

BVCC Newsletter - September 2013

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If you are reading this on your computer display, remember that **Acrobat Reader** has a *zoom* feature (under "View" in your top tool bar) for enlarging or reducing text and graphics.

Next Computer Club (BVCC) Meeting

Protecting Yourself, Your Computer, and Your Identity

Presentation by Bob Gostischa

September 9, 2013, 7:30pm Glenn Center

Will be broadcast on Channel 99

New Quick Index

You can now jump directly to articles in this newsletter. Just left click on the Index listing.

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Notes from Kent

Live Guest Presentation on Personal and Computer Security

Bob Gostischa retired a number of years ago from banking and, in the last decade, serves as a volunteer technical enthusiast for Avast anti-malware software.



Bob Gostischa

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He will offer information on protecting yourself from malware (including **viruses, worms, Trojan horses**, and others), computer safety tips, how to spot **phishing**, how to recover when your email is hijacked, various free software to provide layered protection for your computer, **email etiquette**, and **social media** and **software installation safety tips**. He will also mention **Android Smartphone** and **Tablet** safety and protection recommendations.

Although **Avast** software is sponsoring Bob's visit (which includes a presentation at the statewide conference of computer user groups in Kettering), the presentation is intended as a learning experience rather than a sales effort for free software and is approved by the AARP (<http://www.createthegood.org/volunteer/opportunity-details/19507>). Bob has been using Avast (and speaking on its behalf) since 2003. He resides in Los Lunas, NM.

Invasive Search Engines and Home Pages

In the not-too-distant past, you could choose your preferred **search engine** and/or **home page** and not have to worry further. Sadly, such apathy can no longer be justified. Speaking from personal experience, usurers are increasingly pervasive. In my case, **Search My Web (powered by Google)** and **Delta Search** have been the primary offenders but other club members have reported **MSNBC** and others assuming **home page** functions. Be aware that these wolves may also don sheep's' clothing, such as adding the phrase "powered by Google."

Traditionally, the home page has been the first screen that you encounter when you begin browsing (using **Internet Explorer, Firefox, Google Chrome**, or others). Based on your selection and preferences, it would offer a jumping-off point for exploring the Internet or a link to your preferred new sources or whatever else you wished to look at when setting off (the computers in the Glenn Center offer a collection of search engines and information sites through <http://www.bvres.org/BVCCHome.htm>) Assuming that your computer becomes infected (i.e., shows some page other than your familiar home page), your two main responses can be manually removing the offending site or relying on external software to identify and remove the offender. One problem with the latter is that these are often legitimate (or quasi-legitimate) programs that took over when you inadvertently checked a box or otherwise gave it permission to preempt your usual home page.

The manual way to get rid of one of these interlopers begins with noting its name. If the name is “Search the Web” or “Delta Search,” as indicated in the navigation bar of your browser, that is what you want to remove from installed programs on your computer. You do this by clicking on the **Start** button of your computer and then on **Control Panel** from the drop-down menu. In Control Panel, you will click on **Add or Remove Programs** ~ (if using Windows XP) or **Programs and Features** (if using Windows 7). If you notice a file resembling the name that you identified as having usurped your home page, from either of these you can **remove program** to banish the base of your problem.

But you're only half there. Exit the Control Panel and look at your navigation tool bar. Most browsers will offer a search toolbar near the navigation bar.



In the search toolbar, the symbol on the left identifies the search engine being used (Google, in this case). Left-clicking on that symbol reveals the

search engine options and the search engine manager. This latter, **Manage Search Engines. . .**, is what you need to control (delete and prioritize) the search engines in the tool bar.



You are given the choice to **Move Up, Move Down**, or **Remove** any of the search engines identified. Of course, remove is the proper response for any of the offending interlopers, such as Search the



Web or Delta Search (which have already been purged from this list on my computer).

Telephone Conventional Wisdom

Club officers have avoided giving advice on telephone options. But there are a few points that anyone should remember in considering telephones. There are three types of phone service within the Village: landline, cell, and cable. In the past, we have been able to advise that access to phone service is an important consideration (if you can't use

your phone, it is not a viable option). Some residents have had less than satisfactory experiences in obtaining repairs for landlines. But landlines, (which do not require an electrical connection (that is, those that are directly wired, not a cordless phone—which needs electricity) have been a logical choice in case of emergencies (especially power outages). Cable phones also are dependent on electricity to be accessible and thus are of no use in an outage. It has been assumed that this would hold true for cell phones as well (since cell towers need electricity to transmit and receive).

