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# EXTONPC.ORG NEWS

Volume 26, Issue 9

September, 2011

**THE EXTON PC COUNCIL** [www.ExtonPC.org](http://www.ExtonPC.org)

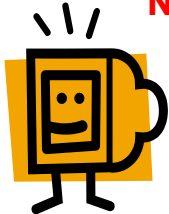


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## NEWS FROM THE EDITORS:

**Stephanie Varis and**

**Bob Linaberry**



On behalf of the EPCC, we would like to thank our recent guest speakers Michael Shephard and George Bourrie. Michael presented "Virtual Programs"- Virtual Box and Sandboxie; these are free virtual programs that let you run a different operating system that you can find on the internet. These programs allow you not to mess up your system, to install and preview your programs first into these virtual programs that stay in one place - leaving your computer intact. By doing so, your programs can be previewed in case it was not what you expected, you can delete them virtually. If you like them, you can install them in your PC. It was very informative and exciting!

George presented "Printer Problems" - the biggest one is the printer queue. This was very good to know. If you missed his presentation, it is available on our website on the page of Past Presentations.

Our future presentations will include presentations for Microsoft docx, Menu for Flash Drives, Getting Ready for the Holidays with Best Buy and more. We will be closing December with another Open House! We will keep you posted!

The EPCC Dues for current 2010 members will be \$10.00 due to cancellation of

meetings due to roof repair at the library. Dues for new members will be \$20.00. You can use the membership application/renewal form at the end of the newsletter or pay at a meeting. ❖



## UPCOMING MEETINGS:

**EPCC Meetings are on Mondays,  
6:30-9:00 in the Struble Room**

**Board Meetings are on Wed.,  
6:30-9:00 in the Board Room**

## Monday, September 12 EPCC Presentation

Part 1: How to Deal with Microsoft.docx

Part 2: Menu for Flash Drives

by Jim McKittrick:

Part 1: How to Deal with Microsoft.docx: Microsoft in an apparent bid to force people to buy its newest version of Office has made docx format the default save. If you send a

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docx memo or letter to someone with an older version of Office it will not open. At this September meeting Jim McKittrick will demonstrate work around for handling the unfriendly and incompatible docx.

In part II: Menu for Flash Drives, Jim will demonstrate some flash drive launcher programs that organize and give a neat and clean menu list for programs on your USB flash drive. These are free programs and if you are sympathetic with the TV detective Monk, who likes everything in its place, you will enjoy these launchers.

## **Wednesday, September 14 Board Meeting**

### **Monday, October 3 EPCC Presentation**

#### **“Get Ready for the Holidays with Best Buy”**

Best Buy’s for the upcoming holidays by “Best Buy”, Downingtown.

What to buy the grandkids, the kids, your spouse and just for yourself.

Best Buy’s technical and sales personal will be at EPCC to present the BEST BUYS for this year in electronics.

Tablets, pads, Readers, computers, printers and cameras. Lots of makes and models.

## **Wednesday, October 12 Board Meeting**

## **Wednesday, November 9 Board Meeting**

### **Monday, December 5**

## **Open House Presentation and Holiday Gathering! ❖**

### **Genealogy:**

One of our programming interests is with Genealogy programs. Please contact Izzi Bourrie or Jim McKittrick (see contact information at end of newsletter) if you have any information to share about Genealogy programs for tracking or research. Our members would love to explore their genealogy.



### **FEATURES:**

#### **Choosing a Mouse**

By Sandy Berger,  
CompuKISS Newsletter  
[www.compukiss.com](http://www.compukiss.com)  
sandy (at) compukiss.com

The mouse is a useful computer tool. Here's a little history combined with information on the many different types of mice available today.

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Many people seem to be curious how the mouse got its name. In the early 1960's, a man named Douglas Engelbart was fascinated with a theory he called "human augmentation technology," an idea that the computer should be used to enhance human performance. Up to that time, computers were useful only to military and scientific communities. In 1968, Engelbart made an input device to help people interact with the computer. The original mouse was a small rectangular wooden box with a cable running to the computer. Since the cord looked like a tail and mice are known for scurrying along a surface, this new device quickly became known as a mouse. The mouse turned out to be one of Englebart's most ingenious ideas. Yet, Englebart's original ideas were rejected, only to be resurrected later by others who took both the credit and the financial rewards. Because it frees the user from having to exclusively use the keyboard, the mouse is recognized as one of the great breakthroughs in computing.

