

THE PRINTER

Chesapeake PC Users Group, Inc.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER



...and sometimes it snows...

We had both meetings at the Middle School canceled due to inclement weather last month. Let's hope for better weather this month. Oh well, so much for the March Technology SIG meeting, hopefully there won't be any snow in April.

Let your Photos tell the Story

At the March 14 meeting, Michael Alloy will present the latest edition of Microsoft Photostory. This will include text and graphics to give a full representation of how this extraordinary, free to use, software makes your stories come alive!

And we will start a series of 'mini' demos with a short presentation from Fran Damratowski on the use of the Lightscribe CD-ROM technology.

April Wow!

On January 30, Microsoft launched the Vista operating system to the general public. As a member of the users group, you know we already had a demonstration and are planning to have a group project to build a Vista Ready system. But to go a little more in depth with the O/S and show a couple of other features another demonstration!

At the April 11 meeting, we will show Vista in a little more depth than in December. As part of the main demonstration, we will touch on Virtual PC 2007. This program can be used to run multiple operating systems on one computer. I touched on this briefly and there seemed to be some interest in seeing this in action. There is more information in this newsletter on how virtual technology works.

We will also continue having 'mini' demonstrations with Rodger Alspach giving an overview of Belarc Advisor. The Belarc Advisor builds a detailed profile of your installed software and hardware, missing Microsoft hotfixes, anti-virus status, CIS (Center for Internet Security) benchmarks, and displays the results in your Web browser.

Two-fer May??

As circumstances have worked out, we will have two **Main** meetings in May! At the **May 2** meeting, Jen Clausen from Smart Computing will come out all the way from the mid-west to discuss Smart Computing publications. This is an excellent presentation and I hope that we have a big turnout. I'm sure she will have many items to give away and discuss how her publication functions.

The following week, **May 9**, Gabe Goldberg from the Association of PC Users Groups (APCUG) will be at the meeting discussing some of the benefits from APCUG and other topics for senior computer users. We are a member of APCUG (there is a link on the home page and notice the symbol on the front of this newsletter).

Daylight Savings Time

Be sure and check your computer's clock. Microsoft deployed a patch (via their automatic update system) to update computers to conform to the 2005 Energy Act. **Would you believe** - they had to issue a new patch because of problems with Outlook. By the way, you must put a check in the Automatic Daylight Savings Time" feature in the computer Date and Time Properties box for all this to work.



File Extensions - cont'd

Windows XP

Select "Tools" then "Folder Options". Select the "View" tab and scroll down to "Hide file extensions for known file types" and uncheck this box. Click "Apply to All Folders"

Vista

Click on the "organize" button. Select "Folder and Search Options". Select the "View" tab and scroll down to "Hide file extensions for known file types" and uncheck this box. Click "Apply to All Folders"

Editor: Fran will continue this series next month with the ever popular letter *B*.



Computer Shoppers Ponder Microsoft Vista

Read Mike Young's insightful quote published in the February 5th, 2007 edition of *The Capital*.

Their website is:

<http://www.hometownannapolis.com/vault/cgi-bin/trial/view/2007/02/05-16.HTM>

Editor: You must first sign up for your FREE account.

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File Extensions

by
Fran Damratowski

Have you ever wondered what the three alphanumeric extensions at the end of a file name mean. (*MS-DOS* required filename limited to eight characters for the base or root name and three characters for the extension. *Windows 95* and above no longer have that limitation.) The three letters or numbers are a way for the computer user, software, and operating system to differentiate between and identify the program used to create a file (document, spreadsheet, database, etc.). We are all familiar with .exe for an executable file, .txt for a text document, and .pdf for a PDF file. There are many other file extensions. The same file extension may be used for more than one program. There is no standard or organization for creating file extensions. This month we will begin to list some of the extensions.