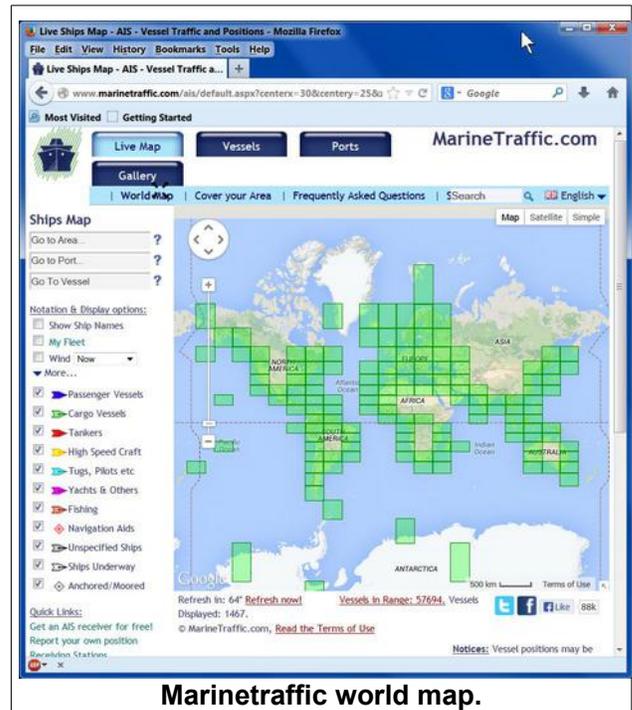
The experiences of East Coast residents during and following Hurricane Sandy suggest that this conventional wisdom may no longer be valid. In many locations, it was found that a cell phone was far more likely to have a live connection than either a landline or cell phone (both of which were more subject to flooding or downed poles). This can theoretically be explained as a result of Sandy striking a high-population-density area with a resulting large number of cell towers. With the increase in numbers of optional connections, the likelihood of a viable connection increases. Whether this applies to more remote areas (such as Pike County) with relatively fewer towers remains an open question.

Ships and Planes

By Len

In an earlier newsletter I provided links to some harbor cameras and ship cameras. For armchair travelers, and those who want to follow a traveling friend it is possible to follow ships and planes on the internet. First, let's take a look at the marine traffic web site.

<http://www.marinetraffic.com/ais/>



Marinetraffic world map.

The opening display of the Marinetrans website shows a map of the world. It has options for entering a location, port, or vessel. I entered Ohio as the location, and then used the left mouse button to click and drag the display, and then used the scroll wheel on the mouse to zoom in on Huntington.

The map legend shows types of ships by color code. When you hover the mouse pointer over a ship, a message box opens with info about the ship. In many cases the message box includes a picture of the ship, and popular ships have additional pictures available.

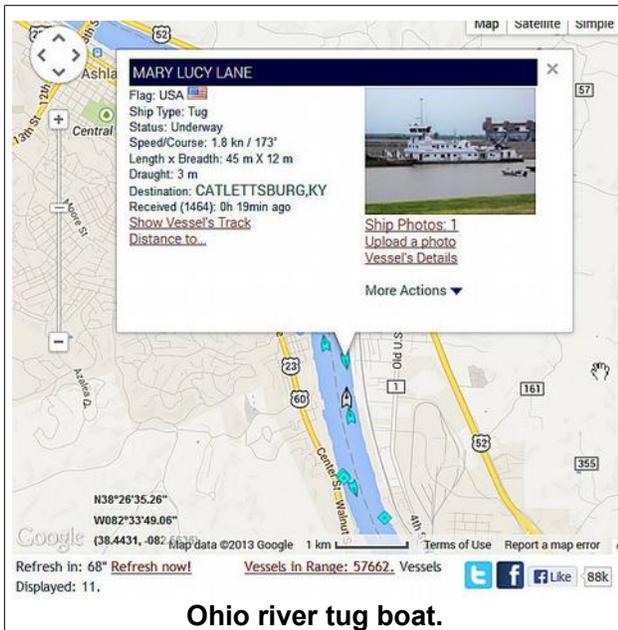
At the time I viewed the Huntington section of the Ohio River, there were 13 vessels in view out of the 57,626 vessels available.



Map legend.

