

TiVo - The ONLY way to watch TV

Thursday, September 11, 2003, 7 P.M.
Lecture Hall of the Carr-Gottstein Academic Center
Main Campus, Alaska Pacific University

Joe Hruska will introduce the Alaska Computer Society to the wonderful world of DVR (Digital Video Recording). TiVo is one of the most popular and readily available DVR systems available on the market today. TiVo combines simplicity with a large number of powerful features in a home media device that will make you wonder how you ever watched TV without it!

"TiVo is a service that automatically records your favorite shows every time they air, even if the timeslot changes. Watch what you want, when you can." (From the TiVo website selecting, "What is TiVo?".)

www.tivo.com

Joe says, "I have to admit; at first I was a sceptic. I really did not see the *need* for a TiVo. I had a VCR, I used it every once in a while to record shows that I wanted to watch. Well, I can guarantee you, one week with a TiVo - and you will never want to watch TV without one again."

Joe Hruska is a local IT consultant for Integrity Solutions, Inc. Joe loves working with new technologies and is a home automation hobbyist. Joe has been playing with and "hacking" TiVo systems for the past two years.

The Alaska Computer Society is a nonprofit educational organization. Our meetings are always free and open to the public. We meet the second Thursday of each month, usually at the Carr-Gottstein building at APU.

For further details about our group and a map to the meeting location, visit our web site at www.acs-pcug.org.

Serving Alaskans since 1983.

Door Prize for Members:

Microsoft Works Version 7.0

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1 README.1ST

AKLUG'ers Celebrate Debian's 10th

As announced last month, the **Alaska Linux Users Group (AKLUG)** celebrated the tenth anniversary of the Debian distribution of the **GNU/Linux** operating system. Bob Plez brought a cake, which should have had a *Real Chocolate Inside* label. Bob also contacted the Debian folks to let them know Anchorage, Alaska, would be joining in the 10th anniversary celebrations.

The venue for the party was NineStar, **AKLUG's** usual Friday night gathering spot for their *laboratory* session. Not all members use the Debian distribution, but all gladly shared in the festivities and cake.

Bob took pictures of the event. Visit the web site below and click on the cake to view the event:

www.debconf.org/gallery/10years/

Breaking News:

Geek For Governor!

Perhaps you have already read, heard, or viewed Georgy Russell, the 26 year old software engineer, who has tossed her hat in the ring down in California. Read all about it on the BBC's web site:

news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/3168177.stm

Reminders:

InfoCom and IT Expo Tech Show

The new and expanded IT Expo is set to take place Oct. 14-15 at the Egan Convention Center in Anchorage.

InfoCom and IT Expo are combining their efforts to provide Alaska with an expanded technology exposition and conference that reflects cutting-edge computer, information and communication technology. It also provides scholarships for students interested in pursuing careers in information technology.

As a result of this partnership, organizers project increased participation from Alaskan and out-of-state technology providers to show off not only the latest products and business solutions, but to offer new fun activities such as a Computer Building Challenge, a Custom PC Builders Showcase, a Wearable Technology Fashion Show, and other great interactive programs.

Extensive training and seminar sessions will target business, IT, and communication professionals with valuable education and information.

Organizers now accept applications for participation in the Expo and Conference tracks. Interested companies should contact Rada Jones

907-277-7469

info@sourdough.net

aitp-info@aitp-ak.org

www.sourdough.net/events/itbe/index.html

Announcements:

2 The DealsGuy for September 2003

by Bob Click,
Greater Orlando Computer Users Group

Has This Kind of Stuff Made You Mad?

Some time ago I noticed \$1.80 on my phone bill for incorporating the long distance charges on it. I called the Phone Company and asked to be billed separately by Sprint, my long distance provider, to save the \$1.80. No postage to pay the LD bill since I do it on the computer. Since my cell phone plan's minutes are local

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all over the US, I use it for all my long distance calls to the family, thus there are seldom many calls on my Sprint LD bill. This month, I had no LD calls to pay for on my LD bill, but I still owed \$2.36 in taxes and charges. It seems there's now a tax on NOTHING? In September, they say they are levying another 99 cent tax. HELP!

When is the last time you looked at your phone bill itself and read the many charges on it? It's disgusting since it seems to be well over 100% taxation. I only have basic service, which is \$10.80, but the final bill with no LD charges is \$23.86. I wish somebody would start a movement to stop this blatant money rip-off. TV's Dateline pointed out that some of those larger charges are not a tax, but simply more money for the Phone Company. Not only that, but my DSL bill just went up \$3.21 per month with new taxes and charges, one just for the DSL. I'll miss it, but goodbye DSL since I thought it was already overpriced at \$59.95.

