Next Event: Tuesday, April 4

So, you've drawn up the plans—but developing a web application requires all the right building blocks ... We'll show you how to put them together."

Directors' Notes

Danbury Area Computer Society
Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, March 8, 2017

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), and Andy Woodruff. The minutes were taken by Richard Teasdale.

(Names in italics denote responsibilities for actions.)

- The Minutes of the 2/8/2017 Board Meeting were accepted.

Reports

- The Treasurer's report for February was discussed. Bert reported that dues receipts were slow but appear to be picking up in March. An issue with the sending of e-mails from CiviCRM may have impacted renewal reminders. Richard mentioned that the issue would be addressed at the Membership Committee meeting on 3/9. Bert reported that liquid assets currently exceed prepaid dues by about $1,200. Fundraising for the Resource Center Capital Campaign currently stands at $656.
- The Membership report was received from Jim Scheef by e-mail:
    - o 89 paid-up members (including 4 new), and 11 in-grace, for a total of 100.
    - o 28 people attended the March 7 general meeting, 4 of whom were visitors.
- Press Coverage:
    - o Dave reported that press releases for the March general meeting were sent out in late February.

o Andy pointed out that we should be monitoring publishers to whom the press release has been sent and following up in cases where the release did not get published. In the case of online publishers this is easy to do but print publications require much more work.

o Dave agreed to work on getting help from DACS members to monitor print publications.

o *Dick* will ask the Trumbull computer group for information about their publicity efforts, since they seem to have more success at meeting attendance than DACS.

o The board discussed the possibility of publicity to the clients of small business owners who have presented at general meetings but concluded that this was unlikely to produce results.

o The pros and cons of co-sponsorship of events with other organizations (e.g. Danbury Library, Apple, Microsoft), so that DACS could benefit from their public relations efforts, were discussed.

- Website:
    - o Richard reported that a few compromised files continue to be detected by Wordfence.

Old Business

- Programs:
    - o April: Dan O'Connor will speak about the WAMP stack (Windows, Apache, MySQL, PHP) and its uses for application development. *Richard* will write the Preview and *Richard Teasdale* will write the Review. *Richard (C)* will ask Dan about publicizing the event to his work colleagues.
    - o May: John Gallagher, the manager of a New Milford retailer of hobby-related merchandise, will present a talk on the subject of remote-controlled devices, including drones. *Bert* will write the Preview and *Andy* will write the Review. *Bert* will ask the speaker about publicity to his client base.
    - o Bert is in conversation with a New Milford consultant who has Google SEO experience, and who may be available to present on the topic of Google products.
- Renovation of the Resource Center (RC):
    - o No donation of used carpet has yet been received from Meadow Ridge Senior Living Community in Redding, but Andy's contact there has confirmed that one is still forthcoming.
    - o The board discussed the pros and cons of starting the painting work right away versus waiting.
    - o *Andy* will speak to Mike Kaltschnee about the possibility that the space next to the Danbury Library, now occupied by the

Dick Gingras   APCUG Liaison
rgingras@dacs.org

Apple User Group

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
Linux	Linux Workshop
Desktop publishing and website design	Web Site Design Workshop
Mac and iPhone/iPad/iPod touch	Apple Workshop
Online/small business	Online Business
Single board computers	Single Board Computers
Smartphones & Tablets	Mobile Devices Workshop
Social media	Social Media
Video capture/processing	Video
Windows	Windows Workshop

Hackerspace, will become vacant soon and that the RC might be relocated there.

New Business

• Free Memberships for general meeting speakers:

o Andy proposed a motion that "DACS will offer one 1-year free membership (with online newsletter) to each general meeting presenter, regardless of whether they are existing members of DACS. (If there is more than one presenter at a meeting, they will decide between themselves which is to receive the free membership.)" The motion was seconded by Bert. After discussion, the motion was voted on and carried with 4 yes votes (1 abstention).

• Annual Officers Election (President, Secretary, Treasurer)

o President: Dave Green was nominated by Richard Corzo and seconded by Andy Woodruff. No other candidates were nominated. A vote was taken, and Dave was re-elected to the position, 4 votes in favor, none opposed.

o Secretary: Bert Goff was nominated by Dick Gingras and seconded by Andy Woodruff. No other candidates were nominated. A vote was taken and Bert was re-elected to the position, 4 votes in favor, none opposed.

o Treasurer: Bert Goff was nominated by Dave Green and seconded by Andy Woodruff. No other candidates were nominated. A vote was taken and Bert was re-elected to the position, unanimously.

