Useful Bits & Pieces December 2013
By Lorrin R. Garson, PATACS

Add-ons That Help Block Web Trackers

There are a number of third-party add-ons that can provide defenses against Web sites that track your online activities. Trackers use numerous techniques other than cookies to monitor your Web actions and most browsers' tools only deal with cookies. Here are three popular free anti-tracking tools (no endorsement given or implied).

Before using any of these add-ons it is strongly recommended you read about these tools at the providers' Web sites as well as seek reviews.

Keep in mind there are some pitfalls in using these add-ons. They will block some things you don't want blocked and you may find some Web sites that don't work well. If some untoward consequence occurs, try using the program's exception tool to work around the problem.

Add-on	Browsers	OS	Where to Download	Comments
Disconnect	Chrome, Firefox & Safari	Windows, OS X & iOS	https://www.disconnect.me/	Claims 2,000+ third-party sites are blocked.
DoNotTrackMe	Internet Explorer, Chrome, Firefox & Safari	Windows & OS X	https://www.abine.com/dntdetail.php	Blocks 600+ trackers.
Ghostery	Internet Explorer, Chrome, Firefox. Safari & Opera	Windows, OS X & iOS	http://www.ghostery.com/	Focuses on detecting JavaScript code used for tracking purposes.

Norton Identity Safe

This useful application was formerly a part of Norton's suite products but is now available without charge. The Safe manages passwords and fills in Web forms with personal data. It can sync data between multiple Macs and PCs; iOS and Android apps are also available. See https://identitysafe.norton.com/# .

Linux and Open Source News

By Geof Goodrum
Potomac Area Technology and
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Tor: Anonymity Online

With the recent attention on the US National Security Agency's surveillance of online communications came more awareness of user tools to prevent such surveillance. Some of the tools that have apparently been quite successful are those of The Onion Router (Tor) Project (https://www.torproject.org/).
Tor is a combination of free, Open Source software and a global network of volunteer-operated servers that together "shuffle" the Internet communications (e.g. web, e-mail, instant messaging) through many layers (hence, onion) to anonymize users and hide their locations.

Somewhat ironically, Tor originated as a project for the U.S. Navy to prevent eavesdropping on communications. While criminals and terrorists have reportedly used Tor to hide their activities, civil rights activists, whistleblowers, and journalists worldwide have also used Tor to protect themselves from repressive governments. Anyone who is concerned about preserving their privacy can use Tor with the tools and instructions that the Project provides.

The Tor Project provides a software bundle for GNU/Linux, Google Android, Microsoft Windows, and Apple MacOSX including a pre-configured version of the Firefox Extended Support Release (ESR) web browser. To preserve anonymity when using Tor, the Project mandates that no other browser plug-ins be installed or enabled, users must not open downloaded documents while online, and users should only access https encrypted websites.

Because of concerns regarding overall security of the Microsoft Windows operating system, the Tor Project issued a security advisory recommending users switch to using a live operating system instead of Windows

(http://gizmodo.com/the-tor-project-tells-everyone-to-stop-using-windows-1041096346). This was largely in response to a Javascript exploit of a vulnerability in the Firefox browser in the Windows version of the Tor Browser Bundle that was reportedly traced back to a US Government contractor SAIC, and speculation that a Government agency was attempting to track Tor users. The Mozilla Foundation fixed the vulnerability in Firefox and The Tor Project released an updated software package.

A live operating system can be booted cleanly on a computer from DVD or USB media. TAILS, The Amnesic Incognito Live System (https://tails.boum.org/), is Debian GNU/Linux-based bootable media that includes Tor software and other applications for encrypted e-mail and web browsing. TAILS is certainly a useful tool to have on travel and when using computer systems that you don't own or control (i.e., libraries, hotels, loaner PCs) to ensure your information is secured.

In a somewhat related story, on October 25th, the Mozilla Foundation announced availability of a Firefox add-on called Lightbeam, that provides a graphic view of how your visits to web sites are tracked not only by those sites, but by third parties you may not be aware of. The Mozilla Foundation's blog post about Lightbeam is online at https://blog.mozilla.org/blog/2013/10/25/lightbeam-for-firefox-privacy-education-for-users-open-data-for-publishers/, and links to a YouTube video about the add-on.

Featured Open Source Software of the Month: December 2013

The software described below can be downloaded at the links provided or copied onto a USB flash drive at the PATACS Fairfax meeting. However, please check the online package management tool included with your GNU/Linux distribution first, as installation is often just a click away.

delaboratory – v0.8. https://code.google.com/p/delaboratory/. Free GNU General Public License source code and executables for Debian/Ubuntu, Apple MacOSX, and Microsoft Windows by Jacek Poplawski. delaboratory is a unique image post-processing application. Features include:

(Continued from page 2)

- floating point precision (not 8-bit like Gimp, not 16-bit like most raw processors)

- native support for multiple colorspaces (sRGB, ProPhoto RGB, LAB, CMYK, LCH, HSL, HSV, BW)

- non destructive editing (adjustment layers)

- KISS design

- real-time preview

- basic operations: CMYK curves, CMYK levels, RGB curves, RGB levels, white balance in LAB, saturation in LAB, LAB curves, BW curve, HSV equalizer, LCH equalizer, recover shadows/highlights, vignette, local contrast, LAB/BW/RGB/CMYK gradients

- expert operations: levels, curves, equalizer, exposure, saturation, white balance, fill, tone, local contrast, auto_dodge/auto_burn, sharpen, vignette, gradient, Gaussian blur, recover highlights, recover shadows, channel mixer, high pass, c2g, copy

- RAW support via dcraw

- up to 5 color samplers

- histograms and color matrices

- many blend modes (multiply, screen, overlay, inverted overlay, dodge, burn, add, grain extract, grain merge, sub, difference, darken, lighten), color/luminosity blending for RGB and CMYK

GFeedLine – v2.4.1.
https://code.google.com/p/gfeedline/
Free GNU General Public License Python code by Yoshizumi Endo. GFeedLine is a social networking client. It supports Twitter, Facebook & Tumblr. This release adds support for thumbnails on Instagram. Requires Python 2.6 or 2.7

Naev – v0.5.3. http://blog.naev.org/
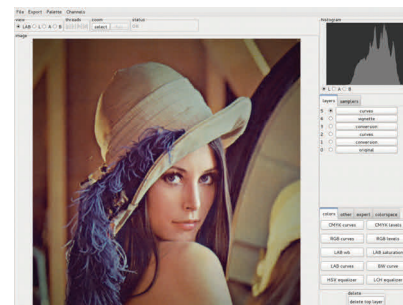Free GNU General Public License source code and executables for Debian/Ubuntu, Fedora, Apple Ma-

cOSX, and Microsoft Windows by Edgar Simo-Serra et al. Naev is a 2D space trading and combat game. Naev is played from a top-down perspective, featuring fast-paced combat, many ships, a large variety of equipment and a large galaxy to explore. The game is highly open-ended, letting you proceed at your own pace. Requires Pentium III or faster processor, 512 MB of free RAM, 150 MB of free disk space, and OpenGL 1.1 or later compatible video card.

