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Random Bits

Licking County Computer Society



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CATERED BUFFET DINNER SAVE THIS DATE

September 16, 2008
More details later.

MEETING REMINDERS

will no longer be sent by mail
See the schedule at

<http://www.lccsohio.org/08%20Yearly%20PlannerFinal.pdf>

Which is also found at
www.lccsohio.org/meeting.htm

2008 General Meetings of LCCS

Online Education

May 20, 2008

Presented by Dave DeRolf and Written by Dave DeRolf

At the general meeting on May 20, 2008, I did a presentation on online education. The four main points of my presentation were:

- 1) trends and outlook for online education
- 2) a special program at some Ohio tax-supported schools which allows persons aged 60 or older to take classes tuition-free
- 3) a demonstration of an online class at Columbus State Community College (CSCC)
- 4) examples of class exercises in Microsoft Office 2003



My search for information regarding trends and outlook revealed several main points. According to the survey, Online Nation: Five Years of Growth in Online Learning that was conducted in 2006, 3.5 million students were taking at least one online course. The popularity of online edu-

cation is consistently growing. Institutions estimate more growth in the years to come.

I visited the websites of The Ohio State University, Ohio University, Miami (Ohio) University, Kent State University, Bowling Green State University, and CSCC. I found no information on the websites for OU and Miami on such a program. Here's what I found on the others, regarding the free tuition plan for age 60 or over:

Bowling Green St. U.: Senior Adult Grants for Education (SAGE) (credit) [see <http://adultlearnerservices.bgsu.edu/container.php?x=sage>]

CSCC: Good as Gold (credit, space-available) [see <http://cscs.edu/AdmFin/gold.htm>]

OSU: Program 60 (noncredit, space-available) [see http://ced.osu.edu/CED_pro60.html]

Kent State U.: Senior Guest Program (noncredit, space-available basis) [see http://www.kent.edu/contstudies/Senior/senior_guest.cfm] to find online course offerings: Visit school's website and look for Distance Learning or Distance Education links. For example, if you open <http://www.ohio.edu/> in your web browser, you'll see a link on the right side of the page for Distance Learning. At <http://www.cscs.edu/>, a link to Distance Learning is found on the left side of the page.

During the spring quarter, I was enrolled in CIT 101 (PC Applications 1) at CSCC and I demonstrated how this online class works. CIT 101 covers four components (Word, Excel, Access, and PowerPoint) of Microsoft Office 2003. The entire class is done online except the final exam. Participation in a Discussion Board is required and is part, albeit a small part, of the grade for the course. Grading of quizzes is automatic; the results are immediately available on the website. Other assignments, projects in Word, Excel, Access, and PowerPoint, are uploaded to the instructor for grading. The instructor then posts the grade on the website where each student can access their personal information by logging on with their username and password.

I displayed some of the projects and talked about some aspects of each of them. For this PowerPoint presentation for the Licking County Computer Society, I used the same design template that was used for the first PowerPoint exercise in the class.

At the outset of this course, I was skeptical about whether I would learn much from the class. A more advanced class in Microsoft Office (CIT 102) is also offered at CSCC and, prior to my actual enrollment, I was thinking CIT 101 would be a waste of time and I should take CIT 102. However, since CIT 101 is a prerequisite for CIT 102, and I was eligible for the free tuition program (noted above), I decided to go ahead and take CIT 101. I have used Microsoft Office, especially Word and Excel, for many years, going through several versions of Office. But, I did, indeed, learn many new tips and tricks with Word, Excel, and Access, all of which I had previously used. Other members of the class posted similar comments in the Discussion Board.

So, I would recommend this class for anyone wanting to improve their knowledge of and skill with Microsoft Office. The textbook is also quite good and could also be used for self-study. It is Microsoft Office 2003: Introductory Concepts and Techniques, Premium Edition (Shelly Cashman); I bought a used one on Amazon.com for much less than the cost of a new one at the college bookstore.

CSCC offers many other computer classes and, like CIT 101, many of them are offered online. Many classes in other areas are also online now. Some classes are called “Hybrid” because they are a mix of online and traditional education. A complete list of courses offered is available on the school’s website.

