Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts

The News Journal

September 2001

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Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts

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2000-2001

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The LCACE News Journal is published eleven times annually. Members are encouraged to submit contributions and will be acknowledged in this newsletter.

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Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts

L.C.A.C.E.
c/o Group Ambassador
409 S. Elmwood Ave.
Waukegan, Illinois 60085-5219

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 Grant Township Meeting Hall, 411 S. Washington Ave., Ingleside, (Fox Lake) Illinois. The meeting location opens at 11:30 a.m., and the formal meeting begins at 12pm. All meetings are open to the public. Bring a friend!

Advertising

Ad rates per issue: Full page - $25, Half page - $15, Quarter page - $10, Business Card - $5. Discounts are available on advance purchase of multiple issues. Please send camera-ready copy and payment to the club address by the 21st of the month preceding publication. For more information on ad pricing, please call our Hotline. Ads are **FREE** to all paid members.

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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 Mike McEnery mmcenery@core.com or Vic Falkner at rvf@se-iowa.net or the Club's E-mail at lcace@inf-net.com

L.C.A.C.E. HOTLINE

Voice: 847.623.3815 **E-Mail: LCACE@inf-net.com**
Fax: 413.521.7052 **Web Page: www.inf-net.com/lcace**
http://lcace.tripod.com

digitalCORNER

THE FUTURE OF PHOTO IMAGING

Contributed By J.J.

Scanning Tip of the Month

Photographic images on a computer monitor can often look fabulous — but we are actually viewing them at low resolution, usually at 72 dpi (the resolution also used on the web). Photographs in most magazines are reproduced at 133 dpi and many color printers are 720 dpi or more. Be aware of this. You need different resolutions for different purposes

What's the difference between GIF files and JPEG files?

There are a lot of technical differences between the two, but here's the short answer:

Both formats offer some great image compression that results in small file sizes. In general, the GIF format maintains good detail, but reduces the number of colors in the file to get the size down. JPEG maintains a great range of colors, but tends to reduce the sharpness and definition of the images. For this reason, GIF files are usually used for text and logo images, while JPEG files are usually used for photos.

To learn from the pros, don't hesitate to "right click" on the images you see on web sites and select "properties" from the context menu that appears. In the properties, you will see the file name, which will indicate what format has been used for the image. If you want to experiment further, take a variety of images and save them as both GIF and JPEG files. Then, compare the size, overall quality, color range and sharpness of the various images to each other.

Photo Tip - The Rule of Thirds

Want to add some spice to your shots? Try putting the rule of thirds to work. The rule of thirds is very simple. When you are composing a shot, mentally use straight lines to divide your viewfinder frame into horizontal thirds and vertical thirds. Then try to position your subject at the intersection of any two of these lines. Ideally, this will give you a shot that looks more alive than a shot where the subject is centered in the middle of the frame.

Got a great grad photo (possibly using the rule of thirds)? Enter it in this month's contest - see above for details.

Tech Tip - Do It Yourself Sepia

Most photo editing software now has some sort of "sepia" effect in its "filter" tools. By applying this filter, you can give many shots an "old time" feel and a distinctive warm look that can be very distinctive. That said, it's well worth the time to go beyond the automatic tools in your software and experiment with creating your own sepia effects.

Typically, the best tools to use to create your own effects along these lines are the saturation and RGB settings. In an example using ACD FotoCanvas and a photo from last month's photo journal sample, we used the following steps to create our own custom sepia effect:

1) Set "saturation" to -50.
2) In the RGB color adjustments, reduce blue (which boosts yellow) to -20.

Future Trends

New in Digital Imaging, Software & Hardware

OLYMPUS is releasing their new Camedia C-4040 4 megapixel digital camera.

TOSHIBA has introduced a 4.2 megapixel digital camera, the PDR-M81.

SONY is launching a camera for new digital camera users. The 1.3 megapixel DSC-P20 will sell for about $250.