• Snacks for general meetings:

o *Richard Corzo* (snacks) and *Jim Scheef* (drinks) will make the arrangements in April.

• Members Directory:

o The desirability and practicality of a Members Directory were discussed.

o It was agreed to form a committee, consisting of Richard, Andy, and Jim Scheef (assuming his availability), to look into the topic further. It was provisionally planned for this activity to begin at the April meeting of the Membership committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 pm.

—RICHARD TEASDALE

March Meeting Review

Taking Notes

By Lisa Leifels

NOW THAT IT'S 2017, has the time finally come to join the digital revolution and begin using one of the many note taking apps that are available? Pocket calendars, spiral notebooks and sticky notes have had their day, but living in a paperless world does sound appealing! After all, the back of a napkin isn't really the best place to be scribbling down that million dollar idea of yours. Who better to explore this type of software than Sean Henderson, a busy father of four? Sean is a long-time DACS member and a past presenter, and at the March 7th DACS general meeting he showed us how he uses Evernote, OneNote and a few other services to stay organized.

Sean started with Evernote, which has been around since 2008 and will give you the ability to store formatted text, webpages, photographs, voice memos, and even handwritten notes. Evernote is an exceptional tool for keeping long-term information and it can also work as a possible camera replacement. The software provides a lot of precision and flexibility for clipping the data you need from web pages and saving them directly as notes. Sean uses Evernote to move photos and other content from his phone to his computer. He explained that one of the strengths of Evernote is that it works consistently and has excellent grouping and tagging capabilities. The tags give you the ability to traverse sideways instead of just up and down, as one does with file folders. Evernote is also one of the more robust note-taking products available, so with that comes a steeper learning curve. Sean recommended watching one of the many tutorials available, at https://help.evernote.com, as a way to become familiar with it.

Our speaker felt that Evernote wasn't the best tool to use when working with grids and tables. He also told us that one of the disadvantages to Evernote is that the pricing and features change over time. The basic version of Evernote is free, gives you the ability to store 60 MB of new uploads each month, and allows you to sync your data across two devices. Evernote Plus is $34.99 a year, lets you upload 1 GB of new data each month, and allows you to sync your data across all of your devices. Evernote Premium is $69.99 a year but provides you with the ability to upload 10 GB of new data each month and will also sync across all your devices.

Microsoft's digital notebook solution is OneNote, which was introduced as a part of the Microsoft Office 2003 suite. It works best on a Windows computer or device, but there are apps available for the Mac, iOS and Android devices. OneNote does offer more features in the Windows app along with integration with the other Microsoft Office products. Sean told us that there is an online version of OneNote with extensions available for all the popular browsers. You can start off by creating a note on your laptop and later updating that same note on your phone. You can type, write, and even draw your ideas with the feel of pen to paper. OneNote also makes it easy to collaborate on a project in real time with other people.

Sean pointed out that if you have Send To One Note running in your Task Bar, you can use this option to quickly save your notes in one step. You used to need to buy the Microsoft Office suite to get the full version, but now it's available completely free, provided you store your notebooks in the OneDrive cloud, which means you must have an internet connection. The paid-for version of OneNote gives you the ability to work offline.

If you need a simpler, more streamlined way to track some shorter term information, then Google Keep might be the answer. Sean told us that he and his wife share their grocery lists in Google Keep. He did a quick demo for us by creating a short grocery list and then giving access to the list to someone in the audience, who updated the list and we saw the live changes show up on Sean's grocery list. You can also use Google Keep to snap a quick photo and save it as a note. It shouldn't surprise anyone that Google Keep's search capability is consistent and high quality, working well in both its desktop and mobile apps.

Sean told us about some other ideas for organizing information, such as using your computer's operating system, since this is suited for the task by design. You can also use your email program, which might make sense if it is the home of the bulk of the data you care about. Sean suggested using wikis as another way to quickly create and link pages since they are collaborative by nature, which makes them great for working with other people.

If you aren't using any of these apps already, it just might be time to put that old moleskine notebook away and jump on the digital note taking bandwagon once and for all. Won't it feel good to be able to finally throw away all those business cards, receipts, and other scraps of paper cluttering up your house? Thanks to Sean for introducing us to so many different tools to help us tackle our next project, plan an exciting trip, and maybe even begin to write that book we've been thinking about. Sean Henderson is a Microsoft Certified Professional and is currently working for a company in Norwalk as a Business Intelligence Analyst.

