

QBITS

Quad-Cities Computer Society
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Protecting Your PC and Securing Your Home Network

With
Jarrod Collins and
Chad Hamilton

QCS Review Moline Public Library

www.molinelibrary.com
presented by Eileen Ackerland
Reference Desk Librarian
by Joe Durham

The QCS did something different this month! We took a field trip to the Moline Public Library(MPL). Eileen Ackerland gave us a tour of the new facilities and showcased the electronic innovations that are a part of a 21st Century library. The new library is impressive, big and offers many new avenues of discovery. They just recently celebrated the 1 millionth item checked out. MPL's next goal is to record the 1 millionth patron passing through their doors.

Compared to the older library downtown this new library is almost like operating in a different universe. The architecture, collection arrangement, and indirect lighting make for a pleasant library experience. The backside of the elevator displays a Quote wall. It contains famous quotations from the world's literature on display. Stop by and see if you can guess their origins.

The library has a separately operated Cafe, and a Friends of the Library Sale Room for the sale of donated books and magazines. There is also a children's section with computers, puppet theater, and activity room in addition to a large collection of children's literature which make it an enjoyable experience for the next generation.

This new library has expanded its reach to the community with many services: in addition to books there are DVDs and VCRs for rent, a public fax machines, copying services, notary functions, and the MPL has an extensive Large Print section of books.

One of the more popular features is the Novel Conversation Kits. This is a collection of 10 books by the same author which are checked to a group for reading and discussion together. This concept is so popular that these kits cannot be reserved but are available on a first come first served basis.

—continued on next page—

This Month in *QBITS*..

APCUG Midwest Conference.....	2
Broadsides.....	3
Wireless Keyboard and Mouse Donated to QCS.....	3
Faststone Capture.....	4
Hewie's View and Reviews.....	5
Outlook & Xobni A Good Match.....	7
The New, The Best and The Worst.....	7
From the Deals Guy.....	9
Access Point Donated to QCS.....	10
QCS Meetings Dates May 2008.....	11
QCS Meeting Raffle.....	12

The QCS thanks NBS ,
the host of the qcs.org site
Network Business Systems NBS
www.nbson.com

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

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



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Library patrons will find the second floor of the MPL library quite useful. There are computer kiosks that can be reserved for one hour at a time with a library card. If you need to print anything you purchase the printing in advance at 20 cents a page. Your library account appears on the computer and gives you access to the printer upon deposit.

As a further service to patrons the fiction section is now subdivided into popular subject areas: horror, romance, science fiction, and westerns. A Best Sellers club is available. Patrons are put on this list and books by popular authors are put in reserve automatically for you.

Eileen directed us to a conference room where she showed the databases that are available to library patrons through the MPL website and the Moline Library. These databases are quite extensive and useful sources of information.

Some of the more popular ones are Prairie Cat, Job Searching, World Cat, Novel List and Reference USA. A library code number is one's password and access to this search engines.

In the Reference USA database you can obtain very detailed information on businesses through out the US. Information that includes branch offices, sales, number of employees, and credit rating.

A Moline library card is the pathway to this extensive database world. One of our members asked about financial databases. Eileen noted that the library has to be able to justify the size and use of a particular database. The site license which covers patron use can be expensive and the library has to budget its priorities accordingly. She did note that if enough demand and interest for a particular database can be shown, then purchase becomes a possibility in the future.

The MPL library has WIFI access throughout the building. The only way to print content from your computer is to transfer what you need to a portable flash device and

then take it to a library computer for print purchase and output. We could see several patrons with their own computers accessing the Internet during the tour.

Many of these features are limited to Moline Library card residents. However Eileen noted that the MPL accepts valid library cards from other libraries for normal library functions. She emphasized that if the library does not have what you request, it can often be obtained through an Inter-library loan which at the most costs \$1 depending on the location of the book.

The QCS would like to thank Eileen Ackerland for her fine presentation and tour. Please visit the library in person and consult their website www.molinelibrary.com for more details and information.

APCUG Midwest Regional Conference

Comments from Patty Lowry

The first Midwest Regional Conference since 1995 was held in Chicago in September. Judi McDowell, Diana Wolf, and I attended. There were members from 19 different user groups.

Friday night we were served cheese, fruit, and veggie trays along with soft drinks. Following the time allotted to mingle, were two presentations in the auditorium, Homeland Security and Google Earth, Sky and Maps.