STARBUCKS is testing a wireless service whereby Wi-Fi enabled laptop users will have wireless Internet access available in participating stores.

THOMSON ELECTRONICS is planning to release an MP3Pro codec this summer which will give 64Kb audio files similar quality to current 128Kb audio files.

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Logitech Cordless MouseMan Optical

by Bob Carpenter

Have you ever gotten frustrated by your mouse cord? Maybe you wanted to move your mouse further away from your PC and didn't want to both with an extension cord. If so, you may want to look at Logitech's Cordless MouseMan Optical mouse.

I've had my Cordless MouseMan Optical mouse for about 3 months now and I've been very happy with it. However, I realize that its' convenience doesn't justify its price (around $70) to everyone. I was able to get the mouse for $60 after an instant rebate at Best Buy. By now, I'm willing to bet there are some better deals (maybe at one of the online stores) than that.

The installation was a breeze. Like many modern mice, it can be a USB or a PS/2 mouse. I tend to prefer the PS/2 mouse since I don't want to deal with a USB mouse if Windows goes into safe mode. Windows (at least Win98 and, probably, Windows Me) doesn't load the USB support if you're in safe mode. Therefore, no mouse. However, I've heard of greater precision with the mouse if it's used in USB mode. The people who've given the Logitech a bad review had been using USB mice and, I guess, the cordless mouse's tracking is comparable to a PS/2 mouse. It's been fine for me, but I felt you should know the down side as well.

Anyway, you just plug in the base unit into either the USB or PS/2 ports. The mouse works on the next bootup. However, you'll want to load the included software (or go to logitech.com to get the newest version) to get the mouse wheel working.

The included software is also useful for one other purpose. It tells you when the battery life in your mouse is getting too low and the batteries need to be replaced. Yes, that's right. Since your mouse is disconnected from the PC, it has to get its juice from somewhere. So you need to put in 2 AA batteries in your mouse. The battery life is said to be three months. That's about what I got out of the batteries. The good news is that Logitech includes 2 batteries to get you started. The manual states if the mouse is on a light colored surface (non-reflective surface or the optical portion won't work correctly), it will extend battery life.

