
The Computer Club At Willow Valley

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The President's Pen by Sid Paskowitz

Membership Your Computer Club has 489 members at this writing, including 165 lifetime members.

Election Results An election of Computer Club officers was conducted at the last Computer Club meeting. Elected as officers for the next two years were Sid Paskowitz, President; Ralph Beedle, Vice President; Dick Dressel, Treasurer and Joan Burks, Secretary. Dick Klahn asked not to be considered for re-election due to personal reasons. I want to thank Dick for all his work in setting up the programs for Computer Club meetings during his time as Computer Club Vice President. I also look forward to Ralph Beedle's approach to programs at Computer Club meetings. Each Vice President has had his or her own ideas as to what should be presented at Club meetings and I know Ralph would be in-

terested in hearing from Residents to find what they would want to see at Club meetings. Please send your suggestions to Ralph at ralph.beedle@gmail.com.

Lancaster Public Library Computer Classes

The Lancaster Public Library at 125 N. Duke Street is offering free afternoon and evening computer classes including Word, Excel, Basic Internet, and Intro to Computers. Online registration is available at <http://www.lplcomputerclasses.eventbrite.com>.

Google Translates I had a recent experience with using the language translator feature in Google. It is accessed by left-clicking on the More selection in the toolbar at the top of the page at the Google home page (www.google.com), and then left-

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Mac Special Interest Group by Joanne Phillips

May 10th Quicken for Mac 2007 has some very real issues with investments according to Intuit: "It will not, ..., track investment buys and sells, nor will it provide some advanced investments performance reports."

There is a solution and it's an elegant one. iBank does everything

Quicken Deluxe for Windows does and it does it for the Mac. You can download a try-before-you-buy full version for 30 days. The price for a single license is \$59.99. Learn about iBank in the Johnson Auditorium at 2:00 PM.

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Coming Programs

May 2012

Tony Poulos, Resident
Windows 7

June 2012

A Panel Discussion on Timely Tantalizing
Technology Topics

July, 2012

No meeting

*All programs are held
in the Education Room
at the Cultural Center
on the 1st Thursday of
the month at 2:00 p.m.
unless otherwise noted.*

President

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clicking on the Translate selection. The next display contains a box for entering text and making a selection of what language you want to translate from. I played with it by composing a note in Notepad, highlighting that note, using Control-C to copy the highlighted text to the computer's electronic clipboard, putting the cursor in the Translate From text box, and pressing Control-V to paste the selected text into that text box. I then selected the language I wanted to translate that note to, and immediately in the Translate To text box was my note translated into the desired language. I could then use the same copy-and-paste procedure to paste the foreign language version into an email or another document. To be on the safe side and more confident that the translation was ok, I pasted the foreign language version into the Translate From text box and translated it back into English. The range of languages is impressive and seeing the text characters in a foreign language is interesting. There is no guarantee that the translation is perfect, but it could be a worthwhile tool to add to your toolbox of computer capabilities. It has been successfully tested by a Resident who is fluent in French and Arabic.

Computer Room Monitors I want to thank the Computer Room Monitors who have volunteered to keep the Computer Rooms open for use by all Residents. We can always use more Monitors so no Monitor will need to sign up for more than one day each month. Any Computer Club member with

basic computer skills who is willing to spend a couple of hours each month as a Computer Room Monitor is requested to contact Dave Baker at 464-6338 for the North Computer Room or Gene Simasek at 464-4605 for the Lakes Computer Room (E-108). Let Dave or Gene know if you would like training to help you feel more comfortable as a Computer Room Monitor.

Computer Experts Speaking of Monitors, several years ago the Computer Club put together a list of computer and Internet topics that Monitors and other Club members were asked to review and indicate their level of expertise in each of the topics listed. The purposes of the listing were to help Residents find friends and neighbors who could help them with problems so all calls were not made to the same handful of helpful Residents; Residents could see which Computer Room Monitors were knowledgeable in the area of their questions or problems and could visit those Monitors when they were on duty in a Computer Room; and Computer Room Monitors could have a list of Residents who might be called for assistance if they were faced with an issue they could not handle while a Monitor. That Expertise Inventory is available at <http://eventregistration.willowvalley.org/kiosk/cclub/expertise.aspx>. Links to the Computer Room Monitor schedules for both Computer Rooms can also be found on that page.

