

QBITS

Quad-Cities Computer Society
Newsletter for February 2009
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www.qcs.org

QCS Review Picasa3 picasa.google.com

presented by
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By Joe Durham

System Requirements:

Windows XP/Vista
Mac OS X
Linux
256 MB of Ram
100 MB of available hard drive space

Norm Dunlap, leader of the Digital Media SIG gave our members an excellent overview of this fine, **free** photo editing program available from Google. Norm noted that he used Picasa2 primarily as image folder tool. He wasn't impressed with the photo editing features of Picasa2. This all changes with the release of Picasa3. He found it to be a more useful and powerful program.

One of the most noteworthy features of this application: Picasa3 does not alter the original image. Any changes you invoke through Picasa3 can be eliminated with the click of a mouse at the program menu: picture --> undo. Usually, when you edit images or photos you have to be concerned that you may lose the original image after editing it. Picasa3 eliminates this fault line and as a result you can be more bold in your creativity and choices with this software safety net. In Picasa all editing is performed on a copy by default.

When you install Picasa3 Norm suggested that you do not accept the default search pattern. Instruct Picasa to scan only My-documents, My-Pictures, My-Desktop areas. If you do a full scan Picasa will snag every kind of image on your

—continued on next page—

Wednesday
February 11th, 2009
7:00 PM

**Acronis
Hard Drive
Management
with Gene Barlow**

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

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Views and opinions expressed
by presenters
do not necessarily reflect those
of the Quad Cities Computer Society

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

With winter upon us, be sure and
check the web site for meeting
information. www.qcs.org

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QBITS co-editor
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The QCS will then arrange to email your next issue to you.



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machine. This means that icons, images from your internet browser and other programs will be indexed by Picasa. In most case you have no use for these extra photo sources.

When Picasa3 begins, your screen will display the folders of images residing in your computer in thumbnail size representations of them. The bottom of the display windows contains a loupe tool. With the loupe tool you can magnify the images on your screen. With the slide of the mouse along the bar, Picasa3 immediately enlarges the image display to accommodate the new settings.

The search engine has been improved. There is more opportunity to move your photographs into more logical folder themes. Again as you rearrange and move things around you are working not with the originals, but a thumbnail version. Picasa3 does this by managing the .ini files that accompany "official photos".

By typing "QCS Picasa3 demo", in the search window Norm was able to immediately bring up the photo set he was discussing before our group. By dragging and dropping you can move photos easily.

Some of the new Picasa3 features include:

- Smart Cropping Tool
- Fill Light Tool
- Retouch image improvements
- Watermarks
- Batch Editing
- Album management

In a sample photo, the left pane of the screen has available three different crop styles. These crop styles can be dynamically changed also.

One of the more interesting editing features is the Fill Light tool. This component brings an adjusted light filter to your picture which in the Norm's photo selection brought increased clarity and form to his image.

Next Norm brought up an old

photograph with scratches and imperfections. With the Retouch tool, he was able to eliminate those imperfections by first clicking the offending area and then clicking a replacement color point. Within seconds he created a picture that looked fresh and new as the day it was made.

In today's Internet ready world, you may want to prevent others from misusing or adopting your photo work as their own. The Watermark tool in Picasa3 is the way to protect your work. You export your image. The export menu at the bottom has a handy Watermark input area. You type in your text and the Watermark is affixed in the lower right hand corner of your image.

If you have several images to edit, the Batch Editing function can apply all of the changes across an entire series that you select. Norm mentioned that this feature is quite useful when uploading all of the images from your digital camera. Some may be horizontal, some may be vertically arranged. By selecting them all you can change the view to be the same for every image.

The thumbnail images of your folders and albums are not static in Picasa3. Use the Loupe, it resides in the lower right hand corner of the screen. By moving the sliding bar the thumbnail images can be enlarged to view them more easily.

Vicki Wassenhove described the web side of Picasa3. It is quite easy to upload you images to Web folders for others to view on the Internet. The bottom toolbar in Picasa3 has buttons to upload your images to web albums, and blogs. There is even a link to commercial online printing services through which you can get printed sets of you work.

To say the least Norm and Vicki were not able to share with us the many useful features of this fine program. It doesn't contain the complex features of commercial

products like layers. Norm and Vicki shared their enthusiasm for this product. And it is free.

I would encourage you to visit Norm's Digital Image SIG where further discussion and exploration of the many Picasa3 features will be discussed in the months ahead. If enough interest is generated, the QCS may create a mini-SIG devoted to Picasa3. Email Norm and Vicki with your comments and questions!

