E-Mailing Photographs

By Richard Kennon, Editor,

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First, we **must** understand that photograph (image) size in the camera and in the computer is measured in **pixels**. These are the basic dots of color that make the picture. **Do not** pay any attention to anything that says "inches" or "pixels per inch." These terms are meaningless when we are considering a picture either in the camera or in the computer. They may come into play later if we want to print the photo on paper. But, that is an-

other subject for another time. For now, we think only of pixels. Most cameras record too many pixels to e-mail. For instance a 6 megapixel camera will make a picture about 3000 pixels wide by 2000 pixels tall and the file size may be several megabytes. Our screens are usually only about 1000 pixels wide (some are larger and some smaller). So, if we e-mail the native picture, it will be wider than the screen for the recipient and the file

will be so large, it may take "forever" to download to the recipient's computer. It is possible the service provider will not even accept it.

There are two things we must do to make a photo e-mailable. The first is to *resize* or *resample* the picture. We want to change the picture width from 3000 pixels to 800 pixels, for instance. This process is called resizing or resembling. We have to pick the best 800 pixels out of the 3000 to represent our photo. Well, no, that is not exactly correct but it sim-

Dymo DiscPainter

CD Labeler Extraordinaire

By Gypsy D. Katz

It's no bigger than a small shoebox; with a higher back part that conceals the ink cartridge. In fact, I'll have to admit it sort of looks like a mixture of the Atari Jaguar and a toilet stool. OK, bad jokes aside,

inside the box, you'll find the typical things… USB connector, power supply, software, a few blank printable CD-R's, a Dymo ink jet

cartridge and a "Quick

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Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts

L.C.A.C.E.

c/o Group Ambassador / Founder

Mr. J.J. Johnson

MEMBERSHIP

Membership for LCACE is open to all individuals and families interested in personal computing. Annual dues are $20.00 per individual/family. Associate membership is only $10.00 (out of state, unable to attend meetings). Membership includes a one year subscription to the LCACE News Journal and access to all club libraries and functions. Applications for membership may be obtained at the monthly meeting, by request on the club Hotline, and are now available on our WEB site at - http://www.lcace.org.

MEETINGS

LCACE meetings are usually held on the second Saturday of each month at the Grayslake Area Public Library, 100 Library Lane, Grayslake, Illinois. The meeting room opens at noon and the formal meeting begins at 12:30 p.m. All meetings are open to the public. Bring a friend!

ADVERTISING

Ad rates per issue: Full page - $25, Half page - $15, Quarter page - $10, Business Card - $5. Discounts are available on advance purchase of multiple issues. Please send camera-ready copy and payment to the club address by the 21st of the month preceding publication. For more information on ad pricing, please call our Hotline. Ads are **FREE** to all paid members.

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Robin's RAMblings

From left to right: Ron Aldana, Geek Squad Supervisor, Joe Neuhengen Customer Assistant Supervisor, and Adam Cash Mobile Manager.

"To catch the reader's attention, place an interesting sentence or quote from the story here."

Some of the things the Best Buy Team discussed.

I hope you attended our August 9th meeting which featured Mundelein Best Buy employees: Adam Cash, Mobile Manager; Ron Aldana, Geek Squad Supervisor; and Joe Neuhengen, Customer Assistant Supervisor. They discussed air cards, *Skype*, webcams, internet security, etc. Each person received a 12% off coupon for the Mundelein store. Lew Seidenberg won the door prize, an LG Bluetooth headset, which Best Buy donated. Member comments included: "Great meeting", "One of the best programs we've ever had." We look forward to these great guys returning to LCACE in the spring.

We saw a number of new faces at our August meeting. After attending this wonderful program, we hope they will return and become members.

LCACE vice president Mike McEnery will discuss Windows Live *One Care* on September 13th. We will also have "Show and Tell". If you have a new "toy", we'd love to hear about it.

