



BGA-BYTES

Official Newsletter of the Bowling Green Area Microcomputer User Group, Inc.



Volume 14 Issue 1

January 2004

Inside this Issue

President's Message
Page 1

Wanted BGAMUG
Members
Page 2

PDF Files
Page 3

Windows XP
Page 4

Microsoft
Keyboard shortcuts
Page 5

World Wild Web
Page 7

TECH Corner
Page 7

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE::

Happy New Year!

2004 will be an exciting year for BGAMUG if the year is anything like our first Executive Board meeting of this year! All the board members shared their goals and reported on their plans for 2004. All four of the new board members—Elisa Davison, James Gegner, Lou Travelsted, and Raymond Hunton—attended and contributed in meaningful ways.



We will continue to meet at Bowling Green Technical College in their Conference Center in Building F for all of our General Meetings from January through November. On December 7 we plan to Celebrate at the Warren County Cooperative Extension Center. We hope to have some Saturday hands-on workshops and in June we will picnic at the Moore's home in Alvaton.

As you will read in other parts of this newsletter, Mike Moore, our new Program Director, has wonderful ideas and plans for upcoming programs. This year some of the programs will include two 20-minute presentations. This month both Mike Moore and Jerry Gillette will be our presenters! We know that each of them could WOW us for hours, but they both have been challenged to contain their presentation to just 20 minutes!

Our new Librarian, James Gegner, has many new software titles to be reviewed. There is a big box of new titles like Office 2004, Money 2004, etc. for members to review. Also, James will coordinate the door prizes for each month and has some very nice prizes to give away to some lucky members at each meeting.

Our new Treasurer, Elisa Davison, is already taking care of our finances. Elisa will also handle the Kroger Cares Project this year and will have new cards at our January 27 meeting that you can purchase for \$25. Our 2003 Treasurer, Kathy Stinson, also attended our January Executive Board meeting and presented us a summary of our 2003 bank balances. She gave us proof that BGAMUG is financial stable as we begin 2004!

Lou Travelsted and Raymond Hunton, our new Officers at Large, are already busy representing all of us. Lou has been sending cards to members at special times of concern and celebrations. But, Lou needs our help. If you know of a member experiencing an illness, a challenge, or special celebration, please email Lou and let her know. She may even ask members for birthday information . . . not the year but just the month and day! Raymond has also been busy helping many Fridays with our Fern Terrace Service Project.

Soon Mike Moore will ask each member to complete a survey about what programs or workshops you'd like this year. Our BGA-Bytes editor, Peggy Beasley, needs to know how you want to receive your copy of the newsletter during 2004.

Our Vice President of Technology, Chuck Thomas, WOWed us at the board meeting by showing us Web Stats for the BGAMUG Website. We are OUT THERE and new people are finding us every day! You too can check us out at the following URL: <http://www.bgamug.org>

What are PDF Files and Where do they Come From?

By Jerry Gillette

PDF stands for Portable Document Format and it is an interchange format that has a growing number of reasons to be supported and used by communicators worldwide. PDF files are compact, can be read on any computer platform and Operating system, maintain the quality of text and graphics, and can be produced by any standard application.

Not too long ago PDF files could only be created using the Adobe Acrobat application that cost \$200 - \$300. Adobe Systems Inc. is the company that created the PDF file format long ago and owns the copyrights on the data structures, operators, and written specification for the PDF file format.

During the past few years Adobe made PDF an open standard, and gave permission to anyone to write software that creates PDF files. Adobe has also given royalty free licenses to the patents if used to create PDF files

This has allowed a number of freeware, shareware and commercial software developers to produce many applications at a lower cost, many even free.

With all these programs, all you have to do to create a PDF file is print the file, not to your printer, but to the PDF conversion virtual printer, which is installed just like a real printer. In the process you give the file a name, and what folder to place it in.

