# Q BITS

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## Wednesday
## April 9, 2008
## 7:00 PM
# Smart Computing Magazine

The Quad Cities Computer Society gratefully acknowledges

*SOLO DIRECTCONNECT*

*http://www.soloconnect.com*
for providing the site for our Web Page at
**http://www.qcs.org**

## This Month in *Q BITS*..

The *QCS* is a member of

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**Monthly meetings are open to the general public.**

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## QCS Review
## *Waste Commission of Scott County*
presented by Paula Mullin
**pmullin@wastecom.com**
**www.wastecom.com**
by Joe Durham

Want to help make the world a better place? Paula Mullin from the Waste Commission of Scott County came to offer us concrete ways to do so through E-recycling at the Electronic Demanufacturing Facility in Davenport.

The Landfill Commission began in 1972 and has progressively evolved to provide more services to protect our community from the every growing waste we generate. The E-recycling process began in 2005.

Electronic components contribute 70% of the heavy metals and 40% of the lead in landfills. So our efforts to keep those out help protect our water supply. A CRT monitor can contain 4 to 8 lb. of lead.

A wide variety of electronic devices can be recycled: anything with a circuit board or a cathode ray tube is welcome. Some examples are: computers, printers, video games, and cell phones. Even the hard drives are shredded to help protect your identity. Paula played a short DVD video presentation which featured the large mechanical shredder that destroys the equipment and makes it recyclable. The process of taking apart the electronics (demanufacturing) takes place in minutes.

The lead, precious metals and other components that are recovered and sold to dealers for reuse. Additionally, fluorescent tubes (which contain mercury) can be recycled at the Waste Commission site. Some of the recovered metals include: chromium, cadmium, copper, gold, lead, mercury, silver, and zinc. Paula brought a display of electronic devices that had been taken apart. Brett Neese, QCS member, helped to describe each device and their components. These devices were an old monitor, a computer, and a scanner. We could see the lead within the monitor, the

circuit boards that contain precious metals that are a part of each device and the batteries that help operate them that can be recycled.

The Waste Commission helps to preserve our environment by recycling hazardous waste also. By appointment you can recycle your home hazardous waste: paint, pesticides, and house cleaners.

The Davenport facility is truly a versatile recycling center that we all should use and support. A much cleaner world will be the result. They are open Monday through Friday 7:30-3:30 PM at

Waste Commission of Scott County
5640 Carey Avenue
Davenport, IA 52807
PH: 563-386-9575

To quote the **www.wastecom.com** website :

## How can Davenport and Bettendorf residents dispose of e-waste?

Bettendorf and Davenport residents that receive curbside collection can put e-waste out as bulky waste on their recycling day. This is a service that is included in the solid waste fee and no call-ins or appointments are required. The e-waste collected at the curb will be delivered to the EDF.

## How do Scott County residents participate?

Scott County residents can bring e-waste to the facility Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Residential e-waste is charged at 20 cents per pound. Console and projection televisions are a flat fee of $15. Large copiers are a flat fee of $11. Large or unusual items are assessed on a per item basis. Some communities have special collection programs; please check with your community.

## How do Rock Island County residents participate?

Rock Island County residents can bring e-waste to the facility Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. There is no charge with a valid Rock Island County address. This is per a contract with Rock Island County Waste Management Agency.

## How can area business owners participate?

Businesses can bring e-waste to the facility Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Businesses e-waste is charged at 20 cents per pound. Console and projection televisions are a flat fee of $15. Large copiers are a flat fee of $11. Large or unusual items are assessed on a per item basis. Call 823-0119 for more information.

Paula encouraged us to participate in the observances of Quad Cities Earth Week Fair April 19th at the QC Expo Center, Rock Island. **www.qcearthweek.org**.

By taking our old equipment to the recycling center we help ourselves two ways: we clean out our house, and save the environment at the same time. Visit the web site **www.wastecom.com** for more details and helpful tips. The QCS would like that Paula Mullin for her fine presentation and encouraging us to be better stewards of the world in which we live.

# New Technology Terms

By Sandy Berger, CompuKISS
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Obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

Words, words, words….In the fast-moving world of technology, new words and phrases are constantly introduced. In order to keep up with the times, you need to learn about the  current terminology. This need not be a drudgery. In fact, it can be fun to see what new words and abbreviations are popular. Check these out and you can wow your friends next time computers and technology become the subject at the 19th hole or the neighborhood cocktail party.

