

Random Bits

Licking County Computer Society

VOLUME 22

MARCH/APRIL 2009

ISSUE 2



<http://www.lccsohio.org>

<http://lccsohio.org/meeting.htm>

<http://www.apcug.net/>



INDEX

General Meeting Notes - pg 2,3,4

APCUG - pg 4,5

Linux SIG - pg 6,7,8

Repair SIG - pg 9, 10

Member Comments - pg 11

Event Notice - pg 12

Membership Information - pg 13

Officers - pg 14

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Jim Amore

I want to thank everyone for keeping involved with the computer society. We will be hosting the National APCUG convention in August and we will need help with little things during the convention. The one thing we are trying to set up is a spouse's/family activity in our area. Some thoughts are going to Longaberger basket, Newark Earthworks / Great Circle Museum, Ye Olde Mill - Home of Velvet Ice Cream, The Mall, The Works, Heisey Museum, and Granville shops ect. Anyone willing to put together something and be able to set a price so we can offer it to the attendee's families?

On another item for the conference, the Executive Board approved paying \$20.00 of the registration fee to the conference. If you register before May 31st for \$70.00 (early bird) and show John Kennedy your receipt, he will write you a check for \$20.00. Registration is online at: <http://ohiomidwest.apcug.org/registration.htm>



Photo submitted by Robert Vance.
Swan feeding at Yoctangee Park.

Search for Yoctangee Park,
Chillicothe, Ohio 45601 at
<http://maps.google.com/> Flag B
appears to be the correct location.

Chillicothe apparently uses red
light cameras. You can find them
by searching "red light camera
45601". Have a safe trip.

March General Meeting Program

Ron Sherwood and John Kennedy presented another one of their “famous” presentations called “More Free Software You Gotta Have”.

Both Ron and John feel that there are many good software packages available, for free, that will meet your everyday needs. They recommend you give these free programs a try and if your needs aren't met, consider using a non free program which meets your needs.

Ron began demonstrating a program that will capture (take a snapshot of) your computer screen so that you can save and maybe share it with others.

The program name is “GADWIN PrintScreen”

<http://www.gadwin.com/printscreens/>
After you install the program, you press the “print screen” key. Several options are available permitting the capture of; the entire desktop displayed by the monitor, a window on your desktop, or a section of desktop which you “box out” with your mouse. When you have captured the screen it is saved in the clipboard permitting it to be; pasted into another document, saved as a graphic file (like a .jpg) or sent to someone as an attachment.

One great use Ron has found is the ability to record changes to setup or customization screens. When testing new program setup/customizations, he creates a visual record of the previous settings. He is able to easily return to the original or previous setup without relying on incomplete or confusing handwritten notes.

John then shared how to create and use an on-line calendar. He likes to use the calendar provided by Google. <http://www.google.com/calendar/render?hl=en&tab=wc>

Google calendars may be accessed, by password, from any computer on the internet. You may also create multiple calendars and he has 3 different calendars within his original; one for family activities, one for activities with friends, and one for all his LCCS activities. The calendar may be color coordinated, with each group (family, friends, LCCS) displayed on the calendar in a different color. You can set up these calendars for sharing with others. As an example, grandma and grandpa can create a calendar entry and allow their children and grandchildren access to add all their activities. Now the grandparents can see what all is happening in the family.

Continued on next page -->

Another program that Ron finds very helpful is called "TreeSize"

<http://www.jam->

[software.com/freeware/index.shtml](http://www.jam-software.com/freeware/index.shtml)

Whereas in Windows Explorer (not Internet Explorer), you are able to see the size of a hard drive (how much is used and how much is free) or file within a drive; it lacks the ability of telling you anything about the folders.

You would have to click on each folder to find out how big it is and how many files it has. With TreeSize, all that information is shown on the display screen. One good use for this program is when you might be wanting to fill up a CD or DVD with files and folders. You will easily know when you have reached the size limits of those medias.

As we returned to John's computer, he next dealt with PDF (Portable Document Format) files. These are the most common type of files found on the Internet and are very good because just about anyone can open them. All that is needed to open and read a PDF file is a reader, and John recommends "FoxIt Reader"
<http://www.foxitsoftware.com/downloads/>

This program not only lets you "read" the file, it will also let you do some editing of it as well.

If you happen to have a file that you want to share with someone, and you want to be sure they can open it, you'll want to convert it to PDF.

John's preferred program to convert files to pdf is the Open Office suite (Writer, Calc, Impress) as they all come with a PDF converter included.

