

Users Groups Give Members A Chance to Learn and Teach

By Stanley A. Miller II
of the Journal Sentinel staff

Last Updated: Sept. 20, 1999

For people struggling with confusing software or cryptic computer manuals, users groups can be self-help havens where people meet locally to discuss problems and socialize with friends.

Computer users groups vary in type and technical level, with some focusing on recreational interests such as games, the Internet and learning software. Others have a professional focus on subjects such as programming languages. Many groups meet just so members can talk about computers or show off their newest technology toys.

The Wisconsin All-computer Users Club is one of the largest in the Milwaukee area, with about 165 members, according to Bruce Kosbab, the group's president.

The club's main meeting is the first Thursday of every month at Jackson Park Lutheran Church, and there are several special-interest groups within the club that address various issues, including telecommunications, early Apple computers and Macintosh machines.

"We don't leave anybody out, and we don't go over their heads," Kosbab said. "We won't do everything for you, but we'll get you off to a good start."

Besides getting questions answered, members get to grill different visiting speakers. Members have seen Y2K question-and-answer sessions, displays from software developers, and software demonstrations for

programs such as ICQ, which is an instant messaging program used over the Internet for real-time chat.

The group has become more diverse as it has grown, Kosbab said. Teenagers, senior citizens and families attend meetings. Questions range from "What kind of printer should I buy?" to "How do I get on the Internet?" Kosbab said.

"A lot of people hear about us by word of mouth, and some people might just stumble upon us," Kosbab said. "I think the socializing is one of the biggest things."

But while some groups say they are growing with the popularity of computers, David Glish, vice president of the Milwaukee Computer Society, said that his group's membership has been stagnant over the last few years, and users groups in general have been declining.

"Users groups seemed to be much more popular when there were lots of different types of computers," Glish said. "It seems like IBM people aren't as interested in users groups because they tend to be people who buy a computer and use it for a few things. They aren't that interested in learning about how it works."

"There are so many help books and magazines out there, people can really learn about it on their own if they want to," he said. "But you always end up with those nagging questions that you can't figure out by yourself, and someone else has already run into it. That's saved me a lot of grief in the past."

Milwaukee Computer Society formed as an Atari
(Continued on page 7 - User Groups)



Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts

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Membership

Membership for L.C.A.C.E. is open to all individuals and families interested in personal computing. Annual dues are \$20.00 per individual/family. Associate membership is only \$10.00 (out of state, unable to attend meetings). Membership includes a one year subscription to the L.C.A.C.E. News Journal and access to all club libraries, and functions. Applications for membership may be obtained at the monthly meeting, by request on the club Hotline and is now available on our WEB site at <http://inf-net.com/lcace>.

Meetings

L.C.A.C.E. meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month at the Warren/Newport Public Library, 224 N. O'Plaine Road in Gurnee, Illinois. The meeting location opens at 11:30a.m, and the formal meeting begins at 12pm. All meetings are open to the public. Bring a friend!

Advertising

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ARTICLE DEADLINE

The deadline for all articles being submitted for the News Journal is the 20th of each month. Send your articles via E-Mail to Corky Bell at corky@foxvalley.net or Vic Falkner at rvf@se-iowa.net or the Club's E-mail at lcace@inf-net.com

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NOTICE

If your E-Mail address is incorrect or missing or you want to add or change your WEB site url, please E-Mail us at lcace@inf-net.com with the correct information.

WEB Sites

Our members own WEB Sites.

Corky Bell

<http://users.foxvalley.net/~corky>

Nancy Larson

<http://users.foxvalley.net/~mamanan>

JJ

http://easyfoto.com/jj_johnson

Time to Renew

If the mailing label on your News Journal is highlighted in **YELLOW**, this means it is time to renew your membership to L.C.A.C.E. This information will be published in the News Journal and will also be posted on the club's WEB site which is

<http://inf-net.com/lcace>

If it is time for you to renew your membership, please fill out a new Application and a Member's Profile Sheet. These forms can be obtained at the meetings or downloaded from our WEB site.

**The following Member(s)
need to submit renewal applications:**

Katheryn Gorenz 12/99

Terri Hanlon 12/99

Linda Heinrich 12/99

Joseph Kelroy 12/99

Steve Yeaton 12/99

**If you have already filed an
application,
please disregard this notice.**

UNIVERSAL SERIAL BUS (USB) UPDATE from Tipworld.com

Remember the initial confusion over the two newest PC buses: USB and IEEE 1364 FireWire? It was hard to figure out what products would be available on what buses. In general, we heard that lower bandwidth devices (such as keyboards, joysticks, and digital cameras) would come in USB form, while higher bandwidth devices such as audiovideo cameras and editing stations would connect using FireWire.

Well, forget everything you've learned. At the latest Intel Developer's Forum, it was announced that USB 2.0, the next generation of USB, will run at speeds as fast as the FireWire bus--between 360 and 480 Mbps (FireWire currently transfers data at about 400 Mbps). Expect PCs and products capable of handling USB 2.0 in the second half of 2000.

What this means for consumers who are trying to decide between product interfaces is still anyone's guess.

