

THE NEWS MAGAZINE OF THE ALAMO PC ORGANIZATION

# PC Alamode

YEAR'S END GADGET ISSUE

[www.alamopc.org](http://www.alamopc.org)  
December 2005  
\$4.00

Getting started with a new PC  
page 34

Automate your card mailing  
with WordPerfect  
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Addressing holiday cards  
with MS Word  
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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:

[membership@alamopc.org](mailto:membership@alamopc.org)

If you have questions about Alamo PC call:

Learning Center number **210.736.0700**

If you have comments about classes call

Linda Bianchi **210.226.2460**

If you have questions about advertising call

Joseph de Leon  
send e-mail to [editor@alamopc.org](mailto:editor@alamopc.org)

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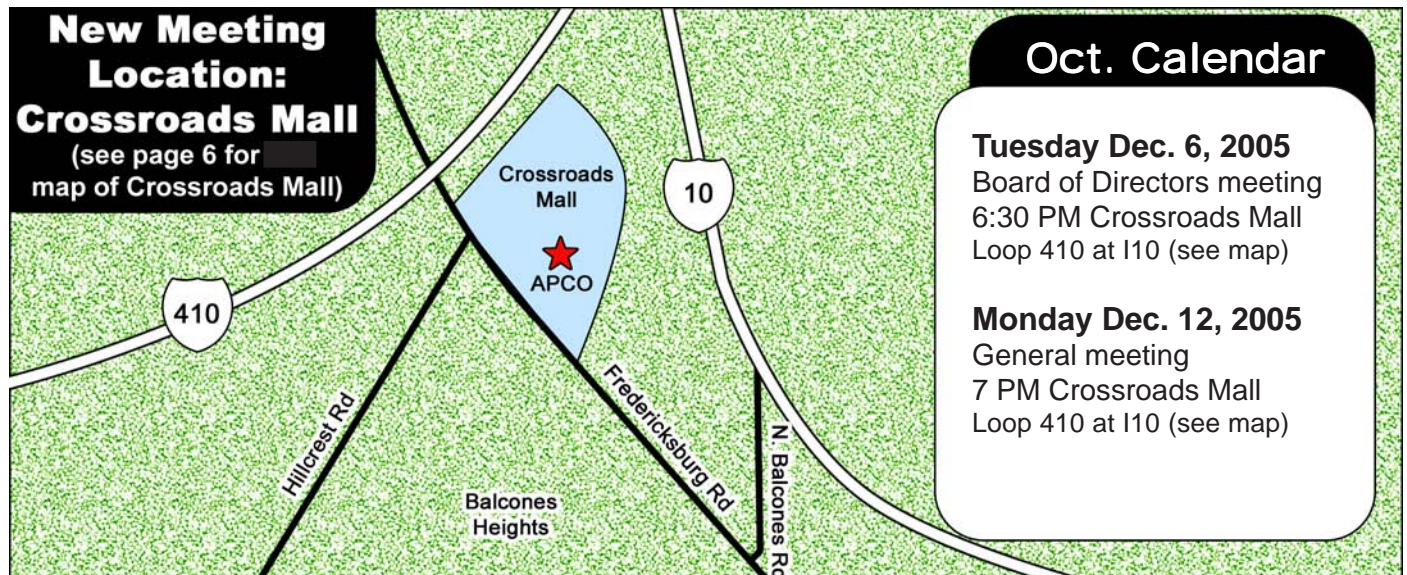
**Alamo PC Organization**  
**PO Box 65180**  
**San Antonio, TX 78265-5180**

## 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)



## Oct. Calendar

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

**Monday Dec. 12, 2005**  
General meeting  
7 PM Crossroads Mall  
Loop 410 at I10 (see map)



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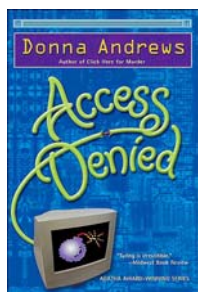
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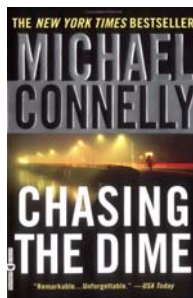


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## Volume 22, Number 12

# PC Alamode

## (501 (C) (3))

PC Alamode (ISSN 1065-3708) is published monthly by the Alamo PC Organization, Inc., PO Box 65180, San Antonio, TX 78265-5180, an independent association of personal computer users, founded in January 1983, and incorporated in January 1984 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. COPYRIGHT © 2005 by Alamo PC or the author. All rights reserved. No part of PC Alamode may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means — mechanical, electrical, or otherwise — including, but not limited to, photocopying, recording, or information storage/retrieval, without express written permission from Alamo PC. However, unless otherwise indicated, articles may be reprinted by other user and education groups provided the articles are reprinted unaltered and the publication acknowledges the author thereof and PC Alamode. Articles, programs, reviews, and advertisements are compiled without verification of accuracy or applicability to a specific task, computer, or other equipment. Comments or claims are made solely by the individual author and do not necessarily represent the views of Alamo PC or of any other Alamo PC member. Trademarks have been used at random within the publication and are hereby recognized as such.

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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

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### Ad rates effective January 2005

Rate frequency.	1 x	3 x*	6x*	12 x*
	<b>Per insertion</b>			
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Quarter pg. (3 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> " w x 4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> " h)	74	72	64	62
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\*Consecutive months

\*\*To be paid in advance



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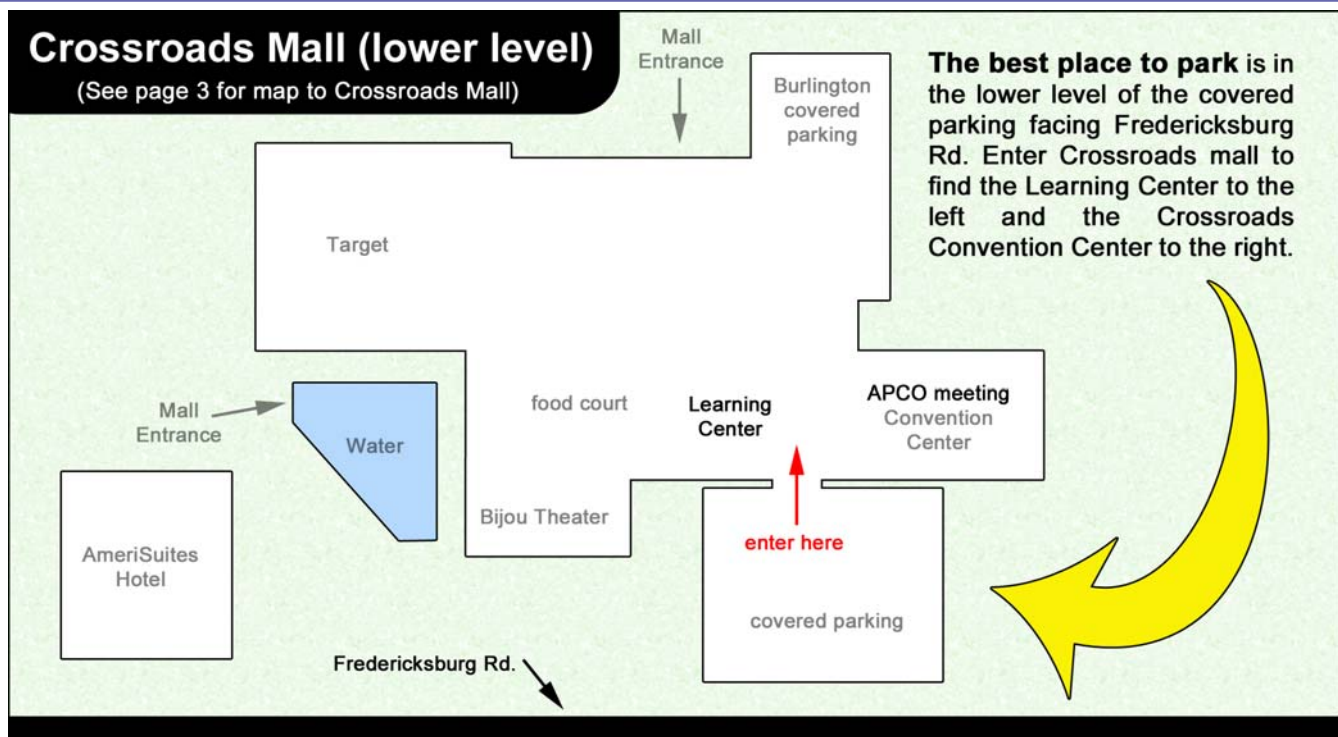
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736-0700

FAX 736-0032

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



# PC Alamode Links List



## BlogLines

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

Combines the best of blogging (online diary) and RSS (Real Simple Syndication - format for distributing news headlines and other content on the Web).



## Flowgo

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

A fun Web site featuring cartoons, animation, interactive quizzes and games. You can even send e-cards and plan your calendar!

← enter

**Joseph de Leon, Editor**

<[editor@alamopc.org](mailto:editor@alamopc.org)>



**Joseph de Leon, Alamo PC**

Joseph has worked in the graphics industry for 7 years and teaches graphics and web classes at San Antonio College.

The December issue has traditionally been an end of the year buying guide of sorts. You can find all kinds of cool gadgets placed throughout the magazine. You will also find some useful articles for people who buy a new computer.

Many of you will be interested in a pair of articles that first appeared in PC Alamode December 2001. Both have been updated for this issue. Clarke Bird, former editor of PC Alamode, and Vade Forrester, long time contributor to PC Alamode teamed up to guide you through the madness that is addressing holiday cards.

Clarke has long been a WordPerfect advocate. His article takes you step-by-step through the process of automating your card mailing.

Vade chose to use MS Word because it is such a common word processor. His article shows you how to use Word's mail merge feature to tackle the job.

Happy holidays!

# President's Message

Bill Klutz

## Close Out One; Open Another!

The year of 2005 is rapidly coming to a close. I think most of us have the mental process started for us about mid November. Although we may be trying to focus on Thanksgiving, the retail community starts the "Holiday Blitz" - Advertisements begin to appear, stores begin to display holiday oriented merchandise, and shelves become crowded with "goodies" for everyone on any list that someone could create. At some point, the remainder of the year begins to be measured by "Only shopping days until..." The last week of the year is clearance sales and exchanges.

Then we open a new year, usually making some resolutions about how things will be different, and go about our daily lives. Before we know it, the middle of November is upon us and we start the "Close Out" process again. That usually brings the reality check statement of "Where did the year go?" When we reflect, we often find the resolutions we made at the beginning of the year are incomplete (many still just a good intention statement).

Although there is a lot going on in December, I hope each of us can spare a few moments to evaluate the relationship that exists between each us and The Alamo PC Organization. During the "Giving and Resolving Season" give a commitment to continuing your relationship with the organization and to sharing some of your time and talent. Then make a dedicated resolve to see that it is accomplished.

Last month I addressed some changes - Revised Bylaws, Revised number of Board positions and areas of responsibility, Current Board composition and tenure, etc. I also indicated that of the seven board positions authorized, there are only five filled. Things haven't changed. This puts additional responsibilities on those willing to serve. Once again, I am asking for at least two people to share responsibilities.

### Stocking Stuffer

Normally I only promote this organization, but I feel compelled to try and help each of you with being a better computer user. At the November general meeting we had representatives from Smart Computing (a computer magazine geared to the beginner and intermediate computer user). They brought, copies of the most current magazine and made a presentation about the products published, and the information available on their web site.

Smart Computing is pretty much written in "Plain English." After reviewing the latest copy I am very impressed. Only about 15-20% ad content, so more information for the reader. Not only were the articles informative, they provided a level of information I have not been able to find in other computer oriented publications (compare it to a master craftsman sharing years of detailed practical experience, tips and shortcuts). Also, some articles addressed projects I have been considering (included fairly detailed "how to" info), and others provided proposed solutions to problems I have recently encountered. (I fixed a couple using the info presented.)

Some of information presented in the Articles included: Desktop Publishing Applications (Buying Tips, brief overview of several software programs, and a scorecard); Password Recovery; abbreviated software reviews; management of computer power electrical power; Windows file & user permissions; Global Positioning System and The Web; Hard Drive technology, purchasing and maintenance; Your Own Remote Security System; Find It Online (many products, prices and respective web sites focused on proposed Holiday gift items); PC Tool Chest (26 programs, many of which are FREE, that can help with Tasks, Security, Efficiency & Customization, and electronic Cleaning ); Transferring audio content to a PC; Tips for using features of specific software (Microsoft, Paint Shop, & Corel), plus Quick Tips for various common tasks; and Examining Errors (problem, error message, proposed solution). I am sure there will be similar informative articles in future issues.

The forgoing list should validate The Smart Computing statement, "Subscribers will receive a great computing publication full of trouble-shooting advice and thousands of tips, tricks and step-by-step instructions that will save them hours of frustration." Plus, they will allow free, unlimited access to the web site where current and past issues are stored, and free access to four additional computing magazines they publish. A very good deal for \$29 a year (about 60% less than cover price). Also, check out the limited-time Reference Series (\$19.95; \$9.85 ea) as a gift for yourself or someone who can use the info presented. If you or someone you know is interested, visit them at <smartcomputing.com> or call 800-733-3809.

### The plea goes on!

Once again I ask each member to being a little more involved with the Alamo PC Organization. Consider taking a class or two during 2006. Keep your member info current, especially your E-Mail address for periodic notices (update both on the web-site, via "members" password protected section). It will allow us to send a renewal reminder without cost to the organization. Please keep track of when your membership expires, and renew well in advance, to save the organization a notification expense. Attend some of the monthly general meetings where presenters provide information about current and future computer related issues. (You also have the opportunity to go home with free product that is distributed by the presenter and/or receive limited time discounts.)

Membership renewals remain a concern - we are still 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), or to me through the organization account <president@alamopc.org> or privately <wlklutzjr@juno.com>. Also, if you have anything (comment, question, statement, concern), please make someone aware of it. I welcome all communications, especially those on how we can improve the Alamo PC Organization and increase member interest!

I hope everyone had a very nice Thanksgiving. Hope everyone has a very Happy Holidays with family and friends.



No presenter has been confirmed.

## News Brief

### Microsoft Finalizes Genuine Advantage

Microsoft has gone live with the Windows Genuine Advantage program. The program, which has been available in an avoidable pilot version since late 2004, is now mandatory. Microsoft also noted that it has somewhat simplified the Windows Genuine Advantage validation process; for example, users are no longer required to enter a 25-character product key to validate their software. Users who try to validate software and discover that they're unwittingly (or otherwise) running illegitimate copies of Windows have a few options. According to Microsoft, qualifying customers who fill out a piracy report, provide proof of purchase, and send in their counterfeit CD-ROMs can receive a genuine copy of Windows XP Home Edition or XP Professional Edition (depending on which version they're using) at no cost. Customers who submit a piracy report can get XP Home for \$99 or XP Pro for \$149.

## News Brief

### New Intel Technology Could Shorten PC Boot Up Time

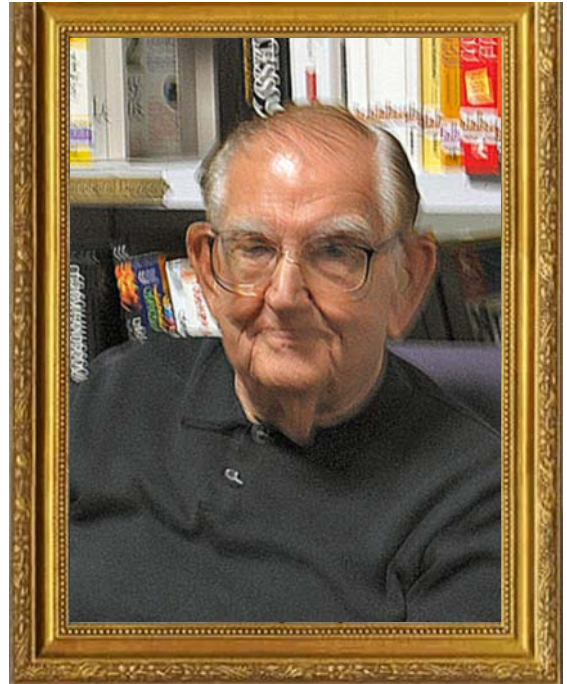
With Robson, a PC pulls data and applications off an add-in flash memory card and Intel software, rather than the PC's hard drive. Potentially, notebook users could experience a longer battery life because the hard drive wouldn't have to work as hard.

Intel did not provide exact boot-up time comparisons, but a representative said Robson will cut the amount of time it takes from when you hit the "on" button to when the PC can operate, the time it takes to go from a sleep state to an active state, and the time it takes to launch an application.



## Volunteer of the Month

### Ed Henkin



### News Brief

## Coming soon: 30Gb on a 1-inch drive

A Japanese university has shown a prototype 10GB 1-inch hard disk drive that packs data on the disk surface more densely than existing hard drives with an areal density--the number of bits per unit of disk surface areal--of 138 gigabits per square inch.

The drive uses perpendicular recording technology to achieve its higher areal density. The Japanese researchers project they will be able to boost the areal density of 1-inch disks to about 500-gigabits per square inch in 2007. This could enable 1-inch drives to have capacities as high as 30GB a few years from now.

Currently, the highest-capacity 1-inch drives on sale store a maximum of 6GB of data.

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:

Live Oak Convention Center  
8101 Pat Booker Road  
San Antonio, TX.

Dec 10, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

more info at <http://www.pcshows.com/>





# Geeky Gourmet

It's nearly Christmas, and with all the hectic activities, drop in guests, and friends, I thought a few easy things to have on hand for some quick refreshment would be good. The rich Mexican eggnog keeps under refrigeration for a long time, well into the new year. It can be sipped from small glasses or served over the pumpkin cake or over some berries.

## Rompop De Almendras (Almond Eggnog)

6 whole cloves  
1 4-inch stick cinnamon  
2 cups rum, or to taste  
6 cups milk  
2-1/2 cups sugar  
1/2 cup finely ground blanched almonds  
15 egg yolks  
1/4 teaspoon grated nutmeg

Marinate the cloves and cinnamon stick in the rum for 24 hours. Boil the milk and sugar in a large saucepan. Add the almonds and cook over low heat for 5 minutes. Set aside.

Beat the egg yolks for 5-10 minutes until they form a ribbon. Mix 1 cup of the boiled milk into the egg yolks. Add this mixture to the rest of the milk and cook over low heat, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon, for 10 minutes or until thickened.

Remove the cloves and cinnamon and stir the rum into the eggnog. Sprinkle each serving with nutmeg. Serve at room temperature or chilled.

## Pumpkin Pound Cake

2 cups sugar  
4 eggs  
1-1/2 cups oil  
2 cups flour  
1-teaspoon salt  
2 teaspoons soda  
3 teaspoons cinnamon  
1-1/2 cups canned pumpkin

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Blend together sugar, eggs and oil thoroughly. Sift together dry ingredients and add alternately to first mixture with pumpkin, mixing well after each addition. Bake in greased and floured 1-inch tube pan for 1 hour. Cool 20 – 25 minutes in pan. Frost when cool, with favorite icing or serve with the rompop.



## Texas Trash

3/4 cup bacon grease or margarine  
1-1/2 sticks margarine  
3 Tablespoons Worcestershire sauce  
3 Tablespoons garlic salt  
1-1/2 teaspoons Accent  
2 Tablespoons Tabasco  
1 large can mixed nuts  
1/2 box Cheerios  
2 boxes small pretzels  
1/2 box Wheat Chex  
1/2 box Rice Chex  
Oyster crackers (optional)

Mix first 6 ingredients together in a saucepan and pour over the next 6 ingredients. Bake 1-1/2 hours at 225 degrees. Stir every 15 minutes. Place in covered containers and serve for snacks.

## Texas Best Bean Dip (a far cry from the plastic taste of the canned variety)

4 cups pinto beans  
2 cups chopped onion  
3 cloves garlic, chopped  
2 tablespoons ground cumin seeds  
2 tablespoons bacon drippings  
6 tablespoons chili powder  
Salt to taste  
1/2 cup butter  
1/2 pound sharp Cheddar cheese, grated  
dash of hot sauce.

Soak beans overnight. Cook in soaking water with onions, garlic, cumin, chili powder and bacon drippings. Simmer 3 – 4 hours. When beans are soft, add salt. While beans are warm, add butter, cheese and hot sauce. Blend in blender until smooth. Serve warm with tortilla chips.



## 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.

**W**ebBuild Express sounds like a great tool for building your new Web site and Serre Murphy, president of Net Fulfillment Technologies Inc. was a vendor at the spring FACUG conference. I asked him for a deal for my readers. Below is information I have put together from their Web site. He is sending me a review copy so I should have some actual experience soon.

They say you don't have to know how to program or write HTML code to use WebBuild Express. Using it, you can easily organize your site and create menus and links to the other pages, and to other sites. Using the unique "Dashboard" feature, you can include special functions like hit counters and search windows in your pages. Other features enable you to create backup copies of your work and to export data to other WebBuild Express users. WebBuild Express is designed to be intuitive and easy to learn and if you've used a modern Word Processing program, you'll be capable of using this Web design software to start building your own sites immediately.

This product also has plenty of undo/redone options just in case you have a problem making up your mind about the design of your Web site. It has Paste Special capabilities, which can be valuable in the design of your site. WebBuild Express organizes your pages by "Application." An application is the collection of pages, images, and other files for a Web site. You can build as many Applications using WebBuild Express as you want and there is no limit on the number of sites you can have, or the number of pages you can have on each site. A page in WebBuild Express corresponds to each page you will have on the published site. Each page can have a title, which will appear in the browser's title bar, and other information that is useful for getting the page listed by search engines.

You can preview a page at any time by clicking the Preview Page tool button (or selecting "Page Preview" from the "File" menu). Page Preview will launch your browser and display the page you are working on as it will appear when published. You can also view an entire site by choosing "Site Preview" on the "File" menu. Site preview creates the html code for all pages in your application and is useful for testing links between your pages. You can use the "Send to Server (FTP)" choice on the File menu to send the files you have published (see paragraph above) to a Web server by supplying the Internet address of the server, your user name, and your password.

Check their Web site <<http://www.nfti.net>> for more information. They are offering us a 25% discount from the MSRP of \$29.95 (already a bargain), making the final price just \$22.45 until January of 2006, saving you \$7.50. To download it at <<http://store.esellerate.net/nfti/store>>, use the coupon code CPN8348901136, when it calls for it, to receive your 25% discount. Ordering it on CD-ROM will add \$10.00. All these features and tech support too! On behalf of my readers, I thank Mr. Murphy for this special offer.

#### \*Announcement for SearchMyDisks 2.01.

I'm pleased to inform members of Users Groups that 10-Strike Software releases SearchMyDisks 2.01 (formerly 10-Strike

Disk-Pile). Please, find the press release for SearchMyDisks 2.01 below for your information. Please note, our summer discounts are still available and the cost of registering the program is 20 US Dollars. Exclusively for Users Group people we've arranged a RegNow 10% discount coupon: STRK-G4BI-GRP

#### \* SearchMyDisks

New disk cataloger and search engine helps PC owners find necessary CD or DVD in seconds.

SearchMyDisks (formerly marketed as 10-Strike Disk-Pile) is a handy software application that helps folks with large CD and DVD collection quickly find the disk that has a needed file, photograph, music track or movie clip. This is how the program works:

First, a person inserts every CD or DVD that needs to be indexed into the PC. The program will automatically scan the disk, cataloging its contents. In addition to that, the program will store the file structure of the disk, thumbnail images and EXIF tags for photographs, MP3 ID3 tags for MP3 tracks, file properties (avi, exe, dll, jpg, gif, bmp, png, tiff, psd, tga, pcx, and other files). It's also possible and advisable to create short descriptions for certain contents of the disk. Plus, the program offers an option to create a file tree that contains files and folders stored on different disks.

After the first step is completed, the program is ready to be used. If the need arises to find that track or photograph, a person simply enters the name of the file or other search parameter, like the name of song, performer or album, and SearchMyDisks will show exactly what CD or DVD contains the desired data. No more trying to discern scribbles on the back cover, inserting and ejecting disks or endless browsing. Reports, for instance "My MP3 Collection," (text or HTML) can be built on demand.

It's possible to organize CDs and DVDs into special groups (i.e. images, music, data) and one disk may belong to multiple groups. Second, SearchMyDisks will store information on hundreds of disks without hogging all that disk space or system resources. A few megabytes will do. Finally, there is the "Borrowed Disk" feature that makes it possible to distinguish between the disks that are loaned out and the ones currently on the shelves. Plus, the program can search through zip, rar, arj, cab, sfx archives to find a file.

SearchMyDisks 2.01 is available at <<http://www.10-strike.com/searchmydisks/>> for free download. The cost of registering the program is 20 US Dollars.