Our October 11th program will feature one of our most popular programs, "Ask the Gurus". Plan to bring your questions, and our gurus will answer them. On Saturday, November 8th, LCACE and the Grayslake Area Public Library will co-sponsor Sue Walter's program, "Computerized Embroidery". Sue will show us a design, then digitize it on her laptop, and use her computerized embroidery machine to stitch it. She will also discuss websites where one can download beautiful designs-often at no charge.

Treasurer Winnie Frost (treasurer@lcace.org) is chairing our annual holiday party which will be held December 6th at the University of Illinois Extension Building on Route 45 in Grayslake. Winnie's co-chairs are vice president Mike McEnery (vp@lcace.org) and membership chair Linda Busch (membership@lcace.org). If you would like to help on the holiday party committee, please email Winnie, Linda, or Mike.

Our January 10th, 2009 meeting will be another "Show and Tell" and "Ask the Gurus" program.

What programs would you like LCACE to have in the future? Please email Mike McEnery or me (president@lcace.org) with your ideas.

Robin

Member Update Form

If you are not receiving the meeting email messages from the J.J., it is possible the club does not have your correct address. Please go to http://lcace.org/Documents/Application.pdf Download the Application form, fill in the information that needs correcting/updating. Bring the form to a meeting and give it to Linda Busch our Membership Chairperson.

Another problem might be that your email client (such as SBCGLOBAL) is blocking our address. Put jj1450xl@yahoo.com in your address book for the sole purpose of receiving this email.

E-Mailing Photographs

plifies things to think of it that way. We don't have to worry about it because a lot of very smart grammers have developed ways (algorithms) to help us. Just remember, you want to resize or resample to get the photo down to a size convenient for e-mailing. I usually use 800 pixels or 900 pixels width for pictures I attach to e-mails.

 The second thing to do to make a photo e-mailable is to save it in **JPEG format (.jpg).** That is a format

Elements 6 is out now and sells for about $100. If you are able to spend that much and want one of the best editing programs, I highly recommend it.

that reduces file size a lot and picture quality a little so the picture can be downloaded more quickly and still be nice to look at. Some software programs give you choices of compression amount with numbers ranging from 1 to 10. One will result in a very small file but the picture quality will not be good at all. A 10 will give the very best quality but with a very large file size. A reasonable compromise is to use 5 or 6. I usually use 6.

 How do you do this? First, I will describe how to do it with a free Microsoft program. Then I will try to look at some other programs.

Microsoft Power Toys for XP has a Resize Pictures toy that is slick and easy but feedback says it only works on XP. It can be downloaded at

http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/downloads/powertoys/xppowertoys.mspx. Right click on an image name or thumbnail in Explorer or My Computer and choose **Resize Pictures.** You are limited to four specific sizes but they are good choices. They don't tell us what compression they are using but the results look OK. Unless you tell them under **Advanced** to replace the image in the file, it will make a copy. That's good. They will add the word, "Large", "Medium" or "Small" to the end of the name you have chosen.

 If you are happy with this solution, then read no further. But, if you want to use a picture editing program, maybe this will help. In Photoshop Elements 5, click on **Image>Resize>Image Size** and this window will pop up. Note that there is some garbage at the bottom about "inches" but we will ignore that. First we will click the **Resample Image** box. That puts the Pixel Dimensions in play and

that is what we want. I selected the Width box and changed the width to 800 pixels. Since the **Constrain Proportions** box is selected, that is all I have to do.

Note, down at the bottom, that we have several choices of sampling algorithms. This is frosting on the cake. I read somewhere that I should use **Bicubic Sharper** when downsizing so that is what I do. Most programs don't give us all these choices. Then we should click on **File>Save As** and give the photo a new name. I often just use the same name and add "_800px" so the next time I will know it is ready to e-mail. Here we can choose the JPEG format and the compression amount. Photoshop Elements 6 is out now and sells for about $100. If you are able to spend that much and want one of the best editing programs, I highly recommend it.

