THE WINDOW

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February Meeting

By Glenda Conradi

Group at February Meeting

Bernie Conradi continued where he left off at the January meeting, talking about and demonstrating some of the computer programs he likes to use, most of which are free. He showed the new Internet Explorer version 8. Some of the other programs he covered were AM-Deadlink, Acronis True Image Home 2009, Update Checker from Filehippo, CCCleaner, SmartDefrag, Autoruns, Belarc Advisor, AVG and Zone Alarm, as well as some other programs, and talked about Firefox, Version 3.06.
There was also a question and answer session.

March Program

By Glenda Conradi

Bernie has been running the beta version of the upcoming Windows 7 operating system since its release. He has been asked numerous questions about it, so at the March meeting he is going to give a demonstration and show some of the things he has learned .
The items to be included are the new task bar, new gadget procedures and a lot of other neat things this OS has to offer.
We hope you can join us.

MEETINGS

Thursday March 12, 2009
Thursday April 9, 2009
Podnuh's Bar-B-Q
1146 Shreveport-Barksdale Hwy
Shreveport, Louisiana

Meetings 2nd Thursday of each month
7 p.m.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

We want to thank Bernie Conradi for continuing to show some of the programs he uses that he finds very helpful.

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THE WINDOW

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Caddo-Bossier Windows User Group
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Membership Dues.
Full: $12.00 a year
Spouse: $6.00 a year
Student: $6.00 a year.

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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.

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

~A QUICK TIP~

Typing URL Addresses

   * Type the domain of an address, such as Microsoft, and then press Ctrl+ENTER. Internet Explorer, and some other browsers, automatically wraps "http://www....com" around what you typed.
   * Not sure if the site uses a .com extension? Just type the domain of the address, and then press ENTER. Internet Explorer tries to find the site by using the various extensions.
   * If you need to edit an address, you can use Ctrl+LEFT ARROW and Ctrl+RIGHT ARROW to easily move between different parts of the address separated by periods.

President's Page

Caddo-Bossier Windows Users Group February Meeting

   The meeting this month was very lively with numerous questions from the floor. This is good, as we all learn from each others problems and fixes that we have discovered. Darrell Strange returned to our group this month and are glad that he has returned. We look forward to seeing him again in the future. There were questions this month about installing a scanner, how to see what drivers you have and how to update same. We showed the new Internet Explorer version 8, reminded all about the latest version of Firefox, Version 3.06. Demonstrated some of the features of the new browsers. Talked about how to keep Firefox from opening numerous tabs when it is first started. The program this month was a continuation of the program started last month. I presented a list of the programs that I use quite frequently and demonstrated them to show what they will do and how to use some of the features. Most of these programs are available on the internet as free programs. A couple of them have to be purchased but are relatively inexpensive.

   We demonstrated, Acronis True Image Home 2009, AM-Deadlink, CCCleaner, Update Checker from Filehippo, SmartDefrag, Autoruns, Belarc Advisor, AVG and Zone Alarm to name a few.
The door prize winners for the evening were Carolyn Franklin a T-shirt and Joe Blasé the CD Cleaner kit. Congratulations to our winners. Carol White took pictures for us this evening as Glenda was not able to come the meeting this month. Thanks Carol for your help.

   I plan to demonstrate the new Windows 7 at the next meeting .
Our next meeting will be March 12, 2009.

Bernie Conradi, President Caddo-Bossier Windows Users Group.

Trouble In AVG Land

by Jay Graff

When it comes to Antivirus programs, the gold standard for the vast majority of us is AVG. Most people I know are using the AVG Free version. It does most of the basic stuff and provides adequate protection against most of the threats that come your way on a daily basis. You could upgrade to AVG Pro, in fact, they are always bugging you to do that. Of course you have to buy it and you don't get any additional protection. Actually, I found that version to be rather bloated with features that you really don't need. So for the record, and the sake of argument, lets just concede that the Free Version is the best for most users.   But lately, there has been a cloud on the AVG horizon. Apparently, when I first log on my computer every day, it checks the AVG website and downloads whatever update is available. They are always coming out with new definitions, so there is almost always an update. The problem occurs later on, say around 8 or 9 AM. Apparently it tries to go out and check for another update. This is when I get a little red icon in my systray telling me that the update (I guess it is the last one) failed. The reason is always because it lost the connection. The first time it happened, I checked my modem and my internet connection to make sure that something didn't go haywire in midstream. Things were working OK. I am not sure of the exact reason, but I suspect that they have more people getting updates