# What is CALEA and Will It Affect My Life?

**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](mailto:johnb@jnbrewer.com)>

In 1994, Congress passed a law known as the Communications Assistance for Law Enforcement Act of 1994. The purpose of CALEA is to define the existing statutory obligation of telecommunications carriers to assist law enforcement in executing electronic surveillance pursuant to court order or other lawful authorization and requires carriers to design or modify their systems to ensure that lawfully-authorized electronic surveillance can be performed. That is a mouthful

In simple terms, the focus is electronic surveillance of telephone calls. A bit of history preceding the enactment of CALEA is helpful.

Electronic surveillance consists of either the interception of call content (commonly referred to as wiretaps) and/or the interception of call-identifying information (commonly referred to as dialed-number extraction) through the use of pen registers and/or trap and trace devices. Lawfully-authorized electronic surveillance is considered to be an invaluable tool for law enforcement in its fight against crime and terrorism.

In 1968, Congress passed the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act, which laid out the meticulous procedures law enforcement must follow to obtain the necessary judicial authorization to conduct electronic surveillance. The law was enacted after Congress debated issues concerning law enforcement's need to effectively address serious criminal activity and an individual's right to privacy.

In 1970, Congress amended the federal wiretap statute to make clear the duty of service providers and others to provide law enforcement with the technical and other assistance necessary to accomplish the intercept.

In 1978, Congress passed the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) to safeguard national security by authorizing select government agencies to conduct electronic surveillance of a foreign power or an agent of a foreign power for the purpose of obtaining foreign intelligence information.

In 1986, as a result of developments in telecommunications and computer technologies, Congress enacted the Electronic Communications Privacy Act, which amended the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act by broadening its coverage to include electronic communications (including email, data transmissions, faxes, and pagers).

The provisions of Title III of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act, as amended, continue to govern the U.S. procedures for obtaining legal authority for initiating and conducting lawful interceptions of wire, oral, and electronic communications.

CALEA seeks to expand the capabilities of law enforcement agencies to perform electronic surveillance and stay current with changes in technology. The issue that has become a current controversy is the cost of compliance by the private sector. A term that is attached to this sort of compliance issue is "unfunded mandate."

A recent article in the New York Times addresses CALEA and the cost of compliance. "The federal government, vastly extending the reach of an 11-year-old law, is requiring hundreds of universities, online communications companies and cities to overhaul their Internet computer networks to make it easier for law enforcement authorities to monitor e-mail and other online communications. The action, which the government says is intended to help catch terrorists and other criminals, has unleashed protests and the threat of lawsuits from universities, which argue that it will cost them at least

\$7 billion while doing little to apprehend lawbreakers. The order, issued by the Federal Communications Commission in August and first published in the Federal Register last week, extends the provisions of a 1994 wiretap law not only to universities, but also to libraries, airports providing wireless service and commercial Internet access providers. It also applies to municipalities that provide Internet access to residents, be they rural towns or cities like Philadelphia and San Francisco, which have plans to build their own Net access networks."

The technology that has created the sudden brouhaha is the ability to make telephone calls over the Internet. Internet traffic is sent in packets of data and they do not necessarily follow each other in a constant stream of traffic. In fact, they are often sent through different Internet routes and assembled at the receiving end.

According to the New York Times article, "technology experts retained by the schools estimated that it could cost universities at least \$7 billion just to buy the Internet switches and routers necessary for compliance. That figure does not include installation or the costs of hiring and training staff to oversee the sophisticated circuitry around the clock, as the law requires, the experts said." Terry Hartle, a senior vice-president of the American Council on Education is quoted as stating, "This is the mother of all unfunded mandates. Even the lowest estimates of compliance costs would, on average, increase annual tuition at most American universities by some \$450, at a time when rising education costs are already a sore point with parents and members of Congress."

On October 25, 2005, a coalition of public interest and business groups asked the federal appeals court for the District of Columbia to overturn the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ruling requiring that broadband Internet and interconnected voice-over Internet Protocol (VOIP) services be designed to make government wiretapping easier.

In the ruling finalized on October 13, the FCC ordered distributors of broadband and certain VOIP services to comply with the CALEA. CALEA requires telephone companies to design their systems to ensure a baseline level of government wiretapping capability. Some experts opine that when Congress passed CALEA in 1994 it specifically exempted the Internet from its reach.

The civil liberties, privacy and high-tech industry advocates opposing the FCC ruling warn that it extends the wiretapping rules to technologies it was never intended to cover, imposes a burdensome government mandate on innovators and threatens the privacy rights of individuals who use the Internet and other new communications technologies.

The appeal was filed by a number of parties that include the Center for Democracy and Technology, COMPTTEL, the Electronic Frontier Foundation, the Electronic Privacy Information Center, Pulver.com and Sun Microsystems.

The merger of the voice telephone system and the Internet has created new challenges that are yet to be resolved.



## Steps to a Safer System

**Rob Rice, Computer Club of Oklahoma City**

Rob Rice is a computer specialist working in Anchorage, Alaska. Rob can be contacted at <articles@isp.com>

One of the most frequent complaints that I hear from business folks is that they hate to travel with a laptop computer. They are too heavy; they don't seem to fit anywhere convenient; and you have to constantly keep an eye on them. Managers are often not too fond of them either. A big security risk, being a target of theft, they are also expensive. Many home users will buy a laptop thinking that its portability is a plus over the traditional desktop, but they too often will park it after one or two trips away from home.

An alternative solution is to take your data with you while leaving the laptop at home. In times past, you needed the laptop to make large amounts of data portable, but if you have access to another computer at your destination, you can bring your Internet bookmarks, documents, desktop and even browser along with you in a USB drive. Until recently, these drives were mainly used for storage and file transfers, but now the software is catching up to the technology and in a big way.

With flash drives now in competition with mini hard drives, the hardware side of USB storage has seen tremendous growth. Flash drives are now up to 4 gigabytes and mini USB hard drives reaching beyond 20 gigabytes, so, many people are discovering that they do not need to drag along a laptop.

Software has also seen a host of new products introduced that makes it easy to take your personal computing with you. Much of the growth comes with the introduction of the "U3 platform." From the company by the same name, the U3 platform allows for the launching of applications from a USB storage device. Here are some remarks from the U3 press release of September 19, 2005:

U3(TM) LLC; its backers M-Systems and SanDisk® Corp.; global hardware partners Kingston® Technology Company, Memorex®, Verbatim® Limited; and a diverse group of global software developers today unveiled the industry's very first USB smart drives and U3 smart software applications. U3 smart drives host U3 smart applications, computer settings and data, allowing people to carry their 'personal workspace' with them and to access it on other PCs for a truly mobile experience. The company also launched U3 Software Central, the online place for consumers to download a variety of U3 smart software applications to their U3 smart drives. U3 Software Central is accessible with a single click from the U3 Launchpad interface on U3 smart drives or from <<http://www.u3.com>>.

Some of the products available on the U3 USB smart drives include: FireFox & Thunderbird, PocoMail, Skype, BeInSync, WinAmp, McAfee portable firewall and anti-virus, Trend Micro anti-virus, ZoneAlarm, Ulead Pocket DV Show, PreClick Photo Backpack, SecurDataStor, ICQ and Migo.

But you don't need U3 to have a portable desktop. Migo <<http://www.pwhtgroup.com/>>, which is available on a U3 flash drive, has been available on the Kingston DataTraveler II Plus (Migo Edition) USB flash drive for several months now. What makes this product special is not so much the flash drive itself, (which is fairly fast!) but the Migo software. Migo can be purchased separately and added to any USB storage device and will synchronize your work with your home or office computer. According to the publisher:



With Migo software on your USB device, any computer you use will look and act like your primary computer. Your Internet Explorer favorites, desktop wallpaper, your most important documents and files, and your windows settings will all be exactly the way you want them. Migo also lets you bring your Outlook® email and files wherever you go, so you can use Migo to send and receive Outlook email on another computer from almost anywhere. When you are done working remotely, pull out the device and leave no trace of your work on that guest PC. When you get back to your primary PC, Migo synchronizes all of your changes back to your home or work computer as if you had never been gone.

You can put Migo on your flash drive or mini USB hard drive. For the ultimate in Geek Chic, you can buy a Migo watch or even put it on a Pretec USB flash earring or necklace <<http://www.pretec.com/PR/2005/Computex/FashionPretec.htm>>.



## Scrabble® Hints for PDA and Board Game

**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>.

I honestly, seriously had planned to sum up my year with a Mailwasher™ article to let you know the pros and cons of its use now that I really have a handle on it. But this is December, and it didn't seem right to have an article that was less than joyous; and let's face it, Spam is not a very joyous topic. Thus I make a promise to deal with that topic next month, and offer something more fun this time around.

Uh, yes, another problem—I already wrote about Scrabble® once this year, in my March article. I quote myself here:

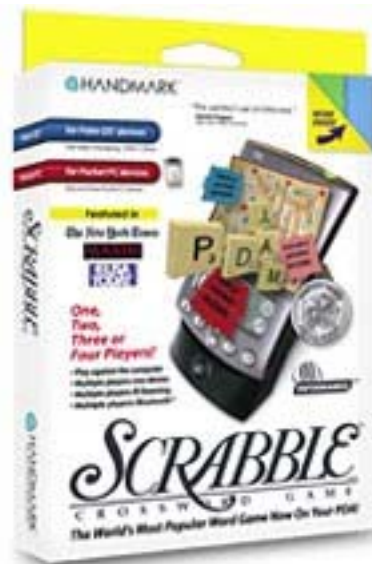
Take a game initially conceived in 1931 and developed in its current incarnation in 1948. Code the process and put the resulting product on a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA). The resulting product is the game of Scrabble® for the Palm and the most amazing thing about this electronic game is that an old linguistic board game lends itself to computerization as if it were designed for it. Computerization actually improves on the old board game with speed and instant dictionary lookup and access to players of varying skill levels. Scrabble® is available for download at Handango (www.handango.com) for about \$20.

Some things, after all, are worth repeating. And now that I have spent the better part of a year playing Scrabble® obsessively on my Palm PDA, I wanted to pass on a few hints to those who are similarly obsessed.

The Scrabble® people must have realized what a goldmine they had and started marketing more products. You can now order a dedicated electronic Scrabble® game called Scrabble® Express, and an Electronic Scrabble® Dictionary to use with the board game. I saw both of these recently in a Travelsmith™ catalog (www.travelsmith.com) along with a tiny travel-sized version of the low-tech board game. Another new product is the online game, available at www.scrabble.com, which makes your PC a Scrabble® board and allows you to play e-mail games and even to integrate your MP3s and CD music into your games. Of course, if you already have Scrabble® on your PDA, you have everything you need, and when you're playing the game on your PDA, you actually look like you're doing something productive.

Which you are. Recent medical reports indicate that playing mental games such as Scrabble® is a good way for us geezers, uh, senior citizens, to ward off the possibility of dementia and Alzheimer's in the coming years. I have already discovered one way it has helped my mental function. Being a technical writer dealing with E-Commerce Infrastructure, I come across a lot of new and unusual terms. I have found it much easier to remember the terms and their spellings because I'm subconsciously assessing the Scrabble® point value of the letters in any particular word. For example, just this week, I read about AJAX, which stands for Asynchronous JavaScript and XML. A Scrabble® aficionado can't help noticing that this word has two honors letters—J and X are both 8-point letters, surpassed only by Q and Z at ten points each.

If you have bought my arguments so far and are in the mood to play Scrabble®, here are my "Ten Commandments of



Scrabble.” Most of my commandments can be used for the board game as well as the PDA game.

1. Start with low expectations. When you start the PDA game, you have a chance to select your opponent's virtuosity. Start with the lowest level. The PDA game labels this as “Beginner.” If you're playing the board game, start with a fourth grader or a non-English speaker. Work up through the higher levels or harder opponents.
2. Play to the board, not to your rack. You may have a perfect seven-letter word on your rack, but if you can't put it on the board, it's useless. Keep an eye on the board for places that beg for a letter or two to make a high-point word. Of course, if you can use the seven-letter word, you get 50 extra points for your trouble.
3. Keep an eye on the colored squares. A two-letter word, well placed, can rack up more points than a six-letter word somewhere else. Cover a red or pink square and the point value of your word doubles (pink) or triples (red.) Cover a turquoise or blue square and the point value of the covering letter doubles (turquoise) or triples (blue)—especially useful for honors tiles like Q, Z, J and X.
4. Rack up points with parallel play. Instead of placing letters across the other person's word, try placing several letters adjacent and parallel to the word. This way you can make two,

three, or even four short words, which usually add up to more points than a single, longer word.

5. Be suspicious of your opponent. A high-point word placed next to a red square, where your opponent can complete it with an "s" in the red square, could give away three times as many points. Sometimes it's best to take fewer points to keep your opponent from capitalizing on your work.

6. Know some honors words. Zee, zed, zek, azo and jeez are popular, as are fax, ax, ox, oxo and onyx. Know also some "Q" words that don't require a "U" such as Qat, faqir and tranq.

7. Know some words without consonants. Aa, ae and oe come in handy. Know some words without vowels. Yes, they do actually exist. Scrabble® accepts sh, pht, mm, and nth. They're very useful in parallel play as well as on occasions when you get a less than friendly rack of letters.

8. Don't bet the farm on what you'll have next. If you only lack a "z" to spell "hazmats" it is very unlikely you'll get that "z" on your next turn. Use the letters you have now, and don't count on the letters you might get next turn. In a similar vein, if you have a seven-letter word ready, you might pass your turn once to see if your opponent sets up a place you can put the word, but passing again is probably counter productive.

9. Set the game to "Friendly" mode and use "Suggest Move" sometimes. This hint is for the PDA game. I use "Suggest Move" for opening play to check my own word choice against what the system would choose. As I have progressed, I have been able to guess the system's choice of opening words nine out of ten times. I also use it when the game is about to close and I can't tell whether I have any legitimate moves left.

10. Know when to cheat. I'm not telling you to cheat blatantly, but the dictionary sometimes refuses to allow legitimate words. One of the PDA game's worst bugs is that it does not recognize the plural when you add an "s" to a preexisting word, even though the dictionary spells out the same plural for you. In this case, you can use the "accept word" option from the warning screen. I also use this handy little feature for perfectly good words that the dictionary won't recognize, such as "zen". If you're on the board game, bluff your opponent. If he asks you to look up the word, he will lose his turn if you show the word exists. Thus, he might not be willing to take the risk in calling your bluff. Be prepared with a perfectly reasonable definition of any non-words you come up with.

When all else fails, conspire. My friend Sheryl and I discovered the game is much more fun when we make up words together and create definitions for them. This is much more fun than following the rules.

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## Gone Fishin'

### 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.pcprou.com](http://www.pcprou.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@pcprou.com](mailto:service@pcprou.com)>. See his ad for PC Pro Computer Services on page 40.

It doesn't look as though computer viruses, spyware and the other malware will leave us anytime soon and as the old proverb goes "Give a man a fish; you have fed him for today. Teach a man to fish; and you have fed him for a lifetime." In this case I say rid a man's computer of malware; and his computer is good until the next bug hits it; teach a man good computer security; and the next bug won't get into his computer or at least do as much harm. Don't get me wrong, I'm not trying to work myself out of a job as a computer technician but I believe that some level of user knowledge should be just as much a part of our lives as computers themselves.

It used to be that just turning on a computer and writing a letter to a friend was all we used the computer for and that was fine. There was no evil lurking down the information super highway because the highway had not been built yet. Our biggest concern was that little floppy disk that you would stick in the A: drive. Where did it come from? Who had used it before Aunt Jeanie? Did it have the "Stoned" virus on it? Today you can go around the world in 60 seconds with high speed Internet connections and click on some things you unknowingly shouldn't. And unlike the old days the malware of today doesn't send you a nice big message on your computer screen saying your computer is "stoned". The evil doers of today like to let the malware get inside your computer build up and fester, using your computer's resources, by running programs in the background, taking personal information, sending pop-ups and other annoying activities. The agenda is more than mere mischief these days there is a money trail to most of this but that is for another story.

The main goal of this column is to inform computer users of the ever growing problem of malware and without further ado lets get into helping make you smarter. There is a world of knowledge out there in print and on the Information super highway. Some information such as product reviews of antispyware software is easier to digest than say detailed information about editing the registry to remove a persistent strain of spyware.

In a recent article in PC World magazine ([www.pcworld.com](http://www.pcworld.com)) 10 items were outlined to combat the malware issue. Along with good security practices, updating your software and other good tips, number 6 was user education. Speaking of PC World magazine, a good computer magazine is a good place to start. Some of the articles may be of little interest to many people but any of the good magazines such as Smart Computing ([www.smartcomputing.com](http://www.smartcomputing.com)), Maximum PC ([www.maximumpc.com](http://www.maximumpc.com)) and the one mentioned at the beginning of this paragraph, will usually feature the topic of malware from time to time. You can usually get a free trial offer by visiting the magazines website. These magazines are not highly technical and usually explain most general public issues such as malware and computer security in a very user friendly way. I suggest you take a magazine such as one of the aforementioned for a test drive or have Santa sign you up for a subscription you'll be smarter for it.

Another great source for information is Internet forums. A forum is an information interchange regarding a specific topic that is hosted on website. It can include the latest

news on the subject, a conferencing capability for questions and answers by participants as well as files for downloading fixes, demos and other related material. One forum that I visit frequently is Spyware Warrior (<http://www.spywarewarrior.com/index.php>). There you will find a plethora of information regarding this evil subject.

**Spyware Warrior**  
Waging the war against spyware.

Besides tips on how to combat the subject matter you will find what I consider to be an invaluable resource which is a list of "rouge" antispyware applications. I covered this in a previous article because it has become such a problem. Downloading and installing a rouge antispyware applications to rid your computer of spyware would be like trying to put a fire out by pouring gas it.

**SpywareInfo**  
home of the spyware weekly



Another forum you might want to check out is Spyware Info at <http://forums.spywareinfo.com>. You can search these forums for specific information on a particular demon you might be wrestling with to get tips on how to deal with it. Another neat thing about these forums is that they usually offer a newsletter that you can read at their website or ask to be put on their mailing list and have the newsletter delivered directly to your email inbox.

If you want to get off the screen for a while and cozy up to a big thick book on the subject here are some of my recommendations:

**Blocking Spam and Spyware For Dummies** by Peter H. Gregory, Mike Simon. I always find the Dummies series a good read sprinkled with humor.

**How to Do Everything to Fight Spam, Viruses, Pop-Ups, and Spyware** by Ken Feinstein from the "How to do Everything series of books."

**Malware: Fighting Malicious Code**, by Ed Skoudis, Lenny Zeltser. Besides being lengthy at over 600 pages this book can be a more technical read than the others but some of the information is well worth it.



## SPAM Defense

**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](mailto:russell@bjassociates.com)> or visit them on the web at <<http://bjassociates.com>>.

Preventive Maintenance

**M**ost everyone who uses Internet e-mail knows of the term spam. A common definition would be an unsolicited, often commercial message transmitted through the Internet as a mass mailing to a large number of recipients. The term "spam" is thought to come from the Monty Python sketch where the name of the canned meat product is used so often that it crowds everything else out. That would be an appropriate name since it now seems to crowd out the regular, useful e-mail that we receive in our inboxes.

I think that most of us would call spam a waste of our time and Internet resources. It clogs e-mail servers not only with the e-mails themselves but also the replies that most servers are required to send for e-mails that are not delivered. I cannot imagine why there are so many spam e-mails but obviously it is working because the number is continuing to increase. What can we, as the receivers of this unwanted e-mail, do to combat the problem?

The first method would be to never buy anything from an unsolicited e-mail. If spamming did not provide an economic benefit to the sender, then it would become obsolete. Even if the item that is being advertised is something that you would normally buy, do not buy it from them. Just like your mom used to tell you, do not encourage them. Some of the e-mails are actually a front to get your personal information and could then be used to start the process of identity theft against you. You could end up spending money and not receiving any

product, and then find other charges that you did not authorize showing up on your bill. If that were not enough, you also will most likely be added to numerous e-mail lists that are sold within the spamming community. Verified addresses are much more costly than non-verified ones.

The next item is to delete any messages sent by a sender you do not know. While most spam is just annoying text or pictures, there are also those that contain viruses or some other exploit that could damage the computer when it is opened. There are also many e-mails that you could receive from people that you know that you would want to delete because of possible virus activity, but that is for a different column.

Next, never respond to any spam message or click on any links in the message. You might think that you are unsubscribing but usually the only thing you are doing is to verify that they have a valid e-mail address. Now you are back to being added to many more lists because you tried to unsubscribe.

If you choose to use auto preview for your e-mail, there is an option in most client programs that will block any external content. Be sure that you do not turn this on since there is the possibility that the spammers can verify your address when the pictures within the e-mail are shown in the preview pane. This would be the same as responding to the e-mail.

The last item would be to never give out your primary address to anyone or any website that you do not trust. It would be better to have a secondary e-mail address like Hotmail or Yahoo that you use for all

your online activity. This would help to keep your online activity separate from your normal correspondence. Then all of the junk e-mail will go to the online account and not your personal account.

Now we can move on to filtering the junk out. Hotmail has a very good filtering system for spam e-mail. The basic setting will send most of the spam to a special folder labeled Junk E-mail and you can change the setting to only allow e-mail from addresses that appear in your contact list. This would defeat the purpose of the account since most everyone that had this address would not be listed as a contact.

The newest version of Microsoft Outlook also has a very good spam filter built into the program. You have the same options as with a Hotmail account and you can also create a list of safe senders, recipients and blocked senders. You can even choose to block any e-mail that originates from any address ending with a specific top-level domain. This could stop all of the traffic that you might receive from the Russian or Czech domains. I do not know of one e-mail that I have received from either of these countries that has been legitimate.

The best defense is going to be to use some sort of filter as well as a secondary address. After that it is going to be up to you to follow the guidelines for the spam that happens to get past the filters. One slip up and you could find yourself on many more lists. Try to use the suggestions that have been provided. There is no absolute way to stay off the lists, but these suggestions should help reduce spam.

## News Brief - Spoofing Brings Adult Spam to Mobile Phones

Compiled from Fairfax Digital  
<<http://www.smh.com.au>>

A new scam involves people using the Internet to fake, or spoof, the originating number of SMS messages, making it seem as if they came from someone else's mobile.

Experts say the weakness in GSM mobile networks that allows spoofing may leave SMS open to a flood of spam - and could call for police work that relies on the authenticity of SMS.

Mobile companies around the globe have been unprepared for spoofing. Mobile phone spam is on the rise with a 10% rise in spam complaints about SMS. Mobile spam falls under the Spam Act, as with e-mail, and will require mobile users to take precautions to stop spoofing.





## Preventative Maintenance Part VII

### 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.

Here's a good rule of thumb to abide by: Never buy the first version of a hardware or software product. Before you buy Longhorn/Vista, which will be Microsoft's replacement for WinXP, there are several issues for you to give serious consideration. **1.** The benefit of Longhorn/Vista's 64-bit computing is that memory- and CPU- apps will perform better than their 32-bit versions. However few 64-bit programs exist and those that do may not offer much benefit to you. **2.** Before switching from 32-bit XP Pro to 64-bit, download 64-bit drivers from your computer and component makers' sites and then burn them to a CD(s). Without proper drivers, you'll likely run into problems. **3.** Once you have upgraded your copy of 32-bit XP Pro to X64, you forfeit your license to the 32-bit version. If you then run into an incompatibility problem later, you can't go back to the old version, and you can't legally dual-boot 32- and 64-bit Windows. **4.** Unlike 32-bit XP, X64 doesn't run 16-bit apps, including 32-bit programs that rely on a 16-bit installer. You will find that ZoneAlarm's firewall, Symantec's Norton Anti-virus 2005, etc., will all fail to install on your new operating system.

### Bart PE

WinXP lets you make an Emergency Recovery Disk (ERD), but most computer users would not know what to do with its few command-line tools. As a better option to an

ERD you can download Bart's Pre-installed Environment (Bart PE), at [find.pcworld.com/48610](http://find.pcworld.com/48610). It's a free tool that creates a bootable Windows rescue CE or DVD from your WinXP installation disc and can optionally backup utilities, such as AdAware SE anti-spyware tool, etc.

### Grisoft Anti-virus Program

Grisoft Anti-virus Program is free and it comes with a very good reputation. You can download it at: [www.grisoft.com/doc/40/lng/us/tpl/tpl01](http://www.grisoft.com/doc/40/lng/us/tpl/tpl01).