Quick Overview

picasa.google.com/features.html

Dutch Photographer's Picasa Web Album

picasaweb.google.com/Mirudimi

Nominating Committee Report (to date)

At the opening of the program meeting March 11th, a 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 you are interested or know of someone interested in being a director-at-large, contact Jerry Heimburger at jheim6407@gmail.com.

ZoomWare

www.getzoomware.com

by Patty Lowry

Most of us spend many hours a day at the computer. This can lead to a condition defined by the American Optometric Association as Computer Vision Syndrome. The symptoms of CVS are impaired vision, eyestrain, headaches, blurred vision, dry eyes, and neck and shoulder pain.

Ai Squared had developed a product called ZoomWare. ZoomWare is a screen magnifier. There are four ways to enhance your computing experience.

The first one is the screen magnifier. This is found by clicking on the view tab. You have three different choices for enhancing your monitor screen. The first is to magnify the whole screen. It will increase in size up to two times larger. ZoomWare's xfont keeps the images clear. As you move your mouse around the screen, the built-in tracking feature follows your mouse pointer around so you can see what you want. The second view feature is like a magnifying glass. There are two sizes and they work like an ordinary magnifying glass. They enlarge the area only under the lens. I find these handy when trying to read the fine print. I also used the magnifying glass when edit a photo. The magnification works not only on installed applications, it also works while on the Internet.

The second feature the color tab. The color enhancement has three options: normal; reverse video which reverses the black and whites on your screen; and the third option is tint. There is a dropdown color palette that will let you choose the tint you want for the white areas on your screen to help reduce screen glare.

The pointer tab is the third feature. Here again there are three options: normal, small colorful pointer, and large colorful pointer

which lets you choose the size and color of your pointer. If you have ever had a hard time finding you pointer on the screen, try choosing the large pointer and a colorful option.

The final option is the cursor tab. By choosing the enhanced option, colored triangles appear above and below the blinking text cursor.

For a free trial, go to **getzoomware.com**. As we get a little older, we often need a little help seeing the smaller print on our computers. This is a program that will be used many times.

System requirements: Windows Vista (32 bit) or Windows XP (SP2), 1 GHz Pentium 4 or equivalent, 512 MG Ram or 1 GB for Vista, and 50 MB free hard disk space.

For special user group pricing, contact Judi McDowell, jmcdowell@mchsi.com for the discount code.

Cybenews

gary.stanley.net/cybernews.htm

By Gary Stanley

Welcome to the January 2009 Edition of Cyber News, an ad free, spam free online magazine emanating from Stanley's Studio (Click link to see studio photo) gary.stanley.net/studio.htm in Phoenix, Arizona. In Cyber News we'll try to pass along some useful tips and information about your computer, the Internet, computer products, digital photography, other related topics, and some stuff that's not related at all.

2008 is history and there's a brand new year ahead of us! This month our new President and his family will move into the White House. The inaugural parade on January 20th promises to be the biggest ever. Obama enters the Presidency with a huge list obstacles ahead for our Nation. Patience on all fronts will be required as they won't all be

—continued next page—

resolved overnight, but better times are ahead for America! Those who voted Republican still have to stay positive for the good of our Country.

January is the month that conjures up thoughts of cold weather, new year resolutions, and football play-offs. This year, Super Bowl 43 www.nfl.com/superbowl43 will be played in Tampa Bay on February 1st with the half time entertainment provided by Bruce Springsteen. www.brucespringsteen.net/news/index.html Personally I think the commercials will be more entertaining than 'The Boss.' It seems like yesterday that Super Bowl 42 was right here in Phoenix.

February 1st is also the final day of the FBR Golf Tournament held in Scottsdale, Arizona. J.B. Holmes won last year in a play-off with Phil Mickelson. This is the fourth tour stop of the new season, and you can find the entire 2009 schedule here. www.pgatour.com/2008/r/11/10/2009.sked/index.html

This month starts the new series of a couple of my favorite TV shows. One of the most highly rated shows ever is American Idol www.americanidol.com/ and it cranks up again January 13th and 14th on the Fox Network. I love music and this program discovers the new singing super stars of the future. I believe you have to be 16 to appear on the show, so 7 year old Celina Hristov www.flixy.com/celina-hristov-singing-talent.htm has a few years to wait. Do you think she will be ready by then? I also like "The Bachelor" abc.go.com/primetime/bachelor/index?pn=index which premieres on ABC January 5th.

Last month a revolutionary new product hit the market, a chainless bicycle. The chain is being replaced by a belt and that has already happened with other sport vehicles like ATVs and motorcycles. Reportedly the belt will last three times longer than the thing that sometimes tears up your pants.