You open the file in Open Office, click the menu items File>Export as PDF, and then Export (save it) it to the desired location. Now you can attach the file and send via e-mail or copy to portable media.

If you don't have Open Office installed (free),
<http://download.openoffice.org/>
you might want to try another free program to "print" the file to PDF.

The term "print" is misleading because you're not truly printing anything, you are converting and saving a file in pdf format. Installing "PDF Creator"

<http://sourceforge.net/projects/pdfcreator/>

creates a virtual (not real) printer that you can choose, instead of your normal printer, when you go to "File>Print".

Continued on next page -->

Finally, you might want to merge a number of pdf files so you have only one to save/send or you might want to save just a portion of a large PDF file. Here's a program for that task, called "PDF Split and Merge"
http://www.pdfsam.org/?page_id=32
 Make sure you do not get the "alpha" version. You want the first one under Basic (not Enhanced, which has a cost associated with it). After installation, you just follow the instructions.

FOLLOW-UP NOTE: Ron had problems opening some PDF files with this program. They appeared to be "locked" and couldn't be merged, so he searched for another free program. He found
[\(http://www.adolix.com/split-merge-pdf/\)](http://www.adolix.com/split-merge-pdf/)
 didn't have the problem. It is recommended that you give this one a try.

The final program that Ron demonstrated dealt with finding duplicate image files on your computer. There are many LCCS members who take pictures, edit them and create improved versions or somehow end up copying/downloading the same pictures to different locations. The program "VisiPics"
<http://www.visipics.info/index.php?title=Download>
 searches your folders (you tell it where to look) listing the pictures found which match perfectly or seem to be a very close match. It evaluates the information in the image file instead of the file name. When finished, it allows you to mark the image(s) you want to keep and those you want to remove. Very helpful if you have pictures/images stored in several locations.

News from APCUG



AUGUST APCUG NEWS

Robert Vance has provided a tentative schedule of events for the August APCUG (Association of Personal Computer Users Group) meeting. The size and shape requires a landscape layout on the next page. Bob has worked many hours to pull this together and it looks to be a very nice payoff for us.

The meeting should be a good opportunity for us to get first hand technical information about personal computers. Typically, there are software handouts in addition to door prizes and other swag.



Friday – 28 August 2009
 4:00pm – 6:00pm
 7:00pm until ?
 Saturday – 29 August 2009

7:00am – 9:00am

9:00am – 10:15am

10:30pm – 11:45

11:45am – 2:00pm

2:00pm – 3:15 pm

3:30pm – 4:45pm

5:00pm – 7:00pm

7:00pm – 10:00am

Sunday – 30 August 2009

7:00am – 9:00am

9:00am – 10:15

10:30pm – 11:45

11:45am – 2:00pm

2:15pm – 4:00pm

Conference Agenda

Registration
 Meet and greet at the Water Park Pizza Pavilion

Breakfast and Guest Vendor Speaker Presentation

Tec General Workshop Sessions 1- 3 events

Tec General Workshop Sessions 1- 3 events

Lunch and Guest Vendor Speaker Presentation

Tec General Workshop Sessions 1- 3 events

Tec General Workshop Sessions 1- 3 events

Dinner and Guest Vendor Speaker Presentation

Vendor Fair

Breakfast and Guest Vendor Speaker Presentation
 Door Prize Raffle Drawing

Repeat Most Popular Workshop Sessions 1-3

Lunch at Local restaurants .04 mile or less & on site

User Group and Vendor Panel Discussions

Track 1
 Technology

Track 2
 User Group Info

Track 3
 IT Professional

Corp Sponsors Magix ***Ai Squared***

Genealogy Workshop Remote Presentation Vendor Presentation

Cyber Security Live Meeting Win/Linux Dual Boot

Corp Sponsors Corel

Identity Theft Fund Raising Running 3 OS's on Mac

PD Particles Growing Membership V Machines and History

Corp Sponsors ***Windows 7 Demo***

Corp Sponsors ***Steganos***

Digital Photography Gene Barlow Accronis Hard Disk Data Destruction

Main Room

Don Singleton and Robert L. Vance
Don Tillman
Jay Ferron
Fon Sherwood
Raynola St.Cair
Unscheduled Presenter
Unscheduled Presenter
Unscheduled Presenter
Unscheduled Presenter
Unscheduled Presenter
Unscheduled Presenter
Unscheduled Presenter
Unscheduled Presenter
Unscheduled Presenter Unscheduled workshop Open
Waiting on Approval and Agreement
Robert L. Vance and Vendor Remote Presentation

Conference information:

- <http://ohiomidwest.apcug.org/>
- <http://ohiomidwest.apcug.org/registration.htm>
- <http://www.cherryvalleylodge.com/>

Linux SIG – March 15th

For this meeting, we had a presentation by Ken Bixler. He demonstrated the use of his Linux computer to manage electrical devices around his home. A master controller is plugged into the electrical system. The computer is connected to the controller via an ethernet cable allowing unattended cycling of devices. Wireless remotes can override commands as needed.

