

THE NEWS MAGAZINE OF THE ALAMO PC ORGANIZATION

PC Alamode

TECH ISSUE

www.alamopc.org
January 2007
\$4.00

Safeguarding your data
page 34

Changing hard drives
page 45

Should you upgrade to Vista?
page 48

**General Meeting:
PhotoShop**
page 9





SAVE ON INK

without the squid farm.



LEXMARK

Canon

EPSON

and more...

Discount Printer Ink

Ink Cartridges ♦ Laser Toner ♦ All Printing Supplies

Huebner Oaks

next to BBQ Galore

San Pedro

next to Hermes Music



The Forum

behind Hobby Lobby

Bulverde Road

inside Loop 1604

210-2-BUY-INK

(210-228-9465)

www.inksell.com

Printer
InkSell.com **INK**



**New
Life
Toner inc.**

930-9300

5800 Rittiman Plaza
www.toner.net

Reduce Office Cost!

Save Up to 70%

on Supplies

Printer, Fax, & Copiers

Toner, Ink, Ribbons

Free Delivery

Volume Discounts

Money Back Guarantee

Huge Selection

New and compatible Toner & Ink Crtgs

We buy empty toner and ink cartridges.
Ask about the great deals on refurb. printers

**Authorized
Printer Service**

Hewlett-Packard

Xerox

Okidata

Brother

10%

Discount
On Parts and Labor

We also service

Lexmark

Canon

Sony

Computer Service

Coupon 1103



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

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

Please send change of address and other correspondence to:

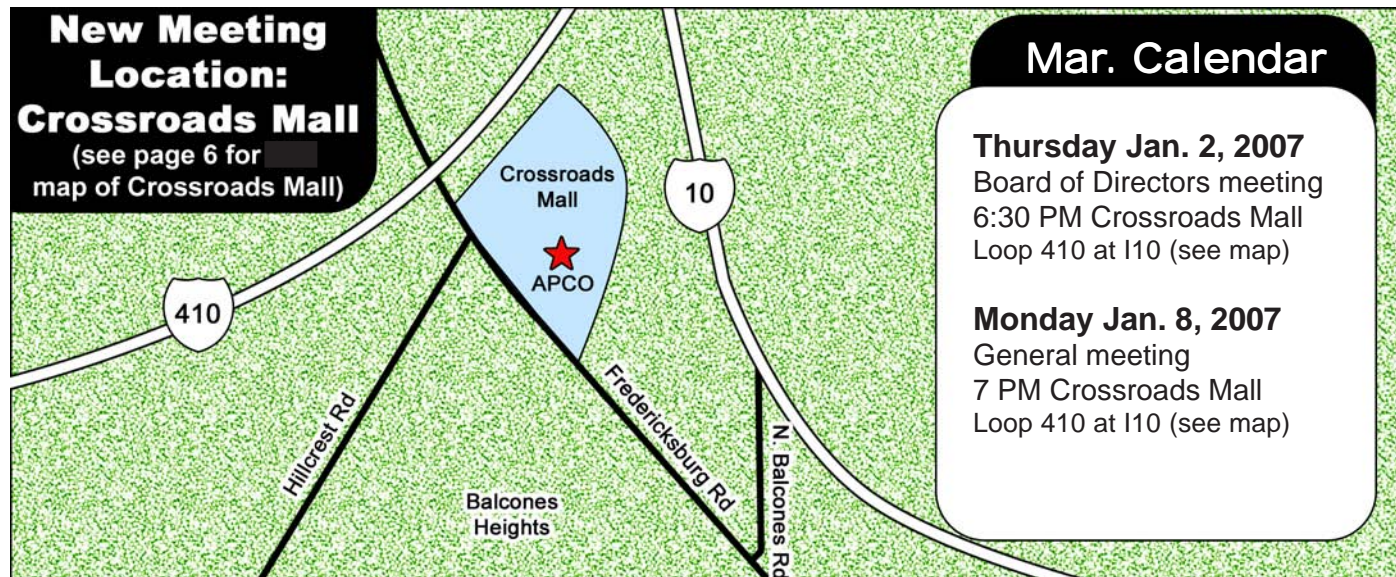
Alamo PC Organization
PO Box 65180
San Antonio, TX 78265-5180

Meetings

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

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

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



Mar. Calendar

Thursday Jan. 2, 2007
Board of Directors meeting
6:30 PM Crossroads Mall
Loop 410 at I10 (see map)

Monday Jan. 8, 2007
General meeting
7 PM Crossroads Mall
Loop 410 at I10 (see map)



columns

The Deals Guy <i>Bob Click</i>	13
Computer Law <i>John Brewer</i>	15
RAM & Reason <i>Rob Rice</i>	17
Windows Tips & Tricks <i>Bill Beverley</i>	20
New Best and Worst <i>Pim Borman</i>	22
PowerTalk <i>Shane Hicks</i>	24
The Switcher <i>Shane Hicks</i>	25
Lazy Webmaster <i>Susan Ives</i>	27
The Graphics Guy <i>Paul Vaughn</i>	28
PC 101 <i>Ron Ingraham</i>	30

departments

PC Alamode Links List	7
Enter <i>Joseph de Leon</i>	7
President's Message <i>Bill Klutz</i>	8
January Program News <i>David Steward</i>	9
Volunteer of the Month <i>Marge Fraley</i>	10
Funny Bytes	12

guest contributors

Kingdom of the Ordinary User <i>David D. Uffer</i>	32
Safeguarding your data <i>Mindi McDowell</i>	34

Alamo PC Phone Directory	6
Map to Meeting Places	6
Alamo PC Calendar of Events	58
Study Groups and Classes	59-63
Help Numbers	64
Index of Advertisers	65
Classified Ads	65
Membership Application	66

PC Alamode

(501 (C) (3))

Featured this month

Processor

To DualCore or Not to DualCore

Monitors

Buying an HDTV?

Upgrading your monitor

Clear reading with ClearType

Hard Drives

Changing Hard Drives

Free up MegaBytes of disk space

Operating System

Should you upgrade to Vista?

Windows XP service manager

Crash! Windows will not come up

36

39

41

43

45

47

48

50

51

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 © 2007 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.

Periodical postage paid at San Antonio, TX and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to PC Alamode, PO Box 65180, San Antonio, TX 78265-5180.

EDITOR

Joseph de Leon

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

Joe Barth
Susan Ives

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

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

INTERIM PRODUCT REVIEW COORDINATOR

David Steward

ADVERTISING

Joseph de Leon

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
editor@alamopc.org

Ad rates effective January 2005

Rate frequency.	1 x	3 x*	6x*	12 x*
			Per insertion	
Full pg. (7 ¹ / ₄ " w x 9 ¹ / ₂ " h)	\$274	\$260	\$246	\$238
Half pg. (7 ¹ / ₄ " w x 4 ¹ / ₂ " h)	144	138	130	121
Half pg. (3 ¹ / ₂ " w x 9 ¹ / ₂ " h)	144	138	130	121
Quarter pg.(3 ¹ / ₂ " w x 4 ¹ / ₂ " h)	74	72	64	62
Bus. card (3 ¹ / ₂ " w x 2" h) **	43	41	39	37

*Consecutive months

**To be paid in advance

product reviews

Computer Crimes

NeatReceipts Scanalyzer

Laptop Desk

54

55

57

Board of Directors

President	Bill Klutz	532-9122 (Home)	president@alamopc.org
Secretary	David Steward	662-8606 (Home)	secretary@alamopc.org
Treasurer	Billy Samples	532-9122 (Home)	treasurer@alamopc.org
Education	Linda Bianchi	226-2460 (Home)	education@alamopc.org
Operations	Cary Hall	736-0700 (Learning Center)	learncenter@alamopc.org
Marketing	TBD (Steve Tech)	675-2880 (Home)	marketing@alamopc.org
Communications	TBD		communications@alamopc.org

Executive Service Officers and other important numbers

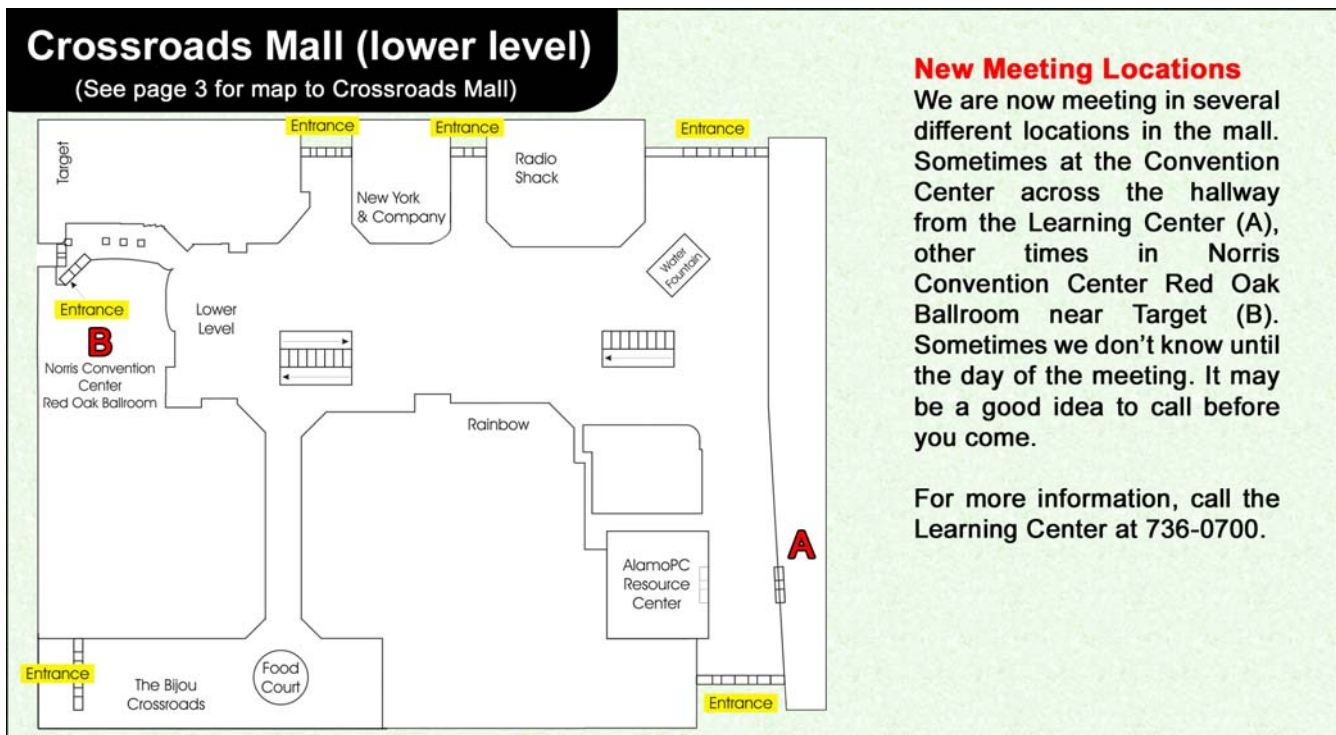
Learning Center, Crossroads Mall

736-0700

FAX 736-0032

Learning Center Manager	Cary & Jean Hall	736-0700 (Learning Center)	learncenter@alamopc.org
Past President/Programs	David Steward	662-8606 (Home)	dsteward@texas.net
Member Records	Steve Tech	675-2880 (Home)	membership@alamopc.org
Public Relations	Susan Ives	694-4582 (Home)	suives@texas.net
Product Review Coordinator	TBD (David Steward)	662-8606 (Home)	reviews@alamopc.org
Study Groups Coordinator	Linda Bianchi	226-2460 (Home)	education@alamopc.org
Special Projects	Joe Brazell	370-2207 (Office)	projects@alamopc.org
Registrar	Linda Bianchi	226-2460 (Home)	Registrar@alamopc.org
Webmaster	Mike Bianchi	226-2460 (Home)	Webmaster@alamopc.org
Lab/Network Administrator	Gary Grieve	492-5066 (Home)	netadmin@alamopc.org
Trade Shows	Steve Tech	675-2880 (Home)	stephentechnr@yahoo.com
APCUG Representative	David Steward	662-8606 (Home)	dsteward@texas.net
Editor, PC Alamo Magazine	Joseph de Leon	unlisted	editor@alamopc.org

For Study Groups and Classes, phone: 736-0080 or 736-0700



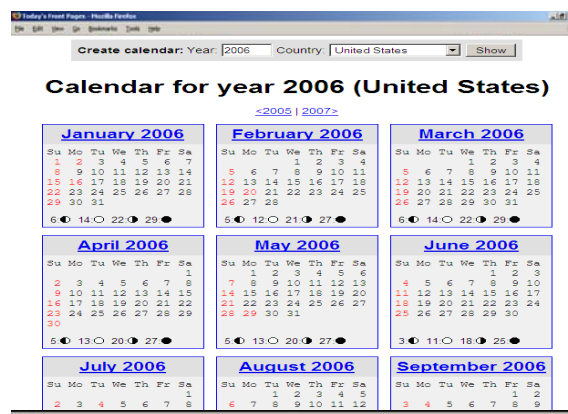
PC Alamode Links List



New Year Resolutions

<http://www.123newyear.com/resolutions.html>

In December or early January, almost everyone is minted up by the desire to plan a wonderful New Year! This site offers tips on how to plan a successful set of resolutions.