What's new for 2009 in the world

of computing? The big news is the release sometime this year of Windows 7, Microsoft's new operating system that will replace Vista. Most of us will make the upgrade from XP having skipped Vista. XP has been a very good operating platform and we just hope that Windows 7 will measure up to what Microsoft is hyping. (www.microsoft.com/windows/windows-7/)

You may be in the market for a new computer, and may have waited until January for "after Christmas" sales. If so there's some things to take into consideration. Plugging in a new computer doesn't mean that everything will be just like your old one. Data files, music, photos, and possibly other stuff will have to be transferred and some of your favorite programs will have to be reinstalled on the new machine. You should take inventory of your old computer to determine your course of action. To most people this chore is daunting so allow extra money for someone else to do it for you. More on this from CNN Technology www.cnn.com/video/#/video/tech/2008/12/06/dcl.data.doctor.new.computer.cnn

After all this is accomplished and you are satisfied that you have everything from your old computer, there is one more step. You must make sure that all your personal information is properly deleted from your old machine if you are planning to part with it. Here's an example (www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,465985,00.html) of what could happen if you don't. This doesn't involve a computer, but a cell phone which is maybe just as bad.

There are probably very few people who haven't watched a video on "You Tube." It's the world's most popular online video sharing site. But what you might not know is that last month You Tube made High Definition available. This technology makes a video look

much sharper and more fun to watch. So the next time you watch a You Tube www.youtube.com/ video look at the bottom right corner and click on the words "Watch in High Quality." You won't see this on all videos though.

A while back I told you about hulu. This is a very cool site where you can watch full length movies, TV shows, and all kinds of other stuff. Fix some popcorn, dim the lights, and have some fun. You can even watch in full screen. Check it out. www.hulu.com/

Speaking of videos, here's a couple of short ones that will amuse you. The first is shot from a guy's truck as he sits at a railroad crossing and along comes a fast moving rail snow plow. www.flixy.com/snow-plowing-train.htm?a=1 Don't you wish you could shovel your driveway that fast? The second one involves two unlikely animals showing affection for each other www.flixy.com/parrot-cat-massage.htm and it will bring a smile to your face.

I'm now going to shuffle a deck of cards. I'm spreading them out now and would like you to pick any card you please. Look at it, focus on the card, and now slide it back into the deck. Concentrate on your card. Now I'll shuffle again, and I believe your card will be the 16th card from the top. Let's count them out together..... 13, 14, 15, 16. Is this your card?

gary.stanley.net/ace.htm

Being a pilot and having made a few parachute jumps, I find this game to be fun and challenging. Remember to compensate for the wind. If the airplane has a head wind you want to jump after the target and drift back. Good Luck www.bassfiles.net/parachute.swf

If you are reading Cyber News this month, I know that you must be an amazing person! You are fun, educated, active, articulate, eager for new knowledge and new adventures. With my love for photography, I'd love to take your picture. Would you mind? Smile!

www.flixxy.com/validation-short-film.htm?a=0

Never compare yourself to someone else. You are unique and there never has been nor never will be another you. Be proud of yourself and realize that you can do things and have talents that other people may not possess. Here's a story about a man who always thought little of himself and has taken the term "little" to the extreme. He can't read or write but has turned his talent into millions! Details from ABC News www.guzer.com/videos/needle-art.php

You might like to check out my blog. There are millions of blogs on the Internet. Blogs got their name from Web log which is simply someone's thoughts about anything kept in the form of a journal. On mine you will occasionally find supplements to Cyber News such as Virus alerts or other computer information that I think might be important to you. You can include it in your favorites if you like, so you can refer to it during the month. My Blog. gary-stanley.blogspot.com/

You may also enjoy browsing my Photo Site

www.pbase.com/gary_stanley
You'll see over 1,000 pictures that I've taken from around the world.

If you are using Outlook Express as your email client don't forget how to speed it up. After deleting messages in your inbox and sent items box, then right click on the deleted items box and choose "Empty Deleted Items Folder." Now that your housekeeping is accomplished click on File at the top of the page, then Folder, and "Compact All Folders." This will condense all that empty space and things will run smoother now. Completing this task will dump a bunch of stuff in your Recycle Bin and that's okay. Now run CCleaner and speed away! You can find details about Ccleaner here

gary.stanley.net/maintenance.htm

Thought for the month. "Think of yourself as a magnet, and attract the things you want into your life."

Also, "Don't worry about tomorrow because God is already there!"

Thanks for being here and Happy New Year! Remember to stay Positive and.....

"Live life with passion, in a constant state of joy, and with an attitude of gratitude!"