Saturday started off with a continental breakfast followed by vendor presentations in the auditorium and roundtable discussion sessions in the classrooms. It was hard to decide which event to attend.

One of the discussions sessions was a remote presentation. Don Singleton was in Tulsa Oklahoma and took control of the computer in the classroom. We will see a similar demonstration of this at our February general meeting.

Sunday morning was the final session. We saw indepth demonstration of Google Earth, Sky, and Maps. The morning was concluded with the drawing for door prizes.

If you have never attended a regional event, you miss the opportunity to meet other computer user group members, see presentations by vendors showing their latest products, or take part in a discussion group topic pertaining to computer related problem and solutions.

Many are looking forward to the next regional event in 2009. There will be information about this as soon as it becomes available.

Comments From Judi McDowell

On September 19, 20, and 21, I attended my first Midwest Regional Conference sponsored by APCUG. It was held at Prairie State College in Chicago Heights and I think it should be considered a success.

I had only one problem and it was minor. When I registered online PayPal was shown to be an option, but when it came time to pay, PayPal was not an available. But since I had pre-registered during the early registration period I was able to pay at check-in with a check—problem solved. Upon arrival you received a “goody bag” that included a T-shirt, literature from many software vendors, and a couple of small gifts. The vendor fair held between presentations included additional literature plus free trial software and a chance to talk to representatives of the companies participating in person.

Continental breakfasts and a light lunch was included with the registration price which made this event a good value. I attended several good presentations; probably my favorite was a remote presentation between an APCUG member from Tulsa OK and one located in Chicago. They demonstrated 4 separate programs that could be used for this purpose and

all were FREE versions. There are paid versions that include more features and options for those who need them. I have been hoping for a couple years this technique would become readily available and easy to use because I think it is a great way for User Groups to still provide quality presentations from out of state vendors who can now show and tell us about their products from across the country as if they were standing at our podium. It is also a way for User Groups to share presentations with each other. I am looking forward to this presentation style within our own Quad-Cities User Group in the near future. The final day of the event is the day everyone is eager to attend because this is when they give away many, many, many door prizes. Lots of software donated by vendors in attendance and many more that could not be in attendance. Software is given away by ticket drawing. Everyone who registers receives one or two tickets but of course we were allowed to purchase additional tickets and the most popular is the finger tip to finger tip length for \$20.00. We look around the room for the longest armed individual and convince him to let us use his arms to measure our ticket purchase—I am sure I got an

extra dozen tickets that way than if I had used my own arm length.

APCUG plans to continue having 3 or 4 of these regional events per year in different locations throughout the US, so if you are able to attend one in the future, I hope you will. It is an informative and fun event for people who enjoy technology and like to be around others who share the passion.

Broadsides

by Ron Broadhurst, a member of the Space Coast PC Users Group, Inc., Florida
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This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).

These ideas are compiled from years of accumulations from various magazines, books, on-line sites, and my own personal experience. I claim neither originality nor ownership to any of its contents. My only intent is to share the various “tips”, “tricks”, & “hints” in hopes of helping & maybe enhancing your computing experiences. They are all intended for anyone who uses a PC. It is for beginners as well as advanced users. Enjoy and use as you will.....Ron Broadhurst

HOW TO GET RID OF “SEND ERROR REPORT TO MICROSOFT”

Right click My Computer on the desktop or in the Start menu.

Click Properties.

Click the Advanced tab.

Click the Error Reporting button at the bottom.

Click Disable error reporting. You can select the checkbox under it if you still want to be notified when errors occur.

Click OK.

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Wireless Keyboard and Mouse Donated to QCS

The Quad-Cities Computer Society wishes to thank Dale Wells of Computer Repair Center for donating a wireless keyboard and mouse.

Computer Repair Center
872 Middle Road
Bettendorf IA 52722
PH: 563-359-0042
Fax: 563-359-3411

www.computer-repair-center.com
dale@computer-repair-center.com

Note that you can disable error reporting for the operating system only, or for programs only, by unchecking the appropriate box under the Enable error reporting option.

You can also configure error reporting only for specific programs by clicking the Choose Programs button.

ALPHABETIZE START MENU LISTINGS

When you install a new program on your system, it will often appear at the end of your Start menu. Reorganizing files alphabetically in the All Programs menu does not affect how they appear in your start menu. In order to alphabetize your start menu, you'll want to click Start and select All Programs. On any file or folder right-click and then select Sort By Name. Now all of your Start menu programs are in alphabetical order. You can also sort subfolders in your Start menu the same way.