"In the beginning there was zero. And God made a one out of the zero. And God said 'be fruitful and multiply.'"

April Meeting Preview

Full-Stack WAMP Development

Preview by Richard Corzo

Date: Tuesday, April 4, 7:30 p.m.
Location: Danbury Hospital Auditorium
Presenter: Dan O'Connor

OUR APRIL MEETING will be geared toward web developers, those programmers who develop interactive web sites and web-based applications. A popular technology stack for creating such applications is LAMP (Linux, Apache web server, MySQL database, and the PHP programming language) or WAMP (substitute Windows for Linux as the server operating system). Our speaker is programmer and musician Dan O'Connor, who has previously presented to DACS on the topics of MySpace (remember that early social network?) in March 2007, social networking dos and don'ts in February 2010, and online stock research and trading in September 2011.

Web applications consist of a front end that runs in a web browser and presents the interface that the user sees, and a back end that runs on a server and is where the behind-the-scenes business logic happens. If you fill in a web form to create an account or make an online purchase, the browser first serves up the blank form page, and then submits the information you fill in. The information is transmitted, hopefully over a secure connection, to a server, where it needs to be saved in a database.

PHP is a popular server-side language for web application. Dan's demo will show the use of object-oriented PHP, and the Zend Framework, which is a framework for building and testing PHP applications. He'll also cover SQL, the database query language used to work with a relational database management system such as the open-source MySQL database product.

On the front end he'll cover JavaScript, the browser scripting language that makes a web page more responsive to user interactions, and the jQuery JavaScript library, which provides common functions and allows the JavaScript code to work across different versions of different web browsers. Traditionally the HTTP protocol used on the web mostly consisted of sending a new page to the browser (a GET), and then submitting information when a user clicked on a button present on the page (a POST). AJAX (Asynchronous JavaScript and XML) is a back-channel method that Dan will describe for updating information on the web page without the need for a GET and a POST. Dan will also talk about an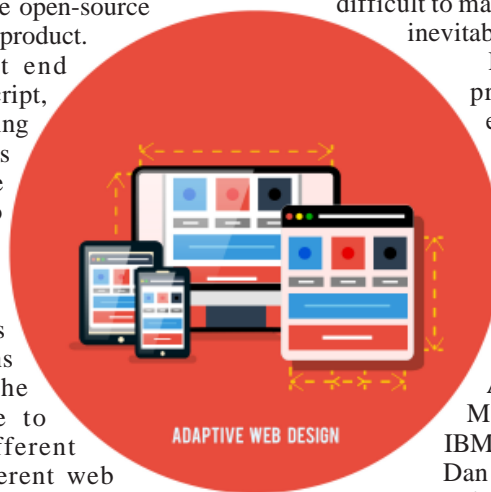other useful technology, JSON (JavaScript Object Notation), that is a convenient way for the back end to return information so that it is easily rendered by the JavaScript engine in the browser.

Thus Dan will be covering full-stack WAMP for creating web applications, including software design patterns that allow the front and back ends to coordinate with a proper separation of concerns. Without such patterns a web application can get quite messy and be difficult to maintain, as changes are inevitably required over time.

Dan O'Connor is a professional software engineer with over 20 years of experience developing web-based applications. He currently works for Agera Energy and has also been employed with Chaikin Analytics, Pentax Medical, Apelon and IBM.

Dan is always keeping his programming skills up on Hackerrank, Udemy, Team Treehouse and Code School. He has a bachelor's degree from the University of Hartford and completed information systems coursework at American Sentinel University.

DACS general meetings are free and open to the public. You can find directions to Creasy Auditorium on the DACS website *https://dacs.org—and bring a friend..*

By Saber omri (Own work) [CC0], via Wikimedia Commons

Workshops

Workshop NOTES: April 2017

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: Apr 11

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: Apr 19

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 member gathering sharing ideas on creating an online source of income.
Contact: Steve Harkness (*onlinebizsig@dacs.org*)
Meets second Monday in 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 at 7:00 p.m on the 3rd Thursday at the DACS Resource Center.
Contact: Jim Scheef (860-355-0034)
Next Meeting: Apr 20

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: Check dacs.org

Web Development/Design This workshop will resume with a meeting on April 18th. The subject will be determined closer to the date. Would you like to take on the role of workshop leader? Share information, learn new techniques, promote your business, and interact with like-minded people. Extensive web knowledge is not required, but rather a willingness to open a topic for discussion. Contact Annette Van Ommeren (avanommeren@dacs.org) and see the DACS website for updates.
Contact: Annette Van Ommeren (avanommeren@dacs.org)
Next meeting: Check dacs.org

Workshops News & Events

SBC SIG. March was 'Show and Tell'. It seems that David Wilkinson has been into home theater technology for some time. He brought in several Raspberry Pi-based setups. These devices run KODI, software to create a media center computer on various devices. It was not possible to demonstrate KODI without a connection to his home network with both tuner devices and stored content.