FromThe DealsGuy

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

They Said It Couldn't Be Done

Have you ever wondered what goes on behind the scenes when a company sheds one of its holdings? When the separation between Daimler's and Chrysler's financial systems needed to happen, many said that would not be achieved for years, but one guy decided the experts were wrong and accomplished wonders. Read this fascinating story at:

www.informationweek.com/news/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=211200970.

Here's an article about what some schools are doing to gather data that would help improve the students chances for getting the most out of school. It's lengthy, but is at:

www.informationweek.com/news/business_intelligence/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=211600206&pgno=1&queryText=&isPrev=.

Some 'letters to the editor' printed later were also interesting from folks that said that teachers also should share the responsibility for a good education for students.

Just a reminder about the special offer for Diskeeper that is still good.

www.diskeeper.com/purchase/purchase.aspx Also, I have not tried any of the products below except TeamViewer.

Reminder

I have been using TaxAct to do my income tax for a few years now

and I'm happy with it, although I do use the pay version because it brings data forward from last year to edit and the free version doesn't; you must type in all the data again. The free version also does one free E'file for you, and if there's a refund, you'll get it back in ten days. Visit www.taxact.com.

DVD Converter At No Cost

DVDVideoSoft Ltd. has updated their Free Video to Flash Converter:

With Free Video to Flash Converter it is very easy to enrich a corporate web site or a personal blog with a good looking video. The program offers over 80 different themes for the flash player. Free Video to Flash Converter converts video files, one by one, or several files at once, to flash (SWF and FLV). Do the whole movie or just a portion in order to make a required video.

The updated Free Video to Flash Converter has a completely new player that meets all up-to-date standards and has all necessary features. Among them are:

- full screen mode;
- volume control;
- autoload enable/disable feature;
- autoplay enable/disable feature;
- loop playback;
- big play button on the video;
- play list;
- subtitles support;
- hot keys support.

Free Video to Flash Converter's design is somewhat strict, but the colors of all player elements are customizable. Now everyone can find the matching one for the particular site. The application runs under both XP and Vista; very convenient for the majority of users.

Free Video to Flash Converter is available at www.dvdvideosoft.com/free-dvd-video-software.htm for immediate free download. The program contains no spyware or

—continued next page—

adware and no activation or registration is required.

Now For A New Task Manager

AnVir Software has released AnVir Task Manager Pro 5.4, a complete application that lets you control everything that's going on while using your computer. AnVir Task Manager manages startup programs and active processes and removes spyware while offering a great variety of Windows enhancements. No need to install dozens of system utilities. You need only one program instead; AnVir Task Manager.

This Task Manager replacement analyzes everything that's currently active on your system and displays it on a tabbed interface. It displays programs that are scheduled to run upon Windows start, as well as all active processes, and services. It shows full information about each process including command line, its DLLs in use, inbound and outbound traffic, disk load, tray icon, performance graph, and Internet connections.

AnVir Task Manager monitors the system's workload, dropping icons in the system tray that indicate CPU usage (including a breakdown by application), hard drive temperature, free space, disk activity (again with per-application info), laptop battery, memory, and network inbound and outbound traffic. You always know exactly what's loading your PC's processing power.

AnVir Task Manager automatically provides a security risk rating for each active process, service and startup program. The security risk rating indicates the likelihood of a program being potential spyware, malware or a Trojan. The rating is based on behavior, code analysis, and integrated database with information about 70,000+ startup programs, Internet Explorer toolbars and services. When any program tries to add itself to startup, AnVir Task Manager shows a notification and enables you to cancel each new startup program you con-

sider useless or harmful. Right click on any suspicious process or file and check it on [virustotal.com](http://www.virustotal.com) with 30 antivirus products.

AnVir Task Manager makes using XP or Vista much handier. With it you can minimize selected application windows to the system tray to save taskbar space. You can make windows semi-transparent, or pin them "always on top" by just right-clicking on the title of any running application. Also, you get the list of recently used folders in Open/Save dialogs. On Windows XP it shows the drive's free space with a colored horizontal bar in Windows "My Computer."

AnVir Task Manager offers a very useful Tweaker that gives you direct access to many Windows settings, enabling you to make your operating system behave the way you want. Tweaker also includes many settings that cannot be accessed in Windows at all without directly editing the registry. AnVir Task Manager dramatically accelerates your PC or Windows boot process. The Startup tab shows all programs that run on Windows start. It includes name, file path, company, and description. You can disable or delete programs that you don't need and your PC will run much faster.

With its "Delayed Startup" feature, you can set up any startup program to load one or more minutes later after Windows startup. This allows you to begin using the computer without waiting for Windows to load all startup applications. Also, you can run startup programs as minimized to system tray, or as floating icons.

