

THE NEWS MAGAZINE OF THE ALAMO PC ORGANIZATION

PC Alamode

GENEALOGY ISSUE

www.alamopc.org

June 2005

\$4.00

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and the miracle of DNA**
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Alamo PC Organization

Alamo PC Organization is a non-profit organization whose mission is to increase its members knowledge and effective use of personal computers through presentations, instructional programs, other membership services and access to the expertise of other members.



To register for a Class, Study Group or Sr. Comp classes call:

Registration number **210.736.0080**

If you **didn't receive your issue** of *PC Alamode* or have questions about your **membership** e-mail:

Sandra Bloom at: membership@alamopc.org

If you have questions about Alamo PC call:

Learning Center number **210.736.0700**

If you have comments about classes call

John Gaddis **210.494.9449**

If you have questions about advertising call

Joseph de Leon
send e-mail to editor@alamopc.org

Please send change of address and other correspondence to:

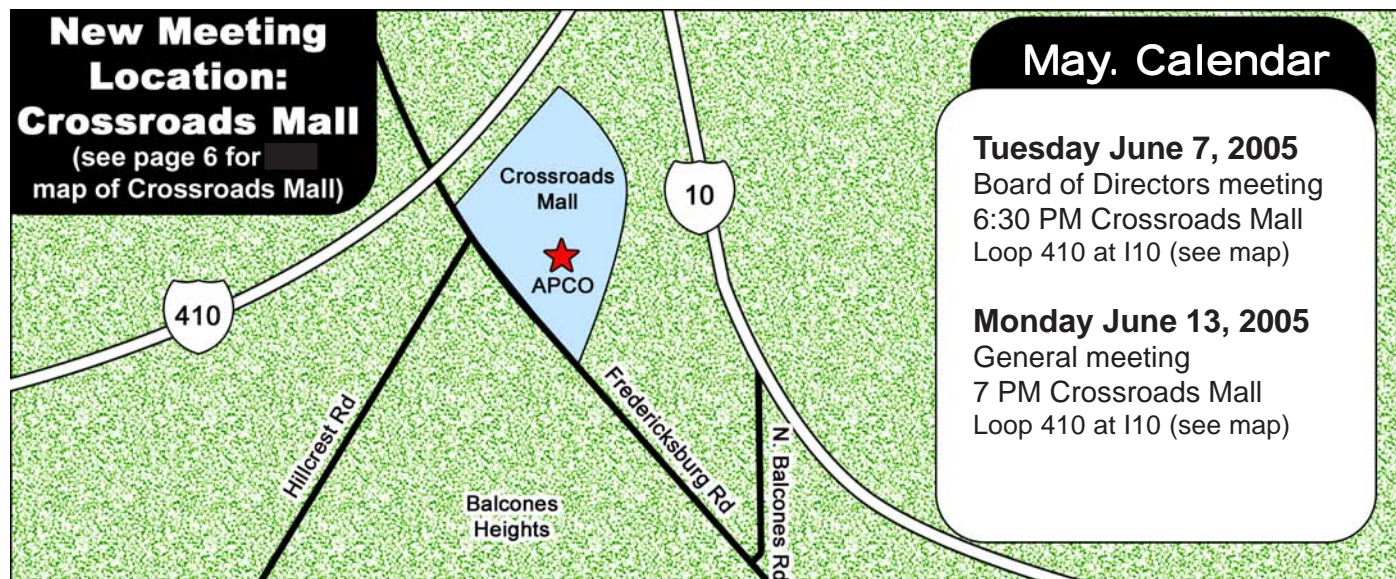
Alamo PC Organization
PO Box 65180
San Antonio, TX 78265-5180

Meetings

Monthly program meetings are normally held the second Monday of the month. Meetings are held at the Crossroads Convention Center (across from the Learning Center) located in the lower level of Crossroads Mall, Loop 410 at the intersection with I-10 starting at 7:00PM. Open to all members and the public.

The Board of Directors meets normally on the Tuesday prior to the monthly General Meeting. The BoD meets at the Alamo PC Learning Center located in the lower level of Crossroads Mall, Loop 410 at the intersection with I-10 starting at 6:30PM. Any changes will be announced via the Voice Mail/Hot Line (736-0700) and on the Calendar of Events. Open to all members.

New Meeting Location:
Crossroads Mall
(see page 6 for map of Crossroads Mall)



May. Calendar

Tuesday June 7, 2005
Board of Directors meeting
6:30 PM Crossroads Mall
Loop 410 at I10 (see map)

Monday June 13, 2005
General meeting
7 PM Crossroads Mall
Loop 410 at I10 (see map)

Finding Your Roots

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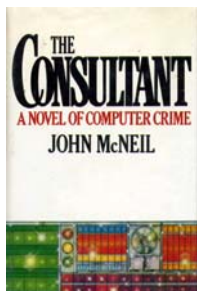
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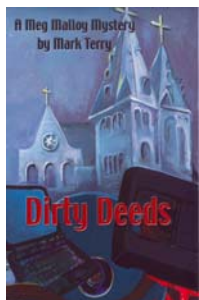


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by Mark Terry

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PC Alamode

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EDITOR

Joseph de Leon

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

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Susan Ives

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Bill Beverley
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Shane Hicks
Tim Hoke
Bill Hudson
Susan Ives
Russell James
Larry Lentz
K. Joyce McDonald
Paul Vaughn

INTERIM PRODUCT REVIEW COORDINATOR

Susan Ives

ADVERTISING

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PUBLICATION SUBMISSIONS: Please check with the editor regarding submitting ads. **Deadline for submissions is the first of the month preceding publication.** e-mail to:

editor@alamopc.org

Joseph de Leon, Editor, PC Alamode

P.O. Box 12202

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*Consecutive months

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| Past President/Programs | David Steward | 662-8606 (Home) | dsteward@texas.net |
| Treasurer | TBD (Bill Klutz) | 532-9122 (Home) | treasurer@alamopc.org |
| Member Records | Bill Eastridge | 223-8743 (Home) | membership@alamopc.org |
| Secretary | Sandra Bloom | unlisted | secretary@alamopc.org |
| Public Relations | Susan Ives | 694-4582 (Home) | suives@texas.net |
| Webmaster | Mike Bianchi | 226-2460 (Home) | webmaster@alamopc.org |
| Product Review Coordinator, Historian | Larry Grosskopf | 531-8 388 (Office) | reviews@alamopc.org |
| VP Education, Study Groups Coord. | John Gaddis | 494-9449 (Office) | education@alamopc.org |
| VP Member Retention/Services | Bill Klutz | 532-9122 (Home) | services@alamopc.org |
| VP Trade Shows | Steve Tech | 675-2880 (Home) | stephentechnjr@yahoo.com |
| APCUG Representative | Dick Popp | 403-2225 (Home) | rpopp@wireweb.net |
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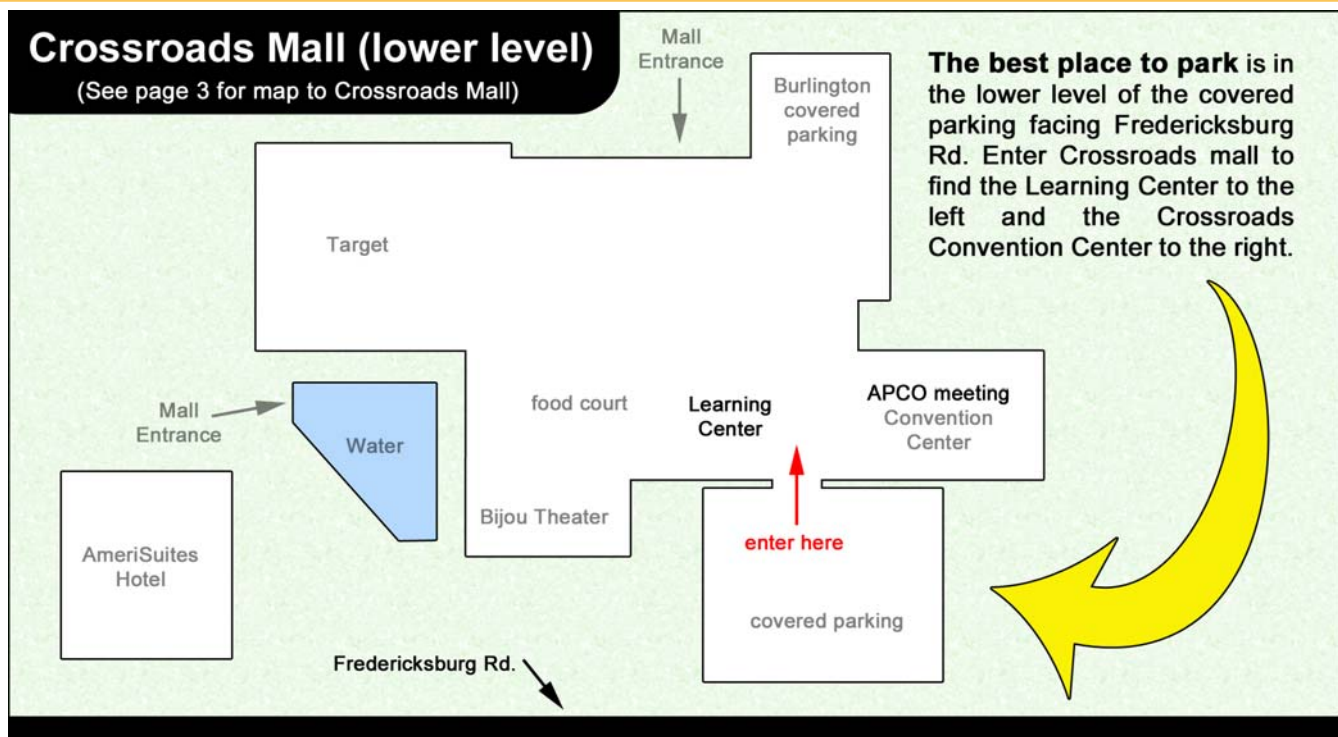
Learning Center, Crossroads Mall

736-0700

FAX 736-0032

| | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Learning Center Manager | Cary & Jean Hall | 736-0700 (Learning Center) | learncenter@alamopc.org |
| Special Projects | Joe Brazell | 370-2207 (Office) | projects@alamopc.org |
| Registrar | Linda Bianchi | 226-2460 (Home) | registrar@alamopc.org |
| Webmaster | Mike Bianchi | 226-2460 (Home) | webmaster@alamopc.org |
| Lab/Network Administrator | Gary Grieve | 492-5066 (Home) | netadmin@alamopc.org |
| Senior Comp Director | Ed & Audrey Henkin | 494-8227 (Home) | seniorcomp@alamopc.org |
| Editor, PC Alamo Magazine | Joseph de Leon | unlisted | editor@alamopc.org |

For Study Groups and Classes or for SeniorComp classes, phone: 736-0080



PC Alamode Photo Contest

1st Place Winner
"Watering Hole"

Submitted by Wenda Gorman

Cedar Waxwing, visiting migrators.



PC Alamode Photo Contest Guidelines

1. Submit your JPG file by E-mail to <editor@alamopc.org>.
2. Each member may submit one entry per month.
3. Image will need to be cropped to 4.25" wide x 5.5" tall if selected for the cover.
4. Observe the due date – 10th of the month before publication date.
5. Only the first place winner will be notified.
6. Submit original images only.



You will notice a new columnist on page 18, Best and Worst by Pim Borman, of the SW Indiana PC Users Group, Inc. Pim has an interesting column, which actually debuted last month, but it escaped my Enter column.

With so many of you on vacation, I would have thought there would be a flood of photos submitted for the Photo Contest. This month, we have only Wenda Gorman's submission. Wenda gets extra big play above for being the only contestant this month!

Send in your vacation photos!

Joseph de Leon, Editor
<editor@alamopc.org>



Joseph de Leon, Alamo PC

Joseph has worked in the graphics industry for over 6 years and teaches graphics and web classes at San Antonio College.

STUDY GROUPS

Call the Learning Center for schedule information 736-0700 or see page 60-63.

President's Message

Bill Klutz

Hi, Ho, Hi, Ho, it's off to work we go...!

That's right! "Snow White and the Seven...." The Seven arose each day and marched off to do the "WORK" they had to do. On the way they would sing the song, indicating they were willing to do whatever it took to accomplish the tasks they would face that day.

When Snow White came into their lives she helped the Seven, and the Seven helped her. That is as it should be everyone helping. The Musketeers of old probably expressed it best by the phrase, "All for One, and One for All." Essentially it is the group doing what is best for each individual comprising the group, and each individual comprising the group doing what is best for the group. Hopefully, as the "What is best for the group" approach is used, it will provide for the highest percentage of satisfied group members.

Truly successful groupings of people, whether in business, sports, clubs, organizations, etc., when scrutinized carefully, will be found following these basic principles. If they "do not," or come to a point in time when they "are not," the group/grouping will cease to be successful, may fail, and finally may cease to exist.

It is no different in a computer user group environment (i.e., Alamo PC Organization). How do I know this? Because there are user groups who have traveled this "down hill" road to the end and user groups who are apparently on the road now. If you don't believe it, let me cite just two examples of user groups who are apparently on this "down hill" road now, and are trying to reverse their direction.

The first is an article by the president of the Coastal Area Users Group (CAUG) <caug.org>, that meets in Corpus Christi, Texas. The second is a notice from the Twin Cities PC User Group (TC/PC) <tcpc.com> that meets in the area of Minneapolis & St. Paul, Minnesota.

"CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS"

By David Burke, Pres CAUG

I am often asked about CAUG, and it is with great pride I tell them about folks like ..., and many more, whom are always ready to help each other better understand and use that amazing box we call a personal computer.

For ten plus years I have served as president. For the most part I have truly enjoyed those years. Before that I served as the very first webmaster using Wildcat software, and program chair as far back as 1987. I enjoy each and every meeting and the chance to fellowship with fellow computer users and fiends.

Recently we have lost several of our officers to illness and burn out: our membership person is suffering from kidney failure. While our prayers are with him and all our members, his stepping down is a great loss. CAUG is not a one man operation and never can be.

... I like to call the board, chair, SIG leaders etc. the "CAUG Action team", as these are by far the hardest working CAUG volunteers. The reason for this open letter is our action team is fast collapsing. CAUG needs a webmaster, program chairperson, secretary, and membership person just for a start. It also needs someone to assume the position of President.

These are all vital positions of which we can not operate without. The Vice president and Treasurer [husband and wife fill the respective positions - WLK] are soon going to retire and are already shopping for their retirement location. That would

leave me and one other as a team of two, that will just not work. If we do not get some folks to offer to take these positions I am afraid CAUG will fold. I will wait till December and if at that time we do not have, at the very least a membership chair and secretary, I will resign from CAUG reluctantly and with a very heavy heart.

I am sure you can see this is an urgent matter, and I hope you will not allow this to happen, so I look forward to the new CAUG action team members."

"WANTED"

June is our annual election month for the Board of Directors for TC/PC. We need people to fill the board positions. If you are interested in serving in a position please contact a board member.

Our Co-Chairman ... is leaving the board. We are going to be without leadership. Several of the other board members who have been doing this for a long time are getting in need of a break....

To be totally honest, several of the other user groups have disbanded and the number is growing smaller. We don't want to be one of the numbers but it may be necessary if no one steps up to help. PLEASE consider!"

The Alamo PC Organization doesn't want to be one of the numbers either, but it may become a "Use to Be" if no one steps up to help. The summer is upon us and will mean fewer people to help, as vacations are taken (but the work goes on).

July is our annual month for nominations for expiring Board positions. Members will be responsible for identifying individuals willing to serve at the BOD level, and may submit names at the July 9th General meeting. Once the Election Committee and Floor nomination list of proposed names has been consolidated, individual biographies will be submitted for inclusion in the August PC Alamo. During August, the online election process will be conducted to determine the list of new Board members for Oct 2005 - Sep 2006. (Currently we need a President Elect, Treasurer, Communications Specialist, Public Relations and some officer positions. Interim fills currently have been made, but the positions need long term fills.)

Once again I ask each member to commit to being a little more involved with the Alamo PC Organization. Keep your member info current, especially your E-Mail address for periodic notices (update both on the web-site, via password section). Also, keep track of when your membership expires, and renew well in advance, to save the organization an expense. Also, attend some of the monthly general meetings where presenters provide information about current and future computer related issues.

Volunteer of the Month

Gwen Langland

President's Message Cont.

A great benefit, often overlook, is the classes at our Learning Center. Keep in mind that a membership also entitles each household member to receive help with computer problems, via the "Help Numbers" near the back of the PC Alamode magazine or through the "Doctor Is In" assistance (each Fri morning from about 9-12). Remember, someone must bring the computer to our Learning Center (lower level of Crossroads Mall, near the Mall entrance from the underground parking spaces that are accessed from Fredricksburg Road).

Membership renewals and new member interest are doing reasonably well. However, we are not retaining members at the level that we would desire. If you do not choose to renew, we would appreciate knowing "Why?" (Send an E-Mail to membership@alamopc.org) We can't fix a problem unless we know what it causing it. Until next month's message.



June Program

David Steward

Gene Barlow of User Group Relations

The June General Meeting will feature a great presentation, by one of the greatest evangelists in the user group arena, Mr. Gene Barlow of User Group Relations.

Gene Barlow has been a key figure in the user group community for the past 25 years. He is an educator, writer and a talented presenter, representing many vendors over the years with products that he finds valuable and effective for home and small business users. Gene currently represents Acronis Software, WhiteCanyon Software, and Spearit Software and their products. Gene will demonstrate 3 of the most exciting products from his clients at the general meeting this month.

MoveMe: This is a clever utility to help users easily transfer all of their application programs, settings and data files from an old computer to a newer computer. By using this utility from Spearit Software, you can quickly stay current with technology and still use your familiar files on your new computer.

SecureClean/WipeDrive/MediaWiper: Recent studies have shown that hard drives on PCs contain hundreds of private files that most users thought they had removed from the drive months or years earlier. Simply deleting a file from the hard drive does not permanently remove it from the drive. The only effective way to permanently remove information from a hard drive is to write blanks or zeros over the top of the deleted information. Gene will demonstrate three wiping utilities from WhiteCanyon Software and show you how easy it is to prevent personal and private information from getting in the hands of the wrong people.

True Image: Gene's main topic will be Backing Up Your Hard Drive with True Image, a drive-imaging utility from Acronis Software. Steve Bass from PC World said "I've been using True Image for regular backups since the beginning of the year. So far, I haven't had a lick of trouble, either with creating the image, adding incrementals, or with the restoration function..I'm happy with True Image's simplicity". Backing up your hard drive is possibly the most important thing you should do with your computer. Gene will demonstrate True Image and show you how to use the incremental backup feature, backups that are relatively small and are completed very quickly. This is a topic every user should understand.

Gene and his wife Linda visit about 100 user groups each year. He is one of the most interesting presenters you will hear. Don't miss this meeting.

The meeting will be held on June 13th at 7:00 PM at the Crossroads Convention Center. I hope to see everyone there.

Significant Happenings...

John Gaddis, Education VP

New Classes for MCSE and Microsoft A+

We have finally found instructors for Microsoft Certified System Engineer and Microsoft A+ workshops. Final details are being worked out. If you are interested, pre-register now at the Learning Center by calling Linda Bianchi at 736-0700. These will be fee-based workshops and seating is limited.

Word has a new instructor and classes begin June 7th. Computer Literacy class is expected to resume soon so add your name to the list. If you are interested in a Blackberry or XML workshop, register with Linda Bianchi at the Learning Center.

Continued from the May Alamode

Instructional classes for Elements 2 are led by Beverly Bihn, assisted by Jane Montgomery, for an 8 or 9 week period, depending upon the amount of Fridays in the months it is taught. A text is supplied, a CD with the images for each student is provided and creative printed lessons are provided for a fee of \$90.00 for members of Alamo PC. The Elements 2 instruction classes are offered each Friday for the months of March-April and July-August from 1 to 5. Registration is required.

Workshops will be available for all students who have completed Elements 2 instruction classes each Friday in September, from 1 to 5 for a fee of \$20.00. Printed lessons will be provided. Registration is required.

Specialty classes for making personal playing cards will be offered on the Fridays in October from 1 to 5 for a fee of \$20.00. Printed instructions will be provided. Registration is required. It is available to Photoshop 7 and Elements 2 users. Participants must bring photos on a CD of family or pets they wish to include them on their cards.

Specialty classes for making personal calendars will be offered on the Fridays in November from 1 to 5 for a fee of

\$20.00. Printed instructions will be provided. Registration is required. It is available to Photoshop 7 and Elements 2 users. Participants must bring photos on a CD of family or pets they wish to include them on their calendars.

Photo Editing classes are led by Clarke Bird, assisted by Beverly Bihn on the second Saturday of each month from 8 to 10 and again at 10 to 12 for a certain amount of months. This class is for users of any graphics program. It will be taught using Elements 2 software. It is a free class but registration is required since there are limited computers for each time period. A waiting list will be created after the classes are full for those who wish to join the classes when seats become available. New sessions will be announced in the online website www.alamopc.org when they are formed.

Photo Artistry classes are created and taught by Rebeka Morozoff on designated Sundays from 2 to 5. They will be announced by e-mail or the online website www.alamopc.org when they are to be offered. You must be a member of Alamo PC and know Elements 2 or Photoshop 7 or CS. The classes will be conducted using Photoshop 7. The fee is \$15.00 and registration is required. Beka creates artistic presentations you won't find anywhere else, including collages, wallpaper for the computer and how to make images appear old or new, and artistic touches to create individual masterpieces.

Call 494-9449 for more information.

Senior Comp Schedule

Bill Hudson, Senior Comp Instructor

Senior Comp Spring Schedule of Classes

Basic Introduction to Windows

Andy Roca and Donna Dudley
Wednesdays 10am -12pm
May 4 - June 8

Introduction To Windows

Don Robinson
Mondays 1pm -3pm
May 16 - June 20

Introduction To Windows

Jane Montgomery
Wednesdays 1pm - 3pm
May 18 - June 22

Introduction To Windows II

Bill Hudson
Tuesdays 10am - 12pm
May 17 - June 21

Senior Comp Practice Lab

Joe Gentry and Sarah Thomas
Every Thursday 9am -12pm

This schedule is subject to change.
Please check with the Alamo PC
Registrar at 210-736-0700

Classes meet for six two-hour sessions. Pre-registration is required. Cost \$60.00 (class materials included); \$40 to repeat a class. Senior Comp classes are specifically designed to assist Adults (age 45 or older) to learn how to effectively use their computers. Senior Comp is a nonprofit with eight years of proven success.

ComputerFest is a collection of local and statewide dealers under one roof offering rock-bottom prices on all your computer needs. All of our dealers are independent wholesalers, so each conducts business separately. Most of the dealers will accept credit cards, but with cash you can usually get the best deals. And new products are almost always backed up with a warrantee, so you and your wallet can always feel comfortable with your purchases.

What you can find at the show:

New Complete Systems
New Hardware
Newest Software Titles
Printers, Monitors, Scanners
Ink-Jet Recharge Kits
Imaging Devices
Internet Services
Used Hardware
Multimedia Upgrades
Shareware
Diagnostic Equipment
Cables & Connectors
Bare Bone Systems
Computer Related Books
Refurbished Systems, Monitors

Location:

Airport Civic Center
8505 Broadway @ Loop 410
San Antonio, TX.

Show Dates and Times:

check dates at <http://www.pcshows.com/>





Geeky Gourmet

As summer heats up, it's a time for entertaining outdoors, enjoying time with friends and just sitting back and relaxing. What better way to do this than with easy to prepare foods that are light and fun.

Nine Layer Dip

- 2/3 cups sour cream
- 1/8 teaspoon cumin
- 1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon paprika
- Dash salt
- One 16-ounce can refried beans
- 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
- ½ cup guacamole (made fresh or store bought)
- ¼ cup sliced black olives
- 2 green onions, chopped (1/4 cup)
- 1 medium tomato, chopped
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh cilantro

On the side:

Salsa and tortilla chips

1. Combine the sour cream, cumin, cayenne pepper, paprika and salt in a small bowl and mix well. Set aside
2. Heat the refried beans until hot, using a microwave or in a saucepan over medium heat. When the beans are hot, spread them over the center of a serving platter.
3. Sprinkle ½ of the cheese evenly over the beans.
4. Spread the guacamole over the cheese
5. Sprinkle the sliced olives over the guacamole.
6. Spread the seasoned sour cream over the olives
7. Sprinkle the green onions, then the tomatoes evenly over the sour cream layer.
8. Finish up by sprinkling the remainder of the cheese over the tomatoes, and topping the dip off with the cilantro. Serve the dip with tortilla chips and a side of your favorite salsa.

Cheese Straws

- 1 cup butter
- 2 cups grated sharp Cheddar cheese
- 2-2/3 cups sifted flour
- Dash red pepper
- ¼ teaspoon salt

Mix ingredients together well. Roll thin and cut in narrow strips. Bake in slow oven, 275 degrees, until light brown. Makes about 4 dozen.

Pickled Mushrooms

- 3 medium onions
- ¾ cup water
- ¾ cup vinegar
- ½ teaspoon leaf marjoram
- ¼ teaspoon whole cloves
- ½ teaspoon celery seed
- ½ teaspoon mustard seed
- 1 Tablespoon salt
- Few drops hot sauce
- ½ pound fresh mushrooms
- ¼ cup olive oil

Cut onions in ½ inch slices and cook in water, vinegar, and spices for 5 minutes. Add mushrooms and cook 5 minutes longer. Remove mushrooms and add olive oil to remaining liquid and onions. Bring to boil and pour over mushrooms. Let stand for 4 hours or longer and serve as hors d'oeuvre or salad.



From the Deals Guy

Bob (The Cheapskate) Click, Greater Orlando Computer Users Group

This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers or freebies I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of any products, no matter how enthused I might sound. Bob (The Cheapskate) Click <Bobclick@mindspring.com>. Visit my Web site at <<http://www.dealsguy.com>> for past columns and some interesting articles.

