



From The Keyboard

This will be my final column as NYACC President.

I want to thank you for the support I have received during the past 3 years. Yes, it's been a long time and I have enjoyed every moment.

It's been an honor to serve and I look forward to continue participating and working with the New Team as a board member.

Participating in the club and maintaining your membership is crucial to strengthening NYACC.

Our general meeting programs have been interesting and informative. We think

we did a good job in presenting a variety of topics.

Again, I encourage you to attend a Board Meeting, it is the fourth Thursday of every month. As a paid up member you are welcome to voice your opinions and ideas.

Good luck to Hank Kee as president and to the new slate of officers.

Have a great summer and observe safe computing. Your virus and spam checkers are your safety belts.

Rayne Byer
President
NYACC

NYACC Membership Renewal 2006 *Support Your Club*

We have maintained the dues at a nominal \$ 20.00 for many years.

This is to keep our current membership and encourage new people to join.

Please come to the next meeting prepared to give your payment to Richard Labov at the next meeting.

Thank you.

Our most active SIGS

Creative Computing
meets 1st Tuesday of each month

Windows SIG
meets 3rd Thursday of each month

Please check nyacc.org
Special Interest
for date time and room.

**Support your club.
NYACC Tote Bags
Available at \$2.00 each.**

Google Earth

By Joe Schmitt, Member of the Tampa Bay Computer Society
jschmitt(at)tampabay.rr.com www.tampa-bay.org

One of the greatest tools of the internet has always been that of maps. From the early days of the Internet www.mapquest.com was a great source for online geography. Now a myriad of new tools is available to home internet users to navigate through the world.

Believe it or not, one of the biggest uses for online maps is not for that big long trip

to the Grand Canyon with the kids but for finding local addresses. How many times recently have you used a service such as www.mapquest.com or maps.google.com to find that new restaurant or new store? While the online services available can be used to find the next route cross-country they are more often used locally.

Another popular role that current cartographic sites such as mappoint.msn.com serve is where a particular place is in relation to your current location. There are many times when we are watching the news and someplace like Jumbo, WV pops up; there is now a great new tool to let you explore the world virtually.

(Continued page 6)

Inside This Issue

<i>Google Earth</i>	1
<i>All About NYACC</i>	2
<i>Web 2.0 and Portable Computing</i>	3
<i>NYACC Membership Form</i>	4
<i>Online Librarians</i>	4
<i>Q & A</i>	8

All About NYACC

NYACC Technical Support

EVER GET A PROBLEM you just can't solve by yourself? From time to time do you need an expert opinion or a little advice? Hardware or software getting to you? Can't wait for the Open Access questions at the next meeting? Well, now your club can come to your aid. NYACC Tech support is just an email away!

Ask your question in as much detail as possible (be specific as to hardware and software) and send it to our self-proclaimed world-class expert volunteers who will try to get back to you with an answer by return mail. **But make sure your dues are paid up-to-date.**

NYACC Tech support can be reached at nyacc@weiser.com

NYACC SIGs: When and Where They Meet

NYACC General Meeting is in the New York University Silver (Main) Building, the second Thursday of each month. 7 pm.

Creative Computing Club meets first Tuesday of each month. Contact Irene Weissman irenesings@yahoo.com

Power Windows meets the third Thursday each month. Contact Rayne Byer

The NYACC Consultants Group meets once a month. Contact Peter Rooney

NYACC Board of Directors meets the last Thursday of each month. Contact Dave Metzger

For Current Meeting Times And Locations, PLEASE ACCESS [HTTP://WWW.NYACC.ORG](http://WWW.NYACC.ORG)

DISCLAIMER AND CAVEAT

The New York Amateur Computer Club (NYACC) is a non-profit organization formed for the purpose of advancing and disseminating information about computers.

The club acts as a forum for computer users. While NYACC has a policy of allowing presentations of interest, sometimes by vendors of commercial products, in no way does NYACC endorse nor is it responsible for any representations made by any such presenter.

NYACC is not a party to any transaction between members or between a member and a non-member, nor does it make any representation concerning such transaction. As with all commercial dealings, we recommend that you clearly understand what you are agreeing to and get an agreement in writing, covering all details of the transaction.

NYACC Newsletter:

The NYACC Newsletter is published irregularly by the New York Amateur Computer Club, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation devoted to education, the advancement of science, and the promotion of camaraderie among enthusiasts and operators of small computing systems of all flavors.

NYACC Club Dues

Annual dues for club membership are \$20 U.S., \$45 foreign. To join or renew, contact the club treasurer at the general meeting or send a copy of the completed application appearing in these pages with payment to NYACC, PO Box 7844, JAF Station, New York, NY 10116

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Web 2.0 and Portable Computing.