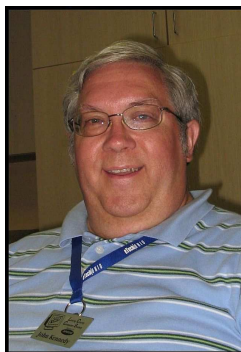
Functional Resources – Economically Enticing

June 17, 2008

Presented by John Kennedy and Written by John Kennedy

I need computer software that works for me and comes at a reasonable price. I appreciate the past work done by the software “giants”, but it's my personal feeling that software prices have gotten out of hand. I no longer can afford some of the software I need and began looking for alternatives.

Thanks to a concept called “Open Source” where software developers allow their software to be “open” to every-



one, especially to those that want to help improve it; and to other developers that want to design quality software with little or no cost (because they just like developing software). Because of this, I have found a lot of functional resources that are economically enticing (FREE) and now I can have the quality software that I need without worrying about the price.

In most of my experiences so far, the software does everything that I need it to do. I must add that I don't know if these software options do everything the paid ones do. But if they don't, what is lacking is something I must not need. My philosophy is: give the free, open software a try. If you find it's not doing something that you really need and the paid version does; then buy the paid version. But with the full understanding that whatever the cost of the software is, you are actually paying the full purchase price just for those one or two “features” the free one doesn't have.

There are 6 different “classes” of software that I use on a regular basis: operating system, firewall, anti-virus, productivity tools (word processing, spreadsheet, presentations, and databases), graphics/imaging, and desktop publishing. I would like to give you some examples of what I'm using that doesn't cost me a thing.

Operating System: Where as Microsoft Windows XP and Vista would cost you \$200/\$260, the Linux operating system (I use Ubuntu ¹, or another good one is openSuSE ²) doesn't cost you anything. The OS can look very similar to Windows, and acts pretty much the same with opening and closing windows. The same goes for a firewall (software that keeps outsiders from getting access to your computer), the paid version can cost \$40/\$50 to buy and about \$40 yearly renewal fees; the Open Source software (such as ZoneAlarm ³ or Comodo ⁴) do not cost anything up front or have any yearly fees. Just about the only thing the paid versions give you is a faster connection to download daily updates and some advanced/additional components that I wouldn't use.

When it comes to the anti-virus software it continues the same pattern: versions you buy (such as Norton or McAfee) would cost \$40 to buy and between \$30-\$40 in yearly renewal fees. But again the open source programs (I use AVG ⁵, and another good one is Avast ⁶) do not have an initial cost factor and never have any update fees. The biggest missing part is automatic scanning, but I can routinely run a scan myself every two weeks.

The biggest group of software that I use comes under the Productivity Tools. The program includes a word processor, spreadsheet, and presentation. The Microsoft Office Suite can cost anywhere between \$150-\$500, depending on the version you buy. The more “parts” you have included, the higher the cost. And then there's OpenOffice ⁷ and AbiWord ⁸. They come in one version and just about everything comes with it. OO includes the same components, but also includes a database and a drawing program (still free).

The last areas are graphics and publishing. Adobe Photoshop can cost you about \$650 for the complete program (including many things that I'll never use), yet there's a version very close in look/feel/function (GIMP ⁹) that's free. It's a bit powerful so I've kind of downgraded and have purchased an outdated copy of PaintShopPro, but there's another program based on the sim-

ple "Paint" program called, Paint.Net¹⁰ that does quite a bit more and it's free. And for those that might use the Microsoft Publisher program (\$170), there's a very good free program called Scribus¹¹.

The financial bottom line rings up anywhere from \$700 to \$1670, as opposed to getting all the software that I use for \$ 0. It doesn't cost anything for you to try them, and many of the paid versions will let you download a trial version so you can see if they do have things you really need.

