

QBITS

Quad-Cities Computer Society

Newsletter for July 2013

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www.qcs.org

QCS Reminder! Annual Payment of Dues!

July 2013 has come around again. July is the month when all current and new members have the opportunity to renew for the year. Please take a moment to do so, as this keeps the QCS financially sound and brings our programs, website and newsletter before the Quad Cities.

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

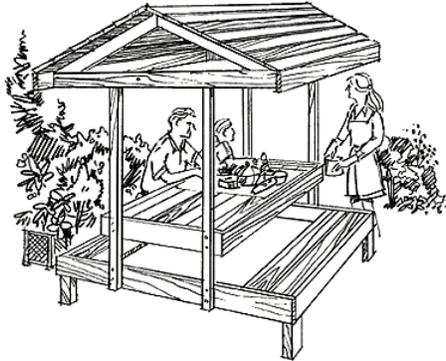
Membership dues are payable **July 1st** each year and expire the following **June 30th**.

Individuals	\$30
Family	\$40

Payments can be made in person at a meeting or mailed to the treasurer

David Tanner
3449 – 52nd Street
Moline, IL 61265

Save the Date! Annual CS Picnic Tuesday, September 10th



Be sure to make your plans to attend the annual QCS picnic Monday, September 9th. These outings have been enjoyable for all. Great food, conversation and fun!

July 1st, 2013 7:00 PM

"The Computer as a Complete Publishing House"

presented by
William Hannan
Artist, Calligrapher, Bookbinder

Ever wanted to write and publish your own book? Bill will show you it is possible to do everything at home on your own computer.

Bill Hannan has been creating, printing, and publishing books on the computer for about 12 years. Although his first love is calli-

graphy (the art of beautiful letters) he has always been looking for a way to print and bind an actual book using some method other than physically lettering, illustrating and binding it by hand and the computer has put this whole process into his hands. His program will outline his methods for creating books.

A display table will be available for any computer generated books of your own that you wish to share. Don't miss this event at the Butterworth Center Library, 1105 8th St, Moline, IL on Monday, July 1st at 7:00 PM.

A special invitation to new computer users is being extended to attend the Beginners SIG (Special Interest Group) which meets at 5:30 PM just before the main meeting.

QCS monthly program meetings are free, handicapped accessible and open to the public. Check the Society's website for more details, www.qcs.org

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.

We thank **NBS**,
the host of the QCS.org site!

ENGAGE
Network Business Systems Inc.



QBITS July 2013

The QCS is a member of



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QBITS

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Stream It, Record It, Keep It



applian.com

presenter by Cheryl Wester
Applian Tech support
by Joe Durham

Cheryl Wester visited us via Skype. She began by describing the small enterprising nature of Applian. It consists of 11 people who have developed and support this media capture software suite. Across five states (California, Indiana, Oregon, Ohio and Utah) they work via the Internet to develop their program and update it regularly.

The program concept originated from the time wasted in long traffic jams without good music or video



to pass the time. So these programmers developed a software suite that can capture and record music and video and save it for later use.

Their suite consists of 7 titles:

Replay Media Catcher

Replay Converter

Replay Music

Replay Telecorder

Video Padlock

Replay Media Splitter

Cheryl highlighted just 3: Replay Video Capture, Replay Media Capture, and Replay Music. The

Replay Music program allows to capture music from various internet sources.

Replay Music is a specialized streaming music recorder that extracts songs as MP3 files from streaming sources including **Digital Music Subscription Services, Music Videos** and many **Online Radio Stations**.

For example Cheryl accessed AccuRadio and Pandora. Replay Music was able to snag songs from each service and download them at the limits of your internet speed and then save them to one's hard drive. If you have a play list software like iTunes on your computer it will transfer them to this area immediately.

Next she demonstrated the capture streaming ability of Replay Media Capture. This software snags videos from popular sites like YouTube and saves them to your computer. It has ability to figure out the name of the song that is downloaded. Replay Media capture understands the multitude of different audio types on the Internet.

Perhaps the most significant demonstration of the evening was the Replay Video Capture software. This program can take a snapshot of your video screen on the internet as it displays information, video and sound in real time. Cheryl went to a YouTube web page and you could see the program application in a small window on the lower right hand side of the screen capturing all that data as we watched. It was a simple click on and click off. The process was completed and the file was created on her computer.

It was like a jazzed up Print screen function but with motion and sound. She did mention that you need to be aware that the file sizes

created by the Replay Video Catcher can be quite large and that it uses a lot of computer resources to complete its work. So you must take that into account as you plan to invoke that function.

Replay Telecorder for Skype was not demonstrated but Cheryl described its features. This could be very useful for saving those Skype sessions with the relatives. She also mentioned that employers often will record Skype interviews for replay and examination at a later date.