I read an article by Lynn Kauer, editor of the Blue Chip News, newsletter of the Saginaw Valley Computer Association, that might interest you about hard drive warranties. When purchasing an Iomega drive he was urged by the clerk to purchase a store warranty because hard drive warranties begin on the day of manufacture. At home, he checked the Iomega Web site, entered the serial number of his unit just purchased, and found that the warranty had indeed already expired. He still had 14 days from his date of purchase to buy a store warranty.

When attending the Comp USA show, I talked to the guys from Western Digital about that and they confirmed it was standard policy. They said the problem is how long a drive sits on shelves at distributors and stores, and that almost nobody keeps their purchase receipt. But if a purchaser still has their store receipt should the drive fail within the stated warranty, they will honor the warranty from the date of your receipt. I can't speak for all vendors, but keep your store receipts just in case that is their policy also.

*I Did Something About The Weather

I'm still bragging about my new weather station. Both my wife and I really enjoy ours, especially the Big Weather Picture accessory that lets you easily see all of the day's stats at a glance. I've seen other brands at shows, but none I've seen had anything like the Big Weather Picture. Peet Bros. displayed at the Home & Garden Show recently and said they'd still honor my deal of including an inside temperature sensor and a serial cable at no extra charge. <<http://www.peetbros.com>> Even our visitors are always fascinated and ask about ours. To get the special, send your order to <peetbros@peetbros.com>. We especially watch the peak wind speed information and the rain gauge. We sometimes wonder when we are at work if it rained at home, but a glance at the Big Weather Picture will tell us all that when we get home, and how much.

Right at my deadline, I had to withdraw a deal that they said was not ready yet from Zio Corporation for a small and convenient product that handles all of the memory cards for digital cameras and cell phones, and also serves as a USB hub. Hopefully, it should be ready for the DealsGuy column next month. In place of it I am reminding you about "CameraMate VideoSafe" and "CameraMate Real Time Video" by Zio Corp from last month's column that had rebates expiring May 31, 2005. I am happy to say they have extended those rebates. I will include text from a message they sent me:

"Purchase select Zio Corp. products from any retailer from Feb. 05, 2005 through Sept. 30, 2005. Submit a completed rebate offer form; the original UPC code from select Zio products packaging; a copy of the dated 'Any Retailer' receipt for the select Zio products purchase with the retail price circled. Consumer also needs to include the rebate sticker (outside the box) along with the UPC code." For information on those products see <<http://www.easiestvideoever.com>>. My friend is having a great time playing with those Zio products that I asked him to test out for me last month.

*Announcement For ActiveStartup Deluxe

"I'm pleased to inform you that HexileSoft releases ActiveStartup Deluxe! We offer a 30% discount on ActiveStartup Deluxe to user group members.

"Smart StartUp Manager For NT-based Windows OS With Anti-Malware Options. Startup manager is a popular software category with dozens of different titles. ActiveStartup Deluxe has been specifically designed for network-based Windows versions, like Windows NT, 2000 and XP. The program gives its users a brain-dead simple way to backup and restore startup settings, add/delete/disable programs on the startup list, and control services.

"Unfortunately, the Internet is packed with malicious software like an overstuffed sandwich. Viruses, worms, trojans, spyware and other malware can easily sneak into PCs and wreak havoc. Oftentimes, the only way to catch the intruders is at the startup point. This is why ActiveStartup Deluxe offers users to perform virus check at startup and makes it possible to run, stop, enable or disable any service that may be used by malicious software. ActiveStartup Deluxe is capable of opening system utilities like RegEdit or SysEdit, checking for "dead" files on the startup list or launching any application. The program does not require any in-depth computer knowledge - ActiveStartup comes with a simple clean interface, support for clipboard and dragging & dropping, hotkey activation and other beginner-friendly options.

"ActiveStartup Deluxe is very easy to operate. This tiny application (only 691 KiloBytes) has been awarded over a dozen prestigious awards including a four-cow rating from TuCows. There is also another version of the program with fewer features called ActiveStartup. The differences between these two versions are available at <<http://www.hexilesoft.com/windows%20startup%20managers.html>>. A 30-day trial version is available at www.hexilesoft.com for evaluation purposes. ActiveStartup Deluxe 1.07 is priced at \$29.95 US Dollars per copy."

Any inquiry, please contact Oleksandr Svider at <info@hexilesoft.com>

*Last Minute Problem

Just before time to send out the DealsGuy column to the editors, I could not send messages, but could receive them. Earthlink tech support says my Eudora Email software cannot be configured to work with their new servers. I may have to find another ISP so be aware that my email address may change.

New Scam Involves USPS Money Orders

John Brewer, Computer Club of Oklahoma City

John Brewer practices law in Oklahoma City, is a member of the Governor's and Legislative Task Force for E-Commerce, and enjoys issues relating to eBusiness and cyberspace. E-mail him at <johnb@jnbrewer.com>

Some people never sleep. They are too busy devising a new artifice to scam someone out of his or her bank account. Some criminally inspired diabolical cretins have a new scheme that is very clever.

According to a recent article in the New York Times, in the last six months, "international forgers - mostly in Nigeria, but also in Ghana and Eastern Europe - appear to have turned new attention to the United States postal money order. More than 3,700 counterfeit postal money orders were intercepted from October to December, exceeding the total for the previous 12 months, according to postal inspectors."

The scam works as follows: In the majority of the cases, the victim is contacted by e-mail or via an online chat room. The scammer arranges to purchase an item from the victim and pay for it with a USPS money order. An alternative scam involves cashing money orders for a fee. The money orders are counterfeit. "160 arrests have been made in the United States since October in cases where people have been suspected of knowingly receiving fraudulent postal money orders or trying to cash them, Paul Krenn, a spokesman for the United States Postal Inspection Service, said."

The New York Times article told the story of a fellow who joined an international online dating site, Elitemate.com. In late January, he was contacted by someone claiming to be a young woman from Nigeria. She - or perhaps he, or even they, the victim now concedes - went by the name of Ogisi Douglas. After an exchange of e-mails, "Ms. Douglas" asked the victim for his help buying a laptop computer. The victim purchased a \$1,500 laptop, and after he received two United States postal money orders for \$950 each, he sent the laptop to an address in Nigeria.

The victim deposited the money orders at a branch of J.P. Morgan Chase. No one knew the money orders were bogus. His "friend" soon asked him to buy more computers, all paid for with bogus money orders. The victim discovered they were bogus when he tried to cash them at a local post office. He had not shipped more computers but the first purchase was a total loss.

"I felt, obviously, a bit foolish for not listening to those little voices that say: 'Something's not quite right here. You don't have all the information on this person,'" said the victim. "But it all moved very fast."

According to the USPS, bogus money orders can be detected.

Hold the money order up to the light and look for the following security features: Ben Franklin images (watermarks) repeated on the left side (top to bottom). A dark security thread running (top to bottom) to the right of the Franklin watermark, with the tiny letters "USPS" facing backward and forward. If either of these security features is not present when the money order is held up to the light, you are holding a fraudulent Postal Money Order.

Also be aware that denominations are indicated on two locations. Discoloration of the denomination amounts indicates erasure (fraudulent). Maximum value for domestic postal money orders is \$1,000. Maximum value for international postal money orders is \$700.

The FDIC issued a special alert referencing the money orders on March 5, 2005. The special alert gives information regarding identification of the money orders and reporting procedures when they are presented for payment.

According to the USPS Web site, U.S. residents are lured into the scam when they are told they can keep some of the money as a gift or payment for their help. Unsuspecting victims provide their home mailing address to the fraudster and are told they will receive a check or postal money order that they should deposit into their own bank account. The victim then is instructed to immediately send the money via Western Union or conventional bank wire transfer to a bank or person located outside the United States.

The NY Times article gives more detail. "Dave Thompson, a bicycling enthusiast from Spokane, Wash., said he had received two \$1,000 United States postal money orders for "a piece of bicycle equipment worth 50 bucks."

A number of people have been arrested according to the NY Times. At least eight arrests have been made in Nigeria in recent months, said Dan Larkin, a chief for the F.B.I.'s Internet Crime Complaint Center, and arrests in the United States are mounting.

On March 3, Christopher R. Zeblisky was arrested in South Milwaukee, Wis., and accused of trying to withdraw the proceeds of a deposit of eight counterfeit \$1,000 postal money orders.

A week later, in Charleston, W. Va., Manuel G. Roberts was arrested and accused of possessing 64 counterfeit checks written for more than \$670,000 and 8 counterfeit postal money orders totaling almost \$8,000.

And two weeks ago, postal inspectors and F.B.I. agents in Puerto Rico arrested William Arocho-Valenti shortly after they said he had cashed 19 counterfeit postal money orders, traced to West Africa, for more than \$18,000. Mr. Arocho-Valenti had \$35,000 worth of bogus postal money orders in his possession when he was arrested, the authorities said.

It is amazing stuff ... these Internet con schemes. I think P.T. Barnum had a saying for the type of person who buys into these schemes, "There's a sucker born every minute." This is the principle that keeps these schemes flourishing.



Computer Basics

Russell James, Alamo PC

Russell is General Manager at **BJ Associates of San Antonio, The Laptop Specialist**. They are an authorized service center for Toshiba and Sony systems. They are the laptop specialist and also handle system builds and parts for desktops. They take care of any IBM compatible hardware or software problem that you have. e-mail <russell@bjassociates.com> or visit them on the web at <<http://bjassociates.com>>.

Preventive Maintenance

Taking care of your computer is really pretty simple. There are a few basic rules that will help you with most of the problems that you might come across. They deal with two issues that you might have with your computer and only two. They are hardware and software problems. The rules are as follows. Viruses, Trojans and Hackers are bad. Antivirus software and

Windows Critical Updates are good. Heat, Dust and new noises are bad. Now you need to know what you need to do in order to follow the rules.

As we have discussed many times, you should not only have a current Antivirus program installed, but you should also have it set to update itself automatically. I like for my systems to check for updates on a daily basis. One of the readers e-mailed me with a question that I thought would be good to explain here. He said that he had installed Norton Antivirus 2004 but he could not find where to change the setup for the update interval. For those of you with this program installed you would go into your scheduled tasks for Windows and view the properties of the Symantec NetDetect task. Adjust the schedule of the task to whatever interval you choose and the update of Norton Antivirus 2004 will follow.

I would suggest that if your antivirus program is more than two years old you should buy the latest version to give you the most protection. There are a number of Viruses and Trojans that the older programs will not detect. After a period of time you will not be able to install the virus definition updates. McAfee 4.03 is one such version of antivirus program that falls into this category. Not only are there viruses and Trojans that it will not detect, you will also have to manually update the product to stay protected.

Windows Critical updates are very simple to deal with. If you are using Windows 98 or ME there is an update that will install a program to check for critical updates every time you connect to the Internet. If a critical update is found a screen pops up asking if you would like to download and install the update or be reminded about it later. If you are using XP or a similar operating system the default setting is to download any critical updates and notify you with an icon in the taskbar. This way the downloading takes place in the background and all you have to do is click on the button to install the update. You can also change the schedule and choose to have the updates installed automatically without the need for your intervention.

Let's take a look at the hardware rules that you need to follow. The first item on the list is heat. It is not a good idea to have a computer system in an area that has a lot of direct sunlight. Heat can also come into play with the other two items on the list, dust and new noises. Dust can cause the fans to not have the same amount of cooling power that they once had. If you are blowing air on a heat sink that is covered in dust, you are not getting the full effect that you could get if you were blowing the air directly on the heat sink. This means that the CPU is going to run at a higher temperature than it normally has to. You only have a certain amount of time before the dust gets so bad that either the fan fails or the CPU overheats and dies. When the fan fails you will find out about the new noises issue. If you start hearing noises then you need to find out what they are and fix the problem now. Later is usually a bad thing.

There is no way that I can give you a definitive answer as to how often you need to clean your systems out. Once a year would be the minimum unless you have some great filters in your air conditioning system. If you have never taken the cover off your computer and it is more than one year old, now would be a good time to learn the basics. You can buy a can of compressed air at most of the office supply stores in town. Take the cover off and use the air to blow the dust off of the CPU fan as well as the vent of the power supply fan and any case fans that your system might have. Some of you will be surprised at the amount of dust you will find.

There are many more things that can go wrong with computers that the basics will not be able to help you with. There is always the possibility that you could have a hard drive die or a video card or memory chip go bad. These are the types of failures that you will have no control over. All you can worry about is the things that you can control. Keep the hackers and dust out of your system and hopefully the only problems you will encounter are the problems that occur between the seat and the keyboard. You are on your own for those.

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Potemkin Websites

K. Joyce McDonald, Alamo PC

Joyce is a contract technical writer specializing in Internet/intranet infrastructure documentation. Visit her Internet domains at <www.jbmcdonaldandson.com> and <www.taichi-interactive.com>. E-mail her at <kjoycemcdonald@satx.rr.com>.

Lee Gomes of the Wall Street Journal, in his May 2, 2005 “Portals” column may have coined a new Internet term. If its usage does catch on, I am hoping I am one of the first to quote it. Mr. Gomes refers to web site “shells” that look like real websites, but their only real purpose is to sell lots of ads. He suggests that such a site be called a “Potemkin” site, in reference to the term “Potemkin Village”, used since the 1760s in Russia to refer to something that appears elaborate and impressive but in actual fact lacks substance. Such a village is named after Grigori Aleksandrovich Potemkin who, according to legend, ordered construction of elaborate fake villages in preparation for Catherine the Great’s tours of the Ukraine and the Crimea.

Mr. Gomes’ observation comes from his disappointing attempt to use information from the Internet to help him learn about and find materials and services to conduct home repairs. Instead of information, however, in most cases, he got ads or “referrals”, not to competent service people but to persons who paid for the “referral.” Consequently, Mr. Gomes ended up abandoning these “Potemkin Sites” for a much simpler and more reliable information utility, the Yellow Pages.

His article was published at a time when I was also involved in online research and also frustrated with the quality of information available I was getting from the Web. I wasn’t looking to improve my existing home; I was looking for a builder to build my next home. Thus, I logged onto the websites of local builders to see what their sites would tell about them.

Were I talking to a human rather than surfing the site, the first thing I would ask a potential builder, after the obvious (Do you build in the neighborhood where my lot is located?) is “What is your specialty?” If I were lucky, the answers would tell me what style of home, number of floors type of construction and if I’m real lucky, floor plans of the builder’s most popular plans or styles. I did achieve a measure of success on some of the sites, but all too often, my web design prejudices kicked in and I ended up evaluating the site’s construction rather than the proprietor’s ability to do construction.

The following are some of the “sins” I found on the sites I visited and suggestions regarding the elements that a good site should offer.

Vanity

Vanity sites usually open with a flash presentation that serves little purpose other than to dazzle the visitor with the webmaster’s graphic prowess. Although the proprietor’s job here is to construct houses, not websites, in this day an age, no business person should be so naïve as to think a web surfer is impressed with a flash presentation, or to be so stupid as to hire a webmaster who does. Flash presentations are a powerful informational tool, but I have seldom seen one that actually enhances the information offered on the site. What the presentation usually does is block entrance into the site to those surfers who don’t already have the flash player plug-in installed on their computers. Now that people are becoming more sophisticated computer users, very few will be happy with the idea of downloading a plug-in just to view the first page of someone’s vanity website.

Specialized features on websites bring up another issue. A visitor might be using, say, the Firefox or Opera browser instead of the standard Internet Explorer or Netscape. Because Firefox is my default browser, one site presented as nothing but a black screen. I switched to IE and found that the index page of the site offered only a flash presentation (with, thankfully, a link marked “skip the introduction”).

False organization

Falsely organized sites group content based upon categories that have little or no relevance to the visitor. I recently visited a Nike website to see if I could find some cool pants and tops that would be appropriate for Tai Chi class. What I wanted to find is pants and tops, not “yoga wear” or “active wear” or “walking gear”. I wear Yoga gear to Tai Chi, but I could just as well wear dance gear or walking gear as long as it offers a wide range of movement. When you drill down to “yoga wear” or “walking wear” you end up with only a couple of choices. All that work to see two ugly jogging suits or a couple of too-short yoga pants? If they had a “pants” category, I could have viewed them all on the same screen. A hierarchy of information is only useful if you have a lot of information to present. Otherwise, a hierarchical structure will more likely get in the way rather than help.

Some home building websites make the same mistake. When searching for the perfect home, the site requires you choose at least one style of a house you want. I love Craftsman style homes, but what I’m really interested in is one in the 22 to 28 hundred square foot range with the master bedroom on the first floor, one room large enough to practice Tai Chi, and a three-car garage. If I have to add “Craftsman” style to that, I get no search results. I could select several different styles, like “California” or “Florida” style, but since I haven’t a clue as to what styles those terms define, I would probably end up with hundreds of irrelevant results.

Irrelevancy

One builder’s site offers links to dozens of sites that sell home plans. It was nice to have all these resources at my disposal, but the builder failed to offer any of its own specialized plans. Most of this builder’s competitors’ sites offer at least a handful of plans that picture their own specialties. One can envision that if a builder builds lots of their special “Minor Mansion” design, they would gain in efficiency, leading to a more accurate cost estimate, better construction values and lower price.

Good Features, Badly Executed

One builder had an excellent site with one glaring problem: "Virtual Tours". I have experienced virtual tours when shopping for flooring, and found this feature quite useful. However, the virtual tours on this site whirl around so fast that the visitor tends to get seasick. And by the way, why on earth would I want to take a virtual tour of the builder's office?

Now that I have outlined some of the "sins" committed by the site owners or builders, I can offer some constructive suggestions for a more effective site. The good news is that decent web site construction is no great mystery, and all that is needed for a good site is a little common sense and a lot of restraint.

Elements of a good site

If you link to another site, explain why the link is there, and open the link in a separate window so the user can easily navigate back to your site. Check all links with each content modification or move to make sure a typo or a change in location didn't disable the links.

Offer an "About Us" page that tells what you do, what you do well, what you can do for me, and where you are located.

Offer a "Contact Us" page that tells me how to get in touch with the proprietor via e-mail (with an automatic link) and via snail mail. Make sure the links work and the snail mail address and phone number contain no typos.

Offer an "Events" page that tells us about any recurring events that you offer or sponsor. If you host an annual fun run to buy textbooks for a local elementary school, it should be mentioned along with the date and time of the next fun run. If you have an annual sale, tell what it's about and when it happens. A builder could tell us about an entry in the Parade of Homes.

Offer pages for "Products" and/or "Services". Keep the pages constantly updated, and don't continue to offer something you can't deliver.

Finally, proofread, test, proofread, test, proofread and test.



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RISC, CISC, EPIC and the Cell

Collected by Pim Borman,

SW Indiana PC Users Group, Inc., IN; <<http://swipcug.apcug.org/>>

Almost from the inception of the microprocessor, a philosophical debate has been raging as to what design is better. A dumb processor capable of only a few simple procedures, referred to as a RISC (Reduced Instruction Set Computer) processor, could do simple operations very fast. A smart processor, capable of performing more complicated procedures, called a CISC (Complex Instruction Set Computer), would be slower with simple tasks but faster with complicated operations. For instance, a RISC processor capable only of addition and subtraction of whole numbers could be faster in performing sorting tasks, but would require extensive software instructions to perform a floating-point multiplication that a CISC processor could perform immediately with its built-in hardware. RISC had the additional disadvantage that its programs had to be larger than similar programs for CISC processors, a big disadvantage in the days that computer memory came at a premium. On the other hand, the greater complexity of CISC processors made them more expensive to make.

In the mid-90s, Apple decided to use RISC processors (e.g. the Motorola 68000) in their computers, while IBM-PC clone makers settled on the CISC architecture, even though IBM was pushing RISC processors. For reasons that have little to do with chip architecture, the Wintel community ended up outselling Apple about 20:1, making the CISC chips the clear winners.

In recent years processor chip designs have begun to merge, where RISC chips have more instructions that are complex and CISC chips are more efficient. Intel referred to the Pentium II as a CRISC design. Intel's major competitor, AMD, started out with a RISC design but still manages to produce chips that are compatible and competitive with Intel's Pentiums.

The next major advance in computer architecture is the use of multiple processors working together, dubbed EPIC (Explicitly Parallel Instruction Computing). This calls for rewriting computer programs if they are to make use of the new architecture. Many computer applications can be divided into separate operations that can be run simultaneously. Mathematical simulations such as those involved in weather forecasting are one example. Playing World-Master class chess is another one, and large sorting programs and spreadsheet-type manipulations are easily run in parallel fashion. Intel and AMD have both announced that upcoming powerful desktop computers will have multiple processors.

And now history repeats itself. Sony, Toshiba and IBM (STI) have announced a new microprocessor called The Cell. Cells are designed, RISC-like, to do just a few things very fast but also to work together to achieve optimum results. It might be called an EPIC RISC. Few details about The Cell have been published, other than the basic patent issued in 2002. According to IBM on its Web site: "IBM expects Cell to define an entirely new way of operating. Cell's underlying architecture will enable it to manifest itself into many forms for many purposes, helping to open up a whole new set of applications. Incorporating this architecture, chips will be developed for everything from handheld devices to mainframe computers." Four of the Cells will power Sony's next-generation games console, the PlayStation 3. However, it is expected that The Cell will also be capable of powering super-fast desktop computers. An excellent article about The Cell can be found in The Economist (February 12, 2005, thanks to Louis Ritz). The article is also a summary in PC Magazine (April 12, 2005).

Several months ago, Google announced a new, free desktop search program. It is still under development and does not (yet) index Acrobat .PDF files. Other search programs immediately came up with competing versions. According to PC Magazine (3/22/05) the best of the free desktop search programs at present is Yahoo's

desktop search (desktop.yahoo.com), a lite version of the outstanding \$75 X1 that they rate best of show. Those miserable spyware intruders continue to get more sophisticated and the antispyware producers are in a constant battle to provide the best protection and, if necessary, removal tools. Yesterday's champions, AdAware and Spybot Search & Destroy have been overtaken by newcomers Spy Sweeper 3.5 (\$30, www.webroot.com) according to PC Magazine (2/22/05) or CounterSpy 1.0 (\$20, www.sunbeltsoftware.com) according to PC World (April 2005) which rated the earlier version 3.2 of Spy Sweeper as a close second best. Take your pick. Do you depend on Quicken to download your financial data from banks and brokers? Well, Quicken is ending online services and tech support for Quicken 2001 and 2002 so you'll need to upgrade to Quicken 2005. And that version will no longer support importing data via the .qif format and will only support the .ofx format in its WebConnect and DirectConnect features. Microsoft Money 2005 will also support online services for just two years. PC World (April 2005).

Linspire (nee Lindows) has released its long-awaited version 5 of its user-friendly Linux distribution. They report that it took 3 years to develop and cost \$20 million. Subscribers to its Click 'N Run library of self-installing Linux-based programs can download the new distribution for free and burn it to a self-booting CD-ROM. As a long-time user and promoter of the Linspire programs, I eagerly obtained the new version to evaluate its new features. Sorry to say, Linspire 5.0 confirms the maxim that odd-numbered versions of major programs are often buggy and are best avoided. Fortunately, the distribution comes on a "live" CD that can be used to boot the computer and run the program without making any changes to the computer's hard drive or settings.

I tried to boot the Linspire CD on my old Inspiron 3800 laptop, the one I have used daily for more than a year with Linspire 4.5 – laptop edition. The screen assumed all sorts of weird color effects and the program hung, presumably. Shutting the computer off fortunately left it unharmed by the experience and still capable of running the older Linspire version. On my newer Inspiron 5150 laptop the CD seemed to boot OK, but the mouse was stuck at the edge of the screen and the programs did not respond to keyboard inputs. Again, no joy, but no harm was done. Finally, I actually installed Linspire 5.0 on my desktop computer in partitions on a second hard drive that I have used previously to evaluate Linspire as well as other Linux distributions. This time the install was successful, but the Grub boot manager did not recognize the presence of Windows ME on the other hard drive, making Windows essentially inaccessible – not an acceptable result. I had the same problem with the Mepis Linux distribution, which also uses the Grub boot manager. So for now I am sticking with the old and proven Linspire 4.5 distribution until they work the bugs out of 5.0.



Computer Defense Department

Computer vs CounterSpy



Bruce Cramer, Alamo PC

A+, Network+, Microsoft Certified Professional (Windows XP). Bruce is retired from the Army. He is the owner/operator of PC Pro Computer Services <www.pcpro4u.com> where he provides in-home/on-site computer services. He is a regular at the Doctors Is In on Friday mornings, at the Learning Center and has never met a piece of malware that he couldn't get rid of. Bruce can be reached by e-mail at <service@pcpro4u.com>. See his ad for PC Pro Computer Services on page 50.

CounterSpy is made by Sunbelt Software. At first, maybe even second glance you will notice that CounterSpy looks much like Microsoft's free beta Antispyware program. There's good reason for this. Microsoft acquired Sunbelt's business partner company, Giant. However CounterSpy is still an independent company. To clarify things here is a quote directly from Sunbelt's website—

Microsoft will be providing definition file updates to Sunbelt to its spyware database until July 2007. During this time, Sunbelt and Microsoft share in the ownership of these definition files." Awesome news. As you know, the threat database is a crucial part of the quality of any anti-spyware product. Now NO OTHER corporate Antispyware product can even get c-l-o-s-e to CounterSpy Enterprise! We are actively developing new versions of both the consumer and enterprise versions of CounterSpy, and on top of the Microsoft antispyware updates, we will add our own threat database updates to the products. We have our own in-house team of developers, as well as a team of researchers hunting for new spyware, and the rapidly expanding Sunbelt Spyware Fighters Network is contributing too.

CounterSpy was recently given a big boost by a review in PC World's April 2005 edition. In the review PC World rated CounterSpy number one with an overall effectiveness rating of 85%. SpySweeper, by Webroot, came in at number 2 with 81%. At a distant 3rd with only a 65% rating was Lavasoft's Ad-Aware SE. These ratings were determined after testing the applications on several types of known spyware, including browser hijackers.