MAKE YOUR QUICK LAUNCH ICONS BIGGER

- Unlock the Toolbar
- Right click the QL toolbar
- Select the View tab
- Select large icons

PIN AN APPLICATION TO START MENU

The Windows XP Start menu includes an area where two or more Microsoft applications, usually Internet Explorer and Outlook Express, are permanently positioned for easy access. You can add your favorite application to this same convenient location. Open Windows Explorer and locate the executable file for the application. Right-click the file and select Pin To Start Menu. The application will now appear in the Start menu. To remove an application, locate it, right-click it, and select Unpin From Start Menu.

Alternatively, you can right-click the app in the Start menu and click Unpin From Start Menu.

CHANGE SYSTEM SOUNDS

Through the Control Panel you can change your system's program event sounds. Click Start and Control Panel. If you're using Category View, click Sounds, Speech, and Audio Devices; and Sounds and Audio Devices. If you are using the Classic View, click Sounds and Audio Devices. This loads the Sounds and Audio Devices Properties dialog box. Choose the Sounds tab. Select the sound you'd like to change in the Program events box, and then select a new sound from the Sounds drop-down menu. Or select a sound you've saved to the hard drive by using the Browse button to navigate to the sound file. Change as many sounds as you like. Save your changes as a sort of theme from the Sound Scheme drop-down menu above the Program events box. (Select the blank line and click Save As.) You can also choose to disable program event sounds. When you're finished click OK.

SAVING E-MAIL MESSAGES

To save e-mail messages highlight the message you want to save, then click on File -Save As. Select where you want to save the message and then save it as a text file.

FastStone Capture

A Review by Ron Hirsch, a Member and Contributing Editor of the Boca Raton Computer Society, Florida

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THE BEST SCREEN CAPTURE PROGRAM I'VE EVER USED

Since it is possible that some of you may not know what a "screen capture program" is, I'll start off by

defining that program type.

WHAT IS A SCREEN CAPTURE?

When you are working on your computer, the material you are working on/looking at, is displayed on your monitor screen, as a bunch of pixels. Often, it is nice to be able to "save" the info onscreen, or parts of it, for further uses.

Windows does offer a "Print Screen" capability, to send info to the clipboard or printer, but as with many of Windows utilities, it's a pretty barren utility, with very few options. Fortunately, there are several 3rd party utilities out there, one of which I consider the best I've ever used.

MY HISTORY WITH FASTSTONE

When I started using FastStone Capture in early 2007, it was still freeware, with a request to send in a "contribution", if one liked it. I liked it so much, I sent off a contribution immediately, and received a very nice "Thank You".

Shortly after my contribution, it became a "paid for" utility. For \$19.95, you get the program, and updates are free forever. There is a 30-day free trial period, during which you can use a fully functional version, to convince yourself that this is indeed a program that you want to keep using.

LINKS

FASTSTONE MAIN SITE

The link to the FastStone site is: faststone.org/index.htm .

While here, check out the other excellent programs, all of which are free, or click on the Download button for FastStone Capture to download it.

FASTSTONE CAPTURE PAGE

The link to page for this program is: faststone.org/FSCaptureDetail.htm or just click on the "capture" pro

gram when you are on the first link noted above.

WAYS TO USE SCREEN CAPTURES

Below, I've included some of the ways I use this screen capture program – which, by the way, I use just about every time I'm on my computer.

Remember, this program can capture a wide variety of areas on your screen - see the listing below in one of the screen captured images.

1. Have you ever installed something where a variety of screens and dialog boxes came up, and had to be filled in with info for various options, etc.? Sometime later on - weeks, months, or even years, you need to know what info and options et al that you filled in. No problem - just save each screen and store the saved screens in a named folder. Then all that info is available at a moments notice. All you have to remember is where you stored it. And you can also print out each of the screens after saving them, and file those pages in a loose leaf notebook.

2. You have some digital photos that you'd like to send to someone in an e-mail. If you just "insert" the pix into the e-mail message as many people do, they may come out to a very large size - much larger than you wanted, or expected. There are of course a variety of ways to "resize" image files, but there is one that is pure simplicity. What I do is to display each picture file in a program such as Windows "Picture and Fax Viewer", or the free Fastone Viewer offered on their site. Then adjust the size of the displayed image on the screen, to what you'd like the size to be in your e-mail. Then capture the image. When inserted into your e-mail it will be exactly the size that you captured, since it captures pixels, and monitors all have very similar pixels/inch.