Kernel Source – v3.11.6. http://www.kernel.org/
Free GNU General Public License source code for all platforms by the Linux community.

Screenshots

delaboratory
http://delaboratory.googlecode.com/svn/trunk/screenshots/0.8.jpg

Naev
http://naev.googlecode.com/svn/trunk/site/screenshots/0.4.0-beta1/naev0.png

Free and Deeply Discounted Software at SharewareOnSale.com

By Ira Wilsker

Websites

http://sharewareonsale.com
http://dottech.org
http://azadinetwork.com
http://giveawayoftheday.com
http://sharewareonsale.com/s/free-softorbits-sketch-drawer-pro-79-95-value
http://sharewareonsale.com/s/free-avg-internet-security-2014-54-99-value

For several years, one of the best sources of objective software reviews, evaluations, and tips has been on dotTech.org. Under the active leadership of the well respected "Ashraf", dotTech.org has developed an impeccable reputation for honesty when evaluating software and related computer components. For many PC users, Ashraf has become the resident guru on software, and loyally and faithfully follow his evaluations and recommendations. On an unaffiliated software giveaway website, GiveawayOfTheDay.com (GOTD), best known for its free daily giveaway of one legally licensed commercial software product, Ashraf's comments and review of the day's single software offering are strongly considered by many of the GOTD users before deciding whether or not to download and install the day's offering. Ashraf's opinion appears to influence the daily volume of downloads.

DotTech.org has now been online for five years (October, 2008), and is viewed on a daily basis by thousands of visitors. Ashraf has expanded the online services that he offers with the creation of his Azadi Network, which he describes as, " ... a web-based company that provides solutions for the digital age." Azadi is an Urdu word which means "freedom", a concept that Ashraf apparently encourages on his websites. Recently (August, 2013), Ashraf expanded his Azadi Network to include a second website, SharewareOnSale.com. Again, according to Ashraf, "SharewareOnSale connects software developers with users, offering daily software deals of free and heavily discounted programs. Although it is a relatively new service, SharewareOnSale has already garnered much attention around the world."

I first found out about SharewareOnSale.com while researching a particular software product on dotTech, and noticed a banner promoting SharewareOnSale. Now, SharewareOnSale is one of the first websites that I visit every day. In order to be better informed about new bargains offered on the site, I chose to sign up for the once daily email that lists that day's offerings; it is important to check the website frequently as the offerings are very dynamic, and frequently changing. Product offerings that may appear on the site early in the day may possibly "expire" before the end of the day as a limited time offer may expire, or a finite quantity of available product may be downloaded, completing the offering prior to a stated expiration of the offer. On two excellent recent offers, both now expired, the offers quickly became unavailable prior to their stated expiration. One was a free, one-year "extended trial" of a newly released and updated, fully functional, comprehensive security suite, AVG Internet Security 2014. On SharewareOnSale.com it was a legitimate free download, rather than paying the $55 charged on the AVG website for the same product. I registered on the SharewareOnSale website (one time, simple and free), put the program in my shopping cart, and checked-out with a zero balance due, with no credit card or PayPal necessary to pay for the free item. On the following screen were download links for both the 32 and 64-bit versions, which were pre-registered and fully activated when installed. Even though the AVG Internet Suite 2014 was labeled as a fully functional, not crippled in any way, trial version, the expiration date of the trial was a full year in the future. All services and updates would be available for a year, no different than any other program with an annual license. When I downloaded the AVG Internet Security 2014, SharewareOnSale said that the

(Continued from page 4)

offer was still good for five more days, but just two days later this particular offer was listed as "expired" (http://shareware onsale.com/s/free-avg-internet-security-2014-54-99-value).

Another offer that I was fortunate enough to take prompt advantage of, prior to its quick expiration, was a free download of the $40 Wondershare Video Converter Pro (sharewareonsale.com/s/free-wondershare-video-converter-pro-39-95-value), and excellent program for converting videos in almost any video format to almost any other video format, including dozens of formats for PC, Mac, online, YouTube, and individual smart devices. I told one of my neighbors about it the day that I downloaded and installed Wondershare Video Converter Pro, but by the next day, when he went to download it, the offer had already expired. The important object lesson here is to frequently check the SharewareOnSale.com website, and download (or purchase) any desired item right away, as tomorrow may be too late.

On the positive side, as mentioned above, is that the content on the site is very dynamic, as new software items are very frequently added, and other offers expire. As I type this, there are several interesting deals posted, which may likely expire before readers of this column have a chance to get them, but new offers will inevitably replace the expired ones after this column is published. Some of the items currently available (which will likely expire soon and be replaced with new offers) are:

SoftOrbits Sketch Drawer Pro, a $79.95 value, available free for a very limited time; this product can, "turn your digital photos into works of art! SoftOrbits Sketch Drawer Pro converts photos/images to sketches in just a few clicks."

SoftOrbits Photo Digital Suite Personal on sale for $4.99 ($349.95 value if each component purchased individually, or $99.95 if purchased together as a suite). According to the posting, "SoftOrbits Digital Photo Suite Personal is a software pack of 10 software titles: Batch Picture Resizer, Photo Stamp Remover, Batch Picture Protector, Html Web Gallery Creator, Red Eye Removal, Private Photo Album, Flash Drive Recovery, SoftOrbits Photo Retoucher, SoftSkin Photo Makeup, and Sketch Drawer."