From the KODI website:

  Kodi® (formerly known as XBMC™) is an award-winning free and open source (GPL) software media center for playing videos, music, pictures, games, and more. KODI (kodi.tv) runs on Linux, OS X, Windows, iOS, and Android, featuring a 10-foot user interface for use with televisions and remote controls. It allows users to play and view most videos, music, podcasts, and other digital media files from local and network storage media and the internet. Our forums and Wiki are bursting with knowledge and help for the new user right up to the application developer. We also have helpful Facebook, Google+, Twitter and Youtube pages.

  I asked David to send an email with links to the items he showed us. Below is the meat of that email:

HDHomeRun Tuners: <*https://www.silicondust.com/*>

The HDHomeRun Prime works with cable (not Frontier or Fios). With Comcast, most channels do not have copy protection and so can be viewed on Raspberry Pi. On Time Warner Cable (now Spectrum) most (all?) channels do have copy protection.

  For Charter Communications I do not know [which channels are protected]. If you want to view protected content, you need to use the viewing software on a different platform (Windows 10 and XBox1 are already working, Android and MacOS coming I believe).

WDLabs PiDrive: <*http://wdlabs.wd.com/category/wd-pidrive/*>

To test out the multi-boot feature, you do not need to buy anything -- all you need is a flash drive and the PiDrive version of NOOBS, which is a free download <*http://downloads.wdc.com/misc/PiDrive_Foundation_Edition.zip*>

Flirc case and IR Dongle: <*https://flirc.tv/*>:
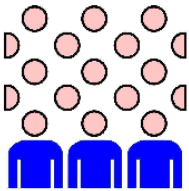
Kodi version of Flirc case: <*https://flirc.tv/more/raspberry-pi-case-ke*>

  If anyone is looking for an inexpensive 4K HDR TV, I would highly recommend:

April 2017
Danbury Area Computer Society

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

Internet Commerce

Are You a Smart Online Shopper?

By Bob Rankin

SHOPPING ONLINE for Christmas, Hanukkah (or any time of year) is easy and convenient, but when you use the right tools, you can also save a lot of cash. Here are some money-saving tips for the smart online shopper...

Wish list? *Check*. Credit card? *Check*. Okay, before you head off to your favorite online store, are you sure you've found the best possible price for the item you're planning to buy? Have you researched other brands or similar items?

Have you searched for coupons or other discount offers? Are you getting free shipping whenever possible? And are you taking advantage of the power of group buying, and the wisdom of the crowd?

Use my ten simple shopping tips to make sure you're getting the best deal when you shop online...

TIP #1: Look for rebates and rewards BEFORE you shop. Loyalty programs such as Ebates offer shoppers rebates and other incentives to purchase from stores where they already shop. Ebates offers up to 25% in cash rebates when you shop online at popular stores like Amazon, Best Buy, JCPenney, Kohls, Macy's, Old Navy, Target and 1000 more. Even better, Ebates will pay you $75 when you refer 3 friends via their Tell-A-Friend promotion.

TIP #2: Use price-comparison sites to find the best deals.

Google Shopping is a good place to start. Just type in what you're seeking, such as "42-inch HDTV" or "cordless drills" and up pops an assortment of vendors. The initial results are displayed sorted by "relevancy" but I recommend that you re-sort them by price from low to high.

Bizrate.com is another good tool. It can display prices including shipping to your Zip code, or even limit your search to items that ship for free.

Pricegrabber.com lets you save interesting items as you shop for comparison to others.

Pricewatch.com was one of the first price comparison sites, specializing in computers and electronics since 1995. They now list non-tech items as well.

TIP #3: Before you buy, look for coupons that can reduce your final price. RetailMeNot has thousands of digital coupons and discount codes from many well-known and obscure online sellers. A little-known trick is to use Google's search function to find coupon codes buried on blog pages. Just use "coupon" and the name of the brand, merchant, or product that you are seeking as your search term.

