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**CADDO-BOSSIER
 WINDOWS
 USER GROUP**

Shreveport – Bossier City
 Louisiana

Volume 5, No 11

Caddo-Bossier Windows User Group Newsletter

November, 2003



Mark Reeves answers a question at the October meeting

Guest Speaker for November

By Glenda Conradi

For the November program we are privileged to have Will Lowe, owner, consultant of Lowe Computer Systems L.L.C. in Minden, LA as our guest speaker.

Many of our members have expressed an interest in finding out what some of the differences are in the Windows operating system and Linux and Will, who is an expert with both, has offered to give us a comparison of the two, including the origin and make up of Linux, it's strengths and weaknesses and demonstrate some of the different versions of Linux. Will does not feel Linux is a replacement for Windows but that it does have some outstanding features and that the two OSs can co-exist.

Will started his own company that has a customer base of Govern-

ment and Private businesses such as Lawyers, Doctors, Insurance companies, construction companies, and various other businesses types. He has an extensive background in technology and computing. After school and military service he worked on main frame systems in the 70s as a company engineer for RCA data processing division, he worked as a memory engineer on mini-computers for Westinghouse Corp., worked as a field support engineering manager for a banking technology firm, worked on secure communications systems and has held government security clearances.

Will also has done extensive programming in machine language, RPG, COBOL, C, C++, Basic, Vis-

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MEETINGS

Thursday November 13, 2003

Thursday December 11, 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~

~2004 Dates~

February 21, 2004

May 8, 2004

August 14, 2004

November 20, 2004



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.

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Membership Dues.
Full: \$12.00 a year

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~ Thank You ~

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 and for providing web space for our club.

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

~ A QUICK TIP ~

Stop Floppy Drive Search

Do you hear your floppy drive churning every time you turn on your computer and Windows starts?

The computer is doing a floppy drive search. This is something that automatically occurs and it does take extra time for the computer to go through this process during start up.

You can disable the scans for the presence of floppy drives when Windows starts to speed up the booting time of the PC.

Just follow the following steps.

1. Right click my computer.
2. Click properties.
3. Click the performance tab.
4. Click file system.
5. Click the floppy disk tab.
6. Uncheck search for new floppy drives each time your computer starts.
7. Click Ok.
8. Click Ok.

Now your computer should skip the floppy drive search during start up.

President's Page



Caddo-Bossier Windows Users Group October Meeting

We had 25 members in attendance this month with Carolyn and Bob Franklin joining us again for another year. Our visitor this evening was Shirley Nutt. We opened the meeting with announcements and a discussion about keeping your computer up to date with the latest virus dat files and updating your operating system with the latest critical updates. Wayne asked if anyone was interested in reviewing a program for the group. For the program, Wayne provided us some important things to think about when buying a new computer. Informing us of the operating systems, amount of memory and hard drive space and all the components of the computer. Mark informed us of the new AMD 64 bit Athlon CPU that will be making a debut very soon. I demonstrated a new flash drive which Glenda bought and showed how it worked with Windows XP. Joe Pugh told us about the program SI Soft Sandra and what it did for him on his computer. The door prizes for the evening were: a Belkin Monitor clip won by Bob Nutt; two games donated by Joe Blasé won by Margaret McGilvray; two more games donated by Joe Blasé won by Clyde Santifer; and a 56K v.92 modem won by Kelly Pugh. Thank you very much for the donations and congratulations to the winners.

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

Enough To Be Dangerous

By Jay Graff

When it comes to knowledge of computers, I would rate myself squarely between beginner and expert. When I used to work in the medical profession, we would always say that a person at that level of expertise knew just enough to be dangerous.

That's why it is embarrassing to relate what happened to me recently. I really should have known better. But I digress.

About a month ago, I got an email from Microsoft. The subject was something like "Important Security Upgrades" or something like that. When I opened it, it said that there were important security patches to a number of MS programs and all I had to do was to run the enclosed attachment. In retrospect, there were red flags being raised all over the place, but I must have had my common sense on hold that day. I opened the attachment and immediately got a message that in order for the updates to take effect, it must update my Outlook and wanted my email address. I put in my secondary one. Looking back, I could have foiled the whole thing by putting in my Netscape address. I had been having trouble with it and deleted that very day. Anyway, as soon as I finished, I was in for a big surprise. The first time I checked my mail I had something like 10 or 12 extra messages. They were all returned mail. The second time I had around 28, same thing and the third time I had around 50. I had been visited by SVEN. I can't tell you whether it was a worm or a virus, just that he was here and making his presence known.

As I say, I should have known better. First of all, Microsoft never sends security patches via email. That is a given. Secondly, though the email *looked* official, it was written entirely in lower case. Any correspondence I have ever received from Microsoft

had perfect punctuation. Third, I should have been suspicious when they asked for my email address. If Microsoft sent me the email, shouldn't they already know my email address?

To fix the problem, I relied on my old buddy, System Restore. It has saved me on more than one occasion. I went back to a point a day or so before and everything seemed back to normal. A friend told me that SVEN writes a code to your registry, so just to be safe I downloaded a fix and ran it. Hopefully he was gone forever.

In the movies, you see the hero kill the monster or whatever it is that threatens the earth and as the movie ends, you catch a glimpse of a baby monster crawling around. In this movie, I hope there are no babies SVENS hiding somewhere waiting for their chance to emerge. I don't think there are, but you just never know. After all, the hero knows.....well he knows just enough to be dangerous.