By John Abbott, member of the Bentsen Grove Resort Computer Club, Mission Texas

John(at)bgrcc.com www.bgrcc.com

Portable Computing has always lagged behind the rest of the computing market. This is probably because there are currently less mobile devices than computers. But that is about to change. According to Steve Rupel (leading PR company on the planet) billions of mobile devices will reach the market this year and by 2010 there will be 50 million of them sold quarterly.

Mobile device? You won't be calling them Pocket PC or Cell Phone long; maybe PCC for Personal Communication Center. The merger of all forms of digital communications is rapidly taking shape. Cell phones now contain very limited access to the web, receive very limited email, and take limited resolution pictures – oh and they work as phones too. With smaller and more low powered devices quickly coming on scene these limits will expand exponentially.

My project over the past month has been the installation of an Operating System on a USB Flash-memory Device (UFD). I started with a full blown Linux distribution on a USB 80 gigabyte micro hard drive. Well after some real torture and lots of reading I managed to get it operational. However, in editing the boot file I managed to misspell something and now I've got to start all over again.

But I did find a couple of small Linux distributions: Damn Small Linux and Puppy Linux. I downloaded the ISO files for each and started working on a flash drive. Today I managed to get the thumb drive fully functional. Along the way I've learned a lot about what I still need to learn about executing from a CD or a UFD. But DSL in a tube really works.

Why do this? Well because I know that Web 2.0 is going to dominate the future of the web. With more and more of the platform being located on the Internet, less and less will be required on your local computer. The computer will take on more and more of the role of thin client (from a client/server relationship where all the applications are on the server). This in turn will have a direct impact on the cost of computers which will no longer have to come with expensive 3rd party software. So I created a portable thin client.

Web 2.0 (platform on the web) will take away a great deal of the chest thumping over O/S because the web interacts with all operating systems. The feature rich web already offers on-line mail processing that works perfectly with thin client or host computer. I am an advocate of Google's Gmail. I can access it on the web where it neatly threads my messages and stores up to 2.5 Gigabytes of mail in the in-basket or in the searchable

archive. From within that mail system I can also originate chats with my friends and maintain my calendar. I can make my calendar or part of it accessible to colleagues for event coordination.

I can use Zohowriter.com for my word processor. Zoho is a full strength word processor with all the power you find in Works, Word or Open Office (or any of the dozen or so word processors available. I am able to store my documents on-line, download them to my computer, publish them on the site so they can be collaborated by associates whom I have previously arranged access. I can upload files from remote files (my computer or yours) and modify and store or simply store them on-line. And as an added feature I can use Zoho as a mail client; sending, receiving and originating email. Zoho automatically assigns you an email account when you register (free).

There will be some who say: “well I can have several programs open at once on my desktop.” And my response would be, fine, I have multiple web pages open on my computer as I use Zoho to write this. I have a page set up with Wikipedia to check facts, the weather, my Google mail, my personal mail web account, XM radio playing great jazz. And in a few moments I'll open another and watch the news on TV – all from my thumb drive. I sure hope my Gizmo or Skype phones don't ring during the news!

There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this article as long as it is kept in context with proper credit given the author. The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you.

An Invitation to Join The New York Amateur Computer Club

Annual Dues are STILL only \$20 per year ---- Join Today!

NEW YORK AMATEUR COMPUTER CLUB INC
PO Box 7844 JAF Station
New York, NY 10016

Date: _____

Re: NYACC MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

New Member Renewal

First Name _____ **Last Name** _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Home phone: _____ **Business phone:** _____

Email Address: _____ @ _____

Please include your email address. If we can send you notices and Newsletters by email, you will save your club considerable money.

Online Librarians Never Say Shhh!

By Gabriel Goldberg, APCUG Advisor; Columnist, AARP Computer & Technology Website, www.aarp.org

Libraries have improved since baby boomers attended grade school. Research assistance once only available in person or by telephone is blossoming into diverse online "ask a librarian" services, handling questions ranging from general curiosity and homework-related to business research.

Friendly Online Librarians Never Say Shhh!

Growing up, I was lucky to live just a few blocks from a great neighborhood library. I fondly remember the children's librarian encouraging my love of reading and books. The library was rebuilt while I was in elementary school; I was recently shocked that the "new" library was undergoing renovation and improvement. Then I realized that what seems like yesterday was five decades ago!

The good news for us all -- near libraries or not -- is that libraries have greatly improved in that 50 years. Research assistance once only available in person or by telephone is blossoming into diverse online "ask a librarian" services. These handle all sorts of questions: general curiosity, homework-related, business research, etc. Just don't expect medical or legal advice. E-mail assistance has been available for some time. Librarians sometimes like it because they can answer questions as they have time, and it avoids people waiting on line or holding on the phone.

