BITS AND BYTES

The Newsletter of the Midland Computer Club

June 2010

GENERAL CLUB MEETING 7:00 P.M.
Meets 4th Wednesday of the month at the
Midland Community Center
2001 George St., Midland, MI

http://mcc.apcug.org/

This month's date: June 23, 2010

This month's topic:
- Creating a slide show using PowerPoint 2007— Larry Piper
- Problem Step Recorder (PSR) in Windows 7— Howard Lewis
- Member Poll

PROGRAM COORDINATORS
Contact : Co-Chairpersons

Howard Lewis	lewis3ha@chartermi.net
Joe Lykowski	joseph@lykowski.com

What you missed! In May, Carol Picard gave a presentation on PC Hardware—What's inside my desktop or notebook computer?

Upcoming Activities:

July: No Meeting

August: Summer party. Please bring a dish to pass. The Club will provide sub sandwiches and soft drinks.

President Piper's Ponderings
Our recent meetings at the Community Center have been plagued with Internet connection problems.

Whatever the cause(s), and we have identified many, your Board has decided upon an 'end run' plan. We have decided to purchase our own wireless router.

The plan is to give the MAC address of this router to Tech Support at the Community Center. They feel they can "unblock" this MAC address so our Club can have free, wireless Internet access.

The drill will be that the President will bring the router to each meeting, plug it into an Ethernet jack from the existing router, and, voila!, we are good to go. The implications of the Club having its own wireless router are many. Members can bring their own devices to the meetings and connect to the Internet. We have seen this arrangement work at a number of other computer club meetings. Of course, how you use this new capability will remain to be seen. We even have the flexibility of moving our meetings to another Ethernet-ready location.

As in all public WiFi access, the issue of website blocking or censorship will remain. I would be interested in how you have handled this issue when at McDonalds, the library, Starbucks or a Super 8 motel.

I purchased and have received a D-Link, 100N router. I doubt that the connection details can be arranged prior to June's meeting, but it definitely should be working when we return for the August picnic.

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http://mcc.apcug.org/

Board Meeting

The next board meeting will be 7 p.m., September 7, 2010 (**first Tuesday**), @ Chapel Lane Presbyterian Church, 5501 Jefferson Ave., Midland.

President Piper's Ponderings (cont from Page 1)

Further food for thought: Would you be willing to purchase tickets at $5 a pop for a chance at winning a $200 electronic item in our raffle? What if this item were an 8G iPod Touch

(The above comments are the opinion of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Midland Computer Club.)

Useful, useless and strange (in no particular order) Web Sites:

http://www.emedicinehealth.com/
This is a good site to obtain information about your medical problems. It is not intended to replace your doctor, but to assist you in discussing your medical problems with your doctor.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lFZ0z5Fm-Ng
Where does social media fit into today's world? Is it a fad or is it a fundamental change in the way we communicate? Watch this video and find out.

http://www.delish.com/food-fun/quizzes/
If you love food, you might want to take some of these food quizzes. You might learn some interesting facts about food.

http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/
County Health Rankings provides access to data from all 50 states, ranking each county within the 50 states according to its health outcomes and the multiple health factors that determine a county's health factors that determine a county's health.

Membership Enrollment Form

NAME _____   PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____   CITY _____

ZIP _____   EMAIL ADDRESS _____

Membership dues   FAMILY ($20)   STUDENT ($15)   New Member _____   Renewal _____

Please fill out the above form and mail it along with payment of check or money order to :

MIDLAND COMPUTER CLUB   Attn: Membership Chairman
  P.O. Box 132
  Midland, MI 48640-0132

You may also pay for membership at a regular club meeting

Tips, Tricks & Techniques (submitted by Howard Lewis)

Add Folders To the Windows Sendto Submenu
If you've done much copying or moving files in Windows, you've probably seen the **Send to** menu item when you right-click on a file. Normally there are several default options available within the **Send to** submenu (**Desktop**, **Mail**, USB drives, etc.), however if you continually find yourself wanting to copy to a specific folder (or folders), you may add them to the **Send to** submenu yourself. To accomplish this, perform the following steps:

> In **Windows Explorer**, type *shell:sendto* into the **Address Bar** (also called Location Bar) (there are no spaces in shell:sendto) and press *Enter*. This will open the **SendTo** folder within Windows Explorer.
> Right-click in the file list of the **SendTo** folder and select *New/Shortcut*.
> Next *Browse* to the folder you wish to add to the **Send to** menu and press *Next*
> Give the shortcut a meaningful name and press *Finish*.