¹ www.ubuntu.com/getubuntu

² <http://software.opensuse.org/>

³ www.zonealarm.com/

⁴ www.personalfirewall.comodo.com/

⁶ <http://free.grisoft.com>

⁷ www.openoffice.org

⁸ www.abisource.com

⁹ www.gimp.org

¹⁰ www.getpaint.net

¹¹ www.scribus.net

SIG REPORTS

Word/Works SIG

Mary Frances Rauch, SIG Leader
Written by **Mary Frances Rauch**

May 21, 2008 Word/Works SIG — Zerger Hall 9:30 AM

1. Discussion of a recent email and its attachment received by many in our User Group led us to learn how to convert a file with .htm extension to a .doc extension. Also we had a mini-review of how to SHOW/HIDE file extensions.
2. We demonstrated how to insert Comments into a document, and how to color/shade the comment box and text.
3. There was interest in reviewing how to make "decorative" and colored underlines in a document. Everyone offered ideas and suggestions to personalize our example.
4. We discussed the "Random Text" feature sometimes used in Word to quickly populate a page for formatting examples. The standard command =rand() and press ENTER, changes rather dramatically in Word 2007. Instead of offering multiple paragraphs of the same sentence, (The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.), Word 2007 will produce 3 paragraphs of text explaining how to perform basic formatting actions.

Tuesday Repair SIG

Wyn Davies, SIG Leader
Written by **J.C. Deck**

June 3, 2008 Repair SIG — A-frame 1:00 PM

There were 17 members in attendance. One member brought their computer in with a malfunctioning network card. The card had stopped functioning after a severe thunderstorm passed over their house. The network card was replaced and that

solved the member's problem.

Another member had trouble with a corrupted registry. CCleaner was installed on the computer to try and repair the registry. After CCleaner scanned the registry, several issues were found and repaired. It was unclear whether this solved the trouble the owner was having with their computer or not.

Another member had an old Dell laptop that they were trying to load with Windows XP. The problem was that their computer only had a 4Gb hard drive, which was too small for Windows XP. The members of the repair SIG tried to load Xubuntu on the member's computer. However, the installation stalled about 30% completed. It was discovered that the fan on the laptop had failed and the laptop overheated. The member was given a different laptop loaded with Xubuntu.

Saturday Repair

Wyn Davies, SIG Leader
Written by **John Kennedy**

June 21, 2008 Repair SIG — A-frame 1:00 PM

The bi-monthly Repair SIG met on Saturday following the General Meeting. There was a shortage of "repair people" so the night went a little longer than normal. An easy fix was a laptop that had a bad/corrupt AVG installation file. Once we were able to get it removed completely, a new download was done and a successful installation/update was done. A second computer had updates done to it and we ran some of the spyware/malware programs for them. That was also the case for another machine, but it was unable to connect to the Internet so an older version of AdAware was loaded with an old definition file. Since it could not get on-line to get either the upgrade version or updated files, the computer will have to come back so that someone can run a stand-alone virus program as it was felt that the computer had something locking the network connection in Windows (there was no problem running a LiveCD with Ubuntu on it). The final computer was also a very messed up one that couldn't be booted into Windows. Lots of different things were tried, but in the end a copy of Ubuntu was installed so that they could see if they could use that software at home. If it doesn't work out, the person that brought in the computer would qualify for the Mar program and we'll install a new operating system (they did not have any installation CD's with them.)

Linux SIG

Jim Amore SIG Leader Written by **Ken Bixler**

May 4, 2008 Linux SIG — A-frame 1:00 PM

Several non-Linux SIG club members attended to various other projects. One XP system was repaired and advice provided to the owner of another who may attempt repair at home. We moved a portion of the salvaged recycle collection equipment to the basement from upstairs. Two members are continuing organizing and rearranging of A-frame resources. The effort is making more space available and should ease locating disks and cables while troubleshooting.

Digital Imaging SIG

David Clement SIG Leader Written by Ron Sherwood

May 13, 2008 — Digital Imaging SIG Zerger Hall 7:00 PM

“Get the red out,” says the television ad. That’s just what members of the Digital Imaging SIG did at the May meeting. Most photographers who have used flash have seen “red eye” the result of light from a flash bouncing off the subject’s retinas and reflecting back to the camera lens. In animal pictures, eyes sometimes have a white, yellow, or green glint depending upon the animal.

SIG leader David Clement first used the red eye tool from the tools menu of Paint Shop Pro. Using this method provides a quick fix for red eye. It’s just a matter of selecting the tool, setting the diameter of the circle used for correction to the size of the eye, placing the cross hairs in center of the eye and hitting enter.