3. You're on a web page, and

there is something interesting that you want to save, but you don't want to print out the whole page. Just select the desired area using Fastone Capture, and save/print that area only.

4. You're watching a video on your TV, and there was an image of someone/something you wanted to capture. Just pause the video, and select the area you want in Fastone Capture. Your image is captured. Remember, screen captures are just pixels. The capture process doesn't care what created those pixels.

Remember, this capture method saves things as an "image" (I use the jpg choice). It will not save text in editable form. If you want to do that, you must copy and paste into a text editor, such as Notepad. But, if you have a program such as "Omnipage" which is generally included when you buy a flatbed scanner, you can use it to convert a jpg image of text to an editable page of text.

Hewie's Views and Reviews

By Hewie Poplock, Windows SIG Chair, Vice Pres, Past President, The Central Florida Computer Society (CFCS)
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Welcome to this issue of Hewie's Views & Reviews. Be sure to visit Hewie's Favorites at www.hewie.net/ .

++++ iPhone choice
++++ When a Special isn't and really is or My Homer Simpson Moment
++++ New additions to Hewie's Favorites

September, 2008

My iPhone choice

Recently the new iPhone 3G was released. Since I have one of the original units, I watched with anticipation for news about the new units and services. With the release, the faster web speeds was enticing, but spending more for the same service just didn't pass the justification test.

I have decided to keep using my iPhone 2G. (I don't know if that is an accurate description.) There are several reasons for my decision. With the new phones, came an updated operating system, which is a free upgrade for my unit. Even though there were some Apple system-wide down times, I was able to upgrade my unit from version 1.1.4 to 2.0.0 on the release day. I did get some errors and had to try a second time, but it upgraded successfully.

With the upgrade, I have much of the same functionality of the new 3G phones. I can download and install any of the third party programs that are now available. The new 3G is not needed to use them. I will discuss some of those programs in a future column.

I don't have the increased connection speed of the 3G network, but much of Florida is not covered anyway. The I-4 corridor from Daytona to Tampa has 3G coverage, but if I get a few miles off of the Interstate, I will not be able to take advantage of the new speed.

The older unit cannot do GPS, but does access Google maps and I have a separate GPS unit, anyway. Other than it being newer, the iPhone 3G holds no advantages for me to pay an extra \$10 for the same service. If I want to keep the 200 per month text messages there is an additional \$5, plus the \$199 or \$299 for the phone. I will keep using my original iPhone.

When a Special isn't and really is or My Homer Simpson Moment

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Last month I talked about the 2 Logitech USB optical mice that I bought from 1saleaday for about \$5 each plus \$5 each for shipping. One of the mice worked great and the other was DOA (dead on arrival). When I e-mailed the seller, they offered to credit my account if I returned the bad one. That's nice of them, except the shipping would equal the refund, so I kept the useless unit.

At a tech meeting that I attended (The Tech SIG of CFCS), I talked about the situation and mentioned that the good mouse didn't have a battery and wondered how it worked. Everyone said that it must have a battery. I searched Google for the model to see if I could find a manual. The mice were shipped in plastic zip-locked bags with no documentation or product information.

I not only couldn't find any info, but found that the model was a Canadian unit, and not available in the US. When the good mouse died, I decided to open one of them. I pushed and pulled all of the buttons and cracks and a cover came off. Inside, there was a battery. I replaced the battery and the mouse again was working.

I then retrieved the other mouse from the throw-away box and opened it up. There was no battery inside and inserted the one AA needed. When I connected it to my laptop, the DOA mouse worked! "Duh" was my reaction.

I want to publicly apologize to **1saleaday.com** (1saleaday.com). They were generous in offering me a refund and I was being a Homer Simpson by not realizing there should be a battery inside and to check it. I guess that's why tech support always asks if the computer is plugged in before trying to solve a problem.

New additions to Hewie's Favorites

There are more new sites this issue, because we skipped a month.

USA.gov **usa.gov/**

U.S. Government's Official Web Portal for all government transactions, services, and information. It provides direct online access to federal, state, local, and tribal governments.