Let's look at Picasa2. It is a free program from Google and looks really good but I do not have much experience with it. By all means, try it first because the price is right! When it comes to e-mailing photographs, it is a little more automated but not any easier to use than

E-Mailing Photographs

Elements. First, click on **Tools>Options>E-Mail**. Then select the width you want in pixels. There are six choices. Then click on **Apply** and **OK**.

The next step is to click on **File>E-Mail** and you will get three choices of how you want to e-mail your photos. Fortunately, I use Outlook Express so my choice is listed.

When I clicked on Outlook Express, an email page popped up with the photo attached. At this point we can write something else on the e-mail and send it. I recommend this so the recipient will know it is really from you and not something sent out by a virus. When I receive e-mails that only say "Attached", I **Delete** them without looking at the attachment. This saved me one time when I received a

virus from my sister-in-law that she did not know she sent. She spent weeks and dollars getting her computer back up.

Oh, I digress. If you want to send more than one picture (and, who doesn't?), you must select the picture and click on the Hold button near the bottom of the screen. Do this for each photo you want to send and they will all be attached to the e-mail. The program automatically chooses JPEG format and a compression ratio but does not tell you. That is OK as the pictures I tried looked good. Picasa2 has considerable capability for editing photos in many respects. Try it!

There are many other editing programs that I haven't mentioned and have no experience with. In all cases you want to change the picture's size in pixels by resizing or resampling.

Pay no attention to anything that says "inches" as that will have no meaning for this process. Sometime later we will talk about printing pictures and then we will use inches.

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Just In

The Holiday Raffle Prizes are Announced

1st Prize

Compaq Presario Notebook Computer

2nd Prize

Nikon Coolpix L18 Digital Camera

3rd Prize

Maxtor OneTouch 4 Mini 320GB Portable Hard drive

4th Prize

One Years Membership to L.C.A.C.E.

Dymo DiscPainter

Start" pamphlet. I started this install originally in Vista; I was up and running from disc install to print in less than 10 minutes.

Manually flip open the bottom part of the printer, the part with the clear acrylic

window, and pop in a printable CD face up, data side down and then open up the Discus application in order to start the printing process. Open up the application choose a template or create your own from your own images: jpg, png, bmp, among others. In this example, I used a 1600

pixels by 1200 pixels at 72dpi Photoshop document that I had created a while back for a calendar image, exported out to *.png. The Discus for Dymo application also includes the ability to add filenames via iTunes, or even adding/synchronizing via tab

Dymo DiscPainter Cont.

(Continued from page 5)

delimited files. On Vista, it picked up my iTunes application, and offered to import filenames from iTunes or a tab delimited file to allow printing of those aforementioned filenames on the face of the CD.

In goes a blank white, printable CD-R and the process is surprisingly fast. A picture via the Dymo DiscPainter at the best quality took about 3 minutes, tops. Seriously… 3 minutes. And it's totally dry, huggable touchable once you take it out.

Perfect each time too. Much unlike the messy Avery labels that require that applicator that haphazardly presses a disc down onto a label that might leave unsightly bubbles under the label - no matter how hard you press down, you still might get a bubble or two. In a slot loaded drive, that's something that might get stuck on entry or ejection, plus the labels sometimes separate from the disc while lying around… creating a sticky, nasty mess. Needless to say, printing directly onto a disc alleviates the fear of label separation.

The cons? There are always a few:

The printer capacity is only one disc at a time. There is no stack loading, no way to just print and forget about it. If you're used to burning discs in your internal drives, this is not any different. Another minus would be the fact that you're likely going to be buying more cartridges very soon, and they're not normally in your Wal-Mart or other local store. But the cartridges are at your favorite online places like Amazon and B&H Photo, as well as the Dymo website among others.

All in all, the Dymo DiscPainter is worth every penny for just a printer. There's no optical burner; this is, however, a full-color printer. I no longer have to try to read my horrible writing and my discs are nice and labeled.

Despite the one at a time method using the Dymo DiscPainter, it's a recommended buy if you're a disc backing up fool like I am. Perhaps for once I can now locate a disc by sight alone. With the software abilities to add filenames from other 3rd party applications like iTunes and other applications, that level of integration makes even my rigorous backup routine fun, colorful and easy to sort out at a later date.

