

ACPCUG

June 2001

From The DealsGuy, by Bob Click, Greater Orlando Computer Users Group

Not surprisingly, in response to my "junk e-mail" soap-box last month, I heard from people explaining what an important service they are doing by forwarding all those warnings, even though some did admit they had also forwarded hoaxes to recipients not happy about it. I also had e-mail saying, "Thanks for the soap box, but you can't win that one." I know that. I have a couple of filters setup now in Eudora because of people who won't honor my request to stop. Here is a Web site made for those do-gooders: [<http://www.cao.com/hoax>] There, you can pick your favorite hoax and personalize it, then send it to all those people that also still believe Elvis is alive, but don't include me.

Fun Among Friends

My wife and I attended the Florida Association of Computer User Groups (FACUG) conference and had a great time. There were about 148 attendees from 27 user groups. The vendor participation was better this year with 17 vendors. Two vendors also did roundtables that were combination presentation and Q &

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Note: Venue Change to Stark Tech Auditorium due to Scheduling Conflict at Taylor Memorial Library for June 2001 (only)

FDD MISERY - SOLVED

By Richard G. Lubinski, ACPCUG

I recently added memory to my desktop PII-266 PC and added a parallel port scanner. Periodically my 1.44 FD (Drive A) would stop working. Windows95 and DOS could not see the A FD drive. Periodically the FD would work normally then not work at all. Logically I checked then replaced the data cable (no change). I check the power to the Drive from the power supply (OK). I replaced the FD drive itself (no change). < Are you getting interested now?>. I then suspected the I/O controller function on the mother board but everything else (HD and CD ROM) worked perfectly. I took the PC to PAK Computer on Graham Road in Cuyahoga Falls . They tested the FD and everything worked fine *IN THE STORE*. As you may have guessed the FDD still did not work at home.

My LPT1: port is connected to my 3.2 GB Orb drive then daisy chained to my

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June 4, 2001

Stark Technical College

North Canton, Ohio

6 pm - **Microsoft Office XP is Coming** by Microsoft Speakers 7:30 **Q&A** and **MS Back Again** for more Office Stuff



www.nashken.com

The Deals Guy

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A. If you don't attend your regional conference, I heartily recommend it. It was great to see friends that I only see those times of year.

That Much!!!

Many aren't aware that some people learn a great deal about your computer, browser and other things when you "hit" a URL on the Web (unless your firewall restricts disbursing data). My ISP (Earthlink) offers limited "free" statistics about the hits on a member's Web site, and there are other free services that will also give you even more stats than I get free from Earthlink. For a monthly fee, I could have a lot more info concerning the hits on my Web site through Urchin, who provides the Earthlink stats taken right from Earthlink servers. Perhaps I'll write more about all that in a future column.

Regarding those Web site statistics, I read the latest APCUG Reports [<http://www.apcug.org>] and this issue had a report by Don Singleton listing just one month's statistics for the APCUG Web site. I strongly urge you to read it and you'll be fascinated with what you see. For example, I never realized there were so many different screen resolutions and it was interesting where many of the hits came from. You'll find "Quarterly Reports" listed on the left side of the APCUG Home Page. Take a look.

Still Good

The TechSmith items, SnagIt and Camtasia, are still good this month. Order these great programs by calling the sales department at 1-800-517-3001, or fax to 1-517-333-1888. Mention your user group's name. For a better discount, order the "SnagIt/Camtasia Bundle" for just \$152.95.

Some editors have been asking for a shorter column lately, so I am reducing the length by a couple hundred words. Now for some deals:

A "Mouse Bungee" Is Not What You Think, And It Works Great

At Space Coast PC Users Group meetings, members are sometimes treated to a demonstration by David Nottingham [dnottingham@cfl.rr.com] of favorite gadgets he finds (you should see his "gadget vest"). A couple months ago he showed them a "Mouse Bungee." It's a device that holds your mouse cord in the air allowing unencumbered mouse motion. It sounded great, so I inquired about it for the column. They sent

me one to try and I LOVE it. No resistance now when rolling my mouse around. No, "Mouse Bungee" doesn't suspend your mouse, just the mouse "cord." It has a stand with dual springs on a slant to hold your mouse cord in the air. Saves me setting something on my cord to keep it slack. Point your browser to [<http://www.mousebungee.com>] for pictures, colors and other information.