## SSD (Solid-State Drive)

This is a type of memory that you will be hearing more and more about in the future. It is a type of flash memory that has no moving parts. Some small laptop computers are appearing using SSDs for storing data instead of hard drives. Because SSDs have no spinning disks like the ordinary hard drives, they offer improved battery life for laptop computers. They also have better data access speeds than hard disks.

## 404

You may recognize this as a common message on the Internet. It indicates that the requested page could not be found. This may mean that the page has temporarily or permanently moved and is not currently available. However, recently the term 404 has come to have another meaning. It refers to someone who is totally clueless. From the error message "404 not found", this has become a slang term meaning that the person's brain could not be located. If you decide to call your spouse a 404, make sure that he or she has not read this column or you'll be in big trouble.

## Crowdsourcing

Using the skills of a wide variety of people to do a job or perform a task is called crowdsourcing. The people who perform such a function are often found on the Internet. Although these people can be paid, often they are often volunteers.

## Geotagging

This is technology built into a digital camera or part of a camera add-on device that is able to tag each photo with the exact location that the picture was taken. Photos can then be sorted based on where they were taken. They can also be plotted on maps.

## HDMI (High-definition Multi-media Interface)

This is a newer audio and video interface that is often found on televisions, DVD players, video game consoles, video cameras, and other video equipment. This type of connector replaces older standard connectors like composite video, S-Video, component video, and DVI. HDMI carries both audio and video in one cable. It supports digital rights management systems. HDMI cables can be very expensive in comparison to older audio and video cables.

## One Laptop per Child (OLPC)

Led by Nicholas Negroponte, this is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to design, manufacture, and distribute affordable laptop computers to children around the world. The laptops were initially called the "$100 laptop", but the final build cost almost $200 each. In 2007, the One Laptop per Child organization started distributing these laptop computers to children in developing countries. The laptops are bright green and white portable computers with special features like a sealed keyboard. They are called XO computers.

## SEO (Search Engine Optimization)

Search Engine Optimization is the process of tweaking a website to improve the volume of traffic that is produced by search engines. The idea is to give the website a higher ranking in the search engines thereby producing more traffic to the site. SEO includes using keywords and website design to get higher rankings with search engines.

## Skype

This is an online service that allows users to make telephone calls over the Internet. The software is free and there is no charge to call the computers of other Skype users. Your computer must have a microphone in order to use Skype. With the addition of a webcam, Skype callers from computer to computer can also place video calls where they can both see and talk to each other. Skype also allows you to call landlines and cell phones for a fee. Skype has other services such as instant messaging and file transfer.

## FTW

This stands for "For The Win". You may remember it being a part of  the game show "Hollywood Squares"  where a certain square would be selected "For the Win." It is also used in some online games like World of Warcraft. It is now a popular term that usually projects a boast, as in "I did it FTW."  It is often used ironically and sarcastically.

## Bot

A bot computer is one that has been infected with some type of malware that allows the computer to be controlled by an outside entity. Millions of computers are bots that are now under the influence of malware distributors who use these computers to send out spam, attack other computers and websites, and carry out scams and identity theft.

The computer owner is usually unaware that their computer has been compromised since this activity is performed in the background.

### BotNet

A series of bot computers, sometimes as large as millions of computers is called a BotNet. The BotNet does the bidding of some entity that has compromised the computers and taken control of them by installing some type of malware.

### Zombie

This term that means the same thing as a Bot. It is a personal computer that has been infected with a virus that allows an outside force to control it. Such a computer can be used to send out spam or attack other computers without the owner's knowledge. Millions of computers today are zombie computers. They are part of a Zombie Network of computers that are controlled by hackers..

# All Computers Wait at the Same Speed

by Vinny La Bash, Member of the Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, Inc., Florida
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I first heard that phrase about ten years ago at a geek conference in Seattle. A decade ago is earlier than the Stone Age in computer years. It was probably meant to make fun of the propeller heads that couldn't live without the fasted CPU on their motherboard. The geeks' concern with processing speed seemed ridiculous to those who understood that computers spend very little of their time processing information. They spend it waiting for us to tell

them to do something. You would certainly find your life very boring if you had to spend 99% of your time waiting for other people to act before you could do anything.