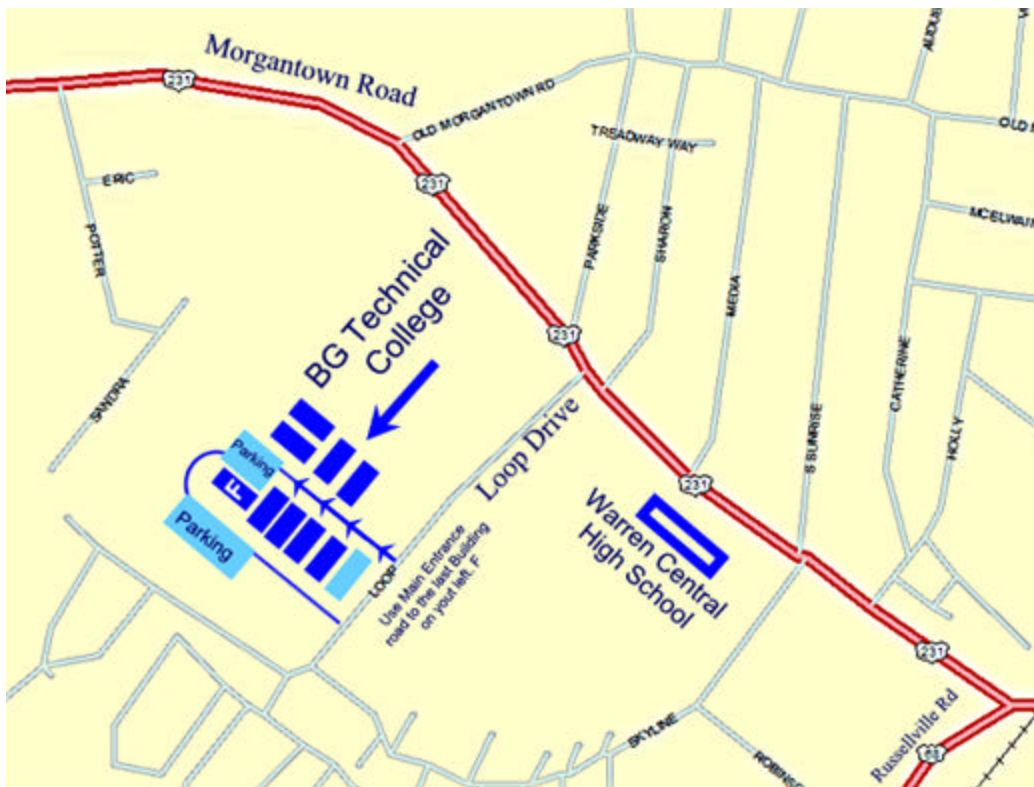
One of the new free programs is Go2PDF

<http://www.go2pdf.com/product.html>

Go2PDF enables you to convert instantly any document into PDF format with a simple click. Go2PDF contains a Virtual PDF Printer, which is a high-quality PDF converter and generator with passwords protection, PDF access control, PDF scaling, PDF version and compatibility control, font embedding options and more. The generated PDF is small yet clear. Go2PDF is Freeware, offering an effective solution to create PDF documents with ease and joy. Go2PDF itself is only 261KB, very small, easy to use, yet smart and powerful.

Virtually any document can be converted to PDF format using Go2PDF including presentations, graphics and spreadsheets.

With the Adobe Reader installed, nearly anyone can view and print, but not edit, a PDF file. And PDF files retain the look of the original file, including fonts, colors, links, images and formatting.



**General Meeting
January 27 @
6:30 pm**

**Bowling Green
Technical College
1845 Loop Drive
Building F**

Windows XP's TCP/IP alternate configuration!

If you have a laptop that you use to connect to both home and office networks, you should investigate Windows XP's TCP/IP alternate configuration. This feature allows you to use your laptop on both networks without having to manually reconfigure your TCP/IP settings.

To use TCP/IP alternate configuration, one of the networks--most commonly the office network--must use DHCP-allocated TCP/IP addresses. The other network--most commonly your home network--must use a static TCP/IP addressing scheme.

Here's how to configure your laptop to use the alternate configuration feature:

1. Open Control Panel.
2. If you're using Category View, select Network And Internet Connections and double-click Network Connections. If you're using Classic View, simply double-click Network Connections.
3. Right-click the Local Area Connection icon and select Properties.
4. Double-click Internet Protocol (TCP/IP).
5. On the General tab of the Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) Properties dialog box, select both the Obtain An IP Address Automatically and the Obtain DNS Server Address Automatically radio buttons. These settings will allow your laptop to dynamically obtain a TCP/IP address from the DHCP server on the office network.
6. Select the Alternate Configuration tab of the Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) Properties dialog box and click the User Configured radio button.
7. Enter the static IP numbers that you use on your home network to connect to the Internet.
8. Click OK twice and close the Network Connections window.