Now when you right-click on a file and select *Send to*, you will have a direct link to the folders that you need.

Increase Font Size In Windows XP
If you are having a problem reading your screen in Windows XP, you can in increase the font size to make the screen more readable. To increase the font size in Windows XP perform the following:
1. Right click a blank spot on the desktop and select *Properties.*
2. From the **Display Properties** dialog box, click the *Settings* tab and click *Advanced*.
3. Click the drop down arrow under **DPI setting** and click the *Large size (120 dpi)* option.
Click *OK* twice.

Quickly display Word's Page Setup dialog box
You probably use *File/Page Setup* to access Word's **Page Setup** dialog box, but did you know that there is a quicker way? Simply *double-click* the *horizontal* or *vertical* ruler.

Within the vertical ruler, you may click anywhere to display the Page Setup dialog. However, if you double-click within the margins of the horizontal ruler you will get the Tabs dialog box instead.

To get to Page Setup from the horizontal ruler, simply double-click the gray area outside of the margins.

BluePack S3

By George Harding, Treasurer, Tucson Computer Society, AZ, The Journal of the Tucson Computer Society, January 2010, www.aztcs.org, Georgehardingsbd (at) earthlink.net

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We have so many portable devices these days that it's hard to keep track of which charging cord goes with which device. We certainly don't want to carry all the cords along wherever we go. Often, we forget to check if a given device needs charging. All these problems! BluePack S3 to the rescue!

If you have an iPhone, iPod or a Blackberry, you'll want to have a BluePack S3. It's a small external battery for charging these three devices and more. In the box is the BluePack S3, a cord with a 3.5 mm plug (for charging the BluePack S3), a USB plug and a wall socket plug. There are three similar cords, one for Blackberry, one for iPhone and iPod, and a third for any device using a micro-USB plug. The Blackberry cord can actually be used on any device with a mini-USB socket for charging, which many MP3 players do.

The box also has three booklets: a Quick Guide, a Warranty Card and a Usage Manual (3½ pages of English, same for 10 other languages). There is also a very nice fabric carrying case with a drawstring for the device and cables.

Charging is with the three-ended cable. It takes a couple of hours to fully charge the device. There is a 3-light indicator and a button on the edge of the device; a press of the button shows all three lights if fully charged, two or one if not.

A built in flashlight is accessed by pressing and holding the button. Once charged, you attach one of the three charging cables to your Blackberry, iPhone, iPod, MP3 player or other device. This will both charge your device and also allow it to play if discharged.

The BluePack S3 is very small, about the size of a deck of cards but half as thick. It's very convenient to put in a shirt pocket or purse. I found the BluePack S3 very easy to use. I recommend it to anyone with any of the devices it can power.

About: BluePack S3
Vendor: Dexim
www.dexim.net
Price: about $66

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PCmover

By George Harding, Treasurer, Tucson Computer Society, AZ; The Journal of the Tucson Computer Society, January 2010
www.aztcs.org; Georgehardingsbd (at) earthlink.net

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Laplink has had PCmover available for many years. Its purpose is to successfully transfer your data and programs from an old computer to a new one. The data part of the transfer is easy enough, in fact, Microsoft has an application called Easy Transfer that will do that part. However, to transfer the programs part is difficult. You usually have to install the original programs on the new computer, and then update them as necessary, which may take a long time

The PCmover process has been adapted to include the tricky process of upgrading from XP to Window 7. As you probably know, Microsoft requires you to do a "clean" install (format the hard drive, then install) if you are running XP, then reinstall and update all your programs. I tried the PCmover process in an update from XP to Window 7.

(PCMover-continued from page 4)

Overall, I would say it was a remarkable success. Before you start doing an upgrade, it's wise to run Microsoft's Upgrade Advisor, available at Microsoft's site.