This media software suite while easy to use is quite sophisticated in function. It has the ability to capture encrypted videos as well. The Replay suite captures audio with the highest quality. Cheryl did mention audio reproduction on the internet does have its limits. Classical and Jazz music often are not reproduced with highest fidelity because there are many instruments in the audio stream.

Applian software is designed to support Personal Use only media capture and does not infringe on copyright laws. It does not violate the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. (DMCA).

applian.com/legal.php

The QCS would like to thank Cheryl for explaining this new way of using the Internet with their software. If you visit their website you can also download demos of their individual Replay programs to see if they meet your needs.

What Has Your Computer Been Doing? Free Utility Shows All

QBITS July 2013

by Ira Wilsker

WEBSITES:

www.nirsoft.net

goo.gl/9KVkP

goo.gl/L5us9

Many of us have encountered frustrations with our computers. Sometimes it appears that running programs crash or otherwise cease functioning without explanation. On older computers, most notoriously those running Windows XP, a cryptic "Blue Screen of Death" (BSOD) sometimes appears when there is a crash of some type, often displaying nonsensical error codes that require extensive research to decode. Some suspicious computer users believe that others are accessing their computer, running unauthorized software or malware. Other wary users may find it interesting seeing what other people may have done on a particular computer, and what programs they may have run, what documents were viewed, and when (what time) the computer was booted and shut down. If a computer was infected by malware, it may often be of great interest to see what was being run on the computer at the time of infestation, and even identify the malware and its payload. This, and more, can be readily displayed by a tiny, free utility, LastActivityView.

LastActivityView is one of dozens of small free utilities published by a feisty software engineer, Nir Sofer, on his website at www.nirsoft.net. Nir personally writes all of his own software in his spare time, and makes it available to all for free. Many of his utilities are given the highest ratings by a variety of web services and computer publications; all of his soft-

ware is free of advertising and other pesky irritants, making it popular among his huge and loyal user base. In his spare time, Nir personally maintains his website and updates his software, as well as creates new utilities. One of his newest titles, LastActivityView has caught the attention of computer technicians, forensic experts, hobbyists, and others who really want to know what has really been running on a computer, and when the computer was accessed.

Windows users may be passively aware that their computers save extensive, but often invisible files, about what they have run; LastActivityView has the capability to read these historical files and display additional information about many of the computer's activities. On my primary computer, this record starts on the day it was manufactured, and documents everything that I have done since I first powered it on after removing it from its box. Every piece of software that I ever installed or uninstalled is listed, including date, time, description, filenames, path on the hard drive, and other information. Every boot, shutdown, crash, and other event was also duly recorded. In addition to simply displaying a huge file with all of my computing activities, LastActivityView also has the power to provide additional information for many of the items listed. LastActivityView also can display detailed information about program interactions, and conflicts that caused software and hardware crashes.

The actual program file itself is tiny, only about 100k in size, and requires no installation. It is totally portable, and can be run from any

Windows connected device. The LastActivityView program, an exe file, is one of only three components included in the 64k ZIP (compressed) file downloaded from NirSoft; the other two items in the ZIP file are a small "readme.txt" file with simple instructions and other information, and a standard format Windows Help File (chm format) that can be opened with any version of Windows, and displays detailed help and other information. I downloaded the zip file, and using Windows native utility, "unzipped" or uncompressed it into a new directory that I created for it. Total space required for all three files is a miniscule 130k of drive space. I also copied the files to the USB flash drive that I always have on my car keychain, so I can use it whenever and wherever needed.

According to the included readme.txt file, " LastActivityView is a tool for Windows operating system that collects information from various sources on a running system, and displays a log of actions made by the user and events occurred on this computer. The activity displayed by LastActivityView includes: Running .exe file, Opening open/save dialog-box, Opening file/folder from Explorer or other software, software installation, system shutdown/start, application or system crash, network connection/disconnection and more... " The file created by LastActivityView can be quickly exported in a variety of formats that can be utilized by a variety of other programs that can read csv, tab-delimited, xml, or html formatted information. A simple copy and paste can also place information in other programs, such as an Excel spreadsheet. For those who may wish to

customize the execution of LastActivityView, several command line options are available, but most users will find that simply running the file without any additional commands will provide comprehensive and useful information.