Here is the **A** list of some of the extensions and the file types they represent:

.a: An ADA program, Unix archive file, Macintosh assembly source code, Free Pascal Archive file for Linux or DOS
.a2b: A2B Player Playlist
.abx: Word Perfect Address Book file
.aby: AOL file
.adr: Address Book, Address Plus Database, After Dark Random Screen Saver Module, Opera , Smart Address addressbook, Web Browser Bookmark File
.albm: webAlbum Photo Album, Photosmart Photo Printing Album
.alz: ALZIip compressed file, game file
.aps: MS Visual C++ file, Flash (Italian), ArcPar Ver. 5 Symbology, Advanced Patching Systems with Error Checking
.arl: AOL Organizer file
.arj: Compression archive
.ars: Adobe After Effects Render, Artifax Report Editor

.asl: Adobe Photoshop Layer file, Quest Adventure game, AppSight Console Log
.asm: non-unix assembler source file, Pro/Engineer Assembly file, LICOM AlphaCAM Stone Parameter Macro, Solid Edge document
.asmx: Microsoft .NET Web Service file
.asp: active server page
.atn: Adobe Photoshop Action file
.au: Audio file, Audacity Audio block
.aud: Audio file
.avb: Inoculan Anti-Virus virus infected file, Microsoft Chat character file, Avid Bin File
.avd: Avery Label Pro Data file, DOS7 file
.avi: Audio Video Interleaved animated file (Windows Video, Quicktime, RealPlayer)
.awb: Lavasoft Ad-aware backup file, ActiveWords WordBase, Adaptive Multi-Rate Wideband ACELP codec
.awd: AWD MS Fax, Award BIOS file, AWK Language Source Code file, Artweaver Painting, FaxView document
.awe: Adobe Acrobat Bookmark XML file
.awm: Animated Works Movie, AllWebMenus, RenderWare Language Pack

When you look at a list of files you may notice that the file extensions are hidden. To find out if they are hidden, right click "Start", then left click "Explore", then click on a file folder on the left side of your screen. If you do not see file extensions they are hidden. You can then make them visible by following the actions below:

Windows 98

Select "View" then "Folder Options". Select the "View" tab. Scroll down to "Hide file extensions for known file types" and uncheck this box.

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Some More Favorite Web Sites

Digital Camera Magazine

<http://www.digicamera.com/features/filterprimer/index.html>

Digital Camera Magazine by subscription, publishes one article on line at the home page. When doing a Google search for a specific topic articles from this site will come up.

Popular Photography & Imaging and American Photo

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

On line versions of Popular Photography & Imaging and American Photo. Some articles from the current issue are available.

Digital Camera

<http://www.dcresource.com/news/index.php?date=2007-02>

Digital Camera resource page. News, reviews, links to tutorials etc. Isn't time you bought that new 15 megapixel, 12x optical zoom, imaged stabilized digital camera?

Wine Enthusiasts Magazine

<http://www.winemag.com/homepage/index.asp>

A good source for information on all things Onenolgical. Wine reviews, Buying Guides, & more. I knew I should have spent more time studying wine instead of that old regular chemistry junk.

PhotoShopSupport

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

Adobe's own site for all versions of PhotoShop, add ons, beta & trial versions of new products, all kinds of FREE tutorials & help. A great sight for both beginners & more advanced users.

Free Translation Online

Babel Fish

<http://translation2.paralink.com/>

<http://babelfish.altavista.com/>

Two different sites that offer FREE multi-language translations. It could be Italian to English, Portuguese to English, Spanish to Russian and a host of others. The translations aren't perfect, but you'll get a pretty good idea of what's going on. Both of these free sites have trouble with current terms & slang, especially with technical, computer, or internet slang. I demonstrated both of these sites at a Technology SIG meeting last year with some semi-comical results.