The first step, of course, is to make at least one complete backup of your system – not just the data files, but the entire partition in which XP is running. Some tech people even advise making two complete backups and having them verified by the backup software.

The next step is to download and install PCmover. You can download it at www.laplink.com/PCmover. Once downloaded, you install it just like any other application. Laplink advises that you turn off any screen savers and power-saving settings. For laptops keep the power plug in. Your computer must stay awake during the entire procedure. They also recommend disabling anti-virus, spyware and similar applications because they probably won't be transferred correctly; you'll have to reinstall them after the upgrade.

Next, you run PCmover. You will need a serial number in order to run the program, which you should get when you download the program. The next screen of the program shows several choices for method of migration. You should choose the Windows 7 Upgrade Assistant method.

You can choose to migrate all users or only chosen ones. You'll usually choose all. Next, you'll be presented with a list of all your hard drives and partitions. You'll only want to migrate the partition/drive which has XP. Next you can exclude certain file types. You probably won't want to transfer the listed types, but it won't hurt anything if you do transfer them.

Next is a scan for applications. You'll get a list of all the applications on your computer. I got 112 in my list. You may deselect any of these which you don't want to migrate. I left them all checked.

The next step creates the list of applications you have chosen, and then asks you what name to give it and where to save it. You should save it on a different drive/partition from the one you are migrating, or on an external hard drive. You can give it any name you want. I called mine "upgrade."

Now, PCmover creates the Moving Van, the file that contains all the info to be migrated and saves it where you specified. This may be quite a large file. Mine was over 7 MB.

Now you upgrade to Windows 7 by selecting the Custom method. This will take a while, but your input will not be needed. Once complete, you reinstall PCmover on the upgraded computer, run it, find the Moving Van file and let PCmover migrate your applications and data. This transfer may take quite a while.

When completed, you should have all your applications and data that you wanted migrated available and working in Windows 7. There may be some of your applications that do not work in Windows 7. I had a few, but the problem was with Windows 7, not PCmover.

I found this migration assistant to be easy to use and quite effective to migrate applications and files

About: PCmover
Vendor: Laplink
www.laplink.com
Price: Ranges from $20 to $60 for a single licensee)

Convert a PDF File to a Text File

By Sr. Dorothy Robinson, Newsletter Editor, The OMUG News; Olympia Microcomputer User Group, Washington; http://olymug.org/; srdorothy (at) gmail.com

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Have you been wishing you had a piece of software that would convert PDF files to text files that you can edit? And maybe also didn't cost an arm and a leg?

BCL Technologies has such software called easyConverter Desktop that costs about $20. That sounds like a good buy to me. But it only works with Windows (2000, XP, Vista and Win 7). So that leaves a lot of people, namely Linux users, out in the cold.

The good news is that BCL also has a free, online utility that does the same thing. And your operating system doesn't come into it. Open your browser and go to http://pdfonline.com/pdf2word/index.asp and take a look.

On the left side, under a header that says "Convert PDF to Word for Free" you'll see a place to browse your computer and select a file. Note that there is no need to provide your email address, since you'll just download the file directly.

Find your file and double click it (or click once then click Open), then click the Upload and Convert button. Press it *only once*, and wait; larger files may take a while to upload. The conversion is pretty fast, under a minute for the one or two page files I tried. There is a 2 MB limit on uploads, so really big files won't work.

This part is where, if you wanted to do a lot of files, or large ones, it would be great to have an application on your computer to do it—thus eliminating the time to upload.

The next step is downloading the text file. I'm not sure why the instructions say to Right Click on the link to download the file, because for me at least it didn't work. I **Left** Clicked instead and the download dialog opened.

You'll see that the file is a rich text file (.RTF or .rtf) which can easily be opened by Word, OpenOffice Writer, Abiword, or other word processors or text editors and be available for editing. When you save it you can save it as a .doc if you like.

The dialog asks, What should (your browser) do with this file? The first choice is to open the file with the default application (mine showed OpenOffice) or you can choose another from a drop-down list. The second choice is to save the file, and if you choose Save the file, your download manager will save it to the default location—or you might get a Save as dialog and choose where to save it. One caution: opening the file directly rather than downloading it got me a Read Only file, which of course I couldn't edit. So for editing purposes, save the file before opening.