To get more control over the correction including a color selector, David used the Red Eye Removal tool on the Adjust menu. This tool allows adjustment of the size and shape of the area affected. In addition users can adjust the color, hue, pupil lightness, iris size, glint size and glint lightness. Another selection on the Red Eye Removal allows users to choose between human eyes and animal eyes. The animal eyes option provides various cat and dog eye selections. However, the “animal eye” selection does not provide users with all the options, color for instance, that the “human eye” method offers.

Red eye can result from any camera with a flash positioned close to the lens such as those built-in to cameras. When subjects look into the lens, they’re also looking directly at the flash, which means that their retinas pick up and reflect almost all of the light from the flash.

Photographers can use methods to reduce red eye but these have varying degrees of success.

Indoors, turn on as many room lights as possible. The additional light will cause your subject’s pupils to constrict more so less flash light will be reflected back to the lens. Most cameras adjust flash output based on the ambient light so the brighter the setting, the weaker the flash needs to be.

Indoors during daylight, positioning subjects near and facing a window can help reduce red eye. The daylight coming through the window will have the same effect as turning on additional room lights.

Some cameras have a red-eye reduction mode. The camera fires a pre-flash light in advance of the main flash. The idea is the same as turning on lots of room lights: the eyes constrict in response to the pre-flash so that when the main flash fires, less light is reflected from the retinas.

If prevention doesn’t work, it’s good to know photo editing programs can save the day.

Networking SIG

Kemp O’Dell , SIG Leader
Written by Kemp O’Dell

May 12 and June 9, 2008 Networking SIG — A-frame 7:00

I wanted to give a quick note as to the accomplishments of the Networking SIG this evening. No we did not get the server running.

We helped a member get his router set up with WPA Security and connected his laptop (both Windows XP and MAC OS) to the router.

We replaced the wireless router in the A-Frame with a new one that was donated during the Recycling Event. We connected the new router to my laptop to set up the configuration. We connected to the set up of the old router and went screen by screen to make sure all of the settings were the same. Once the new router was put in place, we verified everything connected as before.

During the set up of the new router, we added a setting in it to allow us to use a (free) service from the website www.dyndns.org. This site allows you to select a website address (a DNS name) and have it link to the router on our local network. We set this up as our service with Time Warner does not guarantee us a static IP (Internet Protocol) Address to be able to access our site. This service will allow users to connect to the server and to Teamspeak that are located at the A-Frame.

After the set up, we then discussed the process the service uses to provide access to our network by using an Internet Naming convention instead of having to know and track down the IP address.

TIP OR TREAT

ATTENDING LCCS MEETINGS IN YOUR HOME

Anyone wanting to join General Meetings in their home will need the Teamspeak Client program installed in your computer, speakers, and a microphone if you wish to talk back. A headset with a microphone is preferable for talkback.

Audio from the room will be sent to all participants and will provide a "talk back" ability from any participant to the room.

The Client is available for Microsoft Windows and Linux operating systems which is available free from www.goteamspeak.com. Once at the website, click on the "Free Download" button, and select the "Teamspeak 2 Client" for your operating system.

If you have any questions, contact Everett McKee at eveready@alltel.net and in the subject line insert LCCS conference.

“YES” Program Meeting May 22, 2008

Written by George Hreha

Attendees: Constance Hawk, Marge King, Joe Tolliver, Bob Porter, Kemp O’Dell, Gina Buckey, Vicky Atkins, John Dovjak, George Hreha

Constance opened the meeting at 1:00 pm with a review of the

past months meeting and seeing if we are moving forward with our portion of the project. John Dovjak stated that Licking County Computer Society has ten computers for the group. The office will get four of the higher speed computers, because of their needs. All of them (fourteen) will have Microsoft XP Professional on them as well as Microsoft Office 2003. There will not be any additional programs installed on them.

As far as printers the LCCS group all recommended that YES look into Laser printer. Constance mentioned that she had a color laser printer that she would donate to the group if we could take a look at it and see if it could be repaired. Kemp said he would take a look at it for them. Gina said she would pick it up and drop it off to Kemp.

The scheduled opening will be August 15, 2008. A target date for everything to be done is August 1st.