Different types of modules attach to receptacles, screw into light sockets or are installed in place of standard switches and receptacles. Light bulbs can be screwed into a plug that screws into the socket, or lamps can be plugged into receptacles that plug into the wall (or anything else that can be plugged in). Some of the devices operate wirelessly with the use of remote controls. Each unit is coded with an address, which may or may not be the same as others. If you want the porch and garage lights to come on and off together, you use a common address. These “hardware” devices may be ordered from X10.com or several other sources.

Computer software (such as “heyu”) is configured to turn on/off each of the different devices according to their coding.

Differing from some “old fashion” timers that are used to turn devices on and off once (or maybe twice) a day, the computer program can be set up to turn things on and off any number of times per day. The controller can be set up to operate devices at different times on different days of the week and any day up to a year in advance. Ken explained that it's possible to set things up so that if the doorbell rings, a recording of a dog barking can be heard. Another function allows a video camera to activate on motion or a video camera may be accessed and activated via the computer and Internet to see what's going on inside or outside.

You have to purchase the hardware, but the software that makes this all work is, as always with Linux, free.

We finished up the SIG meeting discussing a few terminal commands. Members are trying to learn more about working within the Linux terminal using text commands. It has been asserted that having a good understanding of commands allows you to perform tasks in Linux faster than you could using the mouse and all the menu systems.

Linux SIG – April 5th

Today's SIG began with a discussion of software installation. One way to install software is through the included “Synaptic Package Manager” and another is via

Applications>Add/Remove (both list the certified software in repositories for Debian based Linux). There may come a time when you find a piece of software that hasn't yet been added to the repository. You then download the program and install it yourself.

The easiest type of file for Ubuntu users is the .deb (Debian) extension, as that is the framework for Ubuntu.

When you double click this type of file, Ubuntu knows exactly what to do and performs the installation automatically. A second type of file (.rpm) that is used by a number of different versions of Linux, such as Suse, RedHat, Puppy, etc has the .RPM extension. This is a little different, requiring you to run the Yum program or run a simple conversion command in the terminal.

Occasionally you find a program that you want to use which has not been “packaged” to automatically install.

These program files may have the .tar.gz or .bz extension. If so, it is a compressed (zip) file that first has to be decompressed (unzipped), then compiled.

Compiling uses a terminal command sequence to execute, which was the second part of today's SIG, learning more terminal commands.

For those who are intimidated by the command line, compiling might be too much “programming” and you might be better off waiting for the “package” to be added to the list Synaptic Package Manager. After packaging it becomes just a few clicks of the mouse – no need to use terminal commands. But for some it would result in the satisfaction of having built a piece of software from the ground up. Be aware that software will never be added to repository for various reasons.

Editor's note: My wife has yet to find a program need which is not covered by repository. Most common Windows programs have complimentary Linux programs available.

Linux SIG April 5th

Robert Vance continues to modify obsolete “Macs” to be Ubuntu Linux machines for distribution. They are the colorful macs with everything built into the monitor case. The hard drive, video card and all input/output ports are built in. The keyboard and mouse being the only thing you need attached to the monitor.

Two other members explored the world of the command line on a Ubuntu operating system. You are able to type commands directly into the system for control and programming. A similar function exists in Window as the “Run Command” window, but Linux permits much more control.

For example: You are working on a family tree project, you really enjoy it and you are losing track of time.

Someone important to you is expecting you to show up at Miller's for super and **THEY ARE BUYING!**

In windows you have to open an application, type in several entries, then save everything so a message will pop up at an appropriate time.

In Linux I click on the Terminal icon and type “at -f 'get up' HH:MM.

At the appointed time the file “get up” will speak the phrase “Get up Ken.”

In fairness I created the “get up” file using "espeak" but that was one time, a year ago. If you like, you can paste entire pages of print into the single quotes and the page will be read back to you. Many options are available for voice and gender.