Make your choice by clicking a radio button, then click OK. You now have a text file you can edit. And the quality is very nice, too—for **mostly text** documents. I tried a PDF file that I had originally created in OpenOffice Writer which contained a calendar in a table. The results were not pretty! And for a postal PDF which was a requisition form using tables, the results were somewhat better but still unusable since the tables overlapped, hiding some of the text.

On the other hand, I made a list of data (several rows and columns) in an OpenOffice spreadsheet, exported it to PDF, then uploaded it and converted it. When I downloaded this file, it was perfect—and perfectly editable.
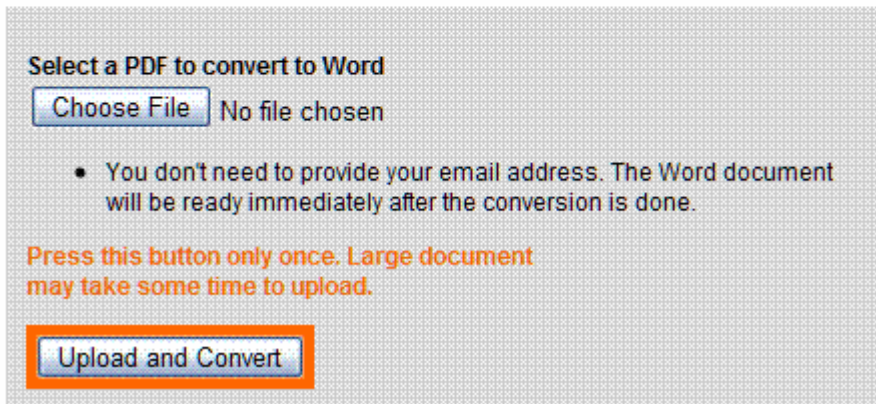
For me, using Ubuntu Linux, this free, online version is a good thing. Windows users have a choice of the web version or the computer application. And pdf2word gives the best results I've seen for this kind of web application.

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Upload and Convert

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Editorial Bits
By Patrick Libert, Editor, Danbury Computer Society, CT; www.dacs.org; dacseditor (at) optimum.net

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Computers and Healthcare
We have all probably had it "up to here" with the health care debate. Medicine is in the twenty-first century; medical record keeping in the nineteenth!

Pet peeve? When I visit my physician's office, a new computer monitor adorns the exam room. Is it used to access my medical history during my visit? Not in the least! It's much easier to leaf through a copious file folder, unable to find (once again) whether or not I had a recommended exam the previous year. Time wasted: several minutes which could have been better utilized to discuss current health topics.

In my opinion, the only in way in which we are going to accelerate this modernizing process is to use the populist approach. Tell your doctor(s), your hospital, your medical insurance company that you **demand** an immediate improvement. You will be pleasantly surprised at the power of a letter or of an email. I do it all the time; so can you!

Social Networking
That relatively new phrase now permeates our daily conversations and actions. The press sometimes depicts this new web-based activity as a waste of time, a fad which will eventually disappear. On the contrary, this is a technological evolution which can help everyone.

Whoa! Hold on for a minute. Let's not just think of this as an online dating service, or an activity reserved for teens. On the contrary, social networking is a remarkable way to communicate with existing and long-lost friends and family with little delay.

In my case, having several siblings and friends in Europe, we are now able to rapidly exchange comments, photo albums and various files thanks to social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. I would even include Skype as a form of social network because we can speak to and see each other and bring our family communications to a degree never before possible without crossing the Atlantic.

Were I not retired, I surely would be actively participating on LinkedIn to broaden my professional knowledge and network.

New and Notable
Readability! (*http://lab.arc90.com/experiments/readability/*)
How cool is this! How many times have you opened the link to a web page and seen a gobbledygook of mixed messages and ads surrounding the article you really want to read?

Install this free bookmarklet in your browser's bookmark bar, click on the bookmark after you have chosen the page you want to see. Abracadabra! All the clutter on the page is removed.

Many of you may already be aware of this site *http://www.komando.com/.* Kim Komando has a syndicated nationwide radio show and columnist. Her site has a multitude of useable information for all computer users, PC or Mac. I have bookmarked many links found on her web site.

