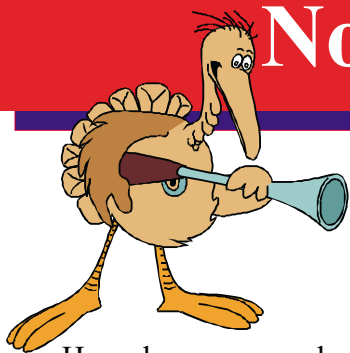


MID-CITIES PC USERS' GROUP

November 2002 Newsletter



Quips N' Tips

by Rick Howell

How does one go about writing an obituary for a club? It was a good group in its younger days, when the membership flourished and we had a good time at the meetings. A time when everyone had the explorer's dream of discovering new things and learning how to utilize the bright new hope for mankind that was rapidly becoming a way of life for some of us. But now the light dims for us as we take our machines for granted and accept them into our lives as just something we have to use like a toaster or the remote control for the TV. Just how many demonstrations of how to build a PC or how to search the internet can we feign interest in watching? Most of us have been around long enough to have seen it all. Is that what we are missing? Our youthful enthusiasm has gone the way of the floppy disk. We no longer look in amazement through the eyes of a child seeing a toy for the first time. No longer does the toy hold the same fascination. No longer does knowing how to play with the toy make you special. Perhaps it is time to put the toy away.

Steve Turner, Earl Drake and I have been around since the club's inception in October of 1986. Many others have come and gone. Those of you who are still with us came and saw something you liked and stuck it out. Many friends have been made at our meetings and many have gone on to other interests. We have influenced many people by our presence, and have actually changed the lives of some. I personally can attest to this when a father pulled me aside one day and thanked me for giving his son a new interest in life diverting him from a path which was leading to partying and drugs. Last I heard his son was attending one of the better colleges in the area. Moments like that can make our efforts worthwhile.

Unfortunately, those moments are few and far between.

Our original mandate was to promote personal computing within our community. I think we have accomplished this. When we first started, there was a computer in approximately one in ten households. Now the figure is something like one in every one and a half households. Most of our members have at least two computers, and some real sickos like me have one in almost every room of the house. Of course we can't take the credit for generating all this interest in computing, but we did our share to promote and encourage that interest.

I have asked George Miner to allow me to lead a discussion about the future of MCPCUG at our next meeting. Personally, I have come to believe it may be time to put it out to pasture. We have worn out all the worker bees, and nobody wants to come to meetings any more. Our club treasury is being stretched to its limits. I am however, open to suggestions. If any of you think we should continue and can convince me of that, please come to the meeting and show me how you feel. Maybe I just need a kick in the pants to try to get the ball rolling again. I want to know how you all feel. I recently sent out an email request to some select members to try to find out how they felt. I received no answer from any of them. I can only assume this was an indication of how they felt. If you want this group to continue to function, come to the meeting and let me know. If you think we should let it die, come to the meeting and let me know. Heck, I'd just like to see everybody again.

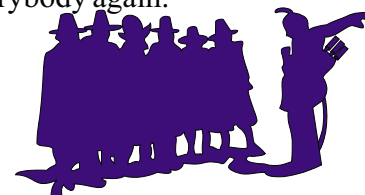
MEETING NOTICE

by: George Miner

When: Tuesday, Nov. 12th, at 7:15 PM

Where: Haltom City Library, located in the 3200 block of Friendly Lane. See our web site for more specific directions. [Http://www.mcpcug.org](http://www.mcpcug.org)

Program: Rick Howell, the founder of MCPCUG will discuss the future of our club with the members. Please come and let us know your feelings.



How To Surf Without Leaving A Trace

By Andrew Brandt for PC World Magazine, October 2002

Worried that someone may be looking over your shoulder – in the virtual sense – as you browse the Web? If so, you don't have to be an online agoraphobe any longer: New tools from old hands in Web privacy will let you surf with complete anonymity.

A certain degree of paranoia about the Web is justified. Advertisers track Web surfers all the time, planting cookies that track you as you surf from site to site so they can see what you want and where you go.

Proxy servers, such as the Safeproxy CGIProxy (available at <http://www.find.pcworld.com/30212>), have been around for years. These sites open another site, say, Amazon.com in a pane of the proxy. That way, Amazon won't see your IP address and the proxy can block ads and some cookies.

But proxy sites still allow destination sites to implant some ad cookies and Web bugs- the two most common tracking devices – on your system. Worse, many proxies are just too slow.

New browser plug-ins block far more than just your IP address. Both Anonymizer.com's Private Surfing (\$30 per year, limited-feature free version; <http://www.anonymizer.com>) and Zero Knowledge's Freedom WebSecure (\$50 per year; <http://www.zeroknowledge.com/>) promise to make you invisible to everyone on the Internet. Each product will encrypt transmissions between your computer and Web sites, scramble URLs so that they can't be seen by

administrators, disable the tracking function of cookies (while still letting them save preferences or perform automatic log-in at Web sites that use cookies for those purposes), and block some – though not all – advertising banners and graphics.

