Next Event: June 7, 7:30 PM

Small Business Technology Challenges

President's Letter

JOHN PATRICK'S presentation at the May General Meeting was a great success! A big thank you to Andy Woodruff for all his hard work, making arrangements and preparations for the event, and then recording it. Also to Lisa Leifels, who helped video the meeting, and to Bert Goff who brought the food. Copies of John Patrick's book, *Net Attitude,* will be used as door prizes at some of the upcoming General Meetings.

How do you like our new policy of providing snacks? We would welcome your feedback on this.

We're looking forward to the June 7th General Meeting in the Robilotti Conference Center as Rick Van Akin tells us about many of the technical challenges facing small business. Please read Bert's preview article in this edition for more details.

We need to get to know each other better. And we need a Program Chairman. Let's combine both of those needs at our next meeting. Let's all introduce ourselves to someone we don't know, and ask them who might serve as our next Program Chairman. It could be either a man or a woman. And don't forget to wear a name tag!

I'd like to extend a warm welcome to DACS' newest member, Bernard Kokinchak!

The 25th anniversary dinner, in March, was such a success that some people have suggested we should make it an annual event. What do you think? Talk it up and it might happen!

What should be the goals of DACS for the next 25 years? The Board of Directors is eager to hear your ideas. Please talk to me or to any Board member.

Have you attended any of our workshops recently? Formerly called SIGs (Special Interest Groups), they are regular events at the DACS Resource Center in the lower level of 198 Main Street in Danbury. One such is Web Design, hosted by Annette van Ommeren. At the May workshop, she taught attendees more about WordPress. Annette has a dedicated web page for this workshop at *www.design.annagraphics.com*.

—Dave Green

Directors' Notes

**Danbury Area
Computer Society (DACS)
Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 4, 2016**

The meeting was called to order at 7:10pm by the DACS President, Dave Green.

In attendance were board members Richard Corzo, Dick Gingras, Bert Goff (Secretary & Treasurer), Dave Green (President), Jim Scheef, and Andy Woodruff. Cathy Quaranta and Tom Zarecki were not present. The minutes were taken by Richard Teasdale.

• The Minutes of the 4/6/2016 Board Meeting were accepted.

Reports

• The Treasurer's report for April was discussed and accepted. Bert highlighted the fact that income from membership dues was much better than in April of last year, and that on a year-to-date basis, it has caught up a lot with last year's performance. Jim mentioned that postcards are being sent, and that members in-grace are receiving weekly e-mail reminders. Also, those who are in the last month of their memberships before renewals become due are receiving e-mail reminders.

• Membership committee: Jim e-mailed an updated spreadsheet, reporting that there are 95 current members + 14 in-grace, making a total membership of 109, one down from the previous month. Two new members were recorded.

• Marketing committee: No report.

• Press Coverage: Dave reported that

*Dick Gingras   APCUG Liaison
rgingras@dacs.org*

HelpLine

Our former telephone HelpLine has been replaced by our web-based DACS Community Forum at *http://forum.dacs.org*. We have topic-specific forums where DACS members can post questions. Questions may be answered by Workshop leaders or other DACS members. If none of the categories fit your question, just post it to the Ask DACS forum.

Topic	Forum
.NET Programming	ASP.Net and C#VB.Net Workshop
Digital cameras/scanners/image processing	Digital Imaging Workshop
Content Management Systems	Drupal Workshop
Linux	Linux Workshop
Mac and iPhone/iPad/iPod touch	Apple Workshop
PC maintenance	PC Maintenance Workshop
Smartphones & Tablets	Mobile Devices Workshop
Virtual machine software	Virtual Computing Workshop
Desktop publishing and website design	Web Site Design Workshop
Windows	Windows Workshop

a press release for the May general meeting was successfully sent out in April.

• Website: Richard reported that Annette van Ommeren used his new documentation webpage to send out the monthly e-mailed newsletter to the membership. Updates to the website during the month included the addition of links to Andy's 2015 video clips of John Patrick.

Old Business

• Programs

o Bert reported that he had so far been unable to contact the owner of Computer Troubleshooters (Brookfield), Rick Van Akin, the prospective speaker for the June general meeting. Assuming that Van Akin is confirmed as speaker, *Bert* will write a Preview article. *Dave* will identify someone to write the Review.

o Several speaker alternatives were discussed, in case a substitute is needed in June. One possibility is John O'Donnell, who was scheduled to speak on genealogy in April but had to drop out due to illness. *Dave* will contact him to ascertain his availability in June or July. Also, *Jim* will contact the Microsoft Store to determine if there is interest in providing a modified version of their seminar about Cyber Security.

• Renovation of the Resource Center (RC) - Options for dealing with the possible health problem (mold) were discussed. It was agreed that the Building Manager (first) and city Health Dept. should be approached, in spite of the risk that the RC might be declared unusable. *Dave* will contact the RC Building Manager.