What are we talking about? We're talking about keeping your system properly tuned so that you don't have to wait while it tries to do its job. It's no secret that Vista has had performance problems. Microsoft has promised that their upcoming service pack should resolve most if not all performance issues. We've heard similar kinds of promises from Redmond before, but this time they say they really mean it. In fairness, not every performance issue can be laid at Microsoft's doorstep, but it's always fun to blame them because they're such an easy target.

Vista puts great demands on your CPU due to Aero and other assorted graphical gizmos built into the product. They should have named it the Eye Candy OS. Responding to the user community, Microsoft also added security features and additional functions that were not present in XP. When you ask your CPU to do more, you're adding overhead. This means you need more CPU power or you live with a slower system. If Vista performance has been less than stellar, the good news is that you can do something about it other than buying a new computer. Here are some of the things you can do to make Vista more appealing from a performance standpoint.

You're probably tired of hearing this one. It's like mother telling you to eat your vegetables. You know she's right, but you don't want to hear it. ADD MORE MEMORY. Vista is hungrier for RAM than any of its predecessors, and with memory as cheap as it is, it doesn't make sense to keep it on a starvation diet. XP runs great on one gigabyte of RAM. Vista should have two gigabytes as a minimum, and you won't go wrong by installing even four gigabytes.

Even with enough physical memory, Vista can still act like a tired

old dog if you have a lightweight video card. Go into the Performance Information and Tools utility in Control Panel, and check out your video card with the Windows Experience Index. You need a video card that's certified for Vista Premium and supports Direct X 10. Use the money you save on RAM to buy a good video card. Don't try to do this one on the cheap.

A real help to good performance is bringing your power settings to the High Performance option. Do this from the Power Options utility in Control Panel. The default setting is Balanced which is OK for XP but not Vista. The High Performance setting gives you full access to all the Power in the CPU.

Turn off the sidebar. While this feature is visually appealing, it has few socially redeeming traits. Turning off this feature can sometimes result in significantly faster startups and shutdowns. Disable the sidebar by right-clicking it. Select Properties, and remove the checkmark in the box that starts the sidebar when Vista wakes up.

Fine tune your indexing options. Vista has a great search feature, but it's totally dependent on indexing the files and programs on your hard drive. It's a mixed blessing. You have a fantastic search capability when you index all locations, but you take a performance hit. By indexing fewer areas, performance will improve, but your search feature will be less robust.

Vista won't let you turn off indexing completely, but you can disable indexing for locations that may not be important to you. Do this from the Performance Information and Tools utility in Control Panel.

Here's another "eat your veggies" type tip. Empty the Recycle Bin and adjust it so it doesn't take up more than 2% of your hard drive. Right click on the Recycle Bin, select Properties, and make the necessary adjustments in the dialog box. Don't forget to defrag your disk once in a while, and empty the

Recycle Bin before you defrag, not after.

Open My Computer from the Desktop. Right click on the C: drive, select Properties and check how much space you have left on your hard drive. If you're approaching 90% or more, you need to take non-essential files and move them to another location. Vista needs free disk space to perform certain housekeeping functions, and if it has to hunt around for room or use virtual memory, your performance hit could be enormous.

Keep your device drivers up-to-date. Device drivers were designed to ensure that programs or hardware peripherals could "talk" to the system without problems and do their jobs properly. Newer drivers can improve 3D performance, fix bugs and other graphical glitches in games and video programs. Device drivers can avoid memory conflicts and prevent programs from squabbling over resources. Newer device drivers can support innovative features within applications, and ensure compatibility among different programs.

These are only some of the things you can do to improve Vista performance. Removing unnecessary startup programs, preventing spyware and virus infections, and updating old software are additional steps you can take. If your system is frequently hanging up or crashing after doing everything you can do to improve performance, then it's time to consider reformatting your hard drive and reinstalling everything, but that's another article.

# *The New, The Best, and The Worst*
Collected by Pim Borman, Webmaster, SW Indiana PC Users Group, Inc.
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Obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

## Do You Ubuntu (yet)?
## A Linux Update

In February of 2002 I wrote here: *"It has been said that Windows XP is less buggy than its Windows 95, 98, and Me predecessors; damnation by faint praise. XP is also more expensive, can only be used on a single computer, and presents many incompatibilities with existing hardware and software. It hogs resources. That led me to wonder how Linux is coming along."*

Replace "XP" with "Vista" and history repeats itself. Furthermore, add that online security has dramatically worsened and that the security of Windows Vista is at best only marginally improved.