The basic functionality and size of the mouse that we use today has changed little since 1968, but there have been changes in the technology behind the mouse. Older mice worked by a tracking ball on the bottom of the device. If you are still using this type of roller ball mouse, it is time for an upgrade.

The newer type of mouse is the optical mouse. The optical mouse uses a tiny camera to take thousands of pictures every second. It employs a light-emitting diode (LED) that bounces light off the surface on to a CMOS sensor that is similar to the sensors used in some digital cameras.

Optical mice have several advantages over the traditional roller ball mice:

- They have better tracking and a smoother response.
- There are no moving parts to wear out.
- While dirt gathered inside of the ball and roller bars of traditional mice interfering with the tracking, the optical mouse is sealed and there is no way for dirt to get inside the mouse.
- They can be used on most surfaces without a mouse pad. The only exception is a mirror, glass, or extremely shiny surface.

Most optical mice have a red light that shines through the bottom of the mouse. The light can actually be any color. I have even seen a few that cycles through various colors, although I don't really see the point in that because the bottom of the mouse is usually not seen.

One of the newest types of mice is the laser mouse. This is a type of optical mouse that uses a laser beam instead of an LED light. The laser beam is invisible, or nearly invisible, to the human eye. The laser mouse is more precise and accurate, but also more expensive. It's great for professional graphic designers and some gamers might find them useful, but the average computer user won't see enough difference to warrant the increased cost.

So if you are still using a mouse with a roller ball on the bottom, you might want to upgrade to an optical mouse. Or buy a new computer, most of which now come with optical mice. You will see a difference.

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Oh, and when you get to the store, be prepared to spend a little time in making a decision. You will find designer mice in red, green, blue, purple, and other colors. You will also see mice in many different sizes with a large variety of finishes. The most important thing, however, may be for you to choose a mouse that fits your hand and feels comfortable.

Also, remember that there are other input devices that can be substituted for a mouse. There are trackballs, joy sticks, and touch pads that can be used if you don't find a mouse comfortable. There are also specialized devices that can be used for people with disabilities. Some of these devices can even adjust for shaky hands and other dexterity problems. I use a specialized mouse called an Aerobic Mouse ([www.aerobicmouse.com](http://www.aerobicmouse.com)) that is especially designed for people with arthritis and carpal tunnel syndrome. It's a big, ugly mouse, but I love it. It keeps your hand in a hand-shake position that alleviates the twist in your wrist that can cause pain if you use the computer a lot or have carpal tunnel syndrome. It also steadies the hand, making using the mouse easier.

So take your time and find the mouse or input device that is right for you. Today, most mice attach to your computer through the USB port. This is a nice feature since it means that if you and your honey want to use different mice, they can both be plugged in at the same time and each person can have constant access to the mouse of their choice. ❖

## **Tackle One of the Top PC Performance Killers: Low Disk Space**

**By Tibor Schiemann, President and Managing Partner, TuneUp**

No matter how fast your PC is, low disk space can slow any computer down, especially newer ones with fast, solid-state drives (SSDs). In fact, low disk space is typically the #1 reason for a sluggish machine, and one that is even overlooked by IT pros. In order to tackle this issue, it's first important to understand why low disk space significantly slows down programs, affects SSD drives, increases load times and causes dozens of error messages.

Windows and most third-party programs need disk space to breath. Windows, for example, needs space for its paging file, which extends a PC's physical memory (RAM) in case it runs out. When there is low disk space, the paging file can't grow when required and impacts PC performance. Low disk space can also reduce SSDs' speed, as it requires these flash-based disks to read single data cells into memory before writing new data. This will even crash read/write performance.