• Search for a Vice-President (and other DACS leadership positions) - Dave indicated that this matter does not need to be pursued further at the current time. Also, Andy reported that no responses have been received to the posting on Craig's List.

• Music Workshop - Andy informed that he had discussed options with Chris Aher, however Dave reported that Chris will be moving away. *Dave* will follow up to determine whether someone else may be available to participate in a Music workshop.

• Ad from Alliance of Nonprofits for Insurance - *Bert* is working on this.

• Location of key to DACS Mailbox - Charlie Bovaird has it.

New Business

• Snacks for general meetings - *Richard* (drinks) and *Cathy* (snacks) will make the arrangements in June.

May Meeting Review

John Patrick on Net Attitude

Jim Scheef

AS BERT GOFF NOTED in his introduction, this was John R. Patrick's 24th presentation at a DACS General Meeting. We invite him back because we learn something new every time. Year after year, John's presentation is always our best-attended meeting. The kicker to all this is that it really puts the onus on the reviewer and, this year, that would be me.

This year John has released an updated edition of his first book, *Net Attitude: What it is, How to get it, and Why it is More important than Ever*. First published in 2001, John's book is about how companies can best use the Internet by adopting a "Net Attitude". The new edition updates and expands the first book.

Ok, back to our meeting and John's presentation. To start, he gave examples of Net Attitude and not-Net Attitude. By John's estimate, amazon.com has roughly 20% market share of all retail sales online. Of all the millions of companies selling online, how can one company capture 20% of all online sales? Because Amazon has Net Attitude. John gave several examples; here is one: when you have a problem with a typical company and need to talk to a customer service representative, assuming you can find a phone number, you call the company and get, "Press 1 for Spanish, then press 1 for sales, press 2 for support," and so on. At Amazon you look on the website for support. The website offers support by email, chat or phone. You choose phone and the website asks "do you want to call us or should we call you?" So you pick to have them call you, the website then shows you the number they have on file and asks, "Is this still the correct number?" When you click, yes, your phone rings with a support person from Amazon. That's the kind of customer-pleasing interaction that shows Net Attitude.

John has always talked about the seven attributes of the Next Generation Internet:

1. Fast
2. Always on
3. Everywhere
4. Natural
5. Intelligent
6. Easy
7. Trusted

Over the years the examples change. This year?

Fast: The latest wireless technology is MIMO (multiple-input and multiple-output) which can provide 4.6 billion bits per second, which makes for fast Wi-Fi and cellular. John noted that soon wireless networking will be faster than the Ethernet typically used today.

Always on: John spoke about his electric car which is always connected to the Internet, either by Wi-Fi in the garage at home or LTE (Long Term Evolution) cellular on the road.

Everywhere: Today the cloud is everywhere. Cloud providers have their entire business riding on the provision of a secure and reliable platform. They hire the brightest people to design their systems – and to test the security by trying to break in. Even for healthcare, there are HIPAA-compliant cloud providers. Kaiser Permanente, the large healthcare provider in California, has moved 25% of doctor-patient interactions to email. Imagine the savings in time (and cost) this would mean if you could ask your doctor a question between visits – and get an answer!

Natural: What's becoming natural today is virtual reality, made of a set of things: artificial intelligence, augmented reality, virtual reality, which are all somewhat related. An example is an app for the iPhone that provides a 360° view of surroundings. After selecting a place, you hold your phone out as a viewer. When you move the phone, the view changes to whatever one would see in that direction – so if you look up you see the ceiling, if you turn around you see what is behind you in a totally natural way. VR will have a big role in medicine enabling a surgeon to plan an operation in collaboration with other doctors.

Intelligent: John's example here is his iPhone that, together with an attachment on the back, can take a basic (single lead) EKG in just 30 seconds. The attachment is called Kardia from AliveCor. The EKG is analyzed by the iPhone for several common heart conditions and can even be sent directly to a board-certified doctor who will provide a "second opinion" for $12. Another part of Intelligent is IBM's Watson super computer. Watson is now being used against cancer. The computer can analyze more data for more variables than any human researcher.

Easy: Easy is becoming about wearables. There are all kinds of wearables but his example was the Apple Watch which can monitor your heart all the time. You don't need to tell the watch to start recording, it just does it all the time – that's why it's Easy. The data is recorded in the Apple Health app on your iPhone. Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles has linked the electronic health records of 80,000 patients so, if the patients choose, the data they collect in the Apple Health app is automatically transferred to the same system used by their doctors. Imagine that!