Shorter Column Format

Many editors now tell me they no longer have room for the entire column. This month's column is about 200 words shorter in the hopes more editors can carry it. It is important to have as many readers as possible to entice vendor participation.

Let There Be Justice

A friend sent me a news item that Hormel is suing a company called Spam Arrest for using the term SPAM in its' product name. I wondered how long it would be before something like that might happen. It's not the use of Spam as a general term, but for using it in an official name. Interesting.

Still Good

I'm reminding you that the Sane Solution's "NetTracker" for analyzing your Web log is good until August 31, 03 with the great discount. Contact Darryl at 1-800-407-3570, ext. 122, to order. The Inkjet deal will be good until the end of the year. Go to

www.inksell.com

to order. For assistance call 1-800-255-0483, or send e-mail to

help@inksell.com

The Executive Software Undelete and Diskkeeper bundle is still good.

consumer.execsoft.com/home.asp

This Author Is Unusual

I read a review by Larry Grannis in the Central Kentucky Computer Society's newsletter about a great computer book that has been given many accolades by well-known sources. Russ Walter wrote this book called "The Secret Guide To Computers." He even gives you his phone number and says to give him a call anytime. He wisely publishes the book himself, no publishing company involved. In fact, you can even read some of it right on the Web at

www.secretfun.com

This book is good for beginner or advanced users. Russ Walter's phone number is 603-666-6644. E-mail is

Russ@secretfun.com

I talked to Russ about a deal and he said that user groups could use the discount on a bulk order as a fundraiser for their group. He has been publishing a help book since 1972 so he certainly goes further back than many of us. In fact, there are very cheap prices if you can use an older book. Standard shipping is free in the US. \$2.00 per book outside the US. Air is \$3.00 per book in the US. Check his Web site for information on quantity discounts and other shipping choices. For example, his latest edition sells for \$17.50 per copy, but buy two and they are just \$14 each.

When I received mine, the first thing I wanted to do is fix my network. Unfortunately, I was unable to find such a chapter so that project is on hold. However, looking through the book certainly shows that just about everything else is covered. While reading through it, I did indeed find a couple of chuckles in the explanations. It looks great, and after seeing it, if your question is not covered, I would be astounded. However, if it isn't, you can always call him for the answer. I have not seen another book of this type with that offer. It is an 8 1/2" x 11" book with 639 pages.

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Let The Gaming Begin!

I picked up a copy of Utah Computer Society's "Monthly Report" at the Comdex-APCUG activities and found a glowing review for "A Computerized One Armed Bandit," a game by Masque Publishing.

www.masque.com

There is much information on their Web site, including games for PDAs. Right now only "Slots From Bally Gaming" (ordering URL below) is on special. They have new releases for PC/Macintosh. The special would have ended in August, but since this is the Sept. column, they agreed to extend it until the end of October.

Slots From Bally Gaming with over 40 slot machines can be purchased for \$19.95, regularly \$24.95, by going to

www.masque.com/SfBGsp.htm

to order. Shipping is \$5.00 in the US or \$10.00 to Canada. Best part is making bets (5 cents, 25 cents, \$1.00 to \$5.00), but not in real money. Think of it this way; look at the money you'll save by not having to go to Las Vegas to play those slots. You're already ahead of the game.

I just received my evaluation copy and I am enjoying it. The installation was faultless and it runs with no problem on my 900 MHz Athlon running Windows 98/SE. Had I known you need the CD to run it, I might have tried installing it differently. While I'm not ahead so far, the sound effects are very real and one slot has all of my favorite cartoon characters; Popeye, Blondie, Dagwood, Wimpy, etc. A couple of times when I won it became very entertaining, and led to more fun. I can't give that away, but I think you'll like it. It takes a few minutes to learn the games. Right now my wife is learning so I'm not sure when I'll be able to tell you more.

That's it for this month. Meet me here again next month if your editor permits. This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers or freebies I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of any products, no matter how enthused I might sound. Bob (The Cheapskate) Click

Bobclick@mindspring.com

Visit my Web site at

www.dealsguy.com

for past columns. I have also been busy putting up some interesting new articles on my Web site, so take a look. My thanks to the authors I was able to reach. However, they don't all answer their e-mail so I often must give up on many good articles for lack of response.

3 The Editor's Keyboard

SCO Attacks the GPL

On Monday, August 18, 2003, *eWEEK* published an interview with SCO CEO Darl McBride which included the following,

In a nutshell, this litigation is essentially about the GNU General Public License and all it stands for. That license has not yet been challenged or tested in court, but it is now going to be. We are also firmly and aggressively challenging the notion that Linux is a free operating system.