than they are able to get them out. In other words, their lines of communication are jammed. This may not be as serious as it sounds. Generally, if you just do nothing, it will fix itself. Eventually the update will get to you and everything will be as it was. But I do not like to see any error messages, so I usually try to manually update it. The last couple of days I was successful but there have been times when I was not able to. I still think that AVG is probably the best out there for doing what you need it to. But maybe they need to look at providing the updates in a different manner so that a person doesn't think there is something wrong with their connection or computer. I know this sounds like I am just looking a gift horse in the mouth but nothing can be further from the truth. I will continue to use this program and have the peace of mind knowing that I am pretty much protected from most of the bad guys out there.

Thank You

I would like to thank Carole White for taking pictures for the newsletter at the February Caddo-Bossier Windows Group meeting in my absence.

Glenda Conradi

GETTING STARTED TIPS

Terminate Application

Use Windows Task Manager to end an unresponsive or hanged application.

1. Press Ctrl-Alt-Delete keys simultaneously in Windows XP or Ctrl-Alt-Esc in Windows Vista. Alternatively, right click on taskbar and select Task Manager. You can also start Task Manager by manually starting "taskmgr" from Run command in Start Menu.

2. In the Windows Task Manager window, under Applications, locate and select (highlight) the application or program that's not responding..

3. Click on End Task.

4. A Task Manager Warning dialog saying "Terminating a process can cause undesired results including loss of data and system instability. The process will not be given the chance to save its state or data before it is terminated. Are you sure you want to terminate the process?" will appear. Confirm the process by clicking on OK or End Now.

Door Prizes Winners for February 2009 Meeting

Carolyn Franklin & Joe Blase

The February door prizes were won by Carolyn Franklin, an Alpha T-shirt and Joe Blase a Radial CD Cleaning kit. All Caddo-Bossier Windows User Group club members in attendance are eligible to win door prizes at the monthly meetings.

At Your Service

By Bob Franklin

I am sure that all of us are familiar with turning on and off services. You simply type services. msc in the search box. Next right click and choose properties. If the service is running choose stop, then the type of start up you want can now be selected. That's pretty simple, only one little problem. What services are not needed or what type of start up do I need? Vista Services Optimizer can answer these questions.

Vista Services Optimizer is a free open source tweaking utility that allows you to improve Vista's performance and security with a few simple mouse clicks. With Vista Services Optimizer you can safely optimize Windows services, it takes the guess work out of tweaking Vista services. Vista's default installation has many services turned on that you may not need. These services can consume CPU cycles and memory that will slow down your system. Vista Services Optimizer analyzes your system and suggest services that can be safely turned off. You can perform an automatic tune-up according to the way you use your computer and the software installed on your computer, or use the manual tune-up that lets you select from a more detailed list of features to disable. If you encounter any problems or just want to return Vista to default settings, simply use the Rescue Center, which allows you to restore Windows services to their default settings at any time.

The program does not require any special technical knowledge. It only requires you to answer a few simple questions that relate to how you use your computer. It is no longer Beta software, Vista Services Optimizer 1.1.18 Final was released on January 10, 2009. You can find a free download at: http://smartpcutilities.bravehost.com/downloads.html.

File size is only 2.56 MB. System requirements include Windows Vista Home/Business/Ultimate Editions with Service Pack 1 and will run on 32 or 64 bit processors. Requires a screen resolution of 1024 x 768, however 1440 x 900 is recommended. You will need Microsoft .NET Framework 3.5 with Service Pack 1 and Adobe Reader 5.x or higher installed.

If you have a sluggish Vista, this little program may be just what you need to add some vitality to Vista.

Happy St. Patrick's Day!

DID YOU KNOW?

In Vista, If you do not like the look of Aero, click Start/Control Panel/Themes and you can choose a non-Aero theme, such as Windows Classic.