Trusted: Do we trust the Internet? What other systems do we trust? Do we trust the voting systems we have now? Remember the election in 2000 and the "hanging chads" in the recount in Florida, ending with Bush v. Gore in the Supreme Court? Following that election, Congress authorized $2.9 billion in grants to the states to buy new voting machines. Some of those machines have already been replaced because of security problems. John is researching our voting systems for a new book to be called *Election Attitude*. (I can't wait to read it.) What he has found is unbelievable in how untrustworthy the existing systems are, so to say that we can't trust the Internet to vote is just not accurate. The solution, John believes, is a combination of the Internet, mobile phones, and the block chain. The block chain is the infrastructure of the Bitcoin digital currency. With seven years' experience, without ever being hacked, John called it " completely secure". It is a peer-to-peer, public, distributed ledger that is also private in that no name is associated with each transaction. With thousands of servers around the world running the same software, an attempt to change a block on one server would be instantly detected and rejected by the network of other servers. The block chain's ability to instantly and securely record transfers of Bitcoins anywhere around the world at essentially zero cost will make this an important technology in the future. There is no reason that block-chain technology could not be used to record votes.

The two principles of Net Attitude:

Think big, Act bold, Start Simple, Iterate fast – Think big and act bold: Uber, Tesla, Airbnb are examples of acting bold. John relates a conversation with Jeff Bezos in 1995 when he asked Bezos why he was selling only books. The answer was "It's simple; nobody returns books. It's a good business to be in." That was the simple start. Ebay started with just baseball cards. When people laughed that there was no business there, they thought bold and iterated into other goods. On the other hand we have healthcare.gov. They thought big and acted bold, but starting big led to failing big.

Think inside out – not outside in – Start thinking on the inside where the people are, walk in their shoes, please them. The example of outside-in thinking is the call center with the endless menus and no tolerance for pressing the wrong key, when what you really need is to talk to an actual person.

John intentionally kept his talk short to leave extra time for questions and answers, so at this point in the meeting, we took a short break.

The following is a summary of the best questions:

Q – Apparently governments around the world hate encryption and the FBI wants Apple to break their own encryption. So will companies still be able to offer products with strong encryption? How do you see this resolving?

A – Excellent question. John related a story from the mid-90's when he was working with a group and the question of e-commerce came up. At that time, many people said that e-commerce was impossible – couldn't be done. John and others thought it could be done and the key was encryption to scramble the contents of a transaction without danger that it could be altered en route. Today some people don't like the idea that encryption can be used to scramble a text message that no one else can read. Encryption can be used to send pictures, email, files, anything. Once this data is scrambled, it can only be unscrambled if you have the encryption key. Most technology companies think that encryption is how products can be made more secure. For example, we don't want someone getting our health records stored on the Internet; encryption is the answer and we want the encryption to be unbreakable. The irony is that parts of our government have spent millions to create secure technology so that dissidents living in countries with repressive regimes can communicate and have free access to uncensored information, while law enforcement doesn't like it and must find alternate ways to learn what people are saying and doing.

Q – Do you feel that Google has a Net Attitude when frequently they change their search algorithms? Sometimes it seems to be harder to find things than it should.

A – John mentioned that many people don't trust Google, but that he does in that he feels they try to do the right thing most of the time. It's natural that people want to understand exactly how that algorithm works, but Google doesn't want people to be able to 'game' the system. An industry has developed of companies who offer to get your company or website to the top of the list for a fee. When you don't get good search results, try using 'advanced' search. This allows you to specify words you want to exclude, set limits on when the page was updated, and more.

Q – Do you have suggestions for how individuals can deal with information overload? Sites like Wikipedia are helpful but do you have other suggestions?

A – One way is to use filters. For email there something called Sanebox which reads your email and figures out which are ads and which are likely to be important. The important ones are delivered to your inbox while the others are set aside for later. Over time it 'learns' your email preferences as you indicate what you do or do not want to see in your inbox. This is an example of a tool that can help, a Google search for "how to deal with information overload" will find many tools.

Q – Two questions: I recently saw an article that Google has been able to manipulate elections around the world by how they present search results to influence the person searching. And I hear that Windows 10 seems to include a key logging system to learn about the person using the machine. Could you comment?

A – Many people are trying ways to learn about your likes and dislikes so they can present "better" information like advertising. Some people like this; I don't. Most browsers now have a "do not track" feature. It's up to the website to obey it, but it's a start.

Q – There seem to standards for many things, why not passwords? Some sites want a number, some want upper and lower case, why can't there be a standard? There are standard formats for much of the information we all use, why not passwords?

A – Passwords are a case where we don't want a standard. The best solution is to use a program to manage your passwords. There are many good password managers; John mentioned 1Onepassword, but there are many. The Net Attitude approach would be to show the rules when creating an account for what a password can contain plus the minimum and maximum length.

Q – The Internet of Things (IoT) is not as much in the news lately, but could you talk about how it relates to the seven attributes like Trusted, Always on, Everywhere, etc.?

A – While it's not in the news, IoT is being rapidly adopted and is a really good thing. On the consumer side, John spoke of more than 100 devices in his home that are networked – like three thermostats, lighting that can randomly turn on and off to make it look like someone is home, digital door locks, and sensors like leak detectors. Over the last few years the cost of these home automation devices has kept going down. These devices will mushroom into many, many areas. Smarthome.com is a place to start. The software John uses for home automation is called Indigo.