Online Calendar

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

Look up a date or customize your own calendar for any year. You can even print out calendars.



Another year has come and gone. Are you ready to make a whole new set of resolutions? Take a look at the New Year Resolutions Web site above for some cool ideas on what to resolve to do and how to stick to it

Don't forget to catch Beverly Bihn, Alamo PC's very own Photoshop expert, as she shows off the power of Adobe PhotoShop at the January General Meeting. I taught her everything she knows! That used to be true, but she has really gone beyond what I showed her in the first Photoshop classes I conducted a few years ago.

There will continue to be a lot of buzz around Windows Vista, so included are another few articles about this soon-to-be-released version of Windows.

Have a great New Year!

Joseph de Leon, Editor

editor@alamopc.org



Joseph de Leon, Alamo PC

Joseph has worked in the graphics industry for 9 years and teaches graphics and web classes at San Antonio College.

President's Message

Bill Klutz

"January" - 1st, BOY, Whew, Bihn

The month of January usually stirs at least three thoughts, in rapid succession. The first two happen on the beginning day January 1st. That day is the first day of a new year and obviously signals the beginning of the year. Hopefully, it also allows one to say "Whew," as they think about all the holiday hustle and bustle that is behind them. (That would assume that all of the post holiday sales and all of the returns have been handled.)

Some of the other thoughts for the month are: December 15th - Martin Luther King Day (One of many tragic days that will be remembered.) - a time to remember that people should live peaceably, regardless of any differences we may have; December 8th-12th - CES (Consumer Electronics Show, in Las Vegas), where all the new and latest products will be displayed (No representatives sent from Alamo PC, but David Steward will be attending because of his position in APCUG); December 8th - Beverly Bihn (member of Alamo PC) - Photoshop and some of the capabilities it has (Industry presenters will all be attending CES at this time).

Note: Keep in mind other General meetings, and the presenters tentatively scheduled, or who are being contacted to determine their availability. February: Smart Computing in my opinion, one of the best kept secrets around if you want to know more about computers. (Subscription price to the magazine allows access to several other online magazines, plus an extensive database); March: Trend Micro Develops, markets and supports anti virus software and management solutions for corporate computer systems and personal computers; April: Gene Barlow - General Computer Information specialist (expert in Hard drives, backups, and computer vulnerabilities that may come from the Internet), friend to User Groups, and software vender; May: Dave Whittle - Technology and security expert (also a software vender), will probably address "Whittle's Picks." These are hidden gems from companies large and small, old and new on computer related technologies, helps and security.


Although I hope otherwise, I am almost sure that with Alamo PC member Beverly Bihn talking about Photoshop and its capabilities on January 8th, there will be decreased interest and support for our General meeting. It will not be because she will not give a good presentation, but because of a lack of interest. (The 2000 Postcard and 8000 E-Mails in early November helped gather 274 people for the meeting on Microsoft VISTA. The 4000 E-Mails in early December helped gather 97 people for the meeting with Advanced Micro Devices [AMD]. Not a very good return. Invite someone to come hear what Beverly has to say about Photoshop. With all the holiday pictures that were probably taken, it could be beneficial.) Hopefully we can try to reverse the trend of waning interest and the desire to say "I'll pass" on just one of the benefits this organization offers (the general meeting presentation). As I have said before, "Word-of-mouth advertising is a great tool." Please help us spread the word on things people may find useful about Alamo PC and computers in general.

Current members, need to reconsider what this organization has done for each of you, and what it can do for others. Perhaps that will help motivate the renewal effort and improve the desire to provide some much needed support, at various places in the organization.

I will continue to ask each member to consider being just a little more actively involved with the Alamo PC Organization marketing, advertising & sponsors, software for evaluation, general meeting set up & tear down, trade shows, learning center volunteer, etc. Please remember "this organization is OUR's (yours and mine), and if WE want it to continue, WE must continue to be a supportive member, through renewals and participation at some level." If not, we will be allowing circumstances to decide for us.

Consider some of the following member items (and talk to others about them): free class benefit - enroll in one or more of the classes; the "Wish List" - (if a class you would like to have isn't on the list, make it known to the people at the Learning Center. They will put it on the "Wish List" of classes that people have requested); one membership for the family - entitles one family member to vote, but it entitles each family member, in the household, to enroll in free classes during, the time the membership is current, "The Dr. Is In" (Friday AM hand-on help, at the Learning Center, with computer problems), monthly presentations about current issues in the computer hardware and software, etc.

With the holidays over, and some great pictures, that may not have turned out like you would have liked, consider our popular Digital Camera & Photography class. (Tips for non Digital Camera users and those considering a Digital Camera; plus



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

Continued on page 9

Google, entry www.popphoto.com to get a sub-list of additional items that may be of interest to you. Or pick from the free tips/courses on photography. Check the Hewlett Packard website hp.com for more related free courses.) That should put you in a great position to get more info on editing and being creative with photos. Also, you will enjoy the January meeting presenter and her info, as she and her class are great!

We are still trying to improve member retention, as new members have not been sufficient to offset non-renewing members. Each month shows a net loss. If you do not choose to renew, send a comment or two as to "Why?" to membership@alamopc.org, or to me (president@alamopc.org or privately wlklutzjr@juno.com). I appreciate all communications, especially those on how we can improve the Alamo PC Organization and increase member interest!

The future of OUR organization rests in the hands of its members. "Whether WE continue (or not) depends on the interest and involvement of each member. But, it primarily depends on membership renewals and/or financial support. Without those, we will not be able to meet our financial obligations and 'business decisions' will have to be made that will affect everyone." "PLEASE, GIVE US SOME HELP!"

I am Looking forward to seeing as many members as possible at the January General Meeting. (As of mid Dec the location has not been finalized, so please call just before the meeting for the location.) For those who missed the last two meetings (Nov - VISTA; Dec - AMD), you missed being apprised of the latest in some computer related information, plus the opportunity to leave with software. Sorry for your loss.

January Program

David Steward

Beverly Bihn presents Photoshop

News Brief

Happy Birthday Lentz Computer Services

Monday December 18th marked Lentz Computer Services' 17th birthday! Owner Larry Lentz founded LCS on December 18, 1989, also a Monday, to serve the technology needs of small businesses in the South Texas area.

Technology has changed a lot in those 17 years and Lentz Computer Services has kept up with it. Larry has made it a point to maintain a high level of technical competency as evidenced by his many certifications. Microsoft recognized not only his technical skills but his community involvement and contribution by awarding him Microsoft MVP (Most Valuable Professional) for Microsoft Dynamics CRM for 2006. He is one of only 15 currently in the world.

For more information on Lentz Computer Services and how we may help your company, please visit our web site at <http://www.LentzComputer.net>.

GOOD MOUSEKEEPING

the seal of approval for computer tips

Desktop real estate is at a premium and I can't afford to have it cluttered with disk, pencils, paperclips and sticky notes. The good guys at Stomp, Inc. apparently had the same problem and invented the ClutterBuster, a storage bin that securely sticks to either side of your computer keeps your desk tidy.

It comes with extra drawers and bins so it can be configured to meet your needs and can be flipped to adhere to either side of your monitor or CPU. Everyone who's seen mine wants one too.



Get it for \$24.99 at www.stompinc.com, or wherever computer accessories are sold.

Send your Good Mousekeeping tips to:
Susan Ives, suives@texas.net

STUDY GROUPS

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

Volunteer of the Month

Marge Fraley



THE DOCTOR . . . IS IN

EACH FRIDAY FROM 9:30 TO 12 NOON
DIAGNOSE YOUR SOFTWARE & HARDWARE PROBLEMS

TROUBLESHOOT MAJOR APPLICATIONS
TROUBLESHOOT HARDWARE, RUN TESTS

SOLVE O/S MYSTERIES

PROVIDE ASPIRIN AS NEEDED

MAJOR SURGERY ACCOMPLISHED BY OTHER FACILITIES

ALAMO PC
RESOURCE
CENTER



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.

Show Dates:

March 10, 2007
May 12, 2007
June 30, 2007
Sept. 29, 2007
Dec. 8, 2007

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



Funny Bytes

Ken Nash & Randy Glasbergen



copyright 2005 by Randy Glasbergen.
www.glasbergen.com



"Information security is a big deal at my office so sometimes we have to communicate in code. We have 37 different symbols for the word 'jerk'."

GOOD MOUSEKEEPING

the seal of approval for computer tips

If you have external (non USB) devices such as a scanner, tape backup or external zip drive, they probably need to be powered on before you boot up your computer. If not, the computer doesn't recognize them and you need to turn them on and re-boot.

Here's how to get around it. 1. Power up the external device. 2. **Right-click** My Computer and select **Properties**. 3. Click the **Device Manager** tab and then the word Computer at the top of the resulting list. Towards the bottom of that screen, you'll see a "**refresh**" button. Click that. You may have to click twice. The computer will now recognize your external device.

Send your Good Mousekeeping tips to:
Susan Ives, suives@texas.net

Volunteers Wanted

Call the Learning Center to volunteer to assist ongoing classes. For more info, call 736-0700.



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.

My wife and I decided to treat ourselves to another cruise and this time we were not disappointed. We chose Holland America's MS Volendam for a ten day southern Caribbean cruise and, unlike our experience on HA's Zaandam, we were happy with the way the Volendam did things. Actually, we chose it mostly for the price, but also because it was Holland America since Carnival had some slightly lower prices for that date. Our only complaint might have been poor table service at our dinner seating, although they improved toward the end of the cruise. While we've had better food on cruise ships, the food on the Volendam was not bad.

I liked the ice cream bar that was open at certain times each day offering four different flavors of hard ice cream, one sherbet and one soft ice cream daily with all the trimmings, and plenty of other deserts. All over the ship were stands holding sterilization cream for your hands. Most of them were used voluntarily, but when you entered the dining room, an attendant squirted it into your hand as you entered. I was impressed with their efforts to prevent sickness, and I washed my hands quite frequently.

The entertainment was top notch each evening, always something to look forward to. There was only one evening without entertainment, but that was the big barbecue party by the pool, complete with the ice sculpturing, and the food was great. Even our cabin was a nice size and had a king sized bed, a nice sofa and chair. That ship had the largest library I have seen, although it was not a really large ship. The captain said the Volendam had been refurbished nine months ago.

I signed up for time at the Internet Café, but working with their machines was a challenge considering the mouse usually didn't work well and the small curser was hard to follow on any computer I tried. They occasionally had discounts on the service. I bought 100 minutes for \$55. I asked if the Internet service would be a freebie when I took enough cruises, using Princess lines as a comparison. I was told no, and that the free Internet service would soon be ending on Princess Lines since this ISP was taking over as their service provider. Some folks found free Internet service at a couple of ports, but I only found out about it on the ship that night.

Something of interest was that Sprint (our Cell phone provider) had told us we would be able to use our cell phone in the Bahamas and the US Virgin Islands if we set it to roam, but we were surprised when our phones found the Sprint Network when we turned them on in St. Thomas (a US Virgin Island). We didn't have to worry about any roaming charges and had a full signal. A friend had asked us to bring him back some duty-free liquor. Since we knew nothing about prices for it, we were able to call our friend while inside the store in St. Thomas to confirm the best prices. Carrying the heavy bottles around while shopping was another story though.

*Deal Reminder

The Medistick deal should still be good this month so don't wait any longer. Click on <<http://www.medistick.ch/en/contact/>> and mention the DealsGuy column in the 'comments' area.

Dave Whittle's discount on the Lenova Laptops may still be good. Simply call Lenovo's user group inside sales rep, Isaac Williams, directly for help in configuring your system, or to get answers to your questions. Call 1-877-338-4465, Option 1, Extension 6322.

I read an interesting article in Information Week magazine about a sophisticated attack on E-Trade and TD Ameritrade that resulted from identity theft. You might find it interesting. <<http://www.informationweek.com/showArticle.jhtml;jsessionid=QHSZ4AFSOS4R4QSNLPCCKHSCJUNN2JVN?articleID=193402954&queryText=Larry+Greenemeier>>

I haven't tried the items below and descriptions are in their own words, so do your homework if anything interests you.