HP Smart Web Printing **h20247.www2.hp.com/hho/cache/482779-0-0-225-121.html**

Software to print usable web pages without cut off edges and blank pages

by-expression **byexpression.com/content/resources.aspx** Expression Web forum and tutorials

Spam Return **spamreturn.com/** Protect your privacy and avoid spam. Use Spam Return where no registration is required No Sign-up

Elance **elance.com/p/landing/buyer.html** Outsourcing to freelance programmers, web & logo designers, copywriters, illustrators and consultants

timeanddate.com **timeanddate.com/** Info that is time and date related, such as yearly and monthly calendars, countdown counters and world clock which shows current time in cities all over the world.

jooce.com **jooce.com/#** Private online desktop with public sharing capabilities. View, listen or share files photos music & video

zamzar **zamzar.com/** Convert files. Zamzar supports conversion between a wide variety of different file formats

Wordle **wordle.net/**

Generate "word clouds" from text that you provide to use however you like.

PlanningWiz Online Room Planner **v3.planningwiz.com/** Software for Furniture Retailers and Manufacturers, Building Contractors, Realtors and more

bobble yourself **xmbaseball.com/** Create a bobble head of you

Volition® **volition.com/index.html** Oldest Free Stuff site on the Internet. Includes Coupons & mystery shopping info

Password Chart **passwordchart.com/** Convert an easy to remember password. It works anywhere on any computer or offline & done in your browser

JOLT - Journal of Online Learning and Teaching **jolt.merlot.org/index.html** JOLT is a peer reviewed online journal that addresses the scholarly use of multimedia resources in education.

Audiko **audiko.net/** audiko is a simple service which helps you to make a ringtone of your favorite song

JotForm **jotform.com/** Web Based WYSIWYG Form Builder. Create and publish web forms using your browser

Mygazines **mygazines.com/** Free to browse, share, archive and customize unlimited magazine articles uploaded by the Mygazines community.

Florida Computer Crime Center

fdle.state.fl.us/Fc3/index.html
Florida Department of Law Enforcement Computer Crime Center

Picnik

picnik.com/
Edit photos the easy way - online in your browser

Starting in Second Life thinkerer.org/SLintChan/SLintroch.htm

What you need to know to get started in Second Life. Lots of good help.

Buzzillions

buzzillions.com/
Product reviews from Verified Buyers about Digital Cameras, Sporting Goods, Appliances, Mens and Womens Shoes, Toys and Video Games, and more.

ZabaSearch

zabasearch.com/
Free People Search and Public Information Search Engine - Telephone Numbers and Addresses Revealed Free. No Registration Required. Instant Results

YouMail

youmail.com/home/index.do
YouMail is a free online voice-mail replacement with personal greetings

Outlook & Xobni, a Good Match

by Vinny La Bash, Member of the Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, Inc., Florida
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Xobni is Inbox spelled backwards, but there is nothing back-

ward about this free plug-in module from www.xobni.com. The more email you receive, the more you will like and appreciate Xobni. The program works as a data mining machine for your stored emails. Without Xobni, the best you can do with Outlook is to organize your email by folders, messages, and dates. With Xobni, you can organize your email by people, email histories, and personal, social or business relationships.

You need Outlook 2003 or 2007 to use Xobni. Either XP or Vista will work fine with the program. The folks at Xobni are also working on versions for other email programs such as Gmail and Yahoo Mail. How long this will take is unknown. Downloading and installation is quick, easy, and seamless. The program requires some time to synchronize itself with outlook. The amount of time will be determined by the size of the email data base you have accumulated. I had slightly over two thousand emails in eighteen different folders, and that took about ten minutes.

If you keep a lot of information on your contacts, it's difficult to extract that information in a way that can be useful with Outlook. All that changes once Xobni is installed. Changes begin with an attractive panel that sits on the right side of your Outlook screen and doesn't infringe or interfere with any of Outlook's standard functions. The panel interface slides open when you need it, and discretely closes when you don't.

You get two options within this panel. The first brings up a blank email which is nice. For you organizational types, the second option lets you send meeting requests. A real time saver is the simultaneous display of open time slots that Xobni drags from your Outlook calendar.

Your contact profiles display at the top of the Xobni panel with pictures if one is in the profile. That's followed by the phone number and a thread of any conversations

you've had along with files you've exchanged. Specifics topics are quickly found with Xobni's search tool, and there is a handy slider that exposes or hides lines of email text. While it appears you could be getting bogged down in details, the material is organized so that navigating through the information is an easy, pleasant journey filled with discovery.

Skype's VoIP service integrates with PC, Xobni quite well. A mouse click on a phone number within a Xobni profile generates a SkypeOut call.