GiliSoft #1 Video Tools on sale for $4.99 ($380 value). "GiliSoft #1 Video Tools is a 7 + 2 software bundle of nine different programs: seven programs by

GiliSoft (Video Converter, Screen Recorder, Video Editor, Slideshow Movie Creator, Movie DVD to Video, Movie DVD Backup, Movie DVD Creator) and two bonus gifts by EaseUS (Data Recovery Wizard and Partition Master Pro)."

Tenorshare Data Recovery WinPE on sale for $2.99 ($39.95 value). One of my personal favorites for recovering deleted or damaged files, "Tenorshare Data Recovery WinPE lets you recover lost, damaged, formatted or deleted data from a bootable/recovery CD/DVD/USB without booting into Windows."

Free BlazeVideo SmartShow ($49.95 value). "BlazeVideo SmartShow offers you the easiest way to create a unique movie with your favorite pictures, video clips, music and voice-over."

While it is somewhat inevitable that many, if not all of these offers will expire prior to publication, Ashraf has been very good at keeping SharewareOnSale.com well stocked with an assortment of free and deeply discounted software products. Examples of some of the other now expired offerings include Wondershare PDF Converter, a $60 utility given away for free, that can convert PDF files in a large variety of other editable formats including Word; RoboForm Everywhere, a very popular $20 password manager, that was also available for free for a limited time; Process Lasso Pro, an excellent $15 system and memory manager, that was available for free; Paragon Partition Manager 12, a very popular $40 hard drive partition manager, that was available for $2.99; Ashampoo Burning Studio 2013, a comprehensive $40 CD and DVD burning utility, that was given away for free; and dozens of other utilities that either given away for free or sold for very nominal prices. As each of these offers expired, they were replaced by newer offers, a cycle that has been repeating since the inception and availability of the service.

It is somewhat amazing that Ashraf has been able to compile and make available several dozen decent utilities of various types, during the two months that ShareOnSale.com has been in existence. For those who may like notice of the free or bargain software available, I recommend signing up for the free, once daily email announcing the offerings, using the form on the top right of each SharewareonSale.com web page. Just like our local weather, if you do not see anything that you like, just come back in a few minutes or tomorrow, and the offerings will likely be different.

Home Networks

By Dick Maybach, Member, Brookdale Computer Users' Group, NJ

July 2013 issue, BUG Bytes www.bcug.com

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Learning about networks, especially the Internet, can easily become mind-numbing, largely because the field is so full of jargon and acronyms. While it isn't possible to escape this morass completely, we can make it somewhat more manageable by approaching the topic in two stages: (1) a single computer connected to the Internet and (2) a home network connected to the Internet.

Every device connected to the Internet, no matter its location in the world, has a unique Internet Protocol (IP) Address. This is usually written as four three-digit numbers separated by periods, where the value of each number varies from 0 to 255. Although we usually think of a site's address as being its Uniform Resource Locator (URL), this is just a convenient representation. When you send a message to a URL, your computer uses a Domain Name System (DNS), usually a service provided by your Internet Service Provider (ISP), to find the associated IP address. For example, *www.google.com* is assigned the IP address 74.125.140.105. You, of course, must have your own IP address so that you can receive data. (You can find it by browsing the site http://whatismyipaddress.com) Your ISP assigns an IP address to your computer when you connect it to the Internet using a Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP) service. This means that your ISP must own enough IP addresses to supply a unique one to each user, and normally each home users has only one. If you have only one computer and you plug it directly into the ISP's modem, this is sufficient.

Before introducing any more complexity, let's see what we can learn about our Internet connection. Use an Ethernet cable to connect your PC directly to the Wide Area Network (WAN) modem provided by your ISP. You will have to reboot your PC and probably the WAN modem to establish an Internet connection. If you use Windows, navigate through *All Programs* and *Accessories* to *Command Prompt* and type "ipconfig /all". (The equivalent Linux and OS-X command is "ifconfig" or "ip".) There are graphical programs that show the same information, but ipconfig puts it all on one screen. (The screenshot shows only the first portion the command's output.)

Fortunately, not all of the displayed data is important, but note the following items.

- DHCP is enabled and its server is located at 68.114.38.114, and the ISP hs used it to assign the IP address 66.169.52.43 to this particular PC.

- This address is valid for one hour (as shown by the Lease Obtained and Lease Expires times). Before the IP address lease expires, your PC will automatically request a renewal.

- The hard-wired address of the Ethernet interface in our PC is 04-7D-B-9A-BD-8A.

- One of the DNS servers at 24.178.162.3, 66.189.0.67, or 24.217.201.67 translates URL to IP addresses.

If ever you lose your Internet access, a good first step would be to repeat the above procedure to see whether the problem is in your home network or within your ISP.

However, many of us want to connect several devices to the Internet. How can we do this with only one IP address? There are blocks of IP addresses which never appear on the Internet, but are reserved for local use. The devices on most home networks use the addresses 192.168.1.x, where where x varies from 0 to 255. (The 1 in the third group could be replaced with any number from 0 to 255.) If your network is

(Continued from page 6)

using the 192.168.1.x plan, it knows that any IP address in this range belongs to a local device and any IP address outside this range resides on the Internet. To make use of this, we purchase a router and connect our local network devices to it. It has a separate connector for a cable to our ISP's modem. The router, as its name suggests, directs any local messages to internal addresses and sends all others to the ISP, but first it changes their return address to the IP address the ISP has assigned. But this means that all incoming messages have the same IP address; how does the router get them to the correct local device? Each message has not only an IP address, but also a 16-bit port number, and the router changes the port numbers of the return addresses of outgoing messages. It keeps track of these and when an incoming message appears, changes its address to the appropriate local device and restores the original port number. This process is called Network Address Translation (NAT).
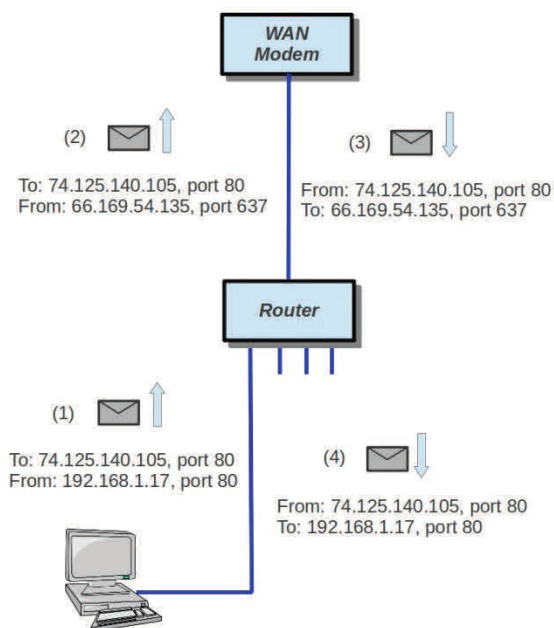
In the figure, our PC generates a message (1) to Google at 74.125.140.105 using Port 80. (It probably consulted an NDS to obtain Google's IP address.) In this case, the ISP has assigned us the IP address 66.169.54.135, and the router changes the return address to this (2) and changes the port to 637. When Google replies (3) to the only address and port it knows, the router consults its records and sees (4) that messages from Google to port