*Another Tool For Restoring Your MS Office Files

Smart PC Solutions Inc. announces the release of Smart Data Recovery, the newest freeware utility to restore MS Office documents, photos, music and many other types of files. You just type a path, and Smart Data Recovery will search for deleted files and folders automatically. Once Smart Data Recovery finds erased files, it shows their name, date, time and attributes.

Smart Data Recovery works with different data storage devices, such as hard disk drives (IDE, ATA, SATA and SCSI), flash cards, multimedia cards, USB drives, PC cards, memory sticks, secure digital cards and floppy disks. It handles zip files and files

Continued on page 14

on your digital camera. It also restores all files and folders on a disk drive that, according to the Windows notifications, can't be accessed. The utility supports FAT, FAT16, FAT32 and NTFS, and is compatible with Microsoft Windows NT/2000/XP/2003. The program can also remove the data related to deleted files by just clicking the "Wipe" button. Therefore, nobody will be able to recover your personal information and use it in their own interests. The program has a multilingual interface that supports English, German, Spanish, French and Italian.

Smart Data Recovery is free at <http://www.smartpctools.com/data_recovery>, but here is a special offer! Smart PC Solutions, Inc. offers user group members a 50% discount on their other software products. It says FACUG there, but all UG members can order. Check out the other utilities by Smart PC Solutions, Inc. at the company's web site.

<<http://www.smartpctools.com/products>>

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

50% discount URL: <<http://www.smartpctools.com/FACUG.html>>

Mailing Address: Smart PC Solutions, Inc., 901 N. Pitt Str., Suite 325, Alexandria, VA 22314, USA

*Help For Your PIM

Copy2calendar minimizes the time and effort to create a calendar entry in a personal information manager such as Microsoft Outlook, Lotus Notes or Palm Desktop. When you receive an email with the date and time of an upcoming event, you just highlight the text, press Ctrl+C twice, and that's it! A new calendar entry is created. Copy2calendar recognizes all the myriad of formats of date and time that a human reader understands. It accommodates European (day/month/year) and American (month/day/year) conventions. Copy2calendar is able to find date and time specifications in 13 languages including English, German, French, Italian, Spanish, Dutch and Swedish.

You can easily extract date and time from a wide variety of sources: mail software, web browser, office applications, and with Copy2calendar, you will never forget or confuse time of an event. Copy2calendar runs under Windows 2000/Windows XP. It is free for noncommercial use, but Registration on LoquiSoft is required. Licenses for commercial use are available at \$24.95 (USD). A fully functional 30-day free evaluation version of Copy2calendar is available from <http://LoquiSoft.com/copy2calendar_setup.exe> (1.6Mb)

Product page link: <<http://loquisoft.com/copy2calendar/>>

E-mail: <werner.noska@loquisoft.com>

Company website: <<http://loquisoft.com/index.php?lang=en&page=&sec>>

*How About A FREE Plugin For PhotoShop!

SibCode has released the newest version of Icon Plugin for Photoshop. This plug-in enhances Adobe Photoshop with an ability to export and import Windows icons (.ico). The use of the plug-in eliminates the need for intermediate files and additional icon editors. In addition to Adobe Photoshop, the plug-in can work with Elements (? Maybe Photoshop Elements), AfterEffects, Premiere, PhotoDeluxe, Corel PhotoPaint, PaintShop Pro, Painter.

Icon Plugin for Photoshop supports multi-format icons, transparency and semi-transparency, and allows making icons that are compatible with Microsoft Windows XP and Vista. The plug-in also supports non-standard icons of different sizes and color resolutions, including monochrome, 16 colors, 256 colors, 24-bit True Color, and 32-bit True Color with semi-transparency.

Icon Plugin for Photoshop is compatible with all versions of Microsoft Windows and all versions of Adobe Photoshop, including 3.0-7.0, CS, and CS2. The product is absolutely free.

Product page link: <<http://sibcode.com/icon-plugin/index.htm>>

Screenshot: <<http://sibcode.com/icon-plugin/scrif.png>>

Download link: <<http://www.sibcode.com/downloads/icon-plugin.zip>>

E-mail: <pr@sibcode.com>

Web: <<http://www.sibcode.com>>

Volunteers Wanted

Call the Learning Center to volunteer to assist ongoing classes. For more info, call 736-0700.

STUDY GROUPS

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



Digital Discovery - What?

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>

All litigation involves a process known as discovery. Discovery is the process whereby one party asks for information and the other party responds to the discovery requests. Discovery in civil litigation is a topic that is fluid by its very nature. There is the ongoing friction between the plaintiff and the defendant as to the manner and the scope of the documents that are furnished pursuant to a request for discovery. Consider the impact of an opening statement with the following words (an opening statement is the beginning of a trial where the lawyers tell the jury what the evidence will be during the trial):

"You'll see a lot of documents. But there are a lot you are not going to see. There are a lot of documents I haven't gotten to see. Documents were destroyed. An order was entered by this court at the very beginning of this case, on May 5th, 1997, that the documents were not to be destroyed. It has already been found that thousands of documents and e-mails, among the people of the company, in the time that matters most to this case, don't exist. And they don't exist for the simple reason that American Home Products destroyed the documents. The legal implications of that destruction you will hear at the end of this case from the judge. We will ask you to do justice ... to honor the memory of a young woman, Mary Linnen, who simply wanted to look beautiful on her wedding day."

Back among the spectators, a Wall Street lawyer representing AHP investors shook his head, "How the hell could AHP let this get to trial?" he muttered to a benchmate. "This is a disaster."

These are the words of Alex MacDonald, the lead lawyer for the plaintiff in the wrongful death trial of Mary Linnen. Ms. Linnen had taken the combination of weight loss drugs known as Fen-Phen for approximately two weeks and died less than a year later. American Home Products, the lead defendant in the case, destroyed electronic evidence in the case. This evidence was in the form of backup tapes. Among other sanctions, the court intended to instruct the jurors as to the implications of the spoliation of evidence and the inferences that could be drawn from the destruction. This was a very damaging factor in a case where American Home Products appeared to be a sinister villain corrupted by corporate greed. The case settled after the first week of trial but several jurors stated, after the trial, that they were prepared to award actual and punitive damages against the defendant for \$1 billion. This is not a typo. There were jurors who were predisposed to award damages of \$1 billion for the death of one young lady who died prematurely in the commonwealth of Massachusetts. Alicia Mundy tells the Fen-Phen story in a terrific book titled, *Dispensing with the Truth*.

"How much data is electronic? Technology consultants will tell you that it is not unusual for each employee to receive 30+ e-mails a day. If a company employs 1,000 workers, this adds up to 210,000 e-mails each week or 10.9 million each year. If a company employs 10,000 employees, this adds up to 2.1 million e-mails each week or 109 million each year. 100,000 employees create 21 million e-mails each week or over 1 billion a year.

More than 35% of corporate communications will never reach paper. Up to 40% is non-business communication. About 18% of e-mails contain attachments. Each attachment is a new discoverable object. Approximately 8% of e-mails are broadcasts; i.e., e-mail messages sent to more than one person.

Active versus inactive data: Active = live data, currently being used, currently on hard drives, databases, servers, etc. Active data is easy to search and can be searched using the Boolean techniques familiar to users of search engines.

Inactive = stored data, usually on backup tapes, perhaps in a warehouse, perhaps far away; perhaps made with software applications and operating systems that are no longer in use or, possibly, no longer in possession.

Computer Problems?

Call Now to get your computer working for you!

Cramer's Computer Services

(210) 865-2933
www.pcpro4u.com

In-Home/On-Site Service Specializing in:

- Troubleshooting & Repair
- Virus/Spy ware Detection & Removal
- Hardware Upgrades
- Networking & More



Inactive data is much more difficult to search, as that data is not stored in any logical or easily searchable way, and is therefore more expensive and more time-intensive. Why? Because inactive data must be returned to active data status before it can be searched. Unused computer capacity must be found to accommodate it and the software that generated it must be found so that it can be read.

These statistics are reprinted from the article by John Jessen, "Special Issues Involving Electronic Discovery," 9 Kan. J.L. & Pub. Pol'y 425, 2000.

What does this mean? It means that in many court cases, the focus has shifted from paper and traditional analog forms of documentation to digital information residing on computers and other digital equipment. This shifts the focus of many court cases from the paper memo to the e-mail residing on a server somewhere or backed up to tape.

The transformation to a digital society in terms of sending and storing information has changed the nature of legal litigation, the same as it has changed so many other areas of our society.

News Brief

OverDisk (v0.11 beta) (freeware)

<http://users.forthnet.gr/pat/efotinis/programs/overdisk.html>

Elias Fotinis, a programmer from Greece, is one of those programmers you often find on the net who in their spare time writes little apps and utilities to solve some personal issue they might have getting the operating system, or some other program, to work the way they want it to.

One of the programs he has written is a disk space monitor called Overdisk. It basically scans a drive or folders of your choice and tells you how much space is being taken up by the files therein. One special difference with Overdisk though, is the way it graphs that data to your screen.

Instead of representing the files as a pie chart, or bar graph, Overdisk shows a breakdown of folders and files as a series of concentric rings, as if you were looking down onto the disk itself and seeing the files laid out below. But it's even better than that.

When you mouse-over a particular section of the chart, a tooltip window will appear to give you more information about that particular folder (size, number of subdirectories, and the number of files); and if you click on a specific point of the chart you can drill down to get the same information for individual files. Clicking on the center of the chart takes you back up the directory path, or you can click on the tree view on the side of the screen to better select a particular folder to view.

I find this utility most useful when trying to identify what parts of a drive need to have a cleanup, or which folders I need to prioritize for backups.



Tour the World with World Wind

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>

I'm one of those people who uses at least three different Internet browsers every day and at times even more. The reasons vary, but typically it is because someone at work has built an Intranet Website that will only display correctly in Internet Explorer, or I need the tabbed browsing feature of Firefox while doing research, or I want to see how one of my Websites looks in Mozilla/Netscape or some other type of browser. But when I come home and kick off my shoes, Opera is my browser of choice. The only browser I have ever paid for.

Opera, (<http://www.opera.com>) is a fast, easy to customize and secure browser from Norway. The speed and the tabbed windows feature is what first attracted me. With a multitude of skins that can be downloaded to change Opera's appearance and the numerous button and search field combinations available, Opera can have a setup for just about everyone.

But it was the many security features that enticed me to stay with Opera. Two of my favorites are the ability to have your Internet cache and cookies deleted automatically when you shut down Opera and the one click deletion of cookies, cache, history, and all private data.

I have also come to love "mouse gestures". This is a way of navigating back and forth between web pages by simply holding a mouse button and sweeping it to the left or right.

Are you tired of pop-up ads? Opera has a built in pop-up blocker that is one of the best I have ever encountered.

Opera also has a very nice download manager that allows you to stop and resume downloads.

If you ever add up the cost buying a pop-up blocker, download manager, and a cache and cookie cleaner you will see I saved time and money by buying Opera. For purchasing and pricing information check the opera Website. A free version is also available that is advertiser supported.

Features found in the latest version include:

Small size

Opera is less than half the size of most major browsers.

Sessions

Opera lets you save a collection of open pages as a single session.

Multiple Document Interface

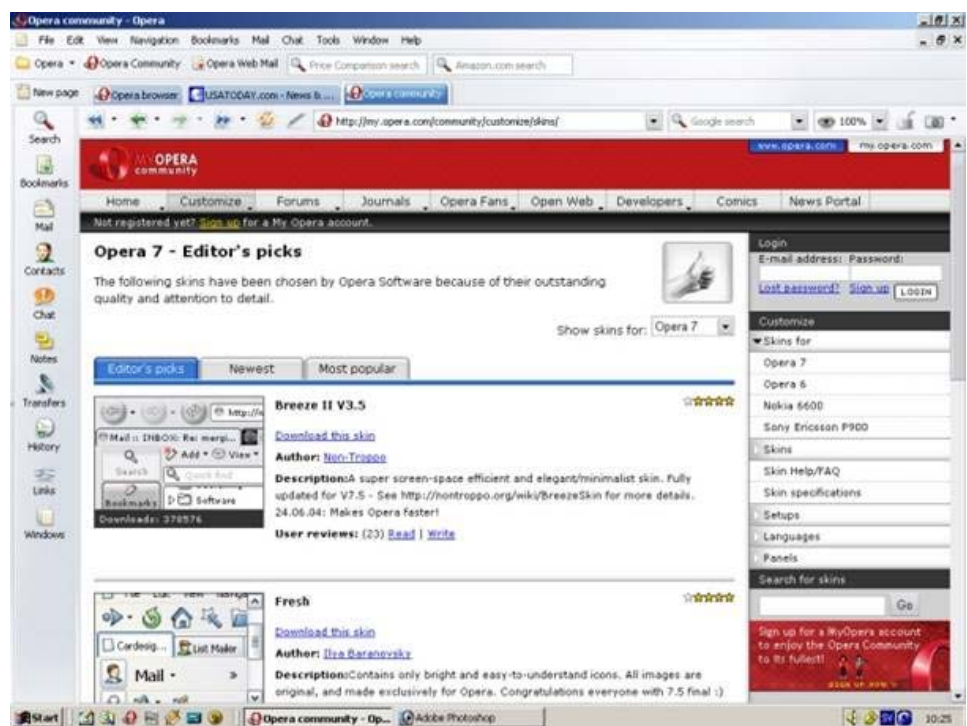
Displays multiple pages in the same application window, allowing you to resize and position the pages next to each other.