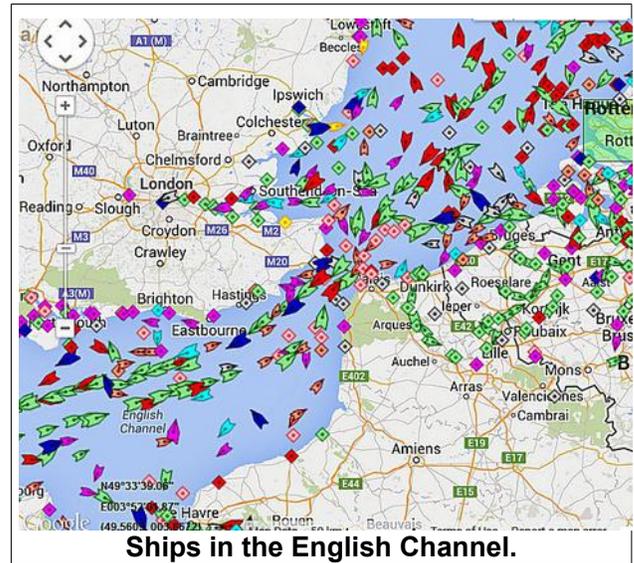


Finding ships on the Ohio River.



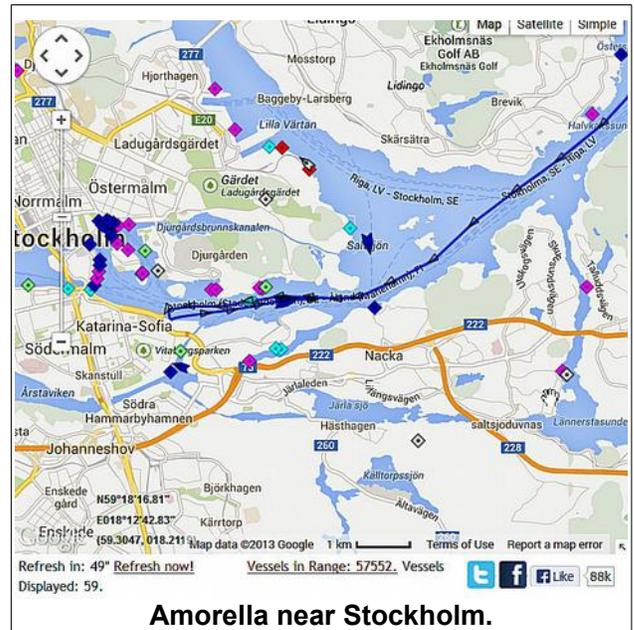
Ohio river tug boat.

Ship-shaped icons identify moving ships and square icons identify anchored ships.



Ships in the English Channel.

Just for fun I entered the name of the ferry (Amorella) Diana and I took from Stockholm to Finland. The view shows the current location and



Amorella near Stockholm.

the track of the vessel. I have even more fun by opening a second tab in Firefox, and viewing a live

Stockholm web camera in one tab, and the marine traffic map for that area in another. This allows me to watch the ships enter the Stockholm harbor in real-time.

If you move the map to coastal areas, the collection of ships in view gets more interesting.

Plane Finder

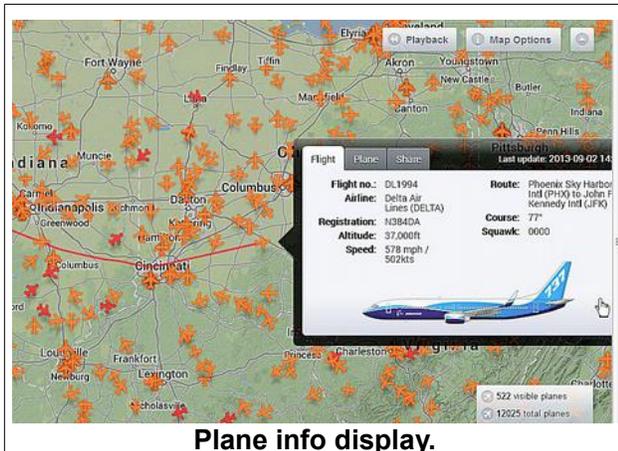
OK, tired of chasing ships? How about following airplanes.