You can use Xobni for simple searches within Outlook, and Xobni searching is lightning fast in comparison. That's probably because it's integrated within Outlook rather than running on top of it like most third party applications. Xobni gives you more than express searching. It organizes social information logically with additional functions that Outlook simply can't match. How often have you given up searching with Outlook because the program lacks even the simplest logic for intelligent searching?

Instead of treating mail conversations, contacts and calendars as separate entities, Xobni weaves them together in a responsive, intuitive interface. It's hard to go wrong with this tool. Go to www.Xobni.com and get started.

The New, The Best, and The Worst

September 2008
by Pim Borman, Webmaster,
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Could Cuil Cool Google?

Let me digress. I suspect that most of my readers, like myself, have reached that stage in life when our wisdom exceeds our wits. To make sense of our surroundings we

—continued next page—>

must keep our glasses clean and a fresh battery in our hearing aid.

Recently my son, Mike, and I were watching a DVD from his vast collection (Batman Begins, in case you're wondering). Mike turns on the subtitles for me, so it wasn't until we took a break for some light refreshments that I noticed that my hearing aid battery had died. As I proceeded to insert a fresh battery, Mike marveled at the tiny disk that successfully powers a small in-ear hearing aid for several weeks. I told him that they are unlike watch batteries and that they are air-powered to the best of my recollection. Before the first use, they are activated by removing a small foil tab to admit air. Mike appeared to question my wisdom, if not my wits.

Just to be sure of the facts, back home I fired up Google and searched for "zinc air battery." That yielded 433,000 results, confirming that my recollection of the technology was correct. One of the results made me sit up and take notice:

Zinc Air Batteries

With the removal of a sealing tab, oxygen from the air is introduced into the cell. A zinc-air battery usually reaches full operating voltage within 5 ...

I often have trouble getting a new battery to work right away and have been scratching the electrodes with a pen knife to assure good electrical contact. The incomplete reference snippet teasingly suggested that the battery simply needed 5 somethings (minutes maybe?) to activate. Maybe the scratching had nothing to do with it? I tried to retrieve the full article, but the link was dead and the cache was empty. None of the other Google retrievals mentioned anything about activation time.

I recently read about a new search program, called Cuil (pronounced "cool"), meaning "wisdom" in Gaelic. Reportedly it improves on Google by scanning articles for organization of ideas, instead of

number of links. It was mostly created by former Google employees and can be accessed at www.cuil.com.

Early reviews of Cuil have been mixed, so I thought this was a good time to give it a try.

As a result of my query about "zinc air battery," Cuil produced exactly 8 results, including 5 virtually identical ones from a single vendor site, www.batteriesplus.com/. Not very helpful. So much for Cuil, as it stands now.

The same query on Yahoo yielded 4,270,000 results, with the first page mostly from hearing aid battery sellers that probably paid to be listed first. The teasing reference found earlier with Google was listed by Yahoo at the bottom of the page, but it also ended in 5... (what?).

I went back to Google and narrowed the search to "zinc air battery activation." That yielded the mysterious reference right on top, adding that the activation time was 5 seconds.

Well, it takes longer than 5 seconds to insert the battery and check the hearing aid by holding it in the closed fist and listening for its feedback squeal.

With a magnifying glass I detected 3 tiny air holes under the tab in the positive top of the battery. Certainly, it would take some time for sufficient air to diffuse through those little holes to activate the battery. I ran a quick experiment, checking how fast the voltage builds up in the hearing aid battery after removing the seal tab, and found that it took about 1 1/2 minutes. With the battery under load in a hearing aid it may well take a little longer than that.

Next time my hearing aid needs a new battery I may only need to wait a few minutes for it to get up to speed.

Meanwhile I'll stick with Google for my searches until Cuil has added more wits to its wisdom.

Zinc-Air Batteries

(side bar)

Zinc-Air batteries, as used in hearing aids, are great performers in comparison to other types of batteries. On an equal weight basis they carry 4-5 times as much charge as lead-acid, nickel-cadmium and nickel-hydride batteries, and 30% more than lithium ion batteries. They maintain a constant power output over better than 85% of the time to full discharge. Because of inexpensive ingredients: zinc, aqueous caustic, carbon and some plastic membranes, encased in a metal container, they are inexpensive to manufacture. The batteries are non-toxic and pose no danger to the environment on disposal. They are not a fire hazard, like lithium batteries.

They have two major shortcomings: a limited life time when air is admitted, and they are not rechargeable.

Zinc-Air batteries are fuel cells that consume zinc. In comparison to the much-ballyhooed hydrogen fuel cells, zinc is inexpensive, easily transported and stored, non-hazardous, and the spent fuel, zinc oxide, is easily regenerated electrically from renewable sources.