If you're working on an older PC and you're not quite sure whether it is USB capable, never fear. The USB Implementers Forum offers a free Windows utility (recently updated to version 3.01) at its Web site, http://www.usb.org/shopping_bag.html

Download and run this utility to determine once and for all if your system is ready for USB. You'll also find some pictures of USB ports and cables so you'll know what to look for on the back of your PC.

Two companies mentioned previously, Anchor Chips at <http://www.anchorchips.com> and Belkin at <http://www.belkin.com> offer USB cables (called bridges) that let you easily connect two PCs via their USB ports. This lets you share files and printers and run some multiplayer games between the two systems.

We understand that there may be some confusion about these USB products. They are not meant to replace a LAN. First off, they only transfer data at about 4 Mbps rather than the 10- to 100-Mbps transfers of standard Ethernets. Additionally, you'll quickly load down your systems if you start to con-

nect more than two PCs using this approach.

Generally, these USB bridges function best as quick and temporary connections--say, for transferring data between a notebook and a desktop. The bridges can also connect just two systems that need minimal file sharing. For anything more sophisticated, look for true LAN hardware

Are you having trouble getting your USB products to work? Even with the news about USB 2.0 coming down the line, many users are still struggling with system hangups, hardware conflicts, and slow performance. Get some help from other consumers who have already conquered your troublesome USB product or PC setup--browse the public USB newsgroup at the USB Implementers Web site,

<http://www.usb.org/forums/retail/webboard.html>

The newsgroup is very active, and most of the postings are helpful.

GETTING THE MOST OUT OF TECHNICAL SUPPORT from Tipworld.com

Even the best hardware upgraders sometimes need help. Most of the time, a problem encountered during an upgrade has nothing to do with you and everything to do with the product itself, arising from some known (or unknown) software or hardware conflict. Still, if you don't prepare for an interaction with a company's technical support staff, you could wind up wasting valuable money and time.

First, always try a company's Web site before calling. Nowadays, you'll find a host of technical support information posted on almost every computer-related Web site. It saves the company money if consumers browse the site instead of calling, so most vendors are quite good at keeping their Web pages current and well-stocked with technical support information and hardware driver software. If you don't see a technical support listing on the home page, search the site on the word "support" or on keywords related to your problem.

(Continued on page 13 - Technical Support)

Windows 95 Tips

PRINT SYSTEM SETTINGS

Want a printout of all your system settings--a handy resource for troubleshooting hardware problems? Ask the Device Manager to make one for you. Hold down the Alt key as you double-click My Computer. In the resulting System Properties dialog box, click the Device Manager tab. Click the Print button, select the type of report you'd like to print, then click OK.

HERE'S SOMETHING COOL, IF NOT ENTIRELY USEFUL

Tired of having your Start button ALWAYS on the leftmost end of your taskbar? Then move it. First make sure you have a blank space long enough on your taskbar to fit the Start button; then follow these steps:

1. Click Start.
2. Press Esc to close the Start menu but leave the button selected.
3. Press Alt + - + M (that's Alt, then the minus sign, and then M).
4. Using the arrow keys, move your Start button to the blank area of the taskbar.
5. Press Enter.

Couple of notes:

To put the button back where you found it, simply change the taskbar--make it larger or smaller, for example.

If your taskbar is set to AutoHide, don't bother with this tip. Every time you redisplay the taskbar, the Start button returns to its original position.

QUICK VIEW TO PREVIEW FILES

Want to view a file without taking the time to open the application in which it was created? Try Quick View, an applet that allows you to view the contents of a file in seconds. (Note: The file type must be

supported by Quick View.)

First, make sure Quick View is installed on your system. Right-click any *.txt or *.doc file and make sure you see a Quick View command in the resulting menu. If not, with the Windows 95 installation CD in your CD-ROM drive, open the Control Panel and double-click Add/Remove Programs. Click the Windows Setup tab and, in the list of components, double-click Accessories. Select Quick View and click OK twice.

Ready to try it out? Right-click the file you want to preview and select Quick View. (If you don't see a Quick View command, that file type isn't supported.) Instantly, Quick View opens with a quick (albeit rough) preview of the file. Click the icon just below the File menu to open that file in its native application.

(Tip-in-a-tip: You can preview one file after another in the same Quick View window. Drag a file icon into the open Quick View window, and its contents will replace those of the previous file.)

THE SHOW DESKTOP ICON GOES BOTH WAYS

If you have Internet Explorer 4 or higher installed on your system, then you have the Quick Launch toolbar next to your Start button (unless you've removed it). This bar of icons includes the Show Desktop icon, which, when clicked, minimizes all windows to display your desktop.

Great, everyone knows that, right? But what you may not know is that after clicking this icon once to display your desktop, clicking it AGAIN restores all windows to their original position (before clicking the button). Who knew?

(Note: If you do anything on the desktop before clicking the icon again--for example, if you open and close a window--you may have to click the icon twice to restore your windows.)

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(Continued from page 1 - User Groups)

computer group in 1981 and has about 30 members now. The society meets the third Saturday of every month at Greenfield Park Lutheran Church in West Allis. Membership is \$20 a year, and for that members see lots of hardware presentations where members talk about scanners and high-end video cards and teach others how to install CD-ROM drives and hard drives. The group also talks about MP3 music files, graphic arts and video games.