<http://planefinder.net/>



planefinder.net

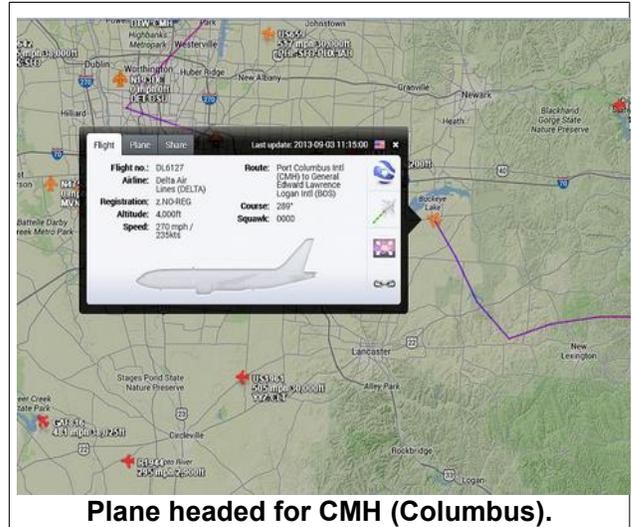
When I captured the planefinder screen image there were over 12,000 planes visible. To make sense of all of this you can either enter a flight number or zoom in on an area of interest.



Plane info display.

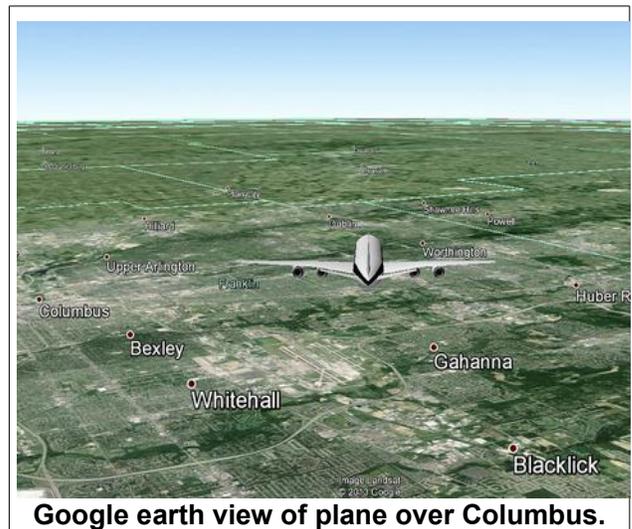
Click on a plane and you will see the flight path and other info about the plane. The map is updated in real time so you can follow the plane as it moves on the map similar to the monitor they have in the passenger compartment of many commercial flights.

Zoom in on the Columbus or Waverly area and you can see what planes are flying over, where they are going, and how fast they are traveling.



Plane headed for CMH (Columbus).

The plane finder info window has a number of options. For example, the flight direction, speed, origination, destination, and plane type are shown. The real excitement (for those who have Google Earth installed) is that you can get a real time view of the terrain as the plane flies along.



Google earth view of plane over Columbus.

With the proper flight number, you can follow a friend or family member as they travel.

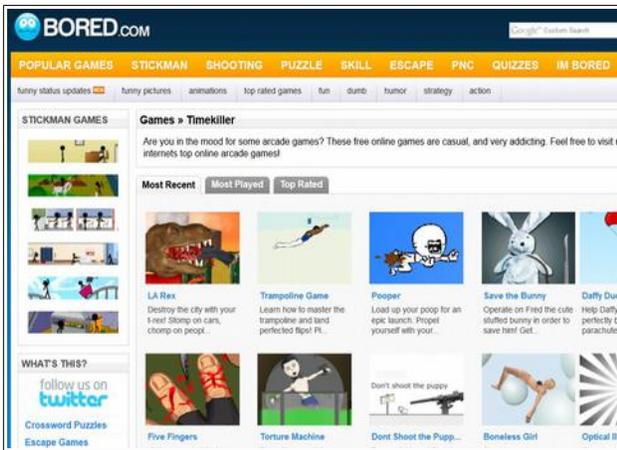
Stupid Websites

By Len

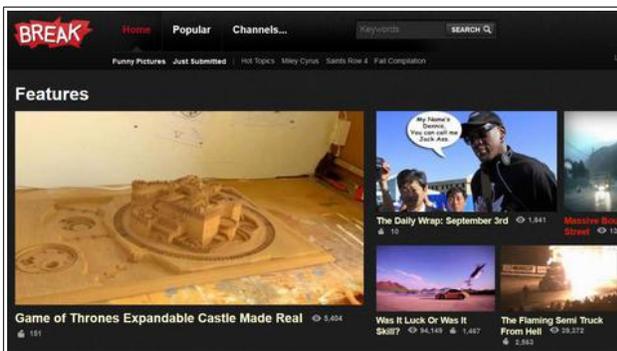
Let's say you have a few minutes to kill with nothing much else to do. Here are some websites you might find amusing.

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

Bored.com contains links to games, puzzles, pictures and more.



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



Links to more time-killers.

<http://www.ebizmba.com/articles/funny-websites>



Hillbilly hedge trimmer.

