

Q BITS

Quad-Cities Computer Society
Newsletter for February 2008
Volume 26, number 1

www.qcs.org

Wednesday
February 13, 2008
7:00 PM

High Definition TV

presented by
Zeglin's Home TV & Appliance

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 PC Backup Solutions

with Larry Stone
lstone521@mchsi.com
Windows SIG leader

by Joe Durham

Larry's Backup Solutions presentation ended with a sad smiley face. He was saying don't be sorry that you didn't back up your data. Hard Drives will fail and you must be prepared! Store your data in two separate places and ensure that you have a recovery disk for your operating system. He presented four categories of options: hardware, software, dynamic and commercial backups.

Hardware Options:

Over the years computers have contained various media from floppy drives to external USB hard drives. The most comprehensive option today Larry observed is the USB external hard drive. Hard drive price per gigabyte is declining and for around \$100 you can purchase a large external drive to back up your data. He suggested that your computer have at least USB 2.0. There are inexpensive USB 2.0 cards available if your system needs that.

In order of usefulness is another internal hard drive. This is OK but Larry advises that your data should be saved in a separate location at best.

DVD's can hold up to several gigabytes of data. It has the advantage of being separate from your machine, but it can take some time to restore the data back from this media. But it does work. CD's just don't hold enough data for backing up the large hard drives in this day and age.

A portable media today for frequent daily backups are flash drives. Some models have 8 GB capacity. These devices are easily read by your machine and are portable. Be careful removing flash drives from your computer. If you do it improperly you can trash these devices too. On the system tray is an icon for safely removing devices. Use it always.

—continued on next page—

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:
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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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Software Options:

Vista has the best software option. It has the ability to back up the entire OS and data while it is running. For Windows XP users there is a back up utility on the disk that came with your system.

Place the disk in your computer, click on my computer, identify the drive, click it and use windows explorer to locate the folder called VALUEADD, navigate to the folder MSFT and click the file: **NTBACKUP.exe**. This will install a backup program on XP. You can also schedule your backups with this software. Backup software that comes bundled with your external hard drives offers another great opportunity to save your data.

Another free utility from Microsoft is called SyncToy. Search for it with Google. It is a small download and works as an everyday backup tool. A left folder is created by which you browse to indicate the source material. Then a right folder is created by which you indicate the destination media.

Larry said that the first SyncToy transfer make take some time, but the subsequent backups transfers only new files from that last backup. If there are deleted files, it places them in the recycle bin for safety. You can scheduled your backups also. Larry does his at 2:00 am each day.

Some of the better commercial backup software include: Norton Ghost, WinBackup, and Acronis True Backup. You have to shut down windows before Norton Ghost works its magic.

Larry gives Acronis True Image high marks for Windows XP machines. It can backup with versatility and across many different media. A Windows XP operating system can be saved while running as in Vista. Acronis can be downloaded and purchased form User Group Relations ([ugr.com](http://www.ugr.com)) for \$29.99.

Dynamic Backups:

This backup category is properly geared for businesses or people who do a lot of work everyday. The loss of which would cause much money or lost time. A dynamic backup does everything in real

time. Every second your data is backedup. One of the better commercial examples of this approach is AJC Active Backup which is only \$29.00.

If you have a broadband internet connection you may wish to consider a service that will backup your data online for a fee. Laplink Carbonite will do this for you. As in other backup systems the first initial backup may take some time. Also note that upload speeds on broadband are slower than download speeds. Subsequent backup take less time. This service costs \$49.95 / year. An Internet backup gives you the advantage of accessing your data from any location in the world.

Commercial Backups:

There are companies now that will come to your place of business and for a fee backup your system regularly. These services are expensive, but for time sensitive, and profit sensitive data it may be better safe than sorry cost effective option.

Larry gave our members and extra bonus. He share with us the remote computing software called LogMeIn that allows you to access your computer from any internet connection. You need a broadband connection. Larry logged to his LogMeIn account and brought up his home computer.

He gave an example of a person who had expensive software on a central computer and it was better to access it remotely than placing it on a traveling laptop.