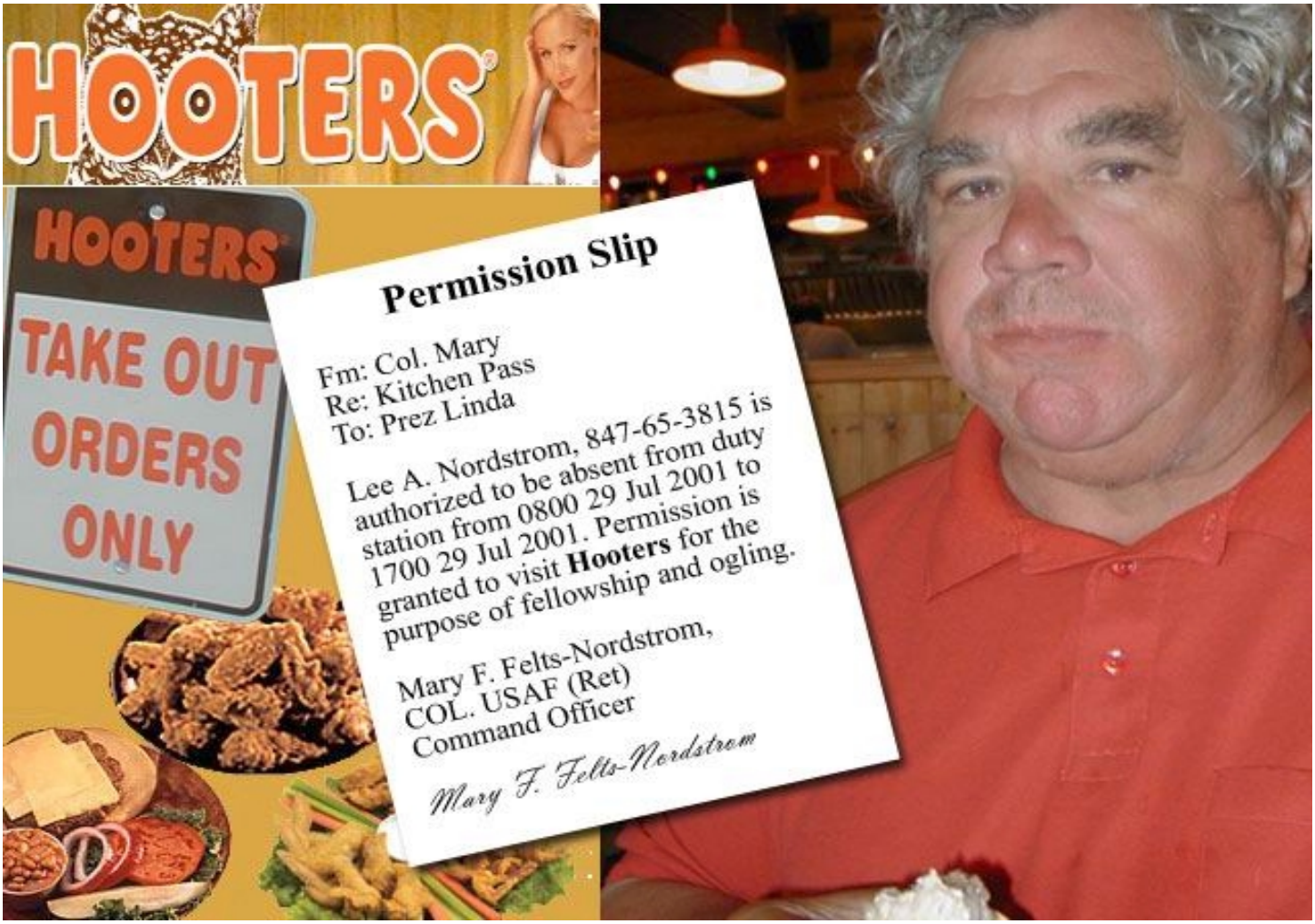
The software also comes with one other program that's so useless I hesitate to mention it, but I will. It's called Web Wheel. Web Wheel looks like something that came out of "Wheel of Fortune". It's a wheel shaped window that appears when you hit a particular mouse button (configurable in Logitech's mouse driver). You can add about 6 web sites to the wheel and your web browser will go to that site. You can also have your favorites appear in IE by choosing a particular slice of the wheel.

It wasn't obvious how to add my own web site to the wheel so I looked it up in the help file. That gave me the answer, but once I saw Web Wheel in action, I wondered why I'd wasted my time. Don't waste yours. Logitech has a great mouse, but Web Wheel's a loser.

