Q BITS

Wednesday
January 9, 2008
7:00 PM
PC Backup Solutions
presented by
Larry Stone
Windows SIG Leader

The Quad Cities Computer Society gratefully acknowledges

This Month in Q BITS...

The *QCS* is a member of

apcug

Monthly meetings are open to the general public.

QCS Review
Holiday Fun & Games

by Joe Durham

Well, the end of the year, and time for some fun, social interaction and good food. The QCS member had all of the above in good measure at our December 12th meeting.

Larry Stone started off our festivities by answering computer questions from the floor with his usual depth of understanding and experience. The group was arranged by round tables of 8. As we filed in many brought their white elephant gifts and placed them on the table.

Judi next handed out a Word Scramble sheet and told us to place it face down on the table. She was giving us ten minutes to unscramble 24 computer related words. It was quite a challenge indeed. Silence was evidence of our hard work. She noticed our distress and granted us an extra ten minutes.

It was tough. Patty Lowry unscrambled 23 and Cheryl Heimberger got 22 of the 24. Judi then proceeded to hand out gifts for 21, 20, and 19 out of 24 answers in the list. She used a computer program to scramble them of course. As we went through the list there were "ahs" around as we clearly saw the answers as she read them out.

Next Patty Lowry handed out a list of 20 questions we each needed to complete by asking other members for the solution. Questions like: Who has a PDA? Who uses Linux? Who drove the farthest distance to the meeting? It was a wonderful way of us to introduce and get to know each other in the club.

At this point our intermission was filled by eating at the wonderful table of cookies, brownies, cheese and drinks provided by Cheryl and the staff at the Tri-City Jewish Center. It was indeed s scrumptious feast on a cold winter night.

Ted Huberts next presented a description and examples of Yahoo games. We all need mindless diversions from the computer from time to time. These online games are welcome refreshers along the way.

Elf Bowling was demonstrated on the big screen, and is a prime example of delightful, mindless play. He said that usually you can play online for free for a certain time period. Each of the online games can be downloaded and installed on your computer for a price, usually $19.95 or in that price range.

Some of the tables contained laptop computers with games on them. Jerry Heimberger brought a model plane simulator that was very realistic and enjoyable. Several members took their hands at the controls. Fortunately they do not have pilot licenses as the flight to crash ratio would have been very troubling :).

Judi handed out eight tickets to the QC Flames hockey team held at the I-Wireless centerCourtesy of Sole Direct Connect. Our White Elephant exchange was a revelation for all. One person got a Zip drive that was Windows 95 compatible. Another person got a mouse port adapter that now is totally useless :) A software package for an Apple IIe was opened.

The meeting was truly an enjoyable night of fun, entertainment, good food and computer camaraderie. Now we are all refreshed and prepared for next year's schedule of interesting computer programs, presenters and raffles galore!

Connected or Discombobulated?
Ramblings by Judy Lococo,
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Everywhere you look today, someone is always talking about "connectivity" and how our new, improved world demands it. The more I see of this phenomenon, the less I think we are connected. The Internet and identity thieves have made us a nation of anonymity, and paranoid anonymity at that. We are electronically connected, but are losing the ability to look into people's eyes, read their body English, listen to the voice inflections, and interact one-on-one with another human being.

It's even impossible to keep up with all the acronyms! WiFi, DSL (I remember ADSL), URL, etc., have become entrenched in our lives so much that we no longer flinch when we hear one of them. And they keep stacking up at warp speed, so that even the nerdiest of us has to visit a website occasionally to find out what one means.

The morning newspaper used to be a shared experience at the breakfast table. Now it's read online with only the parts that a reader prefers coming across the screen, and you don't discuss your opinions with the rest of the family, nor listen to theirs. You no longer have to scan through the business section to find the crossword puzzle. You don't have to pore through the sports pages to find automobile tires. IOW (another TLA), you don't even have to talk to a soul without being considered rude.

Going to an office is not nearly as important as it once was. Now employees can work an 80- hour-week at home, without health insurance or retirement benefits. But you can work in jeans or sweats, so there's considerable savings on wardrobe.

