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To: Julie L. Sigall
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From: Eric Hunt

Comment:

Being a software developer, I have come across many copyrighted code that has out-of-date information on how to get ahold of the copyright owner.

The original person puts their name, a nice email address, and a date. You send an email requesting permission to use their code and you never get a response, or better yet notice that it no longer exists. You search the web for their name and you get nothing. In many cases I have come across code that instead of people using a real name, they use an online alias of theirs that can be used by several hundred, if not thousands, of people.

Email addresses or website URLs are not really useful in trying to find people when they expire or become no longer in use. Unlike a phone number or street address, there is little, or no, way to track changes and movements. The search for its original owner to get permission to use is completely worthless in most cases.

The orphan works program would really help lots of people and I think it is an amazing idea. Please enact this.