### Troubleshooting Windows

If your computer is experiencing a system related problem, Windows troubleshooters can help. Win98/Me/2000 users, click Start and Help. Win98 users, click the Contents tab, the Troubleshooting link on the Help And Support page, and Win98 Troubleshooters. For WinMe, click Troubleshooting and select a category. If you are Using Win2000, select the Contents tab, Troubleshooting And Maintenance, and select the applicable category. WinXP also offers numerous troubleshooters. To locate them, click Start, select Help & Support, and click the Fixing A Problem topic. In the left pane of the Help And Support Center, click Troubleshooting Problem. Now select a specific problem from the list of items or click the List Of Troubleshooters topic in the Overviews, Articles, And Tutorial section.

### Verified Windows Drivers

If a message appears when installing the driver for a scanner using WinXP that says "unverified," it wants to be sure the driver is authentic and uncorrupted. Microsoft encourages manufacturers to sign their drivers. If the drivers are verified, you're pretty sure that they will work with WinXP. If your driver is unsigned, it could still be good if from a major manufacturer. It just hasn't been verified. If your XP machine develops indigestion after installing a driver, you can rescue it. Activate the Driver Rollback by clicking Start, Control Panel and double-clicking System, clicking the Hardware tab, Device Manager button, and double-clicking the device

in question and selecting the Driver tab. Click Roll Back Driver, then select a driver from the list. You can also use System Restore. To find it, click Start, All Programs, Accessories, System Tools, System Restore, and follow the wizard. WinMe has a similar System Restore feature.

### Windows XP Services

Services are programs that run continuously and invisibly in the background. By default, WinXP enables a number of services that you may not need especially if you do not have a network. These non-essential services run in the background and in some cases may even pose security risks. Unless you need them, it is recommended that you disable these services. Disabling them will not only make your system more secure, but it will help boost system performance. Each service you disable is one less service using up system resources. If you have a single non-networked computer, all the services listed in this article may be safely disabled if you don't use them. If your computer is part of a network or LAN, you may want some of these services running. However, unless you really need them, whether part of a network or not, it is recommended that you disable all the security risk services. For other services, common sense should make it obvious whether or not you need them. For example, if you do not have a wireless adapter or network, then there's no use having a Wireless configuration service running. Other services you may want to retain, even though they are not essential, are Fast User Switching or Themes. Remember, you can always re-enable a service if you ever need it. In your Control Panel, go to Administrative Tools, Services. To be safe, do NOT use "msconfig" to disable services. There are services there that are essential for hardware and booting. When you uncheck a service via Services in "msconfig," you completely disable it. If you uncheck the wrong one, you can end up not being able to start your computer. This situation is not the case when you use Services in the Control Panel management console. You can also display Services in your Start Menu, Programs group by right clicking your Taskbar, clicking Properties, Start Menu tab, Customize. Next put a checkmark next to "Display Administrative Tools." You can now access Services by clicking Start, Program, Administrative Tools, and Services.

Another quick way to access Services is by entering services.msc in the Run box and clicking OK. Once entered and run, it will remain in the autocomplete Run box dropdown



list for even quicker access next time. Once at Services, you will see the complete lists that are running on your system. You see this list under the Status column. If the service is running it will state "Started." You can click a column heading to sort the service by that category. By clicking Status you will see all the running services grouped together. To stop a currently running service, double click it to get to its Properties, and then click the Stop button. To disable it from running again, choose Disabled from the dropdown list under the Startup type section. If you are not sure whether you need a certain service, set it to Manual instead of Disabled.

With Manual, Windows should start the service when needed, however some services won't start even if they are set to Manual. Whether they start on Manual seems to depend on your system configuration. If you want to test if Manual works for you, set Print Spooler to Manual, and then see if you can add a printer. If you can, the Add Print wizard will begin which you can just cancel. You will then know that Manual works. If you get a message stating "Operation Could Not Be Completed," it means the Manual setting does not work. If you stop a service and set it to "Automatic," the service will only remain disabled until your next boot up or login. Below is an alphabetical list of 25 WinXP services which most users of a single non-networked computer do not need and can be safely disabled. Click the Name column heading to sort your Services list alphabetically.

1. **Alerter**- There's no need for this service unless you are on network and need to send and receive administrative alerts.
2. **Clipbook**- There's no need for this service either unless you are on a network and do a lot of copying and pasting to others on your network.
3. **Computer Browser**- You might need this service only if you have a network. Recommend you enabled it because this service keeps track of the computers on the network.
4. **Error Reporting Service**- You should only enable this service if you like those error reporting boxes that pop up whenever you have some crash!
5. **Fast User Switching**- If you like this service enable it, if not, it's not needed.
6. **Human Interface Access Devices**- Disable this service if you don't have devices such as Internet keyboards with volume or play controls or scanners with hot key functions.
7. **Indexing Service**- This service is a resource hog and tends to slow down system performance.
8. **Messenger**- This service is not the same as MSN messenger. It is the bad one with the same name used in networking which allows others to send you messages or spam.
9. **Net Logon**- This service is not needed unless you are part of a Domain.
10. **NetMeeting Remote Desktop Sharing**- This service is a security risk that allows a remote user with NetMeeting to access your computer.
11. **Remote Desktop Help Session Manager**- Again, here's a service that is a security risk. You should disable it unless you are a Remote Desktop user.
12. **Remote Procedure Call Locator**- You should probably retain this service.
13. **Remote Registry**- This service is a security risk because someone can edit your registry remotely. You need to disable it.
14. **Routing and Remote Access**- This service is a security risk that allows lan and wan to dial in access to your computer.
15. **Server**- You need this service only if you are on a LAN for basic file and print sharing services.
16. **SSDP Discovery Service**- This service is another one which is a security risk. Microsoft says this service is a security risk.
17. **Telnet**- Here's yet another security risk service.
18. **Themes**- If you are using the Win 98/2000 classic interface, then you don't need this service.
19. **SSDP Discovery Service**- This service is a security risk because it leaves Port 5000 open and accessible.
20. **TCP/IP NetBIOS Helper**- You should disable this service for security reasons unless your network is using the NetBios protocol.
21. **Universal Plug and Play Device Host**- This service is a security risk. However, some multiplayer games using DirectX 7 and 8 may use this feature even though it's a security risk.
22. **Upload Manager**- This service is not needed even if you do have a network because most operating systems use FTP for file transfers.
23. **Windows Time**- This particular service is optional because you want Microsoft to run an always on service to contact time servers to synchronize the clocks on your network.
24. **Wireless Zero Configuration**- If you don't have a wireless network, there's no need to have this service running. You can always re-enable it if you ever do get into Wireless computing.
25. **WMI Performance Adapter**- This service provides performance library information from WMI HiPerf providers. It is not essential for your use.

Finally, there are many options for backing up the data on your computer. They range from tape drives, CDs, DVDs, floppy disks, zip drives, etc. But, perhaps one of the better choices may be an external hard drive. One such drive is the Maxtor's One Touch II, which is a 250GB external hard drive that links to your computer via a USB 1.1., or 2.0, or FireWire. It comes with a simple yet powerful version of Dantz Retrospect Express backup software. This drive sells for \$265 online.



## Wonderful Wizards of SBS

### 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](http://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](mailto:Larry@LentzComputer.Net)

When you go out to your car, you put your key in the lock and start your engine. Why don't you turn on the spark, put it in neutral, put in the hand crank and crank it to get it going instead? Because you've learned to use the 'wizard' the car manufacturer provided for you in the form of the starter and ignition system. With Windows Small Business Server 2003®, Microsoft has provided a wonderful set of wizards for starting up (configuring) SBS. Unfortunately not everyone uses these wizards, at least at first. The main culprits are MCSEs (like me) and folks who are used to large (Enterprise) systems. Somehow they feel they know better and using the wizards is 'beneath them'. Luckily I learned at an early age (SBS 4.0 in 1997) to use the wizards. James Fogg, a contributor to the SBS List newsgroup ([sbs2k-subscribe@yahoogroup.com](mailto:sbs2k-subscribe@yahoogroup.com)), recently stated 'As someone coming from enterprise Windows environments I had a hard time accepting the advice I received about how "SBS is different", and the advice to "always use the wizards". I was not so stupid as to ignore the advice, so I didn't have to learn the hard way, but I can now say it's all true.' The wizards take of all the 'little things' that make SBS such a great package. Ignore them at your peril.

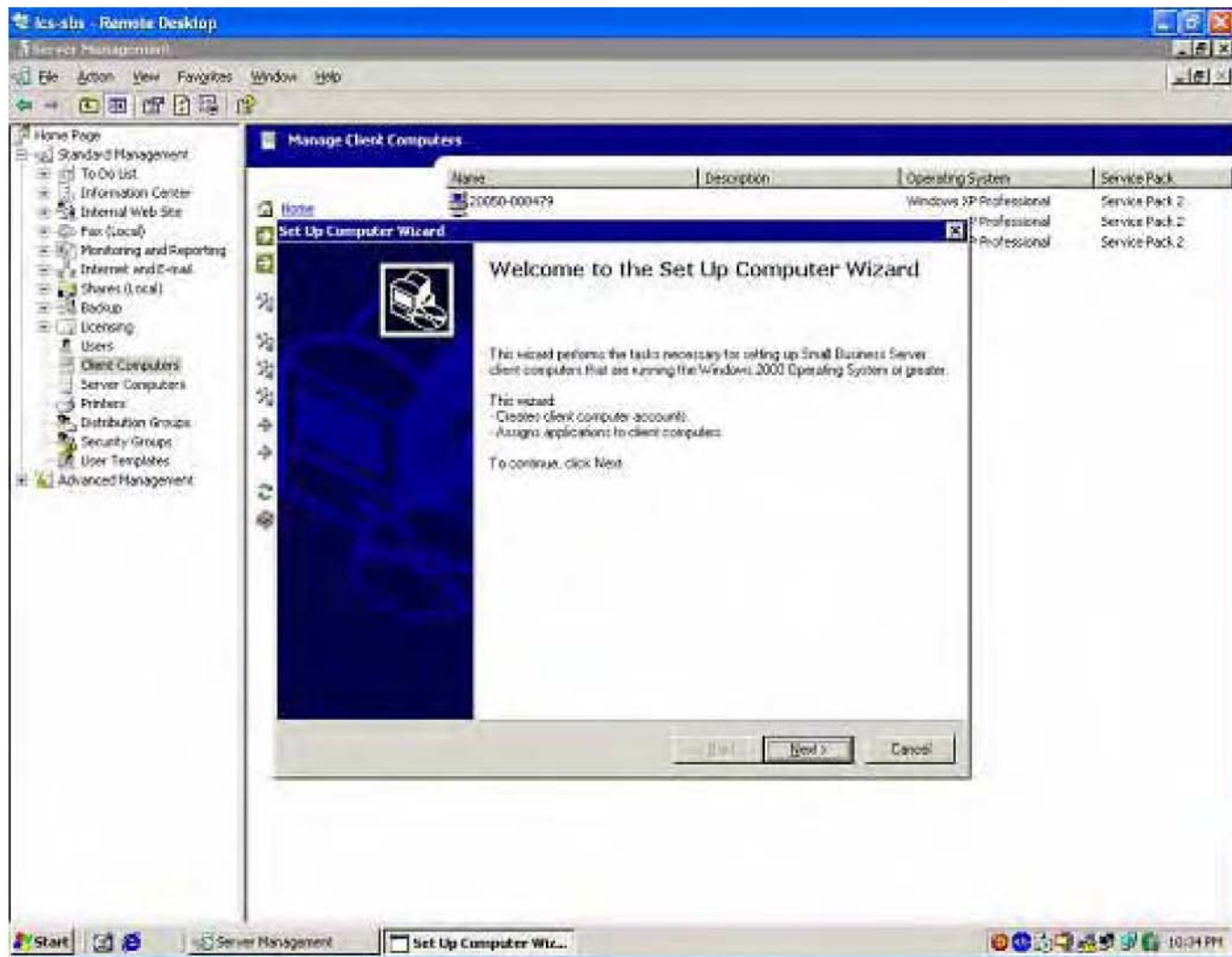


Figure 1



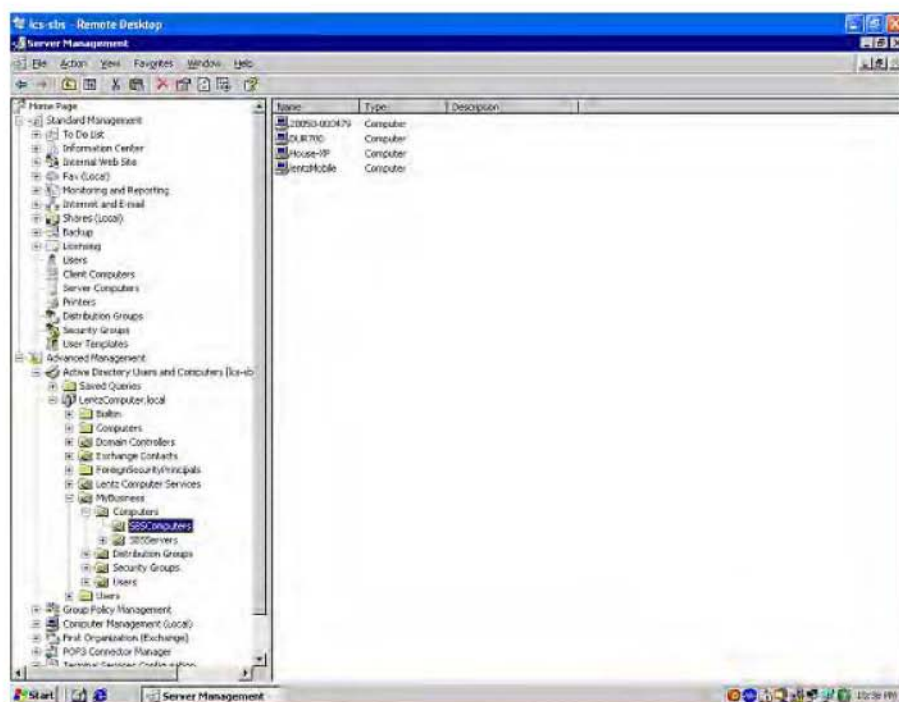


Figure 2

I recently had the opportunity to work on a Small Business Server where the original installer had not used the wizards. The individual users and computers had been joined to the domain manually instead of using the Set Up Computer Wizard (figure 1). Of course all appeared to work. But, when you add computers manually, their accounts are by default placed in the Computers container in Active Directory. When using the wizard, they are placed under the My Business organizational unit (OU), actually a few levels deeper in the OU hierarchy (figure 2).

This may be a subtle nuance but it can have big consequences. I installed ISA Server on the SBS server. Having done that, I now needed to install the ISA Firewall Client on the users' workstations. Normally I create a Group Policy Object (GPO) and link it to the My Business OU. This way it is automatically installed on all of the network computers except the SBS server itself. The SBS server is in the Domain Controllers OU. However since all the computers were in the Computers container and you can't link GPOs to a container, I linked it at the domain level. This worked fine for the workstations. However I noticed that it took for-e-ver to log onto the server. I mean an hour! I eventually figured out it was because the GPO also installed the Firewall Client on the server. A big no-no I learned. I won't do that again. I reconfigured the workstations using the wizards and moved the GPO to the appropriate OU. Then the server logged on fast and the workstations had their Firewall Client so they could access the Internet. Had the wizards been used in the first place, I wouldn't have had this problem.

When you first install Small Business Server 2003, the installation process ends with the To-Do List (figure 3).

This provides a handy way to work your way through the primary wizards to properly configure your server. They are presented in the recommended order but can be run in the order that best suits your needs. Once you've used the wizards, you may go back and make your own adjustments if you must. But run the wizards first.

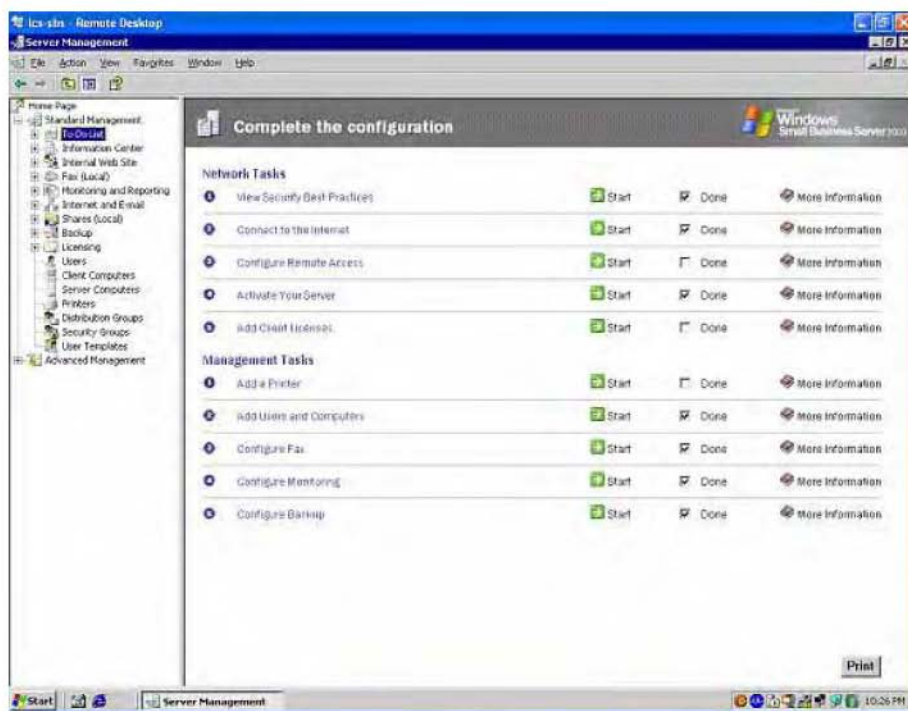


Figure 3





## The \$159 PC?

### Shane Hicks, (certified certifiable)

Shane uses a PC. He wants someone to show him how to get work done with Linux. E-mail him at <shane@vpwn.com.>

I was flipping through the Austin paper the other day when I came across the Fry's Electronics advertisement. For the uninitiated, this store is a geek's paradise. Basically picture it as the Sam's Club version of CompUSA. Sometimes they offer some spectacular deals!

On this occasion, I spotted a complete PC for \$159!

It's the Fry's House Brand, known as GQ for "Great Quality." Their original retail price for this particular system was \$269, but it's been marked down to \$159.

What do you get for \$159?

### HARDWARE

Model number GQ3131 comes in a mini-tower case. It's black. The case has standard side panels, allowing easy access inside. The motherboard is an ECS 741GX-M, a socket 462 motherboard that supports the Athlon XP and Sempron line of processors.

It has integrated SiS Real256E graphics and parallel ATA connections (there aren't any SATA connectors available). Attached to the IDE controllers are a single 40GB Western Digital hard drive and a 52X CD-ROM (which does NOT have CD recording capabilities). It has four USB 2.0 ports, on-board Realtek ALC655 6-channel audio, and a Realtek 10/100 fast Ethernet port.

The processor is a Sempron 2400, clocked at 1.67GHz, with 256KB of L2 cache and 128KB of L1 cache. It supports up to DDR333 memory and comes with a single stick of 128MB (with one open DIMM socket remaining), though 32MB of the 128MB stick is shared with the on-board video card. For expansion, the motherboard offers an AGP 4X/8X graphics slot and three 32-bit PCI slots with its microATX form factor (one PCI slot is filled with a generic PCI modem).

It also has a generic 250W power supply. The system rounds out with a budget set of speakers, a standard keyboard, and a ball mouse.

### SOFTWARE

As far as the operating system goes, you don't get Microsoft Windows. Instead, you get the current version of Linspire, the OS formerly known as "Lindows." For those Linux fans out there, Linspire actually uses a customized KDE desktop and window manager and comes bundled with OpenOffice 1.1.3, Lsongs (for playing your music), and is preloaded with Samba for quick home networking.

### Is the system hard to configure?

Reports that I've seen point to a fairly painless setup, if you wish to continue running Linspire. It has a wizard to walk you through setup and even automatically connects to your network if you have a DHCP enabled router.



Inside the Linspire GQ3131

I've also asked a few who've played with the machines if they handle Microsoft Windows. According to those I've talked to, the drivers are readily available for everything on the system and you can erase the hard drive and load Microsoft Windows XP with no problems.

### Should I buy this PC?

If you were to try and price out the components in the system separately, you'd easily hit the \$200 mark and then you'd end up having to build the system yourself. However, the system (as configured) has some definite issues. First, the included 128MB of RAM isn't even close to being enough. However, the case does allow for easy access and dual-256MB sticks can be had for under \$50 if you shop around. It's not designed to be a gaming machine, but should handle e-mail, Internet, and office work just fine. Also, I've heard second hand that the machine's cooling system can be a bit loud—but not overly so.

If you're in the market for a budget PC for general business tasks, I'd say it's hard to go wrong for \$159!

# The Switcher



## ...the ongoing tale of a Man and his Mac Microsoft Messenger for Mac

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

**M**icrosoft Messenger for Mac is a program that lets you chat online in real time with your friends, family, or anyone else with a Messenger account. Microsoft Messenger for Mac replaces earlier versions of MSN Messenger for Mac.

For those new to Internet messaging, Messenger basically allows you to have a conversation (in a window) and type messages to your contacts. The messages appear instantly on the contact's computer screen. They can respond immediately using the same tool on their end. You can use Messenger to send files, such as pictures or Word documents. You can even set a display picture that represents you during conversations with personal contacts (but not corporate contacts). You can select from a variety of display pictures included with Messenger for Mac or use one of your own. You can change your picture as often as you want.

If you currently use MSN Messenger for Mac, you can upgrade. Simply download the Microsoft Messenger for Mac from Microsoft's website. Then double-click the Microsoft Messenger installer file. The instructions will guide you through installing and configuring Messenger. When upgrading from an earlier version, all of your contacts are transferred into the new interface. Your personal settings, information, and the contents of your Allow and Block lists will also come across.

Microsoft Messenger can be used as a collaboration tool with fellow workers. If your organization uses Microsoft Live Communications Server 2005 (or later), you can chat with other people on your company network without going through the company firewall. Chatting can be a lot faster than e-mail and more convenient than using the telephone. It provides access to your

organization's entire global address list (GAL) and you can easily add colleagues to your contact list. It also uses encryption so that corporate chatting is secure and confidential information stays confidential.

If you don't want to be disturbed, you simply set your status in Messenger. For example, you can list yourself as Busy. When you want to be contacted, list yourself as Online. Your status is visible to your contacts, so they know when you don't want to be disturbed. You can check on the status of others in your organization as well. Messenger conversations are not visible to anyone except the participants. If you don't want someone to be able to initiate a conversation with you, you can block that person from ever seeing you.

With Messenger for Mac, you can chat with anyone who has Microsoft Passport Network credentials and uses a version of MSN Messenger. If you need to chat with someone who doesn't have a Passport Network account, you can send e-mail to invite that person to create credentials (e-mail address and password) to use on the Passport Network and download Messenger for Mac or MSN Messenger for Windows.

*NOTE: Microsoft's Live Communications Server contains features that allow you to chat with others using a variety of instant messaging services (such as AOL Instant Messenger (AIM), Yahoo Instant Messenger (YIM), or iChat).*

### News Brief

## Apple launches Office offer

### Apple is trying to woo more Windows users with discounts for Microsoft Office with new systems

Apple has quietly launched an offer to give Mac buyers money off Microsoft software.

The 'Office Bonus' offer, which runs until the end of January next year, gives shoppers 50 percent off Microsoft Office for Mac when they buy a new Apple desktop or laptop.

Savings on the software bundle could range from \$50 for a Student and Teacher edition, to more than \$200 for the Standard edition.

Analysts believe that more than one million Windows users may have made the switch to Mac this year, mostly driven by this halo effect.

Apple sold 1.2 million Macs during the most recent quarter of this financial year.



## Getting Found

The Lazy Webmaster

### Susan Ives, Alamo PC

Susan Ives is a former president of Alamo PC. She archives these columns on her Web site, <[www.susanives.com/](http://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!

**T**he best thing you can do is to structure your Web site so that it is more likely to be picked up by search engines and categorized correctly.

#### Meta Tags

First, look at the meta data. Meta means "higher level." In Web design, it denotes information that does not show up on the screen but tells the Internet how to handle the document.

Two of them are sometimes used by search engines to find, categorize and prioritize sites and you should use them as a matter of routine. Place meta tags within the <HEAD> tag, right after the <TITLE> tag. The two you need to use are "keywords" and "description" Here is the format:

**<meta name="description" content="San Antonio Vocal Arts Ensemble (SAVAE): Baroque music from Mesoamerica and Middle Eastern music in Aramaic, Hebrew and Arabic from the time of Christ.">**

For the description, aim for about 25 words. Avoid marketing hype and include key words that people may be searching for.