In addition to the obvious tracking of what was run on a computer, LastActivityView can also provide additional and valuable information. I was able to prove this to myself when I examined some recent logs, looking for software crashes and conflicts. One of several reasons why I do not use Internet Explorer as my primary browser is that for some reason, it sometimes crashes when open. According to the report, my most recent software crash occurred on May 17, at 9:11:07pm when Internet Explorer, version 10.0.9200 crashed. By right-clicking on the line in the log showing the crash, an options menu appeared which displayed what additional information could be shown. I first selected "Properties", which displayed the Action Time, Description (Software Crash), File Name, Full Path (location on hard drive), and what was most important to me, More Information. Similar information can be displayed as a webpage in HTML by selecting "HTML Report - Selected Item". The More Information line showed precisely the software conflict that caused the crash; in this particular case, according to the display, there was a memory conflict between IEXPLORE.EXE 10.0.9200.16576 and TmBpIe32.dll, which is a module or component of my TrendMicro security suite. Now that I have recorded this conflict, it would be easy to determine whether this is a one-time anomaly or a continuing problem that requires attention and

remediation. Doing a quick online search for TmBpIe32.dll, I found that this file is a Trend Micro Browser Plug-In for Internet Explorer that is designed to protect the browser from exploitation. According to Wikipedia, "A browser exploit is a form of malicious code that takes advantage of a flaw or vulnerability in an operating system or piece of software with the intent to breach browser security to alter a user's browser settings without their knowledge. Malicious code may exploit ActiveX, HTML, images, Java, JavaScript, and other Web technologies and cause the browser to run arbitrary code." I would not have been able to easily and quickly determine the cause of that particular crash without LastActivityView. This is but one of countless purposes that can be accomplished with LastActivityView.

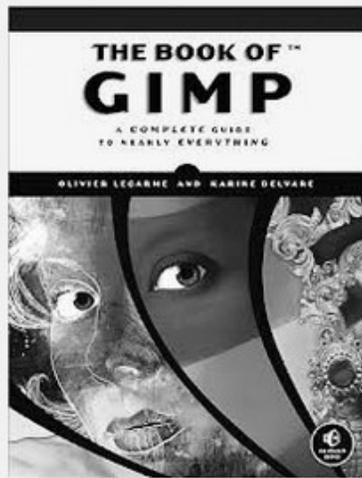
LastActivityView runs on any version of Windows since Windows 2000, and includes XP, Vista, Windows 7 and Windows 8; both 32-bit and 64-bit systems are supported.

For such a tiny, fast, and free program, LastActivityView is a powerful utility that can provide extensive information on what has been done on a Windows computer. For anyone who would like to see for himself what has been running on his computer; what crashed, what caused the crash; files downloaded, installed, or uninstalled; and a wealth of other information, LastActivityView is a very worthwhile program to add to the user's arsenal of utilities.

**Review: The Book
of GIMP: A
Complete Guide to
QBITS July 2013**

Nearly Everything

By Iris Yoffa, Member, Tucson
Computer Society, Arizona
February 2013 issue, *eJournal*
www.aztcs.org
Irisonthego (at) gmail.com



This hefty volume claims to be your source of information and guidance to nearly everything (GIMP). And indeed, at first glance at the Contents in Detail, the book does seem to meet the challenge of the sub-title's boast.

The Book of GIMP is divided into three sections: Learning GIMP, Reference, and Appendices. I jumped into Part 1, Chapter 2, Photograph retouching. The sample image used reminded me of a potentially interesting pic my sister took with her cell phone on a recent visit. I had grabbed a copy of her image with the idea of applying a little straightening and a lot of exposure adjustments.

The tutorial that starts off Chapter 2, Enhancing Badly Taken Photographs, addresses both of these issues and more. Just perfect! The directions are clear, accurate, and broken down into easy to follow steps. There are plenty of accompanying screen shots of dialogs and example images. The tutorial provides basic instructions (more

detailed & in-depth coverage comes in later chapters), for cropping, straightening, and restoring perspective. Correcting exposure and color balance comes next. How to remove a distracting object from the image, add sharpness, and correct for red-eye follows.

The section on the pros and cons of resizing an image or image layer also includes a nice discussion of resolution and printing hard copy. The shear tool is explained. However, the authors do mention that it is 'rarely useful'. All images seem to need a bit of tweaking of the brightness, contrast, and hue and so there is an explanation of how to use the levels, color balance and curves tools. Once again, the step-by-step instructions are easy to understand and follow.

The authors of this book do an admirable job of covering the subjects that you expect to find in books of this flavor. But this book actually does present Everything GIMP. Whether you are interested in that obscure rarely used feature or are looking for the theory behind the process, it is touched upon between these covers.

At this point I want to jump ahead to Part II: Reference, and look over the section on filters, Chapter 17. GIMP comes loaded with all kinds of nifty tools to use to transform an image. The authors state that while some of the tools are not strictly filters, they are included in this chapter because they are included under the program's Filter menu.

