

Q BITS

Quad-Cities Computer Society
Newsletter for November 2007
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November 14, 2007
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Staples
staples.com
Electronic Horizons

The Quad Cities Computer Society gratefully acknowledges



<http://www.soloconnect.com>

for providing the site for our Web Page at
<http://www.qcs.org>

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The QCS is a member of



Monthly meetings are open to the general public.

QCS Review **Computer Maintenance** **You Can Do**

presented by Howard Press
Howard Press Associates
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hjpress@hjpress.com
by Joe Durham

Howard Press has been serving the community for over 20 years with computer repair and maintenance. He mentioned that it is an unfortunate feature of computer life that your computer will fail you somewhere along the line. By observing a few common sense tips, your computer use can be more enjoyable and rewarding.

A built in Windows utility named MSCONFIG is a important part in helping your system operate more smoothly and faster, Howard said. Go to START > RUN > and then enter the word msconfig. In the msconfig window click the STARTUP tab. This will list the number of programs that are running when your machine begins. He said that XP doesn't need to have any of these running. Unchecking each box will prevent it from starting. The only program that you should have checked at start is your antivirus. Howard recommended AVG for ease of use, low computer overhead, and its thorough scanning methods. Often times these programs are installed when you purchase new software and hardware. Do not accept the default settings as they appear on the screen. Examine each setup menu closely to make sure you wish the item on your task bar or desktop.

Hp printer software is a good example. The default settings place items on the taskbar and initiate online actions. These take up memory and processing time. Howard observed that you can start the printer manually from the program menu when you need it. It only delays operations a few seconds. By doing so you reclaim processing time.

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Would You Like to receive your *QBITS* via email?

The *QBITS* can now be produced in Acrobat PDF format and sent to you email box. If you desire to have the newsletter sent to you electronically instead of by US Mail, let

Patty Lowry,
QBITS co-editor know
(563-332-8679)
heidiho@revealed.net.

The QCS will then arrange to email your next issue to you.



Moving? Send an address change to:
felspaw@sbcglobal.net

QBITS

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The Quad-Cities Computer Society or QCS is an Iowa nonprofit organization for charitable, scientific, and educational purposes primarily to educate the public concerning the advantages and disadvantages of microcomputers and to publish a newsletter for distribution to members, area libraries and educational institutions. The QCS is recognized as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable and educational organization by the IRS.

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Another resource hog is scanning software that is running at startup. It is better to run this software when necessary, manually.

Also carefully research trial or free software offered on the internet. Many of these packages contain hidden data mining attributes that you would not want on your computer nor do you want to permit.

Backing up your data regularly is another essential feature to computer health. If your data size is small, use the Windows Explorer to copy it to a CD or DVD or external hard drive. Otherwise go to **download.com** and search for Backup utilities. Try out a few and find one that works best for you needs for larger data backups.

With a data backup you can easily format your hard drive and restore the operating system and applications. He recommended that you do so once or twice a year. The operating system eventually slows down by use. A fresh install will bring zip back into you computers. It is better to treat your back up needs this way than use System Restore. Hackers have exploited the vulnerabilities of this program and you can simply backup the virus by doing so. Turn off the System Restore if it is on by default.

Hardware tips can keep you system working well also. Go to your nearest hardware or electronics store and use a can of air to clean the dust out of your machine a couple of times a year. Make sure your machine is unplugged and turned off. Open the case and blow the dust out of the power supply from the inside out. Use the can to blow out the dust elsewhere. Do not shake the air can, this will mix the propellant and the compressed air. You don't want to spray the propellant in your machine.

The air can is useful on laptops also. There are cooling openings that will allow air to be blown through.

If your machine has been acting up lately, not booting or doing so

intermittently, you can check to see if your mother board is functioning. Open up the case and look at the capacitors (small cylinders) on the board. They have aluminum tops. These should be flat. If they are bulging, replace the motherboard. Motherboards can be purchase inexpensively.

Your hard drive performance can be improved by going to MY COMPUTER. Locate a hard drive icon and right click on it. Go to PROPERTIES > TOOLS. Click both check boxes in the window before invoking the program: Fix file system errors and Attempt recovery of bad sectors. Howard noted that this method often corrected those machines that were booting over and over again.