**<meta name="keywords" content="SAVAE, San Antonio Vocal Arts Ensemble, El Milagro De Guadalupe, Virgen De Los Indios, . . . Aramaic, Hebrew, Arabic, Second Temple, . . . plainchant, colonial, Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, renaissance, missionary, Mesoamerican, Virgin Mary, Dead Sea Scrolls, . . . Iago, Early Music, Classical Music, Christopher Moroney, . . . huehuetli, teponaztli, huilacapitzli, . . . ayacaxtli, omichahuaztli">**

Keywords should relate to you site - in fact, it helps a lot if they are actually mentioned in the text of the page. The upper limit is 1,000 characters. Put the most important ones first.

There is no guarantee that search engines will use your tags - some do, some don't - but including them can't hurt.

#### Title Tag

I am surprised at the number of Web pages that fail to take advantage of the <TITLE> tag. If you bookmark a site, the <TITLE> tag is listed as the name of the bookmark or favorite place. If visitors bookmark several pages from your site, the title helps tell them apart. Search engines list the title and may use the words in it as the most important key words. Hint: Some search engines alphabetize their results by title, so pick something near the top of the alphabet. Don't "spam" search engines, though, by calling your site "AAAAAA something." They are onto this and may drop your listing.

The <TITLE> tag should be no more than 80 characters, including spaces. It may get lopped off in some listings, so put the most important information first. Look upon the title as a mini-advertisement for your site: it may be all a visitor coming from a search engine has to go by. Each page in your site

should have a different title to distinguish it from the others. You cannot use HTML code in your title - only text.

#### Search Engine Submission

Search engines typically have robots or spiders that sweep the Web looking for sites and pages to include. Catalogs have a human behind them, selecting sites. In either case, most will have a link that allows you to "suggest a site" to include. Take advantage of this, even though the best positioning in search engines and catalogs usually goes to organizations that pay for higher placement. To learn more about search engines and how to get a good listing, visit Search Engine Watch.

#### Paid inclusion

You can pay money to have your search engine request processed faster, have greater prominence or (in some cases) get listed at all. You can bid on being listed first for selected key words.

It can get expensive. Yahoo commercial listings, for example, are \$300/year. Non-commercial sites can get listed for free, but Yahoo decides which ones get included. Some paid listings are invoiced on the basis of click-throughs - every time someone clicks on a link, you get billed.

This is a call you have to make.

#### Reciprocal Links, Banner Exchanges and Web Rings

Some people set great store by exchanging links with other Web sites. I am ambivalent about this. I am always eager to get my sites listed on directories that specifically pertain to my site's area of concentration. A genealogy site, for example, would want to be included on "Cyndi's List" of 182,500 genealogy links. Everyone goes there for that kind of information. However, my belief is that asking hundreds of sites to link your site in exchange for you listing theirs is a waste of time. If I like a site, I list it. If I don't, I don't. No obligation on either side.

In banner exchanges, you submit an advertising banner to a service. So do others. The free service provides a script that automatically rotates all the banners through your site. You don't get to choose the content or the design of the banners, and often there is a requirement to display them prominently on your front page. Look at an example at Neobanners.

Web Rings are formalized link exchanges that centralize the administration of managing hundreds of links on related topics. They are best suited to nonprofit and hobby sites, although small businesses not in competition with each other may find them useful. The biggest free service is at WebRing - go there to get the details.

#### Word of mouth

Don't forget to advertise your site by more traditional methods. Put it on your business cards and letterhead. Include it in your signature block on e-mail. Tell your friends.





## Vista, Linux

Collected by Pim Borman,

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

Best and Worst

ALAMODE COLUMNS

**V**ista - A distant view or prospect, especially one seen through an opening, as between rows of buildings or trees. (Dictionary.com) It is also the name of the long-awaited next version of Microsoft Windows, not available until at least the second half of 2006 but already widely previewed and discussed in the PC magazines. What do we glimpse in the distance? Should we fight or switch?

The most significant improvement in Vista might well be security, stated to be a primary goal. Only time will tell – we'll still be facing continuing patches, updates and periodic Service Packs, I expect.

New Internet Explorer 7 will be a major makeover, mostly to catch up with features long since available in Opera and Firefox. It will also be available to current Windows XP users. Windows Media Player gets a boost, but will also be available in Windows XP. Vista will appear in 32 and 64-bit versions, to accommodate the new 64-bit CPUs now available from AMD and Intel. Visually, the windows will sport new folder icons that show thumbnails of their contents, although I wonder how they handle folders with dozens of subfolders and files. If your graphics card can handle it, the icons will also be semitransparent, wow!

Originally, Vista was supposed to support a new file system, WINFS. I understand that this file system does away with branching directory trees to store files. Instead, files are all dumped in large containers, maybe such as the current "My Documents" areas. Instead of assigning unique file names, you label the files with any number of suitable tags, similar to the labels currently used in Picasa2 (see the minutes in this issue to read about Larry Goss's presentation in October). The contents of the files are also indexed on the go to facilitate a search for keywords such as already provided by Google Desktop Search and Yahoo Desktop Search. Vista is expected to include a similar search function even before WINFS eventually is implemented. But WINFS will not initially be part of Vista.

As PC Magazine puts it "... it increasingly appears that Vista's differentiating features, aside from the sleek new shell interface, will be the ones that are less visible to typical users: hardened security, better diagnostics, and improved manageability in enterprise environments." Vista will require an up-to-date computer system, with plenty of processor speed, memory, and graphics capability. Manufacturers of scanners and printers will surely provide the necessary drivers for newer equipment, but older peripherals may no longer work. Will it be worth the additional cost and aggravation to upgrade?

Dedicated gamers will love it – they need all the speed they can get, at any cost. Also, if you work with demanding graphics programs,

large databases or similar CPU-intensive programs you'll probably want Vista for better support of multi-core, 64-bit CPUs. Media enthusiasts will love the new features, but why use them on a general-purpose computer? For the rest of us, we're probably better off waiting until we need to buy a new computer that is almost certain to include Vista, whether we like it or not. At least we'll get it at a discount. I estimate that MS Windows,

Office and Media Player contain at least 50% bells and whistles that are of no interest to 75% of its users.

Last year Microsoft announced a crippled version of Windows, called Windows XP Starter Edition, being made available at low cost in certain developing countries. According to CNet News.com (<http://snipurl.com/winstart>) the local versions of the program were made available in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, India and Russia. Cost in Thailand was reported to be \$36, not including MS Works. Its intended use is in local schools for the obvious reason: catch 'm young.

"The MIT Media Lab has launched a new research initiative to develop a \$100 laptop— a technology that could revolutionize how we educate the world's children. To achieve this goal, a new, non-profit association, One Laptop per Child (OLPC), has been created."

"The machines, which will run a version of the Linux operating system, will also include other applications, some developed by MIT researchers, as well as country-specific software.' Software has gotten too fat and unreliable, so we started with Linux."

(<http://snipurl.com/mitlap>) These two quotes from recent MIT press releases point at new directions in the Computer Revolution. First of all, there is the realization that computers are here to stay as a necessity in a civilized society. To the three Rs of basic education we need to add a fourth Requirement, computer literacy. The cost of general-purpose computers has to come down further to make them available to every schoolchild, even in this country, let alone in the developing nations. That includes the need to eliminate the high cost of the MS Windows operating system and commercial productivity programs written for MS Windows. Essentially free Linux is the obvious alternative.

Here is another quote, from [desktop.linux.com](http://desktop.linux.com) (<http://snipurl.com/INaccess>): "A number of Indiana high school students returning for the fall semester will find brand-new Linux desktops in their classrooms. Under the Indiana Access Program, which uses desktop Linux systems and standard hardware configurations to keep costs low, Wintergreen Systems Inc. and Linspire Inc. are providing computers for classrooms. The arrangement could result in as many as 300,000 Linux machines being deployed during coming years, the companies said in a statement." And Indiana is arguably not a third-world nation.

When a new generation of students gets weaned on Linux, they are likely to continue using that operating system in the future, creating the critical mass that it takes to become generally accepted as an alternate desktop tool.



## On the trail of dust

### Paul Vaughn, Alamo PC

Paul Vaughn is a freelance graphic artist, writer and web designer who has yet to object to anything smart. If you would like to see the Graphics Guy address a specific topic, email Paul Vaughn at <paulv@mac.com>.

One of the biggest enemies of effective scanning and photo graphic retouching is dust. Dust on the scanner, dust on the original, dust in the digital camera all conspire to leave those ubiquitous little white dots and squiggles all over your scanned image. You can easily spend hours working on a photo-composite or retouch project and feel that it is perfect, but when you output the image to a high-resolution printer you are bedeviled by those little spots. We will never be able to completely get rid of dust. High-end graphics shops have tried, using clean rooms, ionizing the air, employing anti-static brushes and compressed air with varying amounts of success, but most of us cannot afford such extreme measures. This month, we talk about simple things we can do to alleviate this graphic arts menace.

The first and simplest thing is to try and keep your workstation clean. Computer stores sell those little cans of compressed air (usually for blowing out your keyboard), they are great for blowing some dust off your scanner surface and the originals you will be scanning. On flatbed scans, dust will appear white; but on transparency scans from a film scanner, dust will be black. Swiffer-type cloths also work well for wiping down your computer equipment. It will be a constant struggle since we all know how much dust computers attract, but keeping a clean area for your scanning will save you time in the long run. On a flatbed scanner, be sure to clean the glass using a streak-free cleaner, but be careful not to get the spray inside the scanner.

There are two types of flatbed scanners with regard to dust: open and closed. Most older flatbed scanners are of the open variety. They had vents in the body to cool the interior of the scanner. Unfortunately this also allowed dust to get inside the scanner, onto the underside of the glass, the light source or the CCD element. Occasionally with older scanners it may be necessary to disassemble the scanner (carefully) and dust out the interior. Dust on the CCD manifests itself as a fine line running down the length



Figure 1

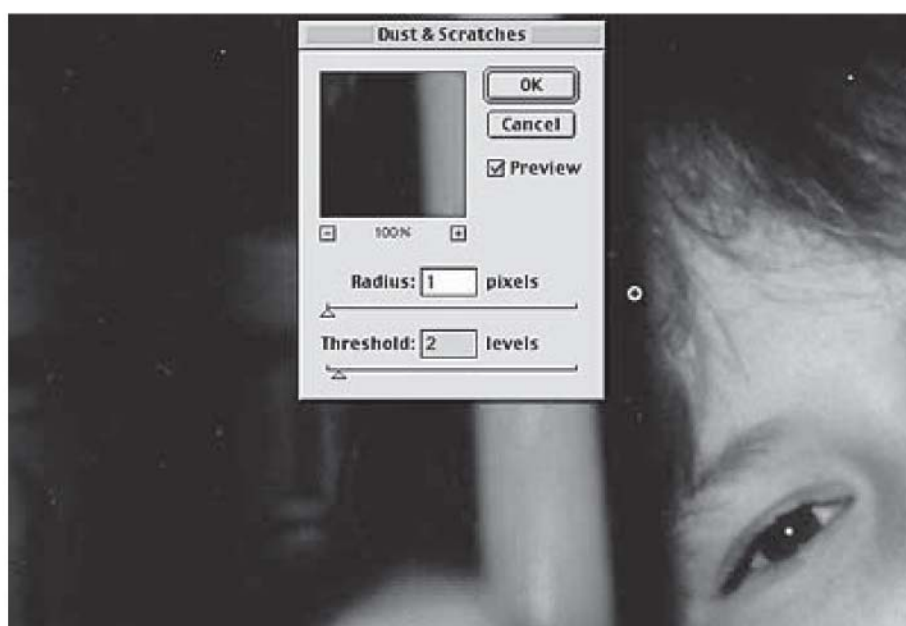


Figure 2



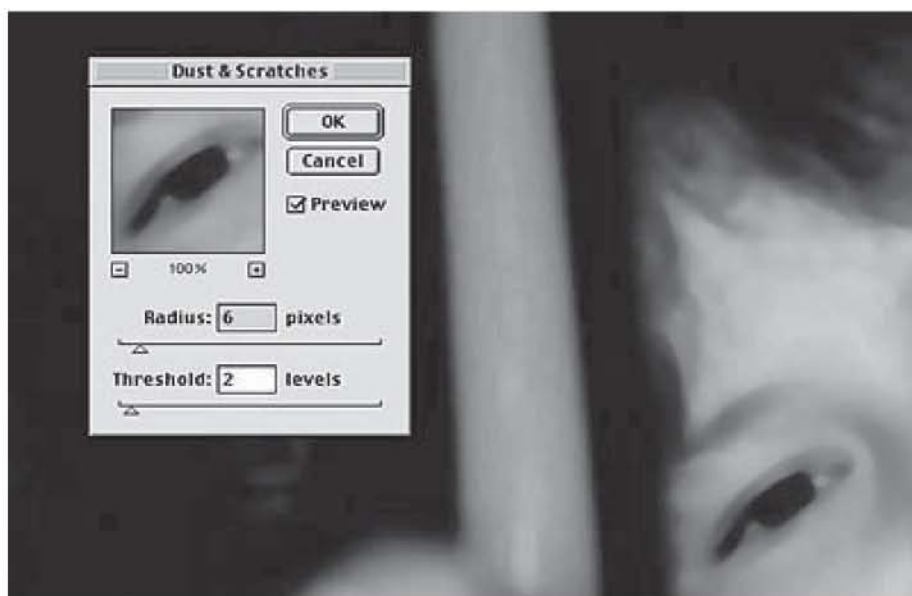


Figure 3

of the scan. Newer, closed scanners run cooler so they do not need to be ventilated in the same way. This is a good thing to look for when purchasing a scanner.

Upon making a scan, no matter how fastidious you are, there will be some dust spots on the image (fig 1). After sharpening the image (in Photoshop select Sharpen: Unsharp Mask from the Filter menu), you will see more dust spots. It is important to view the image at 100% (in Photoshop se-

lect View: Actual Pixels or double click the Zoom tool). This will allow you to see all the spots that need to be removed.

There are two basic ways to remove spots, the Dust & Scratches filter or the Clone or Rubberstamp tool. The Dust & Scratches filter (select Noise: Dust & Scratches from the Filter menu) does an effective job of removing spots at the expense of image sharpness (fig 2).

A high radius amount will eliminate larger dust spots, but will also smooth out the actual detail of the photo and can make somewhat of a watercolor look (fig 3). The Cloning tool is much slower but more precise. It is important to choose a source point similar enough to make the spotted area blend well.

Since viewing the image at 100% often makes it much larger than the size of your monitor, start cloning at the top-left corner of the image and work in a tiling manner. Use the page down key or the scroll bar to move down one screen and retouch out any spots. Once you hit the bottom move the scroll bar right and work on the next column going up until you have covered the entire image.

A combination of the two tools is often the best; you can use the filter at a low radius for the small stuff and then go in manually with the cloning tool to take out the bigger chunks. It is also possible to mask off simple background areas where a high radius Dust & Scratches filter would not be noticeable and then do the subject with the Clone tool. Used in combination, these tools can save you a lot of time.

You cannot stop dust from getting into your images, but you can create your own digital version of perfection. It is important to carefully look over every scan before you print it. No image should go out all spotty.

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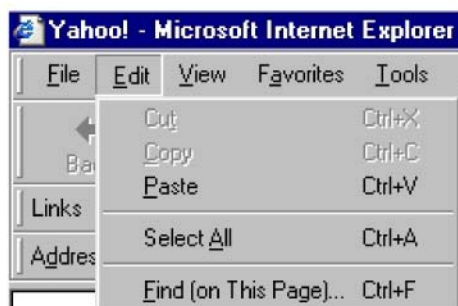




# Internet Explorer - Edit and View menu

## 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>



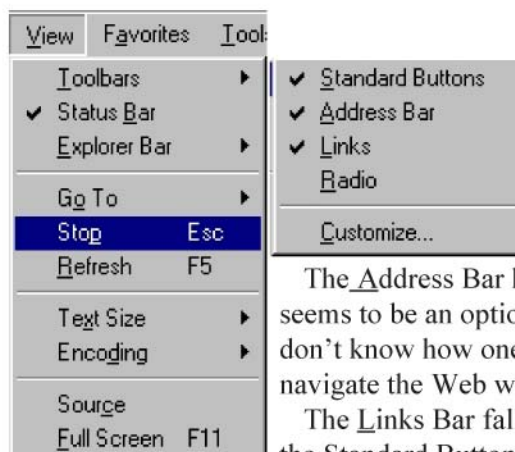
The Edit menu is similar to that found in Windows Explorer and other MicroSoft programs. Cut and Copy are only active if an area in the page has been selected (highlighted) to be copied. Having done so, you may cut the selection from the page to be pasted in a different location, perhaps an eMail message. You must understand that by cutting the selection, it will no longer be in the source page. On the other hand, if you copy a selection, it is available to paste elsewhere, but remains in the source document.

Find (on This Page) produces the window below.



Here you may type in any word in the Find what area, which can be modified in either of the two squares below to Match the whole word only and/or Match case. If the word or phrase in question appears more than once, you may use the Find Next button to get to the next instance. The Direction option allows you to determine whether the search looks up or down from the current location.

The View menu produces the window at the top of the next column. The first option, Toolbars, opens the smaller menu to the right. Here you have the choices for those toolbars you want to appear in the Internet Explorer window. Selecting Standard Buttons places the familiar toolbar just below File, Edit, View.



The Address Bar hardly seems to be an option at all. I don't know how one could navigate the Web without it.

The Links Bar falls between the Standard Buttons and the Address Bar on my browser. That is an optional feature which may be shifted at will by placing your cursor on the vertical bar at the extreme left end of the toolbar and dragging it up or down as you wish. A few of the typical links are Best of the Web, Channel Guide, and Free Hotmail. This is a convenience in rapidly navigating to sites you frequently visit.

You can add a page to the Links bar in a variety of ways:

- Drag the icon for the page from your Address bar to your Links bar.
- Drag a link from a Web page to your Links bar.
- Drag a link to the Links folder in your Favorites list.

Choosing to display the Status Bar will place it across the bottom of the Internet Explorer window. This is a valuable tool which allows you to see exactly what's happening during your online session. I try to make sure that I size the window to keep the Status Bar in view. I also go one step further and hide the Taskbar to keep it from blocking my view of the Status Bar. Some people prefer to keep the Taskbar in view. That's a personal preference issue.

The Explorer Bar menu, seen at the top of the next page, allows you to further customize the appearance and functioning of your browser window. The Search option opens a sidebar area to the left of the browser window, also seen on the next page.



familiar with that.

Look up a word will allow you to search a dictionary, an encyclopedia, or a thesaurus, a service

The first option in Search, Find a Web page, is hosted by MSN Search. As you can see, you may enter any term or title you wish in the Find a Web page containing box.

For example, I entered Microsoft Knowledge Base. This opened a window featuring the first choice, Searching the Microsoft Knowledge Base. There were other related sites referring to the Microsoft Knowledge Base as well.

Find a person's address is hosted by InfoSpace and does just as advertised. Not every name will produce a result, but it's worth a try. As well as a mailing address, you may select eMail address which is powered by Bigfoot. Again, results here are spotty, depending on whether the desired name is in a database.

Under Find a business you have two options. You may search by name or business category. This search is also done by InfoBase.

Previous searches gives you a list of the most recent searches. I'm not sure how many entries are saved in the list. Selecting any of them will bring up the results for that search.

Expedia.com hosts the Find a map function. This produces a map and associated items, much like Mapquest if you're

brought to you by Encarta.

Find a picture is a commercial service provided by Corbis. They have a library of thousands of high quality photos. Pricing varies from \$5.95 each to packages of varying numbers and prices. A four pack is currently offered for \$7.95. I searched for the word rowing and came up with 462 hits. These varied from single sculls, thru 8-man crews, to many different types of boats and locations, i.e. sampans in Asia.

The Favorites selection produces the same result as clicking on that icon in your toolbar. Favorites appear in the same type of sidebar window as the Search menu at the left. History does the same thing. I guess this would be of use if you don't have the toolbar showing in your browser.

On my computer, Media Band is not functional. A search of Help produced no hits. Perhaps if you have something like RealPlayer set up, it would connect you to that function.

Folders opens a windows Explorer sidebar, again like the search window at the left.

Tip of the Day is also non-functional on my computer, but may be something you can set up to be available on demand. Help again was of no use.

Real.com activates the Real One Player. In my case it told me that I need to download a later version.

Discuss activates a discussion server, if one has been provided by your administrator. No help here either.

The Go To View menu duplicates more toolbar icon functions, such as Forward or Back, or to your Home Page and at least the last open page on your browser. Stop and Refresh do the same thing.

Text Size allows you to adjust the size of the text in your browser windows in five steps, from largest to smallest.

Encoding is an option I suggest you take a look at for yourself. There is a wide array of choices, depending on the source of your current page. I have no idea how Hebrew, Cyrillic, or Asian languages are handled in IE.

Source will take you to the HTML code for the current page. Click on any page just to see what lies behind that page. If you haven't done it before, you'll be amazed. These days much or all of the code is created in programs like Front Page, or other HTML editors, which obviates the need to know all the ins and outs of writing HTML code.

Finally, Full Screen produces the same result as F11, expanding the current window to fill your monitor screen. Sometimes helpful in avoiding a lot of scrolling.

Next month Favorites and some of the Tools.



# Browsing WebRings: Communities of Web Sites

*By Gabe Goldberg, APCUG Advisor, Region 2; Columnist, AARP Computers and Technology Website*

If the Internet is the largest library created in human history, where are its card catalog and friendly librarians to explain how the Internet's "shelves" are arranged? Where's a rhyme and reason for how things are arranged, and the Dewey Decimal System <<http://www.oclc.org/dewey/>> when we need it most?

Search engines and directories like Google <[www.google.com](http://www.google.com)> and Yahoo! <[www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com)> are helpful but can be overwhelming. And search results often appear jumbled, lacking the comfort of neighborhood libraries which shelf related books together -- so that if you find an interesting mystery, cookbook, or science tome, its nearby shelf neighbors may be an unanticipated bonus.

But the Internet does offer the equivalent of library shelves, called WebRings ("rings" for short). Not stashed where you can physically touch them, rings are linked sets of Web sites concerned with specific topics.

So rings exist for diverse topics -- physical fitness, photography, falconry, biking, etc. In fact, those topics were all featured on WebRing.com <<http://dir.webring.com/rw>>, a directory of rings, on the day I browsed it.

The WebRing concept is simple: Webmasters of sites with a common theme agree to link to each other, and to a hub Web site; each ring site includes links named Ring Hub, Random, Previous, Next, and Join Now. A ring's hub is like the center of a circle, with all the ring's sites connected to it. The hub describes the ring, gives statistics (how many Web sites belong, how many times the hub has been visited, etc.), and lists member sites with brief descriptions.

WebRing.com combines aspects of a portal site (linking to WebRing-related information and resources), a directory site (providing categories of rings such as Business & Finance, Family & Home, Health & Wellness, and Hobbies & Crafts), and a search tool. Searching is helpful when you're not sure which category includes your topic of interest or when the topic may span categories. For example, searching on "gardening" located 128 WebRings. That doesn't sound like many, but remember that each ring includes a few, dozens, hundreds, or thousands of individual sites. Among the first 20 rings, Friends of the Garden <<http://e.webring.com/hub?ring=friendsgarden>> has the most members, 243 Web sites.

Its cheery greeting reads "Welcome to Friends of the Garden Web Ring. We are the largest gardening Web ring in the WebRing Community! Please visit our members and if you have a gardening web page, consider joining! We welcome both the backyard gardener with his own home page or the commercial grower. All have something interesting to add to our virtual garden tour".

Navigating WebRing.com by topics provides a hierarchical view of its thousands of WebRings -- for example, clicking the Science category yields about two dozen

disciplines including Astronomy, Biology, Ecology, Energy, etc. Biology includes an amazing 3200 rings, while the new science of Nanotechnology has only one ring.

Ring hubs offer a unique search tool with two pulldown menu choices. You can enter a keyword and search only the ring whose hub you're viewing (the Ring choice), or search the entire WebRing.com list of rings (the WebRing search choice). Searching within the ring can help narrow search results. For example, the Amateur and Pro Photography ring has 87 sites. If I'm interested in English photography, rather than touring the entire ring -- entertaining though that might be -- I can use the ring search for "England" and find the four relevant sites.

Clicking the Random link is like closing your eyes and hopping to an unknown site -- it can be entertaining or not, depending on luck. Previous/Next links navigate around a ring's sites so you'll eventually return to your starting point. And Join Now is for Webmasters to enroll sites within a ring; this requires first creating a free account on WebRing.com.

WebRings don't replace search engines, directories, portals, one's own bookmarks, and referrals from friends for finding worthwhile material. And they only link sites that have chosen to enroll. But they're a useful and powerful tool for locating and navigating congenial and related Web sites, and they give topics such as gardening and photography much more a sense of community than do bare links from a search engine.

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## STUDY GROUPS

Call the Learning Center for schedule information 736-0700 or see page 59-63.