In healthcare, hospitals are full of devices that don't but should communicate. John gave the example of infusion pumps. These devices are everywhere in a hospital, some break, some need a battery or other service. How can anyone keep track of all that? But if the devices had a Wi-Fi chip, they could communicate their status (idle, in use, needs service) to a central location that would always know where they are and when to schedule service. Think how much more productive it would be if, when you need one, you could just check your iPhone for the location of the nearest one not in use.

John's website is *attitudellc.org,* where you can sign up for his weekly blog update that comes out each Saturday morning.

John mentioned Internet voting. From the Freedom to Tinker blog, there is a TEDx talk entitled, "Internet Voting? Really?" by Andrew Appel given in April of this year. Andrew Appel comes to the opposite conclusion from John but analyses only existing technology and never mentions the block chain which just could be the technology that allows us to vote online, securely and most importantly, fraud-free. By the way, Freedom to Tinker produces many interesting articles including a recent one on Tesla cars and privacy.

Workshops

Workshop NOTES: June 2016

Apple. Focuses on all aspects of the Mac and iPhone operating systems.

Contact: Richard Corzo (*applesig@dacs.org*).

Meets 2nd Tuesday, 7 p.m. at DACS Resource Center.

Next Meeting: June 14

Drupal. Covers all things on Drupal, the open source content management system (CMS)

Contact: Jim Scheef (*jscheef@dacs.org*).

Go to the DACS Community Forum - (*http://www.dacs.org/forum/*) within the Members only area.

Next meeting: Look for future announcements.

Jobs. Networking and jobs search

Contact: Charles Bovaird, 203-792-7881 (*aam@mags.net*). Go to DACS Community Forum (*http://forum.dacs.org for job listings.*

Linux. Helps in installing and maintaining the Linux operating system. Also of interest to Apple owners using OS X.

Contact: Dave Mawdsley, *linuxsig@dacs.org*

Meets 3rd Wednesday, 7:30 p.m. at the DACS Resource Center.

Next Meeting: June 15

PC Maintenance. Review of PC hardware and OpSys maintenance and use.

Contact: Charles Bovaird, 203-792-7881 (*aam@mags.net*). Go to DACS Community Forum (*http://forum.dacs.org*).

Online Business Workshop. Informal gathering of members sharing ideas on creating an online source of income.

Contact: Steve Harkness (*onlinebizsig@dacs.org*)

Meets second Monday in nearby Brookfield, or by Webinar

Next Meeting: Check *dacs.org*.

Single Board Computers Workshop. Explores small cheap computers like Raspberry Pi, Arduino, Netduino, Beaglebone, and more. Meets 3rd Thursday at the DACS Resource Center.

Contact: Jim Scheef (*jscheef@dacs.org*), or go to the DACS Community Forum: *http://www.dacs.org/forum/,* within the Members-only area

Next Meeting: June 16

Social Media: Master the basics of Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram.

Contact: Tom Zarecki 914-548-4948; email *tomZshow@gmail.com.*

Meets on the 4th Wednesday of the month at 6:30pm, usually at the DACS Resource Center, but check the monthly schedule.

Next Meeting: TBA

Video Production. The Video Workshop explores all aspects of video capture and production, including both inexpensive and professional choices for cameras and editing software.

Meets on the 4th Thursday of certain months, typically at 7:00 pm at the Resource Center. Check the Calendar for details.

Contact: Andy Woodruff (awoodruff@dacs.org)

Next meeting: June 23

Web Development/Design This Workshop meets every 3rd Tuesday, 7-9 pm, at the DACS resource center. Although we cover many web-related subjects, most meetings will feature WordPress ("Content Management System"). We discuss its pros and cons, learn about theme editing, CSS, plugins, security, customization and more. Next meeting: June 21.

Workshops News & Events

Video Production. June 23 - Demo of Video Editor Software

At our next meeting on June 23, I will demonstrate the use of Adobe's video editor called "Premiere". I will target this workshop toward attendees with no background in video editing.

I videotaped John Patrick's presentation at the DACS General Meeting in May. I will utilize these files in this demonstration. In particular, I will show how one first prepares files for editing, including color matching and synchronization of multiple cameras. Then I will show how one can view simultaneous video streams from multiple cameras and select, on a real-time basis, what will appear in the output stream.
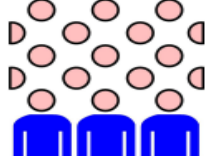
Adobe Premiere is a professional application with many customizable features. It is part of Adobe's Creative Cloud suite. The latest version of Premiere is not available for outright purchase, but instead only on a subscription basis. Other companies have video editing software applications available for outright purchase, although with typically lesser capability.

This workshop will be held at the DACS Resource Center, rather than Charter Communications where previous workshops were held.