You must order it on their Web site's order page and I have a limited time discount for you. MSRP is normally \$14.95 + \$3.95 S&H, but user group members will get 15% off the entire order by typing the special ordering code "EFLX2" into the "promotion code" space. Choose from a nice assortment of colors. For a group order, they will increase the discount. E-mail [webmaster@mousebungee.com] for that info. What great people to do business with! Mouse Bungee won an award at Comdex.

How's The 'OI Ticker Again?

Last month I told you about WinStock, a nice program that puts a ticker on your screen and can be personalized with just the symbols you want to follow. That one cost money, but this month I have another one for you. Several people told me about it, and in fact, I already knew about it but couldn't find the URL to download it. Sounds like many already know about it, so maybe this is a waste, but here it is. It is called TICKER.EXE and you can download it at <http://www.cooltick.com>. It is so simple to use and will certainly serve your purpose. It also can be personalized. Best of all, it is FREE.

How About Backing Up With Throw-Away Parts

Last year I read a review by Carl Petzold of PC Users Group of South Jersey concerning a product called "Quick Drive" by H45 Technologies. Quick Drive is a kit containing a molded plastic case (shock mounted), an AC adapter and a data cord (USB or PC Card). It is designed to use a hard drive (could be an old one you have upgraded from). The object is to use this for a backup that you can unplug and put away.

Carl said the installation wasn't bad and it was just the berries. You cannot use Drive Image or Partition Magic from Power Quest, but he didn't say why. He is using the Microsoft backup in Windows 98 that he said does the job.

Quick Drive Kit sells for \$29.95 and the cable you choose is \$49.00. DealsGuy readers get a 10% discount. Call 1-800-373-8181 and tell them you read about this in the DealsGuy's column. Considering the price of a tape backup or Zip drive, and its media, perhaps this approach is better. See their

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products at <http://www.h45.com>]. It was a bit confusing to me on their Web site, but if you call, they will answer your questions.

How About A Better Clipboard

I've written about two popular replacements for the old "one-at-a-time" Windows Clipboard including the ever-popular "Clipmate," but those cost money. How about a FREE clipboard capable of storing a library of items! It's called ClipBook, and from Microsoft. I looked it up on PC World's Web site and here's where I saw it, although it may be available at other sites: <http://www.pcworld.com/hereshow/article/0,aid,15608,00.asp>]. If you have a problem finding it, I did a search for [clipbk.exe] at the download area.

If you have Windows 98, I'm told it's on some versions of the installation disk, but I didn't see it on mine. Read the instructions because you must remove ClipBook Viewer first. I have not tried it, but hooray for good free stuff.

Unzip Files With a Freebie

In the Space Coast PC UG's Journal, Ron Ingraham imparted this tidbit he received from Barbara Czenthe. Many of us use the popular WinZip for decompressing zip files. However, if you continue using WinZip, you are asked to pay a registration fee. WinZip is well worth the price, but here is an alternative. It's "Power Archiver 2000" which is said to be almost identical to WinZip. It is available absolutely FREE, and according to the description does everything WinZip does.

You can download it at [<http://www.pcnineoneone.com/pokpok/arcpok.html>] and click on Productivity Utilities, (which doesn't look like hypertext). You should find it on the resulting list. I haven't had time to try it yet, but you certainly can.

That's it for this month. Meet me here again next month if your editor permits. This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of products, no matter how enthused I might sound. Bob (The Cheapskate) Click [dealsguy@mindspring.com]. Visit my Web site at [<http://www.dealsguy.com>] for past columns. Also, I keep adding interesting articles (taken from user group newsletters) to my "Articles of Interest" page for viewing or downloading.

FDD Mystery Solved

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Plustek FBIVP scanner then daisy chained to my HP4L laser printer. Each device worked perfectly and worked better than when I tried an LPT2: card for the scanner or printer. There were no apparent IRQ conflicts and everything looked standard. The BIOS also was set normally for all ports. Software drivers all seemed OK and ADD/REMOVE devices and device drivers made no difference.

Another trip to Pak Computers <nice people> produced the same result. The Tech suggested I try alternate mice (I am using a MS Intelli-mouse) and an alternate keyboard. Here we go again. Replacement keyboard (no change) replacement mice , tied three different brands (no change). THEN I eliminated the scanner and BINGO the problem was immediately solved. Since I only use the scanner once or month or so I can live with it unplugged. I can use the scanner (w/o using the FDD) then re-boot. Problem solved by isolating each element of the hardware.