For those who have purchased LCD screens or have laptops, a damp cloth with warm water is a safe and useful way to clean the dirt and grime that build up. Cleaners with solvents are not advisable.

Using several or all of these tips will help to make your computer run well for many years to come. The QCS would like thank Howard for his insight into this important feature of computing. Gordon Grimes was the lucky recipient of our grand prize: a copy of Microsoft's Streets & Trip 2007 software.

QCS Member Raffle

Robert Taylor was not present this month. Next month's QCS member raffle will be \$20!

QCS members, you too can win by attending the main meeting each month!

From The DealsGuy

by Bob (The Cheapskate) Click Greater Orlando Computer Users Group

***Lets Look At The Pluses!**

I reviewed Microsoft Money a few years ago and started actually

using it when my favorite money program, "Managing Your Money," turned to providing software for banks. I have differences with some Microsoft policies, such as Genuine Advantage, and their product activation process, but when it comes to MS Money; that tech support is the best in the business. Each version I have used came with three years of support via an 800 number. They try hard to answer your questions and do not speak broken English. So far, I've talked to tech support in Newfoundland three times, and they have resolved my questions, followed by an e-mail thanking me for using MS Money and saying that if the issue was still not resolved, they are there to clear it up. The phone waiting time has never been long. What a great value for a product that costs so little. There are things I would like to see improved; such as when I back it up before closing the program, it doesn't limit the number of backups on my external USB flash drive, but that's a minor problem.

***Emergency ID And Medical Information**

What if you were traveling and became involved in an accident leaving you incapacitated! How would an ambulance medic and ER facility know how to correctly treat you if your medical condition was special, or you had preferences? In my case, I'm diabetic and now take Coumadin (blood thinner) so it would be important for the medic to know that. Identification Devices L.L.C. offers a compact USB Flash drive to hold vital information that could help a medic make the right decisions. Wear it around your neck, or even put it on your key chain so a medic can see it (the Medical logo is on one side) when examining you, and can then plug it into the USB port on their laptop. Instantly, it gives the default choice to open your information screen. That instantly brings to their computer screen a form with your

necessary medical and other information, along with your picture. You simply type in all the necessary information yourself, no complicated instruction to follow, just fill in the labeled blanks.

The company sent me one to try and I was impressed with how easy it was to use and type in the necessary data. The data includes your personal information with emergency phone numbers for whomever you designate, and your doctors, drugs, important medical warnings (if necessary), your insurance companies and also your attorney information. There is a spot for your picture in the upper corner, and even a way to load PDF files for important documents such as a living will, power of attorney, your own personal instructions and other important documents if you want them there. I was impressed that most of the blanks in the form could be expanded to a larger space by double-clicking them to insert additional information, such as additional doctors, medications and other vital information. It can be password protected if you desire, but I wouldn't want that. The MSRP is \$24.95 + \$4.95 S & H. You can order it on their Web site <http://www.identificationdevices.net> using your credit card. I think this product is a great value.

Be Aware

If you are interested in either of the products below, be sure to do your homework and check their Web site for further information because I edited a lot of information out of them to make them fit. I have not tried either product.

Hope My Wife Doesn't Use This Remote Control Stuff On Me!

Anyplace Control Software released version 4.0 of Anyplace Control, an acknowledged remote monitoring solution. The new version extends the frontiers of remote control and now can bypass routers and firewalls, as well as support

PCs with dynamic IPs.

Anyplace Control displays the desktop of the remote computer, letting you use your own keyboard and mouse to control it remotely. At any point in time, and to any place in the world that has Internet connection, you can monitor your PC and get data transferred to or from it. The program can be used in a LAN, and it doesn't need a Web connection. Anyplace Control can connect to multiple computers at a time. With Anyplace Control, you will get the smoothest remote connection experience along with full control over the system without an external static IP address. Another good thing is that the program can automatically bypass routers and firewalls that lie between the remote computer and your machine.

You no longer need to spend time sending files via e-mail because it's easier to transfer them directly. The program can transfer any kind of data, and you can be sure that the information you send will be delivered immediately with no response delay. Home users can use the program to get access to their office computers and work from home, or check their own PC while away from home.