(continued on page 5)

Online Librarians Never Say Shhh!

(continued from page 4)

But it can be slow if a question must be clarified -- that's important, since people often don't ask what they really want answered! And online interaction lacks face-to-face intimacy, voice tone, body language, which all help communication.

In addition to accepting e-mail, libraries use Web forms for submitting queries, take questions via instant messaging, and offer interactive Web chats. Highly interactive instant messaging and Web chats allow quick conversations, often providing answers within a few minutes. Newer technologies such as VoIP (voice over IP, Internet telephony) and SMS (cell phone text messaging) may soon increase research availability.

Library policies vary regarding answering non-resident questions; some specialized queries (local history, obituaries, newspaper clippings, etc.) must be handled by a library near the area of interest. That brings genealogy questions from far away as people research their ancestors.

Most queries are handled at no cost, though some searches incur charges. A library card usually isn't needed. Some libraries currently mail printed research results; e-mailing images will provide faster service and reduce costs.

Behind-the-scenes technology helps librarians manage queries, ensuring that all questions are answered and eliminating duplicate responses. Shortcuts fill in frequently used answers.

The same sorts of questions are asked online as are posed by phone or in person, with addition of sensitive areas such as sexual issues. Queries often deal with homework -- math, science fair challenges, etc. -- and country reports. Librarians enjoy the occasional obscure gem, such as being asked about "modeling the economic infrastructure of railroads in Great Britain".

The geek expression "24x7" means that something is available all day, every day. Since people expect this full-time access to e-mail, the Web, shopping, banking, and other online services, they're enthusiastic about being able to ask questions whenever they occur.

But it's hard for libraries to provide this never-anticipated level of service, especially when off-hours demand may be limited. So they support each other locally/nationally/ internationally by sharing round-the-clock assistance chores. Questions are entered locally and routed to on-duty librarians -- who sometimes work from home in pajamas, answering off-hours long-distance queries.

Even librarians sometimes need help -- so their world-wide Stumpers mailing list lets them share baffling questions.

Librarians and the public are learning together to use electronic tools. New technologies facilitate supporting diverse clienteles by -- for example -- facilitating non-English services.

Here are a few tips regarding online queries: provide your name/e-mail/phone for answering and clarification; use plain text (not formatted) for easy reading; don't nag, allow time for an answer -- but follow up in a week or so. Finally, contact the correct library. A library in Plymouth, Michigan has received queries about Plymouths in Massachusetts and England!

Using online library services is easy once you have an Internet connection. Some libraries favor PCs with Windows and the Internet Explorer Web browser, but Linux and Macintosh systems are increasingly supported. There's generally no software download or install. Browser pop-up blockers or firewalls sometimes get in the way but they're easily customized.

Start by finding your library's Web site For example, I locate my library by submitting "fairfax county" library

(continued on page 7)

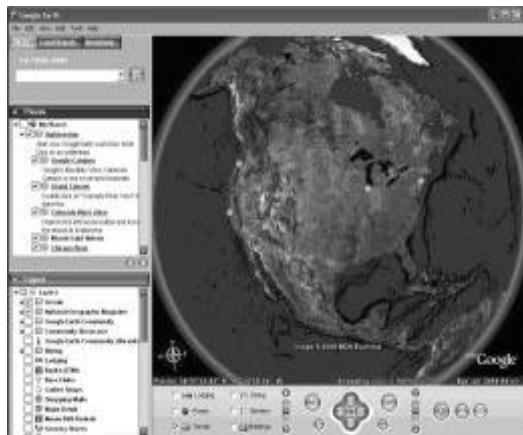
Google Earth

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Google Earth (<http://earth.google.com>) is a new offering from Google that offers a unique spin on online cartography.

While most mapping services try to offer you a straight forward approach to mapping, Google's newest tool takes quite a different tact. Described by Google as "a globe that sits in your PC," Google Earth offers a new perspective on mapping software. Like all its major competitors, Google Earth will allow you to find addresses, points of interest, or a driving route. What makes Google Earth different is the way in which items are displayed to the user. Google Earth has to install software on your machine, and once installed it needs an internet connection to display its images. Also be advised that Google Earth is resource intensive: it requires a fairly fast machine with 3D graphics capability.