Needless to say, printing directly onto a disc alleviates the fear of label separation.

From the Editor

A board meeting was held prior to the August meeting where the Holiday party was discussed. Plans were made for the raffle prizes. Remember the date December 6, 2008. Make sure your calendar is highlighted. Following that, we went right into the business meeting. The folks from Best Buy in Mundelein gave 3 great presentations with the emphasis on "Air Cards" . We are happy to say they will be back with other presentations in the future!

I am looking for a 'Club Historian"/assistant editor. Duties would include writing a monthly article on what happened at the meeting, as well as taking pictures. The Club camera will be made available to you for this assignment. Please contact me at: vice-president@lcace.org or (847) 571-7258.

As always, we are in constant need on articles for the Journal. If you receive a new toy (technology- related) and would like to write a few sentences about it, please send it to me by the 1st of the month.

And the Winner is

Congratulations to Sherry Florian winner of the August 2008 50/50 Raffle.

GyPSy Guide

When we first looked at the GyPSy Guide, it seemed quite pricey… until we looked at the cost of tours

by Angus MacTavish

During our recent trip to Western Canada, we rented a GyPSy Guide (=GPS tour guide), a neat marriage of technology and tourism. This small PDA attaches to the auxiliary port of your vehicle's stereo, to the power port formerly used for the cigarette lighter), and to your windshield. It knew exactly where we were because it's a GPS, and gave us our own personalized tour. As you drive through an area, it automatically plays an audio commentary about that location. It tells you about the beautiful scenery, stories of past explorers, advises where to watch for wildlife, gives directions at important intersections, great photo viewpoints, suggests side trips to places you might otherwise miss, and tells quirky tales of Canadians (such as a tiny town on Vancouver Island that had the world's largest hockey stick. Of course, we stopped to photograph it.). It also provided practical information such as "Check your gas gauge; the next gas station is 150 kilometers away." and "This area has clean rest rooms." You want to know these things when you are in a remote area.

We were able to tour at our own pace: if an area looked interesting, we spent a long time there; if not, we continued on our way. The city tour of Victoria, for instance, was supposed to take about 2 hours. We saw many places where we wanted to linger, take a stroll, lunch by the harbor, etc., so we took close to 5 hours. You can't do that on a Grayline tour!

When we first looked at the GyPSy Guide, it seemed quite pricey… until we looked at the cost of tours. Not only did (we save a good deal of money on tours, we were able to travel as we wished. We realized how extremely useful our GyPSy Guide was when it didn't work

GyPSy Guide

well in downtown Vancouver (Our own Garmin GPS wasn't working properly there either; evidently there was some sort of satellite problem.). Instead of having to pore over maps and guidebooks as we drove, we listened to our own personal guided tour.

If you are ever fortunate enough to visit the spectacular Canadian Rockies and the beautiful coastal scenery of Vancouver, Victoria, and Vancouver Island, I strongly recommend that you rent a GyPSy Guide to use in your vehicle. It

can guide you all through Alberta and British Columbia for the trip of a lifetime.

For more information about the GyPSy Guide, go to www.gpstourscanada.com.

Windows XP:
Free Utilities For Your OS

Overall, Windows XP is a pretty good operating system. After all, it's still going strong after more than seven years, and even after all this time, some still prefer it over Microsoft's newest offering, Windows Vista.

But WinXP isn't perfect, so there's certainly room for some improvement. That's why this month we've found several handy programs and utilities that can help make WinXP better. Many of them can be used as replacements for specific built-in WinXP applications or features, while others either provide a feature that WinXP doesn't offer or correct one of the operating system's foibles or idiosyncrasies.

Sometimes, the tools included with WinXP leave something to be desired.

All these utilities are available via a quick and easy download, and best of all, they're free. So what's the catch? Well, there are a few minor ones. We've used all these programs and found them to work, but because most of them come from smaller, lesser-known developers, it's probably a good idea to back up your system or manually create a restore point (select Start, All Programs, Accessories, System Tools, and System Restore) before installing or using them. Also, you shouldn't count on getting any technical support. (It's seldom, if ever, provided with free software.)