# HandiApped Independence: Part 1

*By Frank Petrie, Freelance writer, Macsimum News contributor, Curmudgeon*

**S**o, your first assignment was to keep a diary of your habits and routines and make notes as to where you spend most of your time, where your paths intersect most and such. But before that, I'd like to first thank you for your emails and kind words. But let's keep focused on what this series is for.

"I am scheduled for a hip replacement on June 20th and just went through a mini-version of your thinking process. The first thing I have to do was move my computer up from an office that is a flight of stairs down from the main living area. (Duh.) For a few weeks I will be somewhat limited in my moving around. The good news is, if I do my P.T. and behave myself I should be okay." – D.B.

"Like you, the computer is central to my activities.

"I have something called HMSN (Hereditary Motor Sensory Neuropathy). It used to be called Charcot-Marie-tooth Disease. Like MS, it involves deterioration of the myelin sheath. I've been wearing braces on my legs for 15 years. I've been in wheel chair a few times.

"My hands and arms are affected too. I had to give up using a mouse in favor of a graphics tablet. I have to wear a glove to help me grip the pen. I have purchased iListen from MacSpeech, but have not yet installed and trained it. I got it on discount from the Apple Consultants program.

"I do use a spare bedroom as a home office. I had my husband remove the thick carpet and padding and put down industrial carpet (glued to the cement slab) so I can roll around the room freely on my office chair."

-V.M.

Now you should have your information at hand. Let's get to work.

Now, in a perfect world, you don't have any afflictions. Or you could afford to set up a wireless system in your house and use a laptop. In which case, you can turn off your computer right now and go outside. But things obviously aren't perfect.

This is where you need to use your imagination or some strong neighbors (nephews will do in a pinch). With the aid of your diary, you should know the point in your house that you frequent the most. This is where I recommend you set up your computer.

And it probably won't be in a place that you would choose first. As an example, my nexus is located in my dining room, near the kitchen entrance. Convenient? Not very, but there it is, all the same. I pass that area almost a dozen times a day. Since I'm going to be there anyhow, it only makes sense to place my workstation there.

Next, I have to figure out how to make this work. I want a table to eat on. I want a desktop to work on. And my wheelchair has to be able to maneuver through all of this (there goes the carpet). Plus, just to let you know, it's a small, condo dining room!

So, here's your next assignment. If you don't have special software or strong helpers, get yourself some engineering grid paper. Take measurements of your room. Think how this room is ideally to be used (i.e., I need a dining room AND a work space). Write that down, then list what furniture and equipment you NEED to accomplish this. (WANT comes later.)

Once you've decided on the room's purpose(s), you need to make a list of what furniture has to go into that empty room.

Make cut outs of said pieces of furniture (making sure that they're to scale with your room) and start moving them around in the room until you've found a workable layout. (Don't forget to make a wheelchair, if you use one. This way you'll be able to see if you can navigate your layout.)

In our next article, we have to fish or cut bait. To accomplish our objective, some WANTS may have to go so that we can meet our NEEDS.

*Remember to email or post your ideas, comments, questions or just tell me how things are going along. You can reach me at <phranky@mac.com>, Subject: HandiApped.*

## News Brief

### Paralyzed man controls his PC and TV using thought alone

Cybernetics - the fusion of human beings and technology - is helping one paralyzed man control his environment by connecting his brain to his PC. Quadriplegic ex-American football player Matthew Nagle is using a system that converts his thoughts into actions on a computer. Nagle's brain is connected to his computer by the BrainGate system, which thought impulses using a sensor implanted in the motor cortex of his brain. Now, neuroscientists monitoring his progress hope he will soon be able to use the system to control other devices including electric wheelchairs.



## Bringing Home Baby -- Getting Started with a New PC

By Gabe Goldberg, APCUG Advisor and Columnist, AARP  
Computers and Technology Website, [ggoldberg@apcug.net](mailto:ggoldberg@apcug.net)

**M**ost purchases provide instant gratification -- you buy, you bring home (or have delivered), you enjoy. Groceries, clothes, toaster, furniture, etc., don't involve study, burdensome chores, or required add-ons for safe usage. While it's worth reading a new car's owners manual, and installing home electronics sometimes requires assembly and cabling, no other burden matches that of a personal computer.

[www.SusanIves.com](http://www.SusanIves.com)

### Geek Gifts



**Computer-to-TV hookup:** I do a lot of PowerPoint presentations and don't have my own projector. This is a compromise: the AVerMedia QuickPlay is a cabling system that can connect your computer to a television so that you can project onto a bigger screen. It's plug-and-play from the USB port in a PC or MAC, doesn't require software and has three levels of flicker control. It could be an especially welcome gift for someone whose only DVD player is in their computer. Get it for \$80 (about one-tenth the price of the cheapest projector) from AVermedia.

[<http://www.aver.com/products/comptv\\_QuickPlay.shtml>](http://www.aver.com/products/comptv_QuickPlay.shtml)

Wait, you might say: Plug it in, turn it on -- simple. But reality isn't so simple. There's a lot to do before a PC can safely be used on the Internet, and still more is required to ensure long-term problem-free operation. This article outlines what to do; more info is available on this site and by Googling for specific terms used.

No matter where you buy your PC -- brand-name Web site, electronics store, custom builder -- get all CDs, manuals, registration cards, and warranty material for hardware/software that's installed. You may need this material to purchase discounted upgrade versions or to apply fixes.

Similarly, warranty material facilitates getting hardware/software support if you can't get satisfaction from your system's vendor. You may pay a little extra for software installation CDs or an image restore CD (which restores your hard drive's delivery-date contents); this is a worthwhile expense.

Assemble and turn on the system, but don't go online. Make sure the system boots properly and that all components operate. There's often a short "no questions asked" period during which dead or defective systems can be returned or exchanged easily. You may have trouble later getting problems resolved, and the vendor may insist on repairing the system instead of replacing it.

Note terms of rebates your purchase includes and submit them promptly. Many vendors won't pay rebate claims submitted even one day late.

Record hardware model and serial numbers for your PC and components. My PC builder provided all boxes and packing material, since it often contains useful information. Submit product registration material; though it may generate junk mail, it lets vendors notify you of problems or new updates/versions available.

At this point you may feel the need to get organized. Good idea! Just as you've likely organized files for auto repairs, health records, and such, your PC deserves a filing system. You can pick the structure -- file cabinet folders, PC-specific storage containers, whatever -- filing everything makes things much pleasanter later.

Part of my system -- optional but valuable -- is recording changes I make to my PC, software I install, upgrades I download, problems I have, configuration settings, and communications with vendors. So I can later refer to the log and be sure what happened. Some people print screen shots -- image captures -- of important configuration settings, for reference in case they must be recreated.

Plan how to separate data from software, to simplify backing up and restoring what's most valuable and hardest to recreate. This can be as simple as establishing a directory or folder in which you store all applications' data, or it may involve dividing your hard drive into data and software partitions. If you're replacing a PC, copy data you're

migrating onto the hard drive and ensure that it's complete and readable. Don't discard the old PC until you're sure you copied everything you need. Plan and implement a backup scheme and test it occasionally by restoring files.

A standard PC likely included a "software bundle". If you're lucky, this includes applications you want. In most cases, bundles are apps you'll never use. To remove clutter, consider deleting what you're sure you won't need, using application-

specific uninstall tools or Windows' built-in Add/Remove Software tool.

If hard drive partitions have meaningless labels (e.g., "IBM Preload") you can set them to useful values ("Dad's PC", "C:", etc.). Run scandisk and disk defragmentation tools to ensure you're getting a clean start.

If you're working on a Windows XP system, install Service Pack 2 before going online. You can order this on CD from Microsoft or borrow a copy. This large set of fixes will protect you against many -- but not all! -- online risks by (among other things) upgrading and enabling Microsoft's software firewall.

If you're on a broadband (cable or DSL) connection, install a router between your ISP connection and your PC and configure it to be secure.

Now install/update/run anti-virus and anti-spyware software.

Run Windows Update (click Start, then All Programs) to download and install recent fixes. This may require repetitions and reboots until no additional fixes are available. Run this periodically -- at least monthly.

You can ensure that device drivers (software links for hardware components) are current by visiting Web sites for your PC manufacturer and hardware components.

Install your applications one at a time with a "cooling off" period in between. This ensures that each works properly and helps identify problems. A good rule when working on PCs is to change one thing at a time, else you can't pinpoint what effects changes cause. After each installation, run any "check for updates" functions.

Consider downloading a Web browser to use instead of the built-in but insecure Internet Explorer. Many alternatives such as Mozilla Firefox improve security and provide better browsing functions. If you use IE, set options to be more secure than default values.

I'm not sure whether it's good or bad news that Windows is infinitely customizable. As you use different Windows functions and applications, browse their Options/Tools/Settings/Customization menus. You'll likely find simple changes that accommodate your preferences.

Finally -- and in spite of warnings about risks -- don't be afraid: enjoy your PC and the Internet it brings to you. But be careful and sensible. Don't open unexpected attachments; don't answer e-mailed requests for personal information; be cautious about installing software from unknown vendors.

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## STUDY GROUPS

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# Configuring a New User's PC

By Gabe Goldberg, APCUG Advisor & Columnist,  
AARP Computers and Technology Website

**D**on't be alarmed by the high-falutin word "configuring". It just means deciding what components -- otherwise called "parts" -- will perform various PC functions. It's like old-days car buying: reviewing a dealer checklist to pick dozens of individual features, from radio to power steering to disc brakes and more.

The good news is that almost any current PC with a printer and Internet connectivity will handle mainstream requirements. That means that a generic Windows PC is usually adequate -- but you should upgrade if you'll do anything challenging or exotic.

Just as when buying a car, the first step in buying a computer is deciding what you'll do with it: e-mail, Web searching/viewing, word processing? Financial work with Quicken? Digital photography? Simple games? Ultra-demanding tasks like high-end games and digital video editing?

Just as when making any major purchase, a small investment in learning pays off for years. Before buying a PC, learn the basics: -- take a class, buy a book, attend local computer user group meetings, consult Web sites, read technology magazines at the library.

As you look at applications' system requirements (processor speed, RAM size, hard drive storage capacity, video card speed and memory, etc.) note differences between minimum and recommended specifications. Vendors are often too optimistic -- and that's being charitable -- about what's needed for their software to run productively. It's much safer, and not much more expensive, to buy at least the recommended choices. In fact, I usually buy a little more power than I need. This bumps cost just a little and it avoids future problems and upgrades. Purchasing this way greatly extends a PC's life and makes it more compatible with future innovations, at least for a while.

Remember that as PCs evolve, a range of choices is always available, from bleeding-edge new to borderline obsolete. An equally valid -- and more economical -- approach to configuring is finding the current technology "sweet spot" the point where cost, performance, compatibility, and useful life are in balance.



A key decision is whether to buy a brand-name system or an unknown-brand machine, have a PC built to order, or build it yourself. Choices for laptop computers are much more limited: brand-name systems dominate, trailed by a few off-brand manufacturers. There are no build-it-yourself options, though manufactured systems can be customized extensively.

Each purchasing choice has advantages and advocates. Brand-name systems can be evaluated and compared by consulting references such as Consumer Reports magazine, are available everywhere via catalog or online shopping, and may have better standard or optional warranties (often worthwhile for quick service and peace of mind). But brand-name systems sometimes suffer from using commodity parts vs. best-quality components.

Unknown-brand machines can be reliable money savers or risky acquisitions. I'd only buy such a system from a trusted store with a flexible return policy. I favor having PCs built to order by small local shops with established reputations, offering maximum flexibility and consultation during design. And I've enjoyed watching my PCs take

shape as they're assembled from a tableful of parts!

Some people build their own PCs, often with training and mentoring from computer user group volunteers. This demystifies system innards, greatly facilitating diagnosing and repairing problems and upgrading components. Build-to-order and build-yourself allow specifying brand-name parts for improved performance and reliability.

No matter where you purchase, look carefully at monitor choices. Traditional CRT monitors prices have declined, allowing buying larger devices with better resolution. And newer/thinner/lighter LCD panels offer a powerful -- though some-

times less flexible -- alternative. Visit stores to compare brands and models and explore settings to match your preferences.

Decide how you'll back up your software and data. Choices include a second -- perhaps external or removable -- hard drive, writable optical media such as DVD, and tape. The first two are most often used, with each having unique advantages. Follow your backup plan regularly; nothing ruins a day like losing months or years of can't-be-replaced data, not to mention having to reconstruct all your software.

Small choices can make large differences in productivity and comfort. For example, mouse technology has advanced far beyond the traditional two-button wired device. Mouse alternatives include trackball and wireless devices, gadgets with many extra programmable buttons, wheel mice allowing horizontal/vertical scrolling, etc. Considering how much time you'll use your pointing device, it's worth spending a little extra money to have the device that suits you best!

Windows offers many choices for easing use -- enlarging type, making keyboarding easier, providing special audible and visual cues, etc. Accessibility options are found in different places -- usually via Control Panel or the Start menu. It's worth exploring these to tailor your PC to your individual preferences. Similarly, small add-on programs can greatly improve a PC's comfort factor. Remember that Windows is highly configurable: you can change how it looks and operates. As you become familiar with your new PC, explore options/settings/preferences. Just as you wouldn't insist on driving a car with seats and mirrors exactly as they came from the dealer, don't be captive of Microsoft's initial settings!

Name-brand computers usually include software bundles. Vendors shout about how valuable they are and how much money you're saving on them -- but that's only true if you'll use the software provided. As soon as you have your machine, examine pre-installed software and remove anything you know you won't use. Then defrag your disk and then install the programs you'll use. These simple steps will make your machine run better by decluttering it.

Finally, If you understand how to do this, use built-in tools such as MSCONFIG to chop out unneeded services started by default when your system boots.

Software bundles often include junior-grade versions or limited-time trial copies of critical tools such as anti-virus and anti-spyware software. For system reliability and security, upgrade these to full versions and subscribe to update services.

Not much else in modern life besides computers keeps getting faster/better/cheaper. And it's not hard to find or build a computer that meets needs for several years, runs reliably, and doesn't break the bank.

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# USB

## Flash Drives

By Brian K. Lewis, Ph.D.  
Sarasota PCUG, Florida

You may already be familiar with the small USB flash drives that plug into a USB port. However, you may know them by another name. Flash drives, JumpDrives™, Pocket drives™, Pen drives™, and Thumb drives™ are all names for the same thing. They are a solid-state medium for storing data, music, photos, and/or applications. Now there is also a new version, the U3 smart-computing platform, which allows the user to carry applications and data from one computer to another and to launch the applications on any USB equipped computer. Many flash drive manufacturers are already jumping on this bandwagon and producing U3 based drives. Since flash drives are growing in capacity, functions and speed, they will probably be important in your computing future. So let's take a closer look at them.

A flash drive consists of a solid-state circuit board inside a plastic casing. Most of these casings are strong enough to stand some substantial abuse. My one gigabyte (GB) drive has managed to fall on the floor several times and it "still keeps on ticking", as the saying goes. It tolerates this kind of abuse because it has no moving parts. Imagine if this had been a magnetic hard drive with several spinning platters and a movable read/write head. Just one fall could knock it completely out of alignment and cause it to fail. So that is one advantage of the flash drive. Another is its portability. Flash drives are small and very light weight. Mine measures 2 3/4 inches by 3/4 inch x 1/2 inch. They can easily be carried in a pocket or strung on a lanyard or a key chain. The USB A type connector on these drives is frequently covered by a plastic cap that protects the connector.

Flash drives are powered directly from the USB port on the computer. When they are disconnected, the information stored in them is retained, not lost. The silicon chips used in flash drives are referred to as a form of nonvolatile memory. The RAM memory in your computer requires constant electrical input to retain information. The same is true of the BIOS chip. But flash drives retain information for greatly extended periods of time without any electrical input. Some estimates indicate data can be retained for periods of up to ten years, possibly longer.

Flash drives also have low power requirements, needing only the five volts and 100-500 milli-Amps provided by the USB port. However, their power demands are such that they generally will not run when plugged into a non-powered hub. You are always better off to directly connect the drive to the computer's USB port.

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**MP3 Player:** I like the Rio Carbon. It goes head-to-head with the Apple iPod, gives you 5 GB of memory and is compatible with Audible audio (talking books) format. My research tells me that this is more PC-friendly than the iPod and is a cinch to set up. If \$250 (ouch!) is too much, look at a USB flash player. The one pictured is only \$24 and comes with 128MB internal memory, an FM player and earbud, plus it accepts 7 kinds of media cards (SecureDigital card, miniSD, MultiMedia Card, Memory Stick, Memory Stick Duo, Memory Stick Pro and xD card). Get it from Computer Geeks.

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



Flash memory was originally developed in 1988 and has seen considerable use in storage for digital cameras. (For the technically minded, flash memory is based on NAND gates where the transistors have two inputs and one output.) Some smart phones and PDA's are now using nonvolatile flash memory to retain information when the device is turned off. This reduces the drain on the device's battery. Flash drives are believed to work for up to 10,000 write/erase operations. However, some sources indicate that flash drives can survive for up to ten million operational or write/erase cycles. Even so, all this indicates that flash drives have a finite life span. To me, this life span seems to exceed that of a standard hard drive which is supposed to operate for up to half a million hours. In practice we know that hard drives generally fail much sooner than that. So a flash drive having a finite life span is really no different than a hard drive.

Flash drives now on the market have capacities of 3 – 4 gigabytes. Samsung has also announced a flash chip capable of storing 16 gigabits. (Note that this is bits, not bytes.) It would take 16 of these chips to make a 32 gigabyte drive. As an indication of what is coming, BitMicro has announced a 155 gigabyte flash drive!

Obviously, the flash drive has many advantages over other removable media such as floppy disks, CD-ROMs, ZIP disks and others. Unlike Zip disks, floppies and CDs, flash memory lacks moving parts, making it ideal as a simple solution, requiring only a port to interact with a system. It doesn't require any special hardware, it is smaller, more portable and it is not as likely to develop storage errors. Flash storage devices, compared to other storage media, are fast, high capacity, durable, and compact. Some computers can already boot from a flash drive that makes them an ideal replacement for bootable floppies or CDs.

Floppy drives are not even included in many new computers. As flash drives already exceed the capacity of CD's; they are becoming a replacement for them. Certainly they are more portable than a CD or a DVD and only require a USB port to run on any computer running Windows XP. They can be run on Windows 98 providing the manufacturer's specific driver is installed. Additionally, flash drives are not subject to scratches, dust, coffee or other liquid spills. In fact some have survived being passed through a washing machine! However, this is not recommended treatment for them. The popularity of flash storage devices may be attributed to their compact size, operating system compatibility, and their use of the standard USB interface.

With all of their capabilities, it is possible to foresee some applications for flash drives that may show up in a reasonable period of time. For example, if the read/write speeds can be increased to a level comparable to that of current RAM memory, flash memory could then replace RAM chips. If the cost of flash memory is also reduced then it could be used to replace the current computer hard drives. Think about what this would

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**USB Flash Drive:** This is the must-have gift this year. Of course, I said the same thing last year and the year before. . . This mini hard drive plugs into any USB port and stores gobs of data. I call mine my "portable brain" and wear in on the included lanyard around my neck. There's room for a PowerPoint presentation to take on the road, or use it to copy files from laptop to desktop. I bought a 128 MB from Crucial for \$29.95; 1GB will set you back \$180.

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

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do to the size of computers and their power requirements. Think about replacing that 10,000 rpm hard drive and it's casing with a flash drive that can be connected to any computer's USB port. Certainly if we can produce 155 GB drives now, what will the capacity be in a few more years?

Earlier, I mentioned the new U3 (smart drive) specification for flash drives. This allows applications to be developed that can be stored and run from a flash drive. Software is already available for such drives. One such example is Mozilla's Firefox browser and their Thunderbird e-mail software. There are other applications that synchronize office files, folders and Outlook e-mail between a computer and a U3 flash drive. There is a version of Pass2Go that securely stores passwords, banking and credit card information on these USB smart drives. Also announced are photo management software and instant-messaging programs. Skype, a VoIP provider has announced a U3 version of their software that would permit voice calls over any computer with a U3 flash drive. The U3 flash drives and the associated software will run only on computers using Windows XP and Windows 2000. A Linux version is expected to be announced shortly.

The U3 smart drive contains software that functions as a "launchpad" to provide a menu of applications on the flash drive. It also has options for drive management and a link that leads users to a web site where they can obtain additional U3-compliant software. When the drive is removed from the USB port, the system software automatically shuts down any applications running on the USB drive and cleans out data fragments so no personal information is left behind on the computer. This U3 system software uses about 6 MB of the drive's capacity and loads within 30 seconds after the drive is plugged into the USB port. One result of this capability is that the U3 compatible flash drive can become your "personal" computer. Certainly it is even more portable than any laptop computer.

The day may come when your computer will be not much more than a motherboard, sound cards, wireless ethernet and USB ports. This reduces the moving parts to not more than a cooling fan, if that. All of the software and data will be on your flash drive. The face of computing is continuing to change. Fascinating isn't it?

*Dr. Lewis is a former university & medical school professor who has been working with personal computers for more than thirty years. He can be reached via e-mail: <bwsail@yahoo.com>.*

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**QuickLink Pen Elite:** I saw this demonstrated at COMDEX a few years ago and was blown away. This is a hand-held text scanner that works just like a highlighter. Run it over a line of text and it captures it in its internal memory - up to 1,000 pages of text! Transfer to it a computer or handheld device using the included USB cable or infrared. A perfect gift for researchers and students of any age. Get it directly from WizCom for \$170 or shop around - I've seen it on the Internet for as low as \$125.

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# Automate your card mailing

## Removing the drudgery of addressing cards



by Clarke Bird

Originally published December 2001.

Revised November 2005.

**D**o you use your PC to print address labels to stick on your Christmas/Hanukkah envelopes? Well, that's a step in the right direction to automate what once was a drudgery task — hand addressing holiday cards. Traditionalists will look down their noses at non-hand addressed cards but these blue noses don't have daytime jobs, children requiring attention, volunteer hours spent out of the home and a dozen tasks that require time — time that is becoming more and more scarce in our daily lives.

Let me tell you about a Word Processing technique to apply the mailing address directly to the envelope. It's called merging. The concept is to merge data (your address list) onto a form (the envelopes). The result will be an address from your address book on each envelope. Once you've walked through the procedure, all kinds of bells will ring in your head and you'll mutter "Why didn't I know about this before?"

I'm going to use WordPerfect in describing merging a Christmas address list to envelopes and although you can do the same thing with Word; the steps may vary a bit. See Vade Forrester's companion article describing the process in MS Word.

If you use WordPerfect version 12, you can no longer create a WordPerfect Address Book to use to merge names and addresses to your cards. Now you simply create a data file of your names and addresses and use this file to merge to your envelope form.

Now the first thing you will probably have to do is create a new paper size to accommodate the dimensions of the holiday card envelope that you plan to mail — most holiday card envelopes are far larger than the normal #10 business envelope so you create a new paper size by going to Format, Page, Page Setup. If you don't see the envelope size you need, you can either create a new envelope. I created a new envelope that is 8" wide by 5.75" high and named it Christmas05 or modify an existing envelope size that is somewhat similar in size to the card envelope you plan to send (see Fig. 1 Create Form Document).

Now that we have the envelope size taken care of, we move to the names and address data we plan to merge on the envelopes. It's as easy as stepping off a curb. Click on Tools, Merge and a window opens (see Fig. 2 Create Data File).

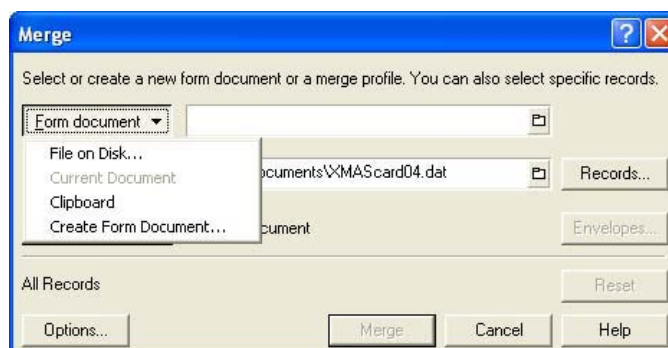


Figure 1

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The first step is to create data Fields. I kept things simple by creating the following fields: Name, Address, CityStZip (Fig 3). Then the laborious job was to fill in all the names and addresses on our Christmas Card list. This is laborious only the first time you do this as in following years, all you will have to do is edit any changes that incur when friends move (see Fig. 4). Click on New Record and fill in the next name on your list. Fig. 5 shows what the data list will look like. Be sure to save it with a filename that you can remember. WordPerfect will add the extension .dat automatically to indicate the file is a data file.

Once you have your holiday data filled with names, you are ready for the big step, creating the merge of names from your address book to the envelope but there are still a couple of small details to finish but we'll let WordPerfect lead us the rest of the way. Click on Tools, Merge and a window will pop up. I will use the new envelope size that I created earlier as my form so I click on Format, Page, Page Setup and select Christmas05 from the list.