The chat rooms are so rampant with predators that parents are restricting their children's surfing, and rightly so. But these chat rooms are yet another example of not connecting with a real, live, breathing person, only an image, which may or may not be accurate.

Email has replaced letter writing to the extent that I have to wonder if script handwriting will also be

obsolete soon. Remember calligraphy? Have you seen any within the last three years? Will the dictionary of the future have "u r 2" as a comeback phrase? Will schoolchildren even be taught English grammar or typing?

And, of course, how could I not mention the answering machines, voice mail, and all other means of not speaking to people who are trying to contact you. If you reach a person on the first attempt, are you supposed to believe that person is not busy? Is this why nobody bothers to answer their phone any more, only return phone calls? If all one does is return phone calls, what happens when the one you're calling also only returns phone calls?

As if all the time spent behind a monitor isn't enough, our automobile windows are now designed to keep others from seeing you. So if there is actually a person around who is considerably higher up on the social ladder than you are, you have to roll your window down for them to see you! How gauche is that?

I have to admit, I'm just as guilty as the rest of the world of spending too much time on email and INet (look it up already...) It is a lot of fun to laugh out loud at a joke that somebody forwards, or follow a link to a You Tube video. I am not addicted, but afraid of what will I will have to face if I don't check it daily. I guess you could say I'm not connected, I'm tethered. <BWG>

The Phenomenon of Facebook - Part III
Love and Dating in the 21st Century
By Courtney Jewett,

Member of Alamo PC, TX and a Senior English major at Baylor University is pursuing a career in Journalism
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Facebook is one of the most valuable tools in the dating world, and is today's version of the little black book.

Users of the social network can display their relationship status on their profile, along with the name of their significant other. This information is visible to their 'Facebook friends', and is simply a click away.

Like many single college students, I depend on Facebook to keep me informed in the social lives of those around me. It is useful, convenient, and makes survival in the dating world much easier.

Imagine that Bobby is interested in dating Susie. In the old days, poor Bobby would have to get to know all of Susie's friends just to determine if she is available. Or worse, Bobby would have to ask her out and risk the embarrassing possibility that she is actually going steady with Charlie.

Thanks to Facebook, Bobby can simply log on, and read on the News Feed section, next to a picture of a broken heart, that "Susie and Charlie have ended their relationship". And then, our Bobby can make his move with newfound optimism and self-confidence.

College students are using the site to learn more about potential dating partners, and to communicate with them in a low-stress environment. With Facebook, there is no need to endure awkward phone conversations in order to get to know someone.

Facebook even offers several ways to flirt with your Facebook friends, like sending virtual kisses and hugs.

I often see groups of women gather around their laptop, discussing the profiles of a certain guy. Some users will visit the profile of their dream date repeatedly, in order to stay informed about what happening in their life.

While this may seem slightly fanatical, it certainly provides an easier approach to dating. Social networking sites like Facebook are providing clarification and information that is making finding love a little easier.

My favorite aspect of the site is the fact that it seems to understand hat some of our relation-ships are difficult to define. For these situations, it offers the "it's complicated" option to explain your relationship status.

Finally, Facebook is a great way to simply attract the attention of a certain someone. Displaying a more exciting facebook picture, or writing an interesting note is often enough to capture the interest of that individual.

Although dating will always bring with it much heartache and strife, Facebook is at least providing an advantage to its users. As it continues to expand the possibility for love, Facebook is bringing good news to single college students everywhere.

Converting to a Portable Office
By Brian K. Lewis, Ph.D., a regular columnist and member of the Sarasota PCUG, Florida
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Many times over the fifteen years that I have been writing for the Monitor I found myself approaching the deadline while I was on the road. Since I usually travel with a laptop I managed to get something written and sent off to the editor. Now, however, I am in the process of changing to a completely mobile lifestyle. That means that everything I need has to fit in a very small space on a travel trailer where there is no room for a desktop and a

CRT. I also needed to add storage to the laptop so that all of my research files, genealogy files, photos, videos, etc would be able to go along. That's what this article is all about – fitting everything into as small a space as possible. First, a disclaimer. Although I will be mentioning various brands, they just happen to be the ones I used. There may be better ones or equivalent items available. This is not to be considered a review or recommendation of any specific hardware or software components. I have included the brand names for those who might want to get more details on the components.