Want to know how many teaspoons are in a barrel? Type “units” then enter “tsp”, “barrel” and it displays 3.1001984e-05, which is 310,019.84 teaspoons in a barrel. Need the square root of 67389? Type bc, sqrt(67389), hit the enter key and 259 pops out. On my computer you can type “vlc Music/e_rigby.mpg” and Elenore Rigby plays, as will any song title from my playlist when you enter the file name.

Ken Bixler updated a computer to Ubuntu 9.10 in preparation for installing Virtual Box and several other Linux distributions. Virtual Box allows a second complete computer to exist electronically inside your primary operating system. With Virtual Box or VMWare, Windows XP can have Linux running "inside XP" simultaneously, only a couple of keystrokes away. If you want to explore Linux without giving up Windows you'll have to come to a meeting to see how it's done. Did we mention that Linux is FREE...John loves that.

Repair SIG – April 7th

You could tell that it was spring as we had a number of computers that must have come out of hibernation.

In fact we probably had a record number of units brought in. The only difficulty was the ratio (3:1) of problem computers to repair people.

It became a very long night and not everyone went away with a repaired computer. In fact, one repair person planned to return Saturday to complete his last project and another repair person took a computer home to finish, as it was going on 11:00 p.m. Several of the computer problems were not a quick fix. One of our biggest problems involved missing drivers which weren't available on disk. Of course, it was frequently the drivers that permit Internet access that were missing.

Obtaining network drivers meant we had to go to one of the A-Frame computers that was on-line, find the driver we needed, download it to a USB thumb drive, and install it on the broken computer. When the defective computer could finally access the Internet, we were able to directly download the additional drivers for sound, video or other devices.

A few of our “problems” included:

-A computer which couldn't access the internet through the dial up modem, but could access the Internet through the network card. The owner has a dial-up service at home, so we had to set the dial up modem.

-Another was a laptop that previously had a Linux OS installed, but because it couldn't play some Windows games the owner tried to reinstall Windows and failed. Having misplaced their installation code our only option was to reinstall XP using our MARS software. We then faced a problem wireless connection, which we were not able to repair because windows couldn't detect the wireless modem card.

-One other computer required a replacement hard drive and reinstallation of the OS.

A special thanks goes out to the “overtime” repair guys for staying the extra hours or even beyond.

Repair SIG – April 26th

Jim Amore

A MAR (Microsoft Authorized Refurbisher) computer owner complained about poor sound output.

I checked the motherboard and finding no damage, located the onboard sound output jack. Next, I considered trying to find updated drivers. That sounded like too much work, so I just installed a different sound card. It was a Sound Blaster ISA card we had obtained at one of the recycling events. Opening the Device Manager, intending to disable the old sound card, I found 7 sound related items. Not being sure which item to disable, I installed the new software along side the 7 other versions. XP found and installed all the drivers so I connected the internal cables for the CD-ROM's and speakers to the new card. When I tried a sound test nothing happened.

As an afterthought, I tried the external speakers by connecting to the old sound output jacks, which worked great. Even the CD-ROM's that are hooked up to the new card sounded great. So, I put tape over the new card output jacks and told the owner it was fixed. Sometimes you just stumble on a repair.

I have another repair project I'm working on. A friend bought a computer at Best Buy, who backed up her utilities, but not the operating system. The hard drive eventually crashed, so a new hard drive was installed. She put a new installation of Vista on the drive but didn't activate VISTA before the software timed out and quit working. She has ordered a restore CD (\$20) for her system but is concerned that she'll lose her documents and pictures when VISTA is restored. The new hard drive is 320 GB and SATA which made backing it up a problem because we don't have equipment new enough to handle SATA at the a-frame. I decided to try a Ubuntu live CD to see what was on the hard drive and possibly back up files through linux. Sure enough, I was able to see all her files and pictures.

The next problem was finding a file save location. I was able to use the Windows Home Server to save some files but the drive filled up quickly, unable to complete a full back up of her system. I plan to purchase an external USB backup drive for adding disk memory to the server. The external drive will have enough storage space to finish saving the files, which will then be restored after her computer has VISTA reinstalled.

Club member/Officer is a celebrity
Quoted from the Newark Advocate

Jeffrey "J.C." Deck will do something this spring that doesn't happen often.

He'll receive his high school diploma in May, then get his associate degree from Central Ohio Technical College in June.

Deck, 18, was homeschooled through eighth grade, then enrolled in Southwest Licking Local Schools' Digital Academy at 15 so he could take Post Secondary Enrollment Option classes at COTC, where he majored in electronic engineering technology.