Before the next step, I will first put my name and address on the upper left corner of the envelope. I chose a sans serif font in 10 point font size and bolded it. Now I will place the data Fields (name, street, CityStateZip) where I want them on the envelope (the form). Using the window Insert Field Names, I select Display Name and click the Insert button. I then hit my enter Key to move the cursor to the next line and select the Street field and click Insert. Clicking the Enter key takes the cursor to the next line where I click CityStateZip and Insert. Next I highlight the addressee fields and choose the font and font size. I chose Papyrus as my font as it appears festive but readable by the Post Office. I enlarged the font size to 24 to make the address stand out on the large envelope.

## STUDY GROUPS

Call the Learning Center for schedule information 736-0700 or see page 59-63.

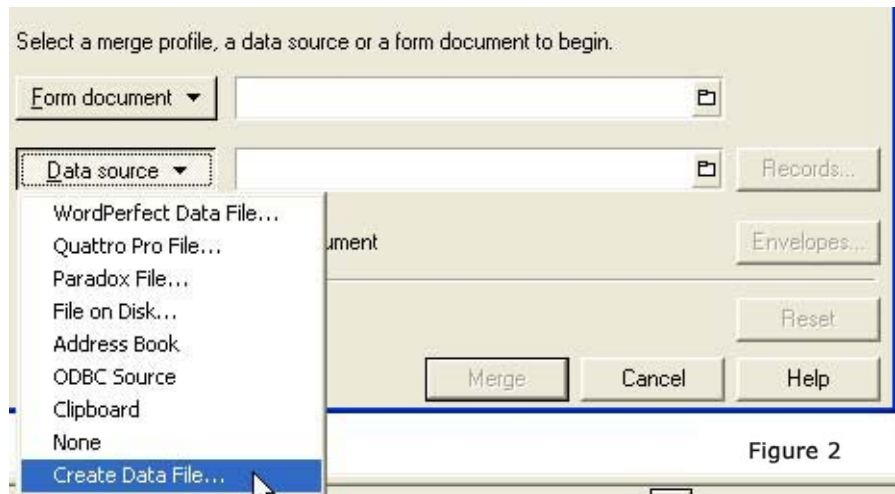


Figure 2

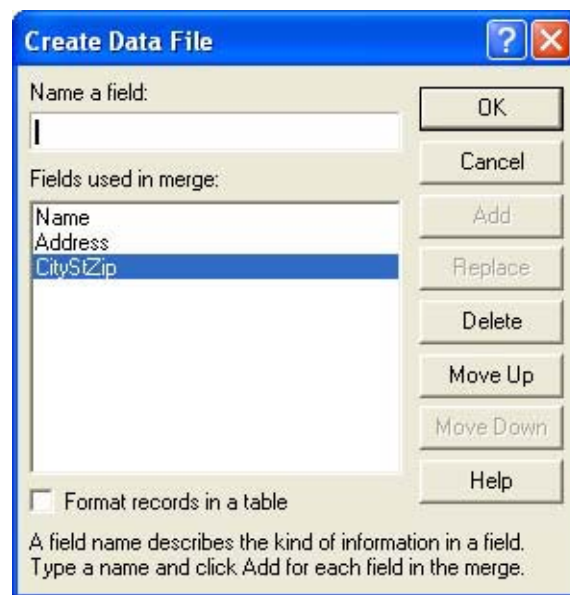


Figure 3

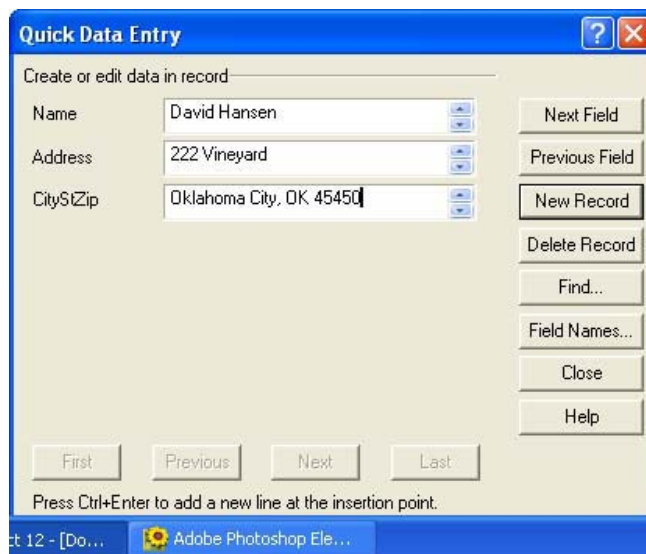


Figure 4

Now I am ready to Merge. I have chosen the Christmas05.dat as my data file and my form file (the envelope) is currently on the screen. WordPerfect churns for a few seconds and the last name on my address list appears in the envelope. Since WordPerfect treats each envelope as a separate page, I click Control and Home to take me to the first page or the first name in my address list. Clicking on Control and End takes me again to the last page (or the last envelope) and I look at the information shown in the lower right part of the WordPerfect screen and I see that I have 89 pages, or 89 envelopes to print. You can save this merged file as a document until you are ready to print the envelopes.

You will have to do a little experimenting with your printer to decide which way to place your envelopes in the paper feed tray to have the names/addresses print correctly. Since you may not have many envelopes to waste, I recommend cutting some scrap paper the same size as your envelope and experiment with paper direction before starting with your envelopes.

Happy Holidays!

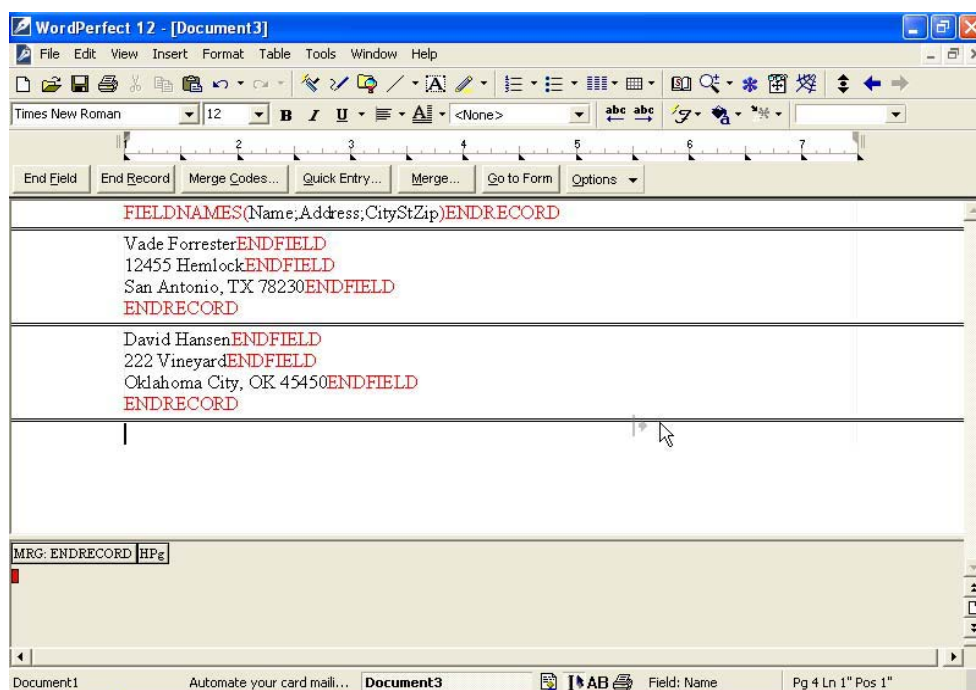


Figure 5

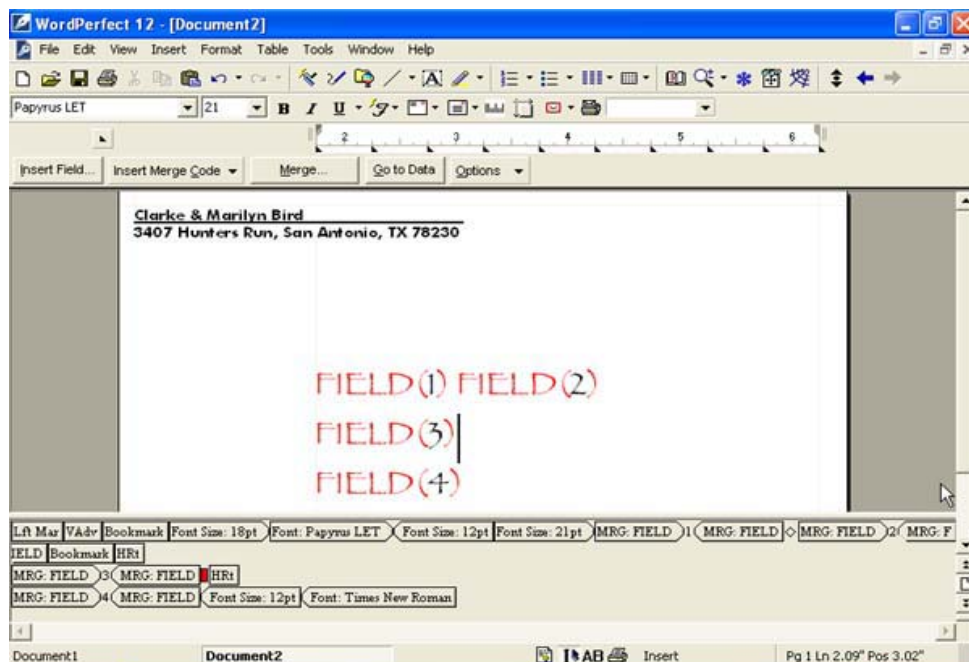


Figure 6



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# Addressing Holiday Cards with Microsoft Word

by Vade Forrester



Clarke's article (page 41) uses WordPerfect as the tool to address holiday cards, but that excellent word processor is not as common as it used to be. Therefore, I'll try to provide parallel instructions for using market-dominating Microsoft Word to address cards. For illustration, I'll use Word 2002, which provides a new, easier technique than earlier versions of Word.

The technique Clarke describes is really the same for Word, except for a few details. The overall process is the same; but we'll use Word's Mail Merge Wizard, a handy feature new in Word 2002, that steps you through the process. It should go without saying that you'll need a printer which can print envelopes, and have the envelopes loaded into the printer before doing all these steps.

Before you begin, you'll need to select a data source, which is your list of card recipients. Word lets you use a wide variety of data sources:

- Microsoft Outlook Contact List
- Microsoft Office Address List
- Microsoft Excel worksheet or Microsoft Access database
- Other database files
- HTML file
- Different type of electronic address book
- A Microsoft Outlook Address Book.
- Microsoft Word data source or a header source
- Text files

My personal choice for data sources is an Excel spreadsheet, which lets me manipulate and sort the data easily; but any of the above types of files is fine. I begin my card addressing session by reviewing the names and addresses in the spreadsheet, updating them, and deciding which ones I want to send cards to. Then I save the updated file.

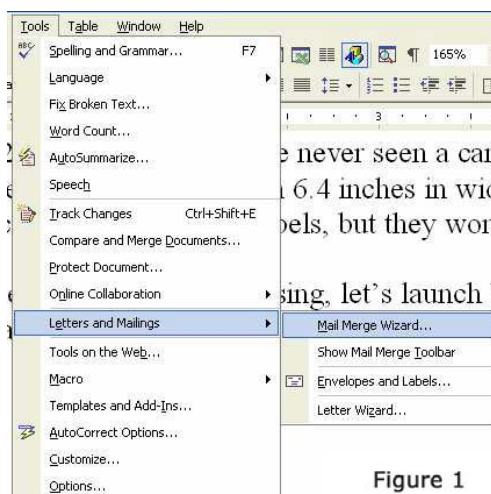


Figure 1

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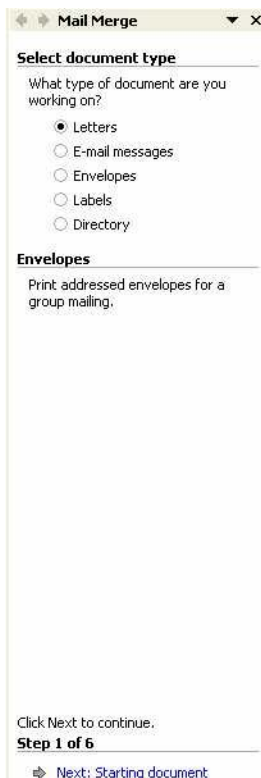


Figure 2

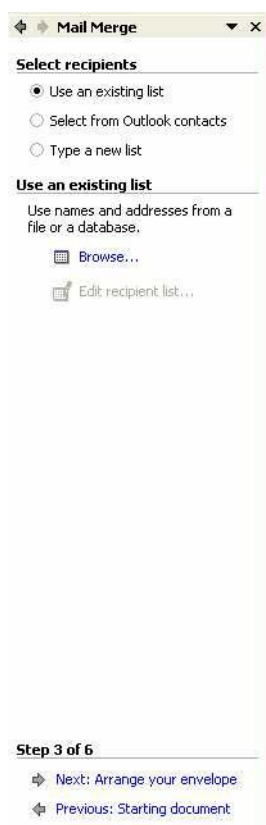


Figure 5



Figure 3

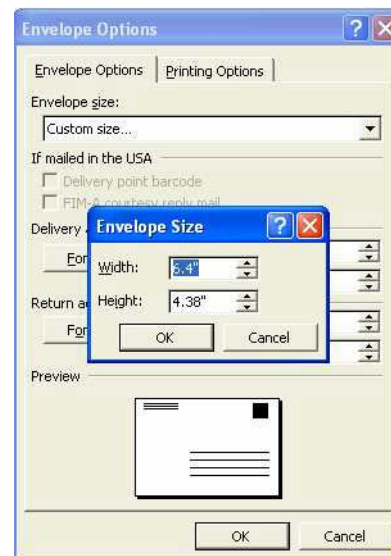


Figure 4

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**Mini Tripod:** Everyone with a digital camera, still or video, needs a tripod. I've been searching for the perfect one and now have four: none perfect, but I'm getting there. This Goldilocks is still looking for one that's just right. I have a big Slik tripod that works great locally, when I'm slinging video stuff around in my car. It has a quick release platform so I can quickly remove the camera for a handheld shot and it's really stable. It doesn't fit in my suitcase, though, so I bought a slightly smaller Slik travel tripod. This one fits in my 22" suitcase (I travel light) but, at 16", not in my camera backpack. So I bought a no-name tripod at Big Lots one day. At 9" it fits in the camera bag, but it's flimsy. I can carry it everywhere but have to watch it like a hawk. I've had a mini-tripod like this one from REI for decades. You can use it on a table, or with the attached Velcro® strap, hitch it to a tree or pillar. At \$10 it's a bargain. Stroll through a camera store and have a look at the tripods : there are a lot of options.

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

Document. In Step 2, we'll select the Envelope Options to enter the size of our envelopes. When the Envelope Options window pops up, scroll down to the last entry on the Envelope Size pick list, which should say Custom Size. When you pick that, another window pops up and asks you to enter the size of your envelope—do so in decimal fractions of inches. Before you leave the Envelope Options screen, you may want to select the font to use in your address and the return address fields. Perhaps something less formal than Times New Roman or less boring than Arial would be appropriate for addressing the envelope. Avoid using highly stylized fonts like Arriba Arriba LET if you want the Post Office's scanners to be able to read the addresses. Now, at the bottom of the Wizard screen, pick Step 3: Select Recipients.

Since we already prepared our list of recipients, we'll select our data source, and then select the recipients from the total list in the data source. You don't have to select everyone on the list to get a card; use the check boxes in the Mail Merge Recipients list to tell Word which recipients to use. Now, at the bottom of the Wizard pane, select Arrange your envelope.

On the Arranging your envelope pane, the first choice is to select a layout for the address block. This actually attempts to create the entire address block from the data source, a neat trick. Word tries to find address fields to use in composing your address book, but if it fails, you may have to use the Match Fields button to pick the

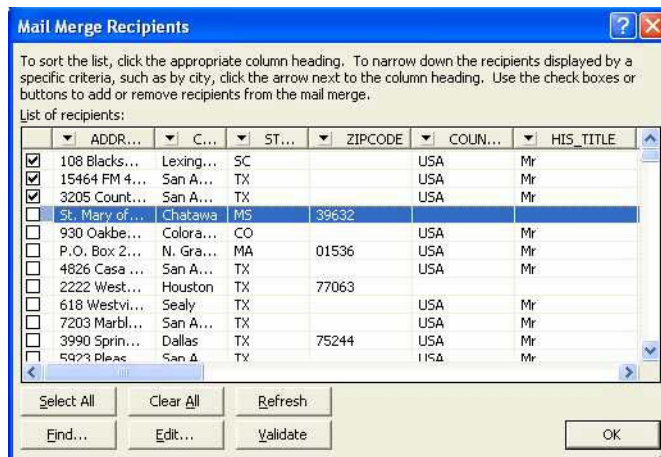


Figure 6



Figure 7

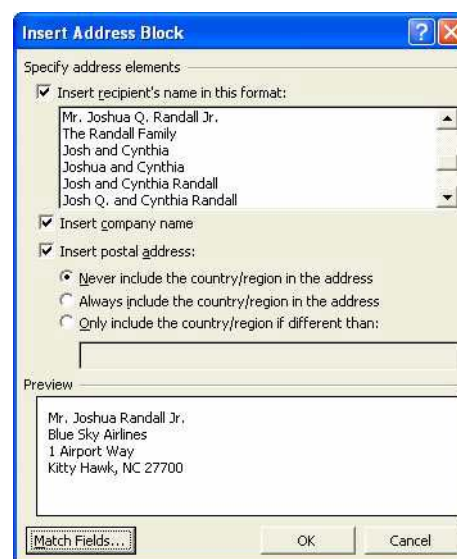


Figure 8

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Figure 9



Figure 10

fields to use. If you want to select all fields yourself, use the More items. . . button on the Arrange your envelope pane. Be sure you have placed the insertion point in the lower address block on the document pane, or Word will insert the address block in the return address field. Then proceed to the next Wizard pane by clicking on Preview your envelopes at the bottom of the pane.

The Preview your envelopes pane prepares images of each address block and lets you view any or all of the recipients. You can change your mind and add or delete a recipient. Then move onward to the last step, Complete the merge.

Word gives you one last chance on the Complete the merge pane to change your mind on the last Wizard screen. You can edit a particular envelope before you print it, or just tell Word to print the envelopes (which must be loaded into your printer). If you select Print, you can print all the envelopes, or just selected envelopes.

That's all there is to it! Happy addressing.

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BACK VIEW



**Portable USB hub:** I've maxed out the USB (Universal Serial Bus) ports on my computers. On a recent trip, I had to unplug the mini-mouse on my laptop to plug in the flash drive then unplug the flash drive to hook up the video camera then unhook the camera to insert the card reader - what a pain! A portable USB hub turns 1 port into 4. Problem solved. I got the model prior to this one for \$19.95 at Big Lots; you can get this one for \$50 at Belkin or at local computer and office supply stores. Make sure you get one that's compatible with both USB 1.0 and 2.0! Works on a desktop computer too.

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# NEW E-FILING TAX COUNSELORS, THANKS TO ALAMO PC

By Henry Johnson

The October Issue of PC Alamo announced a new relationship between ALAMO PC Organization and AARP Tax-Aide, the largest national organization that offers free tax services. The first fruits of this relationship were training classes held October 10 and 17. All-day training sessions introduced 24 experienced Tax Counselors to the benefits of e-filing and doing tax returns by computer rather than by hand.

AARP Tax-Aide began 30 years ago, before PC's were common and before e-filing had been thought of. So it turned out that the most experienced Tax-Aide Counselors learned their skills using pencils and calculators. But the advantages of e-filing are bringing these Counselors into the computer age.

The Counselors showed a wide range of computer know-how, and so some kept up easily while some thought the instruction went too fast. Everyone agreed that the training facilities were the finest.

It was noted that the data input was more time consuming than "just writing in the numbers on a 1040." However, they began to appreciate the detailed calculations that TaxWise provided, such as for social security and Schedule D. One trainee remarked that "the beauty of the software is in the details."

One student observed that people who have been using Turbo Tax would find using the Tax-Aide service cheaper (zero cost) and faster, since a typical Client session is 45 minutes.

The classes were taught by IRS Staff from Austin, Pam Kurburski and Janice Foulk; with Kathleen Jaroszewski and Gene Swanson of Tax-Aide. Gene is the District Coordinator for San Antonio, and Kathleen is the Regional Technology Specialist. She handles computers and software provided by the IRS and the AARP Foundation.



**Senior Tax Specialist Pam Kurburski helps train a group of volunteers to interface with the IRS.**

[www.SusanIves.com](http://www.SusanIves.com)

## Geek Gifts



**Laptop legs:** I find it awkward to use my laptop at a desk - the keyboard is too high and my wrists quickly fatigue. I've looked into laptop stands before, but they are expensive (starting at about \$75) and big - certainly not portable and, in many cases, bigger than the laptop itself. When I found this one I immediately ordered it, on sale from ErgoCube for only \$19.95 + shipping. It weighs 2 oz. and fits into my laptop. It attaches permanently to the computer and the legs swing down when you need them. Rubber legs keep it from skidding. Not only does it place the laptop keys at a more ergonomically correct angle, but by lifting the computer off the desktop it prevents overheating and helps preserve batter life. What a deal!

[<http://store.ergocube.com/eleg.html>](http://store.ergocube.com/eleg.html)

## FBI warns users of latest e-mail spoof

A message supposedly from the FBI tells you that your address has been found on several "illegal" web sites. You are asked to open an attachment that has a virus. It's a spoof, or fake e-mail that attempts to install malicious software on your computer. You can confirm this by going to "snopes.com" and searching under FBI. The official warning is below:

### For Immediate Release

Tuesday, November 22, 2005 Washington D.C.

FBI National Press Office

**FBI ALERTS PUBLIC TO RECENT E-MAIL SCHEME** E-mails purporting to come from FBI are phony Washington, D.C. - The FBI is warning the public to avoid falling victim to an on-going mass e-mail scheme wherein computer users received unsolicited e-mails purportedly sent by the FBI. These scam e-mails tell the recipients that their Internet use has been monitored by the FBI and that they have accessed illegal web sites. The e-mails then direct recipients to open an attachment and answer questions. The e-mail appears to be sent from the e-mail addresses of mail@fbi.gov, post@fbi.gov and admin@fbi.gov. There may be other similarly styled addresses. The recipient is enticed to open the zip attachment which contains a variant of the w32/sober virus. If the program within the zip attachment is executed then the virus is launched and may effect the user's computer. The text of the email is as follows:

Dear Sir/Madam,

**We have logged your IP-address on more than 30 illegal Websites.**

**Important: Please answer our questions! The list of questions are attached.**

Yours faithfully,

Steven Allison

**Federal Bureau of Investigation-FBI-**

These e-mails did not come from the FBI. Recipients of this or similar solicitations should know that the FBI does not engage in the practice of sending unsolicited e-mails to the public in this manner. Opening e-mail attachments from an unknown sender is a risky and dangerous endeavor as such attachments frequently contain viruses that can infect the recipient's computer.

The FBI strongly encourages computer users not to open such attachments. For detailed information on the effects of running this virus please log onto <http://www.cert.org>. The FBI takes this matter seriously and is investigating. Users are instructed to delete the e-mail without opening it.

[www.SusanIves.com](http://www.SusanIves.com)

Geek Gifts



**Wireless Headphones:** Our house is small by today's standards, and the stereo is in the living room, along with the TV. During the day that's not a problem: I just crank up the volume and listen to NPR or my CDs from my office. As soon as John gets home, though, the stereo gets turned off. These wireless headphones by Sennheiser have a range of 100 meters, the length of a football field. Just plug the wireless transmitter into the stereo or TV and start listening. You don't need line-of-sight to the transmitter: they go through ceilings and walls. You can wear them while you're doing the gardening or even visiting the neighbors. Get them for \$90 from Sennheiser or locally at Bjorn's or Circuit City.

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

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# Don't get caught by phishing schemes!

by Linda Gonse, Editor, Orange County IBM PC Users' Group, California <editor@orcpug.org>

In one week, I received three emails appearing to be from well-known companies. But, knowing that phishing scams concentrate on disguising themselves as ISPs, retail, or financial companies, I resisted clicking on any of the links which could lead to a bogus website and possible infection by a keylogger program.

Instead, I suspiciously read the text in one authentic-looking email from "PayPal," and studied the full header on the message (see header below).