The bottom line for computer users is find a backup means that fits your needs and budget. Hard drive prices decline and backup software can be found free and inexpensively. Do it today, before you agonize over lost data, memories, or money disappearing a the click sound of a back drive!

The QCS wishes to thanks Larry for his fine and informative presentation, if we take his able advise we will have save many hours of work and fret.

Five members were lucky raffle recipients: Cheryl Heimberger, Karen Reynolds, Len Stevens,

David Sullivan, Barbara Evans, and Eugene Bartosh.

Nominating Committee Report (to date)

At the opening of the program meeting March 12th, this report of the nominating committee will be presented. After presenting this slate, the President will open the meeting for nominations from the floor. Floor nominations require that:

- 1) Nominees must be members in good standing.
- 2) Nominees must be present and express their willingness to serve.
- 3) Any nominee not present must have submitted to the Board prior to the meeting by mail to Diana Wolf, Secretary, Quad-Cities Computer Society, Tri-City Jewish Center 2715 30th, Rock Island, IL 61201 a written statement expressing their willingness to serve if elected.

If there are no further nominees, the President will ask for acceptance of this report by acclamation. If there are additional nominees, those positions with more than one candidate shall be decided by written ballot. Incumbents are identified with an asterisk, *.

President: *Judi McDwoell
Vice President:
Secretary: *Diana Wolf
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 *Ted Huberts
 *Jim Kristan
 *Emily Smith
 *Vicki Wassenhove
 *Ken Welzenbach
Director-at-large(immediate past president) *Patty Lowry

Respectfully submitted, 2008
Nominating Committee:
Jerry Heimberger, (chair)

Let's Clean "Start-Up"

By Bob Elgines, Editor,
Colorado River Computer Club,
AZRCC Editor
www.crccaz.com/
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Does your computer boot-up or run slow? Maybe there are too many programs running in the background. Let us do the following check first.

Hold your CTRL & ALT buttons and press the DELETE button. Click on the PERFORMANCE tab, is your CPU Usage running more than 10% or is your Physical Memory being in total use?

Go to **START** then **RUN**, type in "**msconfig**" which stands for Microsoft System Configuration. In Windows VISTA you can find **RUN** in the **ACCESSORY** folder under **PROGRAMS**.

The System Configuration Utility windows will come up.

First go to the upper right tab labeled **STARTUP**, here you will see the list of items that load during startup. Of course some you want, some you don't. In the first column labeled **STARTUP ITEM** gives a very rough idea to what it is referenced too, but the second column labeled **COMMAND**, is much more useful. Too read it better, widen the column out by holding your mouse symbol over the vertical line located before the next column label. A double arrow will appear, then hold down left mouse button and move it to the right. This information tells you where it is located and in some cases which program is using it. Uncheck those in question, you can put them back in later if you need too. Do not uncheck you Antivirus or Spyware programs.

Next go to the tab on top labeled **SERVICES**, this show all of the programs running now. You do not what to uncheck those labeled Microsoft under the **MANUFACTURER** column, so to start off, lets put a check mark in the box below

labeled "Hide all Microsoft Services".

Now while you are reviewing the other programs running in the background note the forth column labeled **STATUS**. If it says **STOPPED**, then don't worry about it. We just want to stop the strange ones that are **RUNNING**. You can uncheck those that you are not familiar with, here again you may bring them back in later.

After un-checking all those items under tabs **STARTUP & SERVICES**, then click on **APPLY** and **CLOSE**.

The System Configuration Utility will now ask you to **RESTART** (or **Boot**) your computer.

After restarting a window will come up stating System Configuration Utility has been changed, be sure to put a check mark in the bottom left (labeled "Don't show this message or launch") before clicking **OK**.

If you improved your operation of your computer, you can put back in the items one at a time until you find the program that was slowing you down.