Recently a comment was made that the Expertise Inventory listing was out of date. A survey form that can be used to update the listing is now in Informa-

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President

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tion Central in the same area as the Expertise Inventory at <http://eventregistration.willowvalley.org/kiosk/cclub/p/expertisesurvey.pdf> and includes instructions on using the form. That survey form can be copied, pasted into an email, filled in with response information, and sent to wvrccc@yahoo.com. That response information will be used to update the Expertise Inventory. Computer Room Monitors and others willing to share their expertise are requested to complete and email that information.

Senior TV Information Central at <http://eventregistration.willowvalley.org/kiosk/cclub/index.asp> is updated weekly and contains helpful information on topics that are important to our quality of life at Willow Valley. If you have Senior TV, you may benefit from the entire section of Information Central that is devoted to Senior TV and Senior TV Internet. Bookmark the link to Information Central or save it as a desktop icon. A link to a searchable list of topics covered in Information Central is contained under the big numeral 2 on the first display of Information Central.

Mac Special Interest Group Another new link in Information Central points to the information presented at the Mac Special Interest Group (SIG) meeting. Left click on the Mac SIG Meeting Notes link in the left column of Information Central or go to <http://eventregistration.willowvalley.org/kiosk/cclub/p/macsignotes.pdf>.

Providence Park New information on Providence Park is available on the Internet. Left click on the

Providence Park Website link in the right column of Information Central or go to www.ProvidenceParkLiving.com.

Computer Recycling Our computer recycling program has processed 268 systems that have been given to Computer Club members and community organizations such as the Lampeter-Strasburg School District for families whose students would benefit from a computer at home. I want to thank Ed Dahrnsin and his team for their continuing efforts in making those computers available to those who will most benefit from them. Ed and his team are in special need for working printers so they can be included in with the systems given to the School District.

Is The Power Off? I recently came across two instances where Residents with laptop computers said their computer would turn on for a few seconds and then shut down by itself. In both cases, the battery had run down even though the Resident thought it was plugged in to a wall receptacle and the battery was charging. A quick way to determine if the battery is getting power is to check the electrical input light which is usually either next to the charging connection or on the front of the laptop. If that light is not on, check the wiring from the charging connection all the way to the wall and make sure all the connections are tight, including at the converter box, if applicable. If all the connections are tight, make sure someone has not inadvertently turned off the wall switch that controls power to the wall receptacle.

Thank You My thanks to all of you who volunteer your time and knowledge to help other Residents.

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Curious about how computers are penetrated by hackers? See the book review on page 4.

Computer Penetration—A Book Review by Al Williams

In the March 28, 2012 edition of the Wall Street Journal on page B1, Shawn Henry, the executive assistant director of the FBI with responsibility for cybersecurity, said in an interview "... that the current public and private approach to fending off hackers is 'unsustainable.' Computer criminals are simply too talented and defensive measures too weak to stop them, he said."

He also said "... companies need to make major changes in the way they use computer networks to avoid further damage to national security and the economy." "Too many companies ... fail to recognize the financial and legal risks they are taking – or the costs they may have already suffered unknowingly – by operating vulnerable networks..."

"James A. Lewis, a senior fellow on cybersecurity at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said ... (that) he didn't believe there was a single secure, unclassified computer network in the U.S."

Mr. Henry also said companies most valuable data "should be kept off the network altogether."

The article goes on to state that most companies do not know that their data has been breached until someone else tells them. The article concludes with Mr. Henry's statement: "In many cases, the skills of the adversaries are so substantial that

they just leap right over the fence and you don't ever hear an alarm go off."

The above article is very gloomy. It doesn't present a solution but it does say that not enough is being done.

So what is the "fence" that Mr. Henry mentioned? There are three major skills needed to penetrate a company: social engineering which focuses on persuading a recipient to do what is not in their best interest; website exploitation to steal the contents of company owned databases; and direct penetration of company computers. Mr. Henry's fence is the set of obstacles put up by a company to resist website exploitation or computer penetration.

