

# ACPCUG Newsletter

**Stark Tech—  
Special**

**February 3rd,  
2003**

**Note Change In  
Meeting Place for  
February!**

## ***Inside:***

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**February Program:  
*Photo Elements 2.0***

**by Rick Lubinski**

***Office XP Productivity***

**by Murray Davis**

***Q&A by membership!***

**February 2003**

**Akron-Canton PC Users Group**

**From The DealsGuy for  
Feb. 2003, by Bob  
Click, Greater Orlando  
Computer Users Group**

**Greetings Folks, Ya'll Soon  
Have A Virus, If Ya Follow In-  
structions**

Did you receive one of those e-Cards? I did, and obviously from a name I knew, but when I found I had to download something to view it, I chose to delete it because I didn't want to be bothered. Little did I know that I did myself a favor. I read in Ed Foster's Gripe Line column (InfoWorld) about the e-Card, which is, in reality, a virus that goes into your address book and sends itself out to your friends. According to Ed's column though, antivirus companies didn't treat it as a virus at first because you had to read the EULA (End User License Agreement), then a second EULA to install it and actually get the virus. In other words, the virus would be on your machine with "your" permission if you agreed to the EULA, so it was your own problem. The EULA actually states that it will use your Outlook

address book to send the "eCard" to your friends. He writes that the AV companies now have information posted about it and admit that it is a virus in reality. What's next! Read those EULAs before simply agreeing just so you can do a quick installation.

By the way, the camera I bought at Comdex stopped working when I was trying to install the downloader and I am trying to get an exchange. It won't even stay on now. Since I didn't have a memory board in it yet, I lost all the pictures I took in LV. I hope things go better when I get my replacement. Trying to get a replacement hasn't been easy. I learn everything the hard way.

### **Still Good**

The Viralock deal is good until Feb. 28. I noticed they sent out a special to user groups, but my deal is better. However, I just heard from one person who had big problems and he said it took two days, with the help of Earthlink Tech support, to get rid of Viralock and get his machine back to normal, so be aware. I hope I hear from someone who had better luck. [ <http://www.viralock.com/dealsguy> ]. The SpamNet is a beta right now so it is on-going for the time being. Download at [ <http://www.cloudmark.com> ].

### **Tax Time**

I forgot to remind everyone last month about where to obtain free software to do your income tax. If you want to do your own taxes free, go to [ <http://www.2ndstorysoftware.com> ] and download their free standard version of Tax Act. Many use Tax Act and say it works well, but if you want, they have an upgraded version that you pay for. In fact, last year, my own taxman did my taxes with the professional version of Tax Act. I think I'll try doing them myself this year as they are less complicated now. If my next column asks for somebody to bail me out, you'll know I made a mistake, somehow. Hmmmm---can you take your laptop to prison, and get your e-mail there? From the DealsGuy Incorporated, er I mean incarcerated---Hmmm.

### **Can't Afford Acrobat?**

I realize there have been ways published lately to make up a PDF file free, but there is another solution at low cost. Here is the description sent to me:

"Jaws PDF Creator provides an affordable and reliable means of creating PDF documents and it now generates PDF 1.4 files as its standard. Ideal for corporations, graphic artists, print publishers, Web publishers and government organizations. Jaws PDF Creator is widely used in corporate and other

markets, and as the core technology for Internet printing services. Jaws PDF Creator works in two modes. It installs as a printer in the Windows or Macintosh Printing System allowing you to print to a PDF file directly from any application, or it appears as an icon on the desktop enabling drag-and-drop conversion of PostScript, or EPS files, directly to PDF. Jaws PDF Editor enables you to view, edit and save PDF files on computers using Windows NT, Windows 2000 and Windows XP.

"Another product, Jaws PDF Editor, has many viewing and navigation features. You can navigate via bookmarks, the page list, thumbnails, or links. Reviewer/mark up tools include comments, highlight, strikethrough, and underline, each with an associated pop-up comment window to add additional information. Search for words or phrases in a PDF. Select text with the text and paragraph-select tools and copy into other applications. Auto-rotate while printing so files containing both portrait and landscape pages print in the correct orientation. Other page manipulation tools include insert, delete, reorder, and extract pages. Jaws PDF Editor can be a companion application to Jaws PDF Creator, or can be used as a standalone application."