About 20 society members gathered Saturday afternoon to learn about digital cameras and camcorders, but a few quiet conversations began during the presentations as people talked about color printers, Microsoft Office 2000 and Sony's PlayStation game system.

J.J. Johnson drove all the way from his home in Waukegan, Ill., to attend the meeting.

"Someone says "computers," and I'm there, I don't care where it is," Johnson said. "It's all fun and games, and with my teaching background, I really enjoy sharing the information with others."

Johnson, who creates multimedia tutorials at the Great Lakes Naval Training Center in Illinois, is founder of the Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts users group, which had about 20 members last year but has about 80 now. He said membership rose dramatically after the group got some exposure at a computer show and moved its meetings to a larger facility.

Nick Salonen, 16, a student at Heritage Christian School in West Allis, said that Saturday was his first meeting with the group, and he planned to come back.

"It's pretty good," Salonen said about the group after the discussion on digital cameras. "I like the exchanging of information and the sharing of what they know. Maybe I'll get to share some things."

Sam Gardner, secretary of the the Association of Personal Computer User Groups, a non-profit coalition of groups based in Jacksonville, Fla., said that the number of computer users groups in the United States and the world has grown steadily, and he estimated that the number of groups joining the asso-

ciation had risen by about 50 over the last two years.

"They're really there to help you get started," Gardner said. "It does not require someone there holding your hand, but that's available if that's what you need."

"It's the best-kept secret as far as computing goes. People buy computers, they have a lot of time, a lot of money, and they want to socialize."

Users groups often give feedback to companies that show off their wares, telling them whether the products are stable, easy to use and effective. Members sometimes find problems that company testers miss.

"The nature of many of the groups has changed," he said. "There are many more senior citizens than geeks. There is more need for these groups than ever before."

The Wisconsin All-computer Users Club's site is wauc.naspa.net. The Association of Personal Computer User Groups' Web site at member.apcug.org has information on seven groups in the Milwaukee area and 16 others in the state.

Appeared in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
on Sept. 21, 1999.

HOW STUFF WORKS

How Stuff Works is a site that explains the technology and biology that surrounds us. You can finally find out how a car engine turns tiny explosions into enough force to move an automobile, how your body uses food, and even how a house is built. Browsing is fun, but you can use the Search box if you're looking for something in particular.

<http://www.howstuffworks.com>

Upcoming L.C.A.C.E. Meetings

November 13, 1999

December 11, 1999

January 08, 2000

February 12, 2000

Windows 98 Tips

MULTICOLOR TITLE BARS

Hey, want to see a neat trick? Right-click the desktop, select Properties, and in the Display Properties dialog box, click the Appearance tab. In the drop-down list under Item, select Active Title Bar. To the right of that option, you'll see two settings: Color and Color 2. Use them to select two different colors (or change only one color), then check out the title bars in the preview area! They fade from one color to the other. Cool, eh? When you find a color combo you like, click OK to keep the change.

(Note: You can also select two colors for the Inactive Title Bar component.)

FOR MAXIMUM PROGRAM PERFORMANCE, DEFRAGMENT

Want to make sure that when you select a program in your Start menu, that application starts as fast as possible? Be sure to defragment your hard drive on a regular basis--say, once a month--using the Disk Defragmenter. The version of this utility that comes with Windows 98 will rearrange your program files for optimum performance.

Select Start, Programs, Accessories, System Tools, Disk Defragmenter, and select the drive you want to defragment. Now click the Settings button and select Rearrange Program Files So My Programs Start Faster, if it isn't already selected. Click OK twice, and let the defragmenting begin!

And what if you have more than one drive on your system? Defragment them all in one fell swoop.

Start the Defragmenter as usual, then select Start, Programs, Accessories, System Tools, Disk Defragmenter, but instead of selecting a single drive, scroll all the way down to the bottom of the list (in the Select Drive dialog box) and select All HardDrives. Click OK, and you're off!

EXPLANATION OF V90 AND RELATED MATTERS

This is from Alex Phillips from RICA, internet provider for UGNN

Merely having a 56K modem does not mean you will connect at 56K. Connection rates depend on many variables, including the carrying capability of the phone line itself etc. This is why the boxes of 56K modems usually say right on them "connections UP TO 56K". In this area, we find that connection rates with 56K modems are usually in the 42K to 48K range due to the carrying capacity of the phone lines.

Additionally, All modems talk to each other using certain Protocols. We use the latest stuff, which uses US Robotics 56K (3Com) V90 protocols. This means that modems using the US Robotics 56K X2 protocols will tend to tun a bit slower than they did before, and that modems using 56K Flex protocols will run a bit faster than they did before. Fastest speeds with us are obtainable only by using modems that are US Robotics 56K (3Com) V90 modem compatible.

If you are upgrading your modem, External modems are to be Preferred over Internal modems for several reasons, in our view.

Many 56K X2 and Flex modems can be upgraded to USR (3Com) 56K V90 by downloading and installing updated modem drivers that are available on the Website of the manufacturer of the modem, if you wish to do that. Even Brand New machines are often not delivered with the latest modem drivers due to the length of time the hardware etc. has been in the manufacturing, supply, and distribution pipeline.