The book *The Basics of Hacking and Penetration Testing* by Patrick Egebretonson was written as part of a solution to the above problems. The idea behind the book is that black hat hackers penetrate computers and networks using their knowledge of computers, networks, and various tools. To determine whether or not a network can be penetrated, white hat hackers, or ethical hackers, who are authorized to attempt to penetrate the computers and network, should use the same or similar tools. If penetration is successful, the ethical hacker noti-

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Mac Special Interest Group

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June 14th Plan a wedding. Save for retirement. Track your workouts. Keep a baby journal. Spreadsheets can help you organize and plan, and great-looking Apple-designed templates will help you get started. With the Template Chooser, you can preview over 30 templates to use for home, work, and school. Tables are already made. Formulas have been figured out. Fonts are in place. They're all

ready to go. Just find something you like and make it your own. Chuck Phillips will give a presentation on "Numbers" and show us how to have fun with this versatile program.

June 14th will wrap up this season's programs at the Mac SIG. We will return on September 13 in the Johnson Auditorium in Manor North at 2:00 PM. •

Computer Penetration—A Book Review

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fies the company which then determines what step(s) should be taken to secure the computers and network against the identified security problems.

Mr. Engebretson follows a recognized penetration methodology. First, he discusses what Penetration Testing is: “Penetration testing can be defined as a legal and authorized attempt to locate and successfully exploit computer systems for the purpose of making those systems more secure.” He discusses how to set up a penetration (hacking) lab using readily available, mostly free, tools including BackTrack Linux. And, he provides an overview of the phases of a penetration test: Reconnaissance, Scanning, Exploitation, and Maintaining Access.

Mr. Engebretson makes it very clear that attacking any computer without explicit written authorization is a felony and will result in a prison sentence.

Chapter 2 is devoted to Reconnaissance. He states that this is the most important of the four phases. Although a lot of work, it is the phase that identifies opportunities. Surprising to me is the fact that Google will do much more than just find what you type into a search box. Google supports directives which make possible searching for very specific information on very specific web sites. Johnny Long has written a book, *Google Hacking for Penetration Testers*, which provides explicit information about those directives. Mr. Long also created a database of Google exploits which now is at www.exploit-db.com.

Mr. Engebretson describes a very impressive tool, The Harvester, which can search Google, Bing, and PGP servers for email address and other information. Other tools that he describes include: WHOIS, Netcraft, NS Lookup, Dig, and MetaGooFil. Information about each of these may be found in his book or by using Google.

The takeaway for this chapter, for me, is that we already know that there is a lot of information on the Internet about each of us. This chapter describes tools to find that information.

Chapter 3 describes Scanning. During the Reconnaissance phase, computers and networks were identified as candidates for penetration testing. The author describes how to find open ports on those computers (an open port may support a connection from an outside computer) and the programs that opened those ports using NMap. Once found, it is then possible to do a vulnerability assessment. A tool Nessus contains a catalog, a database, of all known exploits for software. If the computer being penetrated is not fully up to date with patches, Nessus will identify that vulnerability.

The takeaway for this chapter is that all updates for all software installed in a computer need to be installed so that there are no known vulnerabilities.

Chapter 4 describes Exploitation, gaining control of a system. Medusa is a brute force password cracking tool. Metasploit uses the information from Nessus and provides payloads that can be used to take advantage of the Nessus information.

Mr. Engebretson also describes John The Ripper, which he calls the king of the password crackers and some other tools for obtaining passwords.

The takeaway from this chapter for me is that having accomplished the first two phases, it is just a matter of time before the computer is penetrated.

Chapter 5 describes Web-based Exploitation. Since most of us do not have our own websites, I won't discuss the author's description of the process.

Chapter 6 describes how to maintain the foothold in the penetrated computer. Backdoors and Rootkits are the tools of choice. The author describes the support tools that are needed and how to set

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Computer Penetration—A Book Review

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up a rootkit named Hacker Defender. He also discusses how to detect and defend against Rootkits.

The final chapter, Chapter 7, discusses how to write a penetration test report for the owner of the system. He also lists advanced books on hacking, hands-on learning courses, and college level pro-

grams which follow a National Security Agency suggested curriculum.