You can now effortlessly move your laptop between both your office and home networks.

Microsoft to extend support for Windows

From a Google News - AP BIZ WIRE article Monday, January 12, 2004

Microsoft Corp. will extend support for Windows 98, Windows 98 S.E. and Windows Millennium Edition through June 30, 2006, the company said Monday, reversing a decision from last month.

Support for Windows 98 and Windows 98 S.E. had been scheduled to expire on Friday, and for Windows Me on Dec. 31, but the soft-

ware giant decided to keep supporting those systems in large part because some customers in developing countries were not aware it was ending.

"While we've done an excellent job communicating our life cycle policy for most of our products, we have found that we could use more time to communicate those guidelines in a handful of smaller markets," including Kazakhstan, the Ivory Coast and Slovenia, Microsoft spokesman Matt Pilla said.

During the extended support period, the company will offer paid

phone support and review security threats to determine whether it will provide customers with security patches.

About 20 percent of all Windows-based computers still run Windows 95 or 98, according to International Data Corp., a technology market research firm. Support for Windows 95 ended Dec. 31, 2001.

Since Oct. 15, 2002, Microsoft has offered seven years of support for its new products. Before that, it offered four.

Save time with keyboard shortcuts in XP!

Windows XP is simple to use, but some tasks require several clicks of the mouse. Fortunately, there are several keyboard shortcuts that decrease the amount of time it takes to complete certain tasks. These include:

[WIN]E starts Windows Explorer with My Computer expanded.
[WIN]L will lock the workstation
[WIN]R displays the Run dialog box.
[WIN]D shows the desktop.
[WIN]M minimizes all windows.
[Ctrl][Shift][Esc] runs Windows Task Manager.
[WIN][Break] runs System Properties dialog box.
[Ctrl][Tab] switches to the next tab on a dialog box.
[Ctrl][Shift][Tab] switches to the previous tab on a dialog box.
[Backspace] goes to the previous page/folder or previous Web site in Internet Explorer.

Note: [WIN] is the Windows logo key.

To view additional keyboard shortcuts, search Help And Support under the Start menu.

There are even more shortcuts you can take. For instance, you can run built-in utilities much faster through the Run dialog box than by clicking them. Simply type the following commands in the Run prompt:

Desk.cpl runs Display Properties.
Ncpa.cpl runs the Network Connections folder.
PowerCfg.cpl runs Power Options Properties.
Sysdm.cpl runs the System Properties dialog box.
Cmd.exe runs Command Prompt.
Perfmon.msc runs Performance Monitor.
Compmgmt.msc runs the Computer Management console.
hcp://system/netdiag/dglogs.htm runs Network Diagnostics.
hcp://system/sysinfo/sysInfoLaunch.htm runs Advanced System Information.

Welcome to 2004
and **the**
World WILD Web
By Jerry Gillette

During August of 2003 the MSBlaster & SoBig.F Worm made it's attack on computers around the world and I visited with several members and users to investigate and attempted to repair their infected systems.

Up to that time I had not been very concerned with online security issues. After all, I had an updated Anti-Virus program running to take care of all that stuff. Right? I soon learned the one main thing that shielded me from the MSBlaster attack was I had luckily downloaded and installed all the Windows Updates from Microsoft.

Since that time I have dedicated many hours learning why so many of my friends were having similar problems with overwhelming runaway Internet issues, like spam and popups. Seems the WWW now stands for the World WILD Web.

According to security analysts, in no other years have computer viruses and worms wreaked so much havoc and caused so much damage as they did in 2003.

"This has been the worst year ever," says Ken Dunham, director of malicious code at Reston, Va.-based iDefense Inc. "Without a doubt, malicious code came to a massive head in 2003... we saw a huge impact of malicious code on infrastructure. We had seen worms cause some disruption before, but mostly they'd been an annoyance. Now infrastructure is being impacted."

In 2003, viruses and worms not only caused billions of dollars in damages and clean-up costs. They went so far as to shake the Internet's backbone. They slowed down travel, halted 911 calls, and knocked out ATM machines. From the Slammer attack in January to MSBlaster & SoBig family that attacked in August, it was one rough year.