At the time I got a copy of the Red Hat Linux 7.2 distribution (list price $60), included in a 1000+ pages "Linux Bible" and proceeded to evaluate it. I found that the limited software included in the distribution was nice and useful, but trying to install additional programs from the Internet was a nightmare.

Six years later desktop Linux has matured beyond recognition. Lindows, later renamed Linspire, was the first distribution making it a one-click operation to download and install software from a large online library. Originally the cost of acquiring Linspire and a one-year subscription to the library was $100, but more recently the service has been available for free. I am still using an older version of Linspire daily, mostly for Web browsing, accessing email, and playing Freecell, Yukon or Mah-Jongg.

In 2004 Marc Shuttleworth, a South African by birth, started a free new Linux distribution called Ubuntu ("humanity towards others"). In 1999 he sold Internet security software he had developed to Verisign for about $575 million. He spent $20 million of that on an 8-day trip by Soyuz to the Space Station and had plenty left over for a free software project. By now Ubuntu has become the most advanced and popular desktop Linux distribution, with the help of numerous volunteer contributors.

Ubuntu undergoes continuous upgrades as new and improved software is being developed and tested. Twice a year, in April and October, a new version is released. The latest version is numbered 7.10, for October of 2007, and is nicknamed "Gutsy Gibbon." (The next issue in April, version 8.4, will be named "Hardy Hero." You get the drift).

I installed Ubuntu side-by-side with Windows XP on my desktop computer, equipped with an AMD Athlon64 X2 4800+ dual core processor, 1 GB of RAM and an nVidia GeForce 7600 graphics card. I put it in a separate Linux partition on my hard drive previously used for Linspire. Before committing to the installation I ran Ubuntu off the CD to verify that it was compatible with my hardware.

Once installed, Ubuntu was ready to go. It automatically set up my connection to the Internet with Firefox, and with my permission downloaded a large number of updates and additions released since October. The OpenOffice.org suite of programs, comparable to MS Office, was ready to go. I already had been using the Windows version of OpenOffice Writer so there was no learning curve whatsoever. The Gimp, an advanced graphics program similar to Adobe Photoshop Elements and with comparable features, came preinstalled. I also found drivers for my HP 812C printer and my Epson Perfection 3490 Photo Scanner. With all the necessary tools at hand I had no difficulty producing the January newsletter, including typing the articles, downloading articles from other user groups, and designing the layout and the new masthead. I printed the newsletter ready for Xeroxing and used OpenOffice Writer to save a separate version (omitting treas-

ury data) to pdf format for distribution on the Internet.

Ubuntu provides many additional Linux programs:

> Thunderbird, well-known program.
> Pidgin, an Messenger graphical multi-protocol instant messaging client, capable of using AIM/ICQ, Yahoo!, MSN, IRC, Jabber, Napster, Zephyr, Gadu-Gadu, Bonjour, Groupwise, Sametime, SILC, and SIMPLE all at once.
> GRAMPS, genealogy program capable of GEDCOM files that are used in such programs as FamilyTree Maker for Windows. It can produce reports in various formats, such as text, HTML and PDF.
> Gnucash can track finances in multiple accounts, keeping running and reconciled balances. It has a graphical user interface, double entry, a hierarchy of accounts, expense accounts (categories), and can import Quicken QIF files and OFX files.
> Multiple soundand videoprograms for burning and reading CDs and DVDs, ripping and creating audio CDs, recording sound clips, playing movies, etc.
> Popular games, including aisleriot (anagram of solitaire),a large collection of card games, including Freecell. Also blackjack, glchess, gnomesudoku, gnometris (Tetris), gnomine (minesweeper), mahjongg, and many others.

Additional programs can be installed with the Add/Remove function. Some powerful Linux programs that are not (yet) specifically adapted for Ubuntu can be retrieved with the Synapticpackage manager, an easy-to-use graphical program to download applications from the Internet. I used it to download and install Scribus, an advanced desktop page layout manager capable of producing commercial grade output in PDF and Postscript.