To start with my laptop has a 60 GB IDE hard drive partitioned into 35 GB and 25 GB. The 25 is the space I use for Linux (Ubuntu), while the 35 GB is my Windows XP. On my desktop I had a very fast 250 GB SATA drive and a Plextor DVD burner. The DVD burner in the laptop burns only DVD+ disks at a 1X speed. The Plextor burns DVD+ & - discs at a much faster speed than the laptop drive. I also have a 250 GB SATA drive that I use for backup of both the desktop and the laptop. All of these were really what I needed for the expansion of my laptop. Or, I could have popped for a new laptop. The cheap way out was to keep my older drives and make them available to the laptop. Since the desktop hard drive has a SATA interface it has a much faster data transfer rate than the older IDE drives. To get a new laptop with a SATA drive would be more expensive than purchasing external cases. Also, my laptop has four USB 2.0 ports which allow a maximum 460 mbps transfer rate. They can certainly handle the SATA data transfer speeds. (If you are confused by the terms IDE and SATA, check out the *TechTalk* article for February 2003 on the SPCUG website.)

I already had one external case that I used with the backup drive. It is a Vantec NexStar 3 aluminum case which connects to either the laptop or the desktop via a USB 2.0 port. It also has a SATA connection which can be used with the external SATA port on the desktop. Although this case does not have a cooling fan, the aluminum case seems to be very successful in radiating the heat generated by the drive. It also doesn't add any noise to the workspace. This case cost $30 plus shipping. Since it had worked so well with the backup drive I purchased another one for the drive I removed from the desktop unit.

Removing the drive from the desktop and installing it in the Nex-Star case was the easy part. Since this hard drive had been a bootable drive, it had many applications on it as well as a complete Windows XP setup. First, I deleted any applications that were duplicates of ones already installed on the laptop. Then, in order to prevent problems related to having two bootable Windows partitions, I deleted the complete Windows folder on the external drive. After doing this I defragged the main partition on the external drive. Finally, I checked some of the applications still installed on the external drive. Amazingly several of them were still functional. However, most had to be reinstalled before they could be used. That is not surprising since most software has to be installed in the Windows registry which in this case was now on the laptop's hard drive, the bootable C partition.

So now I had a hard drive with more than adequate space available for any photo or video project I wished to work on. It could also be partitioned to for Linux data storage.

The next step was to transfer my Plextor DVD burner to an external case. In this case Vantec has a Nex-Star-2 drive enclosure designed for 5 1/4" CD/DVD drives with an IDE interface. This enclosure is a light weight plastic case with a cooling fan and a USB 2.0 connection. The price for this case was $28.00 plus shipping. Installing the burner in the case was really quite easy. The instructions that were included were very complete. Once I had the installation completed I connected the USB cable to the laptop and turned on the unit. Windows very quickly identified the drive as a CD/DVD burner and assigned it a drive letter.

I did have some CDs that I needed to burn. My burner application (CDburnerXP Pro) was not on the laptop. It was one that I had on the external hard drive that needed to be reinstalled on the laptop drive. That took only a few minutes. When I started the application it found both of my burner drives. I selected the Plextor and the files to be burned. The process was completely successful and was much faster than if I had to depend on the slower built-in drive.

So now I have a laptop with 300 GB of hard drive capacity and two CD/DVD burners. All of this can be stored in a very small space and can easily be packed in foam cushioning for travel.