Until February 15, 2003 (perhaps longer), Jaws PDF Creator V2.11 can be purchased at a 75% discount for just \$25.00 (US funds) by calling 1-800-927-9921 or going to [ <http://www.insight.com/jaws> ]. It is a download (4.8 meg). V2.11 is not the latest version, V3.0 of Jaws PDF Creator is now out and would be available at an additional \$30.00. However the V2.11 does almost as much.

Jaws PDF Editor (the companion software) is also available for just \$25.00 (1/3 off the list price) (3.9 meg download). They are available separately because not everyone needs both products. For more description, visit [ <http://www.jawspdf.com> ]. You can even sign up for the free on-line WebX tutorials there. They say the advantage of the Jaws product over free ones is the many features and the quality of the PDF. You can also get \$100 off any Jaws PDF server. So far, I have not had the time to try this product. Many of us received it at Comdex.

### **Sort Of A Swiss Army Knife For Your Computer**

A few columns ago I wrote about Power Desk for your file management needs because several readers recommended it. Paul Witheridge from Sarnia PC UG in Sarnia, Ontario, tells me he much prefers a file management program called Total Commander, formerly Windows Commander. He feels it is superior to them all, so you might want to take a look, although it is shareware, not freeware. It is a Swiss company (hence Paul's Swiss army

knife comment) and their ordering procedure is a bit confusing, but I think you'll figure it out. No cost to give it a try and see what you think.

Total Commander, version 5.5, and the features are listed below:

- \* Two file windows side by side
- \* Multiple language support
- \* Enhanced search function
- \* Compare files / synchronize directories
- \* Quick View panel with bitmap display
- \* ZIP, ARJ, LZH, RAR, UC2, TAR, GZ, CAB, ACE archive handling + plugins
- \* Built-in FTP client with FXP (server to server) and HTTP proxy support
- \* Parallel port link, multi-rename tool
- \* New: WinXP support, background transfer manager, TAR+GZ packer
- \* And many more!

If you like it after your trial, the price is \$28.00 American and they take your CC. You'll find the download at [<http://www.ghisler.com>]. I didn't try it, but I would like something better than Windows Explorer. I checked into a deal, but they declined. I'm passing this one on because some others also say it's a good product.

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 [[Bobclick@mindspring.com](mailto:Bobclick@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.

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## **- Disk Investigator T-**

**By Robert A Lewis, member of The Dayton Microcomputer Association, Inc. Dayton, OH**

Here's a new utility that members might find useful. Disk Investigator is freeware. Download at

<http://www.theabsolute.net/sware/dskinv.html>

**Bob Lewis**

Disk Investigator T

Latest version: v1.2

**FREEWARE** - (Only 0.5 Mb)

- Discover all that is hidden on your hard disk -

- (for Win95, Win98, WinME, WinNT, Win2000, WinXP) -

What is Disk Investigator? - Disk Investigator helps you to discover all that is hidden on your computer hard disk. It can also help you to recover lost data.

Display the true drive contents by bypassing the operating system and directly reading the raw drive sectors. View and search raw directories, files, clusters, and system sectors. Verify the effectiveness of file and disk wiping programs.

Undelete previously deleted files. <http://www.theabsolute.net/sware/clndisk.html>

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## **Software Download Sources**

**By Ira Wilsker [ira@apcug.org](mailto:ira@apcug.org)**

In some of my recent columns, I wrote about several software products that were available for free download from their authors' websites. Several loyal readers have asked for information on websites where they can view many titles, and download them from a single source. This column is in response to those requests.