Craig's List

<http://baltimore.craigslist.org/>

For those of you unfamiliar with Craig's List, let me just say that it's FREE & great. Craig's List was started in California and has spread not just nationwide, but internationally. So what is it? Craig's List is a FREE classified ad site that allows you to advertise just about everything. These's a Community Section, Personals, Jobs, Housing, For Sale, Gigs and Resumes. The advantage of buying an item (like my last guitar) using Craig's List vs eBay, is that it's regional. I bought my guitar from a guy in Baltimore for \$20 instead of from someone in Los Angeles and paying twice that much having it shipped. I got to try it out before I sent my hard earned \$\$ across the country.

Chesapeake PC Users Group

<http://www.chesapeakepcusersgroup.org/>

This really is a great website. Even if you attend every meeting, there are still new and interesting things posted on our site. We now have an archive of post issues of this very publication. I just wish I knew who did such a great job.

from the Secretary's Desk

Minutes of CHPCUG Board meeting on February 21, 2006

Attendees: The Mikes Young, DeLucia & Regimenti, Fran Damratowski, Sam Shepherd, Craig Barlow, Kris Johnson and Karl Richmond

OLD BUSINESS:

March Meeting: Photostory 3 with Michael Alloy and a mini presentation by Fran "Making Lightscribe CD's"

April Meeting: Mini presentation by Mike D. on Podcast also a mini presentation by Rodger A. along with information on Vista and Virtual PC 2007.

May Meeting: NOTE: There will be a first meeting on **May 2** presented by SmartComputing. A second meeting will be on **May 9** presented by Gabe Goldberg from APCUG discussing web resources for Seniors

June Meeting: Only meeting for the month will be on June 6th, which will be a potpourri of information.

SIG's:

Technology:



The "Podcasting" with Mike DeLucia that was scheduled for February will be presented in March.

Editor: Since the March Technology Sig was cancelled due to snow, hopefully, Mike will be able to present the topic in April.

Computer Refurbishing: Fran noted that the CRSIG continues to be productive in turning out computers and added that there have been a total of 3412.65 hours worked by volunteers in 2006. She declined the invitation to attend the Computer Refurbishing Summit on March 9th and 10th in Washington D.C., feeling it would not be productive enough.

Mid-Shore CUG – Lee reports that it is thriving and getting good press coverage in their local newspaper, the *Star Democrat*. Mike Regimenti and Mike Young were the presenters at their February meeting. Everyone seemed to enjoy the presentation on *Google - Beyond the Search Engine*.

Do-It-Yourself Computer – April 21-22 at CRSIG facility in Crownsville. Project is on schedule with about 8-10 people interested at a cost of around \$1500 for the system and an additional cost of \$349 for TechNet Direct subscription. Attendees should bring their own tools and lunch. A magnifying glass might also prove helpful.

Finances: The club continues to be solvent

NEW BUSINESS:

Mike Young stated that the Combined Federal Campaign forms are due on March 9 and that Karl will apply to both Central MD and National Capital area campaigns this time.

Mike Young reported that MS Office 2003 Pro has been ordered for the board members and will be distributed by Karl. The Photoshop CS bundle is on back order for Mike DeLucia.

In order to expand our outreach, Mike Young suggested that we look into a PG County project which Mike Regimenti will pursue.

Mike DeLucia gave a demonstration of a gadget called *Tornado* that will transfer files from one computer to computer using USB connectors

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Kris Johnson, Secretary

What Do You Use To Frame Your Digital Images

by
Fran Damratowski

When using a 35mm camera, photos are framed using a viewfinder. One of two basic types of viewfinders is used. One type used by single lens reflex (SLR) cameras is a through the lens (TTL) optical viewfinder. The SLR TTL viewfinders use a mirror and pentaprism or porro finder to reflect the light/image directly through the lens to the viewfinder without changing the light/image (what you see is what you get). The second types are optical viewfinders that do not project the actual image directly to the viewfinder. They are (1) rangefinders that use the principle of triangulation and mirrors and (2) optical tunnel viewfinders that consist of a tunnel that goes from a small lens near the photographic lens, and the viewfinder. The problem with the optical viewfinders is parallax error. What you see is not exactly you get, because the complete image does not come through the camera lens to the viewfinder. What you see is actually less than what you get.