Changing clients

Opera can import bookmarks and e-mail messages from the most commonly used applications and formats.

The Wand

Opera's password manager, the Wand, remembers your usernames and passwords so you will not have to.



Continued on page 18

Pop-up blocking

Opera lets the user control whether Web sites can use pop-ups. Select to block them all, or let the browser open only pop-ups that you have requested.

Opera Mail

In Opera's e-mail client, the full texts of messages are indexed to allow for speedy searches. There is a built-in spam filter that learns as you add and remove messages. You may also set up custom filters.

Voice Interaction

The voice feature allows you to control the interface by talking and to have documents read aloud. The voice feature is customizable and adaptive according to your needs. Voice is currently offered in English and runs on Windows 2000 and XP.

Chat Client

You can now use Opera to connect to IRC servers and chat in rooms or privately, send files to other users, and so forth. The chat panel lists previously-visited chat rooms and contacts that are on line.

WAP

Opera can access WAP and WML content (content designed primarily for mobile phones) without a mobile phone connection.

Mouse Gestures

Opera supports mouse-movement recognition, allowing users to perform certain movements with their pointing device in order to access commonly-used features. These gestures can all be customized.

Fast Forward

Opera can automatically analyze the current page and work out the most likely URI for the next page in a sequence, and provides a button for this purpose. For example, when visiting an image gallery with numbered images, clicking the fast forward button will move you to the next image in the sequence.

Hotclick

Double clicking on a word on a page will pop up a menu that provides options related to the selected text, such as a Web, dictionary or encyclopedia search.

Delete Private Data

Opera can be configured to clear the history and cache when exiting, to protect the user's privacy. Any kind of private data can easily be erased at any time.

Cookie Control

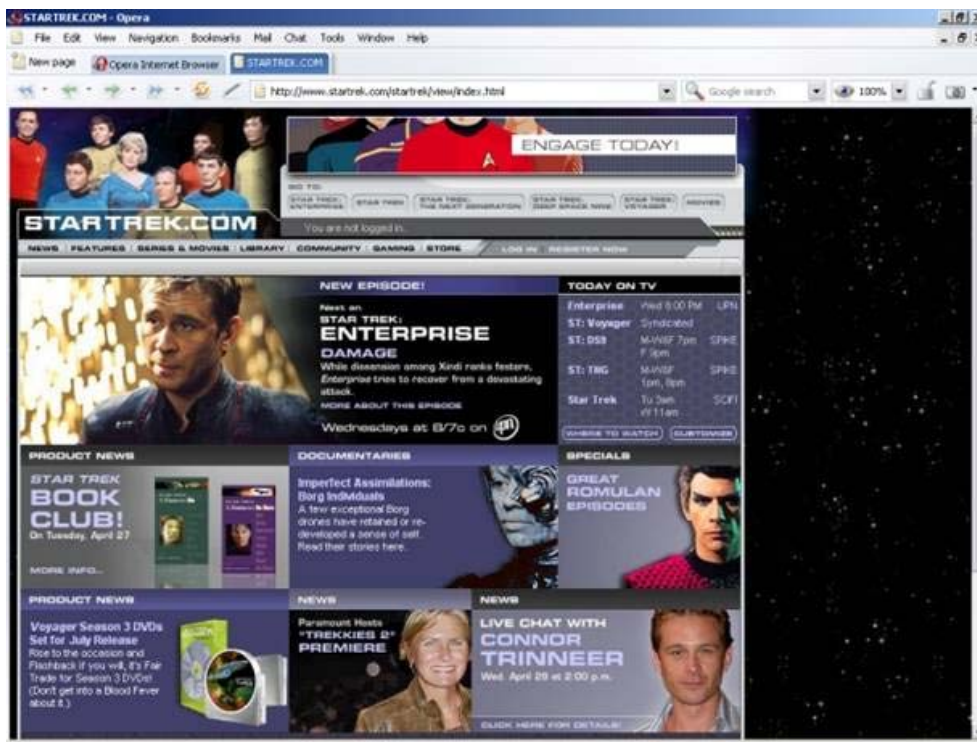
Opera gives you detailed control of which cookies to accept and reject, such as allowing for different set-ups for different servers.

Master Password

Set a master password to block access to e-mail downloads and Wand logins.

Browser Spoofing

When sites are poorly written and set up to work with only one or a limited set of browsers, Opera provides the user with the ability to masquerade as another browser to get optimized content.



Continued on page 19

Off-line Mode

Set Opera to "work off-line", and no attempts will be made to contact remote hosts. Only cached Web pages will be displayed.

Print Preview

When printing the whole document, Opera supports previewing what pages will look like before they are printed.

Favicons

Opera supports favicons (Web site icons) in the address field and in bookmarks.

Standards Support

Opera prides itself in supporting all major Web standards currently in use, including CSS2, HTML4, XHTML1, HTTP1.1, DOM1, JavaScript, PNG, Unicode, and the Unicode Bidirectional Algorithm.

Validation

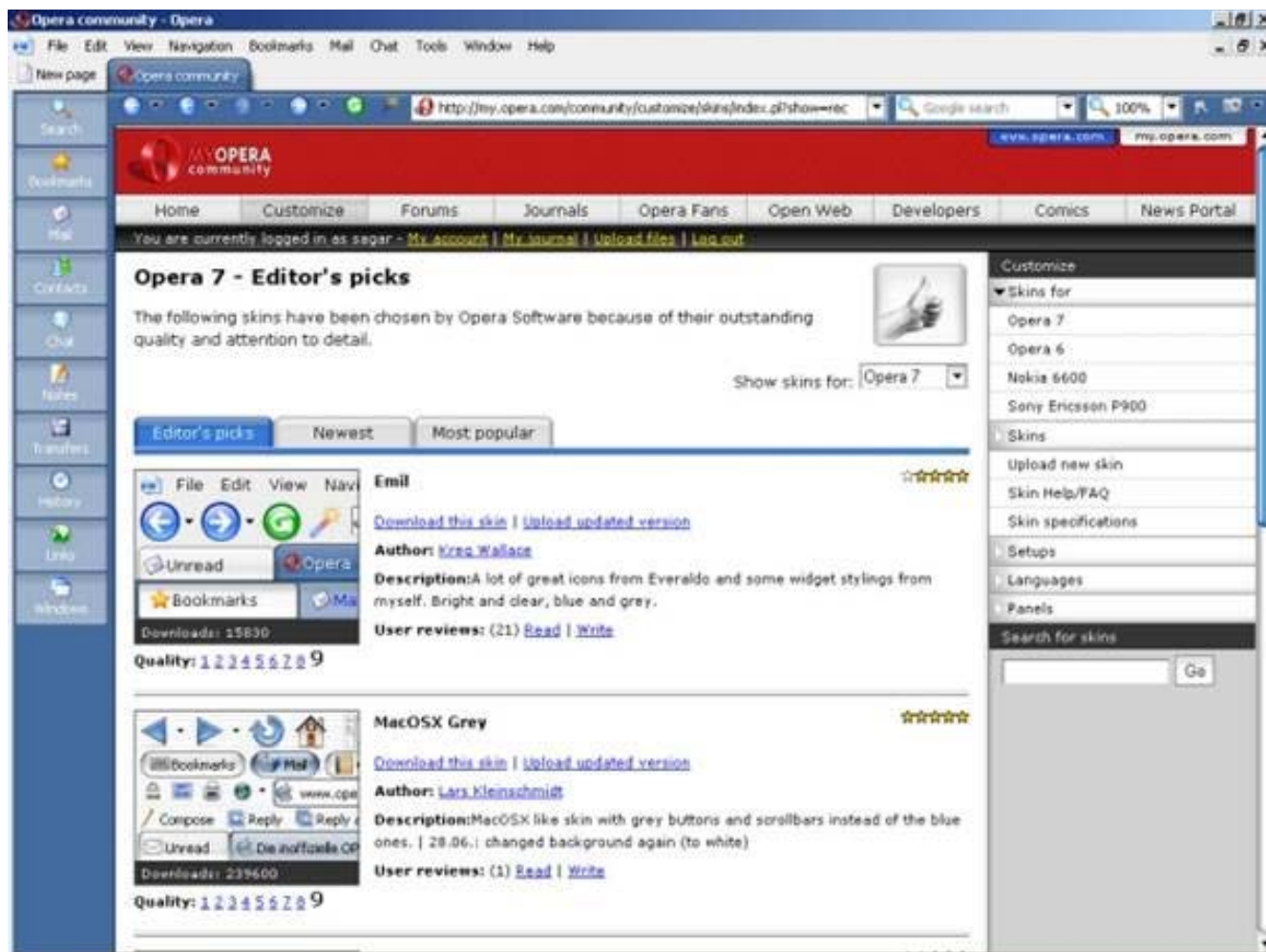
Opera provides Web authors with immediate access to page validation, thus encouraging good practices on the Web.

Check Your Spelling

If your computer has Aspell with one or more dictionaries installed, Opera will recognize this on startup and let you spell-check any input to an e-mail message or other text edit field in Opera.

Kiosk Mode

Registered versions of Opera support a lock-down mode in which the browser can be used for unattended information stands in public environments.





Internet, Part X

Bill Beverley, Alamo PC

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

The Internet can be a bit dangerous if you have kids. You can use the Content Advisor to limit the online locations that your computer can visit by your children. With Internet Explorer (IE) open, choose Tools, Internet Options. In the resulting Internet Options dialog box, click the Content tab. Next click the Enable button. If there is no Enable button but Disable and Settings buttons instead, Content Advisor is already enabled. Now click the Settings button to see the options and make desired changes. In the Content Advisor dialog box on the Ratings tab, click one of the four options: Language, Nudity, Sex, or Violence. Use the slider to set the site-screening level that's appropriate for you. Now repeat the aforementioned step for each of the categories. Click the Approved Sites tab and enter the name of a specific site that you want to control access to by your children. Then click either of the following options: Always: Allows users to view the site, even if it's included in the Content Advisor screening level you've set. Never: Means that nobody can visit the site even if it's acceptable to Content Advisor. When you finish making your settings, click OK twice to save them. If you want to view sites that you don't want others to see, you can do that, too. On the General tab of the Content Advisor dialog box, make sure that the Supervisor Can Type a Password to Allow Viewers to View Restricted Content check box is selected, and click Create Password. In the dialog box that appears, enter the password, confirm it, and enter a hint and click OK. Now if logged on as the system administrator, you can get to any restricted site by using this password.

Internet Links in Outlook

As soon as you type http://, any Office XP application, including Outlook, recognizes that text as the beginning of an address for a Web page. If you type the address of a Web page in the text box of any Outlook item, the address immediately changes to blue, underlined text. If you click that text, your Web browser launches and shows you the corresponding page.

Magnifying Windows and the Web

Just because you have vision difficulties doesn't mean you can't use a computer. Many Web sites are not designed with accessibility in mind. In fact, Windows itself isn't very accessible by everyone. Nonetheless, you have numerous options. First, you could buy a screen magnifier. It fits over the screen and magnifies text and pictures. Independent Living Aids makes a wide variety. Ergo in Demand also sells them. Another option is a screen reader. These programs actually read the screen aloud. They work with both Windows and Web browsers. You'll find many screen readers listed on the World Wide Web Consortium's site. Screen readers are expensive; be prepared to spend about \$1,000. You also can change text size in Windows. Right-click a blank spot on the desktop, select Properties, and then open the Appearance tab. Under "Font size," select Extra Large or Large and click Apply. The screen will go dim for a minute. When it returns to normal, you should click OK. Windows has other accessibility options. Windows' Accessibility Wizard can help you set up the options. Microsoft has a guide to accessibility in Windows XP on its site. When surfing the Web, you can make text bigger. In Firefox, press the Ctrl key and use the mouse's scroll wheel. This trick also works on some sites in IE. Additionally, it works in some programs, including Word and Excel. Furthermore, you can select a more readable font and font size for Web pages. This works in both IE and Firefox. It overrides fonts and sizes established on Web pages. In IE, click Tools, Internet Options. On the General tab, click Accessibility and select "Ignore font styles specified on Web pages" and "Ignore font sizes specified on Web pages." Additionally, you can have IE ignore colors. When you're done, click OK. Now click Fonts and select a font that is easy for you to read and click OK. Next, you need to specify font size. To do this, click View, Text Size. Now pick a font size. In Firefox, click Tools, Options and Content. In the Fonts & Colors section, click Advanced. Deselect "Allow pages to choose their own fonts, instead of my selections above." Then, use the dropdown boxes to select the fonts and sizes he prefers. You'll have to make selections in each of the categories. When you're done, click OK, OK.