—Andy Woodruff

June 2016
Danbury Area Computer Society

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 **Board of Directors** 7:00 PM	**2**	**3**	**4**
5	**6**	**7** **General Meeting** 6:30 PM	**8**	**9** **Membership Committee** 7:00 PM Jim Scheef 860-355-0034	**10**	**11**
12	**13**	**14** **Apple** 7:00 PM Richard Corzo *applesig@dacs.org*	**15** **Linux** 7:00 PM Dave Mawdsley *linuxsig@dacs.org*	**16** **Single Board Computers Workshop** 7:00 PM Jim Scheef 860-355-0034	**17**	**18** **DACS.DOC Deadline**
19	**20**	**21** **Web Development and Design** Annette van Ommeren 7:00 - 9:00 PM *avanommeren@dacs.org*	**22**	**23** **Video Production** 7:30 PM Andy Woodruff (*awoodruff@dacs.org*)	**24**	**25**
26	**27**	**28**	**29**	**30**		

May 2016

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Jul 2016

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31						

Software Review

MailWasher Free - Version 7.7
Free e-mail filtering software for Windows

By John Langill

MAILWASHER IS E-MAIL filtering software for Windows that can detect and delete spam from a user's e-mail while it remains on the e-mail provider's server—that is, BEFORE it is downloaded to the user's computer. This approach is what makes MailWasher unique among similar competitive products.

MailWasher uses a combination of user-defined filters, spam databases, and Bayesian filtering. The filters work on a small portion of each e-mail, and then allow unwanted e-mails to be directly deleted from the user's POP3 inbox without them being downloaded to the e-mail client on the user's computer. This approach prevents the downloading of spam and other messages infected with malware.

Through the use of a Bayesian filter, the more MailWasher is used the more the program's spam detection capabilities improve. By marking certain e-mail messages as spam, the user trains this filter to detect spam more effectively in the future. For example, once MailWasher's Bayesian filter learns that most messages containing the word "Drugs" are spam, it will automatically classify e-mails that use the word excessively as spam in the future.

MailWasher is available in two ver-

sions... Free and Pro. I'll get to the main distinctions between the two versions a little later.

MailWasher debuted in 2001 and has been continually updated and enhanced ever since. I've been using the free version of MailWasher for well over a decade and I can say - thankfully - that I've never experienced having a PC infected by malware transmitted via e-mail in all that time - knock on wood.

Admittedly, it has required some diligence on my part; but MailWasher has made the task a lot easier by enabling me to filter out the spam e-mail without having it downloaded to my computer.

There are any number of programs that purport to automatically filter e-mail and remove spam; and they may do a fair job. While MailWasher can and does do much the same, it gives the user more "hands on" control by displaying e-mail waiting on the e-mail provider's server; thus enabling the deletion of any suspicious or unwanted e-mail from the user's inbox prior to downloading it to the e-mail client on the user's computer. As a person who believes in the adage "If you want something done right, do it yourself," I appreciate the direct control MailWasher gives me to categorize e-mail that is sent to me as coming from "friend" or "foe" as well as to set up

MailWasher to recognize and delete e-mail from specific senders or domains even though it adds an extra manual step to the process of receiving e-mail.

The free version of MailWasher offers many customizing options; the Pro version even more. The screen-shot below illustrates how I've chosen to display e-mail messages waiting for me on the e-mail provider's server and how they might be categorized. Note that two e-mail messages were automatically classified as spam and check-marked for deletion when MailWasher's main screen was displayed. Any other messages, including those classified "Good" and "Friend," may be check-marked manually. Any checked messages can also be un-checked. Clicking the "Wash Mail" button causes the checked messages to be immediately deleted from the e-mail provider's server. Clicking the Thunderbird button brings up my default e-mail client to which the remaining messages on the e-mail provider's server can be downloaded to my Inbox.

MailWasher Features
User Friendly

MailWasher is quick **to** install and easy to learn. MailWasher's extensive Help fully explains the use of the many options and the methods of marking e-mail for various actions - deleting, reporting spam, even returning spam to senders - thereby training the software to differentiate between spam and good e-mail.