Downloading and installing CounterSpy was painless and uneventful. Once CounterSpy was installed like most programs it wanted to be updated to make sure it had the latest Antispyware definitions. The update took about 3 – 5 minutes using a broadband connection. After the update finished I was told that I had to restart my computer to let the installation finish. Once the computer was restarted CounterSpy finished the installation and presented itself with several menus to guide you through setting it up to provide the fullest protection. After walking me through its setup menus CounterSpy loaded itself and was visible with a yellow C shaped icon in my taskbar as well as a desktop icon.

By clicking on the CounterSpy icon I could perform a scan of my computer with the option to do a quick scan, which would take anywhere from 10 – 20 minutes or a full scan with in depth file scanning, this took from 20 – 30 minutes depending on the size of your hard drive. CounterSpy provides full time protection alerting you to among other things, malware trying to change your Internet start page, trying to install or insert itself into your startup menu. CounterSpy also provides automatic updates to its antispyware database.

I have used both CounterSpy and Microsoft's AntiSpyware. I find CounterSpy to be somewhat faster at scanning and more detailed in detecting malware which can be attributed to Sunbelt Software adding its own definitions to the ones Microsoft provides. The interface and menus look very similar.

CounterSpy has a detailed and in-depth "Research Center" which is accessible from the main menu. When you click on the link entitled visit the CounterSpy Research Center from the main menu you will be taken to Sunbelt software's neat and clean website packed full of easy to understand information about spyware. The site doesn't give you specific instructions for removing spyware as its software will handle that for you, but it can give you a good education about the different types of spyware and ways to prevent it.

As I've pointed out CounterSpy has a lot going for it but on the downside I was not impressed to see that instead of buying CounterSpy outright you are more or less renting it for \$19.95 a year. Like most antivirus programs, you have to pay every year to get the updates and like antivirus programs your antispyware program is only as good as its last update. I was also disappointed that unlike some of the other antispyware programs on the market, you cannot stop a scan and remove the spyware that CounterSpy has already found. If you choose to end the scan you must start it all over again and let it finish in order to get rid of the spyware that has been detected. All in all I would have to say that while spyware continues to be a formidable foe Sunbelt Software is doing a good job of stopping these villains with CounterSpy.

You can download a 15-day free trial from Sunbelt's website at <<http://www.sunbelt-software.com/CounterSpy-Download.cfm>>. The 15-day trial is fully functional and will delete what ever spyware it finds but after the 15 days you will not be able to update it. CounterSpy cost \$19.95 per year for automatic updates.

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Preventative Maintenance

Bill Beverley, Alamo PC

Bill is retired military and an intermediate computer enthusiast who has been an APCO member for six years. He has contributed for the past five years.

When people buy computers, sales people tell them they're getting a hard drive of a certain size, say 80 gigabytes. After buying the computers they find only 74GB. What happened to the other 6GBs? The answer is the difference between marketing and math. As far as marketers are concerned, 80 billion bytes is 80GB. However, a gigabyte is 1.074 billion bytes (2 to the power of 30). If you divide 80 by 1.074, the answer is 74.6, which is the true number of gigabytes. A kilobyte is 2 to the power of 10 (or 2^{10}), a megabyte is 2^{20} , and a terabyte (1.0995 trillion bytes!) is 2^{40} .

Boot CD

The ultimate boot CD may be the one found at www.find.pcworld.com/41600. This disc can not only boot your system in the event of a problem, but it also contains 46 utilities including hard-drive troubleshooters and partitioning tools. Once you've downloaded it, burn the program to a CD. Should you need a file recovery utility like PC Inspector Smart Recovery, which restores image and video files in over 25 formats on memory cards, or PC Inspector File Recovery, which retrieves 26 file types from FAT32 and NTFS formatted hard drives, then go to the following sites respectively to download them: www.find.pcworld.com/41636 and www.find.pcworld.com/41639.

Build Number

The build number refers to the iteration of a particular version of Windows. It can tell a techie what updates you have installed on your system. Some software will not work with certain build numbers. A simple way to get this number is to go to Start, Run and in the Open box, type WINVER. You will see the build number along with your version of Windows in the pop-up box. Another way to get this number is to download and install the Microsoft PowerToys TweakUI at <http://www.komando.com/bestshareware.asp#powertoys>. Belarc http://www.belarc.com/free_download.html

is a program that will tell you exactly what is inside a computer. After downloading and running it, you'll get a report that includes the computer's Components (CPU, motherboard, RAM, adapters, cards, etc.), make and model, along with serial numbers and all the software installed on the system complete with license numbers.

Computer Crash

If something stops most versions of Windows in its tracks or causes the machine to act in a strange way, reboot and press F8 before the operating system loads. You may have to press F8 a few times to find the moment that gets a response. This action brings up the "Advanced Options" menu. Use the arrow keys to select Safe Mode and press Enter to launch Windows using a minimal set of drivers. With luck, you can undo whatever caused your computer problem. Next restart Windows in the normal manner. The main culprit of most computer crashes may well be driver bugs. The prime offenders are drivers for graphics cards and USB ports, and bugs in antivirus and firewall software. Other sources of crashes are bad memory and overheating. If Win2000/XP refuses to start,

press F8 right after you turn on your personal computer (PC) but before the Windows log-on appears. At the resulting menu, select "Last Known Good Configuration" to restore your Registry to an earlier date. If this procedure doesn't get your PC working, reboot and press F8 again, but this time select "Safe Mode," and then choose Start, All Programs, Accessories, System Tools, System Restore. If this approach also doesn't work, then use your emergency boot floppy. If your hard drive's boot sector or Windows' basic boot files have been corrupted, this disk will circumvent the problem and boot you into Windows. If the emergency boot floppy doesn't work, you can try the Recovery Console, a Windows utility that provides a DOS like command line from which you can run some repair programs. Only experienced users should work with this utility. If you have a Microsoft Windows CD-ROM, you can get to the Recovery Console by booting from that CD and pressing any key when told to "Press any key to boot from CD." At the "Welcome to Setup" screen, press r Repair.

Computer Freeze Ups

When nothing on-screen moves except the mouse pointer, the computer is frozen up solid for some unknown reason. To fix this problem you can try the following approaches, in the stated order, to correct this situation. One of these solutions should unfreeze your computer. Solution 1: Press Esc twice. If it doesn't work and it may not, then try the next solution. Solution 2: Press Ctrl, Alt, and Delete all at the same time. Windows Task Manager will appear with the message that you discovered an "unresponsive application." The Task Manager lists the names of currently running programs, including the one that's not responding. Click the name of the program that's causing the mess and then click the End Process button. You will lose any unsaved work in it. Press Esc at the unresponsive application message to return to Windows. If that still doesn't do the trick, try clicking the Task Manager's Shut Down menu and choosing Restart. Your computer should shutdown now and restart, hopefully returning without a problem. Unfortunately this three key combination won't work with WinXP except to get you to the Task Manager. If you want to restart your WinXP operating system, right-click the desktop, pick New from the menu, and select Shortcut. In the New Shortcut wizard location box, type shutdown r t 0, and press Enter. If you want to do the same kind of trick for a shutdown, type shutdown s t 0. To put an icon on your desktop that'll shutdown your machine quickly, right-click any empty location on your desktop and click New, Shortcut. When the Create Shortcut Wizard appears, in the "Type the Location of the Item" box, type shutdown -s -t 0. It's important that you: put spaces before each hyphen, have no spaces after each hyphen, use a zero at the end, and

click Next. In the "Type a Name for This Shortcut" box, use a name that will remind you that this button is for a very quick shutdown and click Finish. You will have a new shortcut on your desktop. Right-click the shortcut and click Properties, click the Change Icon button, pick an appropriate icon for the shortcut and double-click it. Click OK, and your new, quick shut down shortcut appears on the desktop. To test the new, fast shut down icon, make sure no programs are running, and double-click it. On a typical machine, you'll see the log-off screen in about three seconds, and after another two or three seconds, you'll get the "It is now safe to turn off your computer" message. Windows gives you a short period of time to save changes in your Office documents, and other applications quit in an orderly way. Solution 3: You may unfreeze your computer by just pressing the Windows key or clicking on the Start button to shutdown and/or restart the machine. Solution 4: If the preceding approaches don't work, push the computer's Reset button. When the "Turn Off Computer" box appears, choose Restart. Solution 5: As a last resort, if not even the reset button works, turn the computer off and choose Restart from the "Turn Off Computer box."

Computer Intrusion

If your computer seems to be running when you are not using it, there could be several explanations. It's possible that a program update is being downloaded. For instance, Windows can be set to download updates automatically. The same is true for anti-virus programs. Some programs, such as Disk Defragmenter or backups, also can be set to run automatically. These tasks can be done through the program itself, or through Scheduled Tasks by clicking Start, All Programs, Accessories, System Tools, Scheduled Tasks. You may have a malicious program that is reporting back to someone through the Internet. These programs can steal personal information off the victims' computers. They also can be Trojan horses downloading other malicious programs from the Internet or be spewing spam into the Internet. In WinXP, you can find out who's talking to whom by clicking Start, Run, and entering "cmd" (without the quotes) and clicking OK. At the command prompt, enter "netstat -no" (without the quotes). You'll get a list of active network connections, including the process identifier (PID) of programs on your computer that are running. Make a note of these connections and then click Ctrl+Alt+Del to open the Windows Security window. Click Task Manager and select the Processes tab. You can identify the PIDs there. If the PID column is not shown, click View, select Columns, and check PID, the second choice in the first column.

Many obscure, legitimate processes, including a number from Windows, are listed in Task Manager. If you don't recognize the name, check it at the WinTasks Process Library or look it up in Google. Those sites are, respectively: <<http://www.liutilities.com/products/wintaskspro/processlibrary/>> and <<http://www.google.com>>. If the running program is malicious, update your anti-virus software. If you can't get rid of it, check the anti-virus sites for specialized programs. You can get them from McAfee, Symantec and Panda, among others. Those sites are, respectively: <<http://us.mcafee.com/default.asp>>,

<<http://www.symantec.com>>, and <<http://www.pandasoftware.com>>.

Computer Virus Troubleshooting

If you have a computer problem but suspect a computer virus, be sure that your anti-virus program is up-to-date. You can also use online scanning programs. There are two free ones at: Panda <<http://www.pandasoftware.com/activescan/>>, HouseCall <<http://housecall.trendmicro.com/>>. If you still come up clean, you probably are not infected by a virus but may have some other computer problem. All major brands of anti-virus software are updated regularly. It is very unlikely that you have a virus that is unknown to these companies. Sometimes, poorly developed spyware programs can make computers act up. Spyware is often included with downloads of free programs from the Internet. These programs track your Web browsing habits and report them back to a computer on the Internet. That information is used to tailor ads for you. It is easy to track down spyware. You can find and delete it with Ad-aware <<http://www.lavasoftusa.com/>> or Spybot Search and Destroy <<http://www.safer-networking.org/>>. Both of these programs are also free. They also must be updated regularly. Occasionally, a new program can make a system unstable. This is not likely, but if nothing else works, you can try uninstalling any recent hardware and software.

Critical Stop Sound

The critical stop sounds like the final half-note of a violin piece. It means that you've tried to perform an operation that either can't be done, or needs another step. If you'd like to hear the critical stop sound, go to Control Panel. Double-click the Sounds icon, select the Sounds tab, and click Critical Stop once to highlight it. Beneath the box, click the right arrow.

MoveMe

MoveMe <www.wugnet.com/affiliates/pcworld/moveme-pcworld.asp> is a software program that solves the problem of moving all applications and settings from an old computer to your new computer. It completely moves your old software to your new computer with all the settings intact, even if the two computers have different versions of Windows. Data can be transferred using a variety of methods, and easily reversed with an undo feature.

If you have trouble with any of the WinXP Updates, which seemingly are constantly plugging security holes in this operating system, then call Microsoft at 866/727-2338 to talk to a technician for free to resolve those patch problems.



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Cell Phones and PDAs

Larry Lentz, MCSE+I & W2K, MCDBA, MCSA:Messaging W2K3

Larry Lentz is an MCSE + Internet, an MCSE on Windows 2000, a Microsoft Certified Database Administrator, an MCSA: Messaging on Windows Server 2003 and Exchange 2003, and Past President of Alamo PC. He is the owner of Lentz Computer Services, www.LentzComputer.Net, which he founded in 1989. Larry has over 22 years as a computer professional and specializes in Microsoft Small Business Server. He chairs the MCSE Advanced SIG affectionately called 'The Geeks' and the Alamo PC Small Business Server Special Interest Group (SBS SIG). Larry is available for presentations on technology for small business and can be reached via e-mail at Larry@LentzComputer.Net

In June 2004 I described how I could access my network remotely using my Pocket PC or even my cell phone. I gave you a bit of the how. This month I thought I'd expand on that and give you some of the why. Many of you tell me you love my column, read it regularly, but don't understand a word of it. Hopefully this one will be one you can understand. First though, I ended my last article saying that being able to access my e-mail from anywhere was a good thing, right? Right?! Well, it is but I do remember the 'simpler' days. Fifteen years ago when I started my business, cell phones weren't very prevalent. One could actually go out for lunch without getting 10 phone calls while eating. You could actually concentrate on your driving and not worry about your phone calls until you got back to the office and got your messages. That made lunch more of a 'break'. But I doubt any of us could live without our cell phones anymore. It's kind of the same thing with mobile e-mail access. I remember when I didn't worry about my e-mail when I was away from the office. Heck, we didn't know what e-mail was 15 years ago. Now

I'm like a fish out of water if I can't get in and sync my Pocket PC or at least access my e-mail with my cell phone while running around town.

But what else can we do with this new capability? Small Business Server 2003 mobile access isn't just for e-mail. You can access all the major portions of Outlook. If you keep your schedule and contacts in Outlook, you sync those up when you sync up your e-mail. Let's look at a couple of hypothetical cases where this might come in handy. Let's say that you are a salesperson on the road all day, or even all week. Maybe you travel a territory. You have a support staff (or perhaps a boss) back at the office. As you make your sales calls, you can enter notes in Pocket Outlook Calendar about your visits. You can enter new contacts or update existing information in Pocket Outlook Contacts. When you find a WiFi hot spot, that information is updated on the server. Now the folks back at the office can access that information without having to wait for you to return to the office. The boss can see what a wonderful job you are doing, real time, and how you've impressed your clients. Conversely, the folks back in the office may need to update contact information in Outlook. Those updates would then be available to you on the road when you sync. Perhaps your secretary is responsible for keeping track of your calendar and scheduling your visits. When he enters a new appointment in Outlook, that appointment will show up on your Pocket PC calendar. And of course you can use e-mail to send in all those orders you are taking.

Now let's say you are a small business services company with a number of service teams out all day taking care of customers. Clients call into your main office and make requests for service. Your office staff then schedules the service calls. Using SBS 2003, they can enter the appointments in Outlook and the service technicians can download that information into their schedule in Pocket Outlook. Client information can be entered into the Outlook calendar as well. The field technicians can then enter the information about the service call at the time of the call and have it synced back to the main office. The office staff can then use that information to bill the customer, all before the service tech returns to the office.

Some organizations use Outlook Tasks to delegate activities. These tasks can then be synced into the Task feature of your

Pocket PC. When they are completed, they can be synced back to let the requester know it's been accomplished.

Can't find a hot spot? If you have a cell phone with Internet access like Sprint PCS, you can do the same thing using Outlook Mobile Access as described last month. It's a little more cumbersome but it will work. A SmartPhone would give you such capabilities as well. Or you could subscribe to a WiFi service. T-mobile offers WiFi hot spots all over town and all over the country. These are easy to find. They are in most Starbucks and Kinkos. If you don't have time for a leisurely cup of coffee, you can just sync up in the parking lot. Time Warner Cable is setting up hot spots as well called SpeedZone. You can subscribe directly to this service or use your user name and password from your RoadRunner cable broadband account for 'free' access.

Mobile access isn't limited to just Outlook. Several CRM (Customer Relation Management) systems are beginning to come out with mobile versions. GoldMine is coming out with GoldMine Mobile Edition to run on a Pocket PC or SmartPhone. Microsoft has also announced that its CRM 1.2 is slated to have a Pocket PC module. These will allow us to have even more detailed information, instantly, anywhere.

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The Latest on DVDs

By Bob Elgines, Colorado River Computer Club Editor, Lake Havasu, AZ

The DVD world is going crazy. The price range is from \$59 to \$130 well within most of our budgets. DVD blanks are down to 50 cents a piece, almost as cheap as CDs. The top four recorder manufacturers are Plextor, Toshiba, Pacific Digital, and Memorex.

Speed is up to 16X, which is max on the outer part of the disk, but only 8X blanks are readily available.

Dual layer (8.5 GB of data space) is labeled as the latest big deal, but is it really? These disks are hard to manufacture and are very expensive. The most important thing is, what will they play in? Well not much of anything. Most DVD players will not recognize the format and neither will your older recorders. So I don't look for this to do anyone much good even in the future.

What is in the future (next year)? The digital world has still been undecided on DVD-R and DVD+R formats, so most of your recorders will do both. Now we come to the future of introducing two new formats named "HD-DVD" and "Blu-ray". These new formats have been developed to use the new blue-laser, where has, they have been using the red-laser in our present recorders. Red laser single level DVDs have 4.7 GB of capacity

where the Blue-laser single layer DVDs will have a capacity of 15 (HD-DVD format) to 25 GB (Blu-ray format) at present.

A HD (High Definition) two hour movie uses about 17.4 GB with out max compression. The compression schemes (MPEG-2, MPEG4, etc.) will be the same for both, so there will be no big difference in playback quality. Here we go again, new DVD players will be needed and this reminds us of the old video tape war on formats "Beta" and "VHS". Remember VHS won out due to more recording time and lower costs. Will this be true of the two blue-laser formats? Only time will tell.

These Blue-laser recorders and players will be coming out near the end of this year or the start of next year, but I think we are going to have to wait and see if they can decide on a format for the blue-laser.

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Windows 64-bit: The Future of Computing is Here

Shane Hicks, (certified certifiable)

Shane uses a PC. He needed comic relief this month. E-mail him at <shane@vpwn.com>.

Microsoft's long-awaited x86 compatible 64-bit versions of Windows XP Professional and Windows Server 2003 are now available. What does Windows 64-bit mean? Basically, 64-bit computing simply means that the processor is able to handle data in chunks twice as large as its 32-bit counterparts.

What are the benefits of 64-bit computing?

Bill Gates commented on several of the benefits of 64-bit computing during his address at the 64-bit Windows roll-out.

The first is performance. When using a 64-bit application on a 64-bit operating system, you should see roughly a 30-40% performance increase over their 32-bit counterparts. Gates offered Microsoft examples, running its Web site and other Web-related services such as MSN Search and MSN Messenger on 64-bit hardware and software. Both saw performance jumps. Windows Terminal Services, in particular, saw a 2.7X increase in performance.

Another benefit is compatibility. Gates pledged an easier transition to 64-bit computing, compared to the transitions from DOS to Windows, and subsequently 32-bit computing. This is due to the inherent compatibility with both current 32-bit code and future 64-bit code. They both run without translation.

Memory is also an area of significant change. With 32-bit Windows you max out at 4GB of RAM, with about half reserved for the operating system. In 64-bit Windows, you can have up to 128GB of RAM. Virtual memory address space is also increased from 4GB with 32-bit to 16TB with 64-bit. While this amount of memory may seem ridiculous presently, it gives the operating system platform a lot of future potential.

Another aspect of memory is support for Non-Uniform Memory Access or NUMA. This allows manufactures to implement a separate bus for each processor in a multi-processor system. You can then assign physical RAM to each individual processor, greatly increasing performance since the processors no longer have to wait in line to access RAM.

Security was a high priority for Microsoft in developing 64-bit Windows. In fact, it's the most secure desktop operating system they've produced. They actually worked with the processor manufacturers to develop the "no-execute bit," which blocks unauthorized malicious code from being loaded and executed into RAM.

Where is 64-bit computing going?

According to industry observers, 64-bit computing will rapidly dominate the server market. One area in particular will be in server consolidation, using one server to perform tasks that normally require multiple machines. Shannon Poulion, director of enterprise platform marketing at Intel, said that 64-bit, with its ability to use much more memory, makes it much easier to run multiple applications on a single box. With 64-bit Windows available, Poulion believes the stage is set for the "rapid conversion of the software base" to 64-bit. By the end of 2005, Intel predicts that 95% of their server CPUs will be 64-bit capable.

Eddie Chan, research analyst for mobile and personal computing and technology at IDC Canada, said that 64-bit will be the performance guideline for the next few years. However, he notes that 64-bit in the client space is going to be a "much more phased approach," with the first users moving to 64-bit hardware and operating systems likely to be users of high-end workstations and gamers.

Where are the applications?

"We're going to see [the move to 64-bit] be quite rapid, especially on the server," Gates said. "And it's extending beyond the operating system itself, because a lot of software developers are building on top of it."

Microsoft's committed to getting 64-bit versions of SQL Server, Visual Studio, Commerce Server, Host Integration Server, BizTalk Server and Services for Unix out this year, while next year and 2007 will see 64-bit versions of Windows Server, Exchange Server, Microsoft Operations Manager, Virtual Server, and a new release of Windows Server called Compute Cluster Edition.

What are the problems with 64-bit?

There are some limitations.

If you don't have a 64-bit processor (AMD Athlon 64 or Intel EM64T), you'll have to upgrade. A 64-bit OS won't run on a 32-bit processor.

Also, 16-bit applications won't run on 64-bit Windows. And, while it does support 32-bit applications, if an application comes with a 16-bit installer, you won't be able to get the program running.

Drivers are another issue. The 64-bit version of Windows only supports 64-bit drivers. While many are supported out of the box, you'll have to make sure your hardware has the necessary drivers available. Of course, the wide adoption of 64-bit will depend on the willingness of hardware vendors to produce quality 64-bit drivers for these systems.

Summary

Well, that's 64-bit Windows in a nut shell. Do I think everyone needs to rush to 64-bit computing today? No. But, if you're in the support business, you should realize the fact that both major processor manufacturers have plans to phase out 32-bit processors over the next 18 months. The writing's on the wall.

64-bit computing is the future, and the future is here!

The Switcher



...the ongoing tale of a Man and his Mac On the Road Again

Shane's a Mac user. Assist in his quest to learn OS X — e-mail him at <mac@vpwn.com>.

I've been traveling a lot lately. My PowerBook accompanies me on all these trips. Of course, the first few trips, I often found myself arriving at my destination missing some key components that I'd wished I'd brought with me on the road. That started me thinking. Most who purchase PowerBooks most likely did so in order to have the roaming versatility that the PowerBook provides. Perhaps my readers could benefit from a ready-made packing list.

The first thing to remember is not to pack too much. Some people try to bring everything they possibly have with their laptop. This does nothing but give you a backache and a sore neck after a day of running through the airport. Having too much in the laptop case can also slow you down at airport checkpoints. Think hard about what you're really going to do with your PowerBook while you're on the road. Are you really going to work, or are you most likely to watch the DVD you bought last weekend?

What to Bring

You never know what environment you're going to end up in, or what the power source requirements are going to be. Make certain you have your batteries, cables, and AC adapters to meet each situation. At a minimum, pack the following in your PowerBook case:

AC Adapter. Most don't forget their AC adapter, though it can be easily overlooked during last minute packing. One suggestion I've seen: instead of disconnecting your power supply at home, invest in a portable AC adapter. These adapters can be found for around \$75 from MadsonLine (www.madsonline.com) or MacResQ (www.macresq.com). They're smaller and lighter than the standard power supply. You can keep one permanently in your case.

A cigarette-lighter adapter is also a good idea, since mobile computing often includes accessing your computer while traveling in a car. MCE Technologies (www.mcetech.com) offers cigarette-lighter adapters for around \$25.

A Bootable System disk and mission critical software. You may need to repair some minor damage or corruption caused to your hard drive while you're on the move. It's a good idea to have a bootable copy of the restore disk that came with your system. This disk contains disk utilities, the Apple Hardware Test (AHT), and the images needed to restore your system to factory defaults. It's also good to have a copy of any software (i.e., Microsoft Office) that may be critical to you on your trip. Make certain, however, that the disks are identical to those installed on your system.

Cables. There are several cables that may come in handy.

1. Two RJ-11 (telephone) cables. It's a good idea to take two cables. While a 6-foot cable is good for working close to the phone jack, you don't want to always be tethered to the desk. Distances of 12- to 25-feet are not uncommon to reach the hotel bed.

2. RJ-45 (Ethernet) and crossover cables. With more hotels going to in-room Broadband connections, you may be in a situation where you can use the on-board Ethernet card built-in to

the PowerBook. Just plug the Ethernet (patch) cable into the wall. You're in business. A crossover cable may be used to connect two computers together, without the need for a separate hub. This is handy for spur-of-the-moment file transfers.

3. FireWire (1394) cables. A 6-pin-to-6-pin (standard) FireWire cable can be used to connect two Macs for file transfers. The bandwidth is 400Mbps, versus the 100Mbps you'll experience using standard Ethernet cables.

Mouse. We all love the touchpad that's built-in to the PowerBook, but a mouse will increase your efficiency if you're working awhile. Most optical mice (those without balls) work on nearly any surface. There are several cheap USB-based wireless notebook varieties available. One manufactured by Targus is around \$20 at CompUSA.

NOTE: Be careful with infrared and Bluetooth devices when traveling. Any motion can activate these and run your batteries down. I suggest removing the batteries from these devices until you reach your final destination.

Earphones / Headphones. You never know when you'll want to listen to some tunes while traveling. Realize that others don't want to hear what you're doing. Have a pair of earphones handy. When traveling with someone else, you can bring a second pair of earphones and a standard headphone splitter so you can both hear whatever's playing (i.e., DVD or iTunes).