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OLPC

(One Laptop Per Child)
www.laptop.org
by Joe Durham

Recently at our last board meeting Sue Peterson's brother Rex Felsman brought two One Laptop Per Child computers for us to examine. The OLPC project (www.laptop.org) is online. Rex participated in their get one, give one promotion. He bought two sets so he could see how the machines interact with one another. The mission of this non-profit association (One Laptop Per Child) is to develop a low-cost laptop - the "\$100 Laptop" - a technology that could revolutionize how we educate the world's children. Their goal is to

—continued on next page—

provide children around the world with new opportunities to explore, experiment, and express themselves. You can view photos of his visit to the QCS board meeting on our web site, .

OLPC was founded by Nicholas Negroponte of MIT and has been featured on 60 minutes. It generated much controversy: the third world has many more serious problems: food, water, unrest, corruption. Why this approach? Also in a very competitive business environment there will be other shakers and movers in the electronics world who will want to make a competitive project to preserve their influence and market share.

Mr. Negroponte saw the need of education in the third world and this is his solution to this need. Recently Intel removed themselves from the OLPC board of directors because of differences with the project.

Nonetheless our board members discovered this device to be an intriguing computer. We booted them up and began to play around with them. The OLPC software is built upon Linux, so it is an unfamiliar landscape to many. We were easily able to log onto the wireless network. The two OLPC machines found each other and our exploration began. First off, you note that the keyboard is cumbersome and small for adult hands which makes sense as the device is designed for children. The video quality was quite good. Following a moment of hit and miss, we were able to chat with one another. It has the ability to task among applications like full scale computers. There is a video camera built into the laptop and we were able to view ourselves.

The programs of writing, sound, music recording, browsing the Internet are started by a panel of icons at the bottom of the screen. We didn't have a manual, and the children to which these computer will be given won't have one either. The OLPC interface is designed for exploration. A child's curiosity and

—continued on next page—

fascination with all things electronic will guide their use. There have been reports in the field where this phenomenon has been proven correct.

It is a lightweight computer, and Rex indicates that two power sources will be offered to operate it: a solar panel and two types of hand cranked generators. The power consumption is low. Because it uses a 512 MB flash ram there are no moving parts. Larry Stone mentioned in the meeting that moving parts are the power drain in our systems today. OLPC machines use just more than one watt of power.

Rex mentioned that the OLPC is a work in progress. They have had problems meeting the \$100 goal. The computers are being offered for more than twice the cost. The two copies are incomplete. Software updates are being issued as we speak. QCS board members spent some time after the meeting with these machines. A testament to their fascination and promise. Hopefully in the future Rex will make a return visit to see his Sister and be able to discuss and demonstrate the OLPC before our entire group. In the meantime go to their website, it contains much information and comment.

Trendnet Modem TFM-PCIV92A

For dial up users this Trendnet Modem has been found to access internet services with a higher connect rate than other modems. It is reasonably priced and is available at many online retailers: 56K (V.92) High Speed Internal PCI Data/Fax/TAM Modem.

trendnet.com/products/TFM-PCIV92A.htm

Features

Compliant with V.92, V.90, V.44 Standards

- Supports V.44 and V.92 Quick Connect, PCM Upstream and Modem On Hold Features

- Up to 56Kbps Data Download, 48Kbps Data Upload

- Supports TAM (Telephone Answering Machine) via Sound Card

- Supports Group III, Class 1 Fax with Fax Transfer Rate up to 14.4kbps (T.31 Protocol)

- Video Phone ready (Interface to H.324 Video Conferencing Support)

- Compatible with Windows 98SE/Me/2000/XP/2003 Server/Vista

- AT commands for data and Class 1 Fax

- ACPI Power Management with PME pin supply for Low Power Consumption

- Free Data/Fax/Voice Communication Software

- 3-Year Warranty

New Gadgets for 2008

By Sandy Berger,

CompuKISS.com

www.compuKISS.com

[sberger\(at\)compuKISS.com](mailto:sberger(at)compuKISS.com)

Every year my husband and I attend the Consumer Electronic (CES) in Las Vegas to see the latest and greatest high tech gadgets. This year didn't disappoint. We found everything from a Leggett & Platt's \$20,000 Starry Night bed with an HDTV projector, pop-up speakers, snoring sensors, iPod dock, automatic lighting system, and breathing pattern monitor to a General Motors Chevy Tahoe prototype car that drove itself. While I don't expect this GM prototype to make it to market anytime soon, some of the technology that it is built in will evolve and is sure to find its way into our future automobiles.