637 should be routed to local IP address 192.168.1.17 and Port 80. Your neighbor may also be using 192.169.1.17 as the local IP address for one of her PCs, but since her Internet IP address is not 66.169.54.135, she won't get your messages from Google.

If your home network includes a router, you should now reconnect it to the WAN modem and restore the original network connection for your PC. Again, use *ipconfig /all* (or *ifconfig*, as appropriate) and compare the results with those you obtained with the PC connected directly to the WAN modem. Again, the screenshot shows only the first portion of ipconfig's output.

Note the changes. (Ignore the change of Host Name and physical address; this is for a different PC.)

- The IP address now begins with 192.168.1, which is a local one, as is the default gateway.

- The DHCP server is now our router, which assigns all the devices with IP addresses of the form 192.168.1.x.

- There are two DNS servers, one in the router for local devices and one at the ISP for the Internet. (Note that the latter is one of the three we saw when connected directly.)

Zenmap (http://nmap.org/zenmap), available for Linux, OS X, and Windows, is a very valuable tool for exploring your local network. Pay special attention in the following discussion of how you can limit its probes to your local network, as its activities can look like you are trying to hack any computer it probes. Some system administrators are quite sensitive to these, and using them could result in unpleasant con-

(Continued from page 7)

versations with your ISP or legal authorities. The screenshot shows the results of a simple ping scan of my local network. Note that the target was 192.168.1.0/24. My network uses the addresses 192.168.1.x, where x varies from 0 to 255. Each field in the IP address is actually an 8-bit number, and the /24 tells Zenmap that it should not change the first three fields. (Three fields times 8 bits equals 24.) Thus it probes all the addresses from 192.168.1.0 through 192.168.1.255. If we had specified 192.168.0.0/16, Zenmap would have probed 192.168.0.0 through 192.168.255.255, and while this wouldn't probe out-side your local network, it could take a long time. The result is shown below.
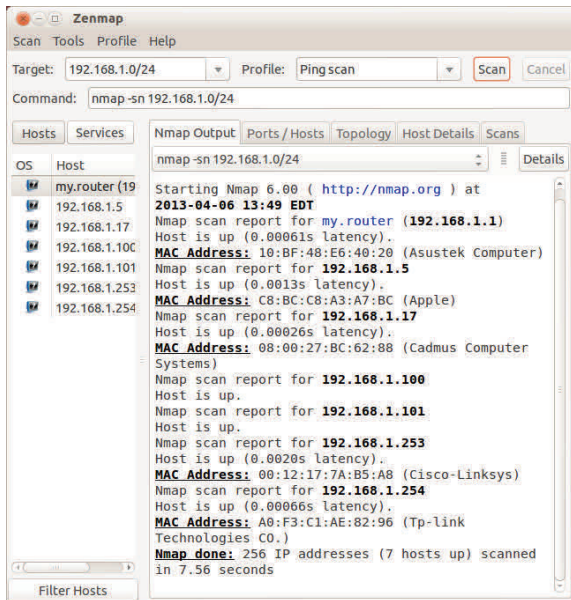

Seven devices are operating; since the first three fields of their IP addresses are the same, I'll designate them by only the last field. Our router is located at 1; 5 is a PC with an Asustek motherboard; 17 is a Windows 7 PC, 100 is the Ethernet adapter and 101 the wireless card of my desktop PC; 253 is a wireless access point; and 254 a network switch. A ping scan is quite simple; we are just looking for an answer from each address. We can learn much more by performing an intense scan, which takes several minutes, compared to the few seconds for a ping scan, and the results fill several screens. Fortunately, Zenmap can sumarize its results graphically.
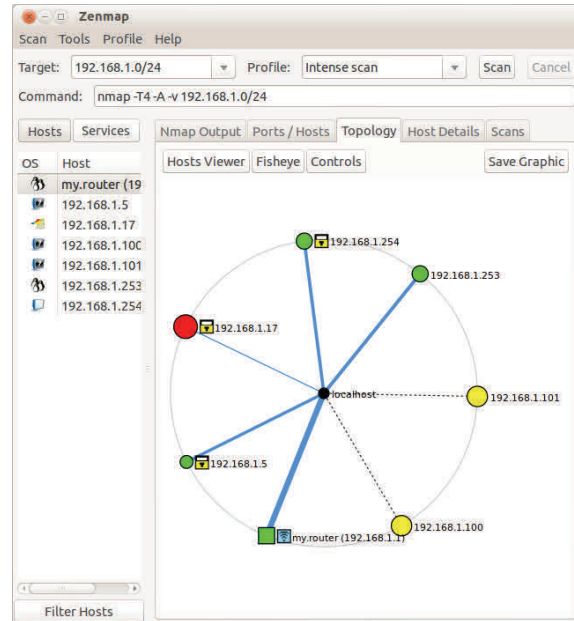
Circles indicate computers, and squares indicate rout-ers. The colors and sizes of the nodes indicate how many ports are open; a greater number of open ports implies a greater vulnerability to outside hacking. (Green is good, yellow less so, and red could be something to be concerned about.) The thickness of the line to localhost indicates the round-trip delay; thick means slow. (I made this probe from the PC with addresses 100 and 101, so delays can't be meas-ured here.) The square yellow icon is a padlock indo-cating that some of the ports are filtered, which less-ens the vulnerability to hacking. Finally, the square blue icon indicates a wireless access point. (Clearly, the detection isn't perfect, because 253 is also a WAP.)