Other modems Cannot be upgraded. These must therefore be used as is. A few modems, particularly older ones, are not compatible with USR (3Com) V90 at all. In those cases, Subscribers will have to buy a modem which is.

All the above notwithstanding, if you Are getting connected at what you consider to be an adequate

(Continued on page 14 - V90)

The PRESIDENT's RAM

To start this month's RAM, I would like to apologize to the **Voice Pilot** company for not mentioning their superb demonstration of their voice recognition programs and also for the donation of the program for the door prize. A letter thanking them was sent, however I feel that the News Journal should have been the appropriate place to notify the members and subscribers of this event, which I inadvertently overlooked.

Mike and Stu, thank you for a job well done. I am enjoying the use of the **HEAR SAY** program and am in anticipation that the other members who purchased programs from you are also enjoying this type of technology. And the other great accomplishment that day was that of catching me lost for words rendering me speechless. Again **THANK YOU** from L.C.A.C.E. and we hope that you will return at a future date to share your programs and technological advances with us.

Now for last month's meeting. Randell Durk did another fantastic job on showing us "**How to Build Your Own Computer**". As he does at the Expo, he showed us how to construct a computer, piece by piece, while answering questions from the audience. Once again he held the attention of every person in attendance, especially Mr. G's. The only thing that went wrong was with the video recording of the session. All of us, including Randell, had anticipated the demo being filmed. However, the recorder failed and just wouldn't respond to any type of stimulus to get it operational. I understand that this has happened before when Randell is to be taped.

Maybe the answer is that Randell is not only a computer guru, but a video gremlin.

Maybe the answer is that Randell is not only a computer guru, but a video gremlin. However, we will be having Randell at future meetings and we will, somehow, eventually get his demo filmed. It was good to see Randell once again and we appreciate him taking his time and effort to provide his talents to

our group. Again, **THANK YOU** Randell for a job well done and very much appreciated by the members of L.C.A.C.E. and their guests. See you at the Expo.

This year's Christmas Party is scheduled for December 11, 1999. I am awaiting an answer from the Warren/Newport Library as to whether they will permit us to bring in our own treats or if we will be required to purchase them from the concessions people located within the library. As soon as I receive an answer, I will E-Mail everyone with the information. We will be having raffles and a "Swap Shop" table at the party. If you have something you would like to sell (computer equipment only), please bring it to the party. Make sure that your name and the price for the item is clearly marked on the item. L.C.A.C.E. will not be responsible for any of the items.

Here is a picture that I would like to share with everyone (it will be on the Web Site soon), just to show how much fun our members have, no matter where they are:



What a group we have. That's why L.C.A.C.E. is such a fun Users Group to belong to. See everyone on November 13th.

Corky



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Quickeys

by Bob Carpenter

Company: CE Software
List Price: \$39.95
Platform: Win95/98/NT

Have you ever found yourself doing the same repetitive steps and saying "There must be an easier way!" Well, now there is. Quickeys is a program that allows you to record almost anything you can do with your Windows PC.

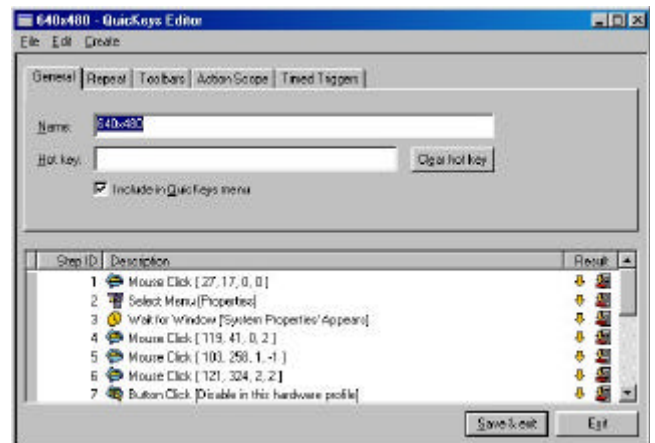


Here's an actual example of something I used to do with my PC. My PC went to the local User Group every month so we could have a demo. However, I had to change the monitor type every month from "Sony GDM-17SE1" to "Generic VGA 640x480" because the club's monitor is a very old VGA monitor. Also, when I got home, I had to reverse the process to get the resolution I normally use. This became a real chore to do. I could basically do these steps in my sleep.

I decided to try to get Quickeys to automate the monitor change for me. I found it pretty easy to do. Quickeys uses a VCR-type of interface. You just pick the "Start Recording" option and a small window appears that allows you to stop recording, pause recording, and cancel recording. Then, you just execute the steps (keyboard and mouse) that you would normally do. One thing I did notice is that Quickeys didn't recognize the Windows keys. That's because the Quickeys recorder thinks you have a 101 keyboard. It's something I hope CE Software fixes in the future, but it can be worked around.

After you stop recording, a dialog box appears that allows you to: name your new macro, decide if it should be on the Quickeys menu (Quickeys puts itself in the System Tray), decide the scope of your macro, and more. Let me explain how you can define the scope of your macro. For instance, you may only want this macro to work if you're in MS Word. You can tell Quickeys to make the scope based on a program. Quickeys then shows a list box where you can pick the program you want this macro to work in. You can also decide that this macro will only work when the desktop is active.