TIP #4: An Amazon Prime membership may save you money. If you use Amazon.com frequently, that $99 flat fee gets you unlimited free, 2-day shipping on products delivered by Amazon. If you haven't been to Amazon lately, it's no longer just a bookstore. Amazon also offers music, movies, electronics, home & garden, health & beauty, toys, clothing shoes & jewelry, sporting and outdoor goods—just to name a few categories. Also, take note of the prices offered by Amazon affiliates on both new and used items; they are sometimes lower than Amazon's price. Amazon is also a great shopping research tool. After searching for the item (or type of item) you're after, Amazon will help you compare brands, prices, and retailers. You can also see what items and accessories other customers bought.

TIP #5: Patience Pays Off. Speaking of Amazon, here's a cool tip to save money when shopping online: CamelCamelCamel is an Amazon price tracking, research, and alert service that helps users get the best deals on the e-commerce giant. If you don't need to buy right away, this tool can alert you to price drops for items you're watching.

TIP #6: Don't forget eBay, especially if the item you seek is a staple rather than a fad of the moment. Because it's an auction site, the price you pay items (both new and used) tend to be very reasonable. And if you prefer to skip the drama of a bidding war, look for an item with a "Buy it Now" option. Oh, and here are two eBay Ninja trick that'll save you money every time. First, start your search at the eBay home page. When you get the list of matching items, refine your search by checking the "Completed listings" box under the "Show Only" header This will tell you what the item has actually sold for in recent eBay sales or auctions. And second, use BidRobot to boost your chances of winning the auction.

TIP #7: Take advantage of group buying power. Group-buying services such as Groupon, LivingSocial are geared mainly towards local, face-to-face merchants. But Groupon has inspired a slew of "daily deal" offers from many online sellers, too.

Subscribe to email lists to receive special limited time offers from your favorite stores.

TIP #8: Use social networking to your advantage. Many online sellers want you to follow, friend or "like" them on Twitter and Facebook. If you do, you'll gain access to coupon codes and special offers. If you find you're getting too many messages from these merchants, you can unfollow or unfriend to stop the flow after you've made your purchase.

TIP #9: Got gift cards? Gift cards are a great option when you don't know exactly what to get for someone on your Christmas list. My friend Aaron and his team have created GiftCard Zen, a site where you can buy gift cards at a discount. You can also sell your unwanted gift cards for cash, or check the balance of a gift card you have. GiftCard Zen handles gift cards from hundreds of popular stores. It's a win-win scenario!

TIP #10: Skip the Warranty. Are you giving a mobile phone, tablet, computer or TV? Read SCAM ALERT: Mobile Device Insurance and Extended Warranties to find out why these are almost always a waste of money.

TIP #11: Avoid Penny Auctions. Have you seen those commercials where people brag about how they bought a $1200 HDTV for $25? See my article Penny Auctions: Scam or Legit? to see why these sites are to be avoided.

TIP #12: The Wisdom of Others. It's smart to take advantage of the experience of others, especially when it comes to considering big-ticket purchases. Sites like Amazon and Epinions offer actual consumer experiences and reviews of products. Consumer Reports and PC Magazine are good places to look for professional ratings and reviews.

BONUS TIP: Shop on Mobile (or fake it) Researchers at Northeastern University found that shopping online with your smartphone may yield a lower price than shopping from a desktop computer. I tried a few hotel searches myself, and found that prices were about 10% lower when I did the exact same search on my phone. So I had an idea… I wondered if changing the UserAgent on my desktop browser would fool these sites into giving me the "mobile discount." And it seems to work. I checked the price for one night at a hotel in Orlando using Chrome on desktop: $145. After changing my UserAgent string to make my desktop browser identify as an iPad, the price showed as $131.

Reader's Comments:

As well as finding the best price sometimes the online stores you use are

affiliated with airlines to reward you with extra miles for purchasing through their site. For example, I use Newegg.com and Backcountry.com which I access through the American Airlines shopping site (*https://www.aadvantageeshopping.com/*). You can earn bonus miles per dollar spent IN ADDITION to any miles earned by your credit card. I believe most of the major airlines have similar shopping sites.

Don't forget to ask if there is a Senior Discount!

YouTube is a great source of product reviews.

I always comparison shop at several outlets and I often use Amazon Prime, because unlike what many say the total price with shipping is frequently lower or very little more for the free 2-day shipping and many of the places that might be a couple of bucks lower don't seem to care how long it takes them to fill your order and get it in the mail. Of course, there are exceptions and if I can afford to wait I will take advantage of those deals. I have also been taking advantage of the Honey Chrome addon for Amazon that tells you if there is a lower price on the same item.