The breakdown by category also follows the menu listing – blur, enhance, distorts, light and shadow, edge detect, generic, combine, artistic, decor, map and render. I've often been at a loss when it comes to figuring out how many of the

gizmos under the Filters menu work. Sometimes I just want to know how to use a particular tool, sometimes I need to know why I would want to. Whether you just want to apply corrective measures, or transform an image into an artistic rendition, the tools are part of GIMP and suggested uses are detailed in these pages.

For those who would like to ponder 'The Physiology of Vision', optical illusions, the screen to printer process, and color theory, appendix A would be your cup of tea. Appendix B provides 'Tips and Hints' for many of the exercises included at the end of the chapters.

If 630 pages of GIMP aren't enough for you, Appendix C offers additional resources. Appendix D is titled 'Frequently Asked Questions (about GIMP)', and is just that. Appendix E provides installation help for GNU/Linux and UNIX, Windows, and Mac OS X. Appendix F covers batch processing of images.

If you want to learn how to use a robust image editing application and are willing to invest the time, effort, and practice required to do so, this is the book for you. The quality and quantity of the content is outstanding. The Contents in Detail and extensive index make it easy to find help with whatever questions or GIMP challenges that confront you.

About: ***The Book of GIMP: A Complete Guide to Nearly Everything***

Authors: Olivier Lecarme, Karine Delvare

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nostarch.com/gimp

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Price: \$24.99 Kindle edition

Price : \$31.16 Google/Play Android

Price: \$22.77 Barnes & Noble: Nook

Cyber News!

gary.stanley.net/cyber_news.htm

This month is the start of summer vacations and again it's going to be interesting to see what the gasoline prices do. When I was younger the prices were very stable and you might see a change maybe once a year. Now they fluctuate almost everyday, sometimes twice a day. I have a hard time understanding why we can't supply our own oil so we don't have to rely on foreign countries, especially countries we don't get along with! When you get ready for your summer vacation "Gas Buddy" gاسبuddy.com/ can give you the current fuel prices.

Imagine picking up a cigarette butt from the sidewalk, extracting the DNA, then creating a 3D portrait photo. That's exactly what Heather Hagborg, an artist and PhD student, is doing. Here's the complete story. <http://goo.gl/ef1Qs>

Want to know everything about everything? Well you can almost do that with a web site that seems to have it all. Social Media, Technology, Business, Entertainment, US & World, Lifestyle, Watercooler, Video and more. Try not to spend more than a week at a time here! <http://www.mashable.com/>

Are you feeling sharp today? Do you think I can outsmart you? I think I can and to prove it I'm going to guess your number. Okay, here we go! <http://goo.gl/IEPWZ>

On a recent camping trip in Northern Arizona we were riding our all terrain vehicles in the wilderness when we spotted a turkey about 25 yards off the trail. Come to find out it was a mama turkey with new born babies. Turkey hunters tell me that this is a rare find. You can watch a short video

that I took here.

<http://goo.gl/WAqxM>

Facebook makes it easy to share everyday things with friends. Took a photo? Share with your friends. Read an interesting article? Post that link. Want to tell people what you are thinking? It's just one status update away. When sharing is that easy, we have to stop and consider exactly who we are sharing with. Facebook is constantly changing their privacy and security controls. You can't set them once and forget it. Are your settings where you want them to be? More from *PC Magazine*. <http://goo.gl/LB2Fv>

Ever wish you would have saved something that you either sold, gave away or threw away? I'm thinking of old cameras that I owned and sold them cheap in garage sales. Would love to have them now with my passion for photography. Some saved items from your past could be worth big dollars. I also wish I would have saved some of my PC and Apple computers from when they first appeared. Take a look at what this one just sold for! <http://goo.gl/fPgDW>

It's an age old question in the computing world, "Should I turn off my computer every night, or leave it on 24/7?" Years ago when we used Windows 98 and previous versions, it was imperative to re-boot your machine often because your computer would lose resources and get slower and slower. This is still true today but with much lesser degree. So what's the answer? Some people use an automatic back-up, schedule defragmenting, or other things during the night so this means leaving it on. With today's computers it's alright to leave them on all the time, but I suggest to re-boot a couple times a week. More

on this subject from the Data Doctors. <http://goo.gl/pH0ul>

Another email problem can develop causing the program to stop working. You are frustrated and can't figure out why this is happening. Before you call tech support I'll tell you the most common reasons why. It's possible that your provider is having a temporary problem, but the most likely reason is there will be a message in your Outbox. As long as this is the case nothing works. Simply click on your Outbox and delete the message or messages that it contains. The reason this happened is that the email or emails had an unknown email address and consequently they didn't get sent out.

I've mentioned this numerous times, but since we have new readers every month I must continue to say that I believe that CCleaner is your best friend for keeping your computer running smoothly. It's a free utility that cleans your machine of files that are no longer used. It's a one click operation and you should run it everyday. You can find out where to get it and how to easily set it up by going to the "Secrets of Safe Computing" link below. Did you run CCleaner today?