Besides the option of adding your macro to the Quickeys menu, you can create a keyboard shortcut for your action. Quickeys warns you against using any of the normal Windows shortcuts (Ctrl-X, Ctrl-C, etc.) because Quickeys will execute your macro instead of doing the normal Cut and Paste that you intended.



If your macro doesn't work right away, don't worry. You can edit your macro if necessary.

If your macro doesn't work right away, don't worry. You can edit your macro if necessary. When I read about this, I was afraid it would be some programming language that would require actual reading of the manual to use. Boy, was I wrong! The editing screen shows you step by step what the macro is doing. For example, the script will say "Waiting for window '640x480 Display Properties'". If you double-click on any step, the editor will show you the options of that step. What I mean is it will tell you which mouse button you pressed (if any), how long to wait

(Continued on page 12 - Quickeys)

MEMBER'S PROFILE

Dan Meyer



**E-MAIL
TO BE ANNOUNCED**

Birth Month: September

Family: Wife: Melissa, Daughter: Stephanie

Hometown: Hanover Park, IL

My Job Is: Material Handler

My Favorite Meal Is: Pizza

For Entertainment I Enjoy: Playing Sport Games

A Movie or Book I Would Recomend: ?????

My Prized Possession: TV/Computer

Someone I Admire: My Mother and Father

I Wish I Could Stop: ?????

I Want People To Remember Me: As a friendly & helpful person

I Use My computer For: Just got It

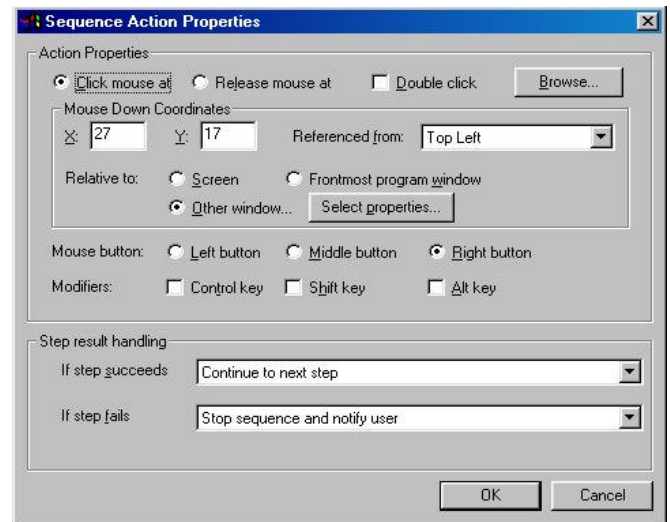
My Favorite Program Is: ?????

My Favorite Phrase Is: "Awsome"

(Continued from page 11 - Quickeys)

for that step to occur, what should the script do if the step succeeds or fails, and more. This is important because I had to adjust my script to work correctly whether certain windows appeared or not. All of this is handled thru a point and click interface. No programming jargon here!

You'll know if your script failed because the playback window (same VCR interface as the recording window) will stop on a certain step. Quickeys shows you the number of the step it is currently executing. If Quickeys pauses at a step for any length of time (more than a second), there's probably a problem with your macro. You then hit the "X" button to stop the playback. With Quickeys 1.0, you'll have to remember which step the macro got stuck on. With the 1.01 update (available for free from www.quickeys.com), when you stop the playback, the editor automatically appears and stops on the step that you stopped the macro on.



If this is too complicated to start with, Quickeys comes with 22 Wizards to help you out. This leads you step-by-step thru many common functions. Some of the Wizards were quite useful. It was incredibly easy to create a macro that automatically entered my name, E-mail address, and signature line if I hit Ctrl-Alt-B (I picked the key. You can pick an easier to remember if you want). I also set the scope of the macro so that it only worked if I was in Wordpad. This is incredibly useful so you don't have macros trying to execute a text entry while you're in your database program and that shortcut key happens

(Continued on page 14 - Quickeys)

(Continued from page 4 - Technoical Support)

A company's Web site should always be your first stop for technical support information. If you don't find what you are looking for there, however, keep browsing. You may find what you need at another Web site. For example, if you're installing a new modem and you're having problems getting it to work properly, you should first check with the modem manufacturer and then with your PC maker. PC vendors often post any known hardware problems, complete with device make and model information, along with the solutions on their Web sites.

Another general-purpose Web site for Windows-based PCs is the Microsoft site at:

<http://www.microsoft.com>

There you'll find a massive technical support database that stores Windows-related problems for many hardware and software products.

Have everything you'll need readily available before you make a technical support call. By "everything" I mean the problematic product's documentation and box, your PC's make and model information and a list of its current configuration, a list of ways you've tried to rectify the problem, and a detailed list of symptoms you've noticed. If the product is an internal one, you'll probably want to have the cover of your PC off so you can quickly list dip switch settings and serial numbers if need be. Just don't power up the PC without the cover on unless you know exactly what you are doing and there are no children or pets close by.

With the right preparation you'll minimize the amount of time your technical support call takes.