Anyplace Control runs under all versions of Microsoft Windows and costs \$22 (USD) for a single-user license. Licensed customers are entitled to free technical support and upgrades. More information on Anyplace Control, as well as a free trial copy is available free of charge from <http://www.anyplace-control.com>.

Direct download link:

<http://www.anyplacecontrol.com/anyplacecontrol/data/AnyplaceControlInstall.exe> (2.7 Mb)

A Freebie For Managing Your Downloads

[FreeDownloadManager.org](http://www.FreeDownloadManager.org) announced the release of a new version of their Free Download Manager. The list of FDM features

—continued on next page—

includes accelerating downloads up to 600%, resuming broken downloads, simultaneous downloading from several mirrors, [http/https/ftp/bittorrent](http://https/ftp/bittorrent) support, flash video downloads support, video conversion and more. FDM 2.5 is released under the GPL license and is now open-source software.

The new version of Free Download Manager stands out due to its expanded possibilities. Now, FDM works as an upload manager as well, making it easy to share files with other people. FDM now allows downloading files using Bittorrent protocol, as well as downloading video from video sites, such as YouTube, Google Video, MySpace videos, etc. The video can be saved in native .flv format or converted to one of more of the popular video formats. The FDM Team has also added more flexibility to the software providing an opportunity to control FDM remotely, via the Internet. Another new feature, portable mode, will be especially appreciated by users who want to always have the program close at hand. They can easily create FDM portable version and enjoy the software on every computer without another installation.

For more information on FDM, visit the product web site:

www.freedownloadmanager.org

Download link:
www.freedownloadmanager.org/fdminst.exe

This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers or freebies I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of any products, no matter how enthused I might sound. Bob (The Cheapskate) Click bob-click@bellsouth.net. Visit my Web site at <http://www.dealsguy.com>.

JKDefrag

<http://www.kessels.com/>

[JkDefrag/](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/JkDefrag)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/JkDefrag)

[wiki/JkDefrag](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/JkDefrag)

JkDefrag classifies files into 3 zones:

- * Directories and system files (zone 1);
- * Regular files (zone 2); and
- * Large files referred to as "space hogs" in the documentation (zone 3).

Files outside their zone are moved to their zone. Directories are perhaps the most accessed data on disk, so zone 1 is placed at the beginning of the drive. After the directories comes a free space area, then zone 2 with regular files, another free area, and then zone 3 with "space hogs", which are large files, archives, recycle bin contents, service pack files, and other infrequently accessed data.[3]

The defragger has several identifying characteristics:

- * Low overhead: it does not place an undue burden on the system;
- * Fully automated operation: there are no interactive buttons or menus;
- * Command line interface (for scheduled defragmentation, or for use with administrator scripts);
- * Screensaver defragmentation, with the option to run another screen saver when done;
- * Complete source code (Microsoft Visual C++ 2005) available for download;
- * A DLL library (for use in programming) licensed using the LGPL; and
- * Support for 64 bit versions of Windows XP and Vista.

It works on Windows NT/2000/XP/2003/Vista Operating Systems, supporting both FAT and NTFS filesystems, and uses the Windows defragmentation API. Since the program is free, support is provided through web-based forums.

Hasta la Vista - Gadgets and the Windows Sidebar

by Lee Reynolds, Member
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Obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

I'm told the literal meaning of "hasta la vista" in Spanish is "until the seeing." Or maybe a more adequate translation is "see you later." But in this column, I'm using that phrase to invite you to take a look at Microsoft's latest version of Windows: Vista.

Devotees of the Apple Mac have for some time had available, in their OS X Tiger operating system, something called Dashboard, which allows them to have what are called Widgets (mini-applications that provide a very simple, tightly focused interface for common tasks) available for instant use. Now Windows Vista introduces something similar in its Windows Sidebar. This is a narrow strip of "Gadgets" that can be parked along either the right or the left side of your Desktop. You can also drag the Gadgets off the Sidebar and place them somewhere on the Desktop. You can configure the Sidebar to start either every time when Windows starts, or only when you want it to appear. It is available on the Start Menu under All Programs -> Accessories -> Windows Sidebar.