<http://gary.stanley.net/secrets.htm>

Overbooked

By Greg Skalka, President, Under the Computer Hood User Group, CA

March 2013 issue, DriveLight
www.uchug.org
president (at) uchug.org

Companies are continuing to develop new and more advanced computer technologies, finding ways to

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innovate on the personal computing platform first released over thirty years ago. Their marketing departments have not been as great at innovation, however, often using derivative and less than imaginative terminology to name and describe these new products and services. These marketing terms are often meaningless fluff, but we users are frequently forced to adopt them into our technical language.

One company that you all know has taken to slapping a lower case “i” on the front of the names of whatever products or services they are offering. It does not seem terribly imaginative to me, but I’m sure they do it to distinguish their products from those of other manufacturers (at least legally).

Another overused term for new technology is “smart”. There are smart phones, smart homes, the smart card, smart cars, smart trains, smart TV, the smart grid, smart meters and smart growth. My head is smarting from thinking about how many things are now referred to as smart. While it is hard to argue against a product when it has “smart” as part of its name, the term alone is not enough to ensure acceptance. For instance, Smart Computing was once a popular print and web magazine that explained new computer technology to the common user. They couldn’t make money long term in that market, so they turned it into a free online business-oriented publication that looks to be mostly advertising.

The latest overused technology term I’ve noticed is “book”. I’ve created the following list of book-related items and their descriptions for instructional purposes, and to see just how long a list I could make.

Book - The original item; a set of flat cellulose sheets with information printed on one or both sides that are fastened together at one edge, forming a hinge. Originating around the 5th century, they were hand written and hand copied until printing methods were developed centuries later. Guttenberg’s movable type in 1450, later industrial printing methods and Amazon’s online marketing ultimately made books inexpensive and accessible to everyone.

eBook - An electronic version of a printed book (or even one that has never been physically printed). An eBook can be read using e-readers like Amazon’s Kindle and Barnes & Noble’s Nook (which surprisingly don’t have “book” in their names), as well as computers, tablets and smart phones. Amazon.com started out as an online seller of books, and now in conjunction with their reader is a main source of eBooks. The existence of many eBook formats does not appear to have diminished eBook popularity.

Notebook - This term refers to a notebook computer, also commonly known as a laptop. The notebook was the first truly mobile version of the personal computer (let’s not count the Osborne, with a case the size of a sewing machine, as mobile). The notebook’s hinged design (like a book) consisted of a computer mainboard/keyboard as one half, with a screen (from 14” up to 17” diagonal) on the other half (facing the keyboard).

These were initially more expensive than desktop computers due to the higher cost of miniaturization, but their popularity brought their volumes up to the point that economies of scale have made their cost the same or lower than

desktops of similar performance (at least for all but the most powerful PCs). Notebook computers first came out in the early 1980s, five to ten years after the first PCs. They typically have all the features and capabilities of desktop PCs, including hard drive mass storage, optical drives, interfaces for wired/wireless networking, pointing devices and some limited expansion capabilities. Notebooks now far outsell the desktop computer.

Netbook - A smaller and less capable version of the notebook, the netbook was popularized in 2007 by manufacturer Asus, but the format was soon copied by others. Netbooks were meant to be even more portable, with smaller screens (5” to 12” diagonal) and lower weight (optical drives were omitted). With a less powerful processor than notebooks, they were much less expensive, and were intended primarily for use on the Internet (through wired and wireless connections). They competed well against notebooks for a while on their cost and size, but recent improvements in notebooks (reductions in cost and weight and increases in performance), as well as the introduction of the tablet computer, have diminished netbook sales greatly. It is likely this category will disappear from the marketplace soon.

PowerBook - A line of Apple Macintosh laptop computers sold between 1991 and 2006, featuring PowerPC processors running an Apple Mac OS. They were targeted at the professional market and were replaced by the MacBook computer line.

iBook - A brand of Apple laptop computers sold between 1999 and 2006, featuring PowerPC pro-

processors running an Apple Mac OS. They were targeted at the consumer and educational markets, with lower performance and cost compared to the PowerBooks, and were replaced by the MacBook computers.

MacBook - A brand of Macintosh laptop computers made by Apple from 2006 to the present (includes MacBook Pro and MacBook Air models currently offered), running the Mac OS. These laptops had screens ranging from 11" to 17", Intel processors and either a polycarbonate/fiberglass or aluminum case. The MacBook Pro features 13" to 17" screens, optical drives and mechanical hard drives (with an SSD, or solid state drive, as an option). The MacBook Air is an ultraportable laptop released in 2008 that is extremely light and thin, with a machined aluminum case, Intel processor, 11.6" or 13.3" diagonal display and SSD for main storage.