Multiple Web Pages

You can be in two or more places at once, at least where browsing Web pages on the Internet is concerned. While waiting for one Web page to load on your computer, you can examine another one. To open more than one Web page in IE, you must press Ctrl+N or choose File, New, Window. Doing so opens a second IE window where you can go to another Web page. You can also open a second window by Shift+clicking a hyperlink. To go back and forth between Web pages that are open, you click buttons on the Taskbar. Mozilla is more sophisticated than IE when it comes to browsing more than one Web page. In Mozilla, you can open the second (or third or fourth) page in a tab. You can use one of these techniques to open the first tab or another tab: Press Ctrl+T or choose File, New, Navigator Tab. Click the Open a New Tab button. Right-click a tab and choose New Tab. Click tabs to go from Web page to Web page. You can use these techniques to close tabs: Click the Close button on the right side of the tab bar to close all tabs. Right-click and choose Close Tab to close a tab (or press Ctrl+W). Right-click and choose Close Other Tabs to close all tabs but the one you're viewing.

Continued on page 21

Windows

If you want to size a window so the edges just touch the sides or the top and bottom of the screen, try FreeSnap from Blue Onion Software at <http://blueonion.home.att.net/>.

Word Document to Web Format

You can convert any existing Word document to HTML format so that it can be published on the Web by opening the document in Word, choosing the File, Save As command, and selecting HTML Document (.html) in the Save as type field. If desired, choose a new location and name for the file and click the Save button. The file is converted to HTML format and saved.

Word Processing Program

Google recently announced the purchase of an online word processing program www.writely.com. It offers features comparable to Microsoft Word, only online and free! No need to download and install a huge program. The whole thing runs via the Internet. But it looks and feels like the program is on your computer. Nearly every document format is compatible with Writely. Upload existing Word documents or save new ones to a Word format. You can save a document to your computer and the server. Documents are automatically backed up every 10 seconds. Since its all online, sharing and group work is a cinch. Content can be turned into Web pages or blogs. Writely was closed to new subscribers while it made the transition to Google's servers. But now it is open to all.

Word Web Page

There's no question that software designed to create Web pages is better than Word, but you can use your word processing program for this same task. To get Word to use only the fonts and other objects you can use in a Web page, open Word with a blank document and immediately, choose File, save As HTML. Name the file and click Save. You will find that the Word window will differ from the standard Web page because the font is now Times New Roman. If you look through the menus, you will notice that WordArt is no longer there. In the View menu, you will find a Form Design Mode command that will help lay out your Web page. After you have added some text and graphics to your Web page, save it, then click the Web Page Preview button in the Word toolbar. Its icon resembles a map of the world under a magnifying glass. This will open your document in Internet Explorer.

Yahoo! Mail

Setting up a free Yahoo for yourself! Mail account is an easy matter, especially if you've already created a Yahoo! ID. You can't have Yahoo! Mail without an ID. You get one Yahoo! mailbox per password. Different IDs accessed by one password all share a single e-mail box. You may give out those different IDs as distinct e-mail addresses, each with the @yahoo.com suffix. But all incoming mail lands in the single mailbox assigned to the first ID you created. You can access that mailbox while logged on to any of the IDs. To set up your Yahoo! Mailbox, at the top of the Yahoo! home page, click the Check Email button. The Welcome to Yahoo! Mail page appears. Now fill in your ID and password and then click the Sign In button. If you don't have a Yahoo! ID yet, click the "Sign me up!" link and continue from there. On the setup page, read the Yahoo! Mail terms of Service Agreement and then click the I Accept button at the bottom of the page. The Yahoo! Mail summary page appears, and you're good to go. Yahoo! Mail has its own log on and log off procedure, distinct from the ID sign in and off process. When you exit Yahoo! Mail, it's not necessary to sign out from your Yahoo! ID account.

Zip Code

Using your Zip Code and APBnews.com you can quickly discover crime statistics for your neighborhood. At Yahoo Real Estate you can obtain a detailed profile of your zip code including average annual utility costs, etc. But the best demographic tool is the U.S. Census Bureau's American FactFinder. Click the link to the 2000 Summary File 1 and choose Detailed Tables or Quick Tables to begin exploring the wealth of information the census collected for your zip code.

Finally, the Web can be slow for a number of reasons. One of them is that the site you're visiting may be overloaded with too many visitors trying to access it all at once. If you suspect that this is happening to you, come back later at a less popular time or look for a mirror site that contains the same information in a

part of the world that is asleep. Australia is a good bet for users in the Americas. For example, say your connection to Yahoo! <http://www.yahoo.com> is sluggish at 9:00 p.m. because of the millions of other Americans who are all logging on to check their e-mail, stocks, and news. Before you pull your hair out in frustration, try going down under to Yahoo! Australia & NZ <http://au.yahoo.com/> instead. The Australian mirror site may be more sprightly at that time of day since most Aussie Web surfers are likely to be asleep because the time is 1:00 a.m. in Australia.



New, Best and Worst

SyncToy and protection

Pim Borman
SW Indiana PC Users Group, Inc.

The best things in life are free, and Microsoft's SyncToy is one of them. It is a simple and effective little utility to let you synchronize folders in different locations. For several generations of MS Windows the "official" Microsoft way to synchronize folders has been to use a virtual Briefcase.

I never figured out how to use the involved and cumbersome process. As easy as it is to synchronize and update a Web site on the computer with its online version, using an FTP program such as CuteFTP, it should be just as easy to synchronize my photo folders with their backups on an external hard drive. SyncToy will do the job quickly and easily, using an intuitive interface. It is also handy to synchronize genealogy data with backups, as well as letter folders and other documents. SyncToy is one of the Microsoft Power- Toys, free utilities programmed by MS programmers, but not officially supported.

They are available for free download at <http://snipurl.com/7r9b> (or do a Google search for "powertoys download") and include such utilities as TweakUI that gives access to system settings not exposed in the Windows XP default user interface, including mouse settings, Explorer settings, taskbar settings, and more. Also Power Calculator with which you can graph and evaluate functions as well as perform many different types of conversions; Virtual Desktop Manager to manage up to four desktops from the Windows taskbar; Taskbar Magnifier to magnify part of the screen from the taskbar; and several others.

Too Much Protection?

While I was writing the previous section, I tried to visit snipurl.com, a free site that lets you convert those endlessly long URLs to more manageable size. I've used it several times in the past, but today, using the Firefox browser, I just drew a blank screen. Using Firefox with Ubuntu-Linux on my laptop, I had no problem accessing [snipurl](http://snipurl.com), and that way I obtained the shorter URL for the PowerToys download site. Eventually I found that it was ZoneAlarm that had blocked my access. It is a dangerous world out there on the World Wide Web, and we are constantly reminded to install protective guardians to keep us safe.

We need a firewall, to start with, preferably a hardware version (a router) as well as a software sentinel. An anti-virus program is vital and we need anti-spyware to keep bad guys from learning our secrets. Unsportsmanlike phishers must be prevented from stealing our savings under false pretenses, and if we want to enjoy our browsing experience, we need to fight off annoying pop-up windows. The trouble is that everyone is getting into the act of protecting us, constantly stepping on each other's toes. ZoneAlarm PRO includes, in addition to its operating system and network firewall, anti-spyware and identity theft protection, game mode, and more. AdAware and its AdWatch feature keep an eye on spyware and suspicious activities in the Windows Registry. The Firefox and Internet Explorer browsers compete with additional security features.

I uninstalled the new Internet Explorer version 7.0 because it kept interfering with legitimate programs. Microsoft has made a major effort to improve security with a long list of new features in its forthcoming Windows Vista. I shudder to think what that will add to the protection confusion. In the end, it gets difficult to know who is doing what to whom.

You can never have too much security, except when it starts to interfere with legitimate programs that are blocked because something seems suspicious. If all those guardians would only let us know each time they block something, and how to bypass it, life would be so much simpler. Too much to ask, it seems.

Dare I mention that none of this applies to Linux?

Broadband Speed Revisited

In the late 80's, before the Internet and fast connections, I did online patent literature searches on a tight budget in databases charging upwards of \$5 per minute online.

Search strategies had to be carefully designed off line, with only the titles and authors of target records to be returned before quickly disconnecting again. The results were carefully scrutinized, and only those of interest were subsequently uploaded to retrieve abstracts of the articles. Those articles of special interest, based on the abstracts, were ordered as hard copies from various libraries. Using a 2400 baud modem, capable of transferring something less than

Continued on page 23

Visit the Alamo PC Learning Center

Media Center

Learn all about computers with hundreds of books and dozens of video tapes. Enjoy our large selection of techno-fiction.

A comfortable seating area is available.

Call (210) 736-0700

10 kilobits per second (kbps; a baud is not the same as a bit per second), the whole process was expensive and took a long time.

These days home desktop computers hooked up to various broadband systems can go online at speeds up to 6 Mbps, and we are still complaining that they are too slow.

No matter how fast the connection, factors beyond our control interfere with fast downloads and uploads. Sharing a cable node with a neighboring game enthusiast may be the cause. Often, congestion on the Web at certain times of the day slows your connection to a crawl, in which case stopping and restarting the download may instantly bring results. A Web site providing a popular download may restrict the speed of individual connections to avoid overloading its server. And, as mentioned in my column last month, the Dynamic Name Servers of your service providers may be slow converting URLs to the numerical codes actually used by the Internet.

Kim Komando, in her weekly newsletter vol.10, no.46, states that Windows XP PRO artificially reserves some of your bandwidth. She writes, in part: "By default, Windows reserves some of your connection's bandwidth. But you can change that easily. Click Start>>Run. Type gpedit.msc and click OK.

The Group Policy Box will open. You will see Local Computer Policy. Click the plus sign to expand the Administrative Templates section [under 'Computer Configuration' – Pim].

Next, click the plus sign to expand the Network section. Highlight QoS Packet Scheduler. In the right side of the box, double click Limit Reservable Bandwidth.

Check Enabled. Change Bandwidth limit to 0 percent. Click Apply>>OK. When you restart your computer, the effect should be immediate. Enjoy your blazing broadband speeds!

I tried it and it didn't seem to make any noticeable difference. So I went to the fount of wisdom – Microsoft itself. Who should know better, after all? For the details go to <http://snipurl.com/MSQOS>. Bottom line, the claims are bogus. The bandwidth limitation setting applies only to unusual circumstances when a program requests bandwidth priority.

If left unchecked, it might take over all other running network connections. It is very unlikely to happen under normal usage conditions and the 20% reserved bandwidth is otherwise always fully available to running applications.



We specialize in individual and small business tax preparation

Laura B. Grover, E.A.
Tax Preparation & Financial Consulting
14350 Northbrook Drive, Suite 240
San Antonio, TX 78232

(210) 402-6100
Fax (210) 402-2888

laurab@lauragrover.com
www.lauragrover.com

**26
in years
public
service**

Enrolled to practice before the Internal Revenue Service



Odds and Ends

Shane Hicks, (certified certifiable)

Shane uses a PC. E-mail him at <shane@vpwn.com.>

When you first install Windows XP, it runs pretty well. Your applications open quickly and respond to your commands. Over time, you notice the system begins to slow down. It doesn't react like it did in the beginning. What can you do? Do you have to format the machine and start all over? Wait! Before you do all that, try some of these FREE utilities and see if you can't return some of that healthy freshness back to your system and get it feeling like it did when it was new.

CCleaner

We are all probably familiar with Windows XP's built-in Disk Cleanup application. If so, you are also probably familiar with how worthless this program really is. It doesn't do much at all to free up much wasted hard drive space while we are all pretty good at wasting a lot of hard drive space. This is where CCleaner comes in. This applications cleans out Internet files, registry files, old prefetch data, temporary files left by third-party applications, and an assortment of other miscellaneous files. You can find it at <http://www.ccleaner.com>.