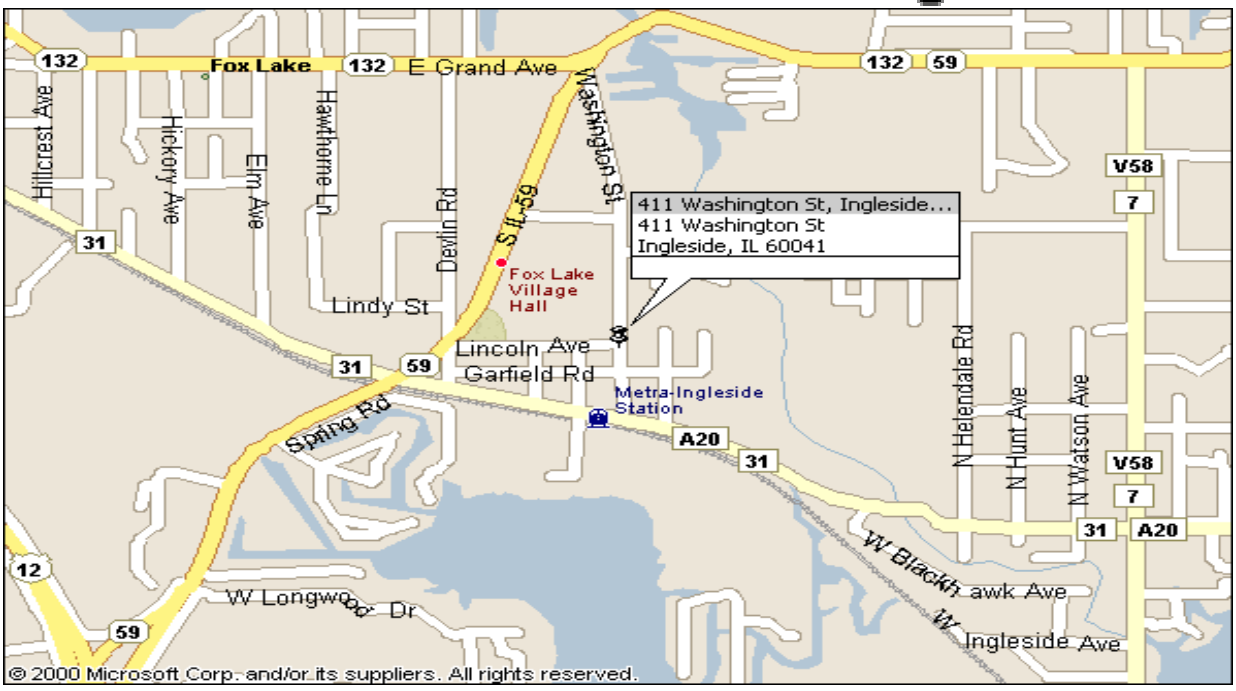
On a short "alternative OS" note, the mouse works great in Linux, but you won't have access to the battery meter to know when your batteries are running low. You'll have to find out the old fashioned way when your mouse stops working.

Discussions From Last Month's Meeting

1. Vote on the new Bylaws was tabled for lack of a quorum.
2. We are still looking for a new meeting place more central in Lake County.
3. Terri Hanlon volunteered to do a Genealogy Demo in November.
4. Members are encouraged to attend the September meeting so that we can vote on the modifications to the By-laws.



Directions to our Meetings



UPCOMING SHOW

September 2, 2001
9:30am - 4:00pm

Great prices!
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Save up to 70% off retail on everything computer!

A VIRTUAL ONCE - A - MONTH CARNIVAL FOR COMPUTER USERS

Once a Month Thousands of Computer Users Gather at the Computer Country Expo to Shop with 80 Vendors from across the Midwest with "Everything Computer", Talk with Computer Clubs and Network with other Computer Users, Listen to Live Midi Enhanced Entertainment, Attend Workshops, Check out Demos, Have a chance to Win computer products in Hourly Raffles, Get help from A+ Technicians for computer upgrades and repairs, Pick up FREE Magazines! Come Join the Fun at the Computer Country Expo!!

We will have Certified A+ Technicians at the show who will help people as personal shoppers and take them around the show and make recommendations for what they are looking to purchase. Buyers can also have their products installed and/or tested by the technicians FREE of charge at the show.

Holiday Inn
Main Ballroom
6161 W. Grand Avenue
Gurnee, Illinois 60031

$6 Admission

All L.C.A.C.E. Members who present their membership card will receive a $1 discount.

See our WEB Site at

www.ccxpo.com

Print this page, fill out the form below, bring it with you to the show, and get $1.00 off the entry fee!

