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A registered Apple/Macintosh User Group



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BYTER

Next Meeting

Apr 16, 7 PM

**American Legion Hall
406 SE Oak Ave**

Agenda

1. Meeting starts at 7 P.M.
2. Intro's of members and guests
3. Old business
4. New biz
5. Program: eMail Conundrum.
6. Questions & (maybe)Answers

eMail Conundrum

by **Jim McClellan**
<mcclellan@charter.net>

On the assumption that I am not the only ABCC member who uses email, I have had some questions almost since I started using email. When I send a message does the recipient always receive the message? If I get an error message when I send the same message to several people does that mean that everyone of them didn't get the message? If I send a message to a rather large number of people and get an error message that all of them who used, for example, **rosenet.net** didn't receive the message because "Your message was not delivered because the destination computer does not support electronic mail (SMTP)," did everyone else get the original message? These are just some

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Youtubyster

by **Dave Archer** <dave@davearcher.com>



Strange Russian animal from lake. "Alive! ... on the inside, see the alien crab from hell"

--- This short movie shows a truly weird animal, so, naturally, I put it first, because, busy Rosebyters that we are today, if you only have time for one YouTube, make it this. Here's an animal that looks like a face-hugger from H. I. Geiger's ALIEN movie.

Supposedly, all over Russia strange creatures like this are being found in lakes. Yikes!

I doubt it or there would be more videos, but hey ... it could happen. What is it? That's what I want to know. A new species of fresh water crab? 2 -->

The **Apple Blossom Computer Club** (ABCC) is an Apple Computer Inc., registered Macintosh and Apple][family user group. The ABCC publishes *The RoseByter* newsletter monthly which is posted to each paid up member and reciprocating user groups. ABCC participates in user group newsletter content exchange. The ABCC also maintains a WWW site at:

<http://www.abccmug.org>

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Ed: This may well be Dave's last **You-tubyer**. Check out

<http://www.coyotepress.com/>

He and Steven are off on a whirlwind tour across the country and, with some luck, back again. I've seen Dave's latest book (cover to the right). It's full of beautiful images seasoned with some of his words about them. You can buy it and more and even download **The Trickster's Bible** for free at the URL.

←-1 YOUTUBYTER A Russian atomic mutant? Something dropped out of a UFO? It defies description. This film is only a couple of minutes. The guy pokes it with a stick, and keeps poking. Believe me, we probably would too. At first it looks like a fish. Then it doesn't. The **MUST SEE** moments come halfway through, when someone turns what appears to be it's "head" over, and back again, (photo above). If it's faked, it's a beautiful job. Hollywood would hire this trickster in a New York minute. At one point this thing looks like a black, deflated hot water bottle with a completely strange head, say, from Alpha-Centuri? Plus it wiggles these gilly-legged underparts (beneath the same head, that seemingly surround what I imagine to be some ghastly gobble-hole. Well, it could be some ghastly gobble-hole. Can't be sure.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9kQ4nLxgauI>

--- SEE: an Angler Fish that walks on fins with elbows!

This has to be the fish that Cousteau filmed for a minute or so in an early 70's deep water movie he did. Or something very like it. The one I saw had the head of a pigeon, beak and all. Other than that, it looked like this fish.

An avid SCUBA diver for twenty years, I never saw anything like it or even dreamed such a thing could exist. For a twist, this animal lumbers around like an alien cow looking to mutilate something. Don't miss it. I remember the one with the pigeon head in Cousteau's movie turned and staggered away with the gait not unlike a turtle, like this one, and had the same strange elbows. Also see the first known images of an Abyssal Kusk Eel, the deepest of all fish.

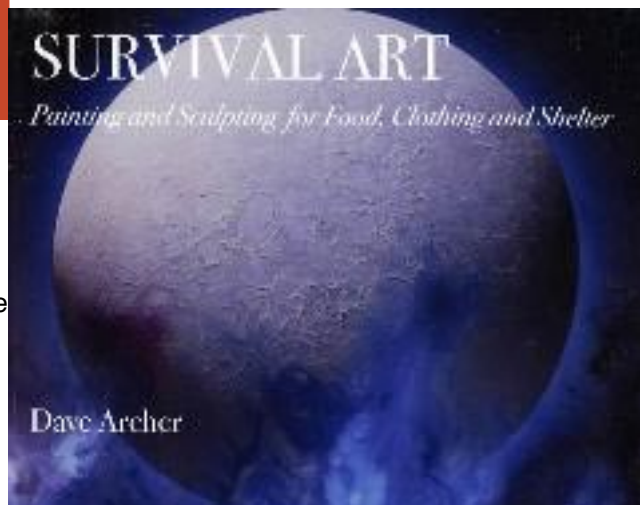
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pa0SY6RYJIo>

...A man says: "I caught this thing (in a bucket) in Shima, Japan. I have no idea what it is, but it's pretty cool. Anyone know? Ha!