Application Or Feature Replacements

Sometimes, the tools included with WinXP leave something to be desired. Here are some applications that provide extra features you might be looking for.

The AbiWord word processor gives you a nice alternative to the limited WordPad without the cost of Microsoft Word.

AbiWord. WinXP's integrated WordPad word processor might be OK for typing grocery lists, but it's not good for much more. If you want a good word processor that will leave WordPad in the dust but would rather not spend the bucks on Microsoft Word, try AbiWord (www.abiword.com/downl oad). It has a familiar and easy-to-use interface, a spell checker, and lots of advanced document layout features, and unlike Word-Pad, AbiWord can save files in Word's ubiquitous DOC format.

Auslogics Disk Defrag.
Your hard drive should be defragmented regularly for optimal performance, but WinXP's integrated defrag utility tends to be slow and clunky, especially on older systems. Auslogics Disk Defrag (www.auslogics.com) is a lot quicker, and it provides better feedback during the defrag process. You can also adjust its CPU usage depending on whether you'd prefer the defrag to finish as quickly as possible or want better system responsiveness while it's taking place. (One minor catch—when a defrag is finished, the summary window includes a mini-advertisement for one of Auslogics' commercial products.)

Comodo Firewall Pro.
WinXP's integrated firewall is better than no firewall at all, but it's light on

Free Utilities For Your OS

features and customization options. Comodo Firewall Pro (www.comodo.com) monitors not just the data coming into your system, but the data going out, as well. It also includes a database of trusted applications to help guard against unauthorized software being installed on your system without your knowledge.

AVG. Even though WinXP gives you a firewall, you're on your own when it comes to antivirus software. You could shell out $30 or $40 for an AV utility, but you don't have to if you use AVG Anti-Virus Free Edition (free.grisoft.com). AVG Anti-Virus Free Edition doesn't include all the features of commercial antivirus utilities (including AVG's own), but it does provide basic virus protection at no cost.

CDBurnerXP. WinXP's built-in CD burning feature is convenient when you don't have third-party burning software installed, but its capabilities are limited. CDBurnerXP (www.cdburnerxp.se) lets you do things that you can't do with WinXP alone, such as burn DVDs,

create bootable discs, and make backup copies of your discs by saving them as ISO image files (or burn discs from ISO files you already have). CDBurnerXP will even let you create and print custom covers for several varieties of disc cases.

Launchy works a lot like the Vista Start menu's search feature, giving you a convenient way to find and run your programs and files without wading through levels of menus.

Revo Uninstaller. It's probably happened to all of us at least once when trying to uninstall an unwanted program via Add Or Remove Programs. Something goes wrong, both the program and its entry in Add Or Remove Programs get left behind, and the uninstall process fails thereafter. Revo Uninstaller (www.revouninstaller.com) can succeed where Add Or Remove Programs fails. Aside from running a program's standard uninstall routine, Revo Uninstaller can also scan your hard drive to ferret out any leftover files and Registry settings. And if there are programs installed that you don't recognize, Revo Uninstaller

installer will let you look them up via a Google search.

System Utilities
Personalize your operating system and accomplish some basic tasks more efficiently with the utilities in this section.

BootSkin. Wouldn't it be nice to look at something more attractive or interesting than the standard WinXP loading screen in the minutes your system spends booting up? WinXP won't let you change the default startup image, but BootSkin (www.stardock.com) will. The program includes a link to Stardock's Web site, where you can browse and download from among about 800 ready-made images created by BootSkin users. (Download them to a convenient place such as your Desktop and double-click to automatically extract and install them in the BootSkin menu. Once installed, you can delete the downloaded files.)

