforgettable picture caught on just one frame of video. Snappy enables you to pick out this frame and make a print of it. This is something you cannot do with a still camera, digital or otherwise, which is capturing that precise moment in time when a miracle shot takes place.*

Now let's take a look at the powerful enhancement capability of Snappy. You have isolated this one frame. Now you make a series of adjustments to change various shortcomings. And this is why Snappy is a 'Studio'—it offers everything.

On-Line Services

by Otto Lang (PCCT)

The club offers you several interactive facilities, such as our **Web** site, the **BBS**, an **Info**-number with **FAX** and several **mail-lists**, collectively referred to as **On-Line Services**. They complement our standard information medium, this newsletter.

I have accepted to represent the On-Line Services at the Board level. In other words, I am the focus—or if you will, the conduit—between the suppliers of the contents and the providers of these facilities and I report to the Board, which is ultimately responsible to you.

I am hoping to be able to approach these responsibilities by forming an On-Line Services Committee, OLSC, consisting of members with a vested interest in these on-line facilities and certain skill-sets to match. An asset would be to have the appropriate background, hardware and software.

We have capable volunteers who give generously of their time and skills to keep these facilities up-to-date and available. You are familiar with the end-results of the efforts by the Webmaster, Daniel ffolliott, the BBS SysOp Arthur Robertson, and Avnish Kashyap, a.k.a. Kash, the moderator for a set of mail-lists offered by a company called OneList.com.

I would like to see each of the current positions in these areas to have one or two volunteer back-ups. Being up-to-date with our On-line Services should be the least our members can expect for their membership fee. Staying in touch, even if you can't come to meetings, is the quintessence of a self-help group such as ours.

Since we are all volunteers it follows that every one of us must be replaceable on short notice.

I am now issuing a call for a deputy On-line Services manager to share with me, as my back-up, the concerns and issues that undoubtedly will surface in that committee. I don't have a self-serving agenda and the usefulness of these benefits to members are of my highest priority.

This requires, in my opinion, a strong paradigm shift. Let me give you an exam-

There are nine properties of the source frame that you can adjust.

- | | | |
|-------------|----------------|--------------|
| 1. Colour. | 2. Brightness. | 3. Contrast. |
| 4. Picture. | 5. Sharpness. | 6. Tint. |
| 7. Red | 8. Green. | 9. Blue. |

Add to this list the ability to zoom and frame, crop, rotate and not to forget saving, printing, e-mailing and filtering and you've a poor man's PhotoShop at your finger tips.

I tried Snappy on a frame of my granddaughter's face. It was a shot against a window which meant her face was slightly darkened because the camera had corrected against the backlight. I was able to brighten up her face, and add colour to improve the flesh tones and sharpen the image somewhat. I then zoomed a frame to get a tighter shot and cropped it. The end result was astonishing—a high quality 'one in a million' picture, all thanks to Snappy.

Normally, a single frame in video is 'thin' because of interleaving. Snappy uses advanced technology to fill out this thinness and produce an extremely sharp picture. Of course, most camcorders of new vintage incorporate a 'Still Picture' mode where this fullness is also achieved. But this merely imitates a digital still camera and does not compete with Snappy. Snappy is the miracle maker that gets you that 'once in a lifetime' split second, almost accidental, 'frame in time'.

The other two features of Snappy 4.0 that have been added with this version are *Performer* and *Picture Explorer*. These and the Adobe PhotoDeluxe 4.0 which is also included deserve more space to do them justice and I will attempt to deal with them in some future article.

If you have a spare hour, engross yourself in the Play website at www.play.com.

Available from Play Inc., 2890 Kilgore Road, Rancho Cordova, CA, USA, 95670-6133. Tel: 916 851-0800. Price: \$169US. ❖

**Great masters of Photography, such as Cartier-Bresson were and are great precisely for their ability to foresee this magic moment and capture it with a still camera—without the benefit of current motor drives. Editor.*

ple of how I envision this new portfolio to work:

There is one On-line Services Director and approximately 3–400 members. If only 10% of members were to send me an e-mail, saying "**Otto, I have discovered such and such a Web site that offers Free this or that—Check it out...**" it would be impossible for me to react with my 2 hrs/day on my personal ISP account, not to mention the amount of time necessary to follow and digest the data. So don't get your hopes up!

On the other hand, somebody could come to the OLSC and present the **follow-up** on such a URL, with a list of "Pros" and "Cons". The committee could then compare this perhaps to other options and prepare one or more recommendations with the approval of the chair. The chair could in turn present these to the Board in a motion and, depending on the decision reached, the providers could then be instructed of the wishes of the membership, as represented by the Board.

You can see that it will require a new level of personal interest and commitment from a lot more people. I can think of many clubs and organizations in which participation, and what you bring to it, is paramount. Think of any kind of sport or leisure activity group.