GETTING STARTED WITH XP

Change Letters Assigned to CD or DVD

If you want to change the drive letters that are automatically assigned to a CD or DVD drive you have added to your computer try the following steps.

- *Click Start>Control Panel.
- *Double-click Administrative Tools.
- *Double-click Computer Management.
- *On the left side, in the Computer Management window, click Disk Management.
- *On the right side of the window, right-click on the drive you want to change.
- *Select "Change Drive Letter and Paths,"
- *Click Change.
- *Click the down arrow on the box to the right and select the new letter for the drive.
- *If you change the drive letter of a hard drive Windows may not be able to find it when you want to open files for a program on the drive.

Door Prizes Winners for October 2003 Meeting



Bob Nutt, Clyde Santifer & Kelly Pugh

The October door prize winners were Bob Nutt who won a monitor clip, Clyde Santifer won computer games and Kelly Pugh won a 56K modem. Margaret McGilvray (not in picture) also won computer games. All Caddo-Bossier Windows User Group club members in attendance are eligible to win door prizes at the monthly meetings.

Windows XP Tips & Tweaks

By David M Huckabee

Windows XP Professional and Home are the most flexible of all of the operating systems ever produced. The look and feel of a lot of the “pretty” user’s interface can be changed and most of them must be done in the registry (how the operating system handles everything).

The developers of the operating system have made available, to the customer, ways to change the registry, without the trauma of possibly “messing the registry up”. These tools are not supported by Microsoft and NO questions can be submitted to Microsoft for help. These tools are available for download at: www.microsoft.com/WINDOWSXP/home/downloads/powertoys.asp. Keep in mind that these are for Windows XP Professional and Home with Service Pack 1. Yes, they are called power toys. The most interesting program of the group is Tweak UI. “This Power-Toy gives you access to system settings that are not exposed in the Windows XP default user interface, including mouse settings, Explorer settings, taskbar settings, and more.” *Quote from the Microsoft Web Site.* Once you have downloaded and installed this program, take time to see the many features that are available for change, there is a good descriptor of the command that you are using. A couple of the more interesting tweaks available:

- (1) Don’t you just hate it when those little “balloon” tips pop up and get in your way? Click on Taskbar and uncheck Enable balloon tips. You won’t be bothered again.
- (2) I find that the large arrow on Shortcuts is a little distracting. Click on the plus box next to Explorer, then select Shortcut, and you have four selections on how you can make the icons look.

You would be surprised how much trouble it is to accomplish these things by editing the Registry.

Thanks to the developers at Microsoft for these FREE tools.

When you first install Windows XP you are presented a blank desktop, “Where are my icons?” Right-click on an un-used portion of the desktop, properties, you can select a theme or not, click on desktop, select a desktop or not, click on Customize Desktop, and select the Desktop icons that you want to see on your Desktop, click OK and you are there. Explore what is available, but BE CAREFUL.

Do you wonder what steps Microsoft recommends to protect your computer? If you go to www.microsoft.com/security/protect/default.asp you will see three steps to protect your computer and you can even use a wizard to accomplish each one or print out the steps if you are a “Do it yourself” kind of person. Keep in mind that there are other ways that work in addition.

Do you want to cut down on the number of clicks required to Shutdown or Reboot your computer? Create a new shortcut by: right-click on an unused portion of the Desktop, New, Shortcut, type in the location “shutdown.exe -s -t 00” (without the quotes, there is a space after the exe and a space after the -s and after the -t, and those are zeros), Next, name the shortcut Shutdown, and hit finish. You will have a rather bland looking shortcut, right-click on the shortcut, properties, click on the shortcut tab, select Change Icon, scroll through the icons and select one that you might like for this Shortcut, OK, OK. I prefer the red square with the white off-on symbol for the icon. If, while you’re at it you can make a Reboot shortcut to stand beside your Shutdown shortcut. The changes are: instead of -s in the location type in -r, the name is Reboot, and change the symbol to whatever you like (I prefer the curved green arrow). From now on you just double-click the shortcut instead of going through the START, Turn Off Computer, and Turn Off routine.

There are a lot of other things to make your computer run better or differently. Have FUN.

(Guest Speaker for November Cont. from page 1)

ual Basic, Dbase, and now web based languages like PHP, HTML, and PERL. He has supported CPM, all versions of DOS, all versions of Windows from 3.1 to XP, UNIX, Solaris, and Linux and was an internet provider in Minden, LA.

If you have questions...on just about anything...this may be your opportunity to get the answers.

~Web Sites~

E-Commerce Times

www.ecommercetimes.com/
(A site full of articles on e-business, technology and other goodies)

Maximum PC

www.maximumpc.com
(A site for Maximum PC magazine that includes some articles you can read)

PublicRadioFan.com

www.publicradiofan.com
(PublicRadioFan.com features program listings for hundreds of public radio stations around the world. Follow the audio links to hear your favorite programs and discover new ones.)

NationMaster.com

www.nationmaster.com/
(view profiles of individual countries including their maps and flags, as well as a full encyclopedia)

Cyberwalker

www.cyberwalker.net
(This site has tips, how to columns and more)

On Line Conversion

www.onlineconversion.com
(Convert just about anything to anything else)



DID YOU KNOW?

You can open the Windows Box by clicking on Start / Run. Inside the window beside Open in the box that opens, type .. (two periods). Click OK and the Windows box should pop up on your screen. The command will stay in the Run box till changed