Depending on its demand, the paging file dynamically increases and decreases in size. Imagine if your PC's disk space were to fall below the 500 to 1000 MB limit. Once the paging file tries to increase and hits the disk space limit, you can expect terrible performance, and your system will most likely crash.

Windows isn't the only system depending on at least a couple GB of free disk space; many applications create files to store data

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temporarily. PhotoShop, for example, is known to create a “scratch disk” when running. This disk has a dynamic size ranging from a couple of hundred MBs to several GBs. Expect PhotoShop, or any other application for that matter, to run poorly or not at all once this temporary file takes up the rest of your hard disk limit.

Unfortunately, this problem persists on modern machines as well. Take a netbook, a low-budget notebook or even a high-end machine with an SSD drive. Your music libraries or even stored photos might just be enough to hit the limit quickly—add the regular size of a typical Windows installation (20 GB) and applications, and you’re working at the limit of their disk’s capacity.

Of course, I wanted to test this theory to make sure that low disk space is, in fact, a serious performance threat. For the tests, I used an Intel Penryn C2D with 3 GHz, 4 GB of RAM and an SSD. In order to run low on disk space, I simply duplicated a couple of files that were several hundred MB until I hit the disk space limit.

Surprisingly, once my disk space sank below the dangerous 100 MB mark, the PC didn’t suffer. This is probably due to the fact that both my RAM and the default paging file compensated for the current memory need. However, things got shaky once I started to work more heavily. Programs and applications suddenly wouldn’t start, and those I was currently running didn’t react. For example, iTunes didn’t respond to any clicks—it froze yet kept playing music in the background.

And the PC’s performance continued to take a turn for the worse when I maxed out disk space. The boot procedure took more than twice as long, according to XPerf from [Microsoft’s Windows Performance Toolkit](#). Since many of my regular programs refused to launch, I couldn’t benchmark the start-up times for many applications. After trying Outlook, PhotoShop, Indesign and even Live Messenger, I was finally able to get Internet Explorer 9 to launch. But, time basically stood still the moment I clicked on the web browser icon—nothing happened. After about 13 seconds, the web browser appeared on the screen and started to load a website, and that was all I could do—the system was unusable.

Given my test results, low disk space is certainly a performance killer. Luckily, there are several tips to follow that can help you quickly rescue your system from low disk space. First, [TuneUp Utilities 2011](#)’s Gain Disk Space feature can be used to remove unnecessary files and old backups, while TuneUp Disk Space Explorer can help you find huge data hogs. It’s also helpful to do some routine maintenance and use Microsoft’s Windows Disk Cleanup tool. Additionally, uninstall unnecessary Windows features and remove large programs that you no longer need to free up your machine’s disk space. This “[Five Ways to Get Rid of Data Clutter](#)” blog post provides step-by-step instructions on how to implement these tips.

It’s important to keep a close eye on the amount of free disk space your computer has. When disk space starts running low, make sure to take the necessary steps to improve performance and get your

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machine back up and running again in no time. For additional tips and tricks on maintaining PC performance, I invite you to visit the TuneUp Blog about Windows (<http://blog.tune-up.com>). ❖

WORD TIPS AT  
[HTTP://WORD.TIPS.NET](http://word.tips.net)  
REPEATING ROWS FOR A  
TABLE FOOTER

When working with longer tables in a document, you may wonder if there were a way to repeat rows at the bottom of a table that spans multiple pages, the same way you can repeat rows at the top of a multi-page table. The short answer is that Word doesn't provide such a capability. If you are willing to experiment a bit, you can try to come up with a workaround that may do the trick for you.

What you want to do is create a document section that contains just your table, and then use the page footers to contain the rows you want repeated from the table. Follow these general steps:

1. Just before the start of your table, insert a continuous section break.
2. Do the same thing just after the end of your table.
3. Select the rows you want repeated at the bottom of the table and copy them to the Clipboard.
4. Choose View | Header and Footer to display the headers and footers of the document. (If you are using Word 2007 or Word 2010 display

the Insert tab of the ribbon, click Footer in the Header & Footer group, and then click Edit Footer.)