Tools. You can perform minor tech support on your PowerBook if you pack miniature screwdrivers and a small pocketknife in your checked luggage. Even if you don't count yourself as a technician, you may limit the damage some accidents incur. You may save your system from spilled coffee by taking the keyboard and battery out, wiping them down, and letting everything dry overnight with the system sitting open and upside down.

Final Thoughts

Everyone knows to back up important data before hitting the road. If available, save your files to an Internet accessible share in case you need to get to them while on the road. You don't want to take any unnecessary risks during travel. Your laptop can be dropped, lost, or even stolen. While replacing the hardware may not be an issue (make sure you have good insurance before traveling with the system), replacing your data will be.

Happy trails!



Tables Part IV - Nesting

Susan Ives, Alamo PC

Susan Ives is a former president of Alamo PC. She archives these columns on her Web site, www.susanives.com/. If you visit, you can cut-and-paste the code instead of retyping it from the magazine – the ultimate in lazy Webmastering!

Tables can be, and often are, nested within each other: a table within a table within a table. Figure 1 shows three tables: B is nested within A; C is nested within B.

The sub-table is a data element of the primary table, so it has to go into a data tag, either `<TD>` or `<TH>`. Here is an example to make it clearer. The second table is in bold:

```
<TABLE><TR><TD>Table 1 data</TD><TD><TABLE><TR><TD>Table 2 data</TD><TD>more table 2 data</TD></TR></TABLE></TD></TR></TABLE>
```

The main challenge in nesting table is keeping track: It's all too easy to lose your place.

When I code in HTML I frequently check my code in "browser view": every line or two, and I look at the site in a browser window. This helps catch mistakes before they get buried in a mound of code. If you type five tags, check, and find a mistake, it's easy to backtrack. If you type 500 tags, check, and find a mistake you have a whole heap of code to review.

There are a couple of ways to insert road signs that indicate when a new table is starting. One way is with comments.

Comments are tags that act as reminders: they do not show up on the screen. The format for a comment is:

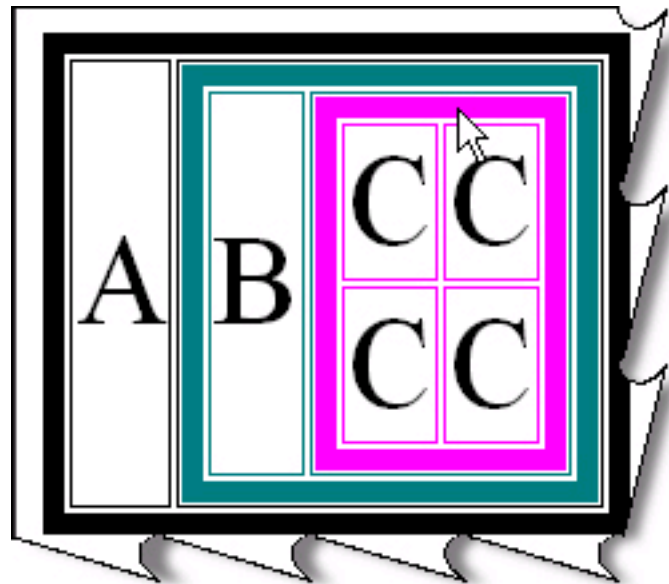
```
<!-- type your comment here -->
```

Here is an example of using comments and spacing (which is also invisible on the screen):

```
<TABLE><TR><TD>data here</TD><TD>
<!-- BEGIN TABLE #2: timetable -->
<TABLE><TR><TD>more data</TD><TD>
<!-- BEGIN TABLE #3: footnotes -->
<TABLE><TR><TD>data</TD></TR></TABLE>
<!-- END TABLE #3: footnotes -->
<!-- RESUME TABLE #2: timetable -->
</TD></TR></TABLE>
<!--END TABLE #2: timetable -->
</TD></TR></TABLE>
```

I also added descriptors: Table 2 is a timetable, table 3 is footnotes. Six months from now you might not remember why you created table 2.

Another way is to include a table summary. This will not show up on the screen but will help you organize your work and will assist non-visual browsers such as those used for speech and braille. It may also help get indexed properly in search engines. Here is the format:



```
<TABLE summary="This table is the timetable for the #34 bus
current as of 5 June 2005">
```

Another way is to indent tables on the screen; use the tab key and it won't show up on the screen:

```
<TABLE><TR><TD>Table 1</TD><TD>
  <TABLE><TR><TD>Table 2</TD><TD>
    <TABLE><TR><TD>Table 3</TD></TR></TABLE>
  </TD></TR></TABLE>
```

I rarely print my code as a hard copy, but when I have a complicated table snafu I make an exception. Print the code and get a few different color highlighters. Mark up your code on paper and you might be able to find the error more easily.

One error I frequently make when nesting table is to accidentally put a tag in the wrong place. For example:

```
<TD /TR>>
```


Oops! When you do something careless like this the actual markup will show up on the screen. The mistake will show up in the browser as >. The easiest way to find it, I've found, is to use the search function of your HTML editor to look for >>. That's something that will NEVER show up in HTML, so it's easy to hone in on the error.

In theory, you can nest as many tables as you want. In practice, some browsers have trouble with more than 10.

More table tags

There are a couple of table tags that I've not yet described because I rarely use them.

<CAPTION> can be placed at either the top or bottom of a table and will never have lines or borders. It's really more of a name, or title for the entire table. Here is an example:

```
<TABLE><caption align="RIGHT" valign="BOTTOM">this
is the caption text</caption><TR><TD>table data here</
TD><TD>
```

You can see that I inserted two parameters. ALIGN, which is the right-left orientation, can be RIGHT, LEFT, or CENTER. The default is CENTER. VALIGN is the vertical alignment. TOP, which is the default, will place the caption at the top of a table. BOTTOM will place it at the end of the table.

<TH> Is a Table header. It can be used interchangeably with the <TD> tag. <TH> will automatically make text bold and center any data within the cell.

Using CSS in tables

One of the horrors of complicated text tables is that each <TD> has to have its text formatted separately. This not only tedious but also makes your coding huge, wasteful and harder to edit. One way to get around this is by using a soupçon of CSS, Cascading Style Sheet, coding. This particular column is not a CSS tutorial, but here are some lines of code that you can stick in your <HEAD> tag (slip it right under the <TITLE> tag) that will make ALL of the text in every table follow the specified format:

```
<style>
```

```
TD { color:#0000FF; }
```

```
TD { font-family: Arial, Verdana, sans-serif; }
```

```
TD { font-size: 8px; } or TD { font-size: small }
```

```
</style>
```

The TD means that this text style applies only to text within the <TD> tags. If you use the <TH> tag you will have to specify the style for that as well. Any HTML coding that you insert with the <TD> tag itself will override the CSS style.

The font family is the font face. If the name of the font has spaces in it (such as Times New Roman) put it in quotation marks. The browser will try to apply the fonts in the order they are listed. It's conventional to have the last font be a generic one, such as serif or sans-serif.

The font size can be specified in pixels or by comparative size. The available sizes are: xx-small, x-small, small, medium, large, x-large, xx-large. The presets larger and smaller may also be used to set the font size in relation to the size inherited from a parent style or the browser default. You can specify a font size in pixels (px), points (pt), ems (em), or as a percentage of the parent element's font size (%).

That's it: you now know as much about tables as I do. Starting next month we are going to start learning about CSS, so brace yourself.

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Adding Color to Photographs

Paul Vaughn, Alamo PC

Paul Vaughn is a freelance graphic artist, writer and web designer. He also writes the Mac Guy column in the Business section of the Sunday Express-News newspaper. If you would like to a specific topic addressed, email Paul Vaughn at < paulv@mac.com >.

Digital photography gives you a lot of creative freedom with your images and it is easy to turn them into Black & White images in Adobe Photoshop or Photoshop Elements. One of the traditional creative techniques used by photographers is to colorize a Black & White image using paint or dye. While some people will go to the effort of having a B&W photo printed using photographic processes and then whipping out the brushes, Photoshop gives us the tools to create this effect with more flexibility and latitude for errors. This month I'm taking a look at techniques for colorizing B&W photos.

I started thinking about this when a client asked me to replace a Black & White product shot with the color version. After we realized there was no color photograph, I was asked to drop in some color. It was a simple product, composed of silver and gold metallic plastic (Fig. 1). The first step is to convert the grayscale image to RGB color mode (Image > Mode > RGB Color). To create the look of a color photograph, I worked with one element at a time starting with the silver area. I created a new layer (Layer > New Layer) above the photo, set it to Color Blending Mode and titled it 'Silver Overlay' (Fig. 2). I then selected the entire canvas (Select > All) and filled it a pale blue color (you won't really be able to tell in this black and white magazine, but I used R-209, G-229, B-233). Since the layer is set to Color Mode you see only the hue and saturation of the color on this layer, the underlying luminance is preserved.

This will give you a good idea what the colorization will look like, but in my case it was much too intense so I dialed the opacity of that layer back to 34%. Since I filled the entire canvas the whole image has a blue cast. To just put the effect where I want a created a Layer Mask that hid all of the 'Silver Overlay' layer (Layer > Add Layer Mask > Hide All). This fills the Layer Mask with black. Remember, anything in a Layer Mask that is white allows the image on that layer to show, anything that is black will be transparent and show the layers beneath. I then painted on the Layer Mask with white to reveal the parts of the Silver Overlay above the silver parts of the image.

These steps were then repeated for the gold areas of the image using a 'Gold Overlay' layer. The layer was filled with a yellow color (R-250, G-224, B-72) and the opacity was set to 27% (Fig. 3). This method gives you a lot of flexibility; you can easily change the hue or make it more or less saturated.

It is very rare for most people to shoot Black & White photos, especially with digital cameras. But you can still use these techniques to add an artistic dimension to otherwise ordinary portraits or landscapes. Here's how I like to approach this sort of thing. Open up a photo and duplicate the background layer by dragging it to the New Layer icon at the bottom of the Layers palette. Select the new layer, name it 'B&W' and Desaturate it (Image > Adjustments > Desaturate) to make it Black & White.

You can now duplicate the color background layer again, set it to Color Blending Mode, drag it above the B&W layer in the Layers palette and add a Layer Mask that hides everything. You can now selectively add in the color that you want by painting with white on the Layer Mask (Fig. 4). You can add to the effect by applying any of the artistic filters to this

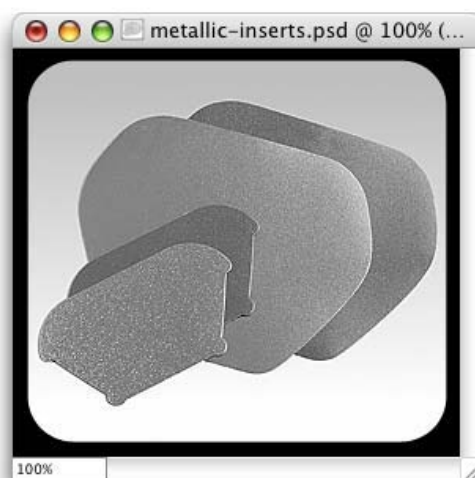


Figure 1

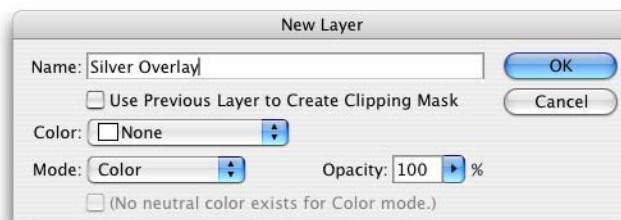


Figure 2

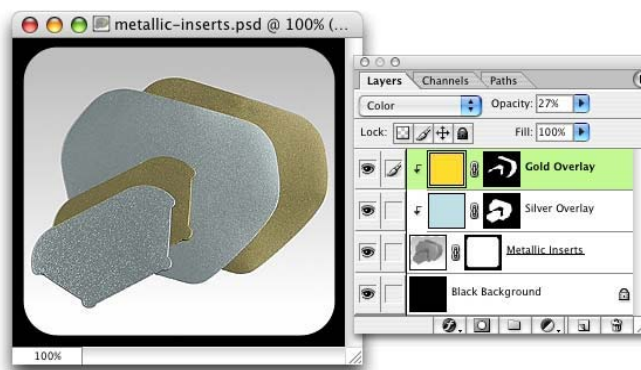


Figure 3

color layer. You can also use the color overlay technique described above to add colors that weren't in the original image (Fig 5).

Now here's a different way to achieve a similar effect. This time, instead of painting a color on a layer above the Black & White image, we will paint underneath it. Start by putting the B&W layer in Multiply Blending Mode. In Multiply Mode, anything that is black will be black, but anything white will be transparent. Now add two new layers beneath the B&W layer, one filled with white and called 'White' and the other called 'Color'. Leave both in the Normal Blending Mode.

Now you can paint on the 'Color' layer and see the hues show through the parts of your image that are not completely black. Unless you are fairly delicate with your choice of colors, this effect can appear pretty cartoony, but that is the beauty of painting the color on a separate layer. You can easily lower the opacity level until you are satisfied with your image (Fig 6).

Another cool effect that bridges the worlds of modern and traditional photography is the sepia tone look. This is that nice warm brown tone that you often see on old photographs. Take your desaturated color image and use the Hue/Saturation adjustment (Image > Adjustments > Hue/Saturation). Check the Colorize box and move the sliders until you have the color your looking for, I chose Hue 47 and Saturation 22 as well as Lightness +10 so that I could see the effect on more of the dark areas of the image (Fig. 7).

Adobe's Photoshop programs are great tools for working with digital photographs, but there is no reason to abandon over a century's worth of techniques and experimentation now that the medium has been transformed. Elegantly colorized photographs can add additional meaning and emotion to an image.

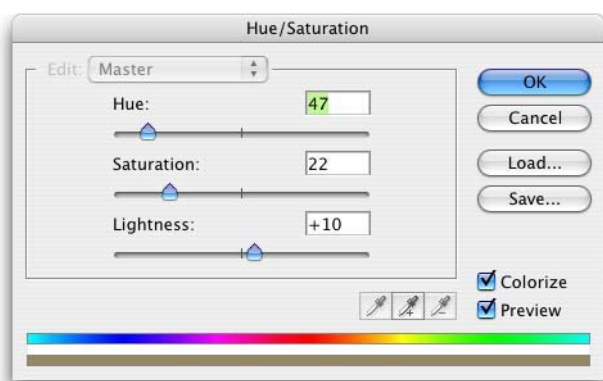


Figure 7



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Windows Accessories “Notepad”

Ron Ingraham, Space Coast PC User Group

Ron is a member of Space Coast PC Users Group. Instructions in this column were created on a Windows 98 system. E-mail Ron at <ringram728@earthlink.net>

If you are familiar with any word processor, you should have no problem working with Notepad, figure 1. The drop down menus are similar to those in any of the Microsoft family of software. As you can see in figure 2, File produces these options. As the name implies, New opens a new document page, where you can create something like the one above. Open allows you to open an existing file, to view or edit as desired. Save and Save As are the same as those in Explorer or other Windows programs.

Page Setup functions much the same as the more elaborate word processing programs. Basically it allows you to determine the appearance of your document. See Figure 3. The Print option will open the printer control for your particular printer. This is the same as most of the Windows software. Exit of course closes the program.

As you can see in figure 4, once you have a document open, the Edit menu becomes active. Until you have an open document, most of the options in the menu are greyed out, as those at the right for Cut, Copy, Paste and Delete. Should you select any portion of the document, the Cut, Copy and Delete options will become active. You should remember that if you Cut a selection, it will be removed from the document and placed on the clipboard. If you Copy a selection, it will be placed on the Clipboard, but also remain in the document. Deleting a selection removes it completely.

If you place something on the Clipboard from another source, the Paste function becomes active, and you may Paste that selection into the current document.

The Word Wrap option when activated will wrap words to the next line when you reach the end of a line. Otherwise, sentences will go on and on until such time as you hit Enter or Return.

Set Font brings up the window in figure 5. This option allows you to select fonts from all those available in your computer. You may also select a style to be applied to the chosen font. The Size option lets you determine the size of the selected font, from the 11 you see on this page, up or down to as much as 72 or as small as 8. The Sample window lets you see the exact appearance of your selection. In my computer, I have no choice other than Western Script.

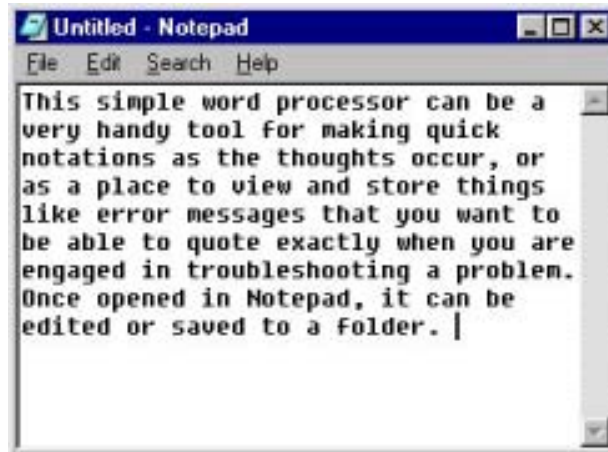


Figure 1



Figure 2

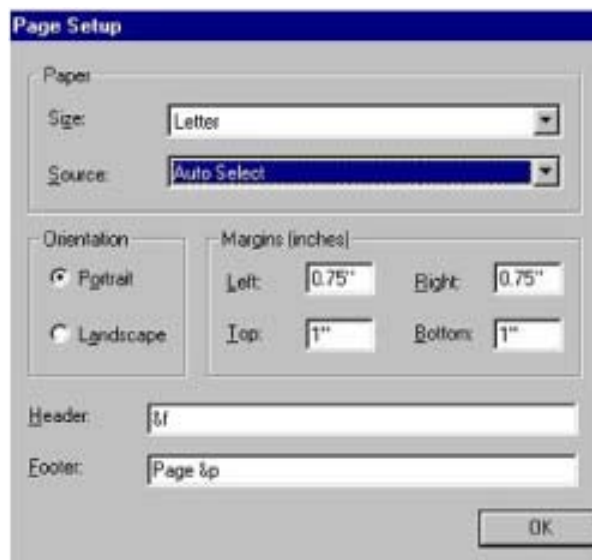


Figure 3

Moving on to the the Search menu, you'll find this function to be identical to that in other programs, like Regedit. Find will open the window seen in figure 6. Find Next is functional after the Find process has begun.

You may search for any word or phrase in the document by placing it in the Find What space, figure 7. The selected word will be highlighted the first time it appears after you hit the Find Next button at the right. If you wish to search for other instances of the same word or phrase, you may hit Find Next or use the hot key F3. You should note that the search process takes place, either Up or Down from the current location of you cursor in the document. You must make the choice by selecting one or the other methods. Match Case will make the search case sensitive, either upper or lower.

The Help menu brings up a standard Windows Help window, in this case Notepad Help, figure 8. The Hide icon on the left allows you to hide or close the tabs pane on the left of the screen. This will allow you to view the selected help topic in the right pane more easily. As you can see, the normal 3 tabs are present, Contents, Index, and Search. In this case, the Contents displays a group of choices pertinent to Notepad. Each topic listed will provide you a detailed explanation of the things I've covered briefly in this article. No need to refer back to this article when you need a reminder.

The Index tab displays an alphabetical listing of all items related to Notepad. You have the option of entering a term of interest in the keyword window, which will move you to that keyword in the index. Selecting the particular item and clicking on the Display button at the bottom, will display the information in the pane at the right. The Search tab opens a window which allows you to enter a topic, which if found may be displayed in the right pane.

Try using Notepad for your simple word processing tasks. You may cut text from almost any onscreen source and paste it here for storage or editing.

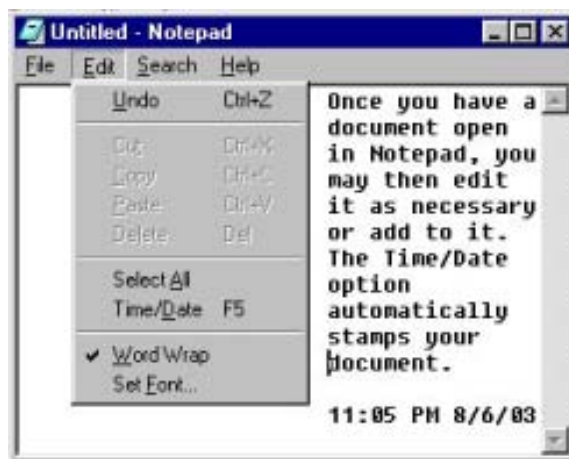


Figure 4

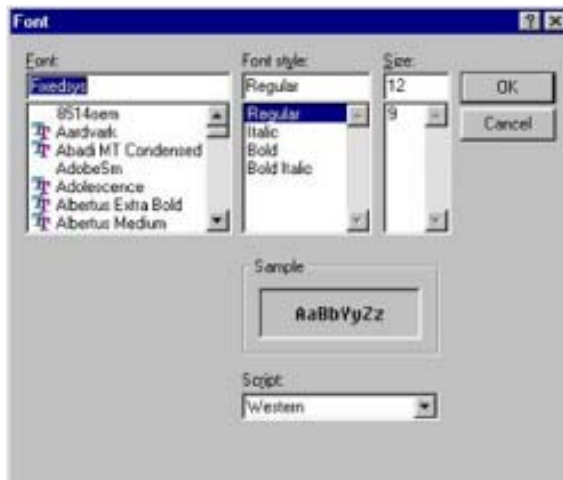


Figure 5



Figure 6

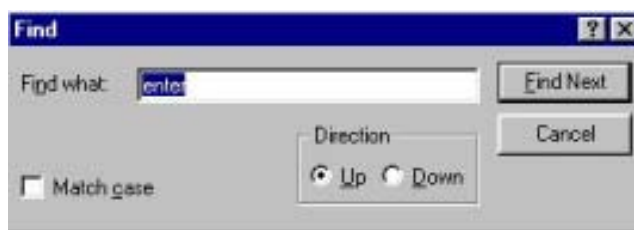


Figure 7



Figure 8

Ponderings

Meredith Poor

Texas is back in the space race, although 'back' requires an examination of context. True Texans refuse to believe we ever abandoned such an enterprise.

We can give a passing nod to Jules Verne, who thought this up in the 1890's, and move on to NASA and the Air Force and various mysteries surrounding pickled aliens stashed somewhere in Brooks AFB (excuse me City Base) (space aliens, as opposed to undoc..., never mind). The race that 'was', of course occurred roughly between the US and the USSR, which the US 'won' before the whole thing got so expensive we started sharing launch services, space stations, and powdered OJ. Then it was Boeing vs. Lockheed vs. ESA vs. China vs. the Russkies (not the Soviets anymore to be excruciatingly precise). All these guys are broke so we're back to sharing, as good Earthlings do when all their respective national debts exceed their GDP.

Star children growing up on a diet of Spock and Chewbacca and Robbie the Robot and Close Encounters to the nth Degree would, if they have enough money, spend some of it to demonstrate that they are 'truly different' by rocketing themselves or their proxies to the edge of space if not yet into orbit. Due to our habit of buying large numbers of books from Bezos, he has seen fit to acquire some ranchland around Van Horn. This will be one of Texas's spaceports.

There was, at one point, a Dallas banker named Beal who was trying to build a launch vehicle, although his name showed up on MyBossSucks.com, and shortly afterwards he decided to limit his activities to banking. John Carmack of Id Software fame is operating Armadillo Aerospace, which is also intending to put something in orbit and beyond. This is before we get the space cadets from the left coast, including microsnotties and paypallors.

So we don't need no freakin gummint to have a space race. There is a small detail in all of this that might have been overlooked: once we get there, then what? What is the difference between living in a windblown trailer park in West Texas and a similar state of being on Mars? Neither one looks like a formula for prosperity and/or raising kids. There might be some interesting geology on Mars, but the person who's going to get there is more generically known for driving big rigs cross country.

Before one can really live in space (live meaning hang out there for more than one shuttle-trip's worth of food) we either need six-armed people or some pretty sophisticated robots. "Pretty sophisticated" might suggest, for instance, a system that could be flown to another planet, which could then extract materials from the available rocks and fabricate sufficient habitat to support a human expedition for an extended time period. This, in turn, requires the efficient extraction and storage of solar or wind energy, which is still problematical on Earth, much less Mars.

Were we in possession of an energy extraction system and robot homebuilding system in combination, we might find our own planet subject to radical rearrangement. After all, if robots can build houses what am I doing spending a fortune on a 2,400 square foot house? If they can build it, can they maintain it..., like, say, cutting the yard, pulling the weeds, cooking dinner, cleaning up? If I cost someone \$10,000 a pound to put in orbit, shouldn't I be doing something more constructive than washing bed sheets?

Widespread use of such a body of technology might ruin someone who spends countless hours of computer time selling trinkets. Further reflection implies that simply getting into space may prove to be within a number of people's budgets, but real exploration and colonization requires a tech-

nology portfolio that is far more complicated than filling a tube full of old tires and laughing gas and lighting a fuse. One goes back first to how civilization is carried on in such a challenging environments, and this goes back even farther to the faith one might have that such efforts are worthwhile. Such faith is sorely tested when confronting the mathematics of image recognition, stepper motor control, and battery charge management.

Does it really have the same cachet to land on some forsaken rock when robots have already been there ten years building and supplying your crash pad? By the time one lands, the place already looks like DFW. Imagine sending pictures of your first step on Mars to everyone back home, as you set foot on the tarmac in front of a building with 'MARS' in raised letters over the doorway.

So which structure is the more stoutly built: a pressurized cabin at 14 pounds per square inch, or a similar structure that can protect one from a direct hit of a Category 5 tornado? One significant difference: one can rebuild their house after the tornado passes, if the house on Mars gets ripped up, you're sleeping in your space suit. This makes a real case for both redundancy and automated home construction.

Once one has a system for diagnosing and fixing spacecraft, building them is incidental. Once one has a system for diagnosing and fixing spacecraft, such technology is more or less applicable to anything else, whether this is cars, houses, aircraft, boats, locomotives, or tunnel boring mining machines.