The host details tab shows what Zenmap has found about a particular computer.
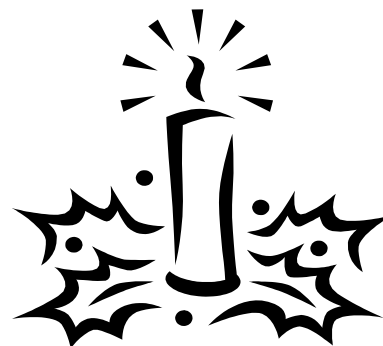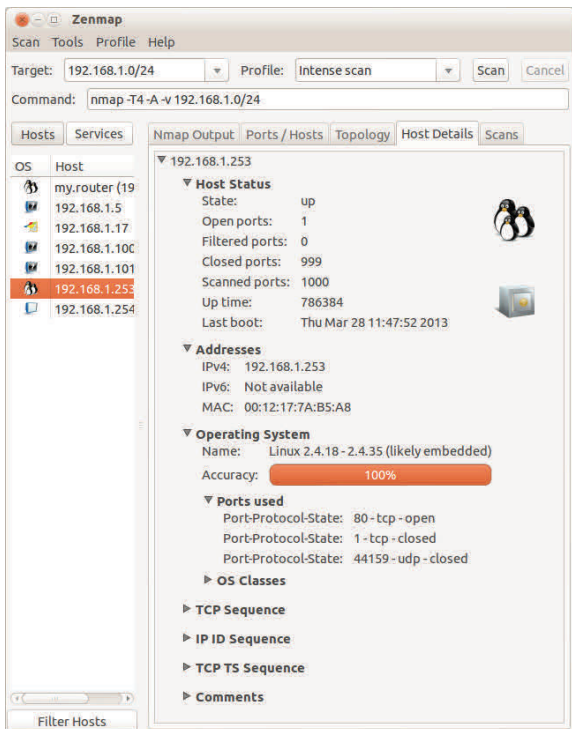
(Continued from page 8)

In this case (the WAP), the operating system is Linux and the one open port is 80.

Zenmap can also show you the route your data takes as it travels to its final destination. For example, let's again use www.google.com at 74.125.140.105. We enter this into the target box and select Quick *traceroute* as the scan. The screenshots show both the text and graphic results.

In this case, our test message made 16 hops on its way to Google, although other tests would provide slightly different results. You can also view these results graphically, but I find the text output easier to understand and to be more complete. There are other network tools, but Zenmap is included in the Parted Image toolkit (discussed in my April 2012 article, available at http://www.bcug.com), which I always have with me. There is extensive documentation for this useful program on the Zenmap Web site, accessible through the Help menu button visible in the screenshots.
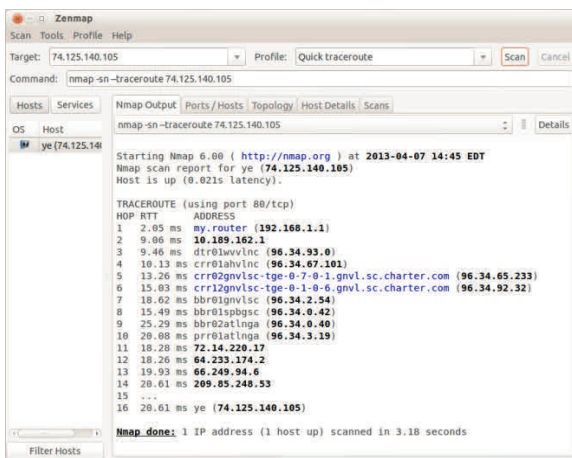
Taking a few minutes to explore your home network will remove much of its mystery and could prove valuable in solving future problems.

Fairfax Meeting
November 16, 2013

Apps

iPad Apps Also Available for Android
Presented by Kyla Lupo

"Learn 30" — Parted Magic

Presentation by Geof Goodrum.
A troubleshooting tool for use when your computer has a 'bad hair' day.

Geof Goodrum will demonstrate Parted Magic, a bootable CD/flash drive of essential utility programs to partition and format storage devices, create and restore drive image backups, report on health of SMART-enabled drives, reset forgotten Microsoft Windows passwords, recover deleted photos from digital camera media and files from damaged drives, securely erase files and entire drives, scan media for malware, and browse the web for answers even if your PC won't boot from the hard drive.

More info: https://partedmagic.com/

How to Find a Lost Document and Other Filing Tips

**By Nancy DeMarte, 1st Vice President,
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August 2013 issue, PC Monitor
www.spcug.org**

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I suppose you're thinking this could never happen… until it does. You have a large number of folders full of documents and photos on your computer. One day you need to find a letter that you wrote and saved a week ago, but can't remember what name you gave it or which folder you saved it in. Here are some ways to
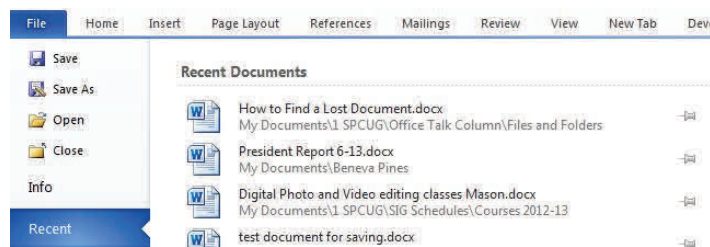

find that document:

Look in your Recent Documents list: Open Word 2010 or 2007 and click File, and you will see a list of documents you opened recently. If you haven't opened more than about 20 documents since you saved the letter, it will be on the list. If you find the letter, you can open it from the Recent Documents list. But before you do that, it's a good idea to take note of its "path," so you'll know exactly where it's stored. The path of a document file in Word 2010 is shown below its name in the Recent Documents list. It is represented by a string of folders, starting with the largest folder, My Documents, and ending with the sub-folder in which the document is stored. As shown, the path for this article is "My Documents\1 SPCUG\Office Talk Column\ Files and Folders." In Word 2007, the path is missing in the Recent Documents view, but with a few steps, you can find it. Open Word 2007 and click the Office button to open the Recent Documents list. Click a recent document to open it. Then click Office button – Save As. In this window the path of the document appears in the address bar across the top. The last folder in the string of folders is where the document is stored.