In closing, I want you to reflect on the importance **to you** of the current on-line services, or future ones that new technologies may afford us. If you want to participate or have further questions, contact me at <ottolang@torfree.net>, and I will represent your views. Thank you. *OL*

WordWeb

by Joan Latchford

A favourite Freeware program I would not be without is "WordWeb," This is a thesaurus and dictionary with a small interface and a huge vocabulary of 160,000 words. Type a word in the search box and it will give you a choice of synonyms, antonyms, and words that are similar, though not exactly so.

Depending on the case of your search word, WordWeb gives you tabs for nouns, verbs, adjectives or adverbs that are derived from it.

WordWeb can be accessed as a stand-alone program from an icon on your desktop or one that is integrated into the Microsoft Word 2000 taskbar. It is a "light" version of WordWeb Pro which offers some additional features such as wildcard, and anagram searches. I have found the freeware version entirely sufficient for my personal needs as a writer.

WordWeb uses 6.41 MBs of hard drive real estate. Information on WordWeb

Concluded from page 1

computers, it weighs just over a pound and connects to a notebook PCMCIA slot or USB port.

Necessity led me to the CD-RW drives. I was preparing to do my Media Workshop in Orlando, FL last fall and realized the PowerPoint slide show I use to support my presentation was far too big to fit on a floppy. Putting it on a CD-ROM disk was the logical way to go. I began by investigating CD-R (record only) drives. They were cheap (\$160 or less) but I learned this was because they were being phased out. I was advised to go for a CD-RW drive instead—and settled on the Verbatim 4420a as one of the fastest in my price range.

Installing it was simplicity itself. I merely disconnected my existing CD-ROM drive and plugged in the new drive in its place, using the existing cable. It came with just!burn software from CeQuadrat (taken over by Adaptec in mid-1999), which I found very easy to use after an initial goof. I ruined several disks by trying to format them not realizing that they were preformatted by Verbatim!

The just!burn Wizard makes it easy to create backup, audio or data disks. The CD-ROM disks I've burned with the CeQuadrat software have been readable by every CD drive in which I have tested them. The tests have included drives in a half-dozen desktop computers and three notebook computers. I should mention that none of the drives was more than 24 to 30 months old. I can't vouch for compatibility with older drives.

The Compro notebook CD-RW drive is a real gem, the world's first CD Rewriter with CD 4X recording, 4X rewriting and 20X reading function all in a slim 23mm height housing. Bare drive weight is only 18 oz. Other weights are: battery pack w/5 AA batteries (Alkaline or NiCAD and NiMH 1.2V rechargables), 7 oz; AC adapter, 8 oz; PCMCIA card/cable, 5 oz; USB cable, 4oz. Current price is \$269.

The whole works adds up to 42 oz., but one normally would use either the PCMCIA or USB cable so actual weight, including a few disks, is less than 2.5 lbs.

The amazing thing is how well this little drive works. It performs so well I don't use it only with my notebook. It is connected via USB port to one of the desktop machines in our office when I'm not traveling.

The Compro slimline came with Adaptec's Easy CD Creator, which most experts consider the top CD creation program. It includes DirectCD, which lets you treat CD-RW drive like a floppy drive. You can copy information in small packets and erase separate files ("random erase") instead of having to erase the entire CD. Packet writing allows sending of small amounts of data or "packets" to CD-R and CD-RW drives without

wasted overhead and without risk of data transfer interruptions (buffer underruns).

Easy CD Creator makes it simple to create music, photo, video, and data CDs. You can even make bootable CDs. I have V3.5 but plan to upgrade soon to V4.0 which has some desirable features added. (Check it out at www.adaptec.com/products/overview/ecdc.html)

As always, your comments and experiences with these or similar products are welcome. I also invite you to visit my website: www.zyworld.com/wordsmithken. ❖

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Two little programs that I downloaded from the Web are not Shareware but Freeware which is even more of a deal. The first one is Regclean 4.1a. If you are like me, you would not have the courage to go into the registry and clean things out. The program Regclean does this very nicely and if things don't work as they should after you run it, the program creates a file of what it removed and it is very easy to go into the folder and reverse what was done. I've used it countless times and have yet to find it causes a problem. I keep the shortcut icon on the desktop and run it whenever I'm going to load more software or have deleted stuff off the hard drive. To find out how to install and run RegClean go to <http://createwindows.com/wininfo/regclean.htm>. You'll be glad you did.

The second Freeware program which I use frequently, *End It All 1.01*, sits on my desktop and helps me close down all the applications that are running or open and need to be closed before new software is installed. It will not close anything that is protected and is extremely easy to use. To find out more, go to: http://newlife-win98.server101.com/enditall_info.htm and it will show you exactly what your getting. Both these programs can be used with Windows 95 and Windows 98. ❖

THAT WHICH YOU
PERSIST IN DOING
BECOMES EASY
TO DO—NOT THAT
THE NATURE OF
THE THING HAS
CHANGED, BUT
YOUR POWER AND
ABILITY TO DO
HAS INCREASED.

H.J. GRANT.

Cambridge Chemistry

Software Review by Jean Vaumoron, Ottawa PC Users' Group

Drawing programs such as Corel Draw are becoming more and more efficient and can be used for many tasks. At least if you have the patience...and are only considering producing a single drawing for an article or illustrating a newsletter.