It is a basics book which does what the author intended. A framework for penetration testing is presented; tools and needed knowledge are described; and a way forward to grow in penetration testing is provided. I think it is an excellent book for the purpose. •

DNSChanger

There is a Trojan by the name of DNSChanger that has been around since well before December, 2008 and has infected millions of PCs and Macs. According to Brian Krebs in his *Court: 4 More Months for DNSChanger-Infected PCs* blog dated March 12, 2012:

“DNSChanger modifies settings on a host PC that tell the computer how to find Web sites on the Internet, hijacking victims’ search results and preventing them from visiting security sites that might help detect and scrub the infections. The Internet servers that were used to control infected PCs were located in the United States, and in coordination with the arrest of the Estonian men in November (Editor: 2011), a New York district court ordered a private U.S. company to assume control over those servers. The government argued that the arrangement would give ISPs and companies time to identify and scrub infected PCs, systems

that would otherwise be disconnected from the Internet if the control servers were shut down. The court agreed, and ordered that the surrogate control servers remain in operation until March 8.

“But by early last month, it was becoming clear that more than 3 million PCs worldwide — including at least 500,000 in the United States — were still infected with DNSChanger. The company that released those estimates, security firm Internet Identity, reported that 50 percent of Fortune 500s and about half of all U.S. government agencies were still struggling with infections.”

The court order has now been extended to July 9, 2012. As stated before, DNSChanger infects both PCs and Macs. You can determine if your computer is infected by going to <http://dns-ok.us> If your computer is infected follow the instructions on that site or the instructions at <http://www.dcwg.org/fix/>
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Like to write an article for the club’s newsletter? Articles are welcomed.

Please contact:

Al Williams at atwilliams136@gmail.com

The Equipment Corner by Ed Dahrsnin

Refurbished Systems The following refurbished systems are available:

#265: Compaq Presario 7000

#266: HP Pavilion a1203w

#267: Compaq DeskPro EN

#268: Compaq 5300 US

The systems are free to any club member. You must pick them up. Contact Ed at 464-6591.

Miscellaneous We have 3 volt CR2023 batteries (suitable for motherboards to keep the system clock running) and a variety of CD-ROM's, floppy disk drives, keyboards, 2-button mice, various power supplies, and assorted cables. Please contact Ed Dahrsnin at 464-6591.

Donations We accept used, *working*, tower and laptop computers (with power units and batteries) from club members along with all software CDs. Used printer cartridges also accepted. You may deliver them to the North's Computer Resource room on the first floor of M building after 1 pm on Monday through Friday. No Macs or Mac parts, see JoAnne Phillips or Bob Handler for additional information. •

The Mission

The Mission of the Willow Valley Computer Club is to:

- Provide the means to educate beginners or interested non-users on how to use a computer.
- Arrange for speakers to talk to the Club about subjects that would be of interest to those with some background and experience in computer use.
- Provide a forum for interchange of computer information among members.

For more information about the Club, contact Sid Paskowitz at 464-2127 or wvrccc@Yahoo.com

The Leadership

Officers

President: Sid Paskowitz

Vice President: Ralph Beedle

Secretary: Joan Burks

Treasurer: Dick Dressel

Community Representatives

Manor: Larry Gallagher

Lakes: Gene Simasek

Committee Chairpersons

Program: Ralph Beedle

Training: Bob McRobbie

Equipment: Ed Dahrsnin

Technical Support: Tony Poulos

Website: Sid Paskowitz

Publicity: Wally Gordon

Newsletter: Al Williams

Mac Interest Group: JoAnne Phillips

Computer Room Coordinators:
Dave Baker, Gene Simasek

Microsoft Liaison: Ed Dahrsnin

Past Presidents

Larry Gallagher

Reviewer Acknowledgment

The following individual kindly reviewed this issue:

Sid Paskowitz

Thank you,

Al Williams

Interested in reviewing the Computer Club newsletter before it goes to press, or providing advice about the content? Please contact:

Al Williams at atwilliams136@gmail.net

Key Willow Valley Web Sites

These are URL links to key Willow Valley web sites. Please copy the URL to your browser's URL space, open the site, and then add them to Favorites/Bookmarks or create desktop icons. You may need to choose a Select Text tool before you can copy a URL.

Information Central: <http://eventregistration.willowvalley.org/kiosk/cclub/index.aspx>

Kiosk Home Page: <http://eventregistration.willowvalley.org/kiosk/default.aspx>

Resident Phone Directory: <http://eventregistration.willowvalley.org/kiosk/cris%20files/phonesearch.aspx>

Service Request: <http://eventregistration.willowvalley.org/kiosk/ServiceRequest.aspx>

Computer Club Newsletters: <http://eventregistration.willowvalley.org/kiosk/cclub/p/Newsletter.pdf>