Joe Tolliver spoke about the need for a communications closet for security equipment, telephone equipment and networking equipment for the office and classrooms. The group also addressed the need to keep this communication closet under lock and key. Marge King stated she would talk with the Architect.

The next time the group will meet will be June 19th at 1:00 pm. Meeting adjourned at 2:15 pm.

“YES” Program Meeting June 19, 2008

Written by George Hreha

Attendees: Gina Buckey, Constance Hawk, Vicky Atkins, Marge King, Bob Porter, George Hreha, John Kennedy, Mary Frances Rauch

Constance opened the meeting by welcoming all who had attended.

Discussion of whether the high speed wiring, cat 5 cable had been run in the building. A visit by the group to the building after the meeting was very enlightening. The wiring is not done yet due to the contractor not having the suspended ceiling put in place as of yet.

George stated that John Dovjak relayed to him that all the monitors, keyboards and mice are the same color, cleaned and tested. We are still working on the computers installing the Operating Systems.

LCCS will install Microsoft XP Professional and the complete Microsoft Office 2003 for the computers.

It was still agreeable that they place two laser printers outside the computer lab so they can control the possible excessive printing. One of the printers is for the lab and the other is for the office staff.

Alpha Link will have to be told they need to put blocks on the computers so as not to be able to go to unwarranted sites.

Meeting adjourned to construction site.

NEWS FROM APCUG



Written by Robert Vance

The APCUG Advisory Board has decided to give up the annual

conferences in favor of Regional Conferences. The first of these, the 2008 Leadership Development Conference was held the 17th and 18th of May in West Nyack, New York, and sponsored by Region 1 Advisor and President of Valencia Falls Computer Club.

There were also two annual regional conferences, one in Florida presented by the Florida Area Computer User Groups. It was the 14th annual spring conference. Additionally there was the 15th annual South West Computer Conference in San Diego 30 & 31 May and the 1st of June. I had the pleasure of attending this conference. Here is a link to some of the activities at the conference: <http://www.theswcc.org/photonet/misc/misc.html> The South West Computer Conference attendance was in excess of 250 people from at least 8 different states and the District of Columbia.

If you did not get a chance to go to one of the other conferences, you might want to try to make arrangements to attend either the Midwest Regional Conference <http://mwug.apcug.org/> that is going to be held the 19th-21st of September. If you do not make this one there is still the Florida Area Computer User Group Fall Conference. <http://www.facug.org/>

THE LCCS/LCAP TEACHING PROGRAM

Written by George Hreha, Chairman

The Teaching Committee met on Thursday, 5-29-08, with the Maintenance sub-committee and went over some of the hurdles they have had to deal with during their installing of Vista on the class computers. Dave Clement, Dave Rauch and Kevin Clement have amassed many hours in doing this task we have asked of them. We, the Teaching Committee, set a few guidelines for them in order to let them know some of our priorities.

The agreement was temporary and subject to change, but we did agree to the date of July 17th for all changes thus giving the Maintenance group a chance to get the computers ready for classes.

Starting in September the Teaching Committee shared our concerns about having too many programs on the Vista side of the class computers. The only programs so far not to be installed on Vista:

Adobe Flash Player
Ad-Aware
Spybot
Microsoft Office 2003
Word Works

All of the above will be available for use on XP Home Edition.

There will be more updates as these meetings progress. If you have questions about the information above, please contact George Hreha, ghreha@columbus.rr.com or 740-924-1925.

LCCS MEMBERS SPEAK

MAY 2008 RECYCLING EVENT

Written by Jim Amore

We had a great recycling event and it went so smoothly. The recycler was able to pick up all items within a week. We received a check for over two and a half times what we received at our last event. The local donations took care of all the costs and the recycler's check was all profit.

It was so nice to have all the support with 29 volunteers the first day and 26 the second.

We've always had weather problems and this was no different. The first day was great during the day and I tried to leave the canopies up with monitors as anchors, but a severe storm came through during the night and in the morning we found the canopies and monitors wrapped up against the fence. Two old canopies were destroyed. I'll never do that again. You never know with the changing weather in Ohio. The second day was a rainy day but we stayed inside and had the large white canopy over the doorway. We used the pallet jack to take loads back to a sorting area and the forklift took the full Gaylord Boxes back to the storage area. Good job by all volunteers...THANK YOU.