Difficult to use for a non-professional, but it worked just fine.

## Installation

It is easy to install Ubuntu and Windows on the same computer in separate partitions. Previously that required manually repartitioning your computer with a program such as Partition Manager, but the latest Ubuntu version, Gutsy Gibbon, includes its own Linux-based partition manager, GParted, and automatically uses it to scan your computer for available space and to reconfigure that space (with your approval) to install itself. During boot-up the computer displays a menu of startup options, including Windows or Ubuntu.

I evaluated the ease of installation on an old Dell Inspiron 3800 laptop computer, with a 600 MHz Celeron CPU, 320 MB RAM and 880MB free disk space. Installation alongside the existing Windows Me went flawlessly. The computer didn't have a network card, but Ubuntu recognized the PCMIA wireless network card and connected to the Internet after I provided the router parameters.

## "Sounds Great, But Why Bother?"

For the same reasons people move out of the city to the suburbs: security and cost-of-living. To enjoy the best of both worlds, install Ubuntu side-by-side with a basic Windows program. No need for expensive MS Office or Adobe programs. Use Ubuntu for safe online access, and keep Windows for those few occasions were Linux does not (yet) provide the means. As time goes by, it will probably be possible to abandon Windows altogether. Give it a try!

## *Benefits of Using a Computer Sandbox*
By Gene Barlow
User Group Relations
Copyrighted January 2008

A computer Sandbox is newer technology that is not very well known, but, it can be quite useful in many situations. By using a Sandbox utility, you can place your computer in a protected state where you can try some rather risky things on your computer and not have your computer damaged in the trials. Once you place your computer into Sandbox mode, you can safely run anything on your computer, knowing that all changes to your hard drive will not be permanently made to your computer. While in Sandbox mode, your computer runs as if all changes to the hard drive were actually made to your system. But, at the end of using the Sandbox, you can throw away these changes, putting your computer back exactly the way it was before entering the Sandbox.

Let's take a look at some real life situations to better understand the benefits of using a Sandbox utility.

## Installing New Software

Everyone knows that when you install a new software product on your computer, parts of the product are placed all over your computer's hard drive. Entries are made to the Windows Registry, special supporting files are place in certain directories of the operating system, and other shortcut and setting files are scattered in various places on your hard drive. These are in addition to the main folder that is installed on your hard drive with the software programs. Most software will uninstall easily, but often pieces of the product are left behind on your hard drive. These leftover pieces of orphaned software can build up and slow down your computer. Some software products include hidden viruses or other bad programs as you install them. The end result is that installing new software on your computer can be a risky thing to do.

Using a Sandbox to install and test new software is a much better approach. With a Sandbox, you put your computer in Sandbox mode before you downloaded and in-

stalled the new software. Since the Sandbox lets you use the newly installed software just as if it had been permanently installed on your computer, you can run the new software to try it out and see if you like it. You can also run virus utilities to see if the installation gave you a virus you were not expecting. If you find viruses on your computer or just decide you do not like the newly installed software, you can get out of the Sandbox and throw away all traces of that software product and any hidden virus that came with it.

### Letting Others Use Your Computer

Another reason to use a Sandbox is to let others use your computer. Other users may change your computer to match the way they like to use computers. For example, many of us have grandkids that come to visit and want to play on our computer. They may download games they like, change your wallpaper and default font sizes. They may pick up viruses in the process of getting your computer changed to their needs. When they leave, your computer no longer is the same as it was before they arrived. It may take you days to get it working again like you want it to. With a Sandbox, you can place the computer in Sandbox mode before they arrive and then let them play on your computer to their hearts content. When they leave, you simply exit the Sandbox and throw away all changes that they made to your computer. It is instantly back the way it was before they started to use it.

### Computer Labs and Classrooms

User groups that have computer labs or classrooms have a similar situation. The classroom computers are setup carefully by the instructors before the class begins. Once the students have used the computer throughout the day, the computers are different and modified from

what they were in the beginning of the day. This may cause problems for the students that follow them, so the instructors will often restore the computer's hard drives to put them back to normal. With a Sandbox, this long restore process is not needed. Instead, put the computers in Sandbox mode at the beginning of the day before the students arrive. Then at the end of the day, exit the Sandbox and throw away all hard drive changes made by the students. The computers are quickly returned to their normal state as you exit the Sandbox.