Digital cameras have several different types of viewfinders, optical tunnel viewfinders, as described above, and TTL viewfinders. There are three types of TTLs liquid crystal displays (LCDs) that are located on the camera, Electronic Viewfinders (EVF), and the mirror and pentaprism or porro finder that are used in digital single lens reflex (DSLR) cameras.

An LCD panel is essentially a small TV built into the digital camera. The camera has a lens that admits light to an image sensor that converts it to data. The data is then sent to a mini computer in the camera that sends the data as an image to the LCD panel. The LCD panel is as active as a TV screen and changes as the image in front of the lens changes. What you see is what you get when you click the shutter button.

An EVF is basically an LCD panel, about 0.5 inches diagonally, located behind the small viewfinder on the back of the camera. The image that is seen through this eye level viewfinder is exactly what is seen on the LCD panel and will be captured when the shutter button is clicked.

DSLR cameras use the same the mirror and pentaprism or porro finder that are used in 35 mm SLR cameras. Very few of DSLRs use an LCD panel to frame the photo. The LCD panel in most DSLR cameras is used to view the image after it has been captured to the memory card.

Advantages and Disadvantages of the various types of viewfinders

Because LCD panels are TTL viewfinders they have the advantage of showing about 100% of the image that will be captured when the shutter button is clicked. There is no parallax error. You can immediately see the effects of zooming in on your subject. It is excellent for accurate framing. If you use an extension or a filter on the camera lens you will see the effect of the extension or filter. You can view the images and immediately delete those you don't want to keep. You can also view the camera settings if you desire. The LCD panel works well in dim light.

One of the major disadvantages is that they generally perform poorly in some situations such as when reflections and glare are present and in bright sunlight. The image is also difficult to see on monitor in some dark situations because the human eye can see about twice the light the LCD portrays. Some of these problems can be corrected with anti-reflective coatings, trans-reflective

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Frame Your Digital Images - cont'd

technology that increases brightness provides better contrast, and wider viewing angles.

Some LCD panels are better than others. Larger LCD panels are easier to see than smaller LCD panels, but to place a 2.5 or 3-inch LCD panel on a camera you must have a large camera or give up the option of an EVF or optical viewfinder. Digicams without an EVF or optical viewfinder are less expensive to manufacture. LCD panels are made up of pixels. Poor quality LCD panels will have fewer pixels and may have a lot of digital noise (bad pixels). A better LCD panel will have more pixels, but it will use more power. See the manufacturers specifications for the number of pixels on the LCD panel.

LCD panels use backlighting consequently they use a lot of power. If the LCD panel is left on for a long period of time it will drain the battery very quickly. This in turn translates into lost pictures because there is no power or additional cost for extra batteries.

Most Digicams have the LCD panel located on the back of the camera integrated into the camera body. The first consumer digicam with an LCD panel was the Casio QV-10 released in 1995. This camera had an articulating body.

Cameras with articulating bodies and articulating screens are still being manufactured today. With these cameras, pictures can be taken from any angle; such as overhead, out a window, pointing the camera at the subject, but looking in another direction.



Nikon Coolpix 4800



Casio QV10



Canon PowerShot S3is

SECURITY TIPS

Phishing

Using email to leverage your trust in a company, brand, or person and trick you into providing personal financial information or access vehicles (passwords, account names, email addresses) to an unknown person or group. If you receive an email that you think is a “phish”, the tips below can keep you from taking the bait.

1. Know thyself: Know the online companies you deal with. When a suspect email arrives, remember: it could be fraud, it's definitely spam, and it is definitely not for you. Delete it.

2. Subject matters: Consider the subject line of an email carefully. Citibank will never send you an email headed “_Citiibank_account_update ACT-NOW”. These messages may get through spam filters because they appear to come from a reputable source, but that doesn't mean it's really from Citibank.