DOWNLOAD.COM – Claiming to be one of the largest sources on the Internet for downloadable software, download.com is a subsidiary of CNet. While CNet originally started as a 30-minute cable TV show, it has now developed into an Internet powerhouse with much of its growth due to "dot.com" acquisitions. Download.com is an assimilation of several other former premier download resources into a single, easy to navigate super-site. With several hundred thousand titles available for Windows, Mac, Linux, Palm, PocketPC, cell phones, and other platforms, download.com may have earned its laurels. At the top-right of the page is a search box; a topic or title can be entered in the box, and the pull-down menu gives the choice of searching in all downloads, Windows only, all of CNet (including reviews, news, price comparisons, etc.), or searching the entire web. If a particular title is unknown to the user, a simpler and classical menu interface is available.

The major menu topics are MP3 and Audio, Internet, Games, Business, Mobile (Palm, PocketPC, cell phone), Multimedia and Design, Web Developing, Software Developing, Utilities and Drivers, and Home and Desktop. Each of the menu headings when opened reveals a comprehensive lower directory of detailed topics, with several levels often appearing below the main topic. A little browsing practice of the menus will reveal a generous cornucopia of choices, sometime numbering in the thousands. Once a software topic is found, and multiple titles are displayed, simply clicking on the column headers "Name", "Date", "User Rating", or "Downloads" can sort alphabetically, by date, by user ranking, or by download volume, respectively. A quick review of just the top few "most popular" downloads will indicate that for some software titles, literally millions of copies of individual titles have been downloaded from download.com. For those who browse this site frequently, a click on the "New Releases" heading on the main page will show the latest additions to the site. On the date that I am typing this, 1105 new titles have been added so far today. As another example of the dependency that many place on this site, the top download of a "new program today" (the evening that I am typing this), is already over 162,000 downloads, and one file "new this week" has had almost one-half million downloads from download.com in the past seven days. As an additional online tool to help narrow the surfers' choices, many of the screens also allow the user to sort by operating systems, license terms (free to use, trial versions, commercial), file size, and category can be selected.

Other headings on download.com can also be used to narrow searches. These headings on the main page include "IS/IT"; "Software Developer" for programmers; "Web Developer" for web page authors; "Business"; "Personal

Tech" which includes audio and video utilities, internet utilities, and home and desktop utilities; "Mobile" includes Palm, PocketPC, WindowsCE, Psion, EPOC, and cell phone software; and a huge "Games" section. As a source of downloads, download.com is an excellent resource.

**TUCOWS** - "The Ultimate Collection of Winsock Software" originally started as a source of Internet related utilities, but has now grown into a massive network of local websites offering an extensive collection of software for a variety of platforms. Containing over 30,000 updated titles, TUCOWS has become one of my "personal favorite" resources. With software available for Windows, Macintosh, Linux, BeOS, Windows 3.1 (still available!), PDAs, and a variety of other platforms and operating systems, TUCOWS is a geek's paradise. In order to make downloads faster, and complying with the "netiquette" that says that downloads should be done close to home, TUCOWS has hundreds of local mirror sites around the world that are fre-

quently updated with the latest in titles. A listing of all current TUCOWS mirrors is online at [www.tucows.com](http://www.tucows.com), at the "Choose Your Mirror" link near the center of the page. In Texas alone, there are over a dozen local sites offering the TUCOWS service, with EXP offering the service locally in south-east Texas at [tucows.exp.net](http://tucows.exp.net).

Connecting to a local TUCOWS server shows a tabular heading of "Business", "Games", "Home and Education", "Internet", "Multimedia", "Systems and Utilities", and "Themes". Also on the main page is a weekly list of the top 100 downloads, indicating the popularity of specific titles. The number one downloaded title, which was the topic of a recent column here, is the excellent Irfan View software, which I personally use on a frequent basis. For those who desire to keep up with the latest in available software, TUCOWS offers a free daily email describing the newest software. By clicking on a tab at the top of the main page, another menu will appear showing sub-topics. The "Internet" tab, for example, opens a menu with an even dozen categories with easy-to-understand topics. It is here, for example, that Internet related software from spam killers to instant messaging services could be found.

There are many other fine resources available to locate and download available software. One warning is to beware of some sources, because it has been documented that some sites, as well as several of the file sharing sites, can be sources of viruses, worms, and Trojans embedded in downloaded software. While not perfect, reliable sources such as [download.com](http://download.com) and TUCOWS are generally safe places to find software.