Email header from spoofed "PayPal" message:

**Received:** from main2.ezpublishing.com ([72.19.192.71])  
 by rwcrmxc11.comcast.net (rwcrmxc11) with ESMTP  
 id <20051024211706r1100p6kqre>; Mon, 24 Oct 2005 21:17:06 +0000  
**X-Originating-IP:** [72.19.192.71]  
**Received:** from main2.ezpublishing.com (localhost [127.0.0.1])  
 by main2.ezpublishing.com (8.13.1/8.13.1) with ESMTP id j9OLGWBG020266  
 for <my personal email address>; Mon, 24 Oct 2005 14:16:32 -0700  
**Received:** (from root@localhost)  
 by main2.ezpublishing.com (8.13.1/8.13.1/Submit) id j9OLGWBB020263  
 for <my personal email address>; Mon, 24 Oct 2005 14:16:32 -0700  
**Received:** from jamaicans.tv.propagation.net (jamaicans.tv.propagation.net [64.182.1.110])  
 by main2.ezpublishing.com (8.13.1/8.13.1) with ESMTP id j9OLGVIZ020257  
 for <editor@orcpug.org>; Mon, 24 Oct 2005 14:16:32 -0700  
**Received:** (from nobody@localhost)  
 by jamaicans.tv.propagation.net (8.11.6p2/8.11.6) id j9OLH7v15310;  
 Mon, 24 Oct 2005 16:17:07 -0500  
**Date:** Mon, 24 Oct 2005 16:17:07 -0500  
**Message-Id:** <200510242117.j9OLH7v15310@jamaicans.tv.propagation.net>  
**To:** editor@orcpug.org  
**Subject:** Paypal Security Measures  
**From:** <service@paypal.com>  
**Reply-To:**  
**MIME-Version:** 1.0  
**Content-Type:** text/html



Looking at the header is easy to do in Outlook Express. Just right click on the unopened email file. Then, left click on Properties. Left click on the Details tab, and click on the button Message Source. (At other times, this also allows me to peek inside an email without officially opening it and letting a virus or worm loose on my system.)

Next, I went to PayPal's site and took a look at their answers about phishing scams.

By then, I was sure that the emails I'd received were fake and intended to "phish" out my personal information. All the targeted companies provided email addresses to report fake emails to follow up on them, so I forwarded those I'd received and deleted them from my email program.

The top 10 companies targeted as phishing bait are: Citibank, eBay, US Bank, PayPal, Fleet Bank, Lloyds TSB, Barclays, Earthlink/AOL, Halifax, and Westpac.

According to The Washington Post, "EarthLink gets around 300 phone calls and spends just under \$5,000 per incident. Still, the nation's fourth-largest ISP encounters about 15 new phishing scams a month featuring email that purports to come from its own service.

"Phishers now focus almost exclusively on banks and online shopping sites. During the past 10 months, nearly 60 percent of their attacks targeted Citibank or US Bank, according to the Anti-Phishing Working Group, <http://www.antiphishing.org/>. Earth-Link and America Online are the targets for about 3 percent of the scams."

How can I tell the difference between a real PayPal email and a fake one?

- The term spoofing and phishing have been used to describe the act of collecting personal information using a fake email in order to commit identity theft, credit card, and Internet fraud. If you click on a link included in an email you're not sure is from PayPal, make sure the address at the top of the browser window you're brought to reads exactly [www.paypal.com](http://www.paypal.com).

- PayPal emails will address you by first name, last name, or business name, and NOT by Dear PayPal User or Dear PayPal Member.

- If you are ever uncertain about the validity of the email or the email links, open a new web browser window and type in [www.paypal.com](http://www.paypal.com).

- If you think you have received a fraudulent email, forward the entire email to [spoof@paypal.com](mailto:spoof@paypal.com) and then delete it from your email account.

If you receive a suspicious email from a familiar company, follow PayPal's guidelines to help you separate fake emails from real ones. (Just substitute the name and web address of another company for PayPal's.)



#### PayPal Security Measures!

We are contacting you to remind you that: on 22/10/2005 our Account Review Team identified some unusual activity in your account, one or more attempts to log in to your PayPal account from a foreign IP address.

IP Address	Time	Country
80.53.1.130	22/10/2005 15:05:08 PDT	Poland
80.53.255.174	22/10/2005 15:07:58 PDT	Poland
141.85.99.169	22/10/2005 15:13:09 PDT	Romania
141.85.99.169	22/10/2005 21:28:08 PDT	Romania
195.61.146.130	22/10/2005 21:33:43 PDT	Romania

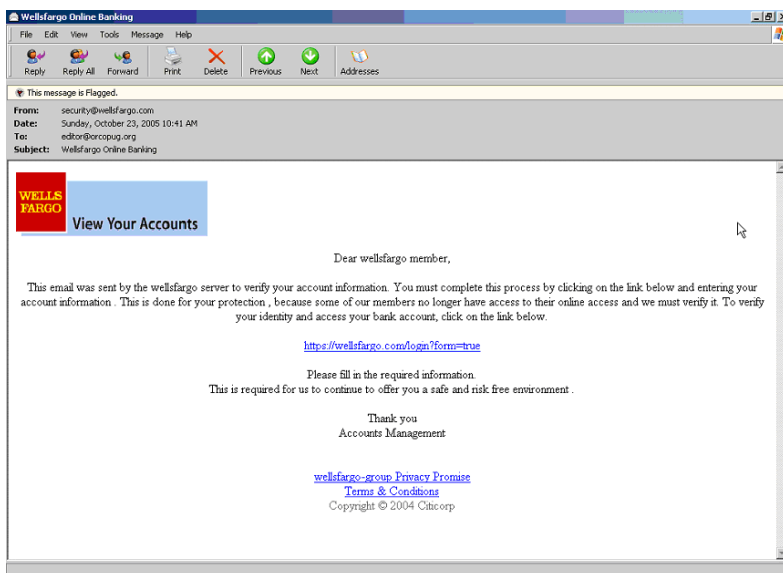
In accordance with PayPal's User Agreement and to ensure that your account has not been compromised, access to your account was limited. Your account access will remain limited until this issue has been resolved. To secure your account and quickly restore full access, we may require some additional information from you.

To securely confirm your PayPal information please go directly to <https://www.paypal.com/> log in to your PayPal account and perform the steps necessary to restore your account access as soon as possible or click below:

To continue your verification procedure [click here](#)

Thank you for using PayPal  
The PayPal Team

**This email is not from PayPal. Clues are: no personal salutation, European-style date, misspelling ("bellow"), and instructions urging you to log into your account.**



**What about this Wells Fargo email — is it real or is it a fake?**

#### Answer

Notice the top of the message. It has no personal information (such as your name or account number). Wells Fargo is one word and it is not capitalized.

Now, take a look at the email's header (condensed due to space limitations). It gives other indications that this email is meant to phish out your personal information. Note the originating domain and the notation "it may be forged" that was added to the header by our web host's server.

The Wells Fargo email is fake.

# Locked Out of Your Computer?

Vinny LaBash, Sarasota PC Users Group, Florida  
<labash@spcug.org>

Some time ago one of my students came to me with what appeared to be an insurmountable problem. She had lent her laptop to a relative who changed the password allowing her access to the hard drive. A dispute developed between the two, and the relative refused to disclose the new password. Upon boot-up, a message appeared that the hard drive was now password protected. She asked me, "How can I break this password and access my computer?"

I had mixed feelings. Most people ask me how to protect their data and equipment, and prevent unauthorized access. I was now being asked to break into a machine. Even though the woman was the legitimate owner of the laptop and the data recorded on it, it felt strange to be on the other side of the fence. After dusting off my notes, we tackled the problem.

Before revealing what actually worked, let's examine what you can do if you are ever locked out of your own computer.

We started with the presumption that the password was embedded in the BIOS, which stands for Basic Input/Output System. Your BIOS is a set of instructions that tells the computer who it is and what it has. Imagine that every morning you woke up with total amnesia and someone had to tell you not only who you were but how to walk, talk, read, and how to use your brain. The BIOS is like that.

To make things more obtuse, the settings in the BIOS are dynamic. They need some kind of electric power to work. If you take out the battery on your motherboard or let it drain, the BIOS settings are lost. What saves you is that the BIOS resides in ROM (Read Only Memory), which is not battery dependent.

Try resetting the BIOS to its defaults. This can be done by removing the CMOS battery after turning the computer off. The CMOS battery is about the size of a five cent piece, and you'll find it on the motherboard. Some motherboards will let you reset the BIOS by using jumpers. Your owner's manual may be helpful. If you don't have an owner's manual, go to the manufacturer's web site, and look for an online version. Some sites list the default BIOS password. Don't hesitate to call the manufacturer and ask for help. Sometimes the company will have a master password, but you will need to provide the serial number of the machine. If you're dealing with a laptop, the manufacturer may have more stringent requirements for proof of ownership since theft is a serious issue with these machines.

Many people use dumb passwords like their pet's name, child's birthday, anniversary or birth dates, employer's name, brand of car, etc. Generic passwords like these examples can be easily defeated. Don't forget to try "password". I never cease to be amazed at how often this works. The other two most common passwords are God and love.

www.SusanIves.com  
**Geek Gifts**



**Caffeinated chewing gum:** Geeks are known for staying up until the wee hours surfing the Internet or hacking into the Pentagon. Takes a lot of caffeine, all that staying up at night. If you drink coffee or cola you have to leave the keyboard for potty breaks. The solution? Caffeinated chewing gum, with caffeine, guarana and ginseng. Get three packs of Jolt gum for \$5.95 from Hacker Stickers. Other flavors are available.

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

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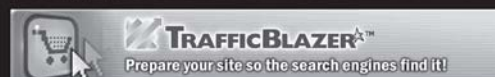
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<http://www.davidsessentialdomains.com>

# Microsoft is Helping

By Bob Elgines, Colorado Computer Club of Lake Havasu, AZ

<elginesz@rraz.net>

You may have noticed in your Windows XP/2000 updates that you have updated the MS Malicious Software Tool (MSRT). Don't bother to look for it on your computer, you won't find it. You will only see a window if you have or had a problem.

What is malicious software? Malicious software (also called "malware") is software that was developed with the intention to cause harm. Malware can include viruses, worms, spyware, and other destructive programs that can hide on your computer and can slow its performance to a crawl. Even more alarming, malware can be used to monitor your browsing habits, steal passwords, and even allow an attacker to gain control of your system. Malicious software either installs on your computer without your knowledge or can be installed with a program you intended to download.

The MSRT checks for and helps to remove specific, prevalent malicious software infections. If detection and removal has accrued, a display window indicates which malicious software was picked up.

Each month, after the second Tuesday, Microsoft will provide an updated version of this tool that removes malicious software that is found to be prevalent for that month.

Getting the Malicious Software Removal Tool - There are two ways you can get the Malicious Software Removal Tool. Microsoft recommends that home users either turn on the Automatic Updates feature in Windows XP, or run the tool online.

1. If your computer is running Windows XP, you can get the latest version of the tool online from Microsoft Update. To have the tool automatically delivered and installed each month on your computer without having to take further action, simply turn on Automatic Updates.

2. If your computer is running either Windows XP, or Windows 2000, you can run the tool directly from an easy-to-use online wizard available at: <www.microsoft.com/malwareremove>

How do I verify whether the removal tool has run on a client computer? There are two ways to check:

1. You can examine the value data for following registry entry to verify the execution of the tool.

www.SusanIves.com  
Geek Gifts



**LEGO Mindstorms Robotic Invention System:** Know a kid who has outgrown his LEGOs? Not so fast. The MindStorm kits link LEGOs and PCs to create a whole new experience. The heart of the system is the RCX, a mini-computer that rides along with your LEGO robot and operates the various sensors. It's programmed using RCX code on your PC. The program is transferred to the robot via infrared. Everything is included (more than 700 pieces!) including the software, a "constrictopedia" and instructions for 9 projects. You can get it for \$199 at most toy stores. Read more about the system at LEGO.

<<http://mindstorms.lego.com>>

You can implement such a check as part of a startup script or a logon script. This will prevent the tool from running multiple times.

Subkey:  
HKEY\_LOCAL\_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\RemovalTools\MRT

Every time the tool is run, independent of the results of the execution, the tool will record a GUID to the registry to indicate that it has been executed. The following table lists the GUID that corresponds to each release.

2. Using Windows Explorer look for the log entitled "mrt.log" located under your "Document" files or in the following folder: C:\Windows\Debug\mrt.log

Another similar tool is written by McAfee called Stinger. It is updated approximately every three months and can be downloaded at: <<http://vil.nai.com/vil/stinger/>>



# Computer Crimes

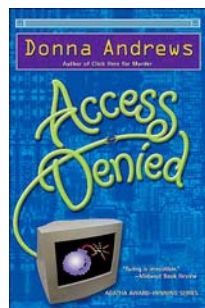
Susan Ives, Alamo PC

## Access Denied, by Donna Andrews

Hardback, Berkley Prime Crime, 2004, \$23.95 251 pages

Turing Hopper, the sentient artificial intelligence computer, is back in her third adventure, along with human sidekicks Maude and Tim. Turing dispatches Tim to stake out an empty house with a porch stacked with packages charged to the credit card of the elusive arch criminal Nestor Garcia, the thief who stole Turing's clone. Tim falls asleep on the job and falls under suspicion when a young man is murdered at the site.

The plot involves identity theft and a credit card scam: the way it's done is clever and will make you feel vulner-

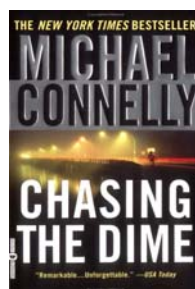


able. As always, there's a bit of hacking and philosophizing about (literally) the meaning of life. Lovely scene with a computerized security and lawn watering system gone whacko. This is a marvelous series: read the books in order if you want to get the full effect. Highly recommended.

## Chasing the Dime, by Michael Connelly

Paperback, Warner Vision, 2002, \$7.99, 436 pages

Henry Pierce, founder of nanotechnology company Amedo, moves to a new apartment and gets phone calls for Lilly, an "escort." Her - now Henry's - phone number is still listed on a porn website but no one has seen her for weeks. Although he should be

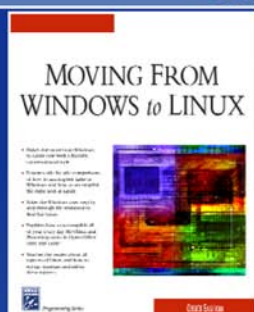


busy preparing for a meeting with a major investor he gets drawn into finding the missing Lilly.

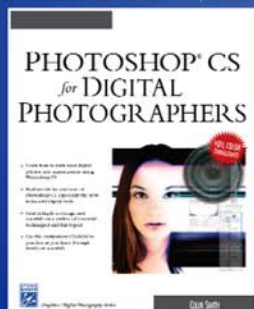
Excellent descriptions of nanotechnology and its potential uses, plus peripheral stuff about hacking, patents, high-tech financing and the Internet porn industry. The term "chasing the dime" refers to the competitive rush to invent a molecular computer no bigger than a dime. This is a very good thriller with a wonderful kicker at the end. Recommended.

*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 darndest to keep the recommended books in stock.*

## COMPUTER BOOKS THAT DELIVER



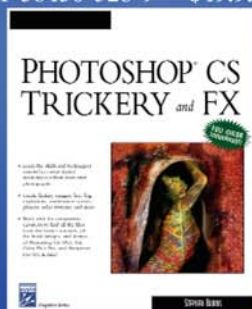
1-58450-280-0 \$44.95



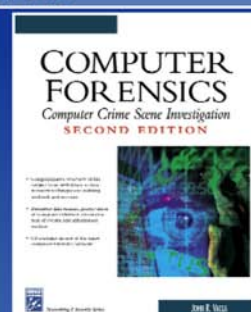
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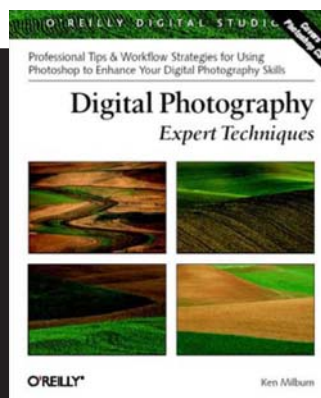
## Book Review

### Digital Photography Expert Techniques

\$44.95

Published by O'Reilly

Reviewed by John Donan, Alamo PC



This book is a companion to Deke McClelland's Adobe Photoshop One-on-One, a second of the high-end digital photography books published by O'Reilly. As with the other it is well illustrated with 653 glossy, full-color photographs illustrating the various steps. This is helpful for someone like me who likes to scan through a book and pick up where it interests me. For example in the chapter "Converting Photos to Paintings," I quickly spotted a technique (Tip 6) that I have wanted to emulate for some time, creating realistic watercolors. Here, as he does throughout the book, he complements Photoshop's capability with a plug-in, stating, "Most computer programs have trouble imitating watercolor realistically." The author's workflow organization allows one to read and understand without having to sit at the computer. It also has a chapter called "Creating Fictitious Photos" which is a different avenue to making art from photos or improving to excellence photos otherwise wallowing in the realm of mediocrity. The last tip in this chapter is "Use the Art of Collage."

The book is directed toward the serious photographer. The first four chapters depict this with such things as a 44 item check list (containing a cable release, something almost forgotten in this era of the advancing digital camera,) gray card adjustments, bracketing exposures and telling which 50 cameras (eleven manufacturers) are recognized by the Adobe Photoshop CS RAW plug-in. He claims that the RAW format is the only way to go, giving step-by-step instruction on its use. This Photoshop plug-in is the most widely used application to interpret RAW images. Compared to JPEG, the format saved by most cameras, RAW files capture a far greater range of colors.

Milburn thoroughly covers image management (Tip 1 in chapter 3 is "get to know your Photoshop File Browser") He then covers three image management programs: iPhoto, Adobe Photoshop Album, and Canto Cumulus. The thirty pages of chapter 4 are all about panoramas, how to shoot, starting with rotating around the camera's focal nodal point at precise intervals. Here, third party programs are the best alternative. They are more accurate and make the stitching process much easier. You will not find a better description of how take and process panoramas anywhere.

The book is 360 pages 13 chapters. Most chapters have a Getting Started section at the beginning covering the basics needed. There are 77 Tips covering common issues that might be encountered as one progresses into the various subjects. The material is pretty much equally divided between photography, general image editing, special techniques and the handling of the end product. It is written around Photoshop CS. Milburn says he assumes the reader has a prior familiarity with Photoshop but most of his tasks can be accomplished

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with Photoshop Elements 2.0 or any other image editor that supports layers and Photoshop-compatible plug-ins. I found at least 45 instances where the author was applying third party software such as Corel KnockOut, nik Color Efex, KPT Collection, plus many more which create some of the same effects found in Photoshop but without the steep learning curve

His camera of choice, for someone purchasing a new one today, is an SLR with interchangeable lenses (possibly your old 35mm film lenses.) These are now dropping below the \$1,000 threshold. For a new computer system he recommends, as a minimum, 2.4GHz processor, 1GB RAM, 17-in monitor, CD-ROM or DVD-ROM burner, two USB 2.0 connections and two FireWire (IEEE 1394) ports. For storage he notes that, if you are serious about quality you will want to keep images at the highest resolution possible. He considers that a single picture could easily consume 500MB of disk space (so buy a ton of hard drive)

The author, Ken Milburn, has been a photographer, both full- and part-time, for nearly five decades. Ken has written over 300 articles and columns for computer magazines as well as 17 books on web design, Flash, and (mostly) Adobe Photoshop

and digital photography. Books currently in print include Digital Photography: 99 Tips to Make You Look Like a Pro, The Photoshop 7 Virtual Classroom, and Photoshop Elements 2.0—The Complete Reference.

This book targets the professional, or serious, digital photographer who is using an SLR digital camera with at least six megapixels and plenty of memory, but I recommend it for any digital photographer desiring to gain high quality results. Although it uses Photoshop for manipulating the images other tools can be used to give spectacular results. Another target for this book is the film photographer who wants to move to the digital realm, but doesn't quite know how best to set up the workflow of processing images. Because a digital photograph can take many forms after image enhancement, there are a number of good ideas here to help you know what material to save and what to delete. It has already become one of my most used references and I highly recommend it for others.

The jacket price is \$44.95, although I have seen it in stores for \$39.95. O'Reilly offers user group members a 20% discount. See the Membership Benefits column of this newsletter.



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## Book Review

### The OS X Files: How to Become a Mac OS X Power User (Panther Edition)

By Bob LeVitus

\$29.99 US

Published by Wiley

Reviewed by Shane Hicks

This book claims it can turn me into a Mac OS X Power User. That's a pretty hefty claim. Let's see if this book lives up to its cover! This is a light read at 482 pages. It has fifteen chapters in four parts.

#### Introduction

I like the doctor's definition of a power user—basically, someone who can do more with their Mac than you can. I also like the fact that the author admits to knowing a lot about the Macintosh, after working with it for 15-years, but is still learning new things. This is an attitude that I like to see in the computer industry—you never know all there is to know and you never stop learning! This book is designed to show what the Doctor has learned in his experiences with the Mac. This book is for any Mac user, with a focus on topics of interest to the intermediate to advanced user.

#### The Book

The first chapter is an overview of the Mac. Of interest is a listing of additional resources accessible from the Internet to learn more. After all, as the author states, you never stop learning and a power user will read everything they can get their hands on.

This author is a fan of being mouse independent, so he covers the importance of learning the shortcut keys available in the OS. Chapter 2 is on the Finder and the Dock. There are good tips on using custom icons and associating them with your programs and files.

Chapter 3 provides a good summary of the OS X file system and how folders are organized. It talks about keyboard shortcuts and placing items in your Dock.

Chapter 4 talks about the importance of back-ups and provides some information on third-party applications available for purchase to perform these back-ups.

The next chapter covers on-line resources—many pay-as-you-go.

Chapter 6 covers the Classic (OS 9) environment.

Chapter 7 is a chapter on hardware. It talks about RAM usage and how to monitor it so that you know when you need to buy more. The author also discusses several additional components that can be added to the standard computer to make the Mac do more.

Chapter 8 provides useful troubleshooting and information on fixing common problems.

Chapter 9 contains some cool tips on customizing your Mac interface, but most involve the use of third-party tools to accomplish the tasks.

Chapters 10 and 11 are on UNIX, but have a surprisingly little focus on powerful things to do with UNIX. The major tips deal with viewing video files.

Chapter 12 is a tiny chapter on users and groups.

Chapter 13 talks about using AppleScript and provides some useful resources for downloading pre-made scripts, so you don't have to do any of the programming yourself.

Chapter 14 provides a list of software the author feels power users should own.

Finally, Chapter 15 contains several tips the Doctor collected on his web site from other users. This is probably the most useful chapter in the book.

#### Summary

Well, if you've seen my other reviews of Macintosh books, you're probably wondering why this one is so short. All I can say is, "Lack of content!" For a book that promised to make me a power user, it really didn't have much substance.

The book is not poorly written. In fact, I liked the Doctor's demeanor and style. As always, I enjoy a good sense of humor and a writer that doesn't take themselves too seriously. But I expected some hardcore content in this book—not common sense references or pointers to additional sources of information.

I'm irritated when books tell me to buy something additional to accomplish what I bought the book for. I'm also irritated when a book is little more than a list of additional resources that are available on the Internet. I'm competent enough that I could've done a search on Google and found most of this information. Even the tips the author provided are generally published monthly in the Mac magazines. As a power user, reading everything you can, you're probably already getting these magazines.

Why pay an additional \$29.99 for the same stuff?

If I were you, I wouldn't.

## Book Review

### PC Fear Factor

By Steve Bass

\$19.99 US

Published by Que



Who among us has not been the victim of a computer disaster at the hands of a virus writer, computer hacker, or some other factor beyond our control? We tend to think of computer disasters as having some external catalyst, but as they often say, most accidents occur in the home.

You are probably familiar with the old joke about the guy who walks into the doctor's office and says, "Doc, it hurts when I do this." The doctor's sage advice is, "Don't do that."

And so it is with one of the most common types of computer disaster: the self-inflicted computer disaster, also known as the Homer Simpson computer disaster. Here are four helpful tips for avoiding self-inflicted computer disasters.

#### Slow Down!

Haste is a major cause of self-inflicted computer disasters. For example, when installing an application, you may receive a pop-up window asking if you wish to overwrite a file that is present on your computer with a different version of that file. Similarly, when uninstalling an application, you may receive a message asking if you wish to delete a file from your computer that may no longer be needed. For the record, you should never allow an installation program to overwrite an existing file with an older version of that same file, and you should never allow an uninstallation program to delete a file if leaving it on your computer will do no harm. The problem is that, depending on how the question in the pop-up window is phrased, you may need to answer "yes" or "no" to effect the appropriate action. If you proceed hastily with the install or uninstall without carefully reading the question and pondering the response, you are likely to answer incorrectly and precipitate a computer disaster, overwriting or deleting something of vital importance.