Large-scale experiments have demonstrated that the batteries can power city buses for a full day's use, using recyclable zinc-electrolyte cartridges for fuel. The US Army is a large-scale user of Zinc-Air batteries in battlefield operations. They provide 4 to 6 times the run time of conventional batteries, and are used with portable equipment, in locations where reliable electrical power is not available.

Desktop Publishing With Scribus

Now that the format of this newsletter is no longer restrained to eight Xeroxed pages for mailing, I will add some color and variety to the layout. That requires switching from the OpenOffice Writer word processor I have been using to a desktop publishing program, pref-

erably inexpensive and easy to use.

I considered my old copy of MS PictureIt! Publisher, but that uses a proprietary file format not easily converted to pdf.

I found an offer of a free desktop publishing program online, Pages-Plus, list price \$129.99, with a special download offer for only \$10. Inexpensive enough to be worth a try. I paid my dues, downloaded and installed the program. The interface was not very intuitive, so I started with chapter 1 of the tutorial. That pointed me in the right direction and I eagerly went on to chapter 2. Surprise! The rest of the tutorial required downloading or ordering a CD at a cost of \$99.99! I quickly lost interest.

I am much in support of Open-Source (free) programs, many of which are quite sophisticated, such as OpenOffice Writer and The Gimp. At one time I had looked at Scribus, an Open Source, full-featured desktop publishing program, available in versions for Linux, the MAC and Windows. At the time I was scared away by its extensive set of icons and cascading menus since I could not find a helpful manual.

I decided to give Scribus another try and went looking for online help. Happily I found an excellent tutorial at http://wiki.scribus.net/index.php/Get_Started_with_Scribus. I am still learning as I am writing this, but if the newsletter looks different when you read this you'll know that I learned at least the basics of Scribus and desktop publishing. As usual, it all seems so simple when you follow the tutorial, but when you are on your own the feared unintended consequences rear up. Fortunately there is a lot of helpful information to fall back on in the aforementioned reference, so I'm getting there.

Of course, the desktop publishing program is only a tool, and it will require new skills to design attractive layouts. Suggestions are more than welcome!

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From the DealsGuy***

by Bob Click, Greater Orlando Computer Users Group

*A Word of Caution; I have not tried any of the items listed below so do your homework if you're interested.

*Share Your Artistry With The World Acoustica

<<http://mixcraftlive.com>> has introduced a free service allowing anyone to upload their music, podcasts or sonic creations to share with the world. The site allows artists to create an account, upload artwork and publish up to 100 megabytes of music. Each artist account has a forum and a blog to help foster a community and fan database. Each song can be ranked and, if popular enough, can appear on the top song charts. Artists can update an event calendar with their 'gigs' so that their fans can find out when the next performance is. The service is completely free and can be used by anyone wishing to showcase their sonic creations recorded with Mixcraft. Mixcraft is a multitrack music recording studio for Windows computers and has recently been awarded the Computer Music Value Award and the Keyboard Magazine Key Buy Award. It is seen as the Windows equivalent of Apple's Garage Band for price and functionality. **MixcraftLive.com** adds even more value to the software and is intended to showcase the musical skills and talents of artists recording with Mixcraft. Mixcraft now includes an additional 574 new music loops and over 300 new

sound effects which are automatically downloaded on demand. These sounds are free to all Mixcraft customers. The loops include 13 exciting new Song Kits; Breakbeat, Crunk, Drum N Bass, Electro House, Film Score, House DJ, Jungle Drum N Bass, Progressive Euro, Southern Hip Hop, Synth House, Tribal House, Underground Hip Hop, and Urban Street Mix!

*Do You Love Games?

MyRealGames has launched a free gaming portal that provides downloadable and online casual games. The portal <<http://www.MyRealGames.com>> is aimed to ensure a great pastime for audiences of all ages. Arcade, puzzles, shooters, dress-ups, sports and more are all free now. The portal also features free games, which were only available in "try-before-you-buy" versions before. MyRealGames.com can be recommended to those who are tired of advertisements in games because they don't have disturbances like annoying banners between levels. The only thing obligatory is a visit of the site after a user exits a game. The games are available in both 2D and 3D, and have three working languages. With more than two hundred games, MyRealGames.com has something in stock for everybody. If you're an arcade game lover, don't forget to check out Space Bubbles. There are extraordinary power-ups and amazing bonuses to discover within every puzzle! Enjoy endless hours of bubble blasting action: <<http://www.myrealgames.com/files/space-bubbles.exe>>. Exercise your billiard skills with the help of Billiard Masters or Cool 3D billiards, which you can play against computer or friends. The atmosphere of a comfortable place makes the game even better. Join billiard club at: <<http://www.myrealgames.com/files/billiard-masters.exe>>. Try Nuclear Bike. Complete levels
—continued next page—>

possible to achieve maximum score points. Speed up! Traffic police can't catch you here:

<http://www.myrealgames.com/en/play_online_nuclearbike.html>.