5. Switch to the footer. (You don't need to do this in Word 2007 and Word 2010, since you are already editing the footer after step 4.)
6. Make sure that the Link to Previous option is turned off for the footer.
7. Select anything that already exists in the footer.
8. Press **CTRL+V** to paste the copied rows into the footer.
9. Use the controls on the Header and Footer toolbar or, in Word 2007 and Word 2010, the Design tab of the ribbon to advance to the next section. (You should be looking at the footer for the section following the section in which the table resides.)
10. Turn off the Link to Previous option for this footer.
11. Delete the table row from this section's footer.
12. Close the Header and Footer toolbar (click Close) or, in Word 2007 and Word 2010, click Close Header and Footer in the Close group.

You are now ready to place the final touches on your workaround. Position the insertion point somewhere in your table, then use the various tabs in the Page Setup dialog box to adjust the relationship between your table and the footer. You'll need to play with the settings on both the

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Margins and Layout tabs to position the rows in the page footer, and you'll want to make sure that the Apply To drop-down list applies the changes to only the current section (the one with the table in it).

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### GET ORGANIZED:

<http://Home.Tips.Net>  
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<http://store.tips.net/>

### NEED COMPUTER HELP?



Visit our Help Desk & Discussion Group [EPCC Yahoo Group](#)

### Chester County Library Workshops

*To register online and to view workshops, go to the Chester County Library website:*

[www.ccls.org](http://www.ccls.org)>[Find an Event](#)>[Chester County Library](#)>[Computer Adult](#)>

***If you have any questions, visit the Jacobs Technology Center (JTC)***

***or call (610) 280-2666***

***or e-mail [ccljtc@ccls.org](mailto:ccljtc@ccls.org)***

### ***Seeking New Technology Groups!***

***If you want to start a new interest group in computer technology, web, photography, film-making, etc., please contact us!***



### ***Become a Guest Speaker!***

***We are greatly interested in bringing in new guest speakers! Please contact us and share! We appreciate your participation***

### ***Contribute a Newsletter Article***



All members are encouraged to submit articles or other items of interest for possible Newsletter publication. The deadline for articles to appear in the next issue is the 1st Monday of the month. All articles are gladly accepted at anytime for our future publications. When you send your contribution as an e-mail attachment, please save your text file in text (\*.txt) or MS Word

**Format (\*.doc); Images are to be saved in Jpeg Format. ❖**

***From July, 2011 on, please send articles to the new EPCC Newsletter Committee:***

**Stephanie Varis** [svaris@verizon.net](mailto:svaris@verizon.net) 

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## Who's Who at EPCC



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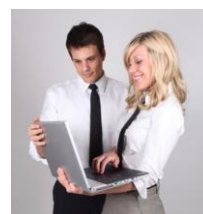
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## MEMBERSHIP 2011

***Thank you to those who have renewed. We welcome New Members who joined us! Please encourage family & friends to join...***

***See the Exton PC Council membership form on the following page... ❖***

Please note: Due to the cancellation of EPCC meetings for the last half of 2010, dues in 2011 for current 2010 members will be \$10.00 payable July 1, 2011. Dues for new members will be \$20.00. You can either use the membership application / renewal form at the end of the newsletter or pay at a meeting.



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### Your Membership Is Welcome!

Non-members and former members are encouraged to join.  
Please fill in the Membership Application below and mail it with your check now!

#### **EXTON PC COUNCIL (EPCC) 2011 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL**

(valid January 1<sup>st</sup> thru December 31<sup>st</sup> 2011)

Membership includes email notices, privilege to post on EPCC's Yahoo Groups, privilege to participate in special prize give away raffles at various meetings and affords additional benefits of special offers through the national APCUG (Association of Personal Computer User Groups).

New Member: \$20.00 \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal: \$10.00 \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Notice of downloadable ExtonPC.Org News will be emailed monthly** – Add \$5.00 to above fees to receive copy by postal mail and mark here. \_\_\_\_\_ (To cover cost of postage and mailing)

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ WORK PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ (Optional)

**EMAIL (please print clearly):** \_\_\_\_\_

Please pay at the next main meeting or mail this form with your check made payable to **EPCC**.