As with any such anti-spam program, however, MailWasher does not detect the presence of malware; e.g., fraudulent links, etc., that may be imbedded within an e-mail. That the user must still do through diligent
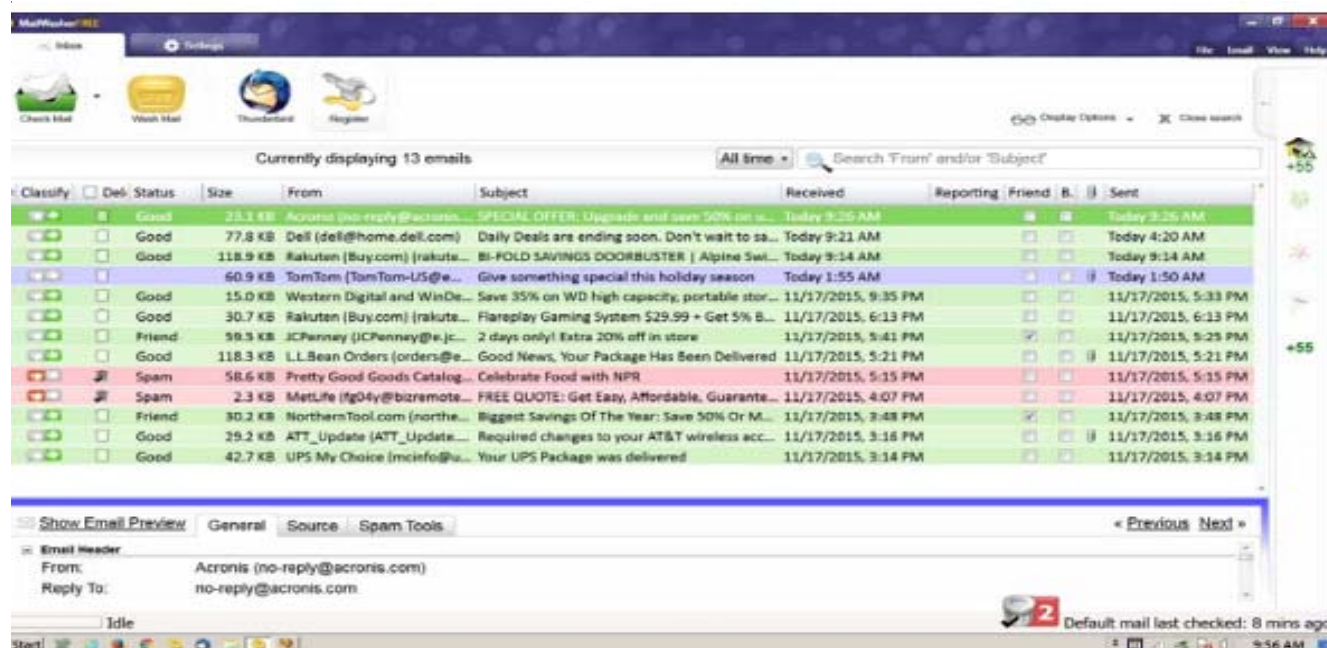
observation of the content of an e-mail that has been downloaded to his or her e-mail client's inbox.

E-mail Compatibility

The software works on all e-mail platforms, whether these are Web-based, POP, or IMAP servers. These include the most common e-mail hosts such as Microsoft Outlook, Outlook Express, Thunderbird, Windows Live Mail, Gmail, Hotmail, Incredimail, AOL, Postbox, Outlook.com, and Yahoo with Mail+.

Supported Operating Systems

MailWasher supports the following Windows operating systems: o Windows 8 and 8.1:
- Windows 7
- Windows Vista
- Windows XP.

According to Firetrust's website, MailWasher Pro 7.7 has been tested with Windows 10 and no issues were found. However, I have been unable to verify if the most recent version of MailWasher Free works with Windows 10 as well; but you can download and install the free version to see if it does.

Free vs Pro

The adjacent chart differentiates the features found in the two versions. Except

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Publisher: Firetrust - www.Mailwasher.com
Current Free Version: 7.7 (Pro Version also 7.7)
Supported Operating Systems: Windows XP, Vista, 7, and 8 (10? - (see article)
Download: MailWasher (Free) - www.mailwasher.net/

Feature Comparison	MailWasher Free	MailWasher Pro
Preview emails on the server	✓	✓
Delete emails at the server	✓	✓
Effective anti-spam tools	✓	✓
Preview Pane	✓	✓
POP3, IMAP, Hotmail, AOL, GMail etc	✓	✓
Colored grid lines for easy reading	✓	✓
Real-time spam filter service	✓	✓
Auto delete spam	✓	✓
Search inbox	✓	✓
Automatic updates	✓	✓
Customize interface	✓	✓
Use multiple email addresses	1 email address only	✓
Recycle bin	-	✓
Full preview pane	-	✓
7 days a week technical support	-	✓
Price	Free	$29.95

for one year during which I tried the Pro version, I have found that the free version of MailWasher serves my needs well. I use only one e-mail address (account) and, except for an occasional oops, I found the Recycle Bin feature to be of little use - that's not to say that I haven't sometimes wished to have had it available.

In addition to what is shown in the chart, MailWasher Pro now includes mobility support for iPhone and Android devices.

Summary

There's no question that e-mail remains the number one method for the distribution of malware with the potential to infect a user's computer. A major headache among all e-mail users alike, phishing e-mails, junk e-mails, unwanted newsletters, and such, continue to clog inboxes and slow down server performance by unnecessarily taking up capacity. By structuring MailWasher around removing security threats before e-mails even reach user servers, the software ensures only wanted e-mail makes it to a user's computer and learns quickly to adapt to the individual recipient's preferences.