Getting into that mindset seems to be a reach, even for NASA types and jillionaires. This would pretty much eliminate manual labor, and everyone would have to know how to command armies of robots. We would all be owner/managers, and we would all be, by our present standards, obscenely wealthy.

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Keep Your Cool

By Ira Wilsker, APCUG Board of Directors

GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

Heat is one of the primary causes of premature computer and component failure. Today's microprocessors, video cards, hard drives, CD and DVD burners, memory, and other components produce much more heat than their earlier brethren. One simple indication of the amount of heat generated in today's newer computers is the power supply; older computers could run well with a 150 watt power supply, while many newer models utilize a 400 watt or larger power supply. While it is uncommon for computers to use all of the power capacity of the power supply, the immutable laws of physics state that much of the power used will be turned into heat, and heat can kill computer components.

Many newer motherboards and computers now come with some form of thermal monitor to inform the user of potentially damaging or dangerous overheating, and a device may even shutdown a computer unexpectedly if temperatures inside the computer get too high. If there is too much heat buildup, and the internal temperatures get too high, parts degrade or fail at a rapid rate.

Expensive CPU chips, hard drives, memory, and video cards that fail are often the result of overheating. Sudden lockups and computer errors may be due to an overheated CPU chip. Our critical data may be lost forever if our hard drives overheat and fail. If our computers can be protected from overheating, not just will they last longer, but they may perform better.

Intel provides a free temperature monitoring utility for its motherboards and chipsets that support this feature. According to Intel, desktop Pentium IV chips work best when below 130 degrees F, may have problems at 150 degrees F, and may start to degrade or fail at that temperature or higher. AMD chips, such as the Athlon may suffer a similar fate from overheating. For this reason almost all modern CPU chips have an attached heat sink and fan. In order to improve thermal conductivity between the surface of the chip and the heat sink, a thermal grease substance is used between them.

The purpose of a heat sink is to provide a greater surface area to enable the dissipation of heat into the surrounding air. Most CPU chip heat sinks are topped with a small fan to blow air through and around the heat sink to better cool the chip. While simple in concept, and inexpensive to produce, this is also a common cause of overheating that is easy to rectify. The same dust and debris that can clog our household furnace filters can accumulate and clog the passages in the heat sink, and obstruct the blades of the chip fan.

It is good practice to periodically unplug the computer, practice safe electrical safety, and remove the "dust bunnies" from the fan and heat sink with a small vacuum, canned air, or a cotton swab. You may also want to read the label on the chip fan to see if it is a "sleeve" or "ball" bearing. Sleeve bearings tend to have a shorter life before they fail, and can lead to premature chip failure due to overheating. Ball bearing fans are slightly more expensive, but tend to last much longer, providing for more reliable chip cooling.

The power supply also has a fan, which for many computers, is the primary cooling component that exhausts the hot air from inside the computer. If this fan fails, or becomes obstructed with dust and other debris, the computer will overheat. This fan must also be frequently inspected, and cleaned as necessary with a small vacuum, or canned air. If the fan starts to squeal, or otherwise appears to fail, it is imperative that either the fan or the entire power supply be promptly replaced.

Many computer cases have a space and mounting for an additional fan; if available, the additional fan should be installed. They are readily available, and inexpensive.

Supplemental cooling is also available, and can be easily self installed. One of the simplest to install is an exhaust fan that sits in a vacant PCI slot, which almost all desktop computers have. These fans which typically exhaust air from the computer can either be powered by the PCI slot, or by a power cord connected to a plug inside the case.

These are especially effective at cooling video cards which generate a lot of heat; Intel recommends that the video cards be kept below 105 degrees F. Again, the slightly more expensive ball bearing fans are considered superior to the less expensive sleeve bearing fans. I installed one of these in my computer, and internal temperatures are consistently about 20 degrees F cooler than before.

Other formats of supplemental cooling are available, such as fans that can be mounted in the front of the computer in a vacant drive bay, also common on most computers. These can be simple propeller fans, or powerful turbine fans, and can either push cool outside air into the box, or exhaust hot air from the box.

Other fans can be mounted on a hard or CD/DVD drive to cool those hot running devices. Some powerful computers, such as the popular gaming machines may now utilize a water cooled device, similar to an automobile radiator, complete with antifreeze. Notebook computers, which are often especially subject to overheating may be cooled by mounting them such that air can circulate all around the case (some people sit their notebooks on a cake rack), or on a notebook cooling pad that contains its own fans. One pundit has been recommending those black painted aluminum sheets from a dollar store that are advertised to quick defrost frozen foods, as they are an excellent heat sink.

Whatever you do, keep your cool – your computer cool, that is.



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Finding Your Roots

GENEALOGY Facts and Story

by Jim Collier

To me, genealogy is about the past as well as the present. It is to explore for an understanding of past generations of various branches of a specific family to help understand how we have become who we now are. It is a search for the details of the history of individual family members, which are enriched when seen within the context of their time in history. It is not a specific fact, or photograph, or event, but rather it is a patchwork quilt that has many pieces; it is both delicate and functional.

Facts can be dates and places of birth, marriage, death, and contemporary stories about our lives and the people and events that have helped to form who we are. But facts can also be those unseen parts of us that have traveled across continents, and oceans, to be combined over centuries to form the building blocks that have contributed to who we are today. And while most of us are concerned with the nuts and bolts of uncovering the “documentable” facts of our historic family members, a fewer number of dedicated researchers are working very hard in the exploration of DNA, in an effort to link the present with our historic past, spanning thousands of years and seemingly linking us to a truly global society.

Genealogy continues to attract an ever-growing number of adherents who have a very broad range of experience. While it has been my experience that the non-professional genealogist tends to be middle aged and older, I find that I must also state that all of the genealogists that I have met, both young and old, whether from the cities or from the rural areas of our country, are all enthusiastic about their various research projects, and are very willing to help one another. I guess that if I were to define a genealogist, I would have to include the words “enthusiastic,” “friendly,” and “helpful” as a significant part of that definition. But, especially the term “open” – as in open to new ideas and methods of research.

Many of us have spent years searching for and collecting facts to populate databases that when viewed in the cold reality of pure information, present a diagrammatic view of our genetic past. In the midst of all of that detail there is a story. But where to begin to tell the story? And how do we tell that story? So, rather than looking at databases and software, in this issue we also look at the process of writing our family history, and very specifically, the writing of memoir.

To me, the term “story” seems to be an appropriate alternative term for genealogy. Because it is a story. It is a story that defines a family or groups of families, made up of many parts, to include documents to historical events, while other elements might rest on slides under a microscope. All are parts of the whole of who we are. And so this edition includes a look at the developing impact of DNA on our family history, and to the story of our history, through the narrative of linked facts and contemporary memoir. To further develop our family story, the National Geographic Society and IBM scientists have combined their talents to develop The Genographic Project, which is explained at: <www.nationalgeographic.com/genographic>.

Paleoanthropology, genealogy and the miracle of DNA

by William Hudson

Note on sources. This article was based solely on a literature search using a multitude of Internet sites and several books. To conserve space, I have not judiciously listed all references but will be happy to answer any questions (if I can) at <rwsh@earthlink.net>.

So you think that finding your great-great-great grandparents was tough?

Let me start by throwing out some seemingly unrelated snippets of information that have caught the popular imagination in recent years. Did you know that the human race originated in Africa and from there migrated throughout the world? Or that 95% of modern Europeans fit into one of seven maternal ancestor groups, of ages ranging from 10,000 to 45,000 years? Did you hear of the prehistoric cave-man from the Cheddar Gorge in southwest Britain and a modern history schoolteacher (living only a few miles away) who are descended from the same female ancestor? In kinship terms, they are some degree of cousin, some 315 times removed. Have you heard of the Iceman, found in the Italian Alps in 1991 and dated at 5300 years old and that he is a proven ancestor of a modern Irish woman? Did you know that there is convincing evidence that the Bantu-speaking Lemba people of southern Africa have at least some Jewish ancestry?

Moving to more recent times, can you imagine that 8% of all males in a vast region of Asia, stretching from the Pacific to the Caspian Sea are all descended from Genghis Khan, the ruler of the Mongolian empire? Did you read about the exhumed bodies in Russia which were proven (with the help of the Queen of England's husband) to be members of the executed Tsarist royal family? If not, I am sure you followed the controversy some years ago surrounding Thomas Jefferson and that he fathered children by his slave, Sally Hemings (who was actually the half-sister of his wife). Of more direct interest to you perhaps, did you know that it is possible to determine the approximate age of the common ancestor of a group of individuals that bear the same last name? By now you have probably figured out that the bond linking all these topics is DNA, or DeoxyriboNucleic Acid to its friends.

In order to understand how DNA has become the primary tool in resolving these mysteries and how it is applicable to modern genealogy, we first need some definitions. DNA is the genetic material carried by all living things, including ourselves, that allows inheritance of characteristics from one generation to the next. A DNA molecule consists of two strands that wrap around each other to resemble a twisted ladder, the famous double helix. Strands of DNA in the nucleus of the cell, which function in the transmission of hereditary information, are called chromosomes. A gene is the fundamental unit of heredity passed from parent to offspring and consists of a sequence of DNA that occupies a specific location on a chromosome. The DNA sequence within the genes of an organism can change over time, resulting in the creation of a new character or trait not found in the parental type. This is known as a mutation. If we then know the approximate period of time over which mutations occur (rate of mutation), we can compare the DNA of two like organisms and

then estimate the age of their common ancestor. An excellent DNA glossary can be found at <www.genome.gov/glossary.cfm> and diagrams that help understand this complex science can be seen at <www.accessexcellence.org/RC/VL/GG/>.

There are two primary genetic methods of finding out if you are related to someone who may be an ancestor, whether living or deceased. This can either be on a genealogical (historical) scale or in an archaeological framework, depending on the approximate mutation rates applicable to the particular method being used. In both methods, you look for similarities and differences between DNA signatures. These can indicate the time to the Most Recent Common Ancestor (MRCA) of the two individuals or groups. There can remain significant margins of error involved because of uncertainties about mutation rates.

The first method uses the Y chromosome, which is passed only through the male line. This biological fact allows us to trace back in time a direct genetic line of inheritance from fathers to sons. The second characteristic that makes the Y chromosome unique is that the information carried on this chromosome is inherited largely intact over time. Unlike other chromosomes, in most instances the genetic material on the Y is not mixed with each new generation. However, during the DNA copying process from one generation to another, small changes or mutations do occasionally occur and it is these mutational differences that allow us to distinguish the Y chromosome of an individual from his ancestor's. Depending on the number of DNA markers tested and the number of matches between individuals, the tests will indicate with a certain degree of probability how long ago their common ancestor existed. Because women don't carry the Y-chromosome, their patrilineal ancestry can be traced only through a DNA sample from a father or brother.

The second method is termed mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) analysis. This method involves the analysis of DNA found in the mitochondria, a circular strand of DNA found outside of the cell's nucleus. In using this method, you are tracing ancestors through the maternal line because mitochondrial DNA is only passed from the mother to her children. The mtDNA test is more often used to study long-term population developments such as human migrations and can reveal details about the distant origins of maternal ancestors.

Y-chromosome analysis is generally more suitable for genealogical study as the faster mutating DNA patterns have durations of hundreds of years whereas the slower mutating mtDNA patterns last for thousands of years. However, Y-chromosome recovery from ancient remains is very difficult whereas it is possible to recover mtDNA, depending on the conditions of burial.

To first consider the archaeological time scale, let's briefly look at the evolutionary route by which we humans arrived. The path by which Homo sapiens (us) got here is much like a family tree. Some branches die out, while others have progeny that continue the line. In some instances, the successful line might be living at the same time as one which later becomes extinct. About six million years ago, the hominid branch separated from that of the great apes; we are not descended from them but we do have common ancestors. Homo sapiens finally evolved about 300,000 – 500,000 years ago. At that time there were probably two other older "cousins" still sharing the earth with us. One was Homo erectus, the most recent form of which was the recently-discovered 13,000 year-old "hobbit man" of the Indonesian island of Flores and the other was Homo neanderthalensis who lived in Europe

up until about 30,000 years ago at about the time of the last Ice Age. Two key questions kept surfacing. First, were we descended directly from these folks or alternatively, did we share common ancestors? Second, did humans evolve on one part of the earth and then migrate to the other continents or did we evolve concurrently on several continents?

DNA analysis takes us closer to the answers of both of these questions. As far as can be concluded at this time, all of the world's population today is descended from the earliest Homo sapiens with no direct evolutionary match to our closest known cousin, Neanderthal man. Our common ancestor was thus much further back in geological time, probably about 500,000 years ago. Moreover, our species most likely originated in Africa and then migrated throughout the rest of the world (the "out of Africa" theory) rather than simultaneously evolving from a prior hominid in a number of locales (the less likely multi-regional theory). Humans evolved relatively recently from small founding population of a few thousand people living in Africa about 200,000 years ago. DNA can also tell us a great deal about the migrations of our species throughout the world, two of the more recent being the populating of North America about 15,000 years ago and the remarkable seafaring journeys of the Polynesians about 3500 years ago. A fascinating interactive site summarizing these journeys can be found at <<http://www.bradshawfoundation.com/journey/>>

Ancestral men were clustered in a relatively small number of groups, perhaps about 18 in total, which can be defined by the genetic signature of their y-DNA. The men within each of these groups are all ultimately descended from just one man, their "clan father". Obviously, these ancestral clan fathers were not the only men around at the time, but they were the only ones to have direct male descendants living today. The other men around at the time, or their descendants, either had no children at all or had only daughters. These clan fathers themselves had male ancestral lines and these ultimately converge on the common paternal ancestor of every man alive today. This man is believed to have lived in Africa, 60,000 – 80,000 years ago.

Similar conclusions have been drawn about the female line, defined by the precise sequence of their mtDNA. Worldwide, there were probably about 33 maternal ancestral groups. Again, "the clan mothers" were clearly not the only females alive at the time but they were the only women to have direct maternal descendants living through to the present day. The other women around, or their descendants, either had no children at all or had only sons, who could not pass on their mtDNA. And, again, the clan mothers had ancestors themselves. Their genealogies show how everyone alive on the planet today can trace their maternal ancestry back to just one woman. She lived in Africa about 150,000 – 200,000 years ago.

Mitochondrial DNA analysis through the female line can hopefully identify a subject's matrilineal ancestral groups. For example, one author claims that most inhabitants of Europe are descended from just seven women who arrived on the continent at different times during the last 45,000 years. The data was taken from an analysis of 6,000 mtDNA samples and researchers found that the seven "ancestral mothers" have strong links to one of three groups in Africa today. If you have European ancestry, modern DNA sampling can place your family into one of these archaic groups. Similar studies are being carried out on other ethnic groups around the world.

Now moving to an historical or genealogical scale, Y-chromosome tests can help determine:

1. Whether specific individual men share a common male ancestor.

2. If a set of men with the same or similar surname are directly related through a common ancestor.
3. How many different common male ancestors any given group shares.
4. Paternity and name-change uncertainties
5. To which broad haplogroup each individual male belongs, including trying to discover geographic origins in another continent or country
6. An analysis of the mutations in the Y-chromosome can also be used to estimate the degree of separation between individual males, in terms of number of generations since the separation occurred, usually expressed as the Most Recent Common Ancestor (MRCA).

The use of mtDNA on a genealogical time scale is rather more challenging due to the slow mutation rate. For convenience, results are usually expressed as the differences between the mtDNA sequence of an individual and that of the Cambridge Reference Sequence (CRS), the first mtDNA donor that was completely sequenced. As mtDNA is more likely to be preserved in the remains of deceased people, it has been used to resolve historical mysteries such as the Titanic Baby and the identification of the Unknown Soldier in addition to those case histories mentioned above.

Several commercial companies offer DNA analysis today for genealogical purposes, some of which are tabulated below. Many of these sites also include excellent tutorials.

“Next of kin” relationships (parents, siblings, grandparents and cousins etc.) can be studied using paternity laboratories that use tests on chromosomes other than Y and mtDNA. Note that all these companies studiously avoid entering the fray of medical disorders with genetic signatures. That requires a wholly different kind of analysis.

In addition to the commercial approach, there are now dozens of genealogical “one-name” groups who are pooling resources and building DNA databases of all their members based on the fact that, at least in many Western societies, both surnames and Y-chromosomes are passed down via the male line. “In a medium resolution test, an exact match on all markers by two men sharing the same surname generally implies that they share a common male ancestor within a genealogically relevant time frame” (Pomery, 2004). Such projects are also based on assumptions that the surnames have a unique origin (it would not work for “Smith”, for example) and that there are few illegitimacies in the pedigree. One such group is the Blair family who also offer a DNA-101 tutorial on their site at <<http://blairgenealogy.com/dna/dna101.html>>. One of the largest one-name databases has been complied by the Wells family, <<http://www.wells.org>>, which at the time of writing has over 300 participants in their study.

Groups of specific ethnicity are also using DNA to determine their ancestry. For example, black Americans are using the latest genetic research to make once-impossible connections to their ancestral homelands. One company, African Ancestry <www.africanancestry.com>, offers two types of DNA tests and claims it can usually trace at least one family

| <i>Company</i> | <i>Web site</i> | <i>Analyses offered</i> | <i>Location</i> | <i>Comments</i> |
|-------------------|---|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Ancestry by DNA | www.ancestrybydna.com | Autosomal | Sarasota, Florida | Reports proportional European, Western sub-Saharan African, East Asian and Native American ancestry |
| DNA Heritage | www.dnaheritage.com | 43 marker Y | Weymouth, U.K. and New York | Highest resolution Y test available |
| Family Tree DNA | www.familytreedna.com | 12 – 37 marker Y & mtDNA | Houston, Texas | Largest number of tests sold worldwide. Combines results with University of Arizona studies |
| GeoGene | www.geogene.com | MtDNA & low-resolution Y | Wimbledon, U.K. and San Francisco | Concentrates on the prehistoric roots of family history only |
| Oxford Ancestors | www.oxfordancestors.com | MtDNA and 10 marker Y | Oxford, U.K. | Founded by Bryan Sykes by following publication “The Seven Daughters of Eve” |
| Relative Genetics | http://66.235.201.45:8085/relativegenetics/ | 15 – 37 marker Y & mtDNA | Salt Lake City, Utah | Offer complete packages incl. Native American and African American data |
| Roots for Real | www.rootsforreal.com | MtDNA | London, U.K. | Solely a mtDNA tracing service estimating the maternal location of ancestral origins |



bloodline to specific geographic areas on the African continent. Several Native American groups, for example both the Comanche and Cherokee tribes have embarked on DNA projects.

Trace Genetics <www.tracegenetics.com> targets the Native American segment of the commercial market.

Many university departments are carrying out statistical DNA analyses around the world for anthropological studies. For example, research into the Y chromosome is being carried out by Mark Jobling at the University of Leicester's Department of Genetics. His article on surnames and genetics is available for download from the website <www.le.ac.uk/genetics/maj4/maj4.html>. That ubiquitous and magnificent source of genealogical material, Cyndi's List, now has her own special DNA section at <www.cyndislist.com/dna.htm>. Chris Pomery has also compiled a remarkable DNA portal at <<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~allpoms/genetics.html>>. But have a care.... once you start browsing these sites, you will glance up at the clock to find you have been immersed for many, many hours without realizing it!

Several popular books have been written on the DNA-genealogy topic. Examples are: "Trace Your Roots with DNA: Using Genetic Tests to Explore Your Family Tree" by Megan Smolenyak and Ann Turner, "DNA and Family History: How Genetic Testing Can Advance Your Genealogical Research" by Chris Pomery <www.dnaandfamilyhistory.com>, "DNA for Family Historians" by Alan Savin <www.savin.org/dna> and "How to Interpret Family History and Ancestry DNA Test Results for Beginners" by Anne Hart.

All of these companies, research groups and publications, whether commercial, private or educational, have to wrestle with many ethical issues ranging from privacy concerns (particularly with respect to the medical, insurance and judicial arenas) to the broader challenge of gross misuse of genetic data by those trying to draw wholly inappropriate conclusions about ethnicity. This latter concern has resulted in some minority groups around the world being understandably reluctant to participate in any such research. Some professional genealogists and bioethicists are skeptical of both the DNA methodology and results; there are certainly many issues to be worked through in this emerging technology.

Nevertheless, as this exciting work continues, maybe one day we shall all be lucky enough to break down many of our genealogical brick walls and find our ancestors by genetic means, especially when the paper trail is either non-existent or has grown cold.

Genealogy Assistance Opportunity

During July 5 – 10, 2005, San Antonio, Texas, will host the Women of the ELCA Sixth Triennial Gathering (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America). It is anticipated that some 5,000 Lutheran women from all over the U.S. will be in San Antonio.

One of the activities of this conference is called a "servant event," where women spend a day helping out at a nonprofit organization. More than 200 women, for example, will be building houses for Habitat for Humanity. Other women will be working at the children's shelter, at St. Vincent DePaul -- about 500 a day will be disbursed throughout the city. On Thursday, July 7 and Friday July 8, from 9 am to 2 pm, and Saturday morning July 9, 2005, they will be at Alamo PC. On each day 10 women will be available to assist Alamo PC members with various computer data input projects – specifically genealogy projects. While final details are still being worked out, it is anticipated that the ELCA volunteers will assist with imputing data into a genealogy data base – specifically the Family Tree Maker program, and scanning documents and photographs that will subsequently be stored and provided on a CD, and perhaps some on-line research.

Alamo PC members who are interested in participating in this activity, who need help with their genealogy project, are asked to contact Susan Ives: <suives@texas.net> or Jim Collier: <jcinquiry@earthlink.net> so that we can get an idea of the type of assistance that is needed and thereby best utilize the time of the volunteers.

Finding the roots of modern humans

DNA study may reveal who we are, where we came from

By Marsha Walton

CNN

April 14, 2005

(CNN) -- "Genographic" is not showing up in many dictionaries yet. But two global institutions, IBM and the National Geographic Society, hope the idea it conveys becomes well known in every corner of the planet.

The Genographic Project, launching Wednesday, is a five-year genetic anthropology study designed to chart the migratory history of humans, and help fill in the blanks of how and where people moved to populate the planet.

Population geneticist Dr. Spencer Wells, an explorer-in-residence at the National Geographic Society, is director of the project.

"Genetics, I think, resoundingly has answered the question of where we ultimately came from, we came out of Africa. And we came out quite recently, within the last 50 or 60 thousand years," Wells said. "But the question of how we migrated around the planet, how we populated the world, in effect, is still an open one."

Wells has spent the past 15 years studying population migration, gathering about 10,000 samples from around the world.

But he says people today move faster and farther from their roots than ever before, complicating the job of scientists and in effect "blurring the family tree." "And the goal is to sample DNA from people all over the world, both indigenous populations and the general public," Wells said.

"We want everybody to have a chance to participate in this, because it is really the story of all of us, that's what we are trying to figure out."

IBM is involved in processing the massive amounts of data that will be generated when scientists around the world begin gathering DNA cheek swabs and blood samples.

Dr. Ajay Royyuru, senior manager for the Computational Biology Center at IBM's Watson Research Center in New York, explains the pairing of "genome" and "geography."

"The genome we all carry is the best record. It actually carries the information of each of our ancestors. And as we uncover the markers in the genome, we are able to tell, who your ancestors were and where they possibly come from," he said.

Critical to the study will be DNA samples from indigenous people, distinctive and unique populations who have long inhabited certain geographic areas.

Royyuru says it is important that scientists from the beginning approach these people, many in remote areas, with care."

The participation of individuals, in any exercise, requires that you respect who they are, what they are, and the reason why you want them to participate. And you make sure that what you give them back is of value to them, which is exactly what we

are trying to do with the indigenous populations and the public at large," Royyuru said.

The study is also counting on people around the world who have a keen interest in their own ancestors to take part.

Millions of people are using the Internet to connect with relatives around the world, using a variety of genealogy programs.

The Genographic Project could take that a step farther, adding DNA details to the available information. Those interested will have to make a serious investment, \$99.95 plus shipping and handling, for a "participation kit." It includes a DVD and brochures detailing the five-year global study, plus a cheek swab kit that individuals send back to the study with their own DNA.

Project officials say these tests will be stored anonymously, but individuals will be able to track details about themselves using a number assigned to each kit.

"You will be able to see, for example, right off the bat if you are in a particular genotypic group, and where is the population of that particular genotypic group in the world today, and what we think are the ways in which this population ended up in this location in the world. And as this data grows, we will be able to make this map, and this journey and this detail richer in content," Royyuru said.

Wells says the project has assembled a "dream team" of scientists, from Moscow to Johannesburg to Adelaide to Paris and Beirut.

Besides the population experts, scientists from many other disciplines will be adding context to the DNA information. One researcher will focus on ancient DNA, studying skeletons hundreds, even thousands of years old.

"So what we can answer [as geneticists] is questions about biology, about biological ancestry. But to make any sense of that historically we have to contextualize it -- the archaeology, the linguistic pattern, even the climatology," Wells said.

"So it really is a synthetic effort to understand our common past."

Find this article at: <http://www.cnn.com/2005/TECH/science/04/12/genographic>

"Genetealogy" Survey Results



By Megan Smolenyak, Ancestry Daily News

In my ongoing quest to gain a better understanding of the world of genetic genealogy (which I like to condense to “genetealogy”), I recently conducted a brief survey. A whopping 1,237 people were kind enough to participate and help me satisfy my curiosity, so I thought I would reciprocate by sharing the results.

