

**Abort,
Retry,
Ignore....**

Founded 1984 **ARI** is the
Official Newsletter of
Computers Are Easy User Group

April 2013
Volume XXX Issue 4

Confirmed
meeting
dates for
2013
Room A

April 13
2nd Saturday

May 25
4th Saturday

June 22, 2013
4th Saturday
**Save the date
for our
annual picnic**

**Check
www.caeug.net
for confirmed
meeting dates**

MEETING
PLACE
will be the
Glenside Public
Library
** **
*** **

Visitors
Welcome
**HOPE TO SEE
YOU THERE!!**



Our April 13, 2013 presenter

Michael Goldberg will present
Oracle VM Virtual Box on a 2 year old desktop computer.
This is a continuation of Feb 23 presentation.
Mike will demo Win8, Vista, XP, Linuxmint 13, and Peppermint 3

Speccky: Another Useful Utility

By Phil Sorrentino, Member, Sarasota PCUG, Florida
February issue, The Monitor
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Way back in November 2009, in the heydays of XP, shortly after the release of Windows 7, I started reviewing useful utilities. Along the way I reviewed some very useful utilities such as Stickies, MP3Tag, CKRename, and UltraFileSearch. Just as a matter of review, Utilities are usually small programs that are intended to do a specific task or a small range of tasks, they are small software application. Today, after the release of the Apple iPad and in the current Tablet environment, we would call these Utilities "Apps".

These Utilities (or Apps) are usually designed to help manage the computer hardware, Operating System (OS), or assist a particular software application. Just as a matter of history, sometimes a utility becomes so popular that the functionality of the utility is included in newer versions of the OS. The functionality of one long-time popular utility, Snagit, which allows a user to capture a piece of the display into a graphics file, is now included in Windows as the Snipping Tool. The functionality in Windows may not be as complete as the commercial version of Snagit, but it is a part of Windows, which means it is

Con't pg 2

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integrated into the OS, and therefore available at no additional cost.

Useful Utilities can be found in a variety of places such as computer stores (internet or brick & mortar), Google searches, and The Computer Buffet, edited by our own Monitor editor, Herb Goldstein. The Computer Buffet is a treasure trove of useful software, some of which can be considered Utilities, like Speccy, and some of which are full-blown application, like Open Office. Speccy was originally discussed in a Monitor article in the December 2012 issue. Speccy was developed by Piriform, the same company that brings us Ccleaner and Recuva, two other useful utilities that many SPCUG members have used. You can download Speccy at www.piriform.com/speccy. When you download it, be sure to uncheck the boxes for other things like the Google Toolbar, unless you want them to come along with the Speccy download.

Speccy is a Utility used to provide information about your computer hardware and Operating System. Speccy is very similar to Belarc, a Utility that is fairly well known and often used at the Refurbishing Facility. Belarc goes a little further and additionally provides information about the software and the software versions, installed on the computer. Just remember “I have not come to bury Belarc, I have come to praise Speccy”. There is probably more information provided by Belarc, but what I like about Speccy is the visual organization and presentation. The initial results are presented in a two window-pane format, much like Windows Explorer. Highlight an item in the left pane and you get detailed results in the right pane. The left pane includes the Summary and all the major computer subsystems; Operating System, CPU, RAM, Motherboard, Graphics, Hard drives, Optical drives, Audio, Peripherals, and Network. The Summary that is shown on the right pane after the program completes its initial analysis phase has the answers to many of the basic questions regarding this specific computer. Immediately you know the Operating System name and the Service Pack (if applicable), and whether it is a 32 or 64 bit OS, and the type of computer CPU. Other basics in the Summary are the amount of RAM, the size of the Hard drive, along with the drive connection type, and the Optical drive and its connection type. From the main menu you can Print any of the results or you can choose “Save as a Text file” and save the results for future review.

