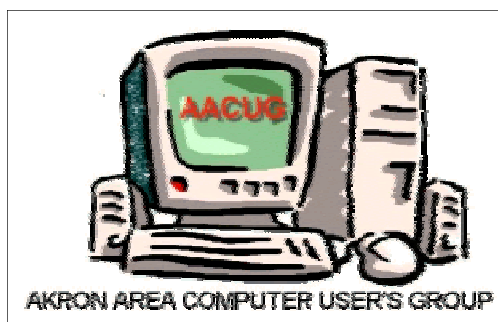


HARDCOPY

A publication of the Akron Area
Computer Users Group



Member of Association
of PC User Groups

Microsoft

MINDSHARE
User Group
Community

We're on the Web:
www.acorn.com/aacug

October 2007

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Next Meeting:

Sat., Oct.20, 1 PM

Ellet Branch Library



***In Memory
Chuck Connolly
Oct. 1, 2007***

We mourn the passing of a dedicated member of the AACUG. Chuck was very committed to the club. He held the office of President for a number of years. About nine years ago, he was so determined to recruit new members that he ran an ad in the *Beacon Journal* for free computer classes to be held in his home.

I saw the ad, before becoming an AACUG member; and, naturally, was very skeptical ... FREE classes??. After contacting Chuck he said that there was one stipulation - you had to join the club.

I eventually took the classes ... and the rest is history. Later, other prospective AACUG members took advantage of Chuck's classes. Without Chuck's determination to make our Club a successful venture, many of us would not be reading this newsletter at this time.

We will miss you, Chuck. May you rest in peace.

Rose Conley

AACUG Steering Committee Meeting

September 15, 2007

Present: Dave George, Betty Duncan, Liz Milford, Bob Cronauer, Gene Cooke, Eugene DiDonato.

The meeting was called to order about noon by Eugene DiDonato at the Ellet branch of the Akron-Summit County Public Library. The secretary's report of the last meeting (which was in July) was in the August newsletter and will stand as is. Treasurer's Report: Savings - \$746.60 Checking - \$1159.96, CD - \$2126.32. A motion to move \$1000 to a CD was passed in July and the money has been put in another CD for 13 months at 5.25%; however, this does not show up in the totals above.

Old Business

We briefly discussed the expenses for picnic prizes and monthly door prizes. No motions were offered but the consensus seemed to be to review prize spending at the end of the year for the next year's budget and to continue to have one larger prize at regular meetings. It was also suggested that those buying prizes communicate about purchases.

The picnic was discussed and all agreed it went very well. There was lots of interaction and the games were fun. Betty Duncan will reserve the park for next year.

New Business

Eugene DiDonato announced that we need a Nominating Committee to get a slate of officers for next year. We want to have a full slate of officers next year.

The committee discussed suggestions for programs including Linux (which Chuck Connolly had requested) and email.

Respectfully submitted,
Liz Milford, Secretary

AACUG Main Meeting

September 15, 2007 at 1:00 PM

Eugene DiDonato called the meeting to order at the Ellet branch of the Akron-Summit County Public Library and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Announcements:

Dave George announced that Chuck Connolly had a heart attack and is in the hospital and will be going to a rehabilitation center. Dave had talked with Chuck and Chuck's son. Gwen Rader is also in the hospital.

Treasurer's Report: Savings - \$746.60 Checking - \$1159.96, CD - \$2126.32. Eugene mentioned that treasurer Betty Duncan has moved a total of \$1000 from checking and savings into a new CD; the treasurer's figures above do not reflect that change.

Members discussed the picnic briefly. Members had a good time. Betty Duncan will reserve the shelter for next year's picnic.

Eugene is looking for a program about Linux that Chuck Connolly has requested. Eugene will attend a meeting of a local Linux group to see about getting a program. Other program possibilities include Jerry Wenger's USB drive with his ICE (in case of emergency) information and a program on the I-Phone.

Eugene asked for volunteers for the Nominating Committee but no one volunteered.

The club roster was available on the sign in table.

Swap and Shop:

Dave George had three Windows 98SE computers for sale. He also said that akronnewsnow.com allows free ads for items for sale.

50/50 Drawing:

Jerry Wenger won \$5.00.

Door Prizes:

Fax Machine	Jim Albright
Paper	Bob Cronauer
CD-R Recordable Disks	Eugene DiDonato
Case Logic Disc Case	Ed Hall
Dust-Off	David George
Learning Microsoft	Judy McCully

Program: A Question and Answer session.

Eugene had a problem with an email that had removed his printer driver. He had asked Don Smith for advice and used system restore to solve the problem.

Several people discussed SPAM and how to handle it. Liz Milford said that Yahoo mail has a setting that will delete SPAM immediately. Bob Cronauer said that Juno will allow one to block senders.