### Browsing the Internet

Much of the Spyware that you pick up on your computer comes from simply browsing the internet. Some web sites are designed so that simply passing your cursor over a part of the screen is enough to activate a download of Spyware to your computer. Not only that, but your privacy is at risk when you browse the Internet. Windows automatically saves all of the places you browse to and all of the screens you see on the Internet. Browsing the Internet in a Sandbox is a much better approach. Place your computer in Sandbox mode before you start to browse the internet. Then browse all of the sites you want to. When you are done browsing the internet, exit out of the Sandbox and throw away all Spyware and traces of web sites you may have visited.

We offer three excellent Sandbox products that you may want to use on your computer. Let's look at each of these briefly to help you decide which one would best meet your needs.

### StorageCraft ShadowSurfer

The smallest and least expensive Sandbox we offer is ShadowSurfer by StorageCraft Software. This product is the quickest product to install and the easiest product to use of all of our Sandbox products. With ShadowSurfer, all changes to your hard drive are always thrown away when you exit the Sandbox,

which is what you want in most cases anyway. This excellent product runs on Win2000 and WinXP systems and is available from us at the discount price of just $20. This is an excellent beginning Sandbox product for most home users.

### Acronis True Image 11 Home Try&Decide

The next step up in ability and price is a feature that Acronis has added to their new True Image 11 Home backup utility. This feature is called Try&Decide and it is a Sandbox feature built into this award winning backup utility. Try & Decide requires that you create and use the Acronis SecureZone on your hard drive to contain the temporary changes to your hard drive. When you exit the Sandbox with this product, you can choose to keep all changes to your hard drive or throw them all away. This excellent product runs on Win2000, WinXP, and WinVista operating systems and is available from us at the discount price of just $29 for a download or $33 on a CD. This is a very good Sandbox feature that comes with an outstanding backup utility.

### StorageCraft ShadowUser Pro

The most advanced Sandbox utility we offer is ShadowUser Pro by StorageCraft Software. This is a professional-level Sandbox product that has many options and features to it. With this product, you can password protect the controls of the Sandbox, so that nobody can disable the Sandbox unless they know the password. Perhaps the biggest differences between this product and the other two Sandbox products is that you can pick and choose what files to throw away and what files to keep as you exit the Sandbox. This top of the line Sandbox product runs on Win2000 and WinXP operating systems and is available from us at the discount price of $47. This is the product you should use if you are running a

public computer workstation that needs tight controls.

A Sandbox offers you a new way to protect your computer from damage from the software you install or access on the internet. It also keeps your hard drive safe from damage caused by others using your computer. The selection of Sandbox products we offer lets you pick and choose which one is right for your needs. To order your Sandbox product, go to www.ugr.com and find the Sandbox product you are interested in. Then click on the Buy Now button on that product page to place your order using our secure web shopping cart. As you complete your order indicate the order code of UGNL0108 to qualify for these excellent discount prices. If you have questions about this new technology or about any of these products send an email to gene@ugr.com and I will try to help you.

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**The April meeting of the Genealogy SIG cancelled in April. It will resume in May.**

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# What Now--Viruses From Gadgets?

Recently viruses have found their way onto widely used tech devices: Apple iPods, digital picture frames, and TomTom navigation gear. In most cases, sources are from Chinese factories.

These viruses are appear to be from lax quality control at factories. Apparently a careless factory worker plugs an infected digital device into the factory computer for testing, infecting the whole system.

When a California man plugged a digital picture frame into his computer to add pictures, the device trigger his antivirus alerted him to the threat. It was infested with four viruses.

We all have been warned about file sharing, opening suspicious attachments, and downloading questionable files from the Internet, now we have to be cautious when we plug a digital device in our computers. Another very important reason to keep our virus programs updated.

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# DustKleenTM

By Neil Longmuir
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## Introduction

DustKleen is an innovative stand alone application from Image Trends Inc. DustKleen will automatically remove most dirt and dust from any scanned images regardless of the source. The scanned images can be color, black and white negatives, color slides including Kodachrome or prints. The technology which is patent pending, identifies the dust or debris on the image. These "defects" are removed without destroying the image quality. DustKleen is exactly the type of innovative software that digital image users need who use a scanner to covert images to a digital format. DustKleen occupies 2.97MB of hard disk space once it's been installed.