This is must be where spider and starfish join for "Sea Spiders" with too many legs, that run like heck. Twelve legs I think. And all, in a movie only 25 seconds long. You can't beat that.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SPs40xSsr_w

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Quantum mechanical model reveals “weird” silicon phase

<http://abrd-media.com/portal/wts/cemc7ibfwxaquFkai0FfikvQnDfc>

March 18, 2009

Using rigorous computer calculations, researchers from Carnegie Mellon University and the Carnegie Institution of Washington have established evidence that supercooled silicon experiences a liquid-liquid phase transition, where at a certain temperature two different states of liquid silicon exist. The two states each have unique properties that could be used to develop new silicon-based materials. Furthermore, the methods developed can be applied to gain a better understanding of other materials.

The findings will be presented Friday, March 20 at the American Physical Society’s March Meeting in Pittsburgh. The results also were published as an Editor’s Selection in the Feb. 20 issue of Physical Review Letters.

Under normal conditions, phase transitions occur when the structure of a substance changes in response to a change in temperature and/or pressure. The most commonly thought of phase transitions are between solids, liquids and gases. However, it was recently discovered that some substances experience phase transitions within the same state, resulting in two different forms with their own individual characteristics. For example, it’s thought that water has a liquid-liquid transition.

“Water and silicon share many unusual characteristics. For example, in most materials, their solid states are denser than their liquid states, but in water and silicon the opposite is true. That’s why ice floats on water and solid silicon floats on liquid silicon,” said Michael Widom, professor of physics at Carnegie Mellon. “The unusual volume expansion of frozen water and silicon that causes them to float is probably connected to the existence of a liquid-liquid transition.”

Like water, it has been hypothesized that supercooled silicon—liquid silicon that has its temperature lowered to below the freezing point without crystallizing and becoming a solid—experienced a liquid-liquid phase shift. Computer simulations initially predicted the existence of two liquid phases, but further simulations and experiments failed to produce the necessary evidence to prove their presence.

To resolve the disparity between the prior experiments, Carnegie Mellon’s Widom and Carnegie Institute of Washington post-doc Panchapakesan Ganesh, who began this work as a graduate student in Widom’s lab, used rigorous first-principles calculations based on quantum mechanics to, for the first time, prove the existence of a liquid-liquid transition in silicon. First-principle calculations start with

established laws of physics, and make no assumptions or approximations, leaving little room for question. Such calculations provide the most accurate predictions for the structural properties at high pressures and temperature, since conducting actual experiments in these conditions is near impossible.

Since the calculations are based on quantum mechanics, they were extremely complex and time-consuming. It took one month of computing time to complete the calculations needed to determine the molecular dynamics of silicon at one single experimental temperature and volume. The researchers applied novel methods of parallel tempering and histogram data analysis to look at nine temperatures and 12 volumes. The calculations required nine CPU years to be completed, but the experiment took only one actual calendar year because the calculations ran in parallel on many computers.

The computations revealed that a liquid-to-liquid phase shift, evidenced by the presence of a van der Waals loop, occurred when silicon was supercooled to 1200 degrees Kelvin; silicon normally freezes at 1700 degrees Kelvin. A van der Waals loop occurs when pressure grows as volume increases, marking a thermodynamically unstable situation. The unstable condition is resolved by transforming into two coexisting states of differing densities—in this case two distinct forms of liquid silicon, each having its own unique and dissimilar properties. One was high density and highly coordinated with metallic properties, much like normal liquid silicon, and the other was low density, low-coordinated and semi-metallic, with a structure closer to that of solid silicon.

“This study shows that accurate calculations based on quantum mechanics can now answer long-standing questions about familiar and unfa-

<-1 eMail Conundrum

random examples.