There are a number of ways you can configure the Sidebar after you right click it and select Properties from the context menu. For example, you can set it so that Sidebar is always on top of other windows; you can hide or unhide it from view (unhide it by right clicking the small Sidebar icon in the Notification Area of the Taskbar and select Open); if you have multiple monitors connected to your pc, then you

can configure which one the Sidebar is displayed on. You can add and remove Gadgets from the Sidebar (perhaps the easiest way is to right click the small plus (+) sign above the Gadgets and select Add Gadgets from the context menu), and detach them from or reattach them to the Sidebar. You can have multiple copies of the same Gadget open in the Sidebar if you want (which might be convenient for clocks or weather gadgets, for example), and you can drag them to different positions up and down in the Sidebar.

The built-in Gadgets for Windows Vista include: an onscreen Calendar, a clock that can show the time in any time zone or city, a Gadget-based version of your email Windows Contacts, a CPU meter which consists of two gauges that show the load on your computer's microprocessor and RAM, a simple currency converter, a notepad for jotting down reminders, a photo slideshow, a weather Gadget, and others. In addition, there are dozens of other Gadgets you can choose from if you aim your web browser at:

<http://microsoftgadgets.com/>

You can even design your own Gadgets and submit them to Microsoft at one of the links on the above page.

With each Gadget, you can choose from a right click menu which allows you to close the Gadget or adjust the opacity of the display, among other options. When you move your mouse over a Gadget, you will see a little "X" icon and one that looks like the head of a wrench. The X icon can be used to close the Gadget, while the wrench icon accesses that Gadget's property page. With the right click menu of the Windows Sidebar icon in the Notification Area, you can choose to Open the Sidebar if it has been closed, Move Gadgets to the Front, access the Property page for the Sidebar, Add Gadgets, get Help, or Exit the entire Sidebar application.

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The Phenomenon of Facebook Redefining Social Networking

By Courtney Jewett, a member of the Alamo PC Organization, Texas

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Courtney_Jewett@baylor.edu

Obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

What do Hillary Clinton, Tony the Tiger, and millions of college students have in common? They all have profiles on the contemporary social network known as Facebook.

As a college student, and avid Facebooker, I intend to share my knowledge and experiences with the site in order to uncover the reasons behind Facebook's widespread success.

As **Facebook.com** explains, the purpose of this "social utility" is to keep friends connected and help people network in a safe online environment.

Mark Zuckerberg, an extremely intelligent student of Harvard University, created Facebook three years ago. At the age of 19, Mark and his college friends launched the site, which began as a place to connect Harvard students.

Today, Facebook has connections to universities across the globe, with over 25 million registered users. If you have a high school or college age child, chances are they're very familiar with this popular site.

Once a fixation only among college students, Facebook is quickly expanding in the hope of connecting a diversity of users. Anyone with a valid e-mail address can reg-

ister and create a free Facebook profile.

The site is successful because it is changing the ways in which the world can communicate.

Through Facebook, users create a profile where they can express their interests, activities, favorite movies, shows, books, quotes, and basic contact information. They can search for their friends and co-workers, and then click to add them as their 'Facebook friend'.

There are countless ways to participate on Facebook, such as uploading pictures, 'tagging' or identifying 'facebook friends' that appear in your pics, sending messages, writing on friends' walls, customizing your profile, writing notes to publish on Facebook, and updating your status to allow your friends to know exactly what you're up to at any given time.

With all of these opportunities to connect, it's no wonder people (especially students) are spending hours on this site, and visiting it repeatedly in order to stay updated with what's happening in the lives of their Facebook friends.

Through Facebook, I am connected with 73 different networks, and hundreds of people, from the U.S to Australia. I can see what my friends who are currently studying abroad are up to, and view pictures of their adventures.

Some of my favorite professors are now Facebook users. The site is an excellent tool for professors to get to know their students on a more personal level. It's not uncommon for students to ask academic questions through Facebook messaging instead of e-mail, or to write friendly comments on their professor's wall.

Employers are also discovering the benefits of Facebook, and can search for the profiles of potential employees. Therefore, it's smart to keep a clean profile, and to be aware of who you are associating with through the site. Many sororities, fraternities, and campus

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organizations monitor the profiles of their members and discourage pictures of drinking, and inappropriate behavior.