AnVir Task Manager runs on Windows XP/Vista/2003/2008 and is available in Pro version for \$59.95, standard version for \$39.95 and a free version, which still has a lot of functions. Users Group members get 15% discount from the retail price using the coupon code "user group." You won't see that on their Web site. 20-days evaluation trial is available free from www.anvir.com.

Take Control Remotely

Having someone talk you through fixing a problem on your computer doesn't always accomplish the task very well, besides taking a lot of time. Perhaps a better solution would be for the other person to take control of your machine and physically do the job before your very eyes, which sometimes happens when you call a company's tech support. This could also be a better system for a helper to teach you how to use your software to accomplish a special task.

www.Teamviewer.com might be the answer for this, and the product is free.

Hewie Poplock www.hewie.net of Central Florida Computer Society told me he tried this and it works well. Both parties need the product on their computer, but only one actually needs it installed for a session. The other can simply run it without actually installing it. Check their Web site for more information. In fact, he set up a session with my machine, although on the first try, I accidentally had control of his machine, so we had to start over, but the connection was easy. According to their Web site, we could have exchanged control, but we didn't realize that. He checked some settings on my machine and then I asked him to actually transfer a file from my floppy drive to his machine. While I could watch him moving the cursor around to check my settings, I was surprised that I couldn't see it when he did the file transfer and he didn't know a way to make it show up for me, but he also transferred a jpeg of a document to my machine. If your file is too large for an e-mail, this method would do the file transfer quickly and easily.

Hewie also suggested another remote control product, but has not fully tried it out. It's called CrossLoop and Don Singleton has an article about it in his APCUG Reports, just released. Visit reports.apcug.org/2009q1.htm to get that publication.

That's it for this month. I'll have

some more new product announcements on my Web site that didn't offer discounts. 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. Visit my Web site at www.dealsguy.com

Roberts Rules of Computer Order

1. You will never have an entire blank disk.
2. If you do bring along a blank disk, you won't need it.
3. If you don't bring along a blank disk, it will be the only opportunity to obtain a copy of a hitherto unattainable, and uniquely appropriate program.
4. If someone else is watching while you are doing anything on the computer, anything at all, it will screw up (that's a technical term)
5. The percentage chance of screwing up increases in direct proportion to the size of your audience.
6. No matter how simple it seems to you, your explanation will be more than they want to know.
7. You will amaze your mother at how much you know about computers.
8. The only pieces of data you will ever lose are the ones you were going to save just as soon as you finished typing a couple more lines.
9. The update of you program will use the keys for something entirely different in this version than it did when you first learned it.
10. You will not understand it the first time you read it in the manu. You will understand it better the next time you read the manual, for no discernible reason.

11. When you are late for an interview and need a last minute copy of your resume, your printer will go down. It will always go down. It doesn't care. Nowhere in your repair manual will it ever tell you what you really need to do - which is to turn the darn thing off and get yourself a nice cup of tea.

12. The price of anything you buy will stay the same until the actual impact of your money on the bottom of the cash drawer, at which time it will automatically re-list itself in the next Thursday's paper at 30% less.

13. Starting at the screen for 97 continuous minutes will not necessarily reveal to you the secret location of nay colon that should have been typed in as a semicolon. Or visa versa.

14. It will always seem like your friend got a better deal.

15. The 800 number will be busy. Always.

Reprinted from the January 2009 issue of *Toggle*, the newsletter of the Tacoma-Seattle Area Microcomputer Users toggle.org

Moving on to Vista – Part 11

by Neil Stahfest, Librarian, Tacoma Area PC User Group, Washington
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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).

One of Vista's disk management systems, that is new to me, is a dynamic disk and the ability to extend a volume. Suppose you have a volume or folder on your hard drive called Pictures for your photographs. If you run out of space on your hard drive, but you have space available on another hard drive installed on your PC, you can extend

your Picture volume onto that drive to make it bigger. There are two limitations to this process. First, you cannot reverse the process. Second, once created you cannot remove the space you've used on the second disk to reduce the size of the volume. The only way you can do this is to create a new volume on one of your drives, copy all of the contents of the spanned volume to it and then delete the spanned volume. The other limitation is you cannot extend the Windows System volume.

I'm not really sure how I would use this feature. My inclination is to create new volumes and not try to span a volume across two hard drives. Perhaps when working with video files, which can consume enormous amounts of space, this might be a useful feature.

How often do you start an operation on your computer which opens a dialog box on the desktop that requires you to click on "OK"? So you move your mouse to put the pointer on the "OK" box and click on it. You probably do this many times in a day. Did you know that there is a setting to automatically move your mouse pointer to the OK button so that all you have to do is click on it? Here's how you can configure Windows Vista to do this.