Survey Summary

The survey asked three multiple-choice questions:

1. How would you describe your participation in genetic genealogy?

- (a) Have not done it and am not interested
- (b) Am “getting smart” about it to decide whether to try it
- (c) Will likely try it within the next 6 months
- (d) Have taken (or sponsored/facilitated) one DNA test
- (e) Have taken (or sponsored/facilitated) more than one DNA test
- (f) Am an active participant in a DNA project, but do not manage it
- (g) Manage a DNA project

2. If you have not participated in genetic genealogy, which of the following explain why?

- (a) Don't understand it yet
- (b) Not sure it would help my genealogical research
- (c) Concerned about privacy
- (d) Too expensive
- (e) Other

3. If you have participated in genetic genealogy, which kind of test(s) have you taken (or sponsored/facilitated)?

- (a) Y-DNA
- (b) mtDNA
- (c) DNAPrint/BioGeographical
- (d) African Ancestry
- (e) Native American Ancestry
- (f) Other Ethnic (Cohanim, Tribes of Britain, etc.)
- (g) Other

Aside from these questions, the only other queries concerned gender and years of experience with genealogy (less than 1 year, 1-5 years, 5-10 years, 10-20 years, more than 20 years), so I could see if either of these seemed to influence the answers to the three main questions.

Participation in Genetic Genealogy

I think it's no secret that I'm a proponent of genetealogy, but I have to admit that even I was surprised at the tale the numbers told: 25.4 percent of those responding have already made the leap! Roughly 11 percent are fairly new on board and

have taken or sponsored a single test, while another 14.4 percent are already on their second test or more deeply involved. Presumably, those already using DNA testing to pursue their roots were more likely to be interested in this survey, so there is undoubtedly a degree of bias. But even factoring this in, I never would have anticipated finding that one in four had already jumped in.

More impressive than this, though, were the numbers that indicate what's coming. 57.3 percent claimed to be “getting smart” about it, while 9.6 percent expect to take the plunge within the next six months. This is good news for all of us. Just as with conventional genealogy, the more who participate, the easier it becomes for each of us to find others who share common ancestors (not to mention, research buddies for our future sleuthing efforts!).

Reasons for Non-Participation

Since I frequently lecture on this topic (and have been doing so for several years), I am often people's first exposure to genetic genealogy. And because of this, I have repeatedly heard a handful of reasons for reluctance to participate. What I didn't have a good sense of, though, was which concerns were the most widespread.

This mini-survey revealed that the number one reason for non-participation is simply that folks aren't sure it would help their genealogical research. 34 percent gave this response, but close on its heels with 31.7 percent was “too expensive.” Fortunately, costs have been coming down, and many eventually discover than an investment in DNA testing can save years of research effort, so I would expect this figure to go down if I were to repeat this survey in another year or two.

21.2 percent said they didn't understand it yet, while 11.2 percent noted privacy concerns. Wedged in between these two responses were 13.5 percent who gave other reasons. This was a considerable figure, so I took a closer look at the comments. I was intrigued to discover a strong theme running through the majority of them--the challenges involved in finding and convincing someone else to take a test.

Women in particular have an extra hurdle when it comes to the popular Y-DNA test. Since women don't have a Y-chromosome, they have to find a male relative to take the test on their behalf--

perhaps a father, brother, uncle, or cousin, or a more distant relative, such as a third cousin once removed. I've had an easy time of this, simply turning to my father, but that's apparently not the case for all women!

Even men who want to test a specific hypothesis or branch of their family tree can encounter this same difficulty. I'd like to think that as genealogy becomes more widely known, this issue will diminish, but, in the meantime, I'd love to hear suggestions from those who have been successful in talking others into testing on their behalf (if I get enough useful examples, I'll share them in a future article).

Which Test?

It certainly was no surprise that the Y-DNA test is by far the most popular. Of those who have taken at least one test, 57 percent took the Y-chromosome test. I was startled, however, to see that 20.8 percent had taken an mtDNA test. While I had expected mtDNA to come in second place, I hadn't anticipated quite this high a number. "Other" came in third place (12.1 percent), and when I inspected the comments, I saw that many had participated in the Sorenson Molecular Genealogy Foundation's study <www.smgf.org>. Bringing up the rear were DNAPrint (6.6 percent), Native American Ancestry (2.2 percent), and Other Ethnic (1.4 percent).

Experience and Gender

Having looked at the broad results, I then took a closer look to see if there were any discernable patterns in terms of years of genealogical experience or gender. There seemed to be virtually no correlation between experience and involvement, as the figures mostly hovered in the same neighborhoods regardless of how many years one had been on the ancestral trail. It did catch my attention, though, that nine of the thirty-three respondents who have been doing genealogy for less than a year have already taken a test or otherwise participated. This is an admittedly small sample, but it seems to support my belief that in the future, taking a DNA test will be the first step for many genealogical "newbies."

Gender did reveal some interesting differences with men (39.8 percent) being much more likely to have actually already participated than women (18.6 percent). And while only 6.7 percent of men indicated they weren't interested, 16 percent of women felt this way. Also, women were almost twice as likely to be concerned about privacy (13.1 percent vs. 7.2 percent) and slightly more price-conscious (33.7 percent vs. 25.9 percent).

Of course, much of this can probably be explained by the fact that women can't take a Y-DNA test themselves, but I also happen to know from an earlier survey I conducted that women are much more likely to be involved in multiple DNA projects (apparently, once we get involved, we tend to be pretty enthusiastic and explore several branches of our family trees).

A Few More Questions

I greatly enjoyed this opportunity to take a peek into people's views about genetic genealogy and share them with you, and I would like to try this again, if you're game! If you have a minute or two to spare, please go to <<http://www.genetealogy.com/survey/index.php?sid=2>> for a new survey--this time focusing on motivations for your genealogical quest. Thanks to each and every one of you for humoring me and my insatiable curiosity!

*Megan Smolenyak Smolenyak, co-author (with Ann Turner) of the recently released *Trace Your Roots with DNA: Using Genetic Tests to Explore Your Family Tree* (as well as *In Search of Our Ancestors*, *Honoring Our Ancestors* and *They Came to America*), can be contacted through <www.genetealogy.com> and <www.honoringourancestors.com>.*

Details and links to upcoming events can be found at <www.honoringourancestors.com/schedule.html>.

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A NATIVE VERMONTNER LOST IN TEXAS

by Gene Warner

Genealogy, as interesting as it is to those of us involved, can be very dry and boring to others, appearing to be an endless list of names, dates and places. I cherish every little bit of data that I am able to unearth; data that “puts flesh on those old bones”. How many times I have wished that I could find a diary, or a contemporary description of my great great grandfather’s life.

There always seems to be a good bit of information about people who achieved prominence during their lifetimes, but rarely anything about the average person. I urge you to be thorough in your search for personal information and lifetime details. Probate records, land deeds, death certificates, obituaries and military records may give you small bits and pieces of a story, which, when assembled will provide a clearer picture of your ancestor. Check with town, county, or state historical societies for details about cultural and social background that will help to develop the bigger story of their life and times. Many average people kept diaries or journals and occasionally these were donated to a local archive. Expand your inquiries beyond the obvious sources. Who knows; you may get lucky and as a result you may be able to use their words to describe their lives and that of other family members and friends.

I have done my best to make sure that future genealogists of my line, will be able to view a more lifelike image of their ancestors, at least the ones I am able to describe. Obviously, we should make sure that all photographs are identified and that copies are sent to various family members, but photographs can't speak and tell the story of the subject of the picture. To add to this picture I have begun to write small biographies of the relatives that I knew well enough to provide a first hand account of who they were and what they did – the type of person they were. What I write about my grandfather will become a window into the distant past for my grandchildren, as it will be about their great great grandfather! This story can be pushed back an additional generation or two if you are fortunate enough to have living grandparents. You can help them record otherwise unknown details about their own lives, and possibly help them write biographies about their parents and

grandparents. A word of warning though; what you write may be associated with these people, forever! You have a huge responsibility to be non-judgmental in what you put down, to never use hearsay unless it is clearly labeled as such, and perhaps identify its source. Perhaps it is safer to stick to the details; the likes, dislikes, talents, work history, favorite foods, favorite music, and manner of speaking - like favorite sayings, etc.

Physical descriptions are important whether or not photographs exist for the people of your family's history. A physical description adds that third dimension that will give depth to the image and to the story, which can be further enhanced through a list of the places where they lived.

By now you get the idea. You don't have to be a great writer. It's more a matter of accurately recording the details of their lives. It's the details that will be invaluable, and perhaps those details will be the source material for a future writer in your family. One last thing...I have decided that it's probably not a good idea to write an autobiography. I have come to believe that you should jot down the pertinent dates, places and actions of your life, but let someone else actually write your story. It's just too hard to be objective – let someone else put his or her own spin on your own life. Now, get to work! Start by helping the oldest members of your family write the unknown details of their own lives and the biographies of their relatives, while they are still with you. Combine your oral histories with your best effort at recording the details of those unreachable generations; together, it will enable you to have a truly superior genealogy.



Writing Our Family's Story

By Megan Smolenyaks, CG, CGL, FASG, Ancestry Daily News

Mark Twain swore that writing is 5 percent inspiration and 95 percent perspiration. A genealogical mentor of mine once poo-pooed both factors. Stick to the Jack Webb Rule, she said: “Just the facts, ma'am, just the facts.” Three decades, twelve books, and five hundred articles later, as I answer readers seeking advice of their own, I've decided I'm not as akin to Jack Webb as to Adrian Monk: “Think creatively, but stay straight!”

There are, in fact, many ways to tell our family's story. Genealogy has room for all sorts of writers, because genealogy is a search for identity and identities wear many faces. The one constant is that identities be real and faces authentic.

To say that my latest book has brought a tsunami of mail on writing family history would be an understatement. “Who'd have thunk it,” one wrote, “that Isle of Canes could come from the same computer as Evidence! Citation & Analysis for the Family Historian!” That writer's real wonder, not surprisingly, was whether the two could share the same hard drive without sinning against St. Genie!

The answer is yes. “Thinking creatively” is a skill all genealogists need from Day One of the research process. Yet whether our path leads to a historical novel such as *Isle of Canes*, or a traditional genealogy, or studies for academic presses—all of which I had previously done for the islanders—we genealogical writers still need to follow Mr. Monk's compulsion to “stay straight.”

Surveying Your Options

If you've been into genealogy for more than two years and seven days, you've likely been bit by the writing bug. Now, you're wondering how to scratch the itch. Some of you fear what bit you. Others relish it. Some of you have dreamed of penning “The Great American Novel” about your own family but feared you'd be sent to Genealogical Siberia if you did.

Wherever you are right now, the roadmap reads the same. Know your options. Know their standards. Know your family—what the live ones like as well as what the dead ones were like. Know your talents. Then plan a journey that gets you where you want to go.

Family historians have at least five ultimate destinations: (1) a traditional genealogy; (2) a genealogical history; (3) a thematic family history; (4) a biography; and (5) historical “faction.” Let's peek at each.

Genealogy (Bare bones)

Genealogies are often called compiled genealogies for a reason. Most are compilations of raw facts—names, dates, and places—rather than creative works. Modern genealogists who find collecting easier than writing are blessed with software into which they can type raw data and, with the click of a mouse, produce ancestral bare bones arranged as a narrative (hopefully, with documentation). Of course, this isn't really a family history. It's a reference work. Even our mothers won't sit down and read it from cover to cover.

Genealogical History (Some flesh on the bones)

More appealing is a genealogy that places everyone into historical context—social, economic, and so on. A genealogical history sticks to proved facts and well-built cases. Of course, it may include traditions, along with the efforts we've made to verify each; and all assertions carry reliable documentation.

However, we can't expect our genealogical software to produce that history. We have to transport our bare bones into a word-processing program to mold the flesh, build the muscle, and trim the fat—efforts otherwise known as writing and editing.

Thematic Family History (Flesh on some bones)

A thematic family history is a newer, more academic approach. First, we define a theme that represents the family. Then we develop that theme, using a limited number of family members who embody those family traits. Here, too, we adhere to proved fact, skillfully analyzed, interpreted, and placed on the broader stage of time and place—with thorough documentation, of course.

Biography (Flesh on a single set of bones)

A meaningful biography reconstructs an individual in all dimensions. It puts that life into both historical and family context, with dispassionate objectivity. It, too, adheres to proved fact, well interpreted, and provides thorough documentation. In genealogical literature, the biography is definitely a genre begging to be used.

Historical Faction, a.k.a. “My Family Saga” (Heart and soul, as well as flesh and bones)

Of all the approaches, historical faction is the most challenging. Its foundation and framework, windows into the past and cobwebbed crannies should all be molded from fact. After all, our ancestors were real people, deserving respect for who and what they actually were.

Having defined a family theme, we develop the plot by drawing upon the actual lives of those forebears. We streamline our cast of characters, culling thousands of kinfolk and known associates to those who best drive that plot. Then we shape the chosen few into vivid, robust characters who personify the family story. But that calls for dialog, and there lies the quicksand where we sink deep into fiction, even though we try to pull dialog from our documents. Even more challenging: that dialog—like plot, stage, and scenery—needs to be rich and varied in context, language, and tone to evoke all the human senses.

(What's that? You thought novels are easier to write because every statement doesn't have to be documented? Yeah, right!)

A “Do-Able Plan”

The path you decide upon will depend upon your talents, time, and intended audience. If the thought of writing anything scares you, you're not alone. Even the best writers leave sweat, coffee stains, and chewed-up fingernails on their keyboards. If that's no comfort, you may decide to let your genealogy software provide the skeletal framework for the family and leave it to more creative cousins to clothe the people you have found and put feathers in their bonnets.

But if your family story has truly gotten under you skin and you know it won't let go until you actually tell it, there is a Do-able Plan:

Step One: Conduct your research using everything available.

--- Thoroughly document every fact; explain every conclusion.

--- Build a Context File, filling it with those descriptive nuggets of ancestral times and places that you find in the course of your research.

Step Two: Choose your favorite ancestor and write a biography. Length doesn't matter. What's important here is substance and soul.

--- Research that life from birth to death.

--- Put that life into context—every kind possible—with documentation, of course.

--- Move out of your database! Use a word processor for real writing and editing.

Step Three: Write more biographies, one at a time.

--- Dress them up. Add illustrations. Format them nicely. Create little booklets.

--- Share these with your family. They're wonderful presents, easily digested, and they'll build interest in your work.

Step Four: Create a Genealogical History.

--- Move your database into your word-processor, merging it into those biographies you've written for key individuals.

--- Then rewrite and edit—massage and shape it all—to create a real family history.

So What about the Great American Novel?

For most of us, that Genealogical History will fulfill our dreams. For others, it won't quite scratch the writer's itch. Some families we encounter—perhaps our own, perhaps their neighbors—burrow under our skin and into our psyche, demanding more. That was the itch that triggered *Isle of Canes*, compelling me to explore the forgotten world of one incredible family from its slave roots through generations of living, loving, laboring, and sometimes feuding with my children's forebears along Louisiana's Cane River.

Many of you confess now to that same itch. Before this—you say—you fought it, wondering “Dare I?” Now you ask, “How Do I?” That last question is the toughest of all. The basic answer is to start with those Steps One to Four of the Do-able Plan. We owe that to our families—to research their lives, document their stories, and put provable facts into print as a permanent reference work. Not until then should we consider taking the creative license that storytelling requires.

Nurturing Our Creative Self

Storytelling is a craft of its own. Many masters of that craft have put their wisdom into print. Lawrence P. Gouldrup's *Writing the Family Narrative* (Ancestry, 1987) will help you hone your skills on such fun projects as character sketches and short stories. Hundreds of writers outside the field teach essentials like narration, point of view, voice, and plot development.

As with genealogy, there are societies and support groups for those who relish historical novels as both a profession and a

hobby. One of the best, the British-based Historical Novel Society <www.historicalnovelsociety.org> will hold its first North American Conference in Salt Lake City in April 2005, where several dozen presenters (yours truly included) will offer three days of guidance on the writer's craft.

Writing a family story—regardless of the approach we take—is as much a discovery process as the research itself. Amid trying to explain what we've found, we discover new ways those findings fit together to create mosaics we had not seen before. In struggling to articulate the meaning of ancestral lives, we discover neglected nooks within our own selves.


Like most writers, I began *Isle of Canes* after I felt I knew my subject. I had compiled the family's genealogy. I had written its history from various angles. But the challenge of telling the Islanders' story through their eyes and voices, rather than mine, forced me to probe far more deeply into areas I had previously skirted. The cultural battles between the Deep South's old Creole Catholic regime and its Protestant settlers from Anglo-America—both of which intertwine on my children's ancestral charts—was only the first of many unexpected historical epiphanies that brightened the labor of writing. As you craft your family's story, you'll discover many of your own.

So long as our family's story remains untold, our ancestors remain forgotten. By immortalizing them, regardless of the format we choose, we'll fill a need within ourselves, inspire our kin and, perhaps, help society itself better understand the tangled past that has led us to our present.

As a writer of genealogy and history for three decades, Elizabeth Shown Mills feels she has avenged all the rejections her grandmother received from yesteryear's editors who thought Carrie Mae Odom Jeffcoat should stick to childrearing. Best known for Evidence! Citation and Analysis for the Family Historian, Elizabeth's latest work is a gripping historical novel, Isle of Canes. For a sample chapter, visit <www.isleofcanes.com>.

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Tips for Shaping Memoir and Family Stories

By Miriam Sagan, Ancestry Daily News

Most of us have family histories that we would like to record in a meaningful way. The question is how to do it -- without being rambling, dry, or including too much or too little detail. For someone recording family stories or writing a memoir, the best place to look for technique is to fiction. This isn't an invitation to start inventing things; rather, the techniques of fiction such as scene, setting, conflict, and dialogue, have an important place in memoir...

THREE PART STRUCTURE

The truism is that all stories have a beginning, a middle, and an end. This is true of the family story as well. A critical question to ask is--where did this story start? In another country? With immigration or marriage? With land or sea migration? Or maybe it started recently, resolving something from the past. Before you start writing, take the piece of family history you are working on and clearly divide it into the three sections. (For a further look at this--a classic fairy tale can help. Take a familiar story and break it neatly into its three parts as a way of observing storytelling design.)

MAKE A SCENE

It is also useful to frame incidents as scenes, using the techniques of fiction. Scenes have characters, action, and unity setting. Thinking in these terms will give your writing more focus than simply recording blindly. An example from my own life is my grandmother's kasha recipe. It was her well kept secret for an eastern European side dish of grain. If I was to write the story, I'd set the scene:

Setting:

The evening after my grandmother's funeral. Five of her grandchildren are sitting around discussing the recipe, and how she gave a different version to each of us.

Dialogue:

"I have onions in mine."

"That's weird, she told me to add Lipton's instant chicken soup..."

"I think she left out an ingredient in each of ours."

"We should put them all together and see what we get!"

Action/Conflict resolution:

Months later my eldest cousin Paul called to say, "These recipes aren't working. I think she made the whole thing up. Just use the recipe on the back of the box. It tastes just the way she made it!"

Character:

This scene reveals a portrait of my grandmother, even if she isn't present -- secretive, bossy, a good cook, etc.

NARRATIVE

Other tips from writing fiction are to let the action flow from the character and to keep the description evocative but not overwritten. Less is more--let character and description be painted with a few brushstrokes rather than putting in every single detail you know. Narrative time includes flashbacks. Some stories are best told that way. Don't use flashback to tell what happened yesterday, but when the past explains or influences the present, this is a good time for that technique. Start writing in the present, then gently move into the past, and then come back to the now for a pleasing circular effect.

And do use dialogue to enliven narrative. Don't tell an entire plot in dialogue, or make up huge chunks of conversations you never heard. But a bit of dialogue really brings your characters to life.

THE WHOLE TRUTH

Memory itself is imperfect. By necessity, in writing family history or memoir, you will be editing the story. You may combine things, flesh out certain details, highlight for effect, and generally use the tools of good writing. Don't forget that "the truth" is somewhat malleable in human terms --particularly when it comes to family stories and versions of events!

Your goal in terms of writing down memories is to remain true to what you know of the story. But don't bore the listener or stultify the reader with too much detail or an overly dry approach. Bring the story alive on the page; this way history gets to live one more time.

*Miriam Sagan is the author of **SEARCHING FOR A MUSTARD SEED: A Young Widow's Unconventional Story** (Quality Words in Print) which won the 2004 Best Memoir from the Independent Publishers Association. Her web site is <sfpoetry.org>.*



Enriching Your Family History

By Anastasia Sutherland Tyler, Ancestry Daily News

Traditionally, family historians have focused on building trees filled with names and dates, branching out to important life events such as immigration, marriage, and military service. But family history can be so much more than names and dates. As we search for our ancestors, many of us will have a desire to understand their lives and times as well. That's why Ancestry.com has begun posting what we refer to as "Rich Content."

Rich Content is anything that adds context and flavor to your ancestors' lives (e.g., images, letters, music, newspaper articles, etc). In a January 2005 Ancestry Daily News article <<http://www.ancestry.com/rd/prodredir.asp?sourceid=831&key=A955601>>, Beau Sharbrough wrote about the music our ancestor's listened to; this is rich content. The Rich Content on Ancestry.com includes newspapers, maps, photographs, and post cards. These images can be printed to your personal printer, saved to your hard drive, or saved in your "My Ancestry" file <www.ancestry.com/myancestry/> for quick future reference.

Even if you can't find images of your ancestors in these collections, what you will find are images and information that add context to their lives. This article describes some of the newest additions to this ever-growing compilation and how you can use them to enrich your family history.

As an example, my great-grandmother Emily was born in 1899 and died in 2003. In addition to what I'll share about her below, here are some things I know about her that add interest to my family history, her father was the first on the block to own a car, and she and her daughter were in Pearl Harbor when it was attacked. She also lived to hold her great-great-grandchild in her arms. One of my pet projects is collecting memorabilia, guided by her memoirs, that will bring alive the places and events that impacted Emily's life.

U.S. Panoramic Photos, 1851-1991

(Available through a subscription to the Family & Local Histories Collection)

In this database, you'll find over 3,500 panoramic photos from throughout the United States, taken between 1851 and 1991. Images include cityscapes, landscapes, portraits, and even the Cal vs. Stanford football game in 1925. (Cardinal fans will be happy to know that they beat the Golden Bears 26 to 14.)

Maybe you'll find a panorama of the city your ancestors grew up in, the beach they visited often, or the train yard where they worked. Six-year-old Emily was living in San Francisco with her parents when the earthquake hit on 18 April 1906. Perusing the panoramic photographs, I found numerous images of the city on fire and the city in ruins. These images gave me a new understanding of what she and other city residents lived through.



U.S. Historical Postcards, 1901-60

(Available through a subscription to the U.S. Records Collection)

The postcard database contains 2,888 postcards that were sent to various individuals throughout the United States between 1901 and 1960. About a third of the postcards include the name and state of the addressee and year of postmark. Where possible both the picture and the writing on the reverse side have been included on the website.

I searched this collection for images of San Francisco and was rewarded with many images of Emily's "old stomping grounds," as she called them. I was able to print out images of the Bay Area, Golden Gate Bridge, Alcatraz Island, and many more from the time period that she lived in the city by the bay. Because I grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area, I also enjoyed seeing how the places I know have changed over time.

U.S. Civil War Photos, 1860-1870

(Available through a subscription to the U.S. Records Collection)

Subscribers with Civil War soldiers in their family trees will find exceptional images among these approximately 6,900 photographs from the American Civil War. Try searching for the name of battles in which your ancestors participated or for the locations where your ancestors would have been during the war. You can even search for generals and commanding officers that may have influenced your ancestors' war experiences. For example, you can view photographs of the battlefields of Bull Run and Gettysburg.

New York Port, Ship Images, 1851-91

(Available through a subscription to the U.S. Immigration Collection)

Those of us with immigrant ancestors may be in for a treat in the New York ships' images database. This is a collection of images, both photographs and artistic renderings, of ships that arrived in the Port of New York between 1851 and 1891.

Unlike the other rich content indexes that contain only relatively few names, the ships' images are linked to about 3 million names of passengers in passenger lists. Therefore, you can search for you ancestors in the passenger lists to find their passenger records and then in the ships' photos to find images of the ships they arrived on. (The arrival date, port of departure, and ship name are used to link passengers to the ship photos.)

You can also find out information about a ship's build date, shipping line, tonnage, mast/funnels, and route. This number of images in this database will be expanding in the near future. Included among these images is the North Star, the steamer owned by Cornelius Vanderbilt, who is credited with building the famous Vanderbilt fortune.

Professional Baseball Players, 1876-2004

(Available through a subscription to the U.S. Records Collection)

Here you'll find information for over 15,000 professional baseball players who played between 1876 (the year the National League was founded) and 2004. Find out players' first and last names at birth, nicknames, birth and death information, college attended, height, weight, date of first game, date of final game, and date and round drafted. For many of the players between 1887 and 1938 you can view either their

team photograph or baseball card. Baseball buffs may be interested in images of famous favorites included in this database are listed below:

- Babe Ruth
- Joe DiMaggio and Lou Gehrig
- Joe Jackson

Add to Your Collection

While Rich Content cannot replace vital and other records, it can add depth to your family tree. Photographs, paintings, music, and newspaper articles can illustrate family stories and bring family history alive for current and future generations despite their being further and further removed from the eras in which our ancestors lived.

Anastasia Tyler is the technical editor for the Ancestry Daily News and Ancestry Weekly Digest and the editor of the Ancestry Monthly Update, MyFamily Weekly Update, and Genealogy.com Member Update. She is also a contributing editor for Ancestry Magazine. She can be contacted at <adntech@myfamilyinc.com>, but regrets that she is unable to assist with personal research or questions about subscriptions to Ancestry.com.



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MEMOIR CONSTRUCTION

by Lynn Stearns

Instead of asking “why write a memoir,” a better question might be “why not?” A memoir is based on one’s interpretation of his observations or knowledge, his memory of a specific event, or events. It is an external expression of an internal desire to pass on the lesson learned from living through certain experiences, in order to save others from pain or conflict. Therefore, to write a memoir is to be a hero, of sorts. It comes with a responsibility, however, to present the lesson clearly, as remembered, or interpreted, and to keep the reader on a direct path toward enlightenment.