The plug-ins work only with Internet Explorer versions 5 and higher. Anonymizer's plug-in is compatible with versions of Windows from 98 through XP; a Zero-Knowledge spokesperson tells me that its tool can't run on some installations of Windows 98 and Me, but that it works well with Windows 2000 or XP.

The two plug-ins behave similarly; After a short download, each service adds a small button to Internet Explorer's toolbar that toggles the application on and off. Private surfing and Freedom WebSecure both generate a toolbar at the top of your Web browser window. Once you log in with your user name and password, the software becomes active and you can surf anonymously to your heart's content. Related services from these companies in the past offered anonymous surfing, but at a snail's pace. The new versions are dramatically faster. Freedom WebSecure seemed positively peppy, while Anonymizer still was a bit slower than unprotected surfing because of its encryption.

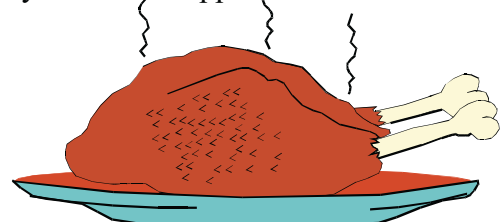
If you're concerned about the bread-crumbs trail you leave across the Internet as you browse the Web, either of these tools can sweep those crumbs away and keep profilers off your back.

Shoo, Ads Don't Bother Me

By Kalpana Narayanamurhti, PC World Magazine, October, 2001

Pop-up ads can drive you crazy, especially when you spend more time closing them than perusing the Web page you intended to visit. AdsGone (<http://www.find.pcworld.com/30269>) runs while you browse the Web with either Internet Explorer or AOL, and it blocks pop-ups before they appear. You can configure the program to block banner ads, too, and you can alter settings by adding ad servers to or removing them from the blocking list. The easy-to-use interface has a status bar that lists how many ads have been

blocked, as well as a logging button that provides information about each ad. Not having to scoot your pointer around the screen closing unwanted windows will make you a much happier Web surfer.



Security Alert

Taken from ZDNet News, Week in Review: Goofs & Gadgets

By Steve Musil



A new mass-mailing computer virus known as W32.Braid began spreading slowly last weekend among pcs. Although only 43 copies of the virus have been seen --indicating an extremely slow start -- W32.Braid shares some attributes of the widely spread Klez family of viruses and could have similar success.

Among the similarities, both viruses forge a fake sender address in the e-mails they use to propagate themselves, which make finding infected pcs more difficult. The Klez.h variant of the Klez virus has sent out millions of e-mail messages with a copy of itself attached.

A Russian antivirus company warned that a new virus could help hackers gain control home computers, but other security companies downplayed the threat. The new computer virus, or worm, is known as Roron, or as Oror.B. It can spread through e-mail messages, shared hard drive and the Kazaa file sharing network.

“We see that this worm is particularly dangerous for

home users,” a spokesman for the antivirus company said. “Corporate customers are already aware of the danger of attachments’ and are unlikely to open the file containing the program.



Microsoft developers tout the company’s upcoming Palladium architecture a technology that would enhance privacy, stymie piracy and increase a corporation’s control over its computers. Others see a more nefarious role for the security software. Instead of keeping just hackers out, critics say programs like Palladium could also block computer users from accessing certain data.

The conflict highlights a growing debate over “trusted computers” -- machines equipped with the technology to wall off data, secure communications and verify the characteristics of their system. Although military and intelligence agencies have used such systems, the concept has been met with opposition in mainstream consumer markets.

**One of our members, Nolan Terrill, is in the hospital.
Send him a card or drop him a line when you can**

**Baylor Medical Center
1901 N. MacArthur Blvd.
Room 670
Irving, TX 75062
or e-mail him
nterrill@nationwide.net**

Happy
THANKSGIVING



THE MID-CITIES PC USERS' GROUP

The Mid-Cities PC Users' Group is a not for-profit organization whose objectives are:

- * to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and experience,
- * education in the form of seminars and programs, and
- * community as pertains to the computer industry.

Annual membership is \$24.00 per family with one vote per membership. Members are encouraged to notify the Membership Chairperson of any change of address as soon as possible to continue receiving their monthly newsletter. Please address any notifications to: Mid-Cities PC Users' Group: Attn. Membership Chair, P.O. Box 54141, Hurst, TX 76054

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THE MID-CITIES PC USERS' GROUP NEWSLETTER

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CONTRIBUTING ARTICLES

Article Style: Type all copy flush left without justification; use word wrap feature for your paragraphs. This includes headings, by-lines, and the first line of each paragraph. Place a credit by-line (author's name) between the title and first paragraph. Leave no blank lines between paragraphs. Use only one space between sentences.

File Formats: MS Word or Word Perfect is preferred. If formatting is crucial and you do not have access to the above programs, send a hard copy to show the layout.

Submitting Articles: You may use one of two methods. Uploading the article to Nancy Hester at newsletter@mcpcug.org or e-mailing her directly at nancyhesterusa@netscape.net



Thanks a lot!

Deadline: The last Friday of the month prior to intended publication.

Advertising Rates:

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