"He's the first I've had who's done what he's done," assistant professor Richard Romei said. "He was able to deal with the fact that there was a maturity (he needed to have). After the first quarter, he was just another student."

Tabbed Browsing & Toolbar Removal Mary Frances Rauch

Mary Francis suggests tabbed browsing for increased productivity and many others agree with her. She suggests <http://www.komando.com/> as a reference. I believe you must join the komando website to view the material, which is copyrighted. Current information for Firefox tabbed browsing may be found here: http://kb.mozillazine.org/Category:Tabbed_browsing Although the documents reference Firefox, the information is relevant to most other browsers.

Mary Francis has also fielded questions about the toolbars at the top of the browser page. Specifically, the questions are in regard to removal of the toolbars. Removal isn't something easily done but hiding is effective. Go to the menu items View>Toolbars and check/uncheck the bars as desired. A check mark means the bar will be displayed.

!!!POT LUCK PICNIC!!!
JUNE 20th

On June 20th we will have a pot luck picnic at the A-frame on Cherry Valley Rd. We will begin the afternoon with our normal repair SIG at 1:00pm. When finished, probably around 4:00pm, we'll bask in the sun before the picnic at 6:00pm. Dinner will be hamburgers, hot dogs, brats and chicken breast. The meat, buns and pop will be provided. Please bring lawn chairs and/or food to share.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

January through February, 2009

Nancy Allee
Bonita Brands "Bonnie"
William Buxton
Mary L. Craig
Bobbie Dornhecker

Fred Davis
Ronna Eagle
Fatina Evans
James A. Holliday
Kristopher Kasson

Eydie Keim
Timothy A. Ward
William Wheeler
Shane Wilson

RENEWING MEMBERS

January through February, 2009

Carl E. Bratfisch
Earl A. Browning
Charles Clarke
John & Bonnie Daley
Catherine & Wayne

Eddleblute
Lewis Hullingar
John Kennedy
John Koenig
Idabell Koontz

Baxter McCanna
Dick Riley
Ron Sherwood
George Willey
Harold Williamson

Current members will receive a postal mail notice with a prorated dues billing. This is an effort to get everyone on a common due date. A complete explanation may be found online in the Forum.



Licking County Computer Society, Inc.
PO Box 612
Newark, OH 43058-0612

LICKING COUNTY COMPUTER SOCIETY 2009

President:

Jim Amore 404-3963 President@lccsohio.org

Vice-president:

Kemp O'Dell 348-0049 Vicepresident@lccsohio.org

Secretary:

J. C. Deck unlisted Secretary@lccsohio.org

Treasurer:

John Kennedy 348-5229 Treasurer@lccsohio.org

Trustees:

Mary Frances Rauch 522-4710 Trustees@lccsohio.org

George Hreha 740-924-1925 Trustees@lccsohio.org

Vicky Atkins 349-8048 Trustees@lccsohio.org

Past President:

Don Furnish 927-9753 DonlFurnish@copper.net

Newsletter Editor:

Ken Bixler 403-1229 newsletter@lccsohio.org

APCUG Representative:

Robert L. Vance 779-3218 vanleer@horizonview.net

Agent:

David Bibler 345-3492 Agent@lccsohio.org

Information Director:

Vicky Atkins 349-8048 vmatkins@alink.com

Teaching Program Chairman:

George Hreha 740-924-1925 ghreha@columbus.rr.com

Meeting Programs Director:

Kemp O'Dell 348-0049 Vicepresident@lccsohio.org

Dave DeRolf dderolph@embarqmail.com

Membership Chairman:

Vicky Atkins 349-8048 vmatkins@alink.com

LCCS/LCAP Seniors Classes:

Dave Bibler 345-3492 lcap@lcap.org

Recycling Events Chair:

Jim Amore 404-396 President@lccsohio.org

Refurbish and Recycle Chairman:

Vacant

Webmaster:

Jon Luzio 587-4632 Webmaster@lccsohio.org

Digital Imaging SIG:

Dave Clement unlisted dvclementusa@yahoo.com

Linux SIG:

Jim Amore 404-3963 President@lccsohio.org

MS Works/Word SIG:

Mary Frances Rauch 522-4710 rauchhouse@alink.com

Networking SIG:

Kemp O'Dell 348 0049 kemp@odellhome.com

Novice SIG:

George Willey 788-8484 gwilley@alink.com

Repair SIG:

Wyn Davies 366-6314 aeolus@windstream.net

WebSIG:

Kevin Clement 587-1511 clementk777@gmail.com