3. Learn the language: Understand how the companies you deal with want to interact with you. For example, banks usually want you to access your account through their website—not an email link. “Phishing” emails stand out because they don't follow the rules.

4. Browsing around: Practice safe browsing. Open a new browser window each time you log on to a web site that displays personal information. When you are done at that site, log out and close that browser window.

5. Spelling counts: Be sure to read emails that say they are from companies you know. Sometimes a

real email will have a spelling or grammatical error, but anything more than one error is suspicious.

6. Mousing around: Scroll over the links in emails you receive and check them. In some email systems, you can scroll over the different links in an email and see the actual contents of the link. If the email says PayPal, but the link content says “www.paipall.com”, be careful. And note: URLs can be disguised—so don't take a suspect link at face value.

7. All form, no function: Never enter your personal or credit information into a form in an email. If you feel the email is legitimate, call the company or visit their web site and log in to provide the requested information.

8. It's personal: Expect good customer service. Unless your name is “eBay User” or “johndoe99”, most “phishing” emails are not personalized. If you receive a “Dear Customer” email, it may be time to move on. Stay on Guard

9. Make a statement: Read your statements – every one, every month to ensure your charges and debits are correct. Often information obtained through phishing is not used right away. Stay vigilant and report any suspicious activity immediately.

10. Stay current: Use and maintain your email protection software for spam blocking, fraud blocking, and anti-virus. If you have any questions, there are many fine web sites which can provide the latest information on the latest virus, “phishing” attack, or on-line scam.

Photos from the Wireless Networking Presentation



Craig's got it all figured out!



**Kathleen Walker wants to know-
"Who stole my network!"**



**While your fearless editor is con-
templating removing the wireless
card for good!**



**Our Webmeister, Mike deLucia,
has it all figured out.**

Project File: Build the best bang for the buck Vista Ultimate Capable PC!

As promised, I have updated some parts and prices below. All of these prices were quoted on NewEgg.com which I would recommend. I was hoping for some lower prices at this point. Basically I think some of the higher end products have come down. This means you get a better system for the same money. With that, remember build weekend is **April 21-22**. You will need to bring your own tools, #0, #1 Phillips screwdrivers, medium and small flathead screwdrivers, needle nose pliers, and any other small hand tools that you may need.

With the release of Windows Vista, it's time to consider an upgrade. With this iteration of Windows, more attention should be paid to the amount of RAM and your video card. Recently there has been a lot of news about new hardware, and quite frankly, it can be confusing to get the most out of your dollar.

I am proposing that in the early spring (after Vista has been out for a little while) that we take a weekend and build Vista capable PCs. I brought this up at the last meeting and there seemed to be a fair number of members interested in the project. Before you commit to participate in this project, I want to clarify some of the details.

First off, this is not a 'cheap' PC. For the hardware alone it will cost about \$1500. The goal is to give you the most bang for the buck, but this is not a 'bleeding edge' system. The PC will have a solid operation and should last you for 3-4 years (with regular maintenance). Regular maintenance may mean adding some more RAM or upgrading the video card. So with all of that said, if you are still interested, let's jump into what you will get out of the project.

You will gain valuable experience and insight to the assembly of a modern PC. This includes

learning some of the latest PC technology and trends when working with these systems. This experience will last you well into the future for your next system, or an additional PC you may want to build.

You will also gain the camaraderie of the other members that build a PC in the same workshop. If you have problems down the road, or would like to make modifications to your system, some of the other attendees of the workshop can assist or may want to make similar modifications to their own PC.

So this is what will \$1500 buy? Below is a list of the hardware and some comments:

CPU: Intel E6600 @ 2.4 GHz Core 2 CPU **\$315**

This CPU offers the most bang for the buck of the newer Intel processors, do the research online and you will see what I mean.

Motherboard: ASUS P5B-E **\$157**

I think this MoBo offers the most bang for the buck. It can be setup with a RAID array and comes from a reputable manufacture.