Another question is where can I find proper email etiquette? For example if I am going to reply to a question and want to leave the question in the email, do I respond before or after the question? Other examples are do I leave the > before the lines in a message I’m going to forward? Should I forward or redirect a file if I want to send it to a number of others? Should I place the names of the people I want to receive a piece of email by the **From:**, **Cc:**

or **Bcc:** characters in the heading?

These are just a few of the questions. Would this be a good topic for a meeting? Which raises another question, how can I let my friends who don’t follow good email etiquette with email know the appropriate way to send email without hurting their feelings?

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Water Blogged Wump

Any trace of organization in these paragraphs is entirely coincidental

4



Documenting the Attack

NIF, the National Ignition Facility, is a LLNL (Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory) project to blow up really small nuclear bombs ... sorta. What brings it to the forefront is that it's finally ready to fire on all 192 "cylinders." As I read things, it has fired all 192 lasers in a test, which apparently went well. This has been a very long running project, changing names, engineering, personnel, etc. over decades. If it does nothing else, it will go a long way toward educating us on the requirements for doing this sort of thing as all its predecessor work has done to this point. The idea is pretty simple really. Take a small bit of stuff that can be fused the way things fuse in the Sun or a hydrogen bomb. Hit it from all sides simultaneously with high energy light to compress it the sort of density that occurs in the Sun and, "Boom!" Now if one can collect a lot of the heat from that explosion, it can be used to generate electricity. As you have probably figured out for yourself, it takes a lot of electricity to run all those lasers and other stuff. It turns out that a lot more energy can come out of these tiny bombs than it takes to set them off, so this technique could become a viable future power source. Already, there plans to develop LIFE (Laser Inertial-Confinement Fusion-Fission Energy) as a real power generator. The idea is to use technical refinements to reduce the size of the "engine" (NIF is a sprawling set of buildings) and to use waste material from current fission reactors as part

of the fuel. The very heavy elements in fissile waste (uranium, plutonium, etc.) serve as the outer shell which the laser energy implodes on the internal fusion fuel. One interesting result, if I understand what I'm reading correctly, would be a **real means of disposing of fissile nuclear waste "safely."** I doubt the results would be something most people would consider really benign but they should be very much less toxic and radioactive than the fissile waste itself. Not that there aren't potential difficulties. Indeed, we probably don't really know what they'll all be. After all, we haven't even run NIF through its paces yet. How well will it hold up? Previous attempts have been famous for melting their optics, being hard to keep aligned (it's a tricky thing in both time and space to get those beams to hit just right), etc. And NIF may run at a few hours per shot. LIFE will have to run at 10 shots per second.

You may want to be suspicious of your air freshener. According to an advertisement **I just heard, Airwick air fresheners are "always watching out."** What they didn't say was to whom they reported what they saw.

"Growth: It's still out there" reads the headline on the front page of a techno-rag that happened to cross my lap. Ever hear of the term "zero sum game?" It's a notion from game theory which describes games in which the total score of all players is a constant. Put another way, whatever gain one player makes is a loss to other players – the sum of gains and losses is zero. One's initial reaction to this arrangement is that it sounds awfully simple and hardly of much interest. Yet it's a subject that's not yet been exhausted by mathematicians, it's in's and out's being driven by philosophy. But the basics are well known and describe the likely unfolding of events in a finite environment. We typically believe that business is not healthy if it's not growing and behave as though there's no

end to how much a business can grow. Repeatedly, we get upset when the latter turns out not to be true and think of the business as being unhealthy at that point. This behavior surprises me as we live in what is largely a closed environment. I temper the notion of closure because the time scale of our lives is wildly different than the duration of the environment. Humans don't normally put much value on the rest of the planet's biota. Thus **they see the environment as having lots of room for expansion. But it's an illusion brought on by not knowing that the environment is basically a zero sum game.** Zero sum games examined on different time scales can produce quite different results. In the very short term, they might exhibit behavior in keeping with our typical beliefs. On longer time scales, the principles of game theory will win out, however: growth on one side is balanced by shrinkage on another.

Does it bother you to hear the voice of John Boy Walton tell you what is and is not "smarter?" I don't have any real argument with Richard Thomas. He seems like a nice enough guy, though he has a way of conveying smugness that I find irritating. It probably has something to do with a soft, near monotone voice. But in this case, it's less about the voice than what it's saying. The voice says this is smarter and that is smarter. What the voice says is meaningless. The word, "smarter," is a word requiring two objects – it's a comparison connective. Something is smarter than something else, but something is not simply smarter. OK. You're convinced the latter usage is just fine because it means to compare the something with the logical complement of the something? Even given that caveat, I have to say that I disagree with little Johnny's dictums in these commercials.