JOHN LANGILL, *is newsletter editor, Southern Tier Personal Computer Club*

*This review was published in the December 2015 issue, **Rare Bits** (http://www.pageorama.com/?p=stpcc1979 jlangill1 (at) stny.rr.com)*

There are Many Ways to Join DACS

An easy way to join DACS is to attend one of the monthly general meetings. General meetings are normally held on the first Tuesday of each month at Danbury Hospital. Or join right on our Website via the PayPal link, where you may also pay by credit card without a PayPal account.

General meetings are always free to the public, but only members benefit fully from DACS' many other events, activities, and publications. As a member you become part of a dynamic computer group in the Greater Danbury Area.

You will receive a subscription to *dacs.doc*, our award-winning monthly newsletter, packed with news and information pertinent to computer users of all levels. In addition to interesting feature stories, the newsletter contains a monthly calendar of events and a recap of the the previous general meeting and last month's workshops. Members may also post questions to the DACS Community Forum.

Members may also attend the monthly workshops, where topics relating to computers, peripherals, software, and operating systems are discussed. Workshops meet throughout the month at our Resource Center in downtown Danbury unless mentioned otherwise in the calendar. Occasionally, special topic sessions are also offered to members.

Individual/Family Memberships

Annual membership dues are $40.00 for individuals or for each family living at the same address. Annual memberships which include a printed newsletter are available for $60.00 a year.

Publishing Tools

PDF File Type - What and Why?

By Phil Sorrentino,

THE PORTABLE DOCUMENT File (.pdf) file type has been around since 1993 when Adobe Systems made the specification available to all, free of charge. However, PDF was initially a proprietary format, controlled by Adobe, until it was officially released as an Open Standard in 2008. Since then it has been controlled by a committee of volunteer experts who are part of the International Organization for Standardization. The .pdf file type was developed as a way to share documents that would include text, formatting, and inline images, among computer users of different types of computers from different companies. (PCs, Apple, IBM, Sun, anyone remember DEC?). The PDF standard endeavors to present documents in a consistent manner that is independent of application software, hardware and operating system. The .pdf file type, by its very nature, and name - Portable, was intended to be a file that could be a complex of text, graphics and so on, and be easily shared by people that didn't have the same hardware or software. So, the real benefit was that the file would look exactly the same when displayed on all different types of computer systems.

Each .pdf file encapsulates a complete description of a document, including text, fonts, graphics, forms, annotations, outlines, and other information needed to display the file. .pdf files can also contain links, buttons, audio, video, and business logic; and where security is important, they can be password protected. So a .pdf file can end up as a pretty big file. (When I was almost finished with this article I saved it as a .doc and a .pdf. The .doc was 36KB, and the .pdf was 106KB. I also looked at a PowerPoint presentation, 127 slides with lots of graphics; it was 11.5MB saved as .ppt, and 32.4MB saved as .pdf. Finally, I saved a fairly large Excel spreadsheet (125 rows, with columns that went out to column AT, with quite a few calculations within the spreadsheet), which was 157K saved as .xls and 475 KB as .pdf. So from that limited testing it looks like the .pdf will be about 3 times the native applications size.)

PDF files can easily be viewed on your computer using a free PDF Reader from Adobe called "Acrobat Reader DC". A mobile "Acrobat Reader DC" App is also available, free, for your Smartphone or Tablet. And for Windows 10 users, who are also Microsoft Office owners, PDFs can now be created from the Office Apps, Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. (By the way, you may have seen a reference to an .xps file type along with .pdf. The .xps file type is Microsoft's alternative to .pdf. It was introduced with Windows Vista but never attracted much of a following. Of the two, the .pdf format is the preferred choice.)

At this point in computer evolution, .pdf files can be opened by just about every major operating system (Windows 7, 10, OS X, iOS, Android) and can be used by many different applications. In addition, the majority of modern web browsers (Chrome, Edge, and Firefox) allow .pdf files to be read without the use of an external application, making them easy to use in web applications. (Though the literature doesn't give these internal PDF readers much of a good review; and advice on how to replace the internal PDF reader is easily found.) Also, Mobile Operating Systems (Android, iOS) are including PDF readers, making the PDF format almost universally useable. (This can't be said of any other file type; even though we all may be familiar with Microsoft's Word format (.doc), this format can only be used by a limited number of applications.)

Those of you who have been to our File Explorer class know that there are hundreds of file types on a typical computer, and that you can inspect and change the association between a file type and the program that uses that file type, using the Control Panel. (Remember, "Default Programs", followed by "associate a file type or protocol with a program"?) So, you have to have a program on your computer that knows how to use the .pdf file type. If you are having trouble opening a .pdf document, you probably don't have a program that knows how to use the .pdf file type, on your machine. If this is your situation, consider getting the free Adobe Reader, from the Adobe website, *http://www.adobe.com*.

Normally, .pdf files cannot be modified by the user, making these files perfect for use by an "end user", i.e., someone who needs the content of the file without being able to modify the file contents. In other words the file was not intended to be changed, once it was created or "published". So, originally there was no way to change a .pdf file without using the very expensive PDF Creator software from Adobe (or lesser expensive PDF creation software from Foxit). However, there are situations where it makes sense to change the contents of a received .pdf file, like "if you need to fill in some information on a PDF form".