Facebook's privacy settings and methods of connectivity separate it from Myspace, and all other internet social networks. Myspace, which has similar features to Facebook, emphasizes individuality and expression through more personalized profiles. Facebook focuses on simple, safe connectivity.

Facebook corresponds more with real life than Myspace, as users typically add people they already know as their 'Facebook friends'. Myspace, users are often contacted by random locals.

In upcoming articles, I'd like to further examine the role Facebook plays in the life of the student, as well as the advantages (and maybe one or two disadvantages) of the site. Lastly, we'll uncover how Facebook is affecting the dating world, and improving the love lives of college students.

Courtney Jewett is a Senior English major at Baylor University, and is pursuing a career in Journalism. This article has been provided to APCUG by the author solely for publication by APCUG member groups. All other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).

Tidbits

Want to check out an interesting web site. Go to scug.org, the website for the Sandwich Computer User Group. When one thinks of sandwich it is associated with food. The Sandwich website does have a tab that leads you to all kinds of recipes. You might also want to click the "Interesting Link" tab.

Are you addicted to jigsaw puzzles? Check out www.shockwave.com/gamelandin g/jigsawpuzzles.jsp and click on the "Play Online" button. Every day there is a different puzzle. Some are the standard puzzle, some have pieces that change color when con-

nected, and some are odd shaped. You can chose the number of pieces you want to work with. If you would rather play Mahjong, the website to go to is

www.shockwave.com/gamelandin g/daily mahjong.jsp.

Most of us have children or grandchildren. A good site to entertain them is the Crayola website, www.crayola.com. The crayola site had several interesting activities. As you would expect, there are coloring pages to print. Also you will find craft ideas, games & fun, and seasonal activities for children. Designed especially for toddlers is the "Crayola Beginnings". Next time the children are bored, explore this site with them.

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Be sure to check your mailing label for your member expiration date.

QCS Recycles!

Save your empty ink jet and laser toner cartridges and bring them to the General Meetings. The QCS will receive a refund check for returned cartridges. Another plus, this will keep them out of landfills

The QCS is also recycling your old CD's. Please bring your extra CD's to the Main Meeting. Thanks.!

QCS Meeting Dates

Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Fri	Sat
		November 2007		1 Nov	2 Nov	3 Nov
						
4 Nov	5 Nov 7:00 PM New! Microsoft Office SIG Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcdowell@mchsi.com	6 Nov	7 Nov 5:30 PM QCS Board Meeting Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcdowell@mchsi.com	8 Nov	9 Nov	10 Nov
11 Nov	12 Nov 7:00 PM Internet SIG Ted Huberts 309-792-9470 slowhand54@sbcglobal.net	13 Nov	14 Nov 5:45 PM Beginners SIG * 7:00 PM Staples Staples.com Electronic Horizons	15 Nov	16 Nov	17 Nov
18 Nov	19 Nov 7:00 PM Genealogy SIG Len Stevens 563-359-9672 judylenstevens@msn.com	20 Nov	21 Nov 7:00 PM Digital Media SIG Norm Dunlap 309-798-2304 normdun@revealed.net	22 Nov 	23 Nov	24 Nov
25 Nov	26 Nov 7:00 PM Windows SIG Larry Stone 309-787-5574 lstone521@mchsi.com	27 Nov	28 Nov	29 Nov	30 Nov	1 Dec
2 Dec	3 Dec 7:00 PM New! Microsoft Office SIG Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcdowell@mchsi.com	4 Dec December 2007	5 Dec 	6 Dec	7 Dec	8 Dec
						

***Beginner's SIG meets at Tri-City
Jewish Center
before the QCS program
Jim Kristan
309-755-8277
jimkris@gmail.com**

**ALL QCS MEETINGS NOW HELD AT
TRI-CITY JEWISH CENTER
2715 30TH
ROCK ISLAND, IL 61201
ALWAYS CALL AS INDICATED ON THE
CALENDAR
TO VERIFY MEETING TIME, LOCATION, AND
TOPIC INFORMATION
ALL QCS MEETING FACILITIES ARE
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QCS Home Page URL
<http://www.qcs.org>

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Membership Level

		New	Renewal
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