Next I needed to consider what to do about scanning, copying and printing. I had a Canon photo printer and an Epson photo scanner. However, there just isn't enough room for both pieces of equipment. The Canon had fit in a cabinet, but there was no place to stow the scanner. So I spent some time doing some research on all-in-one units. All though I preferred laser printers, I also needed color capability. The size of color laser printers just didn't fit with the space I had available. So that seemed to restrict me to inkjet units. I finally found a Brother all-in-one that actually takes up less space than did my Canon printer. It also has network capability if I should ever need it, and it will read my camera's memory cards. The scanner is only letter sized but that should be adequate for my needs while traveling. It is also a USB 2.0 unit so the data transfer speed is fast enough. Since the scanner uses a standard TWAIN driver it works perfectly with my

GIMP graphics software. That also makes it usable if I am running UBUNTU instead of Windows. (The TWAIN standard is designed to link applications and image hardware and is compatible with Linux, MAC and Windows operating systems.) The scanner also has a sheet feeder which is very useful. Especially since I can scan and convert documents for storage in a PDF format, not just as a JPG picture. This allows me to store important documents on the hard drive and shred the original. That reduces the need for storage of paper documents. Although most of my bills are electronic, there are always a few that arrive by snail mail. Not every business operates electronically, even in the twenty-first century.

So now I think I am ready for the next change in my life. Living a mobile life style without having to depend on having a fixed address. This is something that the Internet, VOIP telephones and cell phones have made possible. See you on the road!

Dr. Lewis is a former university and medical school professor of physiology. He has been working with personal computers for over thirty years developing software and assembling systems.

Need a sticky note? Put it on your computer!

by Linda Gonse, Editor & Webmaster, Orange County IBM PC Users' Group, CA
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Sticky note programs for your pc, as you might imagine, are a utility that takes the place of paper Post-It notes that we all stick to our monitors!

But, sticky note programs I've researched this year discouraged me from even trying them out. Sometimes they didn't have enough features, or if they did, they were expensive.

Then, someone recommended a program called Stickies, created by Tom Revell, at www.zhornsoftware.co.uk/. So, I looked at Stickies on the web page, liked what I saw, and downloaded the program.

My first discovery about the program is that it is small, 953Kb, and doesn't interfere with system files and doesn't write to the registry. In fact, Stickies stores all its information in a single text-based ini file. When was the last time you had a program on your computer as well-mannered as this one?

An icon in your system tray will allow you quick access to Stickies' features and options. From this dropdown list you can manage your Stickies notes, configure them, get help, and download new skins. When you do make a Sticky, it won't disappear unless you tell it to, and it stays where it is placed. You can edit, format, and print them. Make as many as you want, or as many as your screen space will permit. But, to save room and keep Stickies organized, they will snap to each other and to the sides of the screen where they can be neatly lined up. You can even "hide" them from view.

Besides viewing Stickies on your screen, you can attach them to a website, a document, or a folder, so they only appear when the objects they are attached to are on the screen.

Stickies are portable, too. You can transfer Stickies from one computer to another over your TCP/IP network connection, to your PDA and back again, or send to friends in email.

They can be set to "sleep" and appear on a specified date and time, as announcements or reminders. They can even play a sound alarm so they

get your attention when they "awaken"!

What's fun is being able to customize the notes with various fonts, colors and buttons. You can even download customized skins from a big selection to change the outward appearance of the notes — plain, borderless, simple border, etc. The notes can be resized, just like the sticky notes in Acrobat.

Stickies are located in five categories within the application so you can see and manage them. You can search for information in Stickies, wake sleeping Stickies, restore closed Stickies and detach Stickies.

What else? Oh, yes! Another attractive feature of Stickies is...the program is free!

What are you waiting for? Try it out and see if you like this little program as much as I do!

Spam Petitions

Dick Jones
Central Coast Computer Club
http://member.apcug.org/fourseas
Santa Maria CA

They are Getting Your Address

"Now I know why I delete all petitions that come my way."

Pass this one on to all your e-mail buddies and take the time to read the **Snopes.com** article listed below,. It is full of good advice especially about the "cookies".

To whom it may concern:

Just a word to the wise. E-mail petitions are NOT acceptable to any municipality. To be acceptable petitions must have a signed signature and full address.