Details of the major subsystems, shown on the left, can be obtained by selecting the appropriate subsystem. Click on any of the major subsystems, and the details will be shown in the right pane. The details are very extensive, probably much more than the average computer user needs to know, but may be useful to someone trying to help solve a problem. Some of the detailed information provided by these subsystems is as follows:

The **Operating System subsystem** shows the OS type (Windows 7, XP), 32 or 64 bit OS, the serial number, the Windows Update schedule, the Antivirus software installed and the age of its Virus Signature Database.

The **CPU subsystem** indicates the number of Cores (today most modern CPUs are multi-core), the Bus speed, the Cache configuration, and the Average Temperature the CPU has been experiencing (if this is approaching 60 degrees C you may be in for some trouble, although the Critical Temperature depends on the specific CPU).

The **RAM subsystem** shows the amount of RAM installed as well as the number of memory slots and the number of free memory slots (nice to know if you are thinking of increasing your memory).

The **Motherboard subsystem** shows the motherboard manufacturer, the chipset (CPU and glue chips) vendor, and the BIOS brand and version number (things that you probably will never need to know).

The **Graphics subsystem** provides information about your Monitor such as the Resolution, and the Graphics chipset (again probably never needed by the average user).

The **Hard Drives subsystem** shows the Drive size, the File System type (FAT or NTFS), and the Partition information (nice to know if you think you will ever re-partition the drive).

The **Optical Drive subsystem** indicates the Media type (CD or DVD), and whether or not you can write to the drive (Writer or Read-only).

The **Audio subsystem** just shows the Sound Card and the Playback Device (usually speakers).

The **Peripherals subsystem** indicates the type of keyboard and mouse, the Printers that are currently in use, and any external disk drives or USB memory devices attached.

The **Network subsystem** provides all the IP addresses, DHCP status (enabled or not), the Computer Name and Workgroup (if it belongs to one), the Wi-Fi SSID (network name) and channel number (good to know if you are experiencing slow operation caused by interference on the network). Surprisingly, I didn't find the MAC (or physical) address of the communications adapters.

As you can see, Speccy provides a lot of information and is definitely a very useful utility. Download it and pin it to the task bar so it will be available and easily accessible when you need it. By the way, a printed version of the results might be nice to have for reference if the computer is down for any reason.

Interesting Internet Finds

Steve Costello, President/Editor
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January 2013 issue, Boca Bits
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In the course of going through the more than 200 news feeds in my Google Reader, I often run across things that I think might be of interest to other user group members. The following are some items I found interesting during the months of November and December 2012.

(Long URLs shortened with the Google URL shortener <http://goo.gl/>)

Shockwave keeps crashing. What can I do to fix it?
<http://goo.gl/8ZVzs>

I'm drowning in spam. What can I do?
<http://goo.gl/a133b>

How to back up your Samsung Android phone to PC
<http://goo.gl/aYaVX>

The Assumptions You Make About Your Slow PC (and Why They're Probably Wrong)

<http://goo.gl/Th9aw>

HTG Explains: What's the Difference Between CC and BCC When Sending an Email?

<http://goo.gl/2nFTx>

15 WordPress User Errors That Make You Look Silly [Infographic]

<http://goo.gl/mFI8i>

3 changes you should make in the Options dialog box of PowerPoint

<http://goo.gl/Z5Wb3>

HTG Explains: What You Can (and Can't) Do on the Desktop in Windows RT

<http://goo.gl/Dbf3o>

Rid Your PC Of Outdated Bookmarks, Duplicate Files, Broken Shortcuts & Empty Folders
[Windows]

<http://goo.gl/BNNUG>

How To Connect a USB Keyboard To Your Android Phone

<http://goo.gl/yltyS>

OTT Explains – Is It Better to Log Into Websites using Facebook, Google or Twitter Accounts?

<http://goo.gl/SfB1T>

How can I read an epub formatted book on a Kindle?

<http://goo.gl/uGUef>

eBooks, Remote Control & Other Creative Uses For Dropbox That You Haven't Thought Of

<http://goo.gl/BqKq5>

Why can't I send mail from my hotel room?

<http://goo.gl/1jLZs>

Websites to Broaden Your Computer Horizons

Jim Fromm, Editor, MOAA Computer User Group, HI

January 2013 issue, The TUG

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Because a number of you (I mean us) fall in the senior age group, and because some of you (I mean us) may be thought to lead a sheltered life, I thought it was time to offer to broaden your computer horizons.