You can keep or "pin" any Recent Document to the list for easy future access by clicking the pushpin icon next to it. You can also right click a recent document in Word 2010 and select "Remove from list." Recent files lists exist in most 2070 and 2010 Office programs.

Search your computer: In Windows 7, click the Start button at the left end of the taskbar, then type in the search box one or more words which you guess are part of your lost letter's name. If your guess is correct, the letter should appear in the Files list and can be opened from there. Sometimes, however, a Windows 7 search does not find files stored too deeply in sub-folders. Windows 8 offers a more targeted search. Open the Charms from the Start Screen and click the category of item you're looking for, such as Mail or, in this case, Files. Then type your search words in the Search box. This tool searches inside all levels of sub-folders in the category and returns a list of possibilities. It searches not only file names, but also the body of the document.
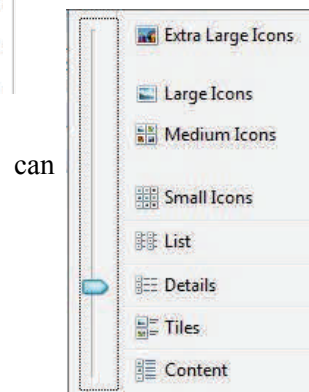
Make use of File Views: The contents of any folder on the computer can be viewed in various ways, but some views fit certain kinds of files better than others. It's easiest to find a document in a file list using the Details view, which is a list which includes File Name, Date Modified, File Type, and Size. A photo is best viewed as an Icon or Tile, which shows a thumbnail of the photo, its name, and file size. To change the view of a file list in Windows 7, open a folder, then click the Views icon at the right end of the menu bar. By moving the slider, you can preview how different views affect your list before making your selection.

If your letter does not appear in Recent Documents and is not found with a Search, you can open My Documents and scroll to the bottom of the list of folders to see unfiled documents. If it isn't there,

(Continued from page 10)

then open a sub-folder where you guess it might be. Set the view to Details, and sort the list by Date Modified, which will put recently opened files at the top of the list. To sort, click the heading of the Date Modified column. Reverse the sort order by clicking the heading again. File names sort alphabetically; dates chronologically.
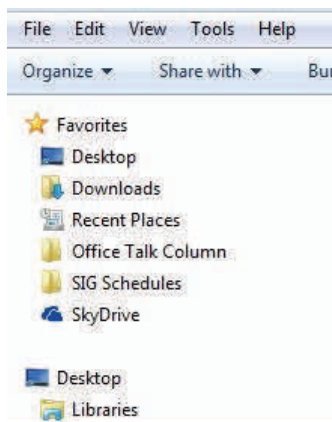
Add folders to your Favorites: Much like the Favorite websites list you keep in your Internet browser, Windows provides a convenient spot for you to park folders that you open frequently. Open Libraries. In the Explorer Window, at the top of the navigation pane on the left, you'll see a section called Favorites. A few folders are listed there by default, but you can customize this list with your own folders. I keep my SIG Schedules and Office Talk Column folders there because I open them frequently, and because opening a Favorite folder takes only one click. To add a folder to Favorites, make it visible in the main Explorer window (but don't open it), then click and drag it left onto the word Favorites, or use Copy and Paste. A Favorite folder is synchronized with the original one. Whenever you make a change to files in the original folder, the change will also appear in the Favorites version and vice versa.

File Management is one of the most difficult skills to master in a Windows environment. And each new version of Windows changes the system just enough to cause confusion.

The more you understand how files and folders are stored and organized on your computer, the more control you'll have of your documents and other important files. You won't have many lost documents, either.

Free Internet Faxing Services No Fax Machine Required!
By Bob Rankin, Ask Bob Rankin
www.askbobrankin.com

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Dump your fax machine, the Internet has made this dinosaur obsolete. Think of the savings on toner, paper, and time when all you really need these days is a cell phone, PDA, or PC. I have a big list of sites for you that offer free Internet faxing services. Some of them are completely free, while others offer free or limited trials. Pick the online fax service that suits you best...

FaxZero lets you send free faxes from a simple web-based interface. Just enter the sender and recipient info, type in your message, and hit the "Send Free Fax Now" button. The rich-text editor lets you add basic formatting, highlighting and fonts to your text. You can also fax a file from your hard drive. Supported file formats include PDF, Microsoft Word (DOC, DOCX or RTF), Excel spreadsheet (XLS or XLSX), image files (PNG or JPG), TXT, HTML, and PowerPoint (PPT). You can attach multiple files, but the combined size of all attachments must be 20MB or less.

And yes, it's really free to send a fax to anywhere in the USA or Canada. You can send five free faxes per day, each with a maximum of three pages. No ads are inserted on your faxed pages, but the FaxZero logo will appear on the cover page of your outgoing fax. You can even use FaxZero to fax your U.S. congressperson or senator. I've written more about FaxZero in my Send a Free Fax article.

GotFreeFax is basically a clone of FaxZero, with some minor differences. You can send 2 free faxes daily to the USA or Canada, with a 3 page per fax maximum. No ads or branding appear on the cover page. GotFree-Fax supports PDF, Microsoft Word, OpenDocument Text (.odt), and Rich Text (.rtf) file formats only. One unique feature is the ability to substitute tokens in the message, such as {RECEIVER_NAME}, {RECEIVER_COMPANY}, and {RECEIVER_FAX}.

PamFax is another free faxing service that offers 3 free outgoing pages (after signup) with no ads. You can also get a free fax number for inbound faxes. PamFax has an address book for convenience, integrates with

PATACS Annual Financial Report, Fiscal Year 2013
By Paul Howard, Treasurer

PATACS's fiscal year concluded on September 30th. With a positive cash flow of $3624.47, the group is in excellent financial condition. This report consists solely of PATACS's business, since the merger of the predecessor groups (WACUG and NCTCUG) into PATACS closed on 5/19/2012, prior to this report period.

Donations are vital to the fiscal soundness of the group. Member generosity accounts for 19 percent of our income. These donations received were $270 less than in FY 2012. Amazon commissions via our website links were $457.58.