DriverView. Information about WinXP's installed drivers is available, but it's not very easy to find because you have to hunt it down on the operating system. If you want a bird's-

eye view of all your installed drivers, or just need information about a particular one, DriverView (www.nirsoft.net) is a handy tool. This tiny utility (which you don't even have to install) provides a comprehensive and sortable list of every driver on your system, and for each it reports the file name, location, version number, the company that wrote it, the device or software component it goes with, and more. It can be especially useful when you are reinstalling a piece of hardware and know the driver's already on your system but WinXP can't seem to find it. (*NOTE: Because DriverView is an EXE [executable] file, you may get a security warning when you try to launch it.*)

If Add Or Remove Programs leaves you high and dry when you try to get rid of a program, Revo Uninstaller can usually hunt it down and remove it.

Purrint. Have you ever pushed PRINT SCREEN to take a snapshot of your screen, only to find that it doesn't seem to do anything? Purrint (www.bcheck.net) makes that key work as you might think it should. It captures your screen; shows you

Free Utilities For Your OS

a preview of the capture; and can save it as an image file, save it to the Clip-board, or, yes, even send it to the printer.

Interface Enhancements
Navigating WinXP might be second nature for you, but there is always room for improvement. The utilities here enhance the WinXP features you likely use every day.

ClipDiary. We've all used the Windows Clipboard to copy and paste data, but its major limitation is that each time you put some-thing new into the Clip-board, whatever was previ-ously in there gets erased. It's kind of like having a closet that holds only one outfit. ClipDiary (clipdiary.com) improves upon the standard WinXP Clipboard by using a data-base that can store count-less Clipboard entries. A quick CTRL-D keystroke lets you easily browse the contents of your newly vo-luminous clipboard, and perhaps best of all, the con-tents don't get erased when you restart your computer.

ActualDoc. Lots of people use the Start menu's My Recent Documents feature

to get quick access to, well, recently used documents. But it only displays the last 15 documents you used, which may not take you very far back in time. Ac-tualDoc (www.flexigensoft.com) improves on My Recent Documents in a couple of ways. First, it can remem-ber an unlimited number of files, so you can more eas-ily find files even if you used them many days or weeks ago. Then, to help you home in on specific files types, ActualDoc lets you sort the list by cate-gory so you can display just documents, pictures, or media files.

Launchy. Vista users have it pretty easy as the Start menu's search feature lets them find and launch any application by typing its name or just part of it.

WinXP's Start menu, by comparison, makes you navigate through layers of menus—that is, unless you have Launchy (www.launchy.net). This utility indexes every item on your Start menu and hides until you summon it by pressing ALT-Spacebar. From there it acts much like Vista's Start menu search feature, displaying one or more possible pro-grams based on what you type. Because it can also be configured to monitor any folders you choose, Launchy can be used to find and launch document files, too.
These free utilities can make using your WinXP system more efficient, con-venient, and secure. So who said you can't get something for nothing?

by Joseph Moran

ClipDiary

"You've called Smythe here in Tech Support so many times I'm permanently assigning him to you."

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Members

Take a good look, you just might see yourself.

LCACE CLUB PICTURES

@ http://lcace.org/PhotoAlbums.htm

TIME TO RENEW

All memberships will now be renewable annually on April 1st. This change in the paying of annual dues will allow the Treasurer to budget our money more closely. If you haven't already renewed your membership, see Linda or Winnie to find out your pro-rated amount.

Almost the Back Page

Computers
Mike McEnery

t	t	r	o	s	m	g	y	a	t	i
t	e	t	m	o	d	e	m	e	d	p
p	n	e	u	e	t	o	g	e	i	i
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s	n	s	b	o	i	i	l	y	g	m
i	i	k	m	o	n	i	t	o	r	e
d	i	g	i	t	a	l	a	u	a	i
e	u	n	e	m	r	r	o	h	m	e
o	m	r	e	h	y	a	d	n	n	n

binary	boot	chip	chip
computer	digital	disk	disk
email	internet	keyboard	memory
menu	modem	monitor	mouse
printer	program		

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NEXT MEETING
September 13, 2008
Grayslake Public Library
@ 12:30 pm.

Presented by

Mike McEnery

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