Ed Hall asked about erasing multiple emails and Dave Raines suggested using the check boxes.

Dave George asked about making MP3 music and having multiple copies of songs on the hard drive. A solution seems to be to put all songs in one folder and use play lists to put songs in categories.

Ed Hall talked about a ZIP drive that is getting full and Eugene had opened up several documents that were blank.

Respectfully submitted,
Liz Milford, Secretary

Advanced WindowsCare Personal Edition – FREWARE

By Ira Wilsker, APCUG Director; Columnist, The Examiner, Beaumont TX; radio and TV show host
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Obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

WEBSITES:

<http://www.iobit.com>

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

A lot can go wrong with the software and operating systems on our computer. Just like a car, if maintenance is ignored or infrequently performed on Windows, problems can occur that can impair the execution of software on our computers. To help us perform the software maintenance on our computers, a small software company IOBIT has released a freeware version of its Windows repair utility, Advanced WindowsCare Personal Edition. For those concerned about the safety and security of free software, this product is free of any spyware or adware.

Available for free download from the publisher's site, www.iobit.com, or the alternative popular mega sites including download.com, and tucows.com, Advanced WindowsCare Personal Edition is a comprehensive suite of utilities that can identify and repair many of the common system problems that plague Windows users. Advanced WindowsCare will run on Windows 2000, XP, and Vista. For those who may desire an even more powerful and sophisticated suite, IOBIT also has an upgrade available, Advanced WindowsCare Professional, which sells for \$29.95 (15 day free trial available). The free Personal Edition has been very successful, with over four million downloads, including over two million from download.com alone. C-Net, the owner of download.com, calls this software, the "#1 most popular system utility in download.com", where it has received a five star rating. Tucows has given this software a "five cows" rating, while ZD Net has awarded it five stars, as well as given it its coveted "Editors' Pick" award.

Softpedia, another well known resource, rates Advanced WindowsCare Personal "Very Good", and gives it a four star rating. Obviously, this appears to be some good software that can make a valuable addition to anyone's software collection.

Advanced WindowsCare Personal Edition is very easy to use, and offers a "1 click" option where all of the major utilities are automatically run, which subsequently gives a detailed report to the user, and offers the options to either automatically or selectively repair any problems found. Personal Edition is also very fast, with most scans being completed in about one minute.

One useful feature of this software is a spyware scan that searches the computer for spyware and adware, using periodically updated signature files. Any such malware that is found can be selectively deleted by the software. For users concerned with privacy, the software can also erase all history files on the hard drive.

The registry is a complex database containing information on all of the software and hardware installed in the computer. Often the registry becomes bloated with obsolete information, and corrupted data, which can create a serious performance drag on the computer. Good PC hygiene dictates that the registry should be periodically scanned for errors and cleaned, and this software does an excellent job of this. One nice feature is the ability to recover any changes made with an integral restore feature. As a demonstration of its capabilities, as a test, I purposely ran other registry cleaning and repair utilities prior to running this one. As an extra precaution, I used my Windows system restore feature to back up my critical files prior to the test. I ran three of the other registry repair utilities, and dozens of registry defects were identified and repaired; I then ran Advanced WindowsCare Personal Edition, and hundreds of additional registry errors were found and repaired, that the other programs missed. There was no need to restore my files, because the system ran very well after the serial repair. This software is capable by itself to repair the registry, and the other registry repair utilities are no longer needed; this software did it all.

Our hard drives become cluttered with a variety of junk files, such as obsolete cache and temporary files. These useless files may waste

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countless megabytes on our drives, and slow down the ability of the hard drive to find data. If useless data is deleted from the hard drives, computer performance can be enhanced. Advanced WindowsCare Personal Edition contains a very efficient junk file removing utility. As a matter of personal choice, I prefer to look over the list of files found and decide which to delete, but it is fairly safe to delete what the software finds. As a matter of practice, after useless files are deleted, it would be a good idea to run Windows integral defragmentation utility, or a third party disk defragmentation utility, to further improve hard drive performance.

Another feature built into the software gauges Windows and internet performance, and offers options to improve the speed of the system. This helps give us the performance that we paid for when we originally purchased our systems, and helps to maximize our internet throughput.

As our computers age, we are often plagued with slow startup and shutdown problems. This occurs because as we install software on our computers, many of the programs place items in the system startup by default, which forces the software to load when the computer is booted; more items in the startup means slower and longer boot times. Advanced WindowsCare Personal Edition contains a powerful but simple startup manager which displays the contents of our startup, and allows for the easy management and control of what loads when we boot. Fewer items loaded at boot means that our computer comes up faster, and runs faster because there is less demand on system resources. Because there are fewer items running, shut downs are also faster.