So, I'm providing you with a laundry list of websites that you can visit and decide yourself if you want to bookmark them. It's never a disadvantage to be informed of what is happening in the world. News, opinions, human interest, goofy and technical sites are included.

There are innumerable websites on the internet covering every topic imaginable. Some are toxic to the sensibilities. Some are dedicated to historic events. Many are opinion sites that cover all topics from art, to comedy, to topical news, anything you can think of, you can find on the internet. All have their own interesting

element.

I must admit, I have become addicted to visiting numerous sites every evening. I can't remember the last time I watched TV after 7 PM. I'm usually at the computer after dinner surfing through a favorite list of blogs, news and feel good sites. It's my way of taking a break from the dismal news events of the day but still keeping current.

At many of the blogs you can read the headline without clicking on through to a link. If the topic does not interest you, scroll down to the next entry. With the talking heads on TV you have to suffer through the narrative and the frequent commercials or press the mute button. At a blog you don't have that problem.

Many of the opinion sites report news items and then give you opinions from one, or more, contributors, whereas the TV news casts spend mere seconds on a topic before breaking for commercial and oftentimes have a one-sided slant to the item.

The really fun part of these is the comments section. Which, I must warn you, can get pretty salty, so be cautious. If profanity offends you, be especially careful. F-bombs are strewn throughout some of the comments. A few blog hosts prohibit foul language and you'll learn which ones if you check out the listings.

I've categorized them so you can see the genre and pass on those that you know won't interest you.

Opinions -- Far right; Left and Far left.

www.instapundit.com

ww.politico.com

www.slate.com

www.rightwingnews.com

www.maggiesfarm.anotherdotcom.com

www.huffingtonpost.com

www.twitchy.com — a compilation of tweets, and responses to them, from around the world.

Fun stuff— Animals and satire

www.cuteoverload.com

www.rumfordmeteor.com

www.flixxy.com

www.top20sites.com/

Tech stuff— Computers mostly

www.docmercury.com

www.pcworld.com

www.cnet.com

Arts and Music

www.classical.net

www.classical.com

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

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

Novels and manuscript

<http://tinyurl.com/c4x5vpm> — Cincinnati Library list of books

<http://manuscriptsonline.wordpress.com/> (Research site)

<http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/> - British Library

A few of the sites listed require registration but no membership fee unless you sign up for their 'premium' offerings. Quite a bit of the content is free to browse.

As Lou (Torraca) reminds us, be careful on the WWW while educating yourself.

Aloha,

Jim



Lamp Post 146

by John Spizzirri

April 2013

The Associated Press (AP **(1)**) has a 'stylebook'. According to the AP web site it is, "The AP Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law is the essential style manual for all writers, editors, students and public relations specialists." That means that all writers and editors that submit material to the AP for publication must comply with the manual. The manual details format and word use in submitted material. The AP is dropping 'illegal immigrant' and 'undocumented immigrants' from stylebook **(2)**. I think that this is a good idea. I do not think any human being is 'illegal'. The dropped terms lump people with no relationship to one another together. For instance, 'illegal immigrant' puts people that crossed the Canadian border or the Mexican border, people that were brought here by their parents as children, and the three 9/11 high jackers that overstayed their visas. People brought here by their parents had no intent to violate the law. The high jackers were criminals intent on violating many laws. The first group may or may not be intent on just getting here. This diverse group, I identified, is by no means complete. How can one or two terms identify such a diverse group. The terminology change will shape public opinion by identifying people on a more realistic basis. People in this country unlawfully may be identified using the term 'unauthorized migrant' or some other terminology. Department of Homeland Security (DHS **(3)**) Secretary Janet Napolitano told reporters that she didn't "really get caught up in the vocabulary wars". Hopefully, the AP style change will avoid the 'vocabulary war'.