When you first start up Google Earth you see the below image:

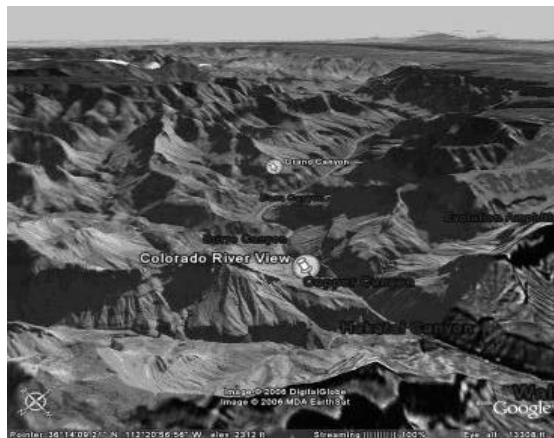


Google Earth generates an image of the planet taken from a mosaic of satellite and aerial photographs. If you enter an address such as your home in the search bar, Google Earth doesn't just pop a map of your neighborhood but actually *flies* to the location. You see the image of the earth get larger and larger as if you were descending on the location from outer space. All the time as the planet moves closer, the program continually generates more detailed pictures of the surface until you are sitting above the location you are searching for.



Another great feature of Google Earth is angular display. Not only are dead top center views available but you can also tilt the plane of the viewing area to see things in the distance. Now this sounds like I should be able to tilt the image and see the windows on my house, but that just isn't possible. All the images are from satellite or aerial photographs that are also taken from straight overhead.

Topography is another feature that Google Earth incorporates makes the tilting feature quite impressive. Topography is how the terrain rises and falls in any given location. Google earth uses 3D technology to render the rise and fall of the land based on radar data gathered from multiple space shuttle missions. The images are melded with the topography and you have the impression of seeing mountains rise and canyons fall:



(continued on page 7)

Google Earth

(continued from page 6)

Not only does Google Earth provide these new ways to explore the world but they have also included the ability to include data files of your own. If you choose to upgrade to the "plus" version you can import data from any of the popular GPS (Global Positioning System) receivers currently available. You can import waypoints, routes, and tracks from the unit.

Also, you can import images, such as a topographic map, and orient them as overlays on the satellite images. The application will let you resize and rotate the map until fits. Google Earth will also let you save data in files that can be shared with other users. One interesting aspect is files that can utilize data available on the web for dynamic interaction. Click on this link to see some examples: <http://earth.google.com/tour/thanks-win.html> . For example there is a link to a file that will track flights around the US live. It displays an icon for the plane and shows it in relation to where it is in the air

Google Earth offers some new and interesting ways to explore our world. With thousands of user files, it can be customized to any number of needs to suit your tastes. A great resource for new ideas involving Google Earth is the Google Earth blog at: <http://www.gearthblog.com/> or at the community: <http://bbs.keyhole.com/ubb/ubbthreads.php/Cat/0>

The only limits to Google Earth are what your imagination and determination can achieve.

Joe Schmitt is a computer and technology guru, who also has a love for the outdoors. He can often be found tromping around the woods with his GPS and digital camera.

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Online Librarians Never Say Shhh!

(continued from page 5)

Start by finding your library's Web site. For example, I locate my library by submitting

"fairfax county" library

to Google [www.google.com]. Or I could click from my county government Web site to the library pages. Or Googling library questions yields many library sites offering answers. Then look for links like Ask-A-Librarian! or "Homework Help!". Links and services will vary; when I click Ask-A-Librarian, I can choose between chatting, e-mailing, or (of course) actually visiting a library.

In researching this article I challenged my library with two questions. I was delighted that they quickly named the obscure British TV show whose name I couldn't remember (The Duchess of Duke Street) and found a science fiction book containing a short story I wanted to reread.

No matter how they evolve, whether as buildings or online, libraries' core mission is everlasting: providing timely information in a customer-friendly format.

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THE PERSONAL COMPUTER SHOW
WBAI-FM (99.5) NEW YORK CITY
EACH WEDNESDAY FROM 8-9 PM

Joe King and Co-host Hank Kee (both former presidents of NYACC) have been bringing you computer industry news, hardware and software reviews, guest interviews and news of User group meetings for over 20 years. Three-time winners of the prestigious national Computer Press Awards, the computer guys try to answer whatever questions you might have on computers and computing when they open the phones to the radio audience. Just call 212-209-2900. The phones are open from 8:30 on each Wednesday night. You can catch the show on streaming audio by pointing your browser to www.pcradioshow.org where you may also subscribe to the Podcast.

Windows XP Q & A

Q: Do you have any running processes that don't need to be running?

A:

Check this by doing Ctrl, Alt, Delete, choose Process tab, make sure that everything that is running is necessary.

You can also try this to see what is preloading:

Start > Run, type in "msconfig" (without the quotes) Click the Boot.ini tab and then select the /SOS switch. Now instead of seeing that black and white progress bar you will now see in real time what files are being loaded. This can give you a clue where it is hanging up.

Next General Meeting
July 13th 7 pm

Search Online
Presented by
NYACC Panel



Send in your Q & A questions to
newsletter@weiser.com

Support your club.

Dues are \$ 20.00 per year.

Become Active...

Contribute an article to the newsletter

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Become a board member.

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