WinDirStat

If your hard drive is full and you would like to know what is taking up all of your hard drive's space, you can use the WinDirStat program. It uses a graphical display that will display statistics by drive or partition of your directory structure. This makes it easy to see what files and folders are taking up the most space. This program can be found at <http://windirstat.sourceforge.net>.

HijackThis

Of course, everyone knows that they should run an anti-virus program and keep their definitions up-to-date. Viruses can slow your computer down. But viruses have evolved over time into a new breed of bug that burrows deep into your system: these are known as spyware. While there are many programs out there that scan for viruses (McAfee, Symantec, AVG [FREE version for home use at <http://free.grisoft.com>]), anti-spyware programs (SpyBot Search & Destroy [FREE download at <http://www.spywarebot.com>], Windows Defender [FREE BETA 2 at <http://www.microsoft.com>]) are also needed. Unfortunately, if you've been had by the nastiest of spyware, these tools may be incapable of cleaning your system on their own. Use HijackThis to scan your system for remnants of known spyware that may be left on your system after it's been cleaned by your anti-spyware utilities. HijackThis can be found at <http://www.merijn.org>.

Recommended Maintenance Schedule

Just like your car, there are certain things that you need to do to your computer to keep it running smoothly. There are also things that you need to do to protect yourself and your data. So, also like the dealership that you bought your car from, here's the list of tasks that you should perform to keep Windows XP purring along for many miles to come:

Weekly Maintenance

1. Defragmentation (Windows utility; scan for errors first)
2. Clear the cache (use CCleaner on Internet files)
3. Run a virus scan (use your scanner of choice)
4. Run a spyware / malware scan (use your scanner of choice)
5. Make an INCREMENTAL backup (use Windows utility to backup changes)
6. Make a backup of your e-mail (export your mail to a file)

Monthly Maintenance

1. Make a FULL backup (use Windows utility to backup entire system)
2. Remove unused software (use Add / Remove Programs or Uninstall)
3. Check for latest drivers (usually from the manufacturer's website)
4. Check your system's temperatures (integrated into some cases or probe)
5. Clean fans / filters (check case fans and any custom filters)
6. Check hard drives (from a cmd prompt type cmd and press <enter>)

Bi-Annually / Annually

1. Check filters (see above)
2. Look for dead pixels in your monitor (look for dead spots on the screen)
3. Update your software (usually from the publisher's website)
4. Update your BIOS (usually from the manufacturer's website)
5. Check your wiring (check cables and wires that might interfere with fans)

If you perform these tasks to schedule, you should keep your PC up and running healthy for many months to come.

The Switcher



...the ongoing tale of a Man and his Mac Mac Stuff

Shane uses OS X. E-mail him at <mac@vpwn.com>.

Microsoft's Macintosh Business Unit has released its first Universal application, designed to run natively on Intel and Power PC-based Macs. Messenger for Mac 6.0 has added several new features including the ability for Messenger users to chat with Yahoo! buddies. Messenger users can also create custom emoticons and a personal display message. Messenger for Mac 6.0 is available free from Microsoft's Macintosh Web site.

QuickBooks 2007 goes Universal as well

Intuit has also announced that QuickBooks 2007 for Mac will release with Universal support. As most of you know, QuickBooks offers business owners the ability to manage standard accounting tasks for their companies, including printing checks, paying bills, tracking sales and expenses, generating estimates, invoices, purchase orders and reports.

New in this release is the Layout Designer, which lets users create customized, professional-looking templates for invoices, estimates, purchase orders, statements, sales receipts and credit memos.

QuickBooks 2007 also lets you create and print deposit slips and apply single payments to multiple jobs faster than before. And a new Tutorial Center helps you complete tasks and gives experienced QuickBooks users a look at new features.

The new version of QuickBooks for Mac works with the latest Windows releases, as well.

Even Apple's OS isn't totally safe

Recently users of nVidia's drivers were in endangered by a zero-day exploit (an exploit that takes advantage of a security vulnerability on the same day that it is discovered). This allowed anyone visiting a malicious website to trigger a buffer overflow that can lead to arbitrary code execution. Since the attack is on the device driver which is closely tied in to the kernel, it operates beneath the user space and does not require root privileges to completely take over the system. Currently there are no patches or updated drivers that fix this issue, so users are faced with the difficult choice of running more generic drivers that lack hardware optimization or live with the risk of being rooted. These kinds of device driver flaws aren't limited to one OS. They can affect Linux, Windows, or Mac OS X equally.

Apple even released three patches for the remote exploit flaws in their AirPort wireless device drivers which affected both PowerPC and Intel-based Macs. Macs equipped with AirPort drivers are vulnerable to wireless remote exploits and kernel-level code execution.

No OS is safe from such flaws in their device drivers and these attacks will only get worse. To assist with the growing problems, hardware makers must start taking device driver security seriously and OS manufacturers need to integrate driver updates in with their critical automatic updates.

Apple ships iPods with a Windows virus

Apple has announced that a small number of video iPods made after September 12th included the RavMonE virus. They claim fewer than 25 reports of the problem, and also claim that it doesn't affect other models of the media player or Macs.

Apple stated on their website: "As you might imagine, we are upset at Windows for not being more hardy against such viruses, and even more upset with ourselves for not catching it."

Apple Vice President Greg Joswiak told CNET News.com that the company has been working around the clock to discover the root cause of the problem. They've traced it to a particular Windows machine in the manufacturing lines of a contract manufac-

Continued on page 26

David's Essential Domains



Website Hosting Starting at \$3.95/month!

Economy	Deluxe	Business
\$3.95/mo.	\$9.95/mo.	\$29.95/mo.
50MB storage	1GB storage	2GB storage
1 GB transfer	15 GB transfer	30 GB transfer
50 e-mails	unlimited e-mails	unlimited e-mails

Domain Names

.COMs starting at \$7.85!

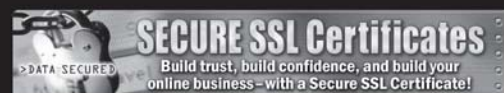
FREE with every domain:

- FREE! Change of Registration
- FREE! Parked Page w/ Domain
- FREE! Domain Name Locking
- FREE! Status Alerts

Website Tonight

Click 'n build your site online, in minutes!

- Hosting is built in
- 5 Page Site - \$4.95/mo
- 10 Page Site - \$8.95/mo
- 20 Page Site - \$12.95/mo
- 100+ professional templates



<http://www.davidsessentialdomains.com>

turer that builds the iPods for Apple. They refused to name the maker.

The company said that computers using a current antivirus software and with default settings should detect and remove RavMonE, as it is an identified virus. It is urging iPod users without such protection to install antivirus software.

Apple also said that the video iPods now being made are virus-free.

McAfee listed the iPod threat as a low risk, but gave it the rating of "low/profiled," which the company said applies to viruses that "appear to be low risk, but warrant additional monitoring because they have attracted media interest."

You can always check for additional virus information from any of the major anti-virus firms sites (i.e. McAfee or Symantec).

Speed up Dashboard

If you use OS X Dashboard feature (you know, that thing that runs all the Widgets), you may find that it can be a big resource suck and also take up a lot of room on your desktop. The more Widgets you add, the slower Dashboard goes.

Using various Widgets, the Dashboard application caches information, which means it creates a local copy of various Widgets' data. When you need to access that data again, it's available locally, instead of requiring a trip to the Internet. These cache files are stored in your user's Library -> Caches folder, in a folder named DashboardClient.

MacWorld provided a tip for speeding up the Dashboard. Drag all the cache files in that folder to the trash and empty the trash. After doing this, restart the Dock—the program that controls Dashboard. You can do this by using Terminal (type killall Dock) or through Activity Monitor (in Applications -> Utilities; type dock into the search box, click once on the Dock process, then click the Quit Process button, then the Quit button in the resulting dialog). The Dock will restart automatically; after it does, try loading Dashboard and see if it's not faster for you.

If it works, and you'd like to permanently prevent Dashboard from creating any cache files, navigate to the DashboardClient folder, select it, then open the Get Info window (Command-I). In the General section of the Info window, click the Locked checkbox. With the folder locked, Dashboard won't be able to write to the folder.

Alamo PC Organization now offers members private or semi-private tutorials

- 🖱️ Keyboarding/Typing
- 🖱️ Basic Computer Skills
- 🖱️ Microsoft Word

Rates for one student

\$35 per hour
\$300 for 10 hours

Rates for two or three students

\$20 per student per hour
\$150 per student for 10 hours

Enjoy private instruction on days and at hours that fit **your** schedule at our modern facility in Crossroads Mall.

Call or visit the Learning Center to register
(210) 736-0080

THE DOCTOR ... IS IN

EACH FRIDAY FROM 9:30 TO 12 NOON
DIAGNOSE YOUR SOFTWARE & HARDWARE
PROBLEMS

TROUBLESHOOT MAJOR APPLICATIONS
TROUBLESHOOT HARDWARE, RUN TESTS



SOLVE O/S MYSTERIES
PROVIDE ASPIRIN AS
NEEDED
MAJOR SURGERY
ACCOMPLISHED BY
OTHER FACILITIES

ALAMO PC
RESOURCE
CENTER



Free Data Feeds

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/>. If you visit, you can cut-and-paste the code instead of retyping it from the magazine – the ultimate in lazy Webmastering!

Content is the drab name for the exciting stuff that you find on a Web site. Some content you can and will create yourself. Lazy Webmasters have no scruples about using free content provided by others. The free content I am touting here is, for the most part, data-driven.

Lurking behind each of these stickers is a sophisticated database that feeds information onto your site. Even if you had the programming skills to create the database and interface, you wouldn't have access to the data feeds. Let's look at some options:

Add a weather sticker: You can include a forecast on your Web page. The free weather sticker is at (www.wunderground.com) First, type in the zip code or city name of the place you want to provide the forecast for. Then, look for the link that says "Add this sticker to your home page." Follow the on-screen instructions.

Poll your visitors: (www.createapoll.com/) offers free polling software. Put an opinion poll on your Website with immediate feedback to your users. (figure 2) Polls can either be radio buttons (as pictured) or a dropdown box. This poll doesn't screen out multiple voting. So feel free to vote many, many times for this column. Or any of my columns.

Add a link to Congress: Congress.Org offers a free sticker that lets people track down and write to their Federal elected officials just by typing in a zip code. An expanded sticker, also free, includes media and issue links. Go to (congress.org/congressorg/dbq/stickers/?command=stickers) to download.

Gas Buddy: Looking for low gas prices? Gas Buddy (www.sanantoniogasprices.com/) will add sticker to your page that lists the high and low prices for any area in the US and Canada. In Texas, prices are listed for Austin, Houston, Dallas, El Paso, Fort Worth and San Antonio.

Computer virus warnings: Trend MicroVirus has several customizable stickers at (www.trendmicro.com/syndication/vinfo/). You can list top viruses, virus advisories and alerts.

News Ticker: (www.newsindex.com/freenews.html) and (www.7am.com/ticker/addticker.html) are both news tickers. The first one lets you select a topic, and feeds in news headlines just on that topic. 7am.com feeds generic news headlines. The most sophisticated is New York Times headlines. You can select the categories - arts, books, technology, front page, international, sports, etc. - the number of headlines and the color and fonts. All you do is cut and paste the code. Get it at www.nytimes.com/gst/nytheadlines.html.

Looking for more free content? Sticky Web at www.freesticky.com/stickyweb/ lists hundreds of sites that offer free content, from games to lottery number pickers. Stickiness is a Web marketing term that means people "stick" to your Web site — stay on it for a long time, or keep coming back to it, day after day or week after week.

So what's the catch? First, you're going to get advertising from the supplier. All of these stickers have a link back to the sponsor. If people click on a sticker and go to the sponsor's page they may never return to your site.


Second, the sticker might not fit aesthetically with your site. Some are downright ugly. A red, white and blue sticker will stand out like a sore thumb on your purple and orange site. It might be too big, dominating your other, more important content. Some sponsors offer customized options, some don't.

Third, as with any data that you are sucking in from another site, you lose control. If the sponsor's site is down, you're the one that has a void, and probably a broken graphics link, smack dab in the middle of your home page. Finally, some Webmasters get a bad case of sticker-mania. Stickers pop up all over the site, like measles. Practice restraint. On the plus side, you are getting high quality content. All you ever have to do is paste in a few lines of HTML, and then never worry about it again. There are enough choices that you can be prudent in matching the data feed to your site.

San Antonio, TX

60 °F / 16 °C

Mostly Cloudy
at 2:53 PM



[Click for Forecast](#)

Best Alamo PC Column

☒ Lazy Webmaster

☐ Computer Crimes

☐ Net Nerds

[Vote](#)
[View Results](#)

SanAntonioGasPrices.com

Today's Local Prices

Low Price	2.05
High Price	2.29



The Graphics Guy Make a Web site in Photoshop

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>.