Here are some of the corporate sponsors:

Park National Bank
 Contour Forming
 Holophane
 Rhodes Storage
 Licking County Litter Prevention
 Bayer Corp.
 City Of Newark
 Helmicks Exterminating Co.

GUIDELINES FOR RANDOM BITS ARTICLES

Written by Gina Buckey

1. Submit your articles in Word, Works or the body of an e-mail using Times New Roman 12.
2. Everything should be written as you would like it to be printed in the newsletter.
3. All articles are to be submitted no later than the last day of the month of that meeting. (All July articles are due July 30th and all August articles are due August 31st.) Follow these guidelines for the remainder of 2008.
4. General Meeting articles are to be written by the person presenting the program or they are to have a reliable source write and submit the article following these guidelines for submission. If General Meeting articles are not submitted in a timely manner, Random Bits will not be published for those two months.
5. Because you don't always get a "bounced back" message if your e-mail is not received I am suggesting, before you send the

e-mail, you go to Tools and check "Request Read Receipt" so you know your article was Received and Read by the editor. If you do not receive notification your e-mail was read, please resend.

6. JPG photos are appreciated.

NOTE: Your editor will be away from internet access from July 28 until August 3, 2008.

HELPING MAKE RANDOM BITS A BETTER NEWSLETTER

How YOU could help make Random Bits a better newsletter.

This issue could have had an article along with photos of the Picnic held on June 14, 2008!

Where are the missing SIG articles?

Be creative and write your own article.

Ideas: How I accessed my e-mail when on vacation.
 My Favorite Internet site in Licking County.
 The Freeware I use, and an evaluation.
 A Technical Article

"A" LCCS Web Board/Forum is Back

Written by John Kennedy

LCCS members now have access again to a Web Board/Forum to post questions and comments, and to read important information. To access the new "temporary" board, you will need to go to this address, <http://lccs.jta27.com/> and click on the REGISTER button. Once submitted, one of the admins will review the request to make sure that it's from one of the members (make sure you allow that e-mails can be sent so you can authenticate your registration). Once approved, and authenticated, you will be able to login and begin taking part in many different types of forum topics.

Microsoft SP3— Beware of this Download

Written by John Kennedy

Members are urging people to NOT download and install Microsoft SP3. I'm just reading another article (from Windows Secrets) that says there's still problems. And they have now found out that SP3 causes conflicts with Norton.

APCUG ARTICLES

Written by Gina Buckey

As the editor of your newsletter I receive the APCUG PUSH articles. Access to these is available to you from the "new" web forum under the topic APCUG.

Fiberglas Credit Union

Written by Jim Amore

The Licking County Computer Society has become a member of the Fiberglas Credit Union. <http://www.fiberglas.org/asp/home.asp>
 A credit union is a cooperative, not-for-profit financial institution organized to promote thrift and provide credit to members. Having LCCS as a member, allows any member of LCCS the opportunity to join the credit union.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

From May through June 2008

Ken Bixler	Shirleen Bowser	Wesley Filipow	Robbi Meldahl	Connie and Steve Hawk
Tammie Stemm	Earl W. White, Sr.		*Austin Wilson	John P. Wilson
* Student				

THANK YOU RENEWING MEMBERS

From May through June 2008

Jamison Ables	Ken Baker	Kevin Clement
David Lantz	Richard and Dixie McManus	Nancy Swigart

**LICKING COUNTY COMPUTER SOCIETY 2008
LCCS APPLICATION FORM**

Check one: New Membership Renewal

Please fill out all applicable sections and submit this page to the address shown below.

DATE: _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

STATE & ZIP : _____

PHONE NO.: _____

E-MAIL: _____

- SINGLE \$24
- STUDENT (full-time) \$12
- FAMILY \$36
- SUSTAINING (life)..... \$250

Please note: The Licking County Computer Society does not endorse or condone any use of software that violates the software's license agreement.

- FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**
- Updated database
 - Sent membership card and bylaws
 - Sent new member name to RB

Please send your check with this page to:

**Licking County Computer Society
John Kennedy, Treasurer
78-B South Westmoor Ave.
Newark, Ohio 43055**

Referred by member _____
(optional)



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