Like any physical structure, a memoir needs to begin with a solid foundation. This is an author’s clear understanding about the life lesson he wants to convey. Themes commonly reflect admiration, gratitude, a need to deal with loss, impending loss, or change, a desire to rescue a person, place, time, or idea, wanting to keep a person, place, or time from being lost, an attempt to right a past wrong, or a demonstration of the effects of a realized or unrealized dream.

The presentation of these events and experiences give the memoir form, like the exterior walls of a structure. In the case of a mother and daughter baking bread together, the plot will show the physical action – measuring and adding each ingredient, kneading the dough, all the steps leading to the finished product. The theme will reflect what the experience means to the mother (or daughter) – for example, if the daughter is about to leave home for college and there is an acceptance of impending loss during the process of making the bread.

Just as eye color, freckles, dimples, and big feet are genetically hereditary, we have our ancestors to thank for certain aspects of our psychological make-up, for causing us to associate specific feelings with memories. Fear of spiders, love of operas, an understanding of “the right way” to play Bridge or fry chicken are examples of biased information passed down from generation to generation. People conquer fears and learn new ways to prepare chicken, of course, but they hold on to the memory of the family’s way of doing things, if the event, or the handed down implications of someone else’s memory of the event, had significant impact on the psyche.



Rule #1 (and the only one I'm going to suggest): WRITE THROUGH THE TRUTH. Do not omit, or "pretty up" the events to protect the innocent, or guilty, or because you may risk being excluded from the next family reunion if you write about "it" the way you remember "it." This includes not feeling obligated to take someone else's interpretation of the event into account. Research as needed to fill in gaps about setting and dates, but by definition, a memoir is what you learned from living through an experience, or what someone else did, in your opinion.

If little Joey was dropped off on the front porch at the age of three by Big Foot, chances are, Joe, as a young man, will have a more than average interest in large hairy animals, even if the family who raised him was a good one. To leave out Big Foot in this story in the initial drafts, would be like making a sketch rather than a painting, and invite the reader to question what's missing regarding Joe's motivation. Memoir, like literary fiction, shows the reader the why of the story, even if the characters do not understand it. Ironically, after the author is finished writing the story, he can usually go back and tone down some events, change names, and edit in other ways without damaging the integrity of the work. An honesty in upholding the story line must come first, though – writing around the truth deflates the sense of reliability from the narrator, and a forward momentum in the story.

Specific details help make a memoir unique, just as the interior style of a home reflects the personalities of the people who live there. It's human nature to take what we need to survive as emotionally whole, and healthy individuals, and to retain "tried and true" information (about people, places, and things affiliated with the event) that helped us, because of the impact the event had, and also to be used later, if needed.

Consider the instant connection we feel to Grandpa or Great Aunt Maude, through the scent of peppermint or mothballs, the sight of wooden buttons, or a lace hanky. The sight, scent, and taste of those bright red and white peppermint candies (and the memory of them) come to mind when I least expect to think of them, but also when I most need a moral boost. The connection? My grandparents owned a country grocery store where every year at Christmas time, I was in charge of scooping out these candies from a glass jar, putting them in small bags, and presenting them to the customers when they were ready to leave. I'm sure I ate a fair share of the candy, but more importantly, I was trusted to handle what I saw as an adult task, making the decision about how much candy to put in each bag, and I was at the receiving end of the thanks from the customers.

Several years ago, I worked at a school where the adults ate lunch together, and a few days before Christmas, I took a bag of these candies to share. One woman went pale at the sight of them, and was unable to finish her lunch. I later learned that she was one of many children living in Germany, of Jewish descent, hidden in the hull of a ship to avoid being captured and taken to a Nazi prison camp. During their journey to England, if they became ill, or cried, they were given peppermint candies. These same candies bring back very strong, but also very different memories for my friend.

The left side of the brain controls, to an extent, the actions of the right, and promotes analytical, rational, logical thinking. It helps us see things sequentially, which is certainly useful in organizing genealogy research data. However, once the facts have been gathered, the right side of the brain must be allowed to take over. This is the side that holds on to colors, scents, sounds, and textures, among other things. It is believed that Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci, who were

left handed, had brains that were more highly developed on the right side. They may have had trouble figuring out how much paint they'd need for a particular project, or how long it would take to complete it, but who can question their creative genius?

Setting and language are tools to help the author achieve the desired atmosphere in memoir. Like any good host or hostess knows, scented candles, background music, colors, prints, and textures of the furniture, carpet, and drapes, all contribute toward a specific ambience in a room. Rather than having guests, or readers, focus on these individual items though, it's best to present them in such a way that they work together to create a particular mood.

John Steinbeck was a master at creating mood through setting and language. In the opening of *The Pearl*, he shows a young woman rising from her mat at dawn with a blue head shawl over her breasts. She pads across the hut with bare feet on a dirt floor while the dog remains curled up with his tail over its feet. Then, the mother took her baby and "hammocked him in her shawl in a loop . . ." In addition to soft earth tones and rounded shapes, the language, with lots of vowel, and silent, or soft consonant sounds (f, h, l, m, n, r, v, w) promote a sense of calm. Steinbeck has the reader unconsciously shift to the edge of his seat as he writes about the husband with a coarse mustache, and two roosters with squared wings in a clumsy fight. It's no coincidence that the author paired these images of bright colors and sharp angles with harsher sounding consonants and consonant blends such as c, ch, ck, cl, j, k, q, s, t, sk, sp, sq, st, and x.



In memoir, the author isn't entirely free to invent setting, but he may use parts of it that help establish the mood he wants, and leave out what does not. For instance, if there are two chairs in a room and one has a straight-back, and a cane seat with stiff, broken pieces of cane sticking up, and the other chair is covered with a linen-like cloth of mauve flowers, which one would make the reader feel that something uncomfortable is about to happen? Which one would help promote a scene of domestic tranquility? Also, there is almost always more than one way of saying something: The child screamed/The little one yelled.

The only decision left is what style, or structure to use in writing your memoir. The quick answer to that is whichever one works. There are no rules dictating how long a memoir should be, or what form it should take. Some people find outlines helpful, others find them restrictive. It is not necessary to use a first person point of view, or to include all characters and details related to an event. In fact, once you write your memoir, you will probably want to go back and remove anything that acts as a red herring, anything that allows the reader to veer from that path toward emotional enlightenment. The important thing is to get started, and keep writing until the tale is told, then go back to revise.

Although Lee Smith's *Christmas Letters* is fiction, it is a good example of writing a memoir via letters. This method is not just for people who actually have letters documenting events. Before e-mail and phones, writing letters was the way people kept in touch, and with a bit of research and imagination, it's easy to fill in gaps around the factual information. Simply decide who would be writing the letters, to whom, and the kinds of information they would share with each other.

Another method is to begin with the old boring (but easy to write), report style, where names, dates, places, and events are

spelled out in chronological order. Then, the fun part, is to fill in the emotional impact of these details to make them tell a story and comes alive for a reader. Facts: Mary Kimble traveled by boat from England to the U.S., arrived in January, 1900, and later that month married George Smith, who was aboard the same boat. The fun part, molding it into a story with information gleaned from photos, styles, practices of the day, and other research, would include the assumption that the weather was cold, conditions harsh, and people were seasick, but there was a spark of romance between Mary and George before the ship reached America.

A third style is characterized in *The House on Mango Street*, by Sandra Cisneros. This is a collection of vignettes, many less than a page long, and each covering only one topic, such as how the protagonist, Esperanza, feels about her hair, her name, a neighbor, and other things. Cisneros makes no attempt to connect these vignettes, but in the end, the reader has a complete story of Esperanza – her hopes, dreams, fears – her life.

There are other approaches, and other styles, but the important thing to remember in writing a memoir, is that the story is yours, and so are the fun discoveries you will make about yourself along the way.

Lynn Stearns is an instructor at the Writer's Center in Bethesda, MD, leading "Memoir, Narrative, and Story Construction" workshops. She also teaches Memoir classes to Senior Citizens, and edits annual collections of their memoirs told through poetry, personal essays, and stories. Her work has appeared in *Chicken Soup for the Mother's Soul 2*, *Women Write About Girls and Girlhood*, and more than forty literary magazines.




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Do It Now

by **Elizabeth B. Wright**, Computer Club of Oklahoma City
Reprinted from October 2004 eMonitor

That is not new advice. In fact, it borders on being trite. However, I am talking about getting things down on paper (electronically) before it is too late. Many of the over-50 group have begun to delve seriously into genealogy. And that is a good idea. However, we are in danger of doing a lot of hard work and then having it completely lost because our children are not yet interested in “roots” things. They give a little lip service to our efforts, but mostly they don’t seem to think any more about it than we did when we were younger. And they mostly do not have the programs we use on their own computers.

There is a good range of programs for genealogical research and most of them can be used by beginners rather easily. That is not to say that all of the available features will magically become useful to first-timers, but most of the essential information can be entered by just about any level of user competence.

That information, however, is going to stay right where it is, on the computer, until something happens to it. That something could even be a computer crash or virus which might wipe out all the hard work put into developing family history. There are options, usually, to save the files to an external disk, CD, or other backup-type media. This should be the very first step after inputting important data into a program.

Then comes the reason for this article. Nearly all of the current programs have choices to output the data into reports of various types. There are always the tree charts which have become so familiar to all of us. Usually there are other types of reports which sort the information in ways other than a typical family tree. Using reports, it is possible to download the essential data into hard printed copy to share with children, grandchildren and other interested relatives. Many programs have very good options for printing books. Most also have the ability to include photographs in the output. And photographs don’t always have to be of people. Most serious genealogists include photos of important documents, as well as maps, places, buildings, and objects of interest such as clothing, trophies, jewelry, grave markers, etc. Photographs can greatly enhance the value of the information as well as making it more enjoyable to read.

Our family members who are not yet interested in genealogy have a tendency to treat our efforts with some humor, thinking perhaps it is a rather quaint way for “seniors” to spend time on an amusing hobby. Of course, the day usually

comes when they wish they had the same information. And the efforts we make now can provide them with a great start. There really is practically no limit to how much research can be done on any family line.

But what if you don’t want to get into deep family research? We have such a golden opportunity to use our computers to just put in print our own memories of family. As we age, and we all seem to, some of those memories begin to be hazy. We need to DO IT NOW, while we have the ability and the means to accomplish it. And when we finish writing a particular memory, we need to transfer it to the same external medium, and also print hard copies of it. With a little luck, younger family members will at least put it somewhere for future reference. Worst case scenario is going to the trouble to give someone your hard work only to have it be given a cursory glance and possibly be thrown away.

Using your word processor, simply typing out a story and by including any available photographs in the document, you can begin to build a family history starting with YOU.

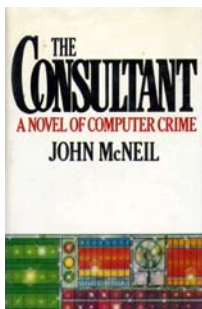
My favorite example from my own case is typing the family “lore” of how my grandmother grew up. She was left motherless as a toddler, put in an orphanage and foster homes before finally being taken from her native Iowa to Kansas by her older (by just a couple of years) brother and possibly her father. The story was always murky, but consistent, told to me by both my mother and my aunt. When I finally began doing serious family research, I came across enough information to confirm the story, almost word for word the way the “lore” had passed it down to me. Both my mother and my aunt had been dead for many years before I began the search for my grandmother’s family, and had I not finally written it down, it would have ended with me. No one else has ever been remotely interested in my grandmother except my mother, my aunt and me. Now I am hoping my son and my daughter and their children will keep the information and expand it someday, along with the other branches of their family tree.

The Consultant, by John McNeil

Hardback, Coward, McCann & Geohegan, 1978, out of print, 297 pages

Chris Webb will tell you: he's the best computer consultant in London, 1978. What he doesn't tell his corporate clients is that he uses his access to their mainframes to detect sophisticated computer crimes and, rather than report them, creates trap doors so he can adopt these almost undetectable crimes as his own. He hits the jackpot when he gets a coveted contract to audit the computer procedures at Waterman's Bank and finds that the potentially high payoffs involve correspondingly high risk.

As far as I can determine this is the first mystery novel featuring a realistic computer crime. I expected a quaint period

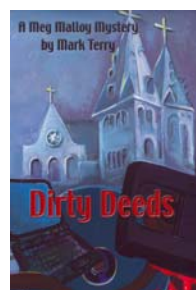


piece but it's brilliant: as fresh as the day it was written, despite the IBM 370s, punch cards and remote access by teletype. The plot involves what Chris dubs a "weevil" and what we would now call a Trojan horse: a hidden program that attaches itself to the operating system, does its dirty work then overwrites itself with meaningless data. Highly recommended and worth tracking down at a library or used bookstore, especially for anyone who remembers those earlier days of corporate computing.

Dirty Deeds, by Mark Terry

Trade paperback, High Country Publishers, 2004, \$12.95, 192 pages

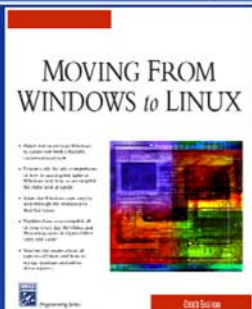
Meg Malloy, after making millions from the sale of her software company, takes a trouble-shooting job to help a friend recover a mega-church's donation records that disappeared in a crash of their secure Web server.



Nice debut novel for what promises to become a series. Great technical details about data recovery, video enhancement (did I forget to tell you about the porn video starring the pastor's daughter?) and a clever Trojan horse program.

Susan Ives, past president of Alamo PC, claims that computers are a mystery to her. Remember the Alibi Bookstore at 8055 West Ave. #101, San Antonio, TX (at the corner of West Ave. and Lockhill-Selma), (210) 344-7776, tries its darnest to keep the recommended books in stock.

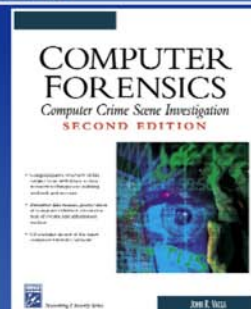
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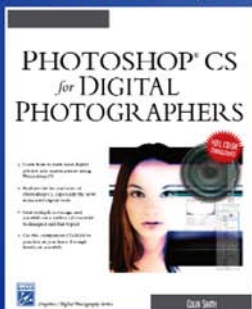
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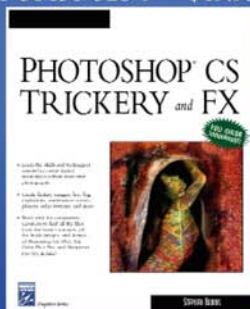
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Book Review

Mac OS X Unleashed

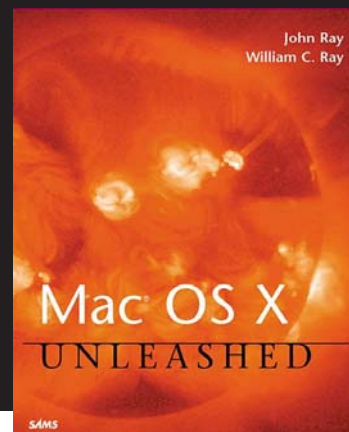
By John Ray & William C. Ray

\$49.99 US

ISBN 0-672-32229-3

Published by SAMS

Reviewed by Shane Hicks, Alamo PC



If there's one thing I want to know how to do, it's to unleash the power of my Macintosh. With that in mind, I picked up a book in the Unleashed series.

This is a weighty beast with 1464 pages. The thirty-two chapters are broken into seven sections, plus two appendixes. The outside of the book is shaded to represent tabs. This makes it easy to find any particular section of the book you might be looking for.

The authors state that this book takes a look at the Mac from both a traditional Mac user standpoint, but will also go into topics of interest to a seasoned UNIX administrator.

Introduction

The writers start with a discussion of the history of Mac OS. I found this interesting, as I'm fairly new to Apple and wasn't aware of their version history and problems associated with various releases versus Windows deployments of the same time period.

Part 1: Introduction to Mac OS X

The authors provide an excellent overview of the internal structure of Mac OS X, followed by a discussion of installing the OS. An interesting point made here is on the use of a single partition by Apple for both the OS and data. This is against the standard followed by UNIX and against best practices for the PC. The authors also talk about the differences between earlier versions and Mac OS X and include a walk-through of the new desktop interface. Since the Finder is a major tool in managing your OS, Chapter 4 is dedicated to discussing the different views and gives general information on how to manage files and applications with the Finder and the Dock. Chapter 5 is on using OS 9.

Part 2: Inside Mac OS X

Built-in utilities start this section. While discussing disk utilities, the authors state that the provided programs can't perform extensive repair operations and that third-party tools are required if your drives become too damaged. I liked the section on the System Profiler, which is much like Device Manager for Windows. Chapter 7 is entitled Internet Communications, but it talked about iTunes and other applications as well as Mail. I didn't see any mention of Safari, but this version of the book may have come before Apple was pushing their browser over Internet Explorer. Chapter 8 ends with some third-party application recommendations.

Part 3: User-Level OS X Configuration

I really liked the coverage of network settings and testing utilities found in this section. There's a small section on printer and font management. Then, the authors go in depth into account creation and user level preferences. I liked the fact that the authors placed a few command-line options in this section to show what the OS is capable of. However, they do this in a non-threatening way—stating that command-line tools are discussed in a later chapter and that users who aren't comfortable with the command-line can still perform the features discussed from the GUI.

Part 4: Introduction to BSD Applications

Wow! This is the first Mac book that I've seen that goes into detail on how to use the Terminal program to access the UNIX subsystem. These chapters outline how to use the online manuals and also provide a listing of some of the command-line options available when using this system. This section actually reminded me of a DOS-primer.

Part 5: Advanced Command-Line Concepts

Chapters 15 and 16 go into even greater detail on what can be done from the command-line. This section hurt my head! I'll admit—I like the fact that this book went beyond my comfort zone for the Macintosh. Chapter 17 covers troubleshooting UNIX application installations and Chapter 18 talks about writing scripts to get UNIX to automatically do some tasks you want performed on a regular basis.

Part 6: Server/Network Administration

This section contains chapters on X Windows, the preferred GUI for UNIX administrators, and how to manage applications in that environment. Then, there are several chapters on using other scripting (programming) techniques and how to connect your Macintosh into certain databases. Chapter 23 provides detailed instructions for setting up the Mac as a UNIX file and print server. This section also includes directions for establishing an FTP and Web server. The chapter on Remote Access and Administration is also very useful to aspiring OS X-based system administrators.

Part 7: Server Health

I didn't really get the placement of a chapter on Web programming in a Server Health section. There's also a chapter on creating a mail server, which I found interesting. Of course, the most important chapter for me was Chapter 30—Accessing and

Serving a Windows Network. I also really enjoyed the discussion on security issues found in a following chapter. The final chapter on system maintenance, with a focus on the importance of system and data backup, is a good one as well. I found this final chapter to be the only one that really dealt exclusively with server health, so I question the heading of the final section—but the information was solid and well written.

Summary

While other books claim to be the only book you need for your Macintosh, I found this book goes farther than any others I've read to date. I was extremely impressed by this book, in both its clarity and in the amount of detail provided to each topic. This is the first book on the Mac that actually challenged me to go beyond what I'd already discovered on my own. Each chapter

contains several hints and tips, separated from the other text by gray and black boxes. The UNIX chapters are killer (in a good way!) I've been looking for a source that would explain the command-line capabilities that I've heard so much about in Mac OS X, but never really seen put to use. This book lived up to all the promises the authors made in the introduction.

I can't wait to get my hands on the newest edition of this book!

I'd highly recommend this book to anyone using Mac OS X. If you're only going to buy one book, this is the one I'd presently tell you to get.

Software Review

24 Celtic and Medieval Display Fonts and Celtic Designs

\$14.95, \$16.95

Published by Dover

Review by: Susan Ives, Alamo PC

I've been designing publications since I was knee-high to an exacto-knife and in the old days you needed that sharp blade. Illustrations didn't come on disks. They came in clip art books. You carefully cut them out and pasted them onto paper. That's why it is called clip art, even though it's not clipped any more.

It was the same with display fonts – the fancy type that you use for initial capital letters and headlines. Cut. Paste. Cut. Paste.

Every office worth its typewriter had a shelf of clip art books. I loved the Dover books: affordable paperbacks with high-quality illustrations.

Well guess what: they're back, better than ever. They have CDs inside!

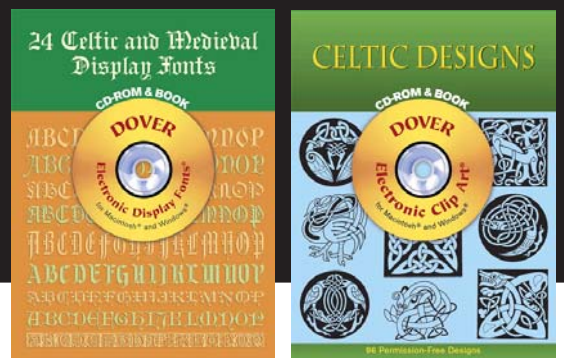
I bought two at Viva! Bookstore on Broadway, just outside the loop, but you can get the entire product line right from Dover, at <www.doverpublications.com>.

The ones I got were 24 Celtic and Medieval Display Fonts and Celtic Designs.

Those of you familiar with the old clip-art books will feel right at home. The book looks just like it always did: high quality glossy paper printed on one side only. The bonus is the enclosed CD.

The font book contains 24 fully-scalable fonts in both TrueType and PostScript1 format. There is a readme file that tells you how to install them on either a PC or a Mac. The book is handy: it shows every character in every font. Most of them (except for the really fancy ones, like the Gloucester and Genzsch shown in (dover-4)) contain full character sets. Need a Yen symbol in Gothic text? Get it here.

The Designs book contains 96 black & white illustrations scanned at 600 dpi in six different file formats: TIFF, PICT, EPS, BMP, JPEG and GIF. They are permission free: use them



anywhere. Most of the ones in this book incorporate a Celtic knot design, as in the example at (dover-3).

When you work it out as cost per image, the books may seem a little pricey: the designs book is \$14.95 and the fonts are \$16.95. You can buy a box with close to a million pieces of clip art for under \$100 or a disk of 500 TrueType Fonts for \$20.

First, this is high quality stuff; no junk. Second, it's manageable: to don't have to wade through thousands of pages of tiny thumbnails to I could envision using these two books if I were working on an Irish Genealogy project, for example. It focuses in on what you need. Years ago, when I did PR for a yacht club, I think I used every illustration in their sailing book. They have ones for Christmas, food and drink, butterflies, African folk art – you name it.

There are more than 140 books with companion CDs in this series, many of them in color, although the two I bought are b&w. You can get a list from the Dover Web site <www.doverpublications.com>, or sign up to have their catalog mailed to you.

Getting reacquainted with Dover clip art was like visiting an old and valued friend.

Susan Ives is a past president of Alamo PC.



Book Review

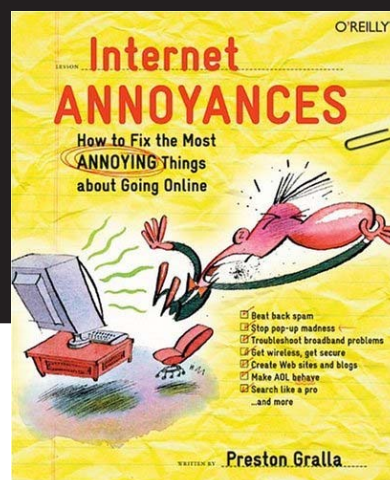
Internet Annoyances

\$24.99

by Preston Gralla

Published by O'Reilly

Review by Catherine Haenze



This month I had the fun of reviewing the book “Internet Annoyances” by Preston Gralla. This book opens up the wealth of problems we’re all having just trying to play and work in free space.

First of all, the internet is a ball of tangled yarn! Secondly, this book is fun to read, play with, and try out all the neat ideas.

Here is a rundown on the chapter headings (they all have the word “Annoyances” after them): eMail and Spam; Connection; Wireless; Webhosting, Design, and Blog;

Browser; AOL; IM; Searching; Security; and Shopping and Online Auctions.

The first tryout was on page 4--eMail. How many of us have gotten a forwarded eMail with these >>>>?

How many of us have sat using up minutes we could be cruising the net taking out all those >>> and cleaning up those misbegotten sentences before we send it on? da de DAH de da! Text Monkey to the rescue! Easy download. Easy to use. Easy to really like. You get a banana on the bottom right tool bar, and a monkey sound when used or opening up the computer for the day. Right now, I’m still getting a kick out of that monkey, so haven’t tried to squelch it. I’m keeping it for the price of FREE! You can get an upgrade that costs \$29.99 (why don’t they just say 30 bucks?). The upgrade does magical things like “stripping out HTML tags, converting tabs to spaces, deleting duplicate lines, and a lot more.” Haven’t tried that yet. Still playing with the monkey.

One other thing I learned from reading this book: solve a problem, get a problem. One of the problems discussed in the Making a Connection chapter was the speed of connection, with which we are all frustrated. Face it, people, that’s what we all want, speed. It’s a battle we are not going to win until speed is instantaneous.

I don’t use WIFI, but enjoyed reading about the problems. It seems to me that when you use WIFI, you might as well get on the rooftop with a megaphone and shout out all your business. But then, if you’re traveling, I’m sure it’s handy. Just don’t think you have any secrets.

Then there’s Webhosting, Design, and Blogging. I certainly could have used this before I did my website. I’ve been trying to get that picture exactly in the center for months. And here’s the how-to. Alright!

The one discussion on the website I felt was shorted was coloring your pages. Mike Bianchi in his HTML class taught us how to use your MSPaint and the calculator in the science mode to get all the colors. I have much more fun playing with that. It’s easy, quick, and already in your computer. Make sure you write down the Dec numbers for the color you choose in an unloseable spot. I never have found just that shade of beige again.

Turning to the chapter on Browsing, you can learn how to bypass Site Log-ins. Yes! It works. Find out why you can’t get a picture to download in gif or jpeg. Also works. Amazing what a few hundred Cookies will do. Tells you how to set your Cookies to block more from downloading into the file. Reset mine, again. My philosophy is, the fewer, the better.