Living in the Internet Age is a pretty remarkable experience. There is a wealth of information just a click away and anyone can publish his or her own web pages. Many Internet Service Providers even give you free web hosting space with your account. Of course, the problem is that few people actually know how to create a web page from scratch. This month we take a look at how my favorite application, Adobe Photoshop, can help you create your web page without knowing a lick of code.

The first step is to design and build your web page graphic. You can do this in Photoshop or you can use an illustration program like Adobe Illustrator, Macromedia Freehand or Corel Draw and then import it into Photoshop. Size the graphic to fill a standard-sized browser screen, about 800 x 600 pixels (Fig. 1). This month's example was put together in Photoshop with a photograph and some text. I also added some capsule shapes behind each line of text to use as a rollover, a graphic that will change interactively when the cursor is over that menu item on the web page (Fig. 2).

Once you have your web page design, you need to divide it up so that some areas will respond a mouse click. This process is called Slicing and Photoshop gives you several tools for doing it. In the Tools palette there is the Slice Tool below the Magic Wand (looks like a knife); but because the design of this page is pretty simple, I can use the New Layer Based Slice command from the Layer menu (Fig. 3). Click on each of the capsule layers and repeat the command. You will now see a grid showing the sliced areas of the image (Fig. 4). In the final web page, each cell of the resulting table will contain a separate piece of the composite graphic.

You can only do have of this process in Photoshop itself, now it's time to take the image into Photoshop's companion program, Adobe ImageReady. This app gives you the rest of the tools to build your interactive web page and is included when you install Photoshop. To move the document into ImageReady, click the Edit in ImageReady button at the bottom of the Tools palette.

ImageReady looks and feels a lot like Photoshop. Make sure that ImageReady is showing the slices (View > Show > Slices) and select the top slice with the Slice Select Tool (on the Tools palette it looks like a knife with an arrow cursor next to it). Note that only the slice you are selected on is shown correctly, the others displayed lighter so you can tell what you're working on.

Pull up the Slice palette (Window > Slice) and you can fill in the information about that slice (Fig. 5). In the Name field, replace the default name with a more descriptive name, in this case



Figure 1

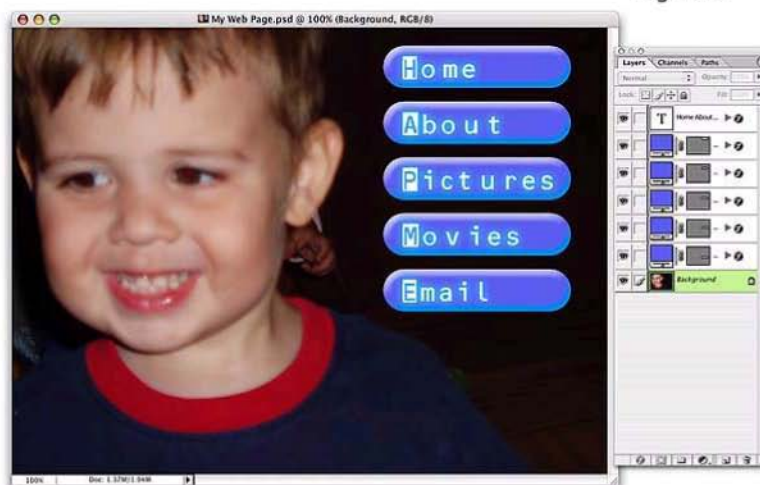


Figure 2

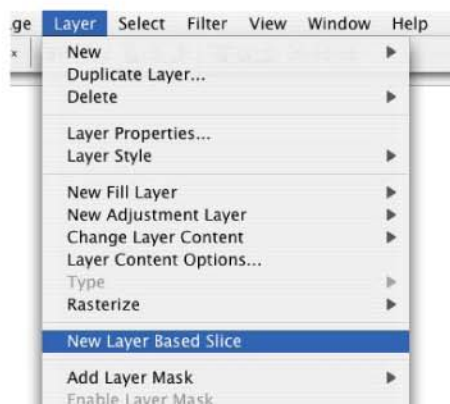


Figure 3

Continued on page 29



Figure 4

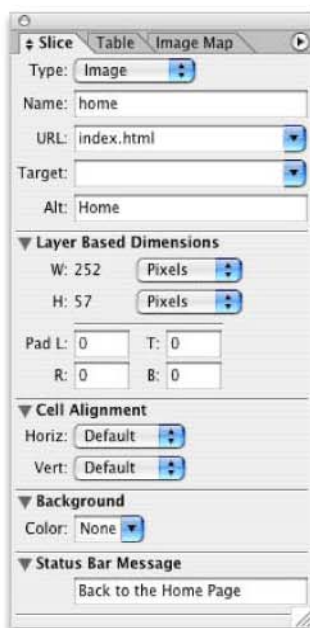


Figure 5

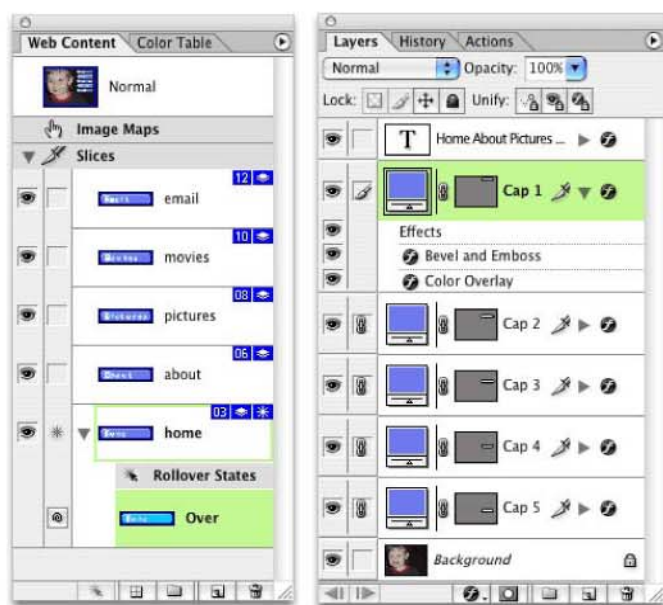


Figure 6

'home'. It is best to avoid any spaces or special characters. For the URL, type the web address of the page to which you want to create a link. It can be just the filename of an HTML web page (in this case index.html), or it can be a full address starting with http://. Target you don't need unless you are using Frames or want the link to open in another browser window. Next to Alt, type in the text you would want seen if the viewer turned off the graphics on their browser or if they are on a slow connection. The last part to fill out is Status Bar Message. This text will be seen in the Status bar of some browsers. Repeat this for each button in the document.

To make the button change when the mouse moves over it, you need to use a combination of the Web Content and Layers palettes (Fig. 6). In the Web Content palette, select a slice and click the Create Rollover State button at the bottom (it looks like a document). By default this state is called Over. This will be what the button looks like when the mouse moves over the button. You can now make changes to the Layer Styles in the Layers palette; you can also alter which layers are visible and even vary their opacity. For this button's Over State I just added a simple Color Overlay layer style to give the button a lit up appearance.

Click the Create Rollover State button again to add a Down State. For this Down State, what the button looks like when the mouse button is depressed, I changed the direction of the Bevel and Emboss layer style I already used to down instead of up. ImageReady remembers the differences between the layer properties for each of the different states. Again, repeat these steps for each button. If you need to change things in the normal state, click Normal at the top of the Web Content palette.

Each part of the image now needs to be saved in a web compatible format like GIF or JPG. To determine the specifics for each portion of the image, you can use the Optimize palette. For this example, I selected JPEG Medium from the Preset pop-up, but you can adjust the setting to your taste. You can mix and match file formats for different sections of an image depending on if one will give you a smaller file or if you need a special feature of one format like animation in a GIF.

If you want to preview your file as a web page, you can click the Preview in Browser button at the bottom of the Tools palette (it will have your default web browser's icon). Or you can select your favorite browser from the list under File > Preview In. Once you are satisfied with the page, select File > Save Optimized As. Choose Format: HTML and Images, Settings: Default Settings and Slices: All Slices and click Save.

You can now open the HTML page in any browser. The buttons change when the mouse moves over or clicks them and the links will work. To put the files on your web site, use your favorite FTP program. If you are already using Adobe Photoshop, this technique leverages knowledge you already have and makes Photoshop and ImageReady an indispensable part of your web creation toolbox. Remember, your ISP gives you free web space, but it's only free if you use it.



Internet Explorer - Connections

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>

I must apologize for any confusion this article may cause. I'm writing this article on my XP equipped notebook. I imagine some of you will take perverse pleasure in the knowledge that I'm having major difficulties with my Win98 desktop computer. The crux of which is that I am unable to connect to the Internet, which is putting a kink in my ability to access Internet Explorer on that machine. It has been the source of all previous article information. Internet Explorer on this machine appears to have some differences from that one. Unfortunately I can't verify the differences.

Last month we finished Favorites and I said we'd move on to Media. I had a problem finding Media on this machine, until I discovered that instead of being a Standard Button, next to Favorites, it has become a link, accessed on the end of the address line. I hope the result will be the same from this point forward.

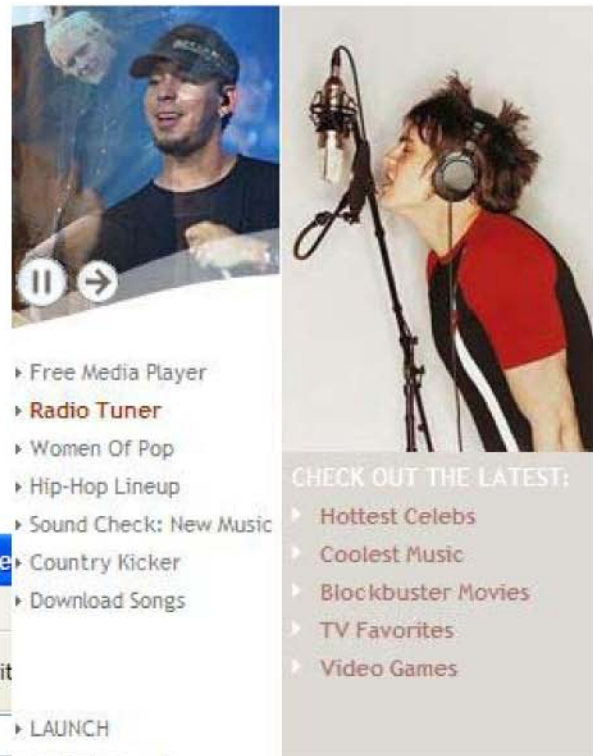


Above you see the result of that access. There is more, but the main area of interest here is the bottom line, where you see the options provided, beginning with Home. Here you are linked to the following URL:

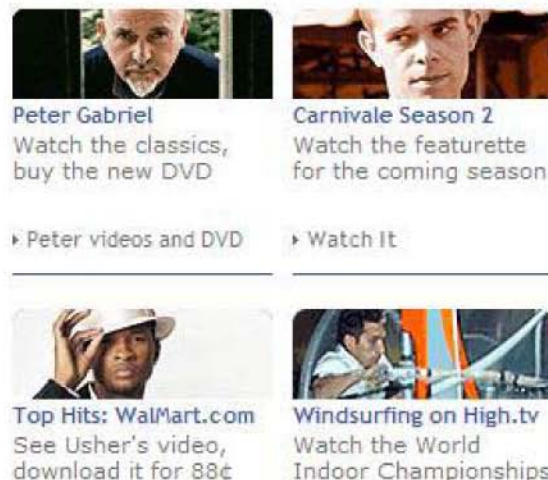
<http://windowsmedia.com/Mediaguide/Home>

This site has a myriad of available choices, just a portion of which may be seen at the right. Clicking on the Peter Gabriel videos and DVD gave me a page with a number of options. However, in this case one is required to have a license to view the material. The details of this action are not really pertinent to this discussion, but are an area you may elect to pursue. If you click on the Top Hits: Walmart.com, you are offered a number of selections to listen to, or buy. This worked well on any selected. While not my type of music, I was able to listen to any of those offered, and if I wished, buy the full song for \$0.88, pretty cheap!

Moving on to the Music button brings up a new page, a portion of which you may see below:



Here again you can see that you are offered many choices. Just one example is the Radio



Tuner. This will allow you to browse a wide range of radio broadcasts, from a folk music station in Ohio, to National Public Radio and MSNBC, just mention a few. You may set up a list of "My Stations", from those you like best. If you're just starting, you may use



the choices seen above to find all available stations in the categories you prefer. It is possible then to listen to streaming radio while doing other tasks, such as I am here. (I don't recommend NPR while involved with demanding tasks).

The next button is Movies. As with the previous selections, here you're enabled to get information on the latest films, including video clips of preview scenes.