I have used this software for about a month and found it very useful and reliable, and can recommend it to all PC users with Windows 2000, XP, or Vista.

One of the most frequent questions asked on my weekly radio show on KLVI is how to improve computer performance and speed. Advanced WindowsCare Personal Edition is a valuable free tool that does much to improve performance, clean up the registry and startup, delete useless files, and otherwise provide benefits to the user. ☒

Free PC Security Software from Grisoft

By Ira Wilsker, APCUG Director; Columnist, The Examiner, Beaumont TX; radio and TV show host
lwilsker(at)apcug.net

Obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

WEBSITES:

<http://free.grisoft.com> – Free Software

<http://www.grisoft.com> – Commercial software

Many of you may be aware already of an excellent but free antivirus program from the Czech Republic commonly referred to with the initials "AVG". What you may not be aware of is that Grisoft, the publisher of the very popular AVG Anti-Virus Free, also publishes free companion software to round out the offering. The other free products by Grisoft are its AVG Anti-Spyware Free, and its recently born sibling AVG Anti-Rootkit Free.

The first thing that comes to mind is why would a prominent European software publisher, with corporate offices in New Jersey and Cyprus, give away highly rated software, for free. The apparent reason is that as millions of users download and use the free software, and become familiar with it and learn to trust it, then a portion of the users will upgrade to the more full featured and powerful commercial versions of the software. There may also be an altruistic component to this marketing plan in that there may be a belief that everyone needs basic protection from malware regardless of their ability to pay for it. Whatever the reason or rationale, Grisoft has made a notable contribution to computing safety and security by releasing these free software titles.

The best known and most widely used of the free Grisoft utilities is its AVG Anti-Virus Free. Considering the fact that millions of users around the world depend on this software for basic protection against the myriad of viruses, worms, and Trojans currently in circulation and attacking our computers, these users of free software are not sacrificing anything in the quality of the protection. The AVG Anti-Virus Free has had generally excellent reviews in the media, and has certifications of excellence and performance from

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testing services and agencies such as the "100% Detection Rate" from the Virus Bulletin, the "Check Mark" rating from West Coast Labs for its "Level 1, Level 2, and Trojan certification", and the ICSA Labs "100% detection rate of AVG Free for Windows System is continuously certified by independent ICSA laboratories." While lacking the automated features and free 24/7 technical support of its commercial incarnation, users of the free version may feel reasonably well protected from computer virus infections.

Lesser known is Grisoft's AVG Anti-Spyware Free software. While not as widely used or known as its antivirus product, the anti-spyware product is also depended upon by millions of users to protect their computers from the hazards of spyware and related malware. This free version offers an easy to use product with daily database updates, heuristics to detect unknown threats, and an automatic cleaning engine to remove malware from the computer. What is not included with the free version, that is included with the commercial version, are automatic online updates, real-time monitoring of the entire system, and self-protection at the kernel layer guaranteeing gapless monitoring and protection from malware. The free version is only licensed for private, non-commercial, home computer use. Any other use will require the purchase of the more substantial commercial version.

Virus and malware writers are becoming more sophisticated and are pouring out new threats designed to penetrate the traditional PC defenses. One method that has only recently evolved from a concept to reality is a type of threat called a "rootkit". Unlike traditional viruses and other forms of malware which infect a variety of data files or are free standing, rootkits are typically hidden deep in the computer registry, making it difficult or impossible for traditional virus scans to detect and remove them. Since they are often concealed in the registry, this malware may be automatically loaded whenever the computer is booted allowing it to perform its vile functions. To help secure and protect PCs from this new and rapidly evolving threat, Grisoft recently announced the latest in its trio of free protective software, the AVG Anti-Rootkit Free. Unlike traditional virus and spyware detectors, Rootkit Free may be able to detect and neutralize rootkits overlooked by more traditional products. This is a worthwhile download for all PC users, even though they may already have virus and spyware protection on their computers.

Grisoft fiscally supports the free software with sales of its commercial products, the flagship product being its AVG Internet Security (\$53 retail), a comprehensive, integrated, and full featured antivirus, anti-spyware, anti-spam, and firewall suite of software. Other commercial software from Grisoft for personal computers includes AVG Anti-Malware (\$34), and AVG Antivirus Professional Edition (\$30). Grisoft also produces software for comprehensive network protection, file server protection, email servers, and Linux machines. Grisoft offers as a demonstration of its social responsibility substantial discounts on its commercial software for schools, charities, churches (and other religious groups), municipal agencies, and other government organizations.

The free Grisoft software can be found and downloaded from free.grisoft.com while the commercial software can be found at www.grisoft.com. For those lacking current protective software, and who are otherwise eligible for a free license, the Grisoft free software may be quite a viable alternative to expensive commercial software. For those who want the automation, 24/7 technical support, and enhanced functionality, users should consider the commercial builds by Grisoft. ❖

The Engineers

An electrical engineer, a chemical engineer and a Microsoft software engineer are driving together. Suddenly, the car just stops by the side of the road.