We also found a few more down-to-earth gadgets and gizmos. In fact, there were several devices that you may want to check out for your own gaggle of high tech products. For instance, if you hate cleaning the gutters, the iRobot Looj has you covered. This robotic gutter cleaner cleans a 60-foot section of gutter in just 10 minutes. Yes, you must use a ladder to place it in position, but you don't have to move the ladder multiple times as you do in regular

gutter cleaning. The demos looked marvelous. iRobot also have robotic vacuum cleaners and floor scrubbers.

Although we have been hearing about wireless technologies for what seems to be years, this year some of that wireless technology became mainstream. Wireless speakers, which up to now were feeble and erratic, have finally found their voice. The Griffin Evolve is a great example. It is a compact speaker system for an iPod. It has two wireless speaker cubes that can be placed in any room in the house. It sounds great and is also easy to use. At about \$300, this is a great solution to distribute music from your iPod throughout the house.

While prices of technology gadgets continue to drop, it seems that ink for that inexpensive ink jet printer often costs more than the printer itself. Well, thanks to Kodak, this trend may be coming to an end. The new Kodak printers are said to use 50% less ink and ink cartridges are reasonably priced at \$15 for color and \$10 for black.

Polaroid, another well-known name in photography has also released a breakthrough product. Their new inkless printer is made for printing pictures from a cell phone or digital camera. Not only does the printer use Bluetooth wireless technology, but it uses special paper that is embedded with 100 billion colored dye crystals. The colors appear when the printer applies heat pulses to the paper. This ink-less technology is called Zink, for zero ink. The 2-inch-by-3-inch prints cost about 30 cents each and the printer sells for \$150, which is not bad for cutting-edge technology.

Although computers are not the focus of the CES show, there were many computer manufacturers showing their wares. Lenovo, the Chinese company who bought IBM's PC division three years ago has previously focused on their ThinkPad business laptops, but this year they introduced a line of consumer laptops called IdeaPads.

These include facial recognition technology. Lenovo, Sony, and others will follow Dell's lead with the introduction of laptops in a variety of bright colors.

Bright colors were the norm at the show. There were MP3 players, cell phone, and gadget covers in every color imaginable. There were red and blue ladybug-shaped iPod speakers and speakers that pulsed to the beat in vibrating, changing colors. There was even pink CAT-5 networking cable, whose purchase supports the National Breast Cancer Foundation.

Oh, and you can expect to be even more confused by television display technologies in the future. Sony's \$2500, 11-inch Organic light Emitting Diode (OLED) was small but clearly better than anything else on the market today..... and it was only as thick as 3 credit cards. Mitsubishi's laser television was also a dramatic improvement. Samsung and Sharp announced backlit LCD televisions. While these technologies may take awhile to go mainstream, other manufacturer's announced Internet-enabled televisions that are sure to appear quite quickly. For instance, the Sharp Aquos Net television displays small icons called widgets that showed news, weather, and traffic data from the Internet right on the television screen. Also next year, when digital television goes mainstream you will see digital TV broadcasting in a variety of devices including cell phones, cars, buses, and anything else they can possibly think of. One car at the show already had TV's in every door and drop-down television screens for every passenger.

While we may not all be interested in watching television all the time, we will find some of these new technologies making our lives just a little more pleasurable in the future.

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permission of the author (see e-mail address above).

From The DealsGuy

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

bobclick@bellsouth.net
www.dealsguy.com

This One Concerns The Rapid Development of Linux

<http://www.informationweek.com/news/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=202404635> It had an accompanying article about seven features coming soon, but I couldn't find it on the Information Week Web site.

From Spinning Platters to No Moving Parts

Are you tired of having a cup of coffee while your computer boots up? Read this article about the future development of computer hard drives that will speed things up. Just switch on the computer and start using it.