First click on the "Start" button and then the "Control Panel". Under the "Hardware and Sound" entry in the "Control Panel" box, click on "Mouse". The "Mouse Properties" box will open. Click on "Pointer Options". Locate "Snap To" and click to create a check mark to activate "Automatically move pointer to the default button in a dialog box".

While you're looking at the "Pointer Options" box, consider the next option line, "Display pointer trails". If you occasionally have trouble locating the mouse pointer on the desktop, consider this option. Experiment with the length of the pointer trail setting. If you don't like it, turn it off.

On a slightly different topic, let's
—continued next page—

talk about shortcuts. Many application programs create a shortcut on your desktop when you install the program. They're a convenient way to start a program without have to go to the Start menu. There are other ways to use short-cuts too. Suppose you have a spreadsheet or genealogy file that you frequently update. Locate the file with Windows Explorer, right-click on the file name, scroll down the pop-up menu to where it says "Create Shortcut" and click on it. Now, before you close the Windows Explorer window, locate the new shortcut and drag it to your desktop. Because Windows (XP as well as Vista) associates application programs with certain type of files (i.e. Windows Excel with spreadsheets), when you click on the file shortcut the application will start and open the file.

But suppose you can't see your desktop icons and short-cuts because they're hidden by something else? Maybe your Internet browser or e-mail program is running and completely cover your desktop. Let's go back and look at the shortcut on your desktop. Right-click on it. In the windows that opens, notice the four tabs at the top. Click on the tab marked "Shortcut". In the middle of the Shortcut menu you'll find something marked "Shortcut key". You'll probably see "None" entered in the box next to it. Click on the box and press and hold down your Ctrl key. In the box you'll now see "Ctrl + Alt + ". While still holding down the Ctrl key, press the the key you want to use to access the shortcut. Now click on the Apply button and then the OK button. Your shortcut key is now set. Just press the three key combination to instantly access your spreadsheet or genealogy file.

Before we leave the topic of Shortcuts I'll just mention that when you open a Shortcut's properties window, the first tab is marked "General". If you click on "General", one of the first entries is "Type of File" and "Open with". If

you click on the adjacent "Change" button, you'll see a list of possible application programs to access the file. You can select from this list or click on "Browse" to locate another program.

I'm hearing more rumors about Windows 7 but, at this point, they are still rumors. One thing seems certain, Windows 7 will have more in common with Windows Vista than Windows XP. Whatever you learn about Windows Vista should help you when you upgrade to the next version of Windows.

Review - magicJack

by Constance Brown, President,
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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).

Do any of you recall the poem by Rosemary and Stephen Vincent Benet stating that no place on earth is more than 60 hours away? The authors were awed by the idea that distance was no longer measured in months but in hours. What would they think now that people have circled the world in spaceships and repaired orbiting space stations? On the other hand, my friends who boarded the plane last month found that it can take 60 hours and more to arrive at a destination in our own hemisphere—if it happens to be Bolivia!

What does travel have to do with computers? Most trips begin with a call to a travel agent or visiting a travel web site to check prices and availability of flights. Then a flight is booked and paid online either by the purchaser or an agent. An e-ticket is sent to the traveler who then checks in via a computer ter-

terminal at the airport. Computerized controls are used to guide the plane.

Computers, computers everywhere. Great when they work. Annoying when they don't! They are here to stay and will be performing more and more of our communications. Wouldn't it be wonderful if you could travel internationally and communicate with folk back home without paying those ridiculous international calling fees! How about staying in touch with friends who do not live in the USA? Guess what! You CAN!!

Several of us in CAMUG have phone service using VOIP (voice over Internet Protocol). Last week I ordered something immediately after hearing about it. I have been eagerly awaiting the opportunity to test it and now I can hardly wait to share it. Perhaps some of you have seen the ads for the magicJack. What is it? Well, let me quote from PC Magazine online: "So simple it's almost perfect, the magicJack is the best home voice-over-IP gadget I've seen to date. Excellent call quality, a workable set of calling features, and an amazing price make this little box the VoIP wonder to beat."

Yes, in two minutes a little USB device about 2 inches by 1 inch by 5/8 inches that I plugged into the powered hub that I run through my USB port was giving me the capability of placing my calls via the Internet. I called Canada and Colorado, spending about 1/12 hours on the phone.

It worked well except when I looked up information on the internet at the same time.

I talked to customer service and they said I can connect to the powered hub that runs directly to my router. I will have to restart the modem, most likely. That means that I don't have to have the computer turned on to make calls, just like my current VoIP service. This is great.

What do I like about the magicJack?