"PDF to Word" conversion websites like "PDF Converter", "PDF to Word" or "PDF Online" are websites that advertise that will do the conversion for free. (Google "free pdf to word" and you'll see many possibilities.) Also, you could try "free document converter" found at www.hellopdf.com. I haven't any experience with these, but the literature claims they work as indicated. And, for those of you who need to do a lot of these conversions, Adobe offers "Adobe Acrobat DC" for about $15/month or you could buy it for around $200. There must be a large enough number of people who need to convert .pdf files to .doc files because when I Googled "pdf to word", I was pointed to many websites that could supposedly help me in my quest. There even was a YouTube video that indicated that you could upload a .pdf file to Google drive, (yes, you'll probably need a Google Drive account), and then download it as a word (.doc) document. When I tried it on a pretty simple PDF, the conversion didn't seem to preserve a lot of the formatting, so it didn't look like it would be acceptable, at all, on a more complex document. I haven't had the occasion to need to convert a document, but if the situation ever arises I'm sure I'll be able to get it done, though I just might have to go to the lab and get some help from one of the very able and helpful Monitors. So, when all is said and done, the PDF standard is deeply ingrained in modern computing because it allows a single file to provide a display that looks the same on all different types of computers.

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Meeting Preview

Small Business Technology Challenges

By Bert Goff

Needs. Outside of work, Rick is active with scouting and enjoys golf, hiking, camping and boating.

DACS IS PLEASED to have Rick Van Akin, Owner of Computer Trouble shooters of Greater Danbury in Brookfield, CT introduce us to many of the technical challenges facing small businesses today.

Small businesses face many challenges in today's complex and increasingly internet-driven markets. From pricing pressures, to regulatory demands, to employee productivity and everything in between, small business must come to grips with addressing all of this while trying to maintain the clients they have and seeking new clients in a very difficult economic climate. Small business IT firms need to understand these challenges and build and maintain platforms that enable companies to be more productive and compete in these challeng-

ing times.

In his presentation, Rick will share a few stories about specific issues some small businesses have addressed and talk about some of the enabling technologies that help them succeed. Topics will include security, cloud services, internet marketing, VoIP, and life-cycle management.

Rick Van Akin, Owner and General Manager

Rick has over 7 years of experience serving Greater Danbury businesses. Prior to assisting local business, Rick has over 20 years of large corporate IT experience where there is no time for down time. Rick is well known in the Northern Fairfield County community as a member of several business groups and a former board member of the Brookfield Chamber of Commerce. Additionally, Rick holds an MBA in Technology Management, which helps him relate Technology Strategies to Business

About Computer Troubleshooters of Greater Danbury

Computer Troubleshooters of Greater Danbury specializes in working with residents and small businesses with 1 to 30 or so employees. Their web site is http://www.cts-danbury.com/. They are the local franchise of Computer Troubleshooters USA, Inc.

Directors' Notes, Cont. from page 3

• Robilotti Room vs. Auditorium for general meetings - The renovations to the Auditorium were judged to be an improvement but the board still felt that the Robilotti room is a better venue for DACS general meetings. Dave said that he would contact the hospital. Andy described some of the new audio facilities of the Auditorium.

• The roping off of certain areas in the Auditorium (done on May 3) was discussed, and it was agreed to use a different method in future for management of audience seating.

• Dick will continue to be the APCUG liaison.

• The board decided to take no action about the request from Danbury Youth Services for mentors.

• The board discussed possible ways to make general meetings more welcoming to non- members. It was decided to move the snacks table to the back of the room, and to use color-coded name tags to identify new visitors.

• Video workshop. Andy outlined his plan to run meetings of the workshop every 2 - 3 months. There will be opportunities for someone else to lead meet-

ings in intervening months.

• It was decided that one of the donated copies of John Patrick's book, *Net Attitude*, will be kept by DACS as a reference copy. The remaining four will be

given away, one per meeting, at the next four general meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30pm.

—Richard Teasdale

An artist's concept of the future Trump presidential library, hotel and convention center to house his vast archive of executive tweets.

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Read the Blog on dacs.org

For the past several months, Jim Scheef has been posting to a blog on the club's website. You can read these posts here. We are looking for a few volunteers to help contribute to this blog. To qualify, you must be a member in good standing and be willing to post regularly, meaning one or more posts weekly. You will receive training in how to enter and format the blog posts (a little HTML can be helpful).

Content must be related to the club's mission of learning and sharing information about computers and how we use them. There is tons of interesting and valuable information to share and one person cannot find and post it all.

If you're interested, email the webmasters.

Future Events:

June 7
Small Business Technology Challenges - Rick Van Akin

July 5
TBA

August 2
TBA

September 6
TBA