Upgrader, heal thyself. To limit the length of a technical support call, perform your own diagnosis before you dial for help. Most technical support staffs run through a list of issues to rule out before they get to the heart of the problem you're having. This list will include items such as these: Are all the relevant cables attached correctly? Is the PC stable? Does a simple reboot solve the problem? Is it a Microsoft Windows problem?

The further you can narrow down the list of suspects

yourself, the faster your tech support call will end. If you can answer "tried that, didn't work" to your support staffer's initial questions, you'll be happier in the long run.

Avoid calling technical support on Monday mornings. Surveys say this is the busiest time for technical support phone centers. Also, listen carefully to the "traffic warnings" that some phone centers provide for customers on hold. If you hear that the current average hold time is 20 minutes or longer, consider hanging up and trying again at a later time unless your situation is critical.

And finally, don't hang up once you do get talking to a human being. Most phone centers classify "throughput" (the number of calls answered in a given time) differently from "closings" (calling back those people who require additional assistance). The support staff person you are dealing with may or may not be good at closing problems. However, if you refuse to hang up until he or she has solved your problem, the burden remains on the tech staffer to resolve your situation as quickly as possible.

How to Avoid eMail Storms

Email Lists... we all love them, use them, and sometimes are exasperated by them. They're wonderful though because they allow people to talk, chat and discuss through a series of emails. One person posts, and the list sends the post to everyone who has subscribed. It really works. Sometimes it works too well.

One of our lists recently was hit by what we refer to as a "Mail Storm." -- not fun. I received a phone call at 9 pm at home: "There are 112 posts on the list!" ... I jumped in the truck and flew into the office only to find the number had grown to over 400. I quickly unsubscribed the offending email addresses. But it wasn't over. The next morning there were over 500 more before we flushed out the Listserv queue.

Typically, a reader of the list will unknowingly set an auto-responder. You've seen them "Hi, I'm on Vacation," or "John no longer works here." These are set

(Continued on page 15 - E-Mail)

(Continued from page 12 - Quickeys)

to be used by the database program for something completely different. Since Quickeys macros have priority over every other shortcut key, that's why they allowed you to define when this macro could be used. I have to admit some of the wizards were more useful than others. Some of the wizards are already done by other free programs. For instance, Quickeys allows you to create a macro to change your screen resolution. QuickRes is freely available for Win95, built into Win98 and it does the same thing. However, the macro recorder is so flexible that you probably won't use the wizards much once you're comfortable with Quickeys.

I found Quickeys to be a very useful program. However, you don't have to take my word for it. CE Software has a 30-day demo available on their web site (either www.cesoft.com or www.quickeys.com). The demo is fully functional so it's a perfect opportunity to see if this program is right for you.

(Continued from page 8 - V90)

rate no matter what modem hardware and software drivers you are using and want to just leave it alone, that is of course always a viable option.

No need to Mess with Success, after all :-)

Related item: DOWNLOAD SPEEDS

There are a number of factors that affect the speed of any download, such as carrying capacity of the phone lines between here and the machine you are downloading from; the modem and drivers you are using; and how fast the machine you are downloading from is sending the data.

The Most Important thing of all that affects download speeds is how fast the machine you are downloading from is sending the data. Bottom line is that no matter what, you can't Get It faster than the sending machine is Sending It. Period :-)

Alex Phillips

Rockingham Internet Community Access [RICA]

NEEDED:

News Journal Articles written by our members.

Please submit to Corky at:

lcace@inf-net.com

corky@foxvalley.net

The *Linux* S.I.G.

By Les Larkin

So, I can download Linux for FREE? But my modem only runs at 28.8k and I only have one phone line. What is the next best deal on getting a copy of Linux?

Glad you asked! There is a company in San Francisco Bay area (where else) where you can get one of the 7 english distributions of Linux on a CD-ROM for \$1.99 plus \$5.00 shipping (UPS ground). The shipping cost of 5 bucks covers from 1 to 18 CD-ROMs. So if you know a person, or up to 17 persons, who wants to order a copy of Red Hat, Caldera, S.u.S.E., Slackware, Mandrake Debian or Stampede Linux, it would cost as little as \$2.67 per copy. The name of this company is CheapBytes. You can place an order on the web at <http://www.cheapbytes.com>. They also have a package they call the CheapBytes Linux 3 CD-ROM Archive Set - Fall '99 for \$5.49. These disks contain many useful programs, which are called 'packages' in the Linux community. If you are looking for the most user friendly installation, I recommend Caldera OpenLinux, which I plan to obtain from CheapBytes. If you prefer to get the 'store bought' copy, be advised that the latest version of Caldera OpenLinux is 2.3. I was in Best Buy on 10-20-99 and noted that they had version 2.2 on the shelf.

Happy computing!

GEEK CULTURE

<http://www.geekculture.com>

No longer an oxymoron, geek culture is alive and--well--alive. Ever wonder what geeks think is funny? What kinds of TV shows they watch? Wanna learn the latest lingo? How about checking out some geek strip pens (don't worry, mom and dad, the whole site's rated PG)?

Check out geek culture to send your loved ones, a geek e-card, buy some geek paraphernalia, download free geek software, or visit some sites deemed geek worthy.