Name: _____

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September 2, 2001

Compiled by: J.J. Johnson

Power Strip Liberator
Get the full use of your power strips and UPS outlets with our high-quality adapter cable. Just plug those big bulky power adapters into our cables and plug the cables into those previously unusable outlets! Have a power cord that just won't reach? Buy a handy 1-foot extension and forget about those long, tangled extension cords. **Heavy-duty molded ends, UL listed.** A Cyberguys!® exclusive @$1.79ea. Contact www.cyberguys.com

CD-R vs. DVD: Burn at Your Own Risk
Have you ever wondered why that CD you made with your new burner, which works perfectly in your CD-R drive, sometimes leaves DVD-ROM drives without a clue? I've started to notice that my DVD player doesn't seem to like the color green: Gold CDs will play, silver and blue ones, too, but stick a green disc in there and the little readout screams BAD DISC and spits it out like a crinkled dollar in a change machine. The funny thing is that whenever I try to put the same disc back in, the player remembers it and pops it out without any message at all. This week contributing editor David Morgenstern gets to the bottom of the green CD conspiracy. He also imparts some good advice on how to increase the chances that your CD-R or CD-RW discs will work in your clients' CD-ROM and DVD-ROM drives.
"A generation has grown up with CDs. Today, desktop systems and notebooks come standard with a CD-Recordable (CD-R), CD-Rewritable (CD-RW), or DVD-ROM drive (ignoring for the moment the writable DVD drive now shipping on Apple's fastest machines). It may come as a shock to content creators that our very familiarity with these optical technologies may pose a stumbling block when delivering work to clients. One disc does not fit all.

Easy CD Creator 5
Roxio has released a new version of Easy CD Creator 5 Platinum software suite. This it Roxio's first product from the Adaptec spin-off. The new version includes a slick new intuitive interface; the ability to encode MP3's (with playlist creation); and support for Windows Media Audio. Along with the ability to catalog your images, you can add voice and sound for a multimedia presentation complete with music and narration.
Some of the new additions are the disc-recovery and disc-repair utility; a simple video editor; MPEG-1 video encoding; and Direct CD packet writing support for Hitachi and Toshiba DVD-RAM drives. Easy CD Creator 5 Platinum list for $99, competitive upgrade is $50. www.roxio.com

Swap CD's instead of MP3s
With Napster's future up in the air, sharing MP3 over the internet will likely become more difficult. Here's another option; Trade CDs via CD Swapper, a new service from Swaplt and MP3.com. Once you register and print out a mailing label, you can send in CDs or games you don't want, in exchange for credits toward the purchase of other titles. More details are available at www.swapit.mp3.com.

Browse So No One Knows Where You've Been
You already know that Web sites gather information about you as you browse the Internet.

If you want to keep your identity and personal information hidden from everyone -- including employers, government agencies, advertisers, Web sites, hackers and ISPs – then navigate to SafeWeb. This free service encrypts all the data you send and receive, making it tough for anyone to see what you're doing online.

You simply enter a URL in the SafeWeb address bar, and SafeWeb then retrieves your requested page, encrypts and compresses it, and sends it to your browser where it's opened in a new window. Everything you access through the secured window is encrypted with 128-bit SSL (Secure Sockets Layer), and a SafeWeb toolbar appears at the top of your browser that allows you to customize your security settings. To use SafeWeb, go to: http://www.safeweb.com.

Vertical Refresh Rates and Your Monitor
Vertical refresh rate refers to the frequency at which horizontal lines on your monitor are refreshed with new signals. If the vertical refresh rate is too low, you're likely to notice
a flicker on your display; even if the flicker isn't perceptible, a low refresh rate can be very tiring for your eyes.

In general, you should buy display adapters and monitors that can run at a minimum of 72Hz in whatever resolution you will use. Although many adapters and some displays can actually run at much higher refresh rates, there's no need to crank the rate up, certainly not beyond 80Hz to 85Hz. Higher rates don't produce any user benefit and waste PC and display card resources that could be used for other processing tasks.

