# THE WINDOW

WE DO WINDOWS

COME DO WINDOWS WITH US

www.shreve.net/~cbwug

**CADDO-BOSSIER WINDOWS USER GROUP**

Shreveport – Bossier City
Louisiana

## THE CADDO-BOSSIER WINDOWS USER GROUP WISHES EVERYONE A BLESSED AND JOYOUS HOLIDAY SEASON AND HAPPY NEW YEAR !!

### *MEETINGS*

Thursday Dec. 12, 2002
Thursday Jan. 9, 2003
**Podnuh's Bar-B-Q**
1146 Shreveport-Barksdale Hwy
Shreveport, Louisiana

*Meetings 2nd Thursday of each month*

7 p.m.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

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**Ark-La-Tex Computer Sheaux**

**~Sheaux Dates~**

**~2003 Dates~**
**February 8, 2003**
May 10, 2003
August 9, 2003
November 8, 2003

**www.computersheaux.org**

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## To Clone or Not To Clone for Christmas

*By Mark Reeves*

Many of us are going to buy or know someone who is going to buy a computer for Christmas. The question is whether to buy a clone/ white box computer, or a compatible like Dell, HP, Gateway, or Compaq. Here are some of the things to consider as pros and cons on both types.

Clones: Easily upgradeable, slightly higher is purchase price, but much cheaper to upgrade or repair on average, since they use off the shelf components. But you must find a local dealer to buy from that is both reputable and stable (meaning he will be there for warranties). In our area we have some very good dealers, we also have a couple of what appear to be large reputable places, that have question-

## THE WINDOW
**Published by**
**Caddo-Bossier Windows User Group**

**Co-Editors**
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Submit articles for newsletter, in RTF file format, by last day of month to Glenda and Jay.

The opinions expressed in the articles in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the editors or publisher. Mention of products by their trade name does not in any way constitute endorsement by the editors or publisher.

The Caddo-Bossier Windows  User Group is a tax exempt, non-profit club.

Membership Dues.
Full: $12.00 a year
Spouse: $6.00 a year
Student: $6.00 a year

**C-B WUG's Web Address**
**www.shreve.net/~cbwug**

### Club Officers

*President*       Bernie Conradi
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*Vice-President*    Wayne Ebert
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      (*cbyrd2@cox-internet.com*)

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## ~Thank You~
*We want to express our gratitude to*:

**Podnuh's Bar-B-Q** 1146 Shreveport-Barksdale Hwy for letting our group hold our monthly meetings in a private dining room in  their restaurant

**ShreveNet, Inc.** for generously providing an email account and internet access for C-BWUG

**ShreveNet, Inc.** – For providing web space for our club.

**BancorpSouth** on Youree Drive for providing us with a checking account at no charge.

### ~A QUICK TIP~

#### HOW TO CREATE A KEYBOARD SHORTCUT

Here is one way you can create a keyboard shortcut for a desktop or program icon in Windows.
1. On the Windows Desktop, select the icon that you want to assign a keyboard shortcut to.
2. Right-click the icon and select Properties then click the Shortcut tab (if you're not there already).
3. In the Shortcut Key field, enter the letter you wish to use, such as W for Word, for the keyboard shortcut. When you're finished, click OK.
4. To use the shortcut click Ctrl+Alt and the letter you chose for the shortcut to open the program.