1) <http://www.ap.org/>

2) <http://sn.im/26s9ymn>

3) <http://www.dhs.gov/>

According to News Track India **(1)**, Janet Napolitano **(2)**, head of the US Department of Homeland Security is looking for 'young, college-age hackers' to help counter cyber threats. She calls this 'hackers for good'. The Christian Science Monitor (CSM **(3)**) reported that Napolitano had "over 3,000 kids compete for 60 billets". CSM did not ask why DHS would provide lodging for 60 kids. In the article Napolitano stated that DHS did a 'workforce analysis' to find out what cyber skills it needed. The threat of cyber warfare has been reported by many news organizations and concerned Congress-critters for at least five years and the DHS just did a study??? DHS celebrated their tenth anniversary in March. I would have hoped that they would have had more competence by now. Napolitano said that DHS needs about 600 hackers for "an alarming number of daily incursions into the nation's electrical grid and financial networks". It seems strange to me that the FBI supplies money and phony bombs to 'terrorists' and then arrests them, but 'daily incursions' by persons unknown are only reported in the CSM and News Track India. Napolitano admitted that many of these 'daily incursions' are done by individuals and are not state sponsored. Why have they not found anyone? The job is not easy but it is also not impossible. Once a perpetrator has been identified, there is no need for formalities like arrest or trial since the President can just order an execution like he did with Anwar al-Awlaki and his son by drone **(4)**. Anwar al-Awlaki, a New Mexico native, was put on the CIA hit list in April of 2010 and executed in September 2010. Abdulrahman al-Awlaki, his 16 year old son, a Colorado native, was executed in October 2010. It seems to me that when government officials admit hopeless incapacity, they

should be fired.

- 1) <http://sn.im/26s9yqc>
- 2) <http://www.dhs.gov/secretary-janet-napolitano>
- 3) <http://sn.im/26s9ysf>
- 4) <http://sn.im/26s9yu9>

On April 6th, WGN meteorologist Tom Skilling hosted the 33rd Annual Tornado and Severe Weather Seminar (1) at Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory (Fermilab (2)). This year there was a new addition to the regular cast. Dr. Don Wueblles, Professor of Atmospheric Science at the University of Illinois, talked about his work on the National Climate Assessment and Development Advisory Committee (NCADAC (3)). He develops and applies numerical models of the Earth climate systems. His work resulted in a report that was published in January. The public can comment of the report anytime via the Internet prior to April 12 at 6 PM Eastern Time. The full text of the report is on the DVD of the month and is available here (4). You may comment on the report here (5). The chapter titled 'Mitigation' will probably interest many people. It is available on this page (6). The regulars in the program included; Dr. Louis Uccellini, Director of the National Weather Service, Dr. Russell Schneider, Director of the NOAA-NWS Storm Prediction Center, Ed Fenelon, Meteorologist in Charge of the National Weather Service Forecast Office, Chicago, Jim Allsopp, Warning Coordination Meteorologist, National Weather Service, Chicago, Brian Smith, Warning Coordination Meteorologist, National Weather Service, Omaha. Each of the presenters had new information. Jim Allsopp announced a pilot program that will change the language of severe weather and tornado warnings (7). He announced a program that he and others have been working on called 'Weather-Ready Nation' (8). He has also been working with some people in Illinois to make Illinois 'weather ready' (9). Brian Smith along with Skilling founded the seminar. Brian informed us of the history of storm reporting and the beginning of the Skywarn spotter system (10). He showed us old spotter training film (11). Brian told us that if we wanted to be severe weather spotters, there are in person and on line courses (12). Unfortunately, most of the course dates have past. College of DuPage offers storm chasing classes with some spots still available (13). The Saturday program lasted about five and one half hours with a ten minute break. If you missed it, WGN-TV will run a condensed version (2 hours) on April 13th at 8 PM and again on April 14th at 2 PM. If those dates are not convenient, WGN will post videos on its web site in pieces. The talk by Dr. Louis Uccellini is on the web site (14).