Read the complete article at:

www.eweek.com/article2/0,4149,1223975,00.asp

August 2003 Editorial

Before McBride's statement to *eWEEK*, I had prepared last month's editorial on the **GNU General Public License (GPL)**. Richard M. Stallman is adamant about *using* copyright law to protect the users' freedoms to use *GPL'd* software.

Here are the four freedoms guaranteed to users by the *GPL* in Stallman's words:

- The freedom to run the program, for any purpose (freedom 0).
- The freedom to study how the program works, and adapt it to your needs (freedom 1). Access to the source code is a precondition for this.
- The freedom to redistribute copies so you can help your neighbor (freedom 2).
- The freedom to improve the program, and release your improvements to the public, so that the whole community benefits (freedom 3). Access to the source code is a precondition for this.

Freedom Isn't Free

As I pointed out in last month's editorial, the *GPL* has been successfully defended for more than ten years **without** the need for testing in the court system. Here are the links in which Eben Moglen explains why the *GPL* is enforceable and how it has been enforced:

1. moglen.law.columbia.edu/publications/lu-12.html
2. moglen.law.columbia.edu/publications/lu-13.html

Eben says in the document at 1. above, why the *GPL* is enforceable [August 2001]:

Because free software is an unorthodox concept in contemporary society, people tend to assume that such an atypical goal must be pursued using unusually ingenious, and therefore fragile, legal machinery. ... But the *GPL*, the legal device that makes everything else possible, is a very robust machine precisely because it is made of the simplest working parts.

Then, he goes on the point out in 2. how well it has been enforced [September 2001]:

But perhaps we have succeeded too well. If I had used the courts to enforce the *GPL* years ago, Microsoft's whispering would now be falling on deaf ears. Just this month I have been working on a couple of moderately sticky situations. "Look," I say, "at how many people all over the world are pressuring me to enforce the *GPL* in court, just to prove I can. I really need to make an example of someone. Would you like to volunteer?"

It appears SCO has volunteered.

Fielder George Dowding
Editor and Publisher
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4 Friends of ACS

We thank those businesses and individuals listed below and the many others who have donated all or a portion of some of the services, materials, and time required to help make the Alaska Computer Society succeed.

AARP – resource center, classroom space, and meeting space in the Northway Mall.¹

Alaska Pacific University – General meeting room, special pricing.

Michael Ardaiz of Mad Dog Graphx – ACS PCUG logo.

Brown Bear Software – iCal program used to create the monthly event calendars.

Lewis & Lewis Computer Store – door prizes for the annual technology show and monthly meetings.

Microsoft Corporation – software for user group support functions and door prizes for monthly meetings.

Application for Membership Alaska Computer Society — PC Users Group

Name _____

Address _____

E-Mail _____

Dues are \$25.00 per year. Please make your check payable to, the Alaska Computer Society. Thank you.

¹Ed.:The initials used to stand for “American Association of Retired Persons”. However, one does not need to be retired to join.

5 The Back Pages

The Alaska Computer Society – PC Users Group (ACS–PCUG) publishes *PC News* monthly via the Internet. This newsletter is copyright © ACS-PCUG 2003. The current edition and the archive of the newsletter may be found at the ACS-PCUG web site:

<http://www.acs-pcug.org>

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²Replace the “{at}” in the address with the “at-sign” to contact one of the volunteers. I have mangled the address to thwart harvesting by spam-bots.

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ACS Board Meetings

Board meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month at the AARP meeting room. Great effort is expended to start the meeting at 7:00 P.M. and to end the meeting before 9:00 P.M. The board meetings are open, and the board encourages members to attend.

ACS PCUG Volunteers

The ACS-PCUG is a volunteer organization. The members of the board are volunteers. Nothing happens without our volunteers who make it happen. Here is the current list of volunteers, who, in addition to the board members, make things happen:

Publicity Coordinator *Publicity1{at}ACS-PCUG.org*
Holly Hawkings

Public Service Announcements *PSA1{at}ACS-PCUG.org*
Marjorie Feldberg

Publications Coordinator (Position Open)

SIG Coordinator (Position Open)

E-Mail Addresses:

1. The policy of *PC NEWS* is to make e-mail addresses accessible to human beings but inaccessible to robots.
2. Members who volunteer are assigned an e-mail address from the pool available within the *ACS-PCUG.org* domain. This is the address that will be published unless a volunteer requests a personal address be published.

The Final Word:

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