*Here Is Another Free Defrager, This One Has Rave Reviews!

IObit is proud to announce the release of Smart Defrag. Smart Defrag was in development for 1 1/2 years, tested by over one million users, and is now available to all PC users for free. Most users cannot clearly know the current fragmentation status of their hard disk, and have no good control over performing the defragmentation. "We have taken care of PC users' needs in our free Smart Defrag" says Hugo Dong, president of IObit. Smart Defrag features include:

- An "install it and forget it" feature that works automatically and quietly in the background of the computer.

- Besides defragmenting, it also places the frequently used data into the fastest area of the disk.

- Smart Defrag has the industry's leading defragmenting engine, specially designed for modern, large hard drives.

- Free for home, organization, and business and 100% safe from any spyware, adware and virus.

- Designed for Windows 2000, XP, Vista and future Windows 7.

Smart Defrag is now available in English and other languages. More information and free downloads are available at

<<http://www.iobit.com/iobitsmartdefrag.html>>.

*Everybody Talks About It, But Here is More Than Talk

Other than spam, a frequently discussed subject is the privacy of your computer. There is a place on the Web where there is help. Check into <<http://www.saltmeadow.com/privacy>> where you will find seven tools for working on the privacy of your computer. Some of

Officers 2008 - 2009

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Other

Resource Center Mgr.....Judi McDowell.....(309) 314-1780 jmcdowell@mchsi.com

them you may already know about them, and others you may not. Best of all, it is a collection of all freeware for your use.

That's it for this month. I'll have some other new product announcements on my Web site. Meet me here again next month if your editor permits. This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers or freebies I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of any products, no matter how enthused I might sound. Bob (The Cheapskate) Click <bobclick@bellsouth.net>.

Access Point Donated to QCS

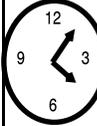
The Quad-Cities Computer Society wishes to thank Dale Wells of Computer Repair Center for donating an access point to extend the range of our internet connection.

Computer Repair Center

872 Middle Road
Bettendorf IA 52722
PH: 563-359-0042
Fax: 563-359-3411

www.computer-repair-center.com
dale@computer-repair-center.com

QCS Meeting Dates

Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Fri	Sat
		November 2008				1 Nov 
2 Nov	3 Nov 7:00 PM Microsoft Office SIG Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcowell@mchsi.com	4 Nov 	5 Nov 6:30 PM QCS Board Meeting Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcowell@mchsi.com	6 Nov	7 Nov	8 Nov
9 Nov	10 Nov 7:00 PM Internet SIG Ted Huberts 309-792-9470 slowhand54@sbcglobal.net	11 Nov	12 Nov 5:45 PM Beginners SIG * 7:00 PM Computer Security	13 Nov	14 Nov	15 Nov
16 Nov	17 Nov 7:00 PM Genealogy SIG Len Stevens 563-359-9672 judylenstevens@msn.com	18 Nov	19 Nov 7:00 PM Digital Media SIG Norm Dunlap 309-798-2304 normdun@gmail.com	20 Nov	21 Nov	22 Nov
23 Nov	24 Nov 7:00 PM Windows SIG Larry Stone 309-787-5574 lstone521@mchsi.com	25 Nov	26 Nov	27 Nov	28 Nov	29 Nov
30 Nov	1 Dec 7:00 PM Microsoft Office SIG Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcowell@mchsi.com	2 Dec December 2008	3 Dec 6:30 PM QCS Board Meeting Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcowell@mchsi.com	4 Dec	5 Dec	6 Dec

**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
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Moving? Send an address change to:
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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.!

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Membership Level

		New	Renewal
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Individual	\$30	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family	\$40	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

QCS Meeting
Wednesday
November 12, 2008
7:00 PM
Protecting Your PC
and Securing Your
Home Network
 With
Jarrold Collins and
Chad Hamilton