We received a huge donation of $2548.88 in September from the NOVACOM Computer Club, which ceased operations in December of 2011. We're very pleased that about a dozen former members of that organization have joined PATACS.

Member donations were received this year from: Graham, Housley, K. Johnson M. Johnson, Leggett, Loew, Lowe, Mabudian, Mikosinski, Pafford, Phillips,Schmidt, Throneburg, Wenri, and Vestrich.

Pizza SIGs were sponsored by Paul Howard, and twice by Jon Mabudian. Pizza SIG donors include Brueggeman, Fraser, Fujii, Garson, Goldberg, Grotenstein, Howard, K. Johnson, Mabudian, Mikosinski, Ruddick, Scheuman, Schmidt, Walsh, Willard, and Wenri.

PATACS is financially sound because of prudent planning and fiscal restraint during the 35 years of its history. Membership stands at 104. Our "rainy day fund" was established many years ago, and is held in a CD and an interest bearing checking account. Low interest yields on insured deposits are disappointing, but the norm we're all experiencing in the savings market.

Our account balances at the close of the fiscal year (September 30th) were: Checking Account $2692.28; Interest Checking - $14718.65; CD account: $1107.29.

This Annual Treasurer's Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2013 has been approved by the Board of Directors of PATACS on 10/21/2013. The account balances noted above are based on on-line and email queries of our banks – statements for all accounts as of the 9/30/2013 close of the fiscal year have not yet been received. On that basis, the balances and the Cash Flow Report below are certified as correct.

Paul Howard, Treasurer
James Rhodes, President

The "organizational documents" area of our web site contains additional information about the user group's financial operations, including prior years' Financial Reports for comparison purposes

PATACS Cash Flow Report
FY '13: 10/1/12 - 9/30/13

Revenues

Pizza SIG Cash Donations	680.00
Donations by Check	575.00
Donation from NOVACOM	2548.88
Total Donations	**$3803.88**
Membership Dues	**2275.00**
Interest Income	**57.59**
Amazon Commissions	**457.58**
Total Revenues	**$6594.05**

Expenses

Insurance - Liability & Personal Prop.	425.00
Legal - VA Corporation & Postage Fees	28.59
APCUG Dues	100.00
Donation – Friends of OLLI	250.00
Total Administrative	**$803.59**
M'bership / PR – Printing, Hospitality	**$180.40**
Door Prizes	174.93
Webinar Services Expenses	159.86
Meeting Equipment	5.24
Total Meetings & Other Svcs	**$340.03**
Newsletter Assembly	59.80
Newsletter Postage	657.50
Newsletter Printing	872.64
Total Newsletter	**$1589.94**
Web Site – Domain Registration	**$55.62**
Total Expenses	**$2969.58**
Results from Operations	**$3624.47**

Prepared 10/20/2013

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Outlook, and works with popular cloud services such as DropBox, Google Drive, and SkyDrive.

PopFax is yet another free fax sending service. Like the others, you can input a brief text message, or upload a document from your hard drive. But I can't recommend PopFax for several reasons. In the Terms of Use on their website, it says that PopFax does not guarantee "the possible alteration of the data sent by the User nor the service availability." It also says they are not liable for damage "following to an alteration of the User data transfer." This could be badly translated legal mumbo-jumbo, but yikes! Also my Chrome browser crashed when trying to send a DOC file with PopFax. On another attempt, it said my fax number was "invalid." After sending a test fax to another number, it never arrived. Of course, your mileage may vary, but with so many other choices, I'd steer clear of PopFax.

Sign up with K7, a messaging system that will send free faxes and voicemail to your email address, with an option to view or listen to your messages via the web. You get a free fax/voicemail number which you can give to your family, friends, and business buds. Just sit back and wait for the faxes to start dropping into your inbox as email attachments. If a K7 number is inactive for 30 days (no incoming voice or fax messages), it will be terminated. K7 cannot be used to send outgoing faxes. My companion article Free Inbound Faxing goes into more detail about Faxaway, an almost-free service that forwards incoming faxes to your email.

eFax claims that they are the largest online network on the planet with over a million subscribers in 2,500 cities and 27 countries. Also known as Zipfax, you can send and receive faxes as email attachments. You simply use the recipient's fax number and eFax's address. The 30-day freebie allows you to send or receive up to 150 pages. If you don't cancel during the initial month, you will be charged $16.95 per month. See also Free Inbound Faxing for more details on eFax Limited Accounts, a free service that forwards incoming faxes to your email.

Nextiva Fax offers a 30-day free trial, including 500 free faxes. Send a fax by email, or send and receive faxes from Microsoft applications. Instead of hitting

the print button, simply select "fax" right from Word, Excel, etc. Nextiva also lets you send and receive faxes from mobile devices. After the trial period, you'll be $8.95 per month, unless you cancel.

RingCentral is designed for small businesses, not only can you receive and send faxes via email, they can supply you with toll-free fax numbers, custom greetings, an auto-receptionist, voicemail, and multiple extensions. The company offers a 7-day free trial, during which you get 500 free fax pages. After the trial period, you'll be $7.99 per month, unless you cancel.

I couldn't find a smartphone app that sends free faxes. There's an app called scanR that's supposed to do that, but apparently it's defunct. CamScanner is a free app that turns your iPhone or Android smartphone into a scanner, fax machine and PDF creator. Take a picture of a document, receipt, business card, etc. CamScanner turns it into a searchable PDF that you can fax, print or upload to various cloud storage services. Faxing costs 99 cents per page.
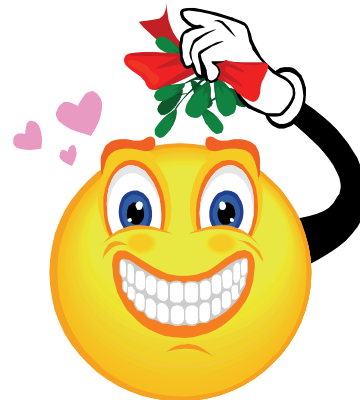
Happy Holidays!

(Continued from page 1)

Norton Identity Safe is free and functionally similar to RoboForm ($29.95 to $39.95; PCs and Macs), LastPass (free; PCs), KeePass (free; PCs and Macs?), and Keychain (free; Macs). Password managers improve security by encrypting passwords and add convenience in using them.