"This year was definitely the busiest one on record for us," says Chris Belthoff, a senior analyst at Sophos, Inc., an anti-virus and anti-spam company based in Lynnfield, Mass. "We started with Slammer in January and then we had BugBear in June. At the time, people thought that was pretty bad. But then the major event of the year was the one-two punch of Blaster and Sobig in August. They were very different -- one spread machine to machine and the other was a mass-mailing worm -- but both very damaging."

Another disturbing change we saw this year was that these new viruses and worms are being created by a new breed of educated more knowledgeable authors. They're not just kids and hackers just playing hi tech pranks. The new writers have a much more damaging purpose.

"Viruses and worms are being written now for financial gain," says Steve Sundermeier, vice president of products and services at Central Command Inc., an anti-virus company based in Medina, Ohio. "They're prodding users, or phishing, for credit card information, bank account information, Social Security numbers. The worms are better disguised because they've upped the ante since they're writing for criminal purposes now... It makes it a lot harder to fight."

"It's not just people who play around anymore," he adds. "This is creating a market for organized crime. Credit cards. Passwords. They're looking for anything they can use to dupe the victim."

Join us at this month's meeting as we launch what should become an ongoing battle against this new wave of attacks expected to become even worse during our new year.

Jg

Tech Corner

Well, it's that time of year when some of us are trying to remove holiday pounds at gyms, others are getting papers together for the tax preparer, and the media are warning us of new computer intrusions and scams to follow up the viruses and worms of 2003!

The first warnings of the year concern scams aimed at stealing your money and, where possible, your identity. Just as you have been warned not to give out your social security number or bank account numbers over the phone, except when you are calling your bank, never provide this information in response to emails or web pages that look and sound genuine.

Recently, scam artists have used web pages that look just like AOL or Microsoft pages to get unsuspecting folks to provide their sensitive information. An email may arrive that sounds official and requests that you update your account because your credit card has expired or they lost the number in a computer crash, or.... The link takes the naïve user to the bogus web page where the card number and expiration date are entered--to be used to line the pockets of these robbers!

Another scam involves the nefarious use of automatic dialers that some people download from 'adult' sites--pay for view, chat rooms, online gambling, etc. These have a legitimate use, but when implemented by hackers with evil intentions, they take over the user's Internet dialer leading to huge phone bills or worse.

Remember "ABS" - *Always be Suspicious*, and when in doubt, call the company back rather than trusting an unsolicited phone caller or emailed message that requests personal information.

I finally got around to subscribing to Smart Computing magazine and now realize what I was missing! Not only is it a great magazine for inexperienced and more mature computer users, but *your subscription earns credits for BGAMUG* that are used to provide free subscriptions for needy persons or for use as door prizes. BUT, we only get that credit if you include our **Code Number** on your order: **8343/423**

To order Smart Computing or one of their other magazines described below and at their web site, click on the link on our home page: www.bgamug.org or go directly to the Smart Computing web site, where you can view current issues of each magazine:

www.smartcomputing.com Don't forget to use our Code when ordering!

Not only do you get a great magazine, but subscribing allows you full access to their web site with the following features:

View current and back issues of all their magazines: *Smart Computing*, *PC Today*, which focuses on the Windows operating system, and *CPU: Computer Power User*, aimed at those who appreciate the fastest and newest technology.

Use of their online *Hardware Reviews & Comparison Charts* to aid you hardware purchase decisions.

Use of their online *Computing Dictionary & Encyclopedia* which defines and explains any computer term you can think of.

A Q & A Board where you can post questions or relate problems and receive responses. Or, you can search or browse the archive of thousands of questions others have asked. You can also reply to those who respond to your questions--to ask more, to clarify, or to show appreciation. As you gain confidence, you can begin to respond to other folks' questions. Users helping users--just like our users group!

In addition to viewing back issues, you can enter keywords to search all articles in every issue of their publications.

So long until next month. Remember, compared to you, computers are incredibly fast but also incredibly stupid! All they can do is to act on 0's and 1's to follow orders; they can't begin to reach the level of a two-year old in thinking and language ability. So never be intimidated by your computer!

Chuck Thomas, VP of Technology

BGAMUG
P.O. Box 20384
Bowling Green, KY 42102



Visit Our Website
www.bgamug.org

**Monthly Meeting will be Tuesday,
January 27, 2004
Bowling Green Technical College
Building F
1845 Loop Drive**