- The price. The gadget is \$40, and that includes one year of service! The renewal service price is \$20! Not \$200. Just \$20. In fact, we paid \$60 for five years!

- The price. Calls are free to US & Canada and reasonable to other parts of the world. Bolivia ranges from 12-14 cents. Guatemala was a little less. I didn't check farther.

- The price. Register your magicJack with a US phone number and travel anywhere in the world. Place calls back to the US or Canada and the call is free! Purchase a magicJack and register it with a number in the USA, send it to your friends elsewhere in the world, and they can call to any place in the US or Canada for free -- almost. Remember, you receive one year of service with the device.

- Convenience. You can use the magicJack with any computer, not just the one you registered.

- Convenience. The magicJack is so small that it will travel extremely easily.

- Convenience. You can use the magicJack to place calls over Wi-Fi, cable, or DSL. Even light high speed is fine as it requires only 80 kbps of bandwidth.

- Services. You get all of them: voicemail delivered to you via email and also available by calling your number and entering your pass code, conference calling, 3-way calling, caller ID, do not disturb -- have I forgotten anything?

- Quality. The quality compares with other VoIP services. The calls pass over a private network.

- Customer Service. Customer service was good, but busy. The online chat took a little time as the service person moved between customers. But it was good. He didn't have time to tell me about the Out-

look add-on, so I am still waiting to discover what that is. Customer service apparently is improving, based on evaluations I read.

The *US News and World Report* had an interesting article online dated September 27 about the magicJack. Here is a part of it.

"The colorful and wealthy Borislow, who also raises, races, and wagers on racehorses, has launched magicJack fast out of the gate. The startup has sold more than 400,000 devices just six months after its official unveiling. It's selling about 7,000 a day, the company says, adding twice as many net new accounts over the period as Vonage, an Internet phoning pioneer.

MagicJack's appeal is not only the price, which falls to just \$20 for a second year of calls, but sound quality that's consistently good. And it's flat simple to install and use."

Who is the inventor behind the magicJack? Dan Borislow. Here is information about him taken directly from the magicJack web site.

- Dan Borislow is the founder of YMAX Communications Corporation, a modern phone company with the largest competitive local exchange carrier (CLEC) network in the U.S, and inventor of the magicJackTM.

- Borislow has been in the telecommunications industry for over twenty years and is recognized in the industry for pioneering the development of breakthrough technologies. He previously held the position of CEO and founder of publicly-held Tel-Save, Inc. At Tel-Save, Borislow revolutionized low-cost long-distance for more than four million America Online (AOL) customers. While with Tel-Save, he saved customers over 40% on their phone bills and also received the prestigious J.D. Power and Associates Award for Customer Satisfaction. After a brief attempt at retirement, Borislow returned to the

telecom industry and invented the magicJack. By eliminating the expense of local and long distance phone charges - and saving the average customer around \$1000 a year - magicJack is positioned to be the fastest growing telecom company in the world; Borislow likes to call it .Telecom Revolution Part II..

- Borislow received his Bachelor of Arts degree and honorary doctorate degrees from Widener University. He is an avid soccer player, dedicated deep sea fisherman, enjoys watching sports and has a Thoroughbred Horse Breeding Business...

VU Point Slide Scanner

by Norm Lamoureux
Sanria Computer Users Group
www.vupointsolutions.com/filmandslide-converters.asp

In Canada I found it for \$99.95
Can, Shopping Channel, ITEM:
36860, 1-888-202-0888
Requires: XP operating System

Do you have 35 mm slides and negatives, we probably all do if you are over 20 years old. I used to have a scanner that did up to 6 by 8 inch negatives, but it does not work too well now. So I saw this on a web site and bought it. It is a portable film and slide scanner from Vu Point. There are other ways to produce slides and negatives but so far this is the easiest.

It says that it scans at 5 megapixel, but I have most of them at 1800 dpi and 3600 dpi, at low resolution each picture is about 600k in size. When you scan at the high resolution, each picture will be around 1.6 megabytes in size. Don't forget to clean your slides and negatives before you scan them, a speck of dirt can look like the moon on them.

—continued next page—

I have seen this scanner advertised in my flyers from other stores for more money and shipping. I even saw this on Ebay too. As of this writing, I am told it only works on XP, but I am sure that someone out there will write a drive so it works with Vista and Macintosh computers since it plugs into your USB 2.0 port. It comes with Arcsoft Photo Impression 6.

It comes with two plastic trays for 35 mm slides (it holds 3) and negatives (it holds 6). I have lots of 110 pocket film strips and 620 film (2 inch squares), so it does not work well for those. If they made a tray that is all clear then you can do you 110 film and 620 negatives. But you cannot do the 620 slides because the scanner insert is too small, if only then made it half an inch wider. The manual is too small to read (it is on the CD too)

If you have lots of time on your hands and lots of slides and negatives, this is a cool way to digitize your stuff.