(Continued from page 13 - E-Mail)

to automatically respond to all incoming mail with a nice note. The problems begin when that user is subscribed to a listserv.

The listserv gets the auto-response from the vacationer. It sends the mail to all other subscribers, including the vacationer. Of course the vacationer replies with the auto-response, and the loop is off to a running start.

Next, another subscriber feels injured by getting multiple posts, so decides to reply "Stop sending all that mail!". Of course the Listserv sends it to everyone else, including the vacationer, who [you guessed it] responds again... and on and on. Then someone says "Unsubscribe Me" – but to the LIST! Bingo. More mail.

Then some ding-dong decides to reap revenge on this offending vacationer and sets an auto-responder to respond to the offending mail, and ... you guessed it. Mail Storm!

How to Recognize and STOP Mail Storms

- * Any email sent more than once, twice, etc.
- * Mail that is obviously automated: vacation, bounces, etc.
- * Mail that has "Autoresponder" or "Auto-reply" in the header.

!!! Do NOT reply to the mail. Do NOT write the list.

!!! Notify the List Mom or Dad through their off-list address ONLY.

If you have a phone number, perhaps give them a ring. They may be home for the evening, or they may not have checked their email since the storm began.

Do not complain if you get more auto-replies after the all safe notice. That mail could be queued on any number of mail servers around the world. Just wait... they'll stop.

If you want OFF the list, don't write the list to unsubscribe you. Follow the instructions for the list.

It's so funny to get an unsubscribe on the list when right there in the header is how to unsubscribe. Duh.

A little care, and we'll all enjoy computing a little more.

Report on Quicken

by Mr. G

On a bright sunny day at one of our meetings, JJ presented to the members present an offer I couldn't refuse! It was this: All I had to do was create a report on the Quicken for 99 for the newsletter AND it would be mine.

You see I have Quicken 98, been using it for some time now so what the heck. Kinda like to compare it with the 98 copy.

I was using my 98 copy for keeping track of my checking - using it as a computerized check register. Nothing fancy, and just a good program to use.

Now getting to the 99 issue - this is my experience with it.

What you need: Computer and monitor, 486 or higher PC with at least 12mb of RAM, a hard drive with 38-98 of free disk space, a double speed CD ROM drive, video board and a monitor capable of running 256 color VGA. This I had so there was no problem.

Insert the CD ROM and you are on your way to installing Quicken 99! The program installed perfectly and transferred my data of Quicken 98.

There were quite a few additions made to Quicken 99 - the quick start icons on the desktop were terrific, especially the quick entry - takes you right to the check register.

Upon examining this program, I am going to try some of its many other features. Thank you JJ for the offer.

See you at the meeting.

MEMBERS UPDATE

New Members

Dan Meyer is a 32-year-old Material Handler from *Round Lake Beach, Illinois*. Dan has just recently purchased his computer and has joined LCACE to learn more about how he can use his computer.

Kerry Broughton is from *Round Lake Beach, Illinois*, and has attended a few meetings with her friend Leslie. Kerry is a computer enthusiast and hopes to learn more at the club meetings. Kerry's favorite computer programs are MS Word, Picture Publisher and Typing Tutor. Kerry enjoys using her computer for exchanging e-mail, Education, and word processing.

Leroy and Bernice Long are from *Zion, IL*. They learned about LCACE from the EXPO at the Fairgrounds and joined LCACE to get knowledge and help on system and operation of their computer. Leroy and Bernice use their computer for exchanging e-mail, Graphic Design, Desktop Publishing, Education, Entertainment, and Word Processing. With all those interest, I hope that they have or are considering a second computer.

Larry Nixon is an Electronic Tech from *North Chicago, IL*. Larry learned about LCACE from the Computer EXPO at the Lake County Fairgrounds and decided to join so he could talk computers with other computer enthusiasts. Larry enjoys using his computer for exchanging e-mail and word processing.

Christine Marshall is a Trainer from *Streamwood, IL*. Christine is an avid Genealogist, and experienced Desktop Publisher. She enjoys using her IBM PS2 for exchanging e-mail, DTPing, and Word Processing. Christine's favorite programs are of course Microsoft Publisher, Microsoft Word, and Printer Shop. Here again, we know that Bill Gates would be proud of her.

Courtney Cain is a Technical Trainer from *Waukegan, IL*. Although Courtney has 15+ years of computer experience, he has become an interested user in LCACE. Like many others, Courtney uses his

computer for exchanging e-mail, DTPing, and Word Processing. Courtney's favorite programs are: Microsoft Office, Thumbs Plus, and would you believe AOL. Maybe we can get him to do a demo on Thumbs Plus.

Rich Crocker is from *Trevor, WI*, and has joined LCACE to learn more about computers. Rich presently only uses his computer for word processing, but since his sponsor is Jim Rutledge, he will soon be up to his elbows inside of his computer upgrading it.

Renewals

Walter Sheets is a Government Program Reviewer from *Ingleside, Illinois*, and has been a member since 1996. Walter enjoys using his computer for exchanging e-mail, Education, and Word Processing, and his favorite program is Microsoft Word. I know Bill Gates is glad to hear that.