- 1) <http://sn.im/26s9ywz>
- 2) <https://www.fnal.gov/>
- 3) <http://sn.im/26s9zlp>
- 4) <http://sn.im/26s9yzv>
- 5) <http://review.globalchange.gov/>
- 6) <http://ncadac.globalchange.gov/>
- 7) <http://sn.im/26s9zni>
- 8) <http://sn.im/26s9zqz> <http://sn.im/26s9z2o>
- 9) <http://sn.im/26s9zsz>
- 10) <http://skywarn.org/>
- 11) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z72OMBkie3M>
- 12) <http://sn.im/26s9z8a> <http://sn.im/26s9zcn>

13) <http://weather.cod.edu/chasing/>

14) <http://sn.im/26s9za8>

United States Computer Emergency Readiness Team (US-CERT **(1)**) thinks you can secure Internet Explorer (IE)! By most accounts, IE is the least secure browser for Windows. Microsoft **(2)** says that IE is secure ignoring all the evidence to the contrary. Opera **(3)** is not much better, but because of its limited use, few attacks are written specifically for it.

1) <http://sn.im/26s9zew>

2) <https://www.microsoft.com/>

3) <http://www.opera.com/computer/windows>

You may have received an e-mail stating that having 5 Fridays, 5 Saturdays and 5 Sundays in March only happens every 823 years. This is not correct **(1)**. Here **(2)** is why.

1) <http://sn.im/26s9zh1>

2) <http://sn.im/26s9zip>

Between you, me and the LampPost, that's all for now.

Backup and Restore – A very useful Windows 7 feature

Phil Sorrentino, Member, Sarasota PCUG, Florida

November 2012 issue, PC Monitor

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I'm going to go out on a limb, here and say that we are all aware that our computers software has to be backed up. Your data, the Operating System and the Applications that you have installed, all should be backed up with some regularity. Data is fairly easily backed up with a simple "copy" or a free backup utility such as SyncToy, but up until Windows 7, the system had to be backed up with an "imaging" application that was typically not for free. But now, with Windows 7, Microsoft has provided a feature (Image and Restore) that allows the system (OS and Applications) to be easily backed up. Windows 7 refers to the backup of the system as an image because it is a bit-for-bit copy (an image) of the system that is loaded and running in memory. The saved system image is what you use to "restore" your computer after a problem is fixed. The problem could have been a bad virus infection, a replaced hard drive, or any hardware problem that may have kept you from booting your system in a normal fashion. (I've had each of these types of problems in the past and none of them are very much fun. Fortunately, I've had my system backed up so after the problem was fixed, I was back up and running right after the most recent Image was Restored.)

The "Image and Restore" capabilities can be found in the Control Panel. If your Control Panel is in the "Category" view then it is under System Security, just click "Backup your computer". If you prefer the Icon view of the control panel, click on "Backup and Restore". Either way you will get to the Backup and Restore screen. In my opinion, this screen is not the easiest to understand. The middle of the screen has a lot of Backup and Restore information, but none of this applies to the system image. The upper left area has the two controls for the system imaging process. A system image is created by selecting "Create a system image". The other control is used to "Create a system repair disc". (The system repair disc is used to initially boot the system

after the problem has been fixed.)

To create a system image, click “Create a system image”. After you make this selection, you will see a screen that indicates “Looking for backup devices...” and finally a screen that asks “Where do you want to save the backup?”. (Note here a confusion with terms, in that the “system image” is referred to as “the backup”.) This screen also gives you a link to “How do I restore my computer from a system image?”, which you can click on to review some ideas relating to restoring the system image. The system image should be stored on something that is not part of your normally operating computer. The typical choice is a set of DVDs, or preferably an external hard drive. If you choose DVDs, you will probably need from 5 to 15 blank DVDs. A DVD can hold approximately 4.7 GB, while an image of your OS and applications could be from around 25 or 30 GB for a fairly new installation with few Applications, up to 70 or 80 GB for a system with loads of Applications that you have been using for a long time.