PS, it was purchased by Norm and not given to SCUG to review.

Reprinted from the November 2008 issue of *SCUG Report* the newsletter of the Sarnia Computer Users Group www.scug.com

How to Clean a LCD Screen

Lots of things can fog up your laptop screen (like dirt, dust, fingerprints, etc.) and it's such a good idea to clean all of that off so your screen doesn't look like it just went through a whirlwind of yuckiness! A LCD screen is not like a regular desktop CRT monitor, so it requires some special cleaning.

First of all, do not spray any liquids directly onto the screen. Doing that may cause some distortions on your screen. Also, do not use a paper towel to clean off the screen, because that could cause some scratching. Instead, use a soft cot-

ton cloth. Try using a dry one at first and if that doesn't get everything off, you can put a little rubbing alcohol on the cloth and remove any other smudges that remain. Rubbing alcohol is used to clean the LCD screens before they leave the factory and are shipped out, so it is safe to use.

If computers get too powerful, we can organize them into a committee—that will do them in.



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

Officers 2008 - 2009

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Other

Resource Center Mgr.....	Judi McDowell.....	(309) 314-1780	jmcdowell@mchsi.com
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Access Point, Wireless Keyboard and Mouse Donated to QCS

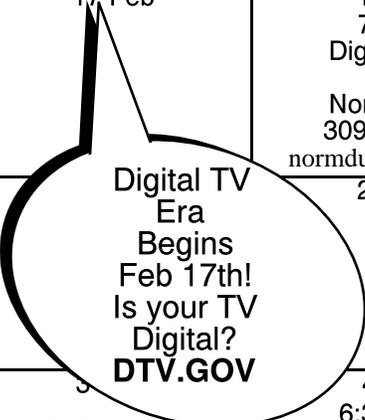
The Quad-Cities Computer Society wishes to thank Dale Wells of Computer Repair Center for donating an access point ,a wireless keyboard and mouse.

Computer Repair Center

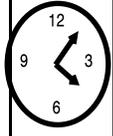
872 Middle Road
Bettendorf IA 52722
PH: 563-359-0042
Fax: 563-359-3411

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

QCS Meeting Dates

Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Fri	Sat
1 Feb	2 Feb 7:00 PM Microsoft Office SIG Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcdowell@mchsi.com	3 Feb February 2009	4 Feb 6:30 PM QCS Board Meeting Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcdowell@mchsi.com	5 Feb	6 Feb	7 Feb
8 Feb	9 Feb 7:00 PM Internet SIG Ted Huberts 309-792-9470 slowhand54@sbcglobal.net	10 Feb	11 Feb 5:45 PM Beginners SIG * 7:00 PM Main Meeting Acronis Gene Barlow	12 Feb	13 Feb	14 Feb
15 Feb	16 Feb 7:00 PM Genealogy SIG Len Stevens 563-359-9672 judylenstevens@msn.com	17 Feb	18 Feb 7:00 PM Digital Media SIG Norm Dunlap 309-798-2304 normdun@gmail.com	19 Feb	20 Feb	21 Feb
22 Feb	23 Feb 7:00 PM Windows SIG Larry Stone 309-787-5574 lstone521@mchsi.com			25 Feb	26 Feb	27 Feb
1 Mar	2 Mar 7:00 PM Microsoft Office SIG Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcdowell@mchsi.com	3 Mar March 2009	4 Mar 6:30 PM QCS Board Meeting Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcdowell@mchsi.com	5 Mar	6 Mar	7 Mar
8 Mar	9 Mar 7:00 PM Internet SIG Ted Huberts 309-792-9470 slowhand54@sbcglobal.net	10 Mar Purim 	11 Mar 5:45 PM Beginners SIG * 7:00 PM Main Meeting Remote Computing	12 Mar	13 Mar	14 Mar

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.**

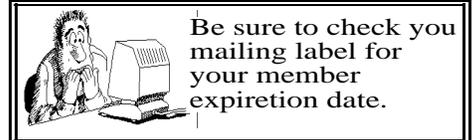
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Quad Cities Computer Society
Tri-City Jewish Center
2715 30th Street
Rock Island IL 61201



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

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

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State, ZIP+4: _____
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		Membership Level	
		New	Renewal
Full Time Student	\$20	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Individual	\$30	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family	\$40	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

QCS Meeting
Wednesday
February 11th, 2009
7:00 PM

Acronis
Hard Drive
Management
with Gene Barlow