# President's Page

#### Caddo-Bossier Windows Users Group November Meeting

The monthly meeting started with the introduction of our visitors David and Diane Ford.  A business session was held to make some changes and corrections to the By-Laws and to remind everyone that elections are coming up during the month of December. The floor was open for nominations and it was stated that all current officers would run for the coming year.  The floor will be open for nominations prior to the election in December. A number of changes and clarifications were proposed for our bylaws. Two of the changes were to add three board member at large seats and change the status of student memberships to have voting privileges. All changes to the by-laws were passed. The Treasurers report was given by Charlie Byrd. The question and answer session consisted of questions about the differences between Outlook and Outlook express, why a floppy drive would not work, how to save an attachment using Juno, what is packet writing when making CD's, what happens to your mirror drive if you format C drive if you are using a raid controller and an excellent program for defragging Windows XP presented by David Huckabee called Raxco Perfect Disk 2000. The web page was raxco.com. Joe Pugh also gave us a follow up on how he fixed his problem of the hard drive light never going out. Mark's program this evening was about the Dazzle video capture program and how Mark was using it and what to do if you are interested in getting into burning DVDs.  The door prizes this evening were a book called Win 98 Visually won by Julious Windham; a T-shirt won by Jane Blasé and some CD jewel cases won by Ed Waites. Just a reminder - dues will be due in January for the year 2003.  A number of members renewed their membership this evening and Charlie will be happy to take your dues for the new year any time.

I would like to encourage the members to send me an email to bernie@conradi.com and give us some ideas as for future programs.  If you have something that you think the rest of the group would be interested in, please do not hesitate to submit an article about it.  Send your newsletter articles to Glenda Conradi and Jay Graff.
*Bernie Conradi,  President Caddo-Bossier Windows Users Group*

## Stamps Anyone?
*By Jay Graff*

Every time I think I have seen it all, something comes along to prove me wrong. A good example of this is STAMPS.COM.

I have been a member of Stamps.com from its inception and have had it as soon as it was available. The basic premise is that you buy a predetermined amount of postage and as you use it, it is deducted from your original amount.

The original program allowed you to print out stamped envelopes on your printer that are accepted by the US Postal Service. For those first starting out, there is a program you have to download, plus in order to use it you must be online. There are many choices you must make, such as what size envelope and the weight (which determines how much your postage will be).

Just having the program and being online does not automatically entitle you to start sending out mail. You have to send in an application and be approved to send mail from your house. This, in effect, turns your house into a mini post office. Also, you have to send in a quality control envelope once a year, I suppose to make sure you are still using the service.

When it first started out, the service was entirely free. In fact, I think I bought $10 worth of postage, but with free incentives and benefits, I soon built up my cache to $35. Since I was only printing out envelopes that cost 34 cents, it took quite awhile for it to go down. Around a year ago, they started charging a monthly fee. At first I was a bit upset about it and almost quit, but after further thought I decided that a small fee was worth the convenience. The best part is that it automatically keeps up with the price of postage, so no matter how often it goes up, you will always be current. Plus, you have the option of printing more postage if you think you need it. This was a handy feature recently when I sent a 4 page letter to my son. I just clicked on 2oz and viola, there the extra postage was.

Just this month, they came out with a new version and this one is a real jewel. I can still print out my envelopes. One small change they made there that was not there on the old version is that now you can print out that birthday or anniversary card envelope that is a odd size. But the biggie is that now you can also print out individual stamps as well. You have to buy a special set of labels ( they have 25 stamps). Each one has its own serial number and the number that is printed by the program must match the one that is already on the label. They are a bit bigger than the regular stamps you are used to seeing, but who cares as long as it gets my mail to where it is supposed to go,

If you are interested in this service, you can go to www.stamps.com to find out more about it. Once you use it, you will wonder what you ever did without it.

### How To Run Scandisk in Windows XP

The Scandisk utility is not available in Windows XP. However, you can use the Error-Checking tool in Windows XP to check the integrity of your hard disk. To check for file system errors and bad sectors on your hard disk, follow these steps:

1.   Double-click My Computer, and then right-click the local disk that you want to check.
2.   Click Properties, and then click Tools.
3.   Under Error-checking, click Check Now.
4.   Under Check disk options, select the Scan for and attempt recovery of bad sectors check box.
5.   Click Start.

## Door Prizes Winners for November 2002 Meeting



*Julious Windham, Jane Blase and Ed Waites are the November winners.*

At the October meeting the door prizes were a copy of the book "Teach Yourself More Windows 98 Visually", won by Julious Windham; a T-shirt, won by Jane Blase and a package of jewel cases won by Ed Waites.