A Little Relief For Clicking Zips

If you've used an Iomega Zip drive, you may have encountered a problem unofficially known as the "Click of Death," when the drive repeatedly clicks and clicks without properly reading or writing a Zip disk. The CoD typically renders a Zip drive useless after some period of time. Now, as a result of the settlement of a class action suit, Iomega is offering $5 - $40 rebate certificates. For full details or to make a claim, go to: http://www.iomega.com/rinaldi/index.html

MS Office XP not for all Window users

Office XP won't work with Windows 95 and lays down a hefty hard drive requirement. You'll have to run Windows 98, Me, NT, or 2000 and have a cool 210MB of space to even install XP. Considering that Windows 95 is five years old and counting, that's not too shocking. And Microsoft's new activation/registration process gets under our skin. Like Office 2000 SP-1 (a second edition, essentially, of that suite), you must activate Office within the first 50 times you run it by calling a toll-free number or going online, then giving your product ID code (but not your name). What's more, you can install Office on only two machines. To do more than a pair of installations, say, if you need to reinstall it on a machine that completely wipes out, you must call another 800 number to receive a code that lets you do another installation. But if you'd rather evaluate the program yourself, head over to Microsoft's web site: http://www.microsoft/office/trial and take advantage of its 30-day Office XP trial run for just $9.95.

Q Drive

Keeps data under your thumb - LEAVE THAT EXTERNAL HARD DRIVE OF CD-RW DRIVE at home. The tiny Road Warrior Q Drive ($70 to $200); q.eiware.com) from Agate Technologies is designed will prove more useful than your key-chain bottle opener and every bit a pocketable. This key-ring-size device stores data and can be plugged into your USB port, and it shows up as a hard drive on your desktop, allowing you to load and swap files in a snap for easy transport. It's also oops-proof thanks to a write-protect switch. Better yet, because with Q-Drive draws power directly from the USB port, no additional power supply is required. Available in 16MB, 32MB, and 64MB sizes. IGo Road Warrior Q Drive; Reno, NV; 888-205-0064; www.igo.com

DEMO SCHEDULE

September 8
Photo Management
By
J.J.

October 13
Windows XP
By
Jim Rutledge

November 10
Genealogy
By
Terri Hanlon

December 8
Christmas Party

CCEXPO SCHEDULE

September 2
October 7
November 4
December 2

Volunteers for working the L.C.A.C.E. table are always welcome.

E-Mail Addresses

The following is a listing of available LCACE members' E-Mail addresses:

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Bobby Bell	Bozo160@hotmail.com
Donna Bell	niteangel85@hotmail.com
Bob Berry	tberry64@aol.com
Kerry Broughton	kerrybroughton@hotmail.com
William & Diane Brumbach	bbrumbach@cs.com
Linda Busch	lindashrub@juno.com
Bob Carpenter	bobc@in-motion.net
Lisa Carter	onedrwmn@juno.com
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Randell Durk	randell@voyager.net
Vic Falkner	rvf@se-iowa.net
Tom Fitzsimmons	tomfitzsimmons@juno.com
Jack Frost	jfrost@megsinet.net
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Bruce Welsch	brwelsch@hotmail.com
Steve Yeaton	hiflyer9@bigfoot.com

As much as we try, we do make errors. Please advise us if there is a mistake in your E-Mail address or if it is not included in this listing. Send E-Mail to lcace@inf-net.com with the additions and/or corrections. Thank you.

This listing last updated - August, 2000

Members Web Sites

Corky Bell
http://www.users/foxvalley.net/~corky

Phil Grimm
http://www.public.surfree.com/pgrimm

J.J.
http://www.picturetrail/lcace

Time to Renew

Renewals will be posted on our WEB site which is:

http://www.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.

See the CLUB PICTURES at:

www.picturetrail.com/lcace

Take a look, you just might see yourself.

L.C.A.C.E Online

View our Sites

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http://lcace.tripod.com

E-Mail Us At:

lcace@inf-net.com

Club Photos

http://ww.picturetrail.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**

Next Meeting

September 8, 2001

Grant Township Meeting Hall
411 S. Washington Avenue
Ingleside, (Fox Lake) Illinois
12pm - 2p.m.

This month:

Photo Management
Presented by
J.J.

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Lake County Area Compuer Enthusiasts
409 Elmwood Ave.
Waukegan, IL 60087-5219

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