An external drive is the preferred choice for saving a system image. Today, external drives are fairly inexpensive (under \$100), and are large enough (500 GB and larger) to save multiple system images. Most external drives are easily connected to the computer via a USB connector. In order to take advantage of your external hard drive, and make it a choice for the system image, you have to connect the external drive to the computer, before going to the control panel. So if you intend to put the system image on an external drive, exit from the control panel, connect the external hard drive, go back into the control panel and choose “Create a system image”. Now one of the choices for the saved system image should be your external drive. (If you don’t immediately see your external drive, try pulling down the triangle in the “On a hard drive” box, where all possible drives will be listed.) The external drive should be listed with an indication of the available space on it. If you have previously saved a system image on this disk, that date will also be indicated. (Also note that if you try to put the system image on the same physical drive the OS is currently on, you will receive a warning indicating “The drive selected is the same physical disk that is being backed up. If this disk fails you will lose your backups.”)

After you have selected DVDs or external drive, you will be asked to “Confirm your backup settings”. These settings are the Backup location:, (where you are going to store the system image), and a selection of “The following drives will be backed up:”, (typically the C: drive). The Backup location setting also gives an estimate of the size of the backup. If all looks right, then click the “Start backup” button in the lower right corner of the screen and be prepared for a long process. If you have selected DVDs, be prepared to remove the DVDs as they are finished and mark them as indicated, and to put in blank DVDs when requested. If you have chosen an external drive you can leave the system unattended until it completes.

When the system image has been created (backed up), don’t forget to “Create a system repair disc”. For this system repair disc you will only need one CD. When you click on “Create a system repair disc”, you will be presented with a window that describes the uses of the system repair disc and a button to “Create disc”. Put a blank CD into the CD/DVD drive indicated and press “Create disc”. It will only take a few moments to create the disc. When it is finished, label it and include the date and the computer you used to create it. Keep the disc and the system image backup (DVDs or external drive) together in a safe place, and hope you never have the kind of tragedy that forces you to use them. But, when that day comes, you will be very happy that you took the time to create these “Restore tools” with this Windows 7 very useful feature.

April 2013 DVD of the Month

A-PDFtext - Text Extractor
AdvancedOnionRouter - Updated browser for proxy
ARI - April newsletter
Belarc - Updated PC audit
BleachBit - Updated file cleaner
CamStudio - Screen recording software
cCleaner - Updated file cleaner
CDBurnerXP - Updated CD / DVD burning tool
CDOMlists - Lists of past CDOMs
Chromium - Updated browser
DiskMax - File ccleaning tool
EventSentry - Monitors event logs
FileHippoUpdateChecker -
 Finds programs that need to be updated
Firefox - Updated browser
GoogleEarth - Updated satellite mapping program
MemberContributions - Things e-mailed to me from members
MemoryCleaner - File cleaner
neoSearch - Better search than Windows
NotePadPP - Updated text editor
OldTimeRadio - Old time radio broadcasts
Opera - Updated browser
Recuva - Updated file recovery tool
SlimDrivers - Driver finding tool
Speccy - Updated hardware reporting tool
SpybotSD2 - Updated spyware destroyer
SpywareBlaster - Updated spyware interceptor
SyncBack - Backup & synchronize your files
TeraCopy - Fast file copy program
Tor - Updated browser for proxy use
VideoPad - Video editor
VirtualBox - Virtual machine in a window
WindowsRepair - Windows repair tool
WinMD5Checker - bit check for downloads
WinMerge - Compare both folders and files
YoWindow - Weather monitor

Meeting Location and Special Accommodations

The Glenside Public Library address is at 25 E Fullerton Avenue, Glendale Heights, Illinois. Please park away from the building. Thank you. The meeting(s) are not library sponsored and all inquiries should be directed to Mike Goldberg at MikeGold60137(at)yahoo.com. Individuals with disabilities who plan to attend this program and who require certain accommodations in order to observe and / or participate in the program are requested to contact CAEUG president, Mike Goldberg at MikeGold60137(at)yahoo.com, at least five (5) days prior to the program, so that reasonable accommodation can be made.

Members Helpline

Any member with a specific expertise can volunteer to be on the Members Helpline.

Beginner Helpline

- Billy Douglas

Beginner hardware problems

- Dick Fergus

Hardware problems, XP,

Win 7 & Linux

- John Spizzirri

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