As you said in tip #10, smart phone insurance is almost always a waste of money. But, some homeowners/renter's insurance policies have a rider available that is cheap. I pay $18/year (not per phone, total) which gives me $5000 coverage on my computers and smart phones with a $50 deductible. This is all risk coverage (lost, stolen, falls in the toilet, etc.) although they can deny coverage if it is negligence (i.e., I throw it at someone).

Inasmuch as one has to use a credit card in order to make a purchase online, I find it best to use a virtual credit card. My Visa from BankAmerica calls their virtual card "ShopSafe" with a link by that name. Enter the CVC code from the back and the spending limit and you are provided with a one-time use credit card number with which to make your purchase. My MasterCard from AT&T Universal Card has a link to get a virtual card; same principle although there is no spending limit nor CVC number. Virtual cards expire in a month or two, and nobody else can use them. Totally safe. I would probably wager that lots of other cards also offer someone similar.

BOB RANKIN *is a free tech support provider (www.askbobrankin.com; bob@rankin.org.*

Media

Shareware and Freeware
By Kent Mulliner

THE TWO TERMS, shareware and freeware, are used interchangeably and refer to software that is available without a required payment (examples include Firefox, and the Libre Office Suite). As an alert, we should be aware that these are usually developed / written by goodhearted individuals or groups, but the absence of a revenue source can be a constraint on maintaining and developing the refinements needed by software in a rapidly changing environment. Increasingly, we are seeing Shareware groups seeking donations to offset commercial revenue. Examples include LibreOffice and Thunderbird (this latter was developed by the Mozilla group but they have decided that it is not fair to Mozilla users to transfer revenue to maintain Thunderbird. Thus they are seeking voluntary donations from Thunderbird users to further develop and maintain the program.

Approached practically, encouraging freeware/shareware development through donations is self-serving. The donations enable more active development and maintenance programs to keep the software up to date. The absence of freely given revenue can threaten the continuance of such software.

A current example is Open Office which was the forerunner of LibreOffice. It was developed by Sun Computing (which was bought by Oracle). In the initial purchase, many staff working with Open Office opted to join together to independently develop the software further and hence the birth of LibreOffice. Others stayed with Open Office but they also left Oracle and opted for the umbrella of Apache software (a shareware server company).

The latest word from this group is that they have decided to retire Open Office. In 2015, Open Office had a single update in October while LibreOffice had 14 over the course of the year. While some updates may correct minor bugs, more importantly is that they correct vulnerabilities [to malware] that have been discovered. Apache Open Offices vice president explained that it faced a severe shortage of staff to address vulnerabilities and that it was hard to adhere to the company's commitment to publicly announcing all vulnerabilities discovered without being able to correct (patch) those vulnerabilities.

The lesson is that while we can appreciate the availability of freeware/shareware, this is only possible if funding is available to support development of the software. It is like National Public Radio. It is only available as long as people are committed to and able to assure its continuance at a quality level that you should demand (and you can make such a demand only because you have paid to make maintenance of that quality possible.

KENT MULLINER *is past-president, Bristol Village Computer Club, OH (www.bvres.org; webmaster (at) bvres.org).*

Back to Basics

Using Windows Explorer Is a Must

By Jim Cerny

THIS IS A START of a series of articles on the basic use of Windows Explorer (known as *File Explorer* in Windows 10). It is very important for ALL VERSIONS of Windows users. This program (or app) allows you to do everything you can think of with FILES and FOLDERS. The icons for this app (see illustration) have not changed very much over the years, it is basically a yellow folder.

What's the big deal? I have taught classes many times on using "Files and Folders" or "Computer Organization" and in every class many students were amazed to discover answers to most of their computer frustrations just by learning how to use this one app or program. Even if you have used this app before, I believe reading these articles will help you discover more or easier ways to help you with your Windows computer.

Windows Explorer (or File Explorer in Windows 10, why they changed the name I'll never know) can easily perform the following functions. Have you ever wanted to do any of these things?