Almost all e-mails that ask you to add your name and forward on to

others are similar to that mass letter years ago that asked people to send business cards to the little kid in Florida who wanted to break the Guinness Book of Records for the most cards. All it was, and all this type of e-mail is, is a way to get names and "cookie" tracking info for telemarketers and spammers to validate active e-mail accounts for their own purposes.

Anytime you see an e-mail that says forward this on to "10" of your friends, sign this petitio, you'll get good luck or whatever, it has wither an e-mail tracker program attached that tracks the cookies and e-mails of those folks you forward to, to the host sender is getting a copy each time it gets forwarded and then is able to get lists of "active" e-mail. to use in spam e-mails in the future.

Please forward this notice to others and you will be providing a good service to your friends, and will be rewarded by not getting 30,000 spam e-mails in the future.

(If you have been sending out the above kinds of email, not you now why you get so much spam!)

Check it out:
www.snopes.com/inboxer/petition/internet.htm.

Reprinted from the August 2007 issue of User Friendly , newsletter of The Journal of the Los Angeles Computer Society.

Photos from Around the World

I am a big fan of Google's mapping site. It is a handy way to get driving directions and to find local businesses.

But for me, the real draw is the satellite imagery. It gives you a real sense of what a place is like. Unfortunately, though, you only get an aerial view. It leave me wanting more photos.

Well, Panorama Explorer lets anyone easily add more photos to Google Maps. And, you can view the photographs posted by other users.

I've been exoploring castles in Scotland and ice caves in Greenland. There's always something new! And I'm sure you'll love exploring these photos as much as I do. **www.panoramaexplorer.com**
Obtained from the September 2007 isssue of The Journal of The Computer Club, Inc. newsletter of The Computer Club, Inc.

QCS Member Raffle

Due to the Holiday Party, no name was drawn. Next months drawing will be for $10.00.

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

Be sure to check you mailing label for your member expiretion 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
	January 2008	1 Jan *Happy New Year!* *2008*	2 Jan 6:30 PM QCS Board Meeting Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcdowell@mchsi.com	3 Jan	4 Jan Deadline for QBITS articles	5 Jan
6 Jan	7 Jan 7:00 PM **New!** Microsoft Office SIG Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcdowell@mchsi.com	8 Jan	9 Jan 5:45 PM Beginners SIG * 7:00 PM **PC Backup Solutions**	10 Jan	11 Jan	12 Jan
13 Jan	14 Jan 7:00 PM Internet SIG Ted Huberts 309-792-9470 slowhand54@sbcglobal.net	15 Jan	16 Jan 7:00 PM Digital Media SIG Norm Dunlap 309-798-2304 normdun@gmail.com	17 Jan	18 Jan	19 Jan
20 Jan	21 Jan 7:00 PM Genealogy SIG **Len Stevens** 563-359-9672 judylenstevens@msn.com	22 Jan	23 Jan	24 Jan	25 Jan	26 Jan
27 Jan	28 Jan 7:00 PM Windows SIG Larry Stone 309-787-5574 lstone521@mchsi.com	29 Jan	30 Jan	31 Jan	1 Feb	2 Feb
3 Feb	4 Feb 7:00 PM **New!** Microsoft Office SIG Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcdowell@mchsi.com	5 Feb February 2008	6 Feb 6:30 PM QCS Board Meeting Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcdowell@mchsi.com	7 Feb	8 Feb Deadline for QBITS articles	9 Feb

*Beginner's SIG meets at Tri-City Jewish Center before the QCS program
Jim Kristan
309-755-8277
jmkris@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 HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE.

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M E M B E R S   **QCS**

HELPING

M E M B E R S

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

QCS Home Page URL
http://www.qcs.org

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State, ZIP+4: _____

Home Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Referred by: _____

Membership Level

		New	Renewal
Full Time Student	$20	☐	☐
Individual	$30	☐	☐
Family	$40	☐	☐

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Wednesday
January 9, 2008
7:00 PM
PC Backup
Solutions
presented by
Larry Stone
Windows SIG Leader