Snowtape (*http://snowtape.com/*)
I have been experimenting with the free version of Snowtape. This software allows me to listen to a radio stream and record at my choosing any portion of the broadcast. It then transfers automatically to my iTunes music gallery for future listening. There are other similar applications but, so far, this is my favorite.

Browser Speed
Being primarily a Mac nut, my principal browser is Safari. I also use Firefox and Opera 10.10 regularly. Less frequently, I have used Flock and, very recently, Chrome now that I have an Intel mac.

I like Firefox but find it to be at times a little slow compared to Safari 4. There appears to be a lot more going on in the background with Firefox which may explain the speed differential.

Chrome is mean and lean. It is very fast on my Mac and as it adds more functions and extensions, I may use it more often, ever mindful that as a Google product, it probably is the equivalent of having a spy cam watching all my actions.

Opera continues to amaze me with its multiple capabilities allowing the browser to serve as your email program, your RSS reader and many other functions integrated in the browser. The latest release is version 10.10 but there is much more coming from the developers. I have been a beta tester for Opera since mid-2003 and I can tell you that this is an exciting venture. The speed of the latest version matches that of Chrome but in a much more complex offering. Stay tuned.

(Editorial Bits-continued from page 8)

Lala (*http://www.lala.com/*)
After reading last month that Apple had bought lala, I joined their site and began to delve into their music library. According to some, Apple's motivation for this investment was to have the capability of having members not only download their mp3 music but to have the option of assembling a music collection "in the cloud." Great idea!

Lala has an extensive music library which one can download to one's computer or, at a much lower cost, buy and add to one's lala "cloud" collection. I used the free 30 song credits offered for joining to save many different songs in my new account. I can sign on to my account on the lala.com site, access my "collection" and play it through my computer. If networked to my home audio system, I can listen to this music in different rooms.

The cost? The price to download a song varies from $0.79 to $1.29. However, adding a song to the cloud collection: TEN CENTS! In my opinion, that makes it a very attractive way to compile a substantial collection of one's favorite music.

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Experiments with Desktop Publishing (DTP) Applications, Part 2
By Mike Morris, Editor, Front Range PC Users Group, Colorado; http://www.frpcug.org; twriterext (at) gmail.com

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This installment continues the comparison of DTP application features. I have attempted to capture the most important features (in my opinion) of 4 applications into 9 categories:

General
Text Controls
Master Pages
Tables
Graphics
Long Document Features
Color
Commercial Printing
Tech Support

The comparisons for categories 5 - 7 are included in this, Part 2, of this article. The remaining comparisons will be provided in part 3.

The information in the following table is based on these applications and versions:
    InDesign®: CS3 (5.0.4) (http://www.adobe.com).
    Microsoft Publisher®: 2007 (12.0.6308.5000) MSO (12.0.6017.5000) (http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/publisher/default.aspx).
    Scribus: 1.3.3.13 for Windows (open source, http://www.scribus.net/).
    PagePlus®: SE 1.0.0.5 (http://www.freeserifsoftware.com/software/pageplus/).

(Esperiments with Desktop Publishign Applications, Part 2-cntinued from page 9)

	InDesign	Publisher	Scribus	PagePlus
Category				
Graphics	All major formats can be imported. Extensive resizing and text wrapping controls. A number of math/science symbols are available, but for equations, a 3rd party application (such as MathType) [will be easier to use]. Equations can be imported as an eps file. Changing size, position or orientation of a graphics frame is aided with the Reference Point feature.	Most major formats can be imported. Imported graphics are auto-matically (and proportion-ately) resized to the size of the picture frame. Text wrap controls similar to those of a word proces-sor. Equations can be imported from a 3rd party applica-tion such as MathType.	Most major formats, except the wmf format can be imported. Limited resizing and text wrapping controls. Cannot directly text wrap the svg format. A number of math/science symbols are available, but for equa-tions, a third party ap-plication (such as MathType) [will be easier to use]. Equations can be im-ported as an eps file. Changing size, position or orientation of a graphics frame is aided with the Basepoint feature.	Cannot import the png and svg formats. It doesn't import EPS files correctly, only preview images, and only the preview image will be exported, so that the EPS import is quite useless. Text wrap controls similar to those of a word processor. Equations can be im-ported from a 3rd party application such as MathType.