The electrical engineer says, "It's probably the car's internal electronics. We should check all the wiring and maybe we can trace where a fault might have occurred."

The chemical engineer says, "Maybe the fuel is becoming emulsified and it's getting blocked somewhere."

The Microsoft software engineer says, "If we close all the windows, get out, get back in, then open the windows again, maybe it'll work!"

Ten Net Commandments

"The Ten Net Commandments" are ten Internet "laws" we all should abide by on a regular basis. Let's see what they are, shall we?!

- 1.) Thou shalt not buy merchandise found in pop up ads or spam.
- 2.) Thou shalt not post thy e-mail address, phone number, address or social security number on the Internet, nor shalt thou post anyone else's.
- 3.) Thou shalt not forget to update thy Windows every second Tuesday.
- 4.) Thou shalt not connect to the Internet without installing an antivirus, nor shalt thou begin a scan without checking for updates.
- 5.) Thou shalt not connect to the Internet without installing a firewall.
- 6.) Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's credit card number, nor his bank routing number, nor his social security number. Volume Control.Ink
- 7.) Thou shalt not enter thy credit card number without seeing the tiny padlock icon on thy status bar.
- 8.) Thou shalt not reply to the e-mail from the Nigerian banker.
- 9.) Thou shalt not forward chain letters to thy friends and family.
- 10.) Thou shalt not use "password" as thy password, nor thy birthday, nor thy childrens' names.

Aren't those great?! I mean, they all make a lot of sense and if you think about it, they are some general rules we can all follow when it comes to keeping ourselves and our computers safe. Also, in case you were wondering, this list was put together by Mr. Mike Healan, who works for Spywareinfo. I hope you enjoyed it!

Now, go on and make sure you're staying on track with the Ten Net Commandments!

Internet Shopping and Security

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/>

Online shopping (also known as electronic commerce or e-commerce) is exactly what it sounds like: buying and paying for an item via your computer. According to the Forrester Research Online Retail Index, consumers spent an estimated \$4.3 billion online in April 2001. E-commerce has become such a growth area that the U.S. Commerce Department has started tracking sales on the Internet. You can purchase almost anything online including clothes, cars, computers, groceries, and homes. You also can make travel arrangements and financial arrangements without leaving your computer. Almost anything you want to purchase can be found online.

This way of shopping presents both opportunities and concerns for consumers. You will find many Web sites (and companies) that claim to be experts on e-commerce. Shopping on the Internet can be as safe as shopping in a store or by mail if you consider the following tips:

Use a secure browser — Your browser should comply with industry security standards such as Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) or Secure Electronic Transaction (SET). These standards encrypt (scramble) the purchase information you send over the Internet, ensuring the security of your transaction. A safe site will show a symbol of an unbroken key, a picture of a closed lock, or a Web address that begins with “https.” (Look for the letter “s.”) In addition to locks and keys most browsers also display a warning message before you send information to a site. This dialog box should inform you whether you’re sending to a secure or insecure site. You may cancel at this point if you wish.

Another way to verify a secure site is with a “certificate.” Currently, VeriSign, Inc. is a provider of Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) and digital certificate solutions used by enterprises, Web sites, and consumers to conduct secure communications and transactions over the Internet and private networks. The company has formed strategic partnerships with many companies. More information about the company can be found at <http://www.verisign.com>. If you have questions about the security of any site, *do not* send your information.

Pay with a credit or charge card — Shopping online requires that you pay for the purchase with a credit or charge card at the time you order. If you pay with a credit or charge card your transaction will be protected by the Fair Credit Billing Act. By law, consumers have the right to dispute charges under certain circumstances. In the case of unauthorized use of a consumer’s credit card, you are usually held liable for only the first \$50 in charges. Some cards may provide additional warranty or purchase protection benefits. Some suggestions on using a credit or charge card online include the following:

- **Start small** — Purchase a small item to test the shopping waters before you invest too much time and money.
- **Use a separate credit or charge card for online shopping** — Just as you may use only one card for business travel, you should use only one card for online shopping. This will allow you to track your online purchases easily.
- **Keep a record of your purchase** — Print a copy of your purchase order and confirmation number for your records. The Federal Mail or Telephone Order Merchandise Rule covers orders made via the Internet. This means that, unless stated otherwise, merchandise must be delivered within 30 days; if there are delays, the company must notify you. ❖

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Next Month's Meeting

SATURDAY, NOV. 17, 2007
 1:00 P.M. AT THE
 ELLET BRANCH LIBRARY

**Help Promote UG Member Awareness
 and Action in Stamping Out Spyware!**