Searching Annoyances: there’s the “Wayback” program that helps you find a site you thought lost forever. Learned how not to lose track of where the heck I am in all those links, but could have used this early on.

One of the more recent annoyances (unless it’s your website and you’ve learned how to work it) is searching for something and having all these weird sites come up before what you’re looking for. I’m not annoyed enough to buy a program for it. I just jump down the page, and continue on. But if you spend a lot of time searching, this program looks interesting.

Looking at Security, we are certainly encouraged to toss those Cookies and clear out the Temp Internet file daily. Not covered, was that you need to check your programs on the Control Panel frequently. I’ve found a couple I never downloaded lurking in the list. Also, before you finish a download make sure there’s an “uninstall” listed. I’ve turned down a couple of freebies because that wasn’t included, and I’ve learned the hard way they can be real tough to get rid of—sort of like cockroaches....there’s always one more.

Last on the list is Shopping a favorite for everyone. A couple of quick observations: there’s a BBB on the net; buying is easy, returning can be a nightmare; finding Amazon without a search engine; and lastly (in my list) how to get the last bid in. Thanks, Mike, for teaching us this in HTML too.

Some sites I still want to try: looking for cars, area codes, trends, how to buy from the police auctions on line as well as other government auctions. How to Phish. I now have info on how to search Amazon and the web at the same time. Yeah.

This book is fun, engaging, and easy for almost anyone, even my 86 year old mother. Believe me, you will find answers to problems you didn’t know you had, and how to avoid ones you don’t want. This book is available at Barnes and Noble and Borders in SA, and on the Net. It costs \$24.95.

Catherine Haenze has, like most moms, a checkered background, a Jill of all trades. Paid jobs have included part owner of an employment agency and substitute teacher. Computing has largely been learned by mega trials and lots of error. I’ve been a member of Alamo PC since October.

Alamo PC Monthly Planner

June 2005

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| | | | | .NET HGSI Photoshop Practice (Adv) | Dr. is In HTML Photoshop Class SBS 2003 | CC++ Computer Lit MCSE Adv | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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The Learning Center

Alamo PC Organization classes and study groups

Advanced Access Study Group

This study group is designed for people with experience with Microsoft Access who wish to learn and share ideas on advanced forms, VBA code, reports, queries, etc. Attendees should already be familiar with database design basics and the basics of building forms, reports and queries in Access. Topics include using graphs, database security, SQL Server connectivity, customer functions or other topics of interest.

Contact: Joseph Kubon
<joseph.kubon@padgett-cpa.com>
210-828-6281 x 1554

When: Fourth Thursday, 7-9pm

Where: Learning Center.

Pre-registration: No
Technical Rating ★★★

C/C ++ Study Group

Please note we are currently a study group and no longer a Class. C/C++ Study Group Our group consists of 3 to 6 regular members who meet twice a month to discuss their plans and progress on development of software for experimental use. We do not plan to offer C or C++ courses in this study group. To join the study group, get acquainted with some of its members and consider preparing a brief presentation of your planned or current efforts.

Contact:
Bruce McAlexander
<mcalexb@satx.rr.com> 210-680-0231

Murry Adams
<mnadams@texas.net> 210-696-0047

Carl Deneke
<cdeneke@Texas.net> 210-496-6397

When: First and Third Saturday, 2:30 pm

Where: Learning Center.

Pre-registration: No
Technical Rating ★★ - ★★★

Commodore Users of SA

Contact: Diana Jones
830-303-1220

When: Second Saturday, 1-4 pm

Where: Learning Center.

Pre-registration: No
Technical Rating ★ - ★★★★★

Genealogy Study Group

For everyone interested in using their computer for genealogy. We will discuss currently available genealogy software, their pros and cons and meeting participants views as to best software to use for both beginners and advanced genealogists.

Contact: Jim Collier
<jcinquiry@earthlink.net>
210-710-5660

When: First Monday, 7-9 pm

Where: Learning Center.

Pre-registration: No
Technical Rating ★ - ★★

HGSI Study Group

The premise of the HGS Investor SIG is, "Knowledge becomes stronger when passed on to others." We have created an environment for continuing education and open discussion between well informed members and guest speakers in matters of using Fundamental and Technical Analysis for the buying and selling of equities. Meetings are held on the First Thursday of each month in the UBS Conference Room, in Suite 300 at 200 Concord Plaza Drive, at 6:30PM to 8:30PM. If you wish to be added to our mailing list or for more information, contact below.

Contact: Maynard Burstein
<maynardb@juno.com> 735-3288

When: 1st Thursday, 6:30-8:30pm

Where: UBS/Paine Webber, 200 Concord Plaza Dr. Suite 300

Pre-registration: Call Maynard
Technical Rating ★ - ★★★

.NET Study Group

A study group for those interested in developing Windows and Web applications using Microsoft's .NET technology. We will focus on VB.NET and C# to build Web applications that interact with a SQL Server database (ASP.NET & ADO.NET). Tools used will include the .NET Framework SDK and WebMatrix. Additional discussions and use of Visual Studio.NET will be included.

Contact: Joe Brazell 688-9508

When: 1st Thursday, 7-9pm

Where: Learning Center

Pre-registration: No
Technical Rating ★★★

MCSE Advanced Study Group

The MCSE Advanced SIG, affectionately known as 'The Geeks', is currently studying Microsoft's new ISA Server 2004 in anticipation of it's being included in the soon to be released Service Pack 1 for Small Business Server 2003. The SIG meets every Saturday morning from 8:30 until noon. Space is limited and the subject matter is very advanced. Therefore membership is restricted. Please contact Larry Lentz before attempting to attend.

Contact: Larry Lentz, MCSE on NT & W2K, MCDBA, MCSA:Messaging
<Larry@LentzComputer.Net>

When: Every Saturday, 8:30-noon

Where: Contact Larry

Pre-registration: Yes - contact Larry
Technical Rating ★★★★★

Small Business Server Study Group

The Alamo PC Organization SBS Special Interest Group held its May meeting on May 7th. We had 18 in attendance including several new members from the March Microsoft event. After tacos, group leader Larry Lentz gave an overview presentation on Microsoft CRM. There appeared to be a lot of interest and the meeting went an extra 1/2 hour. Next month, June 3rd, Larry will continue the topic by demonstrating how to install MS CRM onto an SBS 2003 server. The Alamo PC SBS SIG meets on the first Friday of the month at 8 AM at the Alamo PC Learning Center in Crossroads Mall, San Antonio, Texas. The meetings begin with a 'Taco Social' from 8 to 8:30 followed by our presentation. For more information, please contact group chair, Larry Lentz at Larry@LentzComputer.net, or visit the group web site at <http://www.LentzComputer.net/SBS.>

Call for Instructor

A Computer Literacy class leader is needed for an additional class. Please contact John Gaddis at <education@alamopc.org> or 494-9449.

STUDY GROUPS (cont.)

Power Internet Study Group

This year we are covering eight subjects: 64 bit computers, SATA HDD technology, DSL and direct cable broadband connectivity, e-mail, browser use, MS Outlook and virus protection in communications.

Contact: John Woody

<jwoody@texas.net>

210-494-5684

When: 2nd Wednesday, 10am-noon

Where: Learning Center

Preregistration: No

Technical Rating ★★

WordPerfect Evening Study Group

We demonstrate projects and features of the latest version of WordPerfect. We also like to work on real life situations with our members who have questions. Co-chairs Frances Pape and Paul Chevalier.

Contact: Cynthia Thompson

210-655-1058

When: 4th Wednesday, 7-9pm

Where: Call Cynthia for directions

Pre-registration: Yes - Call Cynthia

Technical Rating ★ - ★★★

Computer Literacy Class

This course is designed for beginners and those who want to brush up their computer skills. Students learn about the parts of the computer, acquire keyboard and mouse skills used in many software programs, and gain a basic understanding of surfing the Web and using e-mail. The course prepares students to enroll in a variety of second level courses.

Contact: David Henry <oobootes@juno.com>

When: First three Saturdays of every month, 1-3pm

Where: Resource Center

Pre-registration: Yes - Call the Learning, 210-736-0080

Technical Rating ★

Call for New Instructor

A Computer Literacy class leader is needed for an additional class. Please contact John Gaddis at <education@alamopc.org> or 494-9449.

FREE CLASSES

CorelDRAW I Class

This basic class discusses basic tools and effects, concentrating on fills, blends, envelopes and other special effects for the next few months.

Contact: Steve Tech

<stephentechjr@yahoo.com>

210-675-2880

When: 4th Monday, 6-8pm

Where: Learning Center

Pre-registration: No

Technical Rating ★★

DotNetNuke Configuration and Management

This is a class on using the DotNetNuke portal software for hosting your website. The class will focus on hands-on configuration and use of the DNN 2.x portal. This portal is a service available to Alamo PC members. The class will setup web pages, insert modules on the pages. Modify and edit the look of the pages as well as the data in the pages. Modules will include: Calendar, Announcements, Forums, Blogger, Contacts, Links, Surveys and HTML.

Contact: Joe Brazell,

<ejbrazell@satx.rr.com>, 345-2207

When: August 31 7PM - 9PM

Where: Learning Center

Pre-registration: No

Technical Rating: ★

eBay - Bid with Confidence: An Introduction to Internet Auctions

This 4-session class shows you how to buy and sell at Internet auctions using the eBay system (excludes real estate and automobiles).

Contact: Learning Center 736-0080

<learncenter@alamopc.org>

When: TBA

Where: Learning Center, Room 1

Pre-registration: Yes

Technical Rating: ★

Excel 2000 Class

Students will become familiar with Excel 2000's basic functionality, menus, toolbars, icons and shortcut keys. Learn how to create, format, save and print an Excel spreadsheet. Understand and use formulas, work with worksheets and workbooks, and learn the basic productivity elements of Excel. The Excel 2000 Basics Class will use the Excel 2000 Step By Step book. This book will be helpful but is not required.

Contact: Bill Eastridge

<weastridge@satx.rr.com>

When: First four Tuesdays of odd numbered months (Jan, Mar, May, etc.) 7-9pm

Where: Learning Center

Pre-registration: Yes

Technical Rating ★ - ★★★

HTML and Beyond Class

Learn how to create your own web site. Learn how to design, build and manage your own web site using HTML. Some of the topics discussed include formatting text, links and forms. Additional non-HTML topics include planning, design and management, color and graphics, CSS, FTP and dealing with search engines. Students should attend the Home Page Jumpstart Class and have familiarity with the Windows Operating System. The 10 week class will begin a new cycle each January, May and September.

Contact: Mike Bianchi

<webmaster@alamopc.org>

When: every Friday 7-9 pm

Where: Alamo PC Learning Center

Prerequisite: Home Page Jumpstart

familiarity with Windows

Pre-registration: yes

To register e-mail Mike at

<webmaster@alamopc.org>

Technical Rating: ★★

Home Page Jumpstart

A general introduction to developing your own Internet web page. It is *not* a course on HTML. Includes a 20+ page manual and a training disk. Not hands-on.

Contact:

Susan Ives <suives@texas.net>

210-694-4582

When: 2nd Wednesday, 5:30-7pm

Where: Learning Center

Pre-registration: No

Technical Rating ★ - ★★

Internet Jumpstart Class

The class is intended for people who would like to learn more about the mail program Outlook Express, which is a subset of Microsoft Outlook. The first class is entirely on e-mail and the second class is for people who have never seen the Internet, who have not been on the Internet or who are on the Internet but are just beginning to find their way around.

Contact: Sandy Knight

<sknight@satx.rr.com>

When: 2nd & 4th Sunday of even numbered months, 2pm - 5pm.

Where: Learning Center

Pre-registration: Desired, but walk-ins are welcome

Technical Rating ★

Introduction to Photo Editing

A new class will begin in July. We will primarily use Photoshop Elements software, although we will also use Corel PhotoPaint and ArcSoft

Photostudio occasionally.

Contact: Clarke Bird

<cbird@satx.rr.com>

When: 2nd Saturday, 8-10am, 10am-noon

No Class in June, will resume in July

Pre-registration: Yes - Learning Center

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★★

Power Point class

A new PowerPoint class will start in January 2005. See Significant Happenings Page 8.

Pre-registration is required.

Contact: 736-0700

When: call

Where: Learning Center

Pre-registration: Yes

Technical Rating: ★

Windows XP Class

This class is intended to help you make the transition to Windows XP the latest version of Microsoft's Operating System. Subjects covered include the features of and how to configure Windows XP.

Contact: Sandy Knight

<sknight@satx.rr.com>

When: 2nd & 4th Saturdays of odd numbered months, 9am - noon.

Where: Learning Center

Pre-registration: Yes

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★

Word 2000 Class

Become familiar with Word 2000's basic functionality, menus, toolbars and shortcut keys. Students will learn how to create, view, format, save and print a Word document. Also work with templates, multiple documents, insert files, objects and pictures. Optional textbook: Word 2000 Step by Step book (this will be helpful but is not required). Student should have basic knowledge of Windows and be familiar with operating the mouse and keyboard.

Contact: Paul Sanchez,

<webmaster@rnpconsulting.com>

When: First four Tuesdays of even-numbered months (Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, Dec), 7-9pm

Where: Learning Center

Pre-registration: No

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★★

FEE-BASED CLASSES

Photoshop Elements & Photoshop 7 Class - \$

2005 Schedule:

September - each Friday 1 - 5

Elements workshop for all students who have previously taken the Elements 2 instruction classes. Fee \$20.00; Registration required

October - each Friday 1 - 5

Special Playing Cards class; learn to create your own personal playing cards for anyone who has previously taken Photoshop 7 or Elements 2 instruction classes; Fee \$20.00; registration required; bring photos; small laminating machine and pouches required.

November - each Friday 1 - 5

Calendar Class; learn to make personal calendars for friends & family; bring photos; fee \$20.00; registration required

Contact: Beverly Bihn <bihndolls@att.net>

When: Fridays 1pm - 5pm except holidays

Where: Learning Center

Fees: (includes textbook) \$120 non members (includes one year membership to Alamo PC), \$90 Alamo PC members

Pre-registration: Yes - call the Learning Center at 210-736-0080.

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★★

Contact: Beverly Bihn <bihndolls@att.net>

When: Thursdays 1pm - 5pm except holidays

Where: Learning Center

Fees: (includes written instructions) \$20 per month for Alamo PC members only

Pre-registration: Yes - call the Learning Center at 210-736-0080.

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★★

Senior Comp Class - \$

Introductory classes for people 45 and over. New classes begin approximately every two months. Classes are held at the Resource Center Lab and meet for two hours once a week for six weeks. Courses offered: Intro to Computers 1&2 and MS Word and Internet/E-mail.

Contact: Ed & Audry Henkin

www.seniorcomp.org

When: see page 10 for schedule

Where: Learning Center

Fees: \$60 includes textbook

Pre-registration: Yes - call 736-0080

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★

Introduction to MS Access Databases Class - \$

This class is a hands-on beginner's class on Microsoft Access offered in four 4-hour sessions (16 hours total) over four consecutive weekends. The focus is on designing and building database applications. The fee includes a syllabus and a textbook. Prerequisites: Experience using Microsoft Office programs such as Word and Excel.

Contact: Joe Brazell,

<ejbrazell@satx.rr.com>, 210-345-2207

When: contact Learning Center

Where: Learning Center

Fees: \$60 Alamo PC Members; \$75 Non-Members

Pre-Registration: Required - Call the Learning Center at 210-736-0080. Technical Rating: ★★

Private or Semi-Private Tutorials - \$

Develop your skills at your own pace and at a time that fits your schedule. Introductory private tutorials for one, two, or three students. Choose from:

- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Basic Computer Skills, or
- Keyboarding/Typing

Contact: Learning Center (210) 736-0080 or 736-0700

When: Days and hours are arranged between the student(s) and teacher.

Where: Learning Center

Fees: 1 student: \$35 per hour, 10 hours for \$300. 2 or 3 students: per student—\$20 per hour, 10 hours for \$150

Pre-registration: Yes—call or visit the Learning Center

Technical Rating: *

Technical Content Ratings

- ★ For the beginner, no experience necessary and no prerequisite.
- ★★ Assumes some basic familiarity with the subject but is not a technical course.
- ★★★ Assumes that the student is somewhat familiar with the subject and will discuss.
- ★★★★ Assumes that the student is competent in the material and will be technical.

Help Numbers

Can you help a new member with a new computer? Are you proficient in software not listed? Can you help with a title currently showing only one volunteer? Call John Gaddis at 494-9449.

1 Look down the list for the software program you need help with; note the number in front of the title.

2 Then look down the list to the right for the corresponding number for the person who may be able to help you.

Please observe the times given by the volunteers name to call for phone help.

Step One


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Step Two

| Expertise | Name | Phone | Availability | E-mail |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (2) | Tom Drawert | 696-9601 | M-F 6-9pm; S/S 9am-6pm | |
| (12,24) | Steve Northover | 497-5750 | M-F 7-9pm; S/S 12-3pm | |
| (6) | Bowen Moursund | 736-1791 | M-F 9am-4pm | |
| (7, 21) | Keith Marbach | (830)303-9344 | M-F 9am-4pm | |
| (7, 21) | Ed Conner | 696-0191 | 4-7pm | |
| (9, 10, 16, 23, 30, 32, 33, 35, 42) | John Bolton | 658-3060 | M-F 6-9pm; | |
| (0, 10, 11, 26, 29, 30, 35, 36, 42) | Jean Smith | 822-1133 | M-F 10am-8pm; Sun 12-8pm | |
| (11, 14) | Bob Harris | 492-3683 | M-F 7-9pm | |
| (14) | Bob Battaglia | 651-5642 | 9am-7pm | |
| (18) | Lou Harris | 492-3683 | M-F 7-9pm | louharris@alumni.utexas.net |
| (18, 23, 31) | Herb Langthorp | 651-6087 | M-F 6-10pm; 6-9:30pm on S/S | pokeypub@satx.rr.com |
| (44, 45, 46, 47, 48) | Chris Montgomery | 490-2415 | M-F 7-9pm;S/S 12-6pm | |
| (21) | Paul Woods | 653-8940 | 4-7pm | |
| (25) | Barry Woitena | | M-F 9-5pm | dallasmx@swbell.net |
| (28) | Brian Collie | 828-1505 | M-Sat 10am-5pm | |
| (36) | Christel Villarreal | | | cvillarreal@stic.net |
| (37) | Cynthia Thompson | 655-1058 | 9am-9pm | |
| (9,42, 43) | Frank Flores | 344-2231 | M-Sat 9am-1pm | frflores@grandecom.net |
| (10, 43) | Mario Flores | 566-4048 | 10am-11pm. Leave name, number. | |
| (8, 13, 26) | Robert Carrasco | | | carrasco_r@yahoo.com |
| (1, 10, 25, 26, 36) | Joseph Kubon | 828-6281 x 1554 | 12noon - 8pm M-F and S/S | |
| (1, 10, 36) | David de Leon | 614-3100 | 1-4pm M/F 12noon-8pm Sat & Sun. | |
| (9, 14, 16, 32, 36, 40, 41,42, 43) | Bruce Cramer | 865-2933 | M-Sat 9am-3pm | service@pcpro4u.com |
| (40, 41, 50) | Ted Ressler | | | catechist@gmail.com |

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100% gray cotton golf shirts with pocket and embroidered full-color **Alamo PC logo**

Available at the Learning Center in a wide variety of sizes.

\$20.00

Call the Learning Center at **736-0700**

Classified Ads

E-mail or snail mail (address on page 3) your ad to the Editor, PC Alamo at: editor@alamopc.org. Copy deadline is 10th of month preceeding publication. Classified ads are free to members of Alamo PC.

- Lost** A lady lost her purse either in Alamo PC area or in the general Meeting area. If you should find her purse please call Charlene Ray at 493-3666. A reward is offered.
- For Sale** Scrapbook Tote Crop-in-Style XXL is new with pull up handle, fixed ball bearing wheels, removable pen caddy hold 75 pens, 18 scissors loops, punch storage. Holds multiple albums up to 12" x 15" and anything else you can think of for the growing scrapbooker. Store price is \$140.00 plus tax and I am asking \$95.00. Call David at 492-5153. <marjdave1@sbcglobal.net>
- Free** Free to anyone who needs them: FAX paper rolls, one new, one half used. Heat sensitive paper. (8 1/2 x 98 ft.) I got a new FAX machine that doesn't use them, so if someone wants them... E-mail for more info: <joeecool@satx.rr.com>
- For Sale** 100Gig hard drive, 512Mg RAM, Flat screen monitor, Speakers (with subwoofer), DVD drive, CD/DVD writer (separate drive) \$700, negotiable. <richardstrout@hotmail.com>
- For Sale** View Sonic Professional Series P75f+ Flat Screen CRT 17" monitor. Purchased June 1, 2004. Hot key to boost brightness levels for intense, vivid colors with video, DVD, graphics and gaming. Toggle back to normal brightness for text. Ultra-fine 0.25mm aperture grille pitch. \$99 call Sandy 372-9985 or <sknight@satx.rr.com>
- For Sale** Hewlett Packard Laser Jet 1100se black and white printer with extra unopened Laser Jet Toner Cartridge. Used occasionally for 3 months. No problems. \$65 total. Contact Doris at 494-2402
- Wanted** Handspring Deluxe PDA. 646-7856. Mary Sidorsky
- Wanted** Someone to teach me Publisher and Access, will pay. Contact <jwoody39@netzero.net>

Alamo PC Organization has your Number!

Your membership number entitles you to a full year of membership privileges. Established in 1983, this non-profit, all-volunteer organization is dedicated to helping members keep up with trends and technologies.

Monthly Meetings

Every month you can attend a presentation meeting, which is open to our 2,500 members. Local and national companies provide the first glimpses of new products and discounts on existing products. There are also drawings for FREE hardware and software.

Award-Winning Magazine

When you join Alamo PC, you'll receive its award-winning magazine, *PC Alamode*, each month. You'll learn of group activities and you'll enjoy the reviews of new products from your fellow members. Regular columnists will give you insight to this fast-paced, dynamic industry. As a member, you can sell your outgrown stuff in our FREE Classified ads section.

Special Interest Groups and Classes

Alamo PC offers more than 30 Study Groups and classes on specific software programs for beginners to expert. These small groups typically meet once a month in one of our two hands-on computer labs or classrooms and provide an opportunity to get answers in an informal setting. There are groups for word processing, Web design, graphics and programming and even study groups to help you get Microsoft Certified. You can attend as many SIGs as you'd like and, as you become experienced, even lead one!



Internet (www.alamopc.org)

Alamo PC is on the Internet, and more importantly, Alamo PC can help you get on the Internet too. If you're already on the Internet, attending one of Alamo PC's Internet SIGs will help you to become a savvy Internet surfer.

Alamo PC SeniorComp

Are you age 45 or older and not into computers or the Internet yet? Let us help. Contact Alamo PC today and sign up for the very next class. Classes are hands-on at a pace to match your learning style.

Expert Help

Deadlocked with a computer problem or question? Get access to personal help from expert Alamo PC members. Just call! If you need someone to diagnose hardware and software problems, try "THE DOCTOR IS IN," a free clinic where members bring in their computers and allow our experts to help diagnose and often fix many PC ailments.

APPLY FOR YOUR NUMBER -- JOIN NOW!

To join, return the application below or sign up online at www.alamopc.org. Your \$45 dues covers your entire family!e. You may use your credit card or send your personal check. If you need more information, call (210) 736-0700. Shortly after joining, you'll receive a membership card entitling you to all rights and privileges and discounts. **JOIN TODAY!**

GIFT MEMBERSHIPS NOW AVAILABLE: Call 210-736-0700 for details.



Membership Application -- Apply for your number today!

PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS. This information will be kept in confidence - it will be used for planning purposes only

FIRST: _____ MI _____ LAST: _____

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CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE H: _____ W: _____ FAX: _____

DATE OF BIRTH: ____/____/____ OCCUPATION: _____

EMPLOYER: _____ TITLE: _____

E-MAIL: _____

Please accept my membership for: ☐ 1 year - \$45 ☐ 2 Years - \$85 ☐ 3 Years - \$125 ☐ New Member ☐ Renewal

Method of payment: ☐ Check ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express

Credit Card # _____ EXP DATE: ____/____/____ SIGNATURE: _____

Make checks payable to Alamo PC Organization and mail to: **Alamo PC, PO Box 65180, San Antonio, TX 78265-5180**

IMPORTANT ☐ I do not authorize Alamo PC Organization to release my name address and phone to selected vendors

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Alamo PC Organization, Inc.

Renew Now!

Isn't it about time for you to consider all the benefits of membership with Alamo PC? Renew your membership before the year is over!

For more information call the Learning Center at
210.736.0700



Consider A Matching Donation, or a Donation To Alamo PC Organization

Increasing members knowledge and effective use of personal computers, and providing other membership services and access to the expertise of other members, does not happen without an associated monthly expense. In recent months, although member dues and ads have offset the majority of the required monthly expense, and cost-saving measures are constantly being reviewed, the total amount of monthly funds generated has been less than the monthly expense. The shortfall has had to come from reserve funds, which have been severely depleted. We would like to offer everyone the opportunity to help rebuild the reserve fund.

If your employer has a "Matching Donation" program, please consider that you can double a donation amount by participating. All donations are tax deductible and can be dropped off at the Alamo PC Learning Center in Crossroads Mall (near the underground parking entrance, accessed from Fredericksburg Road) or mailed to **Alamo PC Organization, PO Box 65180, San Antonio, TX, 78265-5180**. Checks, Money Orders, etc., should be made payable to Alamo PC Organization and identified as "Donation."

On-line donations can be made at <<https://training.alamopc.org/donations>>. If you do not have on-line access, credit card donations can be made by mail if you legibly provide the following information on a piece of paper: Full Name, Address, City, State, Zip, Phone Number (to verify you want your card charged), Name of Card, Card Number, Card Expiration Date, Donation Amount, and your usual Signature. Please help us keep our membership dues low, meet our monthly expenses and rebuild the reserve fund.