	InDesign	Publisher	Scribus	PagePlus
Category				
Long Document Features	Both the Table of Contents and Index features have extensive options. Figure captions require a separate text frame and an appropriately defined style. The Table of Contents feature can be used to automatically create a Table of Figures. When used for a Table of Figures, it is necessary to manually cut/paste entries to get list in correct order. Can import all styles from a word processing document. There are a number of options for preserving formatting of imported text. Adding text frames is a "story" not a document feature, and can be added manually, "semi-automatically," or automatically.	Very basic [and hard to use] Table of Contents feature. No Index feature. No Footnote feature. A Table of Figures must generated manually. Formatting from an external document (such as a word processing document) can be preserved or overridden only if copy/paste is used. If Insert/Text file is used, source document formatting is used. If imported text exceeds available space, Publisher can create additional text frames.	Table of Contents feature available, but no Index feature. No Footnote feature. A Table of Figures must generated manually. Can import only paragraph styles from a word processing document. [Options for preserving formatting of imported text are not intuitive.] [Automatic page numbering feature not intuitive.] Automatic text frames are a document feature.	No Table of Contents feature, no Index feature and no Footnote feature. A Table of Figures must generated manually. If Insert/Text file is used, source document formatting is used. No automatic text frame feature.
Color	Extensive color and color management features. Pantone® licensed.	Pantone® licensed. Some (untested) color management features are available in the Windows XP and Vista operating systems.	Additional software provides color management for the Linux OS. MAC computers include color management with the ColorSync capability. Not Pantone® licensed.	It can't export spot colors to PDF/PS files. They are always converted to CMYK. Not Pantone® licensed. No color management available, although some (untested) color management features are available in the Windows XP and Vista operating systems.

THIS AND THAT

By Elizabeth B. Wright, Contributor to the Computer Club of Oklahoma City newsletter; www.ccokc.org
wright599new (at) sbcglobal.net

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You never know what your program will remember when you close it.

For that reason, if the last file you used in the program happened to be on removable media which has been detached from the computer, you might face a real problem the next time you turn on your computer. So, before terminating whatever program is using a file located on the removable media, CLOSE the file located on that media. Next, still in the program you have been using, locate on your internal hard disk any file which that program will recognize. Open it. You don't have to work on the file, just open it and close it so that the last file used by the program was from the hard disk. You don't necessarily have to do any editing of the file, but you can re-save it as an added step to help the program remember where it found the last opened file, or you can just close it without resaving it. On my C:\ drive I keep a text file created in MS Notepad titled freecell. You guessed it, that is where I save a list of the games I have failed to win (in other words, LOST). It isn't particularly important, so if it somehow becomes corrupted or deleted, it can always be replaced with new information. This file is easily accessed and opened, after which, for a little added security, I re-save it before closing it.

Hopefully this satisfies the computers lust for usable information. I have spent too much time thinking a program had taken a permanent dive before remembering that the last work I did before turning off the machine was on a file located on a floppy disk, a camera memory card (either in a card reader or in the camera itself), or from some other form of removable media no longer accessible by the computer. If a file can no longer be physically accessed, many programs go into an endless loop trying to find it, causing your program to appear to be failing.

If you are lucky, using every trick you can think of, you might get the program to respond to a command to open a file on the hard disk. My all-time-favorite, Paint Shop Pro went to a "White Screen Of Death" recently every time I tried to use it. When my brain's memory kicked in I remembered the last thing I had done before closing PSP earlier was to download pictures from my camera's memory card. The memory card had been in a card reader and was removed to put it back in the camera AFTER I closed PSP. Downloading the camera photos was the last work I did before closing PSP. When next opening the program and getting that "WSOD" (see above), I found that even though various messages told me the program was not responding, the mouse would still operate and I was able to get "File/Open/ etc. etc." to open a photo located on my hard drive. Problem solved, at least for that incident.

Of course, you can never count on anything happening exactly the same way twice. So maybe, instead of "Death" for PSP it should just be "White Screen Of Coma." But your program might just stop working with no change in the screen at all. Quoting one of our knowledgeable members, "it all depends" on how the programmers wrote it.

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