<http://www.informationweek.com/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=202404347>.

What a Fraud!

In November I included an announcement for Advanced WindowsCare Personal that was supposedly freeware. A reader informed me that after it scans your hard drive, it does not remove the errors it found unless you purchase the paid edition. Sorry about that one.

Do You Keep Track Of Your Own Finances? Try This, And Its Portable

Alzex announces the release of Personal Finances Portable 2.1. When you get a pay raise, you might start considering a major purchase, or perhaps saving money for your child's education, based on the fact that you will have some spare money. But the month with a pay increase comes to an end and you realize that, actually, you've ended up with no extra money because, somehow, you spent it all. In that case, Personal Finances may come

to your rescue. It'll record all expenses and help you see where your money goes. It shows the total sum and percentage structure for categories, overall balance and balance on accounts.

Personal Finances has a user-friendly multilingual interface, scheduler, password protection and a very useful expense addition ability with one click. It can import/export data from/to .txt or .csv files. The application has a multiple database support and allows you to create an unlimited number of databases. Detailed information on all transactions is available for any time period. There is also an unlimited number of sections, subsections, categories, etc. Besides the basic ones, the application allows users to add more currencies upon inserting the exchange rate. Personal Finances allows you to sort by fields and group names, or by transaction. The program has the capability of logging regular transactions automatically.

If you are an active and mobile businessman, or just a globetrotter, why keep a record of expenses in an ordinary notebook and copy those notes into your home PCs after returning home. The features making Personal Finances Portable unique in its category is that you can install and run the application from a USB flash drive; consequently, your "personal accountant" will be portable and always at hand. Download link:

www.financesoftware.com/downloads/PersonalFinances_v2.1.exe
(2,73 Mb)

That's it for this month. I'll have more new product announcements on my editor permits. This column is written to make user groups 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.

Genealogy SIG News

This year the Genealogy SIG meetings will have the following sections:

- A return to basics discussion
- Discussing recent magazine articles on genealogy news and Internet research
- Roots Magic, PAF, and other programs such as Personal Historian, Gen Smarts
- Join us and get the "bug"

Officers 2007 - 2008

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Other			
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QCS Member Raffle

Brett Neese won the January member raffle of \$10! Congratulations! Next month the jackpot will be \$10.

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



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 receives 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
	February 2008				1 Feb	2 Feb
3 Feb	4 Feb 7:00 PM New! Microsoft Office SIG Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcowell@mchsi.com	5 Feb	6 Feb 6:30 PM QCS Board Meeting Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcowell@mchsi.com	7 Feb	8 Feb	9 Feb
10 Feb	11 Feb 7:00 PM Internet SIG Ted Huberts 309-792-9470 slowhand54@sbcglobal.net	12 Feb	13 Feb 5:45 PM Beginners SIG * 7:00 PM High Definition TV	14 Feb	15 Feb	16 Feb
17 Feb	18 Feb 7:00 PM Genealogy SIG Len Stevens 563-359-9672 judylenstevens@msn.com	19 Feb	20 Feb 7:00 PM Digital Media SIG Norm Dunlap 309-798-2304 normdun@gmail.com	21 Feb	22 Feb	23 Feb
24 Feb	25 Feb 7:00 PM Windows SIG Larry Stone 309-787-5574 lstone521@mchsi.com	26 Feb	27 Feb	28 Feb	29 Feb	1 Mar
2 Mar	3 Mar 7:00 PM New! Microsoft Office SIG Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcowell@mchsi.com	4 Mar March 2008	5 Mar 6:30 PM QCS Board Meeting Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcowell@mchsi.com	6 Mar	7 Mar	8 Mar

Deadline
for QBITS
articles

Deadline
for QBITS
articles

***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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Membership Level

		New	Renewal	
Full Time Student	\$20	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Quad-Cities Computer Society Tri-City Jewish Center 2715 30th Street Rock Island IL 61201
Individual	\$30	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Family	\$40	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Wednesday
February 13, 2008
7:00 PM

High Definition TV

presented by
**Zeglin's Home TV &
Appliance**