Ultrabook - A high-end type of notebook computer defined by Intel in 2011 to compete with the MacBook Air. Like the MacBook Air, the Ultrabook is lightweight and thin (0.8"), with SSD storage, Intel processor (no surprise), long battery life and typically no optical drive or Ethernet ports. It is intended to use the Microsoft Windows operating system, with some models sporting a touchscreen display to work better with Windows 8.

Various manufacturers, including Asus, Acer, Dell, Lenovo, HP, Samsung and Fujitsu have already released Ultrabook models, with diagonal screen sizes ranging from 11.6" to 15.6". Their higher cost (typically \$1000) as compared to conventional notebook computers has limited their acceptance in the

marketplace so far.

Zenbook - An Asus family of Ultrabook computers, ranging from a model with an 11.6" diagonal screen and limited connectivity to a 15" screen model with an optical drive. First released in 2011, their design was said to follow "zen philosophy".

Chromebook - A notebook computer running the Google Chrome OS (which is Linux-based). Intended to be used while connected to the Internet, it features a lower performance processor, SSD storage, no optical drive and typically smaller size (somewhat similar in functional philosophy to the netbook). It is designed to run applications from the web, rather than from internal storage. Acer and Samsung introduced Chromebooks in 2011, with HP and Lenovo introducing models in 2013. Screen sizes range from 12" to 14" diagonal. Additional features include quick boot up, long battery life and low cost (\$200 to \$450). They are sold primarily over the Internet. Google itself is producing a Chromebook Pixel model with premium features and price (\$1300 to \$1450).

Facebook - a social networking service started in 2004 on the Internet, with currently over 1 billion active users.

Bookmaker - An organization or a person that takes bets on events at specified odds.

I wouldn't bet that these are going to be the only book-related terms for us to deal with in the future, but that's all I have for now.

Book'em, Danno!

LibreOffice 4 – Free Competitor

to Microsoft Office

By Ira Wilsker

With a very few exceptions, I have used Microsoft Word as my word processor when writing these columns. Tonight I am using LibreOffice Writer, a component of the newly released LibreOffice version 4.0.0.3, a totally free and open source competitor of Microsoft Office. The Writer desktop looks very similar to the desktop used in Word, and all of the commands and shortcuts that I have been using with Word appear to work equally well with Writer. Anyone minimally familiar with Word should be able to immediately use Writer, as it has a "zero learning curve" for those familiar with Word. What is especially interesting about this entire LibreOffice suite is not just its price (totally free), but the fact that it can read and write almost all of the office files used around the world, including word processor, spreadsheet, database, presentation, desktop publishing, and other types of office documents. LibreOffice also includes an "Export to PDF" feature on the File button on the menu bar, that can create perfect PDF files, without the necessity of third-party PDF writing utilities.

LibreOffice (**libreoffice.org**), is aptly named "LibreOffice" because it is a free (Libre) office utility, and is an open source, comprehensive office suite that contains all of the office components found in its expensive commercial competitors. For those who like to use office templates, add-ons, plug-ins, and other enhancements, the massive international community of LibreOffice users has created an extensive library of free supplements for the suite. Many of the

founders of LibreOffice were on the staff of its older cousin, OpenOffice, when OpenOffice lost the majority of its support funding due to a change in ownership. LibreOffice contains updates, enhancements, and features not found in its older open source cousin. The original OpenOffice grew out of a commercial dispute between Microsoft and Sun Microsystems, which resulted in Sun purchasing a German office suite, Star Office, and giving it away for free as OpenOffice, in direct competition to the expensive Microsoft Office. IBM licensed OpenOffice, and released it under the banner Lotus Symphony. When Oracle took over Sun, there were some disagreements over the future of OpenOffice and its employees, resulting in many of the employees leaving and using the OpenOffice source code (open source, which means not copyrighted), to create an updated and more competitive LibreOffice. (Source: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_office).

LibreOffice 4 was a 183mb download (Windows version) which installed quickly and without any annoying options to install toolbars, search engines, and other irritants; it was a totally clean install process. An optional 7.9mb "HelpPack" (Windows version) provides integral, context sensitive help when needed. The Windows version of LibreOffice 4 will run under Windows XP, Vista, Windows 7, or Windows 8, and has minimal hardware requirements (256megs RAM, 1.5GB hard drive space, and 1024x768 minimum recommended screen resolution). Recent versions of Java may be required to utilize all of the features in Base, the LibreOffice database

program. The Mac version of LibreOffice requires MacOSX 10.4 (Tiger) or higher, 512Mb RAM, 800 Mb available hard disk space and a 1024x768 graphic display with 256 colors (higher resolution recommended). For Mac computers, Java may also be necessary to utilize the Base database program. Some special steps may be necessary to install LibreOffice on Macs running MacOS X 10.8 (Mountain Lion), and these steps are shown on the "system requirements" page at libreoffice.org/download/system-requirements. LibreOffice is also available for computers running almost all iterations of Linux including Debian, Ubuntu, Fedora, Mandriva, Suse, and others.