## Working with DustKleen

When was the last time you installed a stand alone program that used so little hard disk space? My test hardware is running XP Pro with an AMD 3200 processor, 1 Gig Dual Channel RAM, 320 gig of hard disk space on two hard drives, CD and DVD burners, ATI Radeon video card with 64 MB of RAM. Windows NT, 2000 and Vista operating systems are also supported. A Mac version is currently under development. The software interface is clean and very east to use. Press the ? on the bottom left of the program to get a quick overview of how to use DustKleen. Clicking on the ? will bring up more detailed help information. The help files are very well written and have all the information required to answer questions. Because DustKleen is a stand alone program it works very fast. DustKleen targets one problem, dust and debris on scanned images, and does the job it was designed to do very well. DustKleen can read BMP, JPG, PNG, PSD and TIFF files. The automatic detection and removal default setting works great for most images without any end user intervention. There will be times when the default settings do not clean up all of the dust or debris defects. However, the good news is that the default automatic detection and removal gives the end user three tools for removing dust and debris. There tools are: dust size, dust amount and dust aggression. Any additional defects can be handled using the advanced "Manual Touch Up" mode. The Manual Touch Up modes lets the end user adjust both brush and dust size to target a specific area of the image. The "Add Touch Up" feature works very similar to the healing brush in Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Photoshop Elements. If you do not like your change, Pressing Ctrl+Z will remove it immediately or you can use the "Remove Touch Up" feature to remove either an automatic or manual correction in a specific area with a single brush stroke.

People do not want to spend a lot of time in front of a computer screen correcting scanned images by hand using the healing brush in Adobe Photoshop CS. I didn't come

close to getting all the spots.

I then ran my supposedly cleaned up image through DustKleen. DustKleen found a lot more dust. This dust and debris was visible in the final print. DustKleen is an easy to use stand alone application that works and solves the problem! Question: Why not just use the "remove dust and scratches filter" that's available in both Adobe Photoshop and Elements? I tried this method as well but found that the image quality was degraded.

Scanning and removing visible dust and defects from Kodachrome slides is no easy job. I scanned the Kodachrome slides with a Minolta Dimage Scan Elite 5400. This scanner supports Kodak's hardware Digital Ice. Digital Ice is a terrific hardware solution. However, Digital Ice does not work with Kodachrome slides or black and white negatives. Even if Digital Ice did work on Kodachrome slides, it still takes approximately seven minutes to scan a slide at 2700 dpi and to clean up dust and debris.

Digital Ice works great on E6 processed slides and color negative film but is time consuming. By comparison, scanning four slides at 2700 dpi without Digital Ice takes about five and a half minutes. Cleaning up and saving the four scanned slides using DustKleen takes another minute.

Hint: Scan and save your files as PSD or TIFF. Then run DustKleen to clean up the file and save the file. When you want to make prints convert the files to JPEG and upload them to your favorite photo lab or print them on your own inkjet printers. Remember you do not lose any information when you save a file as a PSD or TIFF.

## Conclusion

Every photographer, amateur or professional need a "digital toolbox" to solve specific problems quickly. In my opinion, DustKleen if a very innovative working tool that should be in every digital photographer's digital toolbox.

# *Hasta la Vista*

by Lee Reynolds, a member of the Boca Raton Computer Society
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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.

## Configuring the Taskbar

The Taskbar works very much like previous versions of Windows, particularly XP.

You can configure some options on how it operates by right clicking an empty area on it and selecting from a popup context menu.

For example, you can decide:
> To have various toolbars such as the Quick Launch toolbar and a Desktop or Documents toolbar displayed
> Show all open windows "cascaded" like a row of dominoes one behind the other, or show them side by side, or one on top of another to cover the desktop
> Minimize all the windows to show the Desktop
> Start the Task Manager application; or lock the Taskbar so that its settings cannot be modified without unlocking it first.
> If you select Properties from the context menu, you are given further ways of customizing the Taskbar.

As in Windows XP, there are options:
> to auto-hide the Taskbar (it reduces to a very thin line which only becomes visible as a

normal Taskbar when you put your mouse over that thin line)
> keep the Taskbar visible over other open windows,
> group similar Taskbar buttons for the same application in a stacked list.