- Organize all your files and folders on your computer and other memory devices
- Move, copy, delete, and rename files
- Create new folders
- Copy files and folders TO and FROM other devices such as other drives, phones, cameras, disks, etc.
- Create quick and easy backups of your stuff

Please take a look at the large illustration of a sample of the File Explorer window—I will be referring to it in the next couple of articles. Please remember that this app or program is in ALL versions of Windows and the functions are basically the same. So let's get started simply by understanding what this app shows you in its window without really doing or changing anything. It may help you to think of a steel filing cabinet in an office. You don't want to just throw things into the drawer, you would never be able to find an item without searching through everything. So you use a FOLDER and write a NAME on the folder and put things INTO that folder so you can find them. Everyone has done that, right? Remember that you can put a folder INTO a folder too - so you could have one big folder that you have named "Home Expenses" and have folders IN that folder such as "Electric bills", "Phone bills", "Water bills", etc. So, to get to a specific electric bill you would have to first look IN the "Home Expenses" folder and then open the "Electric bills" folder in it. It's not too hard, right?

Basically, the File Explorer app is a way to find and organize anything in memory on your computer's C drive and any memory device connected to your computer. This is one app that I think Windows has done pretty well to help us all use our computer. The app window has two basic areas (called window "panes", get it?) a left pane and a right. The LEFT pane contains the list of FOLDERS and only folders. You will never see a "file" in this list! The RIGHT pane displays the contents of any folder you have selected in the left pane. When you click on a folder name in the left column, the contents of that folder appears in the right area of the window. EVERYTHING on your computer is organized in FOLDERS. You could think of your entire "C" drive as one big folder. If you connect another drive, that whole drive is a folder as well. Your C drive contains hundreds or thousands of folders, way too many to see them all at one time in the list on the left, so only the highest level of folders are shown in the list. If a folder in this list contains at least one folder then there will be an arrowhead ">" next to the folder name pointing to the right. If you click on this arrowhead (which is pointing to the right) it will change to an arrow pointing DOWN ("v") and will display below, indented, the names of all the FOLDERS in that folder. Thus you can view the contents of any folder on any memory device connected to your computer. If you connect another drive, for example, to your computer, that drive or disc will be given a letter (such as "E" or "F") which is a folder. You will see it appear in the folder list on the left probably at the bottom of the list. You can explore all you want to look to see what is in any folder on your computer. But remember that YOUR stuff, YOUR files, are in folders put there for YOUR use - such as "Documents" (or "My documents"), "Pictures", "Music", etc. Windows has and needs hundreds of other folders to store their stuff too, so do not go changing any files or folders in their folders, stay in your folders. Although any folder may contain ANY kind of a file, the folders provide for you with Windows means you should put all photo files into "Pictures" all documents into "Documents", etc.

So you can see that folders, which can contain files and more folders, are organized like an "outline" that you did in grade school. You have Roman numerals I, II, III, IV, etc. and under each of these you have the capital letters A, B,

Windows 7

Windows Explorer

Windows 10

File Explorer

C, etc. and under each of them could be numbers 1, 2, 3, etc. Each level is indented slightly to show you visually that a list is contained within the element above, etc. Folders are LOCATIONS in your computer memory into which you put your FILES (or more folders).

Now it's your turn. Open your Windows Explorer or File Explorer app and open some folders to see what is inside them. Use the scrollbars (if they appear) to scroll up and down the lists. When you have clicked on a folder, the contents of that folder will appear in the right pane. Click on some arrows to see how you can list the folders in a folder. Try to stay within your "Documents" or "Pictures" folders. Doing this will only display what you have and will NOT CHANGE anything, so don't' worry about messing anything up. We will get to moving things around later.

Next time we will look at the different ways to VIEW or display the contents of a folder, and this also will not change anything either, so it is safe to play with different display options. If you want to learn more right away, use Google and view some videos. Learning the basics o   f Windows File Explorer puts you in the driver's seat of your computer.

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BASIC WINDOWS 10 FILE EXPLORER ELEMENTS

Workshops, Cont. from page 6

Hisense 50H8C ($499 at Best Buy, 4 year warranty from Hisense). Larger sizes are available also: *<https://www.hisense-usa.com/electronics/tv/50h8c>*

<http://televisions.reviewed.com/content/hisense-h8-series-review>

As we discussed at the meeting I ordered the WDLabs WD PiDrive Compute Centre. This is a kit to build a complete desktop or maybe a home theater computer using a Raspberry Pi 3 - the Pi is included along with a 375GB hard drive (USB 3 interface), keyboard, custom case, and all the cables needed. Even an appropriately sized wall wart to power it!

At this point, there is nothing planned for next month except to have a meeting. See you then.