All Caddo-Bossier Windows User Group club members in attendance are eligible to win door prizes at the monthly meetings.

## Happy Ending!?!

By Wayne Ebert

Storing your data on a CD has become the way many home owners are saving their information. However, there are situations where the 1.44MB "floppy" is adequate. Then again when using My Computer or Explorer I found that the true size of the folder and it's content are not displayed in the folder's Size column, it is blank. Understanding that I would have to double click on the folder to obtain the required storage size information I found it necessary to double click each of the subfolders as well and do some mental addition. There has to be a better way, probably with a plug-in available to download on the Internet. I found two free utilities; DiskPie2 located at www.pcmag.com/utilities that displays the size of the folder as well as the space of the different file types within the folder. From the context menu there is an option to display selected directories in a DiskPie view. Helpful if you are trying to figure out what is using up the space on your hard drive, but this provided more information than I needed. The other free utility is TreeSize from www.jamsoftware.com, which provided what I needed; it simply displays the size of the folder and their subdirectories.

While I was mumbling about the inefficiency of Windows My Computer and Explorer I happened to Right Click on a folder in Explorer. Intending to clear the pop-up menu I inadvertently Left Clicked on Properties at the bottom of the menu. The General Tab displayed informing me that this file folder contained 3 folders and 2 files with a size of 43.0KB. As the title of this article indicates, finding this shortcut to answer my problem question resulted in a happy ending. Yes, I did mumble a Thank You to Microsoft, as there are more features available in Windows than I was aware of. What unlisted features have you found that Windows users should be made aware of?

able practices. Best way is to ask around, of course you will get some with good reports and others with bad ones, so YOU must make up your own mind as to what to think. Compatibles: Dell, Gateway, and such have the fantastic prices, UNTIL you get to the bottom line. Many of them REQUIRE you to sign up for internet access for 1 or 2 years to get the good pricing, and when you figure that additional cost against what you are paying your ISP now, usually it makes it just a little better than a clone if not worse. Many of them you CANNOT upgrade the motherboard, in some cases not even the processor, without going back to that company. The motherboards are proprietary to their cases and even some limit the amount of ram you can install. Many have built in video cards, so you cannot upgrade to a better card. If you have a power supply go bad, you have to buy theirs (price for a clone supply $25-$50, price for one of theirs up to $150), plus you have to wait for the replacements (a clone system you can get one anywhere). Many of the compatibles come with power supplies just enough for the equipment installed in it and not much more, adding a few internal items can over tax many of them. Also most of the compatible companies will only sell you WindowsXP, where a clone provider will give you a choice.

So what to buy? As I said before, check with your friends and listen to what they have to say, think it through, then make an intelligent decision for you. In a case like this, there is normally no right or wrong, just what works the best for you. A student off to collage, a cheap compatible, just might fill the bill. Doing heavy graphics or music, changing things all the time-go for a clone.


*David holds the jar while Bernie draws a ticket*

### ~Web Sites~

**Good Old Days**
www.oldversion.com
*(Find old versions of programs here)*

**Kids' Site Crafts**
www.claus.com/santashome/crafts.shtml
(*Kids Christmas crafts*)

**A Powerful Search Engine**
www.invisibleweb.com
*(Use InvisibleWeb to locate material that other search engines don't )*

**Holiday Lights**
www.tigertech.com/hlights.html
*(Dress up your screen with holiday lights & enjoy background music)*

**Worldwide Live Cam Shots**
www.webworldcam.com
*(Look at live cam shots and check the weather around the world)*

**Gibson Research**
www.grc.com/default.htm
*(Security and privacy information, free utilities! Strong opinions!)*

**Windows Support Center**
www.aumha.org
*(Provides a lot of links to support sites and information on Windows)*

### DID YOU KNOW?

There are two ways to quickly get to your Desktop if your screen is full of open windows in Windows XP:
1. If your keyboard has a Windows button, hit Windows+D.
2. Right-click on the Toolbar, and select Show Desktop to get to the Desktop, or Show Open Windows to get the windows back.

## MERRY CHRISTMAS