Starting sometime last night, drug related spam took a huge 5 -->

<--Water Blogged Wump

jump, becoming about half my incoming email. I wonder whether my ISP has decided to open the flood gates or whether some new means of gaining botnets (groups of compromised computers) has arisen.

This should be fun. **My hands barely work at the moment. But they're doing better than other parts of me ...** like the arms the hands are connected to and the shoulders that attach the arms to my trunk. I just got done with a stint of wood splitting. You'd normally think that with an engine driven, hydraulic mechanical splitter, it'd be easy to do the work. Certainly it makes splitting some things possible that mere muscle driven axe, wedge and sledge find most difficult. But one still must muscle the wood into the splitter, deal with it as it falls away, toss the pieces into a stack, while operating the hydraulic valve. It's a kind of a heavy weight juggling act. Some years ago, I'd have been able to run a tank of gas through the splitter before taking a break and then go right back to work after bit. Not today. I have Myasthenia Gravis which affects my shoulders and breathing. I've learned to keep my energy expenditure in those areas just below the threshold that wipes them out ... most of the time. Besides the M.G., I'm constantly borderline anemic. Numerous bouts with the rat poisons of cancer combat have transformed my bone marrow into a factory producing something almost, but not quite, like human blood. But the stuff is still sort of working OK, I guess. It drains out holes really easy and doesn't seem to do much in the way of stopping up said holes the way good old blood is supposed to. Even if my skin were still working the way skin is supposed to work, it's necessary for me to dress in a rather more padded manner than I'm used to. For example, several years ago, my mother made some shin pads that strap on with velcro. I've had to wear them because even high pressure is enough to put a hole in my shin

– nothing sharp required. This makes the minor work I'm able to do heat me up very fast. That heat exacerbates the M.G. So, I don't get a lot of wood splitting done in a day. On a good day, I get two sessions in. By fall, I may have it all split.

As some of you may know, long ago, in my youth, I did some sports car racing in SCCA (Sports Car Club of America). Mind you, it was an endeavor done more cheaply for a season than today's entry fees alone would total. Back in "them days," you could drive a street legal car to the events and reasonably convert them to race legal with a bit of bolt turning and adhesive tape. I quit when that became infeasible for us and some of the safety regulations required spending serious money just to acquire the equipment involved. I didn't disagree with the regulations – they make good sense – but I simply could not afford them and didn't bother to try to convince any gullible business persons with excess cash that my activities would increase their sales if they stuck a decal on my aging, stock TR3. I really like **the sort of racing done by SCCA as it's the most closely related to driving quickly on real roads that can be had on the comparative safety of a closed, engineered road race course.** Tonight the 2009 Formula 1 racing season kicked off in Australia, where it was a bright sunny fall day. This is the first year that something known as KERS (Kinetic Energy Recovery System) is useable on the cars, which might cost something like \$300,000,000 to develop and campaign for a year – clearly way out of my league. KERS is basically a generator/motor attached to the engine's crankshaft, some control and power electronics and "a" battery. The idea is to use it analogously to the way flywheels have been used in some buses. During breaking, the controls set the KERS parameters so that the battery gets charged by absorbing the car's energy. Then, when you need some extra goose power, you dump the bat-

tery energy back to the drive train. It's a complex system, though the gear train required to handle a flywheel makes it look pretty simple. David Hobbs (a very good driver who doubles as a race commentator) is old school and thinks the best thing to do with KERS is get it off the cars. I can't say I blame him. Formula 1 cars are more than complex enough without adding more stuff for the driver to control and KERS is sort of an effort by the organization to placate the environmental activists by being more "green." But that's not all that's changed this year in Formula 1. There are a host of rules changes targeting making the racing more competitive. They seem to have been very successful. The previous big players also ran. Honda dumped their team because they were spending too much to compete unsuccessfully. The team was picked up by the fellow who ran it for Honda. They won.