#### Don't Be Overzealous

In the old days, we had to squeeze every ounce of performance out of our slow computers and every megabyte of space out of our puny hard disks. Although this is no longer necessary in a world of 3Ghz processors and 160Mb hard disks, many have not abandoned this mentality, and it gets them into trouble more often than not. For example, there are dozens of web sites offering thousands of Windows XP tune-up tips. Most of these tips make me shudder because they provide imperceptible gains in performance at enormous risk. My advice here is simple: if it ain't broken, don't fix it.

And while there is nothing wrong with good housekeeping – keeping your hard disk clear of clutter and debris – I run into too many examples of bad housekeeping. ("Alan, I deleted a lot of stuff off of my computer that I didn't need and now my speakers don't work.") If you are not absolutely certain whether something can be safely deleted from your system, leave it alone. As Dirty Harry said in Magnum Force, "A man's got to know his limitations."

#### Don't Be Gullible

Every few weeks I receive an email warning me about a new computer virus. These messages tell me that if I have certain files on my computer, my computer has been infected and that I should immediately delete these files. Such warnings are always virus hoaxes, intended to coax the gullible into deleting critical system files from their computers. Be suspicious of all such warnings. All antivirus software vendors have a section of their web site devoted to virus hoaxes. Before you take any action, verify that the virus warning you received was legitimate. (Hint: I have yet to receive such a warning that was legitimate.)

Unfortunately, antivirus software cannot protect us from ourselves. But wouldn't it be great if Symantec came out Norton AntiGullible to compliment Norton AntiVirus? I can see it now. A virus hoax from a well intentioned but uninformed friend arrives in my inbox. Norton AntiGullible swings into action, throwing up a warning message:

"Warning: you have just received an email message from an idiot advising you to delete critical files from your computer. This message has been automatically deleted to prevent you from shooting yourself in the foot, and a reply-all response has been automatically generated to help protect others on the message's distribution list."

Why, the very thought of it brings a smile to my face.


#### Don't Be Reckless

The easiest way to cause a self-inflicted computer disaster is to make changes to your computing environment with reckless abandon. Computers are unstable equilibriums, and change and stability are mutually exclusive concepts. You may not realize this, but every time you install an application on your computer, you are making four implicit assumptions:

1. The application will not conflict with your operating system, other applications, or hardware.
2. The application's install program will not cause problems by automatically overwriting or modifying files that are shared by other applications.
3. The application is well behaved and won't wreak havoc on your computer.
4. The application will uninstall cleanly without leaving any vestiges of any problems it caused on your computer.

Given that any change to your computing environment can disrupt its tenuous, unstable equilibrium, it always amazes me that some people think nothing of downloading, installing, and trying dozens of software packages without regard for the potential disastrous consequences.

DECEMBER 2005						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	Calendar is subject to change, Please call the Center 736-0700 or visit the online calendar < <a href="http://alamopc.org/calendar.html">http://alamopc.org/calendar.html</a> >		Learning listing at	<p><b>1</b></p> <p>Sr. Comp. Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon</p> <p>Digital Camera &amp; Photography 9 A.M. - Noon</p> <p>(a/r) HGSI 6:30 - 8:30 P.M.</p> <p>.Net 7 - 9 P.M.</p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p>(a/r) SBS 2008 8 - 10 A.M.</p> <p>Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon</p> <p>(p/r) PC Alamode Magazine Adobe PDF 7 - 9 P.M.</p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p>(a/r) MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon</p> <p>C++ 2:30 - 4:30 P.M.</p>
<b>4</b>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>(Sr. Comp. p/r class 5 of 6) Intro to Windows 1 - 3 P.M.</p> <p>Genealogy 7 - 9 P.M. (Cancel)</p>	<p><b>6</b></p> <p>Digital Camera &amp; Photography 9 A.M. - Noon</p> <p>(Sr. Comp. p/r class 5 of 6) Intro to Windows II 10 - Noon</p> <p>BOD 6:30 P.M.</p> <p>Microsoft Word 2000 7 - 9 P.M.</p>	<p><b>7</b></p> <p>(Sr. Comp. p/r class 5 of 6) World Wide Web &amp; E-mail 1 - 3 P.M.</p>	<p><b>8</b></p> <p>Sr. Comp. Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon</p> <p>Digital Camera &amp; Photography 9 A.M. - Noon</p>	<p><b>9</b></p> <p>Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon</p>	<p><b>10</b></p> <p>(p/r) Photo Editing 8 - 10 A.M.</p> <p>(a/r) MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon</p> <p>(p/r) Photo Editing 10 A.M. - Noon</p> <p>Commodore 1 - 4 P.M.</p>
<p><b>11</b></p> <p>(p/r class 1 of 2) Internet Jumpstart 2 - 5 P.M.</p> <p>(Not meeting in December)</p>	<p><b>12</b></p> <p>(Sr. Comp. p/r class 6 of 6) Intro to Windows 1 - 3 P.M.</p> <p>General Meeting Crossroads 7 - 9 P.M.</p> <p>Convention Center Presenter</p>	<p><b>13</b></p> <p>Digital Camera &amp; Photography 9 A.M. - Noon</p> <p>(Sr. Comp. p/r class 6 of 6) Intro to Windows II 10 - Noon</p> <p>Microsoft Word 2000 7 - 9 P.M.</p>	<p><b>14</b></p> <p>Power Internet 10 A.M. - Noon</p> <p>(Sr. Comp. p/r class 6 of 6) World Wide Web &amp; E-mail 1 - 3 P.M.</p> <p>Jumpstart Your Home Page 5:30 - 7 P.M.</p>	<p><b>15</b></p> <p>Sr. Comp. Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon</p> <p>Digital Camera &amp; Photography 9 A.M. - Noon</p>	<p><b>16</b></p> <p>Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon</p>	<p><b>17</b></p> <p>(a/r) MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon</p> <p>C++ 2:30 - 4:30 P.M.</p>
<b>18</b>	<p><b>19</b></p>	<p><b>20</b></p> <p>Digital Camera &amp; Photography 9 A.M. - Noon</p> <p>Microsoft Word 2000 7 - 9 P.M.</p>	<p><b>21</b></p>	<p><b>22</b></p> <p>Sr. Comp. Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon</p> <p>Digital Camera &amp; Photography 9 A.M. - Noon</p> <p>? ? Advanced Access 7 - 9 P.M. ? ? (Dot).NetNuke Portal 7 - 9 P.M. (Not meeting)</p>	<p><b>23</b></p> <p>Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon</p>	<p><b>24</b></p> <p>(a/r) MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon</p> <p>Desk Staff Meeting 1 - 3 P.M.</p>
<p><b>25</b></p> <p>(p/r class 2 of 2) Internet Jumpstart 2 - 5 P.M.</p> <p>We are closed. No classes today!</p> <p>Merry Christmas</p>	<p><b>26</b></p> <p>CorelDRAW 12 6 - 8 P.M.</p>	<p><b>27</b></p> <p>Digital Camera &amp; Photography 9 A.M. - Noon</p> <p>Microsoft Word 2000 7 - 9 P.M.</p>	<p><b>28</b></p> <p>(a/r) WordPerfect 7 - 9 P.M.</p>	<p><b>29</b></p> <p>Sr. Comp. Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon</p> <p>Digital Camera &amp; Photography 9 A.M. - Noon</p>	<p><b>30</b></p> <p>Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon</p>	<p><b>31</b></p> <p>(a/r) MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon</p>
<p><b>ALAMOPC ORGANIZATION</b></p>						

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	Calendar is subject to change, Please call the Center 736-0700 or visit the online calendar < <a href="http://alamopc.org/calendar.html">http://alamopc.org/calendar.html</a> >		Learning listing at			
4	5 (Sr. Comp. p/r class 5 of 6) Intro to Windows I - 3 P.M. Genealogy 7 - 9 P.M. (Cancel)	6 Digital Camera & Photography 9 A.M. - Noon (Sr. Comp. p/r class 5 of 6) Intro to Windows II 10 - Noon BOD 6:30 P.M. Microsoft Word 2000 7 - 9 P.M.	7 (Sr. Comp. p/r class 5 of 6) World Wide Web & E-mail I - 3 P.M.	8 Sr. Comp. Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon Digital Camera & Photography 9 A.M. - Noon	9 Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon	10 (p/r) Photo Editing 8 - 10 A.M. (a/r) MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon (p/r) Photo Editing 10 A.M. - Noon Commodore I - 4 P.M.
11 (p/r class 1 of 2) Internet Jumpstart 2 - 5 P.M. (Not meeting in December)	12 (Sr. Comp. p/r class 6 of 6) Intro to Windows I - 3 P.M. General Meeting Crossroads 7 - 9 P.M. Convention Center Presenter	13 Digital Camera & Photography 9 A.M. - Noon (Sr. Comp. p/r class 6 of 6) Intro to Windows II 10 - Noon Microsoft Word 2000 7 - 9 P.M.	14 Power Internet 10 A.M. - Noon (Sr. Comp. p/r class 6 of 6) World Wide Web & E-mail I - 3 P.M. Jumpstart Your Home Page 5:30 - 7 P.M.	15 Sr. Comp. Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon Digital Camera & Photography 9 A.M. - Noon	16 Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon	17 (a/r) MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon C++ 2:30 - 4:30 P.M.
18	19	20 Digital Camera & Photography 9 A.M. - Noon Microsoft Word 2000 7 - 9 P.M.	21	22 Sr. Comp. Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon Digital Camera & Photography 9 A.M. - Noon ? ? Advanced Access 7 - 9 P.M. ? ? (Dot).NetNuke Portal 7 - 9 P.M. (Not meeting)	23 Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon	24 (a/r) MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon Desk Staff Meeting 1 - 3 P.M.
25  (p/r class 2 of 2) Internet Jumpstart 2 - 5 P.M. We are closed. No classes today! Merry Christmas	26 CorelDRAW 12 6 - 8 P.M.	27 Digital Camera & Photography 9 A.M. - Noon Microsoft Word 2000 7 - 9 P.M.	28 (a/r) WordPerfect 7 - 9 P.M.	29 Sr. Comp. Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon Digital Camera & Photography 9 A.M. - Noon	30 Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon	31 (a/r) MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon

# ALAMOPC ORGANIZATION





# The Learning Center

## Alamo PC Organization classes and study groups

### 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

This is a study group for those interested in developing Windows and Web applications using Microsoft's .NET technology. We will use development modules and applications for the DNN Portal using VB.NET and C# as a basis for demonstrating .Net development. Guest speakers occasionally present new technology and development tools available for .Net Developers. Door prizes (books, software, shirts, etc.) are distributed at most meetings.

**Contact:** Joe Brazell 345-2207

**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 Small Business Server Special Interest Group (APCO SBS SIG) celebrated its first birthday on Friday, July 8th. We had a record turnout of 24 despite several 'regulars' having to be out of town or taking care of clients. The technical portion was a brief discussion of how to configure Internet Over the Internet (RPC over HTTP).

Our next meeting will be on Friday, August 5th. After the Taco Social we will have a discussion of WSUS, Windows Software Update Services.

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.>

### Small Business Server Certification Study Group

The SBS Certification Study Group will focus on presentation of material related to Microsoft's Small Business Server Exam Preparation. The target audience includes computer consultants, and network administrators holding advanced Microsoft certifications MCP and MCSE. Experience with small business server product support is important. Due to the anticipated pace of the class and complexity of material, attendees should have previously passed an advanced Microsoft Server Certification Exam (MCP or MCSE) and be experienced and competent with SBS Win2000 or SBS Win2003.

**Contact:** Ed or Therese Weitz for information and registration.

Phone 210-946-4700 or e-mail <ed22@satx.rr.com>

**When:** Tuesdays, 6-9 pm

We will not meet on the Tuesday when the Alamo PC board meets

**Where:** Learning Center

**Technical Rating** ★★★★★

### 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** ★ - ★★★★★

## STUDY GROUPS (cont.)

### Power Internet Study Group

Current Internet users can learn more. Each month a different Internet application will be discussed, such as 64 bit computers, SATA HDD technology, e-mail, browser use, MS Outlook, and virus protection in communications. This is a good place to share interests and insights about your experiences on the World Wide Web.

**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.

**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

Brush up on your computer skills. Students learn about the parts of the computer, acquire keyboard and mouse skills, and gain an understanding of surfing the web and using email. The course prepares students to enroll in a variety of second-level courses.

**Contact:** Ruben Sanchez

**When:** Sat. Aug 20, 27, Sep 3 1-3 pm

Sat. Sep 17, 24, Oct 1 1-3 pm

Sat. Oct 15, 22, 29 1-3 pm

**Where:** Resource Center

**Pre-registration:** Yes - Call the Learning,

210-736-0080

Technical Rating ★

### DotNetNuke Portal Study Group

Learn DotNetNuke portal software for hosting your website. Focus on hands-on configuration and use of the DNN 3.x portal. The class will discuss the portal framework and configuration of a DNN site. Setup web pages, insert modules on the pages, modify and edit the look of the pages and data in the pages. Modules include Calendar, Announcements, Forums, Blogs, Contacts, Links, Surveys and HTML.

**Contact:** Joe Brazell 345-2207

**When:** 7PM - 9PM Sept. 29, Oct. 27 (no November or December meeting)

**Where:** Learning Center

**Pre-registration:** No

Technical Rating: ★

### APCO Retro (Antique Computer Users Group)

We're initially only going to meet on-

## FREE CLASSES

line, through the mailing list I've established using Yahoo! Groups. Membership is limited to Alamo PC members, but anyone can join the list by sending a message to <apcoretro-subscribe@yahooogroups.com>." Or, if you're reading the electronic version of the PC Alamo where this text appears, you can join APCO Retro simply by going to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/apcoretro/join>

**Contact:** Shane Hicks

<shane@absolutepowercomputing.com>

**When:** Anytime

**Where:** Cyberspace

**Pre-registration:** Must sign-up on

<APCORETRO@yahooogroups.com>

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★★

### 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

<stephentechnr@yahoo.com>

210-675-2880

**When:** 4th Monday, 6-8pm

**Where:** Learning Center

**Pre-registration:** No

Technical Rating ★★

### Digital Camera & Photography

Learn how use your digital camera, plus all the tips and tricks to get better pictures when you take them. The workshop will have two parts. Part one starts with using your camera and field trips to interesting local spots to learn photography techniques. Part two deals with editing your images using Microsoft Digital Image 2006 and, extra tips and tricks about matting and framing plus interesting uses for your photos.

**When:** 8 weeks, Tuesday and Thursday each week, starting the first week of November 2005; 9 to noon

**Contact:** Joe M. Davis

**Where:** Learning Center plus field trips

**Pre-registration:** YES Call Learning

Center at 210-736-0080

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:** 7-9pm on Wednesdays.

4, 11, 18 and 25 January 2006

**Where:** Learning Center, Room 1

**Pre-registration:** Yes

Technical Rating: ★

### Excel 2000 Class

Learn Excel 2000's basic functionality, menus, toolbars, icons and shortcut keys. 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 design, build and manage your own web site using HTML. Students should attend the Home Page Jumpstart Class and have familiarity with the Windows Operating System. The Six (to Eight if needed) Session class will begin a new cycle each March and September.

**Contact:** Mike Bianchi

<webmaster@alamopc.org>

**When:** Saturdays, 4-8 pm

**Where:** Learning Center

Prerequisite: Home Page Jumpstart

Class, 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

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

We will primarily use Photoshop Elements software, although we will also use Corel PhotoPaint and ArcSoft Photostudio occasionally. Two classes, one at 8 a.m., another at 10 a.m.

**Contact:** *Clarke Bird*  
<cbird@satx.rr.com>

**When:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday, 8-10am, 10am-noon

**Pre-registration:** Yes - Learning Center

**Technical Rating:** ★ - ★★★

## Power Point class

This course features a structured curriculum for Microsoft PowerPoint. Students will be introduced to PowerPoint and will experience hands on development of an entertaining PowerPoint presentation. Emphasis will be placed on Inserting Graphics, Text, Layout, Titles and Slide Transitions.

**Contact:** Learning Center 736-0700

**When:** Dates and time to be announced

**Where:** Learning Center

**Pre-registration:** Yes

**Technical Rating:** ★

## Surf and Search

A new beginners' class to explore the Internet. Learn how to search for long-lost cousins, how to research Aunt Jemima's antique tiara or how to find just about anything on the Internet (including yourself). While the class will be largely "Google-based" we will also look at many other options and will be sharing our own favorite sites. Students should have familiarity with the Windows Operating System.

**When:** Saturday, Nov. 19th; 2 pm - 5 pm

**Where:** Alamo PC Organization Computer Learning Center

**Tuition fee:** Free with membership  
Technical Rating:

**Class Leader:** William Hudson (Please note: William Hudson is Not the same person as Bill Hudson who teaches Senior Comp courses)

**Pre-registration** is required. Call the Alamo PC Computer Learning Center at (210) 736-0080, or (210) 736-0700

## 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 Sundays of odd numbered months, 2pm-5pm.

**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. 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:** *Ruben Sanchez*

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

**Where:** Learning Center

**Pre-registration:** Yes, call Learning Center at 736-0080

**Technical Rating** ★ - ★★★

## FEE-BASED CLASSES

### Photoshop Elements & Photoshop 7 Class - \$

#### 2005 Schedule:

**November** - each Thursday 1pm-5pm

**Calendar Class;** learn to make personal calendars for friends & family; bring photos; fee \$20.00; registration and completion of Photoshop 7 or Elements 2 class required.

**Photoshop 7 classes** - 8 weeks on Fridays, 1 to 5 p.m. The course will teach you how to modify and combine images to create realistic composite images.

**When:** Fridays 1-5 pm except holidays

**Where:** Learning Center

**Fees:** \$90 Alamo PC members (includes textbook) \$20 for Previous Students to retake the same class

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

**Technical Rating** ★ - ★★★

**Contact:** Beverly Bihn  
<bihndolls@att.net>

**2006 - Thursdays from 1 to 5 p.m.** will offer Photoshop 7 instruction class "B" with different lessons and text during January - February teaching the basic tools, palettes and procedures for Photoshop 7. Registration is required and a fee of \$90.00 for first time participants or \$20.00 for those who have previously taken the class.

**2006 - Fridays in January - February from 1 - 5 P.M.** will offer Elements 2 instruction classes for a fee of \$90.00 for first time participants or \$20.00 for repeats. Registration is required and you must be a member of Alamo PC.

## 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:** Saturdays, October 8, 15, 22, 29, 8:00 - Noon

**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.



## FEE-BASED CLASSES (cont.)

### Senior Comp Classes - \$

Introductory classes for people 45 and older. New classes begin approximately every two months. Classes are held at the Computer Learning Center and meet for two hours, once a week for six weeks. Pre-registration is required. Senior Comp Classes are backed by eight years of proven success!

#### Senior Comp Basic Intro. To Windows

The Basic Introduction To Windows class is designed for people who do not have a computer yet or have just gotten one and don't know how to "turn it on". SOME of the material found in the Introduction To Windows Class will be covered but at a MUCH slower pace and with lots more "hands on" practice. Students will learn the basics of using the computer and some word processing. Taking the next course, Introduction To Windows I, will still be necessary for students who want to be productive with their computers, but the students will be better able to understand what the Introduction To Windows Instructor is teaching. Internet and email will NOT be covered in this course.

**When:** 6 weeks, Wednesdays Oct 12, 19, 26, Nov 2, 9, 16; 10 am to 12 pm

**Instructors:** Andy Roca, Donna Dudley  
**Where:** Learning Center

**Fees:** The First Class is \$60.00. To repeat this class or if going from Basic Introduction To Windows, to Introduction To Windows I or from either beginning class to Introduction To Windows II the fee is \$40.00.

**Pre-registration** - YES Call Learning Center at 210-736-0080

**Technical Rating:** ★

#### Senior Comp Intro. To Windows I

Our Introduction To Windows I course covers the fundamentals of using a computer, from turning it on to working with Microsoft Windows 98 and Windows XP. In this class you will learn how to: Open, Close, Save, Delete, Copy, and Move files; work with Files and Folders; customize your Desktop Layout; and to Resize and Move program windows. You will also be introduced to several "free" programs already on your computer, including: Wordpad - for basic word processing; Paint - for basic graphics work; Computer Solitaire and other games; and a Calculator.

**When:** 6 weeks, Tuesdays Oct 25, Nov 1, 8, 15, 22, 29; 1:30 to 3:30 pm

**Instructor:** Audrey Henkin

**When:** 6 weeks, Mondays Nov 7, 14, 21, 28, Dec 5, 12; 1 to 3 pm

**Instructor:** Don Robinson

**Where:** Learning Center

**Fees:** The First Class is \$60.00. To repeat this class or if going from Basic Introduction To Windows, to Introduction To Windows I or from either beginning class to Introduction To Windows II the fee is \$40.00.

**Pre-registration** - YES Call Learning Center at 210-736-0080

**Technical Rating:** ★

#### Senior Comp Intro. To Windows II

This course takes students beyond the basic computing information we present in our Beginning Windows course. We cover some Word Processing, Task Bars, Windows Explorer, and Finding Files. The student will also learn about E-Mail, and the Internet. The Internet information focuses on how to get on the Internet, how to search it for the information you want, and how to download program updates. The E-mail information focuses on sending email and working with email attachments. The course features "hands on" exercises in class. The course uses advanced sections of the same textbook employed in the Introduction To Windows Classes.

**When:** 6 weeks, Tuesdays Nov 8, 15, 22, 29, Dec 6, 13; 10 am to 12 pm

**Instructor:** Bill Hudson

**Where:** Learning Center

**Fees:** The First Class is \$60.00. To repeat this class or if going from Basic Introduction To Windows, to Introduction To Windows I or from either beginning class to Introduction To Windows II the fee is \$40.00.

**Pre-registration** - YES Call Learning Center at 210-736-0080

**Technical Rating:** ★★

#### Senior Comp Internet And E-Mail

The Internet and E-mail course will cover basic techniques needed to effectively and enjoyably "surf the net." Students will learn how to find information on the net, download files, applications and graphics, and how to purchase items from "e-commerce" sites. Depending on student interest, the class will learn about important Internet issues like privacy, credit card security, and information reliability. Depending on time constraints, students may also cover more advanced topics like using the Internet for long distance communication, "Web Cams," and enjoying streaming audio and video.

**When:** 6 weeks, Wednesdays Nov 2, 9, 16, 30, Dec 7, 14; 1 to 3 pm

**Instructor:** Don Robinson

**Where:** Learning Center

**Fees:** The first class is \$60.00. To repeat the Internet and Email Class the fee is \$40.00

**Pre-registration** - YES Call Learning Center at 210-736-0080

**Technical Rating:** ★★

## COMPUTER CLINIC

### The Doctor Is In

Each Friday morning, volunteer "Computer Doctors" share their time at the Computer Learning Center to handle technical hardware and software questions and solve problems. They attempt to troubleshoot hardware and sort out software problems on site. If the problem is beyond their means, the member is referred to one of the repair shops that advertise with Alamo PC. The repair shop does charge for the problem. We do the work at the Computer Learning Center as a member-to-member benefit, with donations requested.

#### What to bring with you:

- Your Alamo PC membership card
  - Your computer and all connecting cables, cords, software drivers or programs related to the problem area. You do not need to bring your monitor, mouse, or keyboard unless you are having a specific problem with those items. Make sure you have the keycode for all of your software.
  - If you are having problems with your scanner, printer, or something that hooks up to your computer; bring that item in addition to your computer etc. plus all connecting cables and software (don't forget the keycode for your software)
  - If you are having a problem with SBC Broadband (DSL) in addition to your computer etc. bring your SBC or Broadband modem, power supply and cables. We will also need your user name and password for this and any other internet related problems.
- When:** Every Friday 9 am to noon  
**Where:** Alamo PC Organization Computer Learning Center
- Prerequisites:** Bring your hardware and all connecting cables, cords, software drivers or programs related to the problem area
- Tuition fee:** Donations for this service are requested, the funds are used to purchase testing and other equipment to use at the Dr Is In sessions.
- Technical Rating:** ★

# 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.

## Step One

**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.

<b>0</b>	<b>ACT!</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>Quattro Pro</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Access</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>Quick Books</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>AlphaFour</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>Quicken</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>dBase</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>Photo Album</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Delphi</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>Windows 98</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Dreamweaver 3</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>WinFax Pro</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Networking</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>MS Word Windows</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Excel</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>WordPerfect</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Family Origins for Win.</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>Visual Basic</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>FrontPage 98</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>Internet Explorer</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>Flash 4</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>MS Outlook Express</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>Genealogy</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>Home Help</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>RoadRunner</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>Hardware</b>
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<b>26</b>	<b>PowerPoint</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>Windows XP</b>

## 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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## Classified Ads

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


**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: <joecool@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



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



# 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](http://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](http://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: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

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

PCA JAN05

# 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 you 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.