FDD Addendum

by Art McRowe, ACPCUG
As our president, Frank Ramsey, was discussing last meeting, floppies can be frustrating and frightening. My brand new Athlon on a quality Asus motherboard with "big" (for me) 44Gb IBM hard drive was worthless because it couldn't read a floppy. The Win98se emergency disk from the machine I was transferring from was not a "valid bootable disk" on startup. Win98se emergency disks from two other machines were not readable, either! (These disks all worked on the machines on which they were produced, but they didn't necessarily work on each other!)

I had bought my cheap FDD (Samsung) from Belka at a computer show. No problem, they nicely replaced it. New FDD, still no boot! Disk 1, Disk 2. Bingo, Disk 3! Now I've loaded Win98se on it and made a new emergency disk. This machine has booted successfully several times from its own disk. Disks 1 and 2 still never. And Disk 3 is problematic.

Moral of this story: you can't trust a floppy from machine to machine. Whatever happened to "sneaker net"? In truth, all four machines will read data files from one another, but they don't always boot from one another's emergency disk. **Make your own and test rou-**

Did you get the AnnaK worm yet?

Here's a quick and easy way to trick the worm

by Rod Ream, Pasadena IBM Users Group

Visual Basic Scripts (VBS) are popular with virus writers. That's because they're easy to create and will launch if sent as an e-mail attachment. And the recipient double-clicks on them. But there's an easy, free way for you to defeat Visual Basic Script viruses.

Every file type has a default action that takes place when we double click on a file. The default action for double clicking on a VBS (Visual Basic Script) file type is to open and execute the script file. That means double clicking on the attachment runs or launches the script. This default action is the mechanism that can result in system infection if a user unknowingly launches an infected attachment received in an email message.

You can easily change this action and stop the accidental launch and execution of a VBS file by making it do something else when double-clicked on.

Some users have disabled or removed the capability of the system to run a VBS file out of fear of potential viral exposure. However, there's a relatively easy fix for this that will still permit a web page or other application to run a VB script when such function is actually needed, but will block the double click action. The fix is to change the default action to Edit, which causes the file to open in Notepad rather than execute.

Here's the Step-by-Step

In Windows Explorer (not Internet Explorer), open Folder Options under the View pull-down menu (moved to Tools in Windows Me). Select the "File Types" tab and scroll to VBScript Encoded File. Click on the "Edit" button ("Advanced" in Windows Me).

What happens is another window will open showing the possible file actions, with the default action indicated in boldface type. The default action is likely "Open." Highlight instead the word "Edit" and click on the "Set Default" button. "Edit" should now appear in bold face.

In some older systems the Edit function may not be listed. In such instances, click the NEW button and enter "Edit" in the action field and "NOTEPAD.EXE" in the application field. When "Edit" has been added make it the default action as shown above.

While in the file type screen, also make sure the boxes for "always show extension" and enable quick view" are also checked. Click "OK" to close the open windows.

Windows usually has several example VBS files on the system, in a folder named "sample." Find one of them and double click on it. If the action caused Notepad to open and display the content of the file, you've done it correctly and are now safe from an accidental VBS infection.

Rod Ream is senior tech support for the Pasadena IBM Users Group and president of PC Consulting, 626/280-6850 RodReam@techie.com. This article is brought to you by the Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an International organization to which this user group belongs.



Those ZIP & PDF files

By Bob Elgines

Trouble with some of those attachments and downloads? What do I do with those *.zip (a data compressed file) and *.pdf (Portable Document Format compressed file) files?

One of the most important things we need first is a program to unzip compressed files labeled as Zip files. There are several programs out there such as Aladdin, Winzip, etc. Winzip is the easiest and most widely used and a trial version can be downloaded free from the Internet: www.winzip.com

After downloading Winzip (winzip80.exe is latest version) save it to a folder such as "My Downloads" or what ever folder you want, so you can find it. If

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you have an older version remove it first by going to START/SETTINGS/CONTROL PANEL, then double click on ADD/REMOVE PROGRAMS. See if Winzip is on the list, if Winzip is there, then click on it to highlight, then click on the Remove button to uninstall it.

Now you are ready to install Winzip by finding your file using Windows Explorer (file management tool) and doing a double click on your downloaded file (winzip80.exe), or go to START/RUN, type in C:\My Downloads\winzip80.exe and click on OK. The program called WINZIP will install itself and put icons on the Start Up menu, the Desk Top and in the Program listing. (I delete the one on the Desk Top with a right click and selecting Delete). Now we are ready to unzip those compressed files received from email, web, etc.