As I've pointed out before, I "like" commercials on TV because they serve as an indicator of what's going on in our society – not that the indications are all that good, mind you. And you really should mind. One set of commercials that I believe mirrors much of the societal ills we face are the inane singing "freecreditreport.com" stuff. The very notion that we somehow find some automated baloney data about us of such high importance is very scary to me. I don't see any particular reason to be terribly secretive about data that would serve to allow a lender to make rational decisions to lend their money. But it's the faux rationality of centralized data producing a numerical "score" that should be troubling. Even if you go see a local person behind a desk, you'll find they don't have the power to do any more than look up your number in "the" database and use it to rate your eligibility. They'll probably make you feel good about not having the number they need to do whatever you're trying to do. After all, that's what they're hired for. If it weren't for the perceived need

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<--Water Blogged Wump

to placate the client, there'd really be no need for them at all. Most people today can swipe their credit card in a reader to put their identity into the system to retrieve the answer to their query. For that matter, why go to a machine someplace when you can do the equivalent thing from your Internet connection at home? Business people will argue that taking the human element out of the transaction is a benefit to "consumers" because it makes things less expensive to do. I have a question for those business people: So what? **There are many things wrong with government in Oregon but one thing they got right was outlawing self service gasoline.** I can pump my own gas and don't mind working in a service station as I've done years ago. But we've all been sold on the idea that self service gas is cheaper. As a little travel outside the state will readily corroborate, this is complete drivel. I suspect it's less expensive to operate a self service gas station than a human operated service station but the consumer gets no benefit from that. Worse, the consumer also doesn't get the interaction with the operators who occasionally actually know things and can provide real help. Gas is just an example. What I wonder about sometimes is where the general elimination of human presence in business will lead. It doesn't seem like it will be to a place I'll like. I'm not even all that sure that the fat cats who'll create this "benefit" for "consumers" will like it very much either. The assumption is that "consumers" have money to spend. But they won't if they don't have an income and that income is the main thing eliminating humans from business processes is all about. The idea is that the business converts the pay to a former employee into an boost in income for the principals.

We are our own victims of our misuse of language. We say things like, "Do the right thing." To many, this apparently means something. I find it curious that, even when a situation can be

separated into two mutually exclusive categories, people will converse with others on the subject with such verbiage, believing they're referring to the same category when they're really diametrically opposed to one another. The rhetoric of politics is replete with such grand sounding meaningless gibberish. Indeed, the rhetorical aficionado would have you believe that all situations can be sorted into binary dichotomies. Such is clearly not the case as the game of Rock-Paper-Scissors clearly demonstrates. But even when there is a clear separation of possibilities into two classes, **how does one determine which of the two classes is "right?"** As near as I've been able to discern, most of us seem to let someone else tell us what to class as "right" and "not right" (or, more commonly, "wrong"). It's a lot easier than trying to figure such things out for oneself. Perhaps even more vexing is the fact that what may seem right today about something will result in a situation that seems very wrong later on. For practical purposes, the expectation of the later situation can change how one classifies the precursors. Extend such notions further into the future and one can go crazy vacillating over how to weigh the sequence of events on the time line so that one can produce a classification for the here and now. Resolution of such situations is typically left up to opinions of others. So, how to "fix" this? In my opinion, which I offer as mere food for thought, is that one should avoid it all together. Instead of worrying about what's right and what's wrong, one can think of how situations affect them and leave it at that.

Have you ever listened to a Bell & Howell Silver Sonic XL hearing aid commercial? Maybe it's just me, but these commercials seem to be targeted at people with no understanding of the way physics works at all. **Do you know what "sonic hearing" is?** I wonder if it's analogous to "optical seeing" or "chemical smelling?" Well, I guess I'm asking the wrong ques-

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tions. Perhaps it makes more sense to ask what other sort of hearing there is. There might even be some rational ways to answer that question, considering that sound transducers could be configured to modulate other signaling pathways, thus converting sound into light, or even smells. Somehow, I don't get the impression that the ad's being certain to differentiate those possibilities from their device's improvement in your ability to hear "sonic sound." I especially like the statement about being able to amplify sounds from 30 feet (or was it yards – I can't recall at the moment) away. I find this a particularly puzzling concept. Perhaps it's a "spooky action at a distance" quantum mechanical effect? Last time I checked, sound was a generally small scale, back and forth movement of a material. When that movement causes our eardrums to move, we may sense the movement if it has certain characteristics. But none of that requires that the energy source creating the movement be at any particular distance from us. (FWIW: the Tonight Show parodied this commercial with a Hell & Howell product offering a few hours after I wrote this paragraph.)