Sometimes, it is convenient or necessary for a user to carry his own portable software and files on a USB flash drive, or similar device. LibreOffice has a fully functional portable version (100mb download) that includes a word processor (Writer), spreadsheet (Calc), presentation tool (Impress, a PowerPoint competitor), drawing package (Drawing) and database (Base). All of these are "packaged" to run in the standardized "PortableApps" utility, or run by itself from a USB flash drive, in the cloud, or from a local drive. As a fully functional portable office utility, the user can take all his documents along with everything he needs to work with them wherever he goes. As are all of the other forms of LibreOffice, this portable version is free (libreoffice.org/download/portable). I downloaded the portable version, installed it to a flash drive, and it worked flawlessly; I even opened a PowerPoint with it to be

sure I could play it with LibreOffice Impress, and as all of the other documents that I tried, it worked just fine.

As I am typing this right now on Writer, the Microsoft Word competitor, I have not encountered any issues, as the look and feel of LibreOffice Writer is almost identical to Microsoft Word. One difference between LibreOffice 4 and Microsoft Office 2010 is the menu ribbon used in Office 2007 and 2010, while LibreOffice 4, by default, uses the more traditional menu bar as used in earlier versions of Office such as Office 2003. LibreOffice surveyed its users and found an almost perfect 50/50 split between those who preferred the classic menus to the newer Office 2010 ribbon menu. For those who prefer the more modern looking Office 2010 ribbon, several free add-ons are available which mimic the ribbon style.

I use Microsoft PowerPoint on a daily basis in my classes and for my external presentations; using the PC installed version of LibreOffice, I opened several of my PowerPoint presentations, created on either PowerPoint 2003 or PowerPoint 2010, with LibreOffice 4 Impress. Both PPT and PPTX PowerPoints opened and played perfectly with Impress, including all of the slide transitions and animations. Since I carry backup copies of my PowerPoints on my USB flash drive when I do external presentations, the portable version of Impress could easily be utilized to play the slide show if the computer provided either has an older version of Office, or no Office at all. In terms of desktop appearance, the Impress window looked exactly like PowerPoint 2003, but had all of the fea-

tures of PowerPoint 2010.

I use Office Excel for several types of record keeping, both at home and at work; to perform a quick test of compatibility between the LibreOffice Calc with files created with Excel 2010 (.xlsx) and Excel 2003 (.xls), I loaded Calc and opened a variety of Excel files. With Calc, all of the Excel files opened, maintaining all colors, fonts, graphics, formulas, spacing, and other characteristics of the original Excel files. As do all of the other LibreOffice components, spreadsheet files created in the dozens of spreadsheet formats used around the world, including all of the Microsoft formats, can be opened in Calc.

Base is the LibreOffice database utility, which, like all of the other LibreOffice components, can read and write other database formatted files. Base integrates seamlessly with the other LibreOffice components, and can also be used as a free-standing database utility. Linked tables and queries from MySQL, PostgreSQL and Microsoft Access can be imported, or the user can design his own in Base. Support is built-in or easily addable for a wide range of other database products, including HSQL, MySQL, Adabas D, Microsoft Access and PostgreSQL.

Draw and Math are two LibreOffice utilities that add enhanced capabilities over Microsoft Office. Draw allows the user to create diagrams and sketches ranging from simple images to dynamic 3D illustrations with special effects. Math is an equation editor that lets users lay-out and display mathematical, chemical, electrical or scientific equations quickly and in standard written notation. Users of Microsoft

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Publisher and Visio can easily import documents created with those products into LibreOffice using free import filters. An import filter for LibreOffice Draw opens Microsoft Office Publisher files, while another Draw import filter can open all Visio files ranging from the original 1992 Visio format to the latest Visio 2013 files.

For anyone from students at all levels, to businesses and other agencies or enterprises, LibreOffice 4 is the way to go for those who want all of the features and usability of the expensive Microsoft Office suite, without the expense, as LibreOffice explicitly means "Free Office".