Potential New Memory Technology

Scientists at the National Physical Laboratory in Teddington, England (see http://www.npl.co.uk) have created an experimental memory device that uses carbon nanotubes filled with germanium-telluride that can be switched between crystalline and amorphous states when heated by a beam of electrons. Think 1s and 0s as in (a) charge, no charge and (b) magnetic field or no magnetic field. This may lead to novel architectures for memory devices. Don't expect to see commercialization for some years. For a short summary see *Chemical & Engineering News*, September 23, 2013, p. 26. The original research was published in *Nano Lett.*, 2013, 13(9), pp. 4020-4027.

Duolingo

Want to learn Spanish, French, German, Portuguese or Italian? Take a look at Duolingo for a unique approach to learning languages. See http://www.duolingo.com

Solution to XP Obsolescence

Microsoft's Extended Support for XP ends on April 8, 2014 (Mainstream Support already ceased on April 14, 2009). What happens then? There is fairly widespread concern that the world's digital mischief-makers will attack XP-based computers. The city of Munich in Germany plans to distribute, through its Gasteig library (Münchner Stadtbibliothek), 2,000 free CDs with Ubuntu Linux as an OS replacement. The Munich city council (Münchner Stadtverwaltung) has for years strived to replace commercial products with free, open-source software starting with LiMux in 2003 (see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LiMux). See also http://www.omgubuntu.co.uk/2013/06/germany-to-hand-out-free-ubuntu-cds-on-xps-deat

What is the implication for us? If you are still using Windows XP it would be prudent to replace it sooner rather than later. In 2013 through September Microsoft issued over 80 patches for XP and there is no reason to believe miscreants won't find additional security holes, but there will be no patches. It will be open season for hackers.

Oh, one more thing. Microsoft's support for Office 2003 also ends on April 8, 2014. See http://www.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/endofsupport.aspx for a pseudo-ad from Microsoft.

Trackpad in Your Life

If you are now using Windows 8, you may wish to consider acquiring a trackpad for your desktop computer rather than using a traditional mouse, particularly if you use both a laptop and desktop machines. Using a trackpad with a desktop computer will give you a more consistent user experience with the laptop. A touchpad provides gesture controls to non-touchscreen Windows 8 desktops and laptops. Consider the Logitech T650 wireless, rechargeable touchpad, which has generally received positive reviews (see http://www.logitech.com/en-us/product/touchpad-t65). This device also works with Windows 7.

Other touchpads you may wish to consider:

- Dell Wireless Touchpad (sold by Microsoft).
- Dell Wireless Multi-Touch Touchpad TP713.
- Lenovo Wireless Touchpad K5923.
- Perixx PERIPAD-720 Wireless Touchpad.

PATACS Information

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E-mail article submissions and reprint requests to editor(at)patacs.org

Membership Policy

Membership dues are $25.00 (U.S.Funds) per year, with a $15 surcharge for international mail. Membership in PATACS includes membership in all SIGs, access to the software libraries, and subscription to the Posts published 12 times per year in print by US Mail and PDF download by Internet. Applications may be obtained at any club meeting, by downloading from the website, by calling one of the officers or board members, or by writing to the club. A sample newsletter, membership application and related information may be obtained by enclosing $2 (for US addresses only) and mailing your request to the membership address. Please do not send cash by mail. Payment and applications may also be submitted at any meeting, or mail to: PATACS Membership, 4628 Valerie CT, Annandale VA 22003-3940

Advertisement Policy

Members' advertisements: Ads are accepted from members for non-commercial purposes at no charge. Copy should be sent to the Editor in the same format as article submissions. Commercial Advertisements: Ads are accepted from commercial advertisers at the rate of $40 per full page, per appearance, with discounts for multiple insertions. Smaller ads are priced accordingly. Payment for ads must be made in advance of appearance. Advertisers must supply a permanent address and telephone number to the editor.

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Permission to reprint articles from the PATACS Posts is given to school, personal computer club, and nonprofit organization publications, provided that: (a) PATACS Inc. receives a copy of the publication; (b) credit is given to the PATACS Posts as the source; (c) the original author is given full credit; and (d) the article author has not expressly copyrighted the article. Recognition is one means of compensating our valued contributors

If you are moving

Please send your change of address to the

Microcenter Clinics

See http://microcenter.com/site/ stores/instore-clinics.aspx for the latest news on these free clinics.

Upcoming Meetings

December 14th Fairfax Meeting

Identity Theft

Hewie Poplock, a victim of identity theft, presents this informative session which includes many videos of actual occurrences of events and articles that pertain to how ID theft can happen. Then Hewie gives many great suggestions on how to prevent you and your family from experiencing ID Theft.

Hewie Poplock, Program Chair, Central Florida Computer Society, APCUG Director. Hewie attended his first user group meeting armed with a yellow legal pad and 21 questions. Although only four of them got addressed at that first meeting, he knew that computer user groups were an invaluable source of help, information and friendship. That was in 1982 at an Osborne User group. He has been active in the user group movement ever since. He likes to help computer users and give back much of what he has learned over the years.

Hewie's session will utilize APCUG's Adobe Connect service, allowing PATACS members to view and listen to the presentation on-line, if they're unable to attend in person.

First Class

PATACS Meeting Information

Call (703) 370-7649 for meeting announcements

Scan the QR code at left or enter

http://www.patacs.org

to visit our web site

Free Admission — Bring a Friend!

Arlington Meetings

Carlin Hall Community Center
5711 S. 4th Street, Arlington, VA 22204
http://www.patacs.org/arlingtonmeetings.html

General Meeting
1st Wednesday (12/4) 7pm

Technology and PC Help Desk (SIG)
4th Wednesday (12/25 **CANCELLED**!)
       Happy Holidays!

Board of Directors
3rd Monday (12/23) 7pm

Fairfax Meetings (with OLLI PC User Group)

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI)
4210 Roberts Road, Fairfax VA 22032
http://www.patacs.org/fairfaxmeetings.html

General Meeting
3rd Saturday (12/21) 12:30pm

Online-Only Webinar
2nd Wednesday (12/11) 7-9pm
http://www.patacs.org/webinarpat.html

**The 1/1/14 Arlington meeting
is Cancelled. Happy New Year!**