Experimenting with and using downloaded, often free, software can be a significant enhancement to your computing experience.

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## **Outrageous Help Desk Stories**

### **From the Help Desk of a company that would rather stay anonymous**

#### ***Printer problems***

My favorite story comes from my past when working in a tech support organization for a computer company. At the time of this story, the company had released some buggy spooler software in their product, which was a database product.

We were quite used to frantic customers calling after trying to run an end-of-month job to complain that nothing is coming out of the printer. The typical fix was to dial-in to their computer, go into a debugger and through a laborious process unclog the confused spooler software so the job would print. We would then admonish the customer to install the latest patches.

In this particular instance, the customer called at the end of the day, frantic and upset. A couple of us sat around a terminal and modem and dialed into the system. After pawing through the entrails of the machine for a while, the tech next to me talked to the customer on the speakerphone.

tech: "would you mind going over to the printer?"

customer: "OK, I'm there."

tech: "Do you see a white, square button labeled, 'On Line?'"

customer: "Yes, I see it."

tech: "Is it illuminated?"

customer: "No."

tech: "Please press it once."

customer: "OK, I did that...Wow! The most amazing thing just happened: the report is spewing out of the printer. Good job! Thanks a lot!"

And this, of course, is why most companies don't use local support. They know it is impossible to kill someone over the telephone.

#### ***Upside Down Envelopes***

A long-time user complained that the network printer had begun print-

ing envelopes upside-down. I told her the printer could not be printing them upside down, but the envelopes had to have been inserted backward. She insisted that she had been putting envelopes into that printer in exactly the same way for over a year and she knew it had always worked that way before. My solution was to open the printer, take out the toner cartridge, shake it up a bit, turn the envelopes around, reinsert the cartridge, and have her try again. Voila! "See," she said, "I KNEW I had loaded the envelopes right! It really was something wrong with the printer!"

### ***It's Magic!***

***This incident occurred at a previous employer. It was not an outrageous complaint, but was more an example of how incompetent users can be. A user came to me complaining that she could not get any of her documents to print. I went through the normal checks to make sure everything was functioning properly, which it was. I then determined that she had not logged on properly to the Novell network so her documents were not getting to the networked printer.***

Without her knowledge, I got her logged on, but before I printed anything, I thought I would have some fun with her. I asked her if she was familiar with the terms bits and bytes, and she said she was. I told her that her computer sends bytes of information through the network to the printer to be printed.

But for some reason, there were a large number of bytes clogging the line to the printer. We then went over to the printer where I unplugged the network connection. I told her we had to let the bytes "escape" out of the line so it would be clear to print again. I plugged it back in, went to her machine and printed a document. She was amazed!

After that, whenever she had a problem, she asked me to come "Clean the lines again."

### ***Black and White in Color***

Received a call from a new user wanting to know why her documents were not printing in color. I told her that the printer is a black and white laser printer She said well the program said what you see is what you get. I told her again that the printer is only prints in black and white. She continued to blame the software and her computer and wanted someone to come take a look at it.

### ***Click the Power Switch***

I had a guy who was sitting in the building with all the power off calling me and screaming that he could not print his Excel spreadsheet.

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## ACPCUG Members Notice

The format of this newsletter is in response to numerous members who expressly requested on page across reading as would be appropriate for reading down line by line on the computer. In other words, the ACPCUG is now using an electronic newsletter. Many feel we should read it electronically and spare the forest! I agree. Therefore, I made the fonts a little bigger for screen-reading. I feel Verdanna is a very readable font for screen reading (it was developed for Microsoft for that purpose).

I am trying to balance members wishes. Some want to print out the newsletter and deplored the use of dark headlines and background colors. OK, no background colors—yet! Print colors might be judiciously used in the future! *And there will be more pictures of meetings printed, in color!* As usual this an appeal to members to communicate to me and all at the meetings to optimize this newsletter to your needs!

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**Peter Trapp Show** on Sunday, February 16th, Tadmor Temple, Arlington Road Exit I-77, right on Jarvis, follow signs!

**Reminder, February (& March) meetings at Stark Tech!**

**Looking forward to seeing everyone there!**