Video card: EVGA 320 -P2-N811-AR GeForce 8800GTS 320MB **\$310**

NVIDIA has released the 320MB version of their 8800 series card. This isn't much more then the card that was previously recommended and is the only video chipset that is DX 10 compatible.

RAM: CORSAIR XMS2 2GB (2 x 1GB) 240-Pin DDR2 SDRAM DDR2 800 **\$207**

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Project File-cont'd

cont'd from Page 10

As with the motherboard, the exact memory will need to be decided upon when the time gets closer. Right now there are several decent 2 GB memory solutions. The current cost with shipping and before rebates is about \$220. Hopefully this price will fall.

Hard drive(s): Seagate Barracuda 7200.10 ST3320620AS (320 GB) \$95

The full name of this on NewEgg is: Seagate Barracuda 7200.10 ST3320620AS (Perpendicular Recording Technology) 320GB 7200 RPM 16MB Cache SATA 3.0Gb/s Hard Drive. This sums it up. I will recommend the at least two of the drives be purchased for building your RAID array.

Case: Rosewill R6AU6-BK ATX Mid Tower Computer Case \$50

This seemed to have a lot of nice features and should last you a while. A case is a personal choice, but I didn't see any issues with this one.

Powersupply: ePOWER ZU-550W ATX12V Version 2.0 550W \$55

This seemed like a nice middle of the road powersupply. The important thing is the current available on the 12V supply line (rails). This powersupply has 18A and 16A on two separate rails. This is a great way to distribute the power to your components.

CPU Cooler: Tuniq Tower 120 \$65

I am currently using this CPU cooler and can recommend it. It's quiet and really helps to keep the CPU cool. The one issue to keep in mind with this cooler, its HUGE! It stands about 8 inches high

and just clears the case that I am using. But once it's in your system, you probably won't overheat the CPU any time soon.

DVD Drive: ASUS Black 18X DVD+R SATA DVD Burner with LightScribe \$45

It's important to get a SATA DVD writer. There is only one PATA port on the MoBo so save it until you really need it. Besides, you have 6 SATA ports.

Miscellaneous: Add about \$100 With any project, there are always overages.

At this point the total is **\$1494**. Some things may be able to be reduced here or there, but this is a firm number.

Michael

Editor: For a complete list on tools and miscellaneous items needed for this project, refer to the article by Fran Damratowski on page 4 of the January 2007 issue of *The Printer*.



**The Next Regular Meeting will be at
The Severn River Middle School**

Wednesday, March 14th 2007

**Meeting will be held in the
large meeting room.**

**It starts at 7:00 P.M. with club business
and a short discussion period.**

After Elections, there will be:

***a Michael Alloy
presentation of***

Photostory 3

**Members and their friends are welcome to
come, ask questions and become enlightened.**

How to Find: Severn River Middle School

SRMS is close to the Arnold, MD campus of the Anne Arundel Community College. From Annapolis and parts south, take Rte 2 (Ritchie Highway) north about 3 miles from the intersection of Rt. 50, **turn right on College Parkway**. At the first light, turn left on Peninsula Farm Road. (Of course, if you are coming from points North, you would turn left on to College Parkway) about a half-mile down the road the large SRMS school building, set back off a large two level parking lot, will be visible on your right. Park here and go to the main entrance. Signs will be posted to direct you to the **Large Group Room** where we will be meeting.

How to find: The Technology SIG, A ChPCUG Special Interest Group**

Meets the 1st Wednesday of each month at 7:00 P.M.

The meetings are held at the SRMS in the Library.



**1783 Forest Drive #285
Annapolis, MD 21401**

FIRST CLASS

INSIDE THIS VERY ISSUE!

President's Corner

File Extensions

The Big Frame Up!

Project File Update!

Gone Phishing!

Some More Comic Photo Relief

... and a little more!

Note: *The date above your name on the mailing label is the expiration date of your membership. Contact the Membership Chairman (page 2, column 2) to update.*

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