Linda Busch is an Office Manager from *Round Lake, IL* and has been a member since 1998. Linda serves as secretary on LCACE's Board of Directors. Linda joined the club to learn about computers, and calls herself a Computer Geek Wannabe. Linda likes to share her experiences be it computer or whatever, but uses her computer for exchanging e-mail, Desktop Publishing, Business, Entertainment, and Word Processing. Linda's favorite programs are: Adobe Photo Deluxe, Microsoft Publisher and any game.

Vic Falkner is a semi-retired disabled vet who lives in *Ottumwa, Iowa*. Vic has been a member of LCACE since 1989, and although living out of state, Vic continues to help the club by proofreading the newsletter, and doing product reviews. Vic enjoys using his computer for exchanging e-mail, word processing, and helping his son run a business. Thank you Vic.

Bob Carpenter is a programmer and presently lives in *Indianapolis Indiana*. Bob has been a member of LCACE since 1989, and was also a member of Milwaukee Computer Society (MCS) where he held the position as newsletter editor even after he moved

(Continued on page 17 - Members)

DEFRAG YOUR MACHINE REGULARLY

This is from Alex Phillips from RICA,
internet provider for UGNN

Especially in Windows machines (all versions) the hard drive tends to turn itself into Swiss cheese in a relatively short period of time. This slows down the operation of the machine and also leads to various Faults and error messages in the operation of programs running on it. It will also eventually kill the operating system of the machine if left unaddressed.

DEFRAG is like Jiffy Lube For Your Computer in terms of preventive maintenance to keep the above from happening.

DEFRAG is like Jiffy Lube For Your Computer in terms of preventive maintenance to keep the above from happening. It takes your drive, reorganizes it, and puts everything back into place so it looks like American cheese again :) :) DEFRAG should be run on your machine weekly or so, EVEN IF YOUR MACHINE SAYS THAT IT DOESN'T NEED IT (it is lying to you); and every time after you have put a bunch of stuff on or taken a bunch of stuff off your machine.

You run DEFRAG by clicking on the Windows Start Button at the bottom left of your main Dektop screen, which brings up a Column of options. In this column, select Run and then type in defrag and then click OK etc. The DEFRAG progam will them come up. Select the drive you want Defragmented (usually C, but if you have more than one hard drive or a drive with several paritions you should use the Down Arrow next to the window showing the drives to select All Hard Drives) and then Start the Defrag.

This is the single most important thing you can do to assure the reliable operation of your computer.

This should be done even on Brand New Machines just out of the box. They are generally delivered from the factory in a fragmented state from the installation of the software on the machine from the factory. The First thing you should do when you get a new ma-

chine set up is to run DEFRAG on it Immediately so that whatever fragmentation there is on the HDD does not have a chance to get any worse.

Remember, Defrag is like Jiffy Lube for your computer. Run it often and take care of your computer, and then your computer will take care of you.

(Continued from page 16 - Members)

to Indiana. Over the years, Bob has written several interesting articles, and continues to do software reviews for the club.

Jim Rutledge is ICW Specialist at the *Great Lakes Naval Base*, and is from *Waukegan, IL*. Jim has been a member of LCACE since 1998 and recently elected as Vic President. Jim is also our networking guru and enjoys crawling up to his elbows inside of computers. Most of Jim's remaining time is spend online exchanging e-mail with his social group (The Party of...) and other friends and family. While not online, Jim uses his computer for word processing, and entertainment. His favorite programs are: WebFerret, Corel Word Perfect, and MS OutLook.

ASK JEEVES FOR KIDS

<http://www.ajkids.com/>

Perhaps you've heard of the Web site Ask Jeeves. If not, it's essentially a smart, agent-based search engine: You ask the cyber butler a question, and he returns some suggestions of sites based on the inquiry you submitted. Now there's a Jeeves just for kids. Rather than trying to teach Junior the arcania of Boolean search terms, have your child enter a question such as "Where can I find Mr. Potato Head online?" and Jeeves will offer his suggestions.

PARENTS' GUIDE TO THE INFORMATION SUPERHIGHWAY

The Children's Partnership sponsors The Parents' Guide to the Information Superhighway: Rules and Tools for Families Online. The site helps parents set up ground rules for children using the Internet and gives them ideas for finding good resources online.

<http://www.childrenpartnership.org/bbar/pbpg.html>

Next Meeting!!!

L.C.A.C.E Online
View our Site

www.inf-net.com/lcace/

- ◆ LCACE E-mail addresses
- ◆ LCACE information,
- ◆ LCACE history and pictures
- ◆ LCACE meeting location and map
- ◆ LCACE members e-mail addresses
- ◆ LCACE online membership application

November 13, 1999

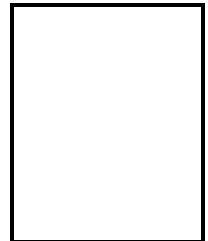
**Warren/Newport Library
McCullough Room B**

**224 N. O'Plaine Road
Gurnee, Illinois**

11:30 am - 2:00 p.m.

L.C.A.C.E

Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts
409 S. Elmwood Ave
Waukegan, IL 60085-5219



ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED