THE WINDOW

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www.shreve.net/~cbwug

Comdex 2001

By David M. Huckabee

The week before Thanksgiving every year, the computer industry gathers in Las Vegas to display its wares to the public. This year's show was a little smaller and a lot more security conscious.

The security was evident with the metal detectors and bomb sniffing dogs that greeted the guests and exhibitors alike.

There were vendors that had security devices to show. Everything from fingerprint recognition devices embedded in a mouse to locks to secure laptops to tables were shown. Voice recognition software and retina scan devices show that the industry has been quite busy. Most of these devices were offered last year but were hardly noticed.

The Pocket PC with the new Microsoft Pocket PC Windows was the "in" device this year. These items resemble the Palm PDA but have a whole lot more power. They run a scaled down version of Microsoft Office and can share data with the full Office product. The add-ons to the Pocket PCs are quite pricey, but there are interesting things that can be done with them. A Global Positioning device can be snapped on and this thing will tell you where you are and how to get anywhere else in the world, in plain spoken English. A wireless accessory can be added and you can get your stock quotes, e-mail, surf the Web, or even Fax a document without connecting to another computer by wires.

The Tablet PC was introduced by Bill Gates at his keynote address on the day before Comdex opened.

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*✱MEETINGS✱

Thursday Dec. 13, 2001
Thursday Jan. 10, 2002
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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East 70th-Shreveport

Ark-La-Tex Computer Sheaux

~Sheaux Dates~

~2002 Dates~
February 16, 2002
May 11, 2002
August 10, 2002
November 9, 2002

www.computersheaux.org

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THE WINDOW
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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 (voting privileges)
Student: $6.00 a year (no voting privileges)

C-B WUG's Web Address
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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~

Change the Sounds of your Computer

In Me you can change the standard wav files that come preset in Windows by opening the Control Panel under Settings and left clicking on the Sounds and Multimedia icon. In the box that pops up select the Sounds tab and in the Sound Events window click on the action (open Windows, close Windows, new message, etc.) that you want to give a new sound. Click the down arrow beside Name to see a list of wav files you can choose from or click Browse to access a folder on your computer where you have saved wav files you have gotten from the internet. You can hear the wav file you have selected by clicking on the button beside the Name window. You can make these changes in other versions of Windows with similar steps.

President's Page

Caddo-Bossier Windows Users Group Meeting
November 11, 2001

Our visitors for the evening were Dana Harvey, Glenn Price and Darryl Strange's son Clint Strange. Welcome visitors, we encourage you to join the group for all the fun. Keith O'Kelley gave a Treasurer's report of $1,1296.97. In the December meeting we will have the election for the Board of Directors for the year 2002. The present officers were nominated again for the coming year. They are Bernie Conradi, President, Wayne Ebert, Vice President, Glenda Conradi, Secretary, and Keith O'Kelley for Treasurer. The floor will be open again in December for additional nominations prior to the election. I brought the notebook computer on which I had installed Windows XP and we browsed around and answered any questions that came up about the new operating system. We also looked at a lot of the new features of Windows XP. This month was our usual question and answer program, we had numerous questions about networking, scandisk, defrag, installing a larger hard drive, replacing icons on the desktop, installing wallpaper and optimizing your internet connection using the web site www.pcpitstop.com. Wayne Ebert reminded us of the web site www.antivirus.com. The door prizes were won by Glenda Conradi, a box of floppy disks, and Ed Waites, a World Wide Web Directory. A Gateway AOL training session was won by a member who did not use AOL and given to Ed.

I would like to wish everyone a Happy Holiday Season.

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 both Jay Graff and Glenda Conradi as an email attachment in rtf format to jay@jaygraff.com and glenda@conradi.com.
Bernie Conradi, President Caddo-Bossier Windows Users Group

A Slow Day
By Wayne D. Ebert

Information Technology [IT] continues to advance at an outstanding rate. New features and capabilities are becoming available so rapidly that it generates questions from the potential user that the average user may not be able to answer. For example, recently how to determine the bandwidth of a user's system was requested. Bandwidth being the capacity of the transmission path that is measured in bits per second [bps] and is the unit of measure for the modem's speed as well. The inquiry arose when the user noticed the time factor to accomplish a task varied noticeable. The logic being that a malfunction was effecting the rate of transmission. However, there are three primary factors that effect the transmission rate; your computer's configuration, the type of connection being utilized, and the amount of traffic. Other factors are the type of data being moved and the distance between connection points. The smaller text files transfers faster than the much larger bit map files, for example. To locate the closest testing site, visit http://home.cfl.rr.com/eaa/Bandwidth.htm and scroll through this listing. To become familiar with the modem testing procedures, visit one of the following sites. Try http://www.testmyspeed.com or try a sample test at http://toast.net/performance that requires you to enter additional information before testing starts. When you are comfortable with the testing procedures, repeated testing at various times of the day and days of the week identifies when the bandwidth you are sharing has a high usage rate that slows down the transmission. The day or days of the week when you have to share the bandwidth with more users can be determined with repeated testing. Though the above tests will not answer all of your questions they do identify the status of your system and when you can expect optimum conditions. Consider using a test log of testing time of day, date, and results.

Pc Pitstop
By Jack Burke

There is an outstanding site on the Internet that I find many people do not know exists. It is a computer diagnostic site, which helps keep your computer running fast, stable, and secure. To quote from the Welcome information on their home page, "PC Pitstop runs diagnostics on your PC to identify things that might help improve performance.
The process is fully automated, private, and safe. After the diagnostics run, they give you tips for improving all kinds of things. Best of all the service is free."

This site is singularly one of the most valuable on the web. I find myself checking it on numerous occasions throughout the month. It has located a number of problems for me and pointed me in the right directions for the proper fix. Primarily I have used the Full Testing feature and the test for the Internet Connections. Recently I just changed to a cable modem and the site was tremendous in helping me modify my connections--without them I would still be crawling along with speeds similar to a dialup connection. And, the local cable office and technicians had no clue as to why I was not getting sufficient speed. In a matter of a few moments, with PC Pitstop, I was getting the advertised speeds.

There are also tests for Antivirus, Disk Health, Active X, and a Windows XP readiness examination. Additionally there is a Newsletter and a Technical Help feature. All of this adds up to a very useful service to the computing world. Once again, it is free and available for Internet Explorer, Netscape, Opera, and AOL/CompuServe users.
Try it and I think that you will be impressed and go back to the site again and again. It can be found at http://www.pcpitstop.com.

This device is a little smaller than a laptop, a lot thinner, and a whole lot lighter. It has the power of a laptop but can be configured such that the screen is touch sensitive and will do handwriting recognition.
Universal Serial Bus (USB) technology was enhanced by the new USB 2. Twenty times faster than USB 1 and backward compatible. USB 2 capable devices were shown, including ZIP drives and CD-RW drives.
WiFi or 802.11 Wireless Networking was a new technology that was present last year. 802.11b was shown last year and a lot of companies jumped on the bandwagon. This year, a new standard was introduced, 802.11.a. This is forty times faster and with more reliability. This standard still has a long way to go before you can transfer your credit card number without having someone intercepting your information.
If you get a chance to go to Comdex, just once in your life, this is a must see. Las Vegas is fun and the show is something you will not believe.

Door Prizes Winners for November Meeting

Ed Waites and Glenda Conradi

Ed Waites won a World Wide Web Directory and Glenda Conradi won a box of floppy disk. Ed was also given a Gateway AOL training disk and book by a member who won it and did not use AOL.

The Winning Edge
By Jay Graff

OK, I will be the first to admit that I have been ripped off a few times in my life. But there have been lots of times when my faith in my fellow man was restored. One of these times happened just recently.

At the last ComputerSheaux, it was almost time to close, when I heard an announcement that they wanted to clear off the SWEPCO table and would sell any laser printer on the table for a ridiculously low price. Up till that time, I had absolutely no idea or intention of getting another printer, but I remembered paying $1250 for my HPIIP. Bottom line is that I picked up an older HPIII.

I didn't really expect it to work like new, and when I hooked it up and tried it, I wasn't disappointed. Right away, the thing jammed up on me.

I have been doing business with Laser's Edge for awhile now. I usually take my old cartridges there and let them recharge them for me, so I knew that they also worked on printers. I had made up my mind that I would let them look at it and if it wasn't worth fixing, all I would be out would be what they charged to look at it, plus the low price I paid for it.

I brought it over there that next Tuesday and spoke with Lance Nix. He said that he had a few minutes and could look at it right away. He immediately knew that the fuser assembly was shot and to save me some money, put in a working used one from another printer. He also changed one of the gears in the paper path. We ran some paper through and everything seemed to be working OK. I was pleasantly surprised that he only charged me for the parts used and I was well within the limits I had set. Ordinarily, that would be the end of the story, except that when I got home, I tried to print out an envelope. It went through, but it looked as if it was having a hard time. A couple of rollers on the top tray were worn and dragging....we knew about this and decided it was cost prohibitive to replace them. With this type of printer, you can also feed paper through a rear door, but when I tried, nothing came out. So I imposed on Lance's time again. He tried to explain to me what to look for, but I couldn't understand what he was saying, so I brought it back again.

This next time, I wasn't so lucky about Lance being there. He is always extremely busy and was out for most of the day I brought it in. So I left it there for him to check out. He called my a few days later and told me that he discovered that the rack that allowed the paper to go through the rear had a crack in it and again, took one from an old printer. He replaced it and again, did not charge me.

I always believed that Lazer's Edge just refilled laser cartridges, but it turns out they do so much more. If you have a printer that is acting up, you need to call the good people over there. I don't know if they work on inkjets or not and they may not always be able to solve your problem, but one thing is sure, they will always be honest and treat you right.

WE WISH YOU A HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON

Ark-La-Tex ComputerSheaux

Loading the AEP SWEPCO donations

The November 10, 2001 Computer-Sheaux was a big success, thanks to the help of the volunteers from all the computer clubs and a very generous donation of equipment from AEP SWEPCO. The SWEPCO table alone took in over $6,000 making it possible for the Ark-La-Tex ComputerFest, Inc. to donate $8,700.00 to the Shriners Hospital for Children in Shreveport.

Thank you so much for your support!

~Web Sites~

Christmas Carols
www.familyinternet.about.com/cs/christmascarols/
(*A Web page with links to sites that provide the words to Christmas Carols)*

Christmas Directory
www.familyinternet.about.com/cs/christmas/
(*Christmas links for you to enjoy)*

Trillian (NEW Version)
www.trillian.cc
(*everything you need for instant messaging. Connect to ICQ, AOL Instant Messenger, MSN Messenger, Yahoo! Messenger and IRC)*

ExtremeTech
www.extremetech.com
(Optimize Windows XP A step-by-step guide to better performance)

DID YOU KNOW?
You can right click on a program, file, folder or drive and select the Open option instead of double clicking on it to open it.