Professionals who edit articles for scientific magazines generally do not use fancy programs for the text itself. They rely almost exclusively on safe workhorses such as WordPerfect or Word, which are readily available to most authors. When it comes to drawings though, the software gets a lot more involved. In the Chem-ical field for example, editors must be able to insert into the text, neatly drawn figures, formulae and reactions. The drawing skills necessary to produce these works of art are out of the reach of most computer users and they have to be replaced by specialized tools which do all the calculations for you. A good example is ChemDraw, the de facto standard chemical structure drawing program manufactured by Cambridge Software (more information at www.camsoft.com). Usable in both Mac and PC programs, it can save you a lot of time and produce absolutely perfect drawings with minimum work. ChemDraw has a proprietary file format but also exports through .wmf files into any text environment.

The basics can be learned in a few hours, and its intuitive approach is quite impressive. You can almost draw freehand and yet everything just falls into place. All the basic shapes such as benzene rings, and all kinds of chemical links and chemical symbols are available from the tool bar. All drawings can be modified and integrated into chemical equations. Although these first steps are already impressive, the program can take you much further with the use of molecular modeling, search engines for instant access to huge databases of ready-drawn chemicals, each with a list of their physical properties and lots more...but you need to have the finances of a chemical firm if you hope to tap all their resources! ❖

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WHERE: North York Memorial Centre
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 the Central Library.

TIME: 7 p.m.

WHEN: Third Tuesday of the month.
 see the calendar below.

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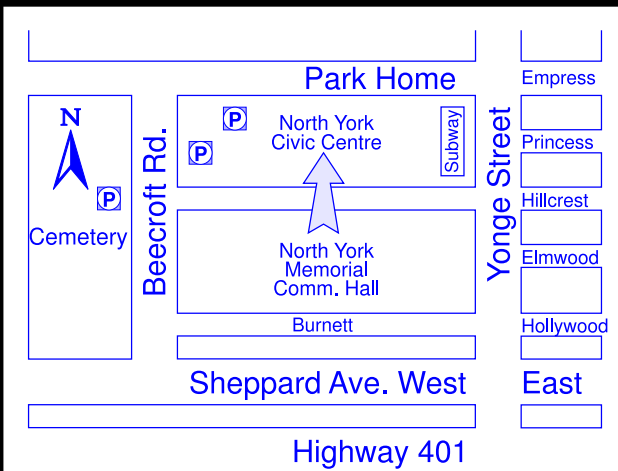
Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
1 Windows SIG BTS 7:30 p.m.	2 Investment SIG BTS 7:00 p.m.	3 The Basics SIG BTS 7:00 p.m.		1 Investment SIG BTS 7:00 p.m.	2 The Basics SIG BTS 7:00 p.m.
8 The Daytime SIG St. A, 1:00 p.m. Linux SIG, BTS, 7:00	9 Digital Imaging SIG BTS 7:30 p.m.	10 Visual Basic SIG BTS 7:00 p.m.	7 Windows SIG BTS 7:30 p.m.	8 Digital Imaging SIG BTS 7:30 p.m.	9 Visual Basic SIG BTS 7:00 p.m.
15 General Meeting NYC 7:00 p.m.	16 New User Group BTS 7:30 p.m.	17 Office SIG BTS 7:00 p.m.	14 The Daytime SIG St. A, 1:00 p.m. Linux SIG, BTS, 7:00	15	16 Office SIG BTS 7:00 p.m.
22 Daytime SIG St. A 1:00 p.m.	23	24 Internet SIG BTS 7:00 p.m.	21 General Meeting NYC 7:00 p.m.	22 New User Group BTS 7:30 p.m.	23 Internet SIG BTS 7:00 p.m.
29 LEAP YEAR			28 Daytime SIG St. A 1:00 p.m.	29	



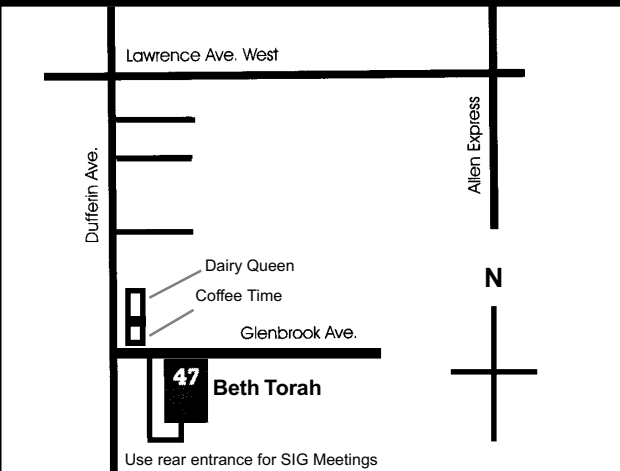
INFO LINE!

Find out what is going on at the PCCT each week by calling the club hotline at: (416) 633-6971 for the latest news on meetings.

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St. A Church of St. Andrew
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