I was about to recommend that you avoid getting an iPhone right away (which may be a good idea for other reasons anyway ... or not) because I read an article about IPv6 in which it was stated that the iPhone doesn't support IPv6 despite Mac OS X doing so. It took me about 30 seconds to realize this was probably not much of a problem since the IP (Internet Protocol) networking capability is software. Why should you care one way or the other? The simple fact is that the historic IPv4 addressing scheme we've been using for decades is expected to be fully allocated sometime in 2011. When that happens, no new connections to the IPv4 network will be possible. **All the possible 4,294,967,296 IPv4 addresses will be allocated.** What can I say? It looked like a pretty good idea at the 7 -->

That Bane of the Macintosh User

Recently I was given an HTML file with numerous links to files I was supposed to download so I could help the supplier with a problem. The files had been uploaded to **RapidShare Easy File Hosting**, aka <http://www.rapidshare.com/>, where, "... you can send big files easy and secure." The basic idea is that you upload files to RapidShare, which returns you a URL that can be used to download the file, whereupon you can simply send someone the URL instead of attaching the file to email. Why? Well, the main reason is that many email hosts will not support all the data that attachments can require. Email's MIME encoding plumps up the amount of data involved by 1/3. Isn't it nice that RapidShare (and other file hosting sites) are will-



ing do this?

Actually, such file hosting services are businesses intended to make a profit. They do pro-

vide some free service. For free, you can upload files of limited size – to be sure, much bigger than one should be sending as email attachments. Since I'm not doing that part, I have not explored its caveats. However, if they're anything like doing downloads with free service, there will probably be plenty. You see, their real business is to annoy you with advertisements and delays to get you to buy premium service. Here's how this works.

First, you paste the URL into the location field of your web browser. This brings up a page with buttons, one for

a free user and one for a premium user. Since I'm not a premium user, I've not investigated how that branch works – most likely it requires a username and password and is straight forward after that. Clicking the free user button gets you another page that declares you are not a premium user so you have to wait. So, you watch the second counter count down and change to a download button. Clicking that button starts the download. It's not super slow, though they do tell you that it's not a premium user speed. Now the fun begins.

Second, you paste the next URL into the location field of your web browser. This does *not* bring up a page with the two buttons on it. Instead, it brings up a page that says you've used up your free user allotment and should try again in some number of minutes. So, you add the 15 or so minutes to the clock showing in the menu- **8 -->**

<--Water Blogged Wump

time IPv4 was created. After all, at the time, no one had little dinky computers that cost a mere \$2,000.00 or less. From today's perspective, it seems patently ludicrous in a world with 6+ giga-people and efforts to create and market Internet connected laptops for less than \$100.00, to say nothing of all the iPhones and other handheld goodies that use the Internet and who knows what else as our use of technology expands. You might think these concerns are just emerging. But that's very far from true – in 1998 an official RFC (Request For Comment) IPv6 document was published. RFCs are usually only published when the subject is pretty well thought out; even operational in some venues. IPv6 has been "on the table" for well over a decade and provides 340,282,366,920,938,463,463,374,607,431,768,211,456 addresses, which should hold us for a few more decades. So, you'd think that with the impending brick wall of no more IPv4 addresses being available and a long standing, well

7 proven means of jumping over that brick wall (IPv6), your and

my ISPs would know all about it and be champing at the bit to provide the service. I don't know about your ISP, but **when I've tried to get some idea what my ISP has going on with IPv6, mostly I get replies of, "What's that?"** Somehow this is not quite what I'd expect of a very large, mainstream ISP. There are problems associated with IPv6 that will cause a lot of difficulty for people. The big one is a world of user level software that is written to deal with IPv4 addresses directly, even though they didn't need to and don't care what the address actually is. That's not to say that there isn't a lot of IPv6 compatible user level software available. There is. But it's a small fraction of what people are used to having available. I suggest annoying your ISP about IPv6. I suggest asking a software supplier if their software is compatible with IPv6. One thing is certain – if we don't get moving on IPv6, we're going to be left behind by the emerging world which is starting out using it.