## New Option

A new option available in the Taskbar properties page, is to determine whether or not hovering your mouse over a Taskbar button shows a live preview of the corresponding window (thumbnail.)

## Customize The Notification Area

Unlike XP, you now have a separate tab to customize the Notification Area, which is the part of the Taskbar on the right hand side, normally showing the system clock, a
volume control for your speakers, a Network icon, a Safely Remove Hardware icon, a Power icon (if you are using a laptop on battery power), and others. You can put a check mark next to Hide Inactive Icons and then click the Customize button, in order to access a list of all icons that have shown up in the Notification Area.

This is broken down into two lists, those icons that are currently showing in the Notification Area, and those that have shown up in the past but are not currently there now. For each icon, you click to access a drop down list to choose Hide when inactive, Hide, or Show.

## System Time

One of the things that you can show on the Taskbar is the system time (and that was in previous versions of Windows also), but this now has some modifications.

Hover your mouse over the system time in the Notification Area, you get a balloon tip telling the system date and day of week, but if you click on the system time instead, up pops a nice looking circular clock and a calendar of the

current month, with a link to the Control Panel area where you can change the date and time settings.

In that area of Control Panel, you can now click on a tab for Additional Clocks and configure up to 2 more different system clocks to be active, each with a different time zone and time of day perhaps. If you do that, then hovering your mouse over the system time in the Notification Area will modify the balloon tip to show all active clocks, whereas clicking on system time will now show all these different clocks side by side, together with the calendar of the current month.

## MidWest Regional Conference

The Chicago Computer Society will be hosting an APCUG Regional Conference September 19, 20, and 21, 2008. There will be workshops, vender presentation, and door prizes. Each attendee will receive a Welcome Bag filled with goodies. All computer user are encouraged to attend. Watch for more information.

## QCS Member Donates Adapter

QCS wishes to thank Board of Directors member, Jerry Heimburger for his donation of an 802.11 g USB wireless adapter. This donation allows the QCS to take advantage of the improved speed of the new cable internet connection at the Tri City Jewish Center and brings our networking equipment up to its full potential. Please let Jerry know we appreciate his generosity.
**jerry@revealed.ne**t

Be sure to check you mailing label for your member expiretion date.

## QCS Member Raffle

Sharon Mack was not present at theFebruary meeting for the member raffle. Next months drawing worth $20.

You too can win by attending the main meeting each month!

## 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 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **April 2008** | 1 Apr | 2 Apr 5:30 PM QCS Board Meeting Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcdowell@mchsi.com | 3 Apr | 4 Apr Deadline for QBITS articles | 5 Apr |
| 6 Apr | 7 Apr 7:00 PM **New!** Microsoft Office SIG Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcdowell@mchsi.com | 8 Apr | 9 Apr 5:45 PM Beginners SIG * 7:00 PM **Smart Computing Magazine** | 10 Apr | 11 Apr | 12 Apr |
| 13 Apr | 14 Apr 7:00 PM Internet SIG Ted Huberts 309-792-9470 slowhand54@sbcglobal.net | 15 Apr | 16 Apr 7:00 PM Digital Media SIG Norm Dunlap 309-798-2304 normdun@gmail.com | 17 Apr | 18 Apr | 19 Apr |
| 20 Apr | 21 Apr 7:00 PM Genealogy SIG **Cancelled** 563-359-9672 judylenstevens@msn.com | 22 Apr | 23 Apr | 24 Apr | 25 Apr | 26 Apr |
| 27 Apr | 28 Apr 7:00 PM Windows SIG Larry Stone 309-787-5574 lstone521@mchsi.com | 29 Apr | 30Apr | 1 May **May 2008** | 2 May | 3 May |
| 4 May | 5 May 7:00 PM **New!** Microsoft Office SIG Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcdowell@mchsi.com | 6 May | 7 May 6:30 PM QCS Board Meeting Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcdowell@mchsi.com | 8 May | 9 May Deadline for QBITS articles | 10 May |

**\*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.**

## QCS officers

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### Membership Level

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

Quad-Cities Computer Society
Tri-City Jewish Center
2715 30th Street
Rock Island IL  61201

Wednesday
May 14, 2008
7:00 PM

**Custom Build or
Ready Make
Which Computer
is Best?**