Websites

<http://www.libreoffice.org>
<https://www.libreoffice.org/download/system-requirements>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_office
<https://www.libreoffice.org/download/portable/>
http://portableapps.com/apps/office/libreoffice_portable/

SIG and Event Calendar

July 2013

July 1 st – Monday	5:30 PM	Beginners SIG	BCL	Jim Kristan	309-755-8277
	7:00 PM	General Meeting	BCL	Using Microsoft Publisher Bill Hannan	
July 10 th – Wednesday	6:30 PM	Craft Room	BC	QCS Board Meeting Craft Room	309-314-1780
July 15 th – Monday	5:30 PM	Genealogy SIG	BCL	Len Stevens	563-359-9672
	7:00 PM	Internet SIG	BCL	Ted Huberts	309-792-9470
July 22 nd – Monday	5:30 PM	Digital Media SIG	EDC	Vicki Wassenhove	309-787-2239
	7:00 PM	Windows SIG	EDC	Larry Stone	309-787-5574

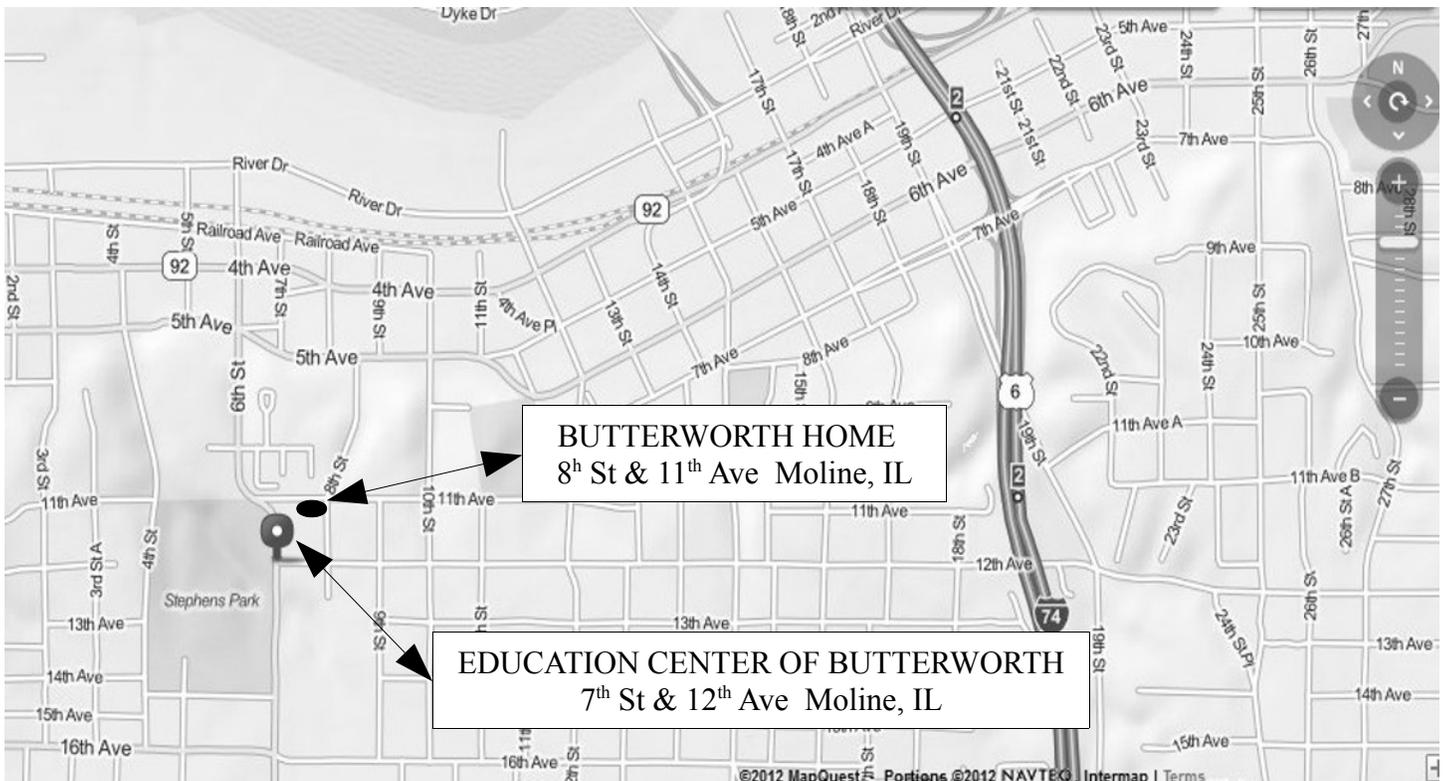
Location Key

EDC Education Center of Butterworth

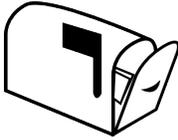
BCL Library of Butterworth Home

ORC Orchid Room of Butterworth Home

OAK Oak Room of Butterworth Home



Quad Cities Computer Society
c/o Dave Tanner
3449 - 52nd St
Moline IL 61265



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Monday
July 1st, 2013
7:00 PM
Using Microsoft
Publisher
presented by
Bill Hannan
Black Hawk College