To unzip a file is very easy, just select your file and do a double click, Winzip will automatically come up showing you what is in the zip file. Go to the top right and click on EXTRACT! This will bring up the menu that allows you to select the folder you wish to extract and save the file(s). After you have the folder selected click on the EXTRACT button. That's all there is. Now you can go to your folder and work your extracted or unzipped file(s).

If your unzipped files are picture files and you double click on them they will come up in Windows Paint (*.bmp) or Internet Explorer (*.jpg, *.gif, etc), unless you have a photo program. If the files are text files you will see them in Notepad or WordPad, or you can view them in your word processor. If they are PDF (Portable Document Format) files then we need a special program called Acrobat Reader by Adobe.

To get your free Acrobat Reader, go to the Adobe web site at: www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html

Save your file (ar40eng.exe) in your special folder such as "My Downloads". Before installing this program be sure you remove the old version (this is version 4) just like we did for Winzip. Now go to your special folder and locate the acrobat file and double click to install it, or go to START/RUN and enter C:\My Downloads\ar40eng.exe, then click on OK. Restart windows! **Ed. Note: Latest version is now 5.0.**

Once this is installed and Windows is back up, you can double click on any PDF file and the Acrobat Reader will come up automatically.

I hope this helps people to read those email attachments and program manuals!

Note: Bob Elgines is Editor for the Colorado River Computer Club user group located in Lake Havasu City, Arizona. If this article is used please keep

it in context, give proper credit, and notify him by email: elginesz@redrivernet.com This article is brought to you by the Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an International organization to which this user group belongs

Special Notice

June 4th meeting at Stark
Tech Auditorium with
Microsoft Presentations

(This is place of our usual meeting place at Taylor Memorial Library for the month of June)

Treasurer's Report

ACPCUG Bank Balances 4/24/01

Checking:	\$1,367.95
Savings:	\$5,118.65

Humor from the Net

Re: Upgrading Programs:

Dear Tech Support:

Last year I upgraded from Boyfriend 5.0 to Husband 1.0 and noticed that the new program began making unexpected changes to the accounting modules, limiting access to flower and jewelry applications that had operated flawlessly under Boyfriend 5.0.

In addition, Husband 1.0 uninstalled many other valuable programs, such as Romance 9.9 but installed undesirable programs such as NFL 5.0 and NBA 3.0. Conversation 8.0 no longer runs and HouseCleaning 2.6 simply crashes the system. I've tried running Nagging 5.3 to fix these problems, but to no avail. Signed, (Desperate)

Dear Desperate,

Keep in mind, Boyfriend 5.0 is an entertainment package, while Husband 1.0 is an operating system. Try to enter the command: C:/ I THOUGHT YOU LOVED ME and install Tears 6.2. Husband 1.0 should then automatically run the applications: Guilty 3.0 and Flowers 7.0. But remember, overuse can cause Husband 1.0 to default to GrumpySilence 2.5, Happyhour 7.0 or Beer 6.1. Beer 6.1 is a very bad program that will create "Snoring Loudly" wave files.

DO NOT install MotherInLaw 1.0 or reinstall another Boyfriend program. These are not supported applications and will crash Husband 1.0. In summary, Husband 1.0 is a great program, but it does have limited memory and cannot learn new applications quickly. Consider buying additional software to improve performance. I personally recommend HotFood 3.0 and Lingerie 5.3. Signed, (Tech Support)

Akron-Canton PC Users Group
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**Next Meeting - June 4th,
 Stark Tech Auditorium,
 North Canton, OH**

First Class Mail

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Mailing Label Address Goes Here

*Published by: Akron-Canton PC Users Group
 Box 2151, Akron, Oh 44309-2151
www.acpcug.org*

* Membership - 1st year \$25, renewals \$20 per year
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Note: Special Meeting Venue Change Due to Scheduling Conflict
June 4, 2001 Meeting,
 Stark Technical College, North Canton
 Main Auditorium
 Use Visitor's Parking Lot

Microsoft is coming to Stark Tech on Monday, June 4th—Change of Venue!!

Yes we're meeting next at Stark Tech in June! We're not able to be at Taylor Memorial Library in June because of a scheduling problem. The Stow-Monroe Falls library was too small, so we are lucky to be back at Stark Tech for Microsoft! See you there!

Club Officers			
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Future Events	
Sun., June 17th, 2001	Peter Trapp Computer Show at Tadmor Temple off Arlington Road, Akron, OH