—Jim Scheef

Capital Campaign to Renovate the Resource Center

We are lucky to have this community of people who are interested and skilled at computers and technology. Only a few cities in the United States have an award-winning computer society as active as DACS! Thank-you to the many people who freely give their time to present at our General Meetings, teach at our SIG Meetings, serve on our Board, and help organize events. We are an all-volunteer organization.
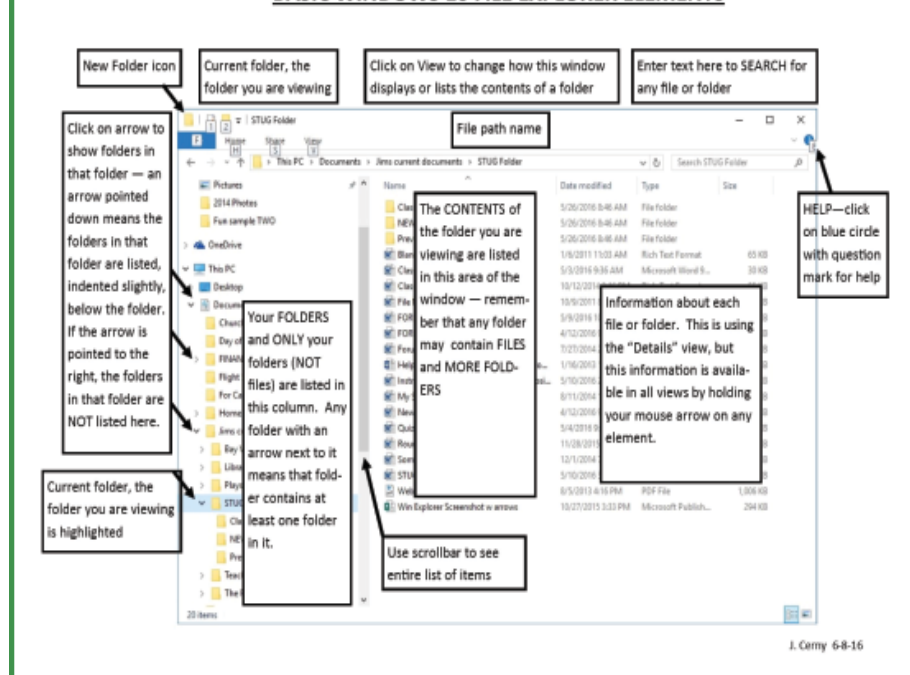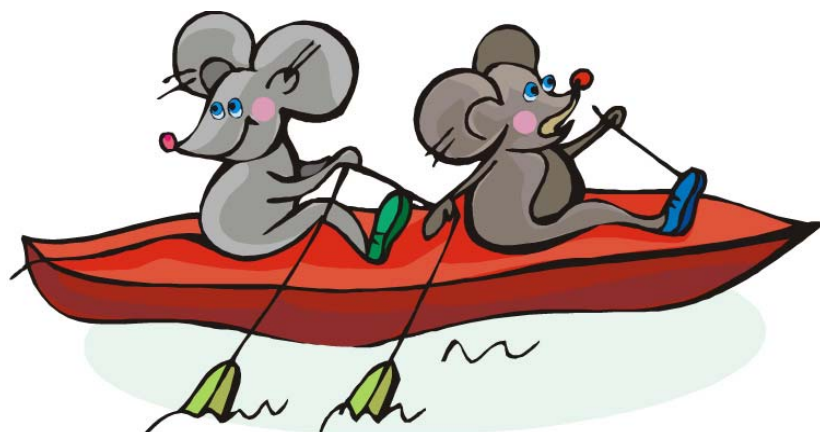
We are launching a capital campaign to renovate our Resource Center, where we hold SIG meetings and other events. We are fortunate that the city of Danbury has for 20 years provided this space for us at no cost in a city-owned building. However, the space needs renovations, including rug replacement, paint, moldings, and new chairs. We cannot afford new rug, but we already have a promised gift of lightly used rug from Meadow Ridge, a retirement community to Redding. We have also lined up skilled volunteers to install the rug, paint, and do other renovations. All we need is some money for materials.

Our goal is $1,500. Please consider a gift to DACS! We are a 501(c)(3) organization, and your contribution is tax-deductible.

You can make an online donation at our website www.dacs.org or mail a check to:

DACS, Inc.
c/o Bert Goff, Treasurer
65 Legion Rd.
New Milford, CT 06776

When you come to the next DACS meeting, why not bring a friend?

Future Events:

April 4
The WAMP stack (Windows, Apache, MySQL, PHP)

May 2
John Gallager Remote Control Devices

June 6
TBA

July 4
TBA