What a deal! You can buy one and get one. I guess that's a good deal. Part of the problem we're having with

the economy is apparently buying one and not getting anything. What puzzles me is why getting what you pay for is considered worthy of an advertising special. Now I've seen stupid, so-called BOGO commercials which, despite the idiot wording of the acronym, are about buying one item at the regular price enabling you to buy another one of the items for half price. Once in a while you see ads for specials touting buying one and getting another one free. But today is the first time I've seen one that makes a real fuss about being able to get one of what you pay for. I'll bet my problem is that I haven't learned to speak Murkin yet.

Are you familiar with an "o?" I've long known it as a letter of the alphabet; one of our vowels, or an exclamation often preceding the ejaculative form of vernacular for feces. But that's not what it is any more. Murkin redefines the "o" as a word formerly known as "ovation." (Reference: Dancing with the Stars) S, frm nw n, I can't use the letter "" unless I'm referring to cacphnus applause.



<--7 Dread Terminal

bar and play cyber-Tiddlywinks until that's what the clock reads. Do it again and it works.

It can take over 24 hours to download 100 files this way. Sitting through that may make you a cyber-Tiddlywink champion and give you lots of practice yawning. Alternatively, you can do a file now and then over a period days, maybe weeks, perhaps doing something more useful than cyber-Tiddlywinks in between files. Or, you can pay to be a premium user. If I were

line extracts the data needed to click the Free User button and clicks it. loading the resulting web page into the file **tmp2**. The next line extracts the URL from which to download the file from one of the Level 3 mirrors that can be chosen ... if there is one. Since the list of mirrors is shuffled and mostly contains URLs from foreign sites, with Level 3 you usually get a site in the U.S. If there isn't one, the **-z** test will be true, meaning that there should be a page telling how many minutes to wait. In that event, the number of minutes to wait is extracted from the

the regular expression stuff to extract data from the web pages. One could eliminate the use of the **tmpx** files. I used them to aid in debugging and didn't eliminate them since I don't do this often and the regular expression to extract the URL or the time delay from a live data flow would have been problematic.

Even so, I had a devil of a time getting URL extraction from **tmp2** to work. The difficulty is the several levels of "escaping" involved. The URL part of a JavaScript which escapes the quotes written to the HTML code. Likewise,

```
#!/bin/sh
U1=$1; curl "$U1" > tmp1
U2=`perl -ne '/<form.*action="(.*?)"/ && do{print "$1";exit}' tmp1`
curl -d dl.start=Free -d submit=Free\ user "$U2" > tmp2
U=$(perl -ne '/type="radio".*dlf.action="\''(http.*?)'\''\.*Level/ && do{print "$1";exit}' tmp2)
if [ -z "$U" ];then
  T=$(perl -ne '/try again in about (\d*) minutes/ && do{print "$1";exit}' tmp2)
  (( T=(T+)*60 )); sleep "$T"
  curl -d dl.start=Free -d submit=Free\ user "$U2" > tmp2
  U=$(perl -ne '/type="radio".*dlf.action="\''(http.*?)'\''\.*Level/ && do{print "$1";exit}' tmp2)
fi
sleep 60; curl -O "$U"
```

being paid for this, I'd do that. Since I'm not, I decided to let the computer do this whole job for me. It can take the list of URLs and run the browser for me ... if I can write the program to do it [see the box].

It might be possible to do this with AppleScript or Automator, but parsing out the data needed strikes me as more difficult with those approaches, so I stuck with plain old Bourne Shell scripts – it's hard enough. The first line after the shebang (the **#!** on the first line) loads the web page for the base URL into the file **tmp1**. The next

file **tmp2**, converted to seconds and the script puts itself to sleep for that amount of time. Upon waking, the next two lines do the loading of **tmp2** and extraction of the download URL. Finally, the last line "waits for it" and does the download.

This script was developed by a sort of osmotic process, little bits being added as needed. There are numerous opportunities to add checks and balances and clean up the behavior. I've ignored all that, favoring instead to let the flotsam of the ordinary terminal output tell me if something isn't working. The hard part is figuring out

the Perl for the regular expression to find these escaped quotes must itself be escaped. Even the script process itself has escape processing to deal with.



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miliar materials," Widom said.

The simulation methods used by the researchers are a breakthrough on their own. The computational methods can be applied to achieve a better understanding of a wide range of elements and molecules and how they behave at extremely high temperatures. Revealing the structure and properties of

different elements and compounds at previously untestable conditions could lead to the development of new materials with commercial applications. Widom, for example, is now using the tools to study metallic glass, a solid metal with the structure of a liquid that contain desirable properties not found in commonly used alloys.