Action Pics

Jennifer Garner stars in *Elektra*

► Elektra

- Assault On Precinct 13
- Hostage
- Constantine
- Batman Begins
- Flight of the Phoenix
- House of Flying Daggers
- Ocean's 12
- National Treasure



Movie Preview:
Elektra
56k | 300k



Movie Clip:
Her name is Elektra
56k | 300k



Movie Clip:
Just Keep Running
56k | 300k

As you can see above, there are 9 Action Pics covered. There are additional categories such as the Top Five Box Office, Top 5 Most Requested Movies, just to mention a couple. You can see these to the right. I could go on indefinitely, but the truth is, each of the media areas is similar to the others. The name of the game is to take a look at them, become familiar with what's available, and enjoy.

There isn't a whole lot of skill or computer savvy needed to browse this area. You may however find that you don't have all the necessary plugins to take advantage of these offerings. Just in going over the

spots I've mentioned so far, I've had to make use of Real Player, Flash, and Windows Media Player. It's possible that if I didn't have one of them, another might have picked up the task. Should you run into a situation where you're told that you need a certain program or plugin to view or hear the selection, in most cases you'll be offered the opportunity to download it on the spot. Once you have most of them installed on your hard drive, you won't run into the problem again.

Entertainment covers a wide variety such as Comedy Club appearances by such stand-ups as Tim Allen and Rosie O'Donnell in their early days. Other TV areas are also featured.

And finally there is the Current Events area. Here you find things such as National Geographic, Sports and Leisure, Today's Weather, and Business News.

If you don't have time to browse the individual areas, there is a Site Index with the complete listing of everything that's on windowsmedia.com.

As I've said in the past, the best way for you to gain experience with Internet Explorer is to just jump in and look around. I'm constantly amazed by the amount and variety of material that one may access on the Internet. Now if I can just figure what's gone wrong with my Desktop computer, perhaps I'll find time to do some web surfing on my own. Next month Windows Marketplace, about the end of this series. □

Top 5 Box Office



Meet The Fockers
Preview and watch clips from the movie
► Get more

- White Noise
- The Aviator
- Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events
- Fat Albert

Top 5 Most Requested Movies



Batman Begins
Opens June, 2005
► Get more

- Mr. and Mrs. Smith
- Constantine
- Cars
- Chicken Little

Dufferdom - Kingdom of the Ordinary User

Written by David D. Uffer, a member of the Chicago Computer Society, <http://www.ccs.org>, daviduffer@sbcglobal.net

Hello folks. I'm Dave Uffer, retired in good order from the world of education, where I was a cog in a wheel that barely notices losing cogs. Now I can do more of what I like to do. One of those things is messing about with a PC. I use it for learning, getting and passing information, for communication, and just a bit for entertainment. I make no claims as any kind of expert. I'm an ordinary user with some experiences and views that may be of interest to others. I try to share them from time to time.

Word Processors

Over the years I have used plain text and PROFS for messaging, then for more wordage, composition, and records WordPerfect, WordStar, DisplayWrite, MultiMate, MS Word, and Ami Pro. They are not for the simple minded, but some are easier than others. Some are more challenging and useful. Some walk alongside you as you learn and grow along with you in subsequent versions. That's the way I feel about WordPerfect, a friend and companion of many years, capable and patient with many features I've yet to explore. It is now in its 13th major (numbered) version. All versions are compatible, just one of the ways in which it has served me better than has been my experience with its major competitor, without "Perfect" in its name.

Of Mice, People, and Paranoia

The "mouse" pointing device was an early convenience, a means to change the point of attention more easily than by tedious scrolling with the underline cursor. It came into its own with the graphical user interface and gained more adherents. People were tickled by its usability and found it to be fun. The basic design was ingenious and stable, needing only occasional cleaning of little specks of crust from the clever rollers. It has been so for about 10 years, or into the last century as we old-timers might say. Some variants were developed with more or different button configurations, differing means of locomotion or connection. I can recall a pleasant 3-button Logitech mouse of great convenience for a CAD program of the era.

Then, less than a year ago, there seemed to me to be some strange movements. I joked that it was mousey wanderlust, hoping it would subside before the allusion grew stale. Nope. My mouse and its inexpensive replacements worked initially but were similarly afflicted with abrupt sideways movements much greater than the occasional prior small ones. Ultimately, I bought a \$15 new mouse. A Microsoft mouse prominently described on the box as their BASIC MOUSE, all I'd need or want. Wrong, it worked fine on basic ops. But I learned there or nearby of their fancier mice. Smoother movement, optical not mechanical drive, sideways scrolling, easily invoked magnification. Interesting; why should I continue to deprive myself?

So I got a new and better one with the soothing, elevating name of Optical Comfort Mouse 3000 for \$30. Worked fine and still does. What had developed was that I had a need, tried other cheaper mice, then bought first one then two Microsoft mice. Clever marketing. Then the steadfast and reliable mouse on our other PC began worsening in a different, recent reluctant movement behavior, unheard of heretofore. Not fixable by any means known to me, it dragged and stalled. Of course I knew one likely solution, a new MS mouse. Fortunately, I got the last of the same model as above. They were being replaced by new and still fancier series from MS, cordless, laser connected.

Wait a minute. What's happening here and why? And how? Faithful devices developing two kinds of corrupting condition in two time periods following a series of free Windows upgrades. How could that be? Super clever marketing? Sneaky sci fi? Evil enterprise? Hard to believe. Still, I wonder and suggest you be aware of this experience. You might let me know if it happens to you.

A Touch of Terminology

It turns out that what most of us like to call simply "computer programs" have a useful division into "applications" and "utilities". Applications are what we use to do specific things. Utilities are a sort of set of servants to enable the applications to do their things. They work together smoothly. Usually.

License Agreements

One of the entertainments in loading a new program into your computer is the license agreement. I know, or know of, a few users who still read them. Reading them is an optional chore, like reading the small print on a product with big print claims you've decided to trust. A similar pleasure is half-listening on radio or TV to the rapid but required counter-claim cautions following the

Continued on page 33

opening proclamations of better health now available to the user. Marketers of more general new conveniences or higher glories seem less bound by law or conscience and low ball or ignore the cautions.

Not so the makers of software. License agreements are a signal that the producer of the product is sincere. And worried. Worried enough to hire lawyers to make up and repair fences to protect them from other lawyers looking for holes. Reminds one of why there are so many lawyer jokes abroad in the land. But fewer than there are lawyers.

Some of them work for the makers of software, composing their proofs of sincerity, walling off their anxiety. One of the best agreement statements I've seen was while installing a pretty good application. At least 3, maybe 4 steady screens of legalese. [Mild compared to Buy.com's 13 screens.] You've gotta laugh out loud at that. Another one had a 4-line-deep viewing slit for the agreement. The user was expected to scroll through all the conditions and speculations. Or maybe not. Maybe that was just a candid admission that the makers knew they needn't use up screen space with trivia.

Of course that's essential trivia, since it's a required hurdle. You can pay the money but not use your purchase if you object to their narratives of what might possibly go wrong—for them. You can buy their software but you can't use it until you lie a little, let them off the hook in case anything goes wrong in any way that alerts a legal mind to potential loss or profit (depending which side in a dispute). Correction above, rent their software, since as I understand it, the maker retains ownership. The user buys access and may use it any way he wants unless he can't be cool and somehow displeases the maker.

Dave Uffer, originating in Colorado, has been an Illinois resident most of his adult life, so far, preferring to live in or near Chicago. He is a member of some standing & longevity and has attended meetings scattered around North Shore, West Suburban, and Downtown.



SAN ANTONIO • PC-HELP

(210) 748-5311 • SAPCHELP@ATT.NET

Seniors — Computer troubles ?

We understand that making the jump to computers, E-mail and the Internet can be a real challenge.

When you are stuck or your computer just doesn't seem to be working as you expected, call us. In the comfort of your own home, let us help you work through the problem. We provide on-site service for the individual PC user and small to medium size business.

Call PC-Help today!

SE HABLA ESPANOL

(210) 748-5311

9 AM - 4 PM • Monday - Friday

Safeguarding Your Data

By Mindi McDowell, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, United States Computer Emergency Readiness Team

When there are multiple people using your computer and/or you store sensitive personal and work-related data on your computer, it is especially important to take extra security precautions.

Why isn't "more" better?

Maybe there is an extra software program included with a program you bought. Or perhaps you found a free download online. You may be tempted to install the programs just because you can, or because you think you might use them later. However, even if the source and the software are legitimate, there may be hidden risks. And if other people use your computer, there are additional risks.

These risks become especially important if you use your computer to manage your personal finances (banking, taxes, online bill payment, etc.), store sensitive personal data, or perform work-related activities away from the office. However, there are steps you can take to protect yourself.

How can you protect both your personal and work-related data?

Use and maintain anti-virus software and a firewall - Protect yourself against viruses and Trojan horses that may steal or modify the data on your own computer and leave you vulnerable by using anti-virus software and a firewall (see Understanding Anti-Virus Software and Understanding Firewalls for more information - <http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST04-005.html> / <http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST04-004.html>). Make sure to keep your virus definitions up to date.

Regularly scan your computer for spyware - Spyware or adware hidden in software programs may affect the performance of your computer and give attackers access to your data. Use a legitimate anti-spyware program to scan your computer and remove any of these files (see Recognizing and Avoiding Spyware for more information - <http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST04-016.html>).

Keep software up to date - Install software patches so that attackers cannot take advantage of known problems or vulnerabilities (see Understanding Patches for more information - <http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST04-006.html>). Many operating systems offer automatic updates. If this option is available, you should turn it on.

Evaluate your software's settings - The default settings of most software enable all available functionality. However, attackers may be able to take advantage of this functionality to access your computer. It is especially important to check the settings for software that connects to the internet (browsers, email clients, etc.). Apply the highest level of security available that still gives you the functionality you need.

Avoid unused software programs - Do not clutter your computer with unnecessary software programs. If you have programs on your computer that you do not use, consider uninstalling them.

Consider creating separate user accounts - If there are other people using your computer, you may be worried that someone else may accidentally access, modify, and/or delete your files. Most operating systems (including Windows XP, Mac OS X, and Linux) give you the option of creating a different user account for each user, and you can set the amount of access and privileges for each account. You may also choose to have separate accounts for your work and personal purposes. While this approach will not completely isolate each area, it does offer some additional protection.

Establish guidelines for computer use - If there are multiple people using your computer, especially children, make sure they understand how to use the computer and internet safely.

Alamo PC Organization now offers members private or semi-private tutorials

☞ Keyboarding/Typing
☞ Basic Computer Skills
☞ Microsoft Word

Rates for one student

\$35 per hour
\$300 for 10 hours

Rates for two or three students

\$20 per student per hour
\$150 per student for 10 hours

Enjoy private instruction on days and at hours
that fit **your** schedule at our modern facility in
Crossroads Mall.

Call or visit the Learning Center to register
(210) 736-0080

Setting boundaries and guidelines will help to protect your data (see Keeping Children Safe Online for more information - <http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST05-002.html>).

Use passwords and encrypt sensitive files - Passwords and other security features add layers of protection if used appropriately (see Choosing and Protecting Passwords and Supplementing Passwords for more information - <http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST04-002.html> / <http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST05-012.html>). By encrypting files, you ensure that unauthorized people can't view data even if they can physically access it. You may also want to consider options for full disk encryption, which prevents a thief from even starting your laptop without a passphrase. When you use encryption, it is important to remember your passwords and passphrases; if you forget or lose them, you may lose your data.

Follow corporate policies for handling and storing work-related information - If you use your computer for work-related purposes, make sure to follow any corporate policies for handling and storing the information. These policies were likely established to protect proprietary information and customer data, as well as to protect you and the company from liability.

Dispose of sensitive information properly - Simply deleting a file does not completely erase it. To ensure that an attacker cannot access these files, make sure that you adequately erase sensitive files (see Effectively Erasing Files for more information - <http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST05-011.html>).

Follow good security habits - Review other security tips for ways to protect yourself and your data - <http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/>.

Produced 2006 by US-CERT, a government organization.

News Brief

Inner Circles

Written by **Berry F. Phillips**, a member of the Oklahoma City Computer Club and a regular writer for the CCOKC website and the eMonitor, bfpdata@1access.net, <http://www.ccokc.org>

The birth of a new year brings changes in membership and planning activities within the "Inner Circles" that often operate almost like occult groups in their private inner sanctums. They are elected or appointed to serve others and work without compensation. These "Inner Circles" operate in civic organizations like computer clubs and represent a very small percentage of the memberships. While those of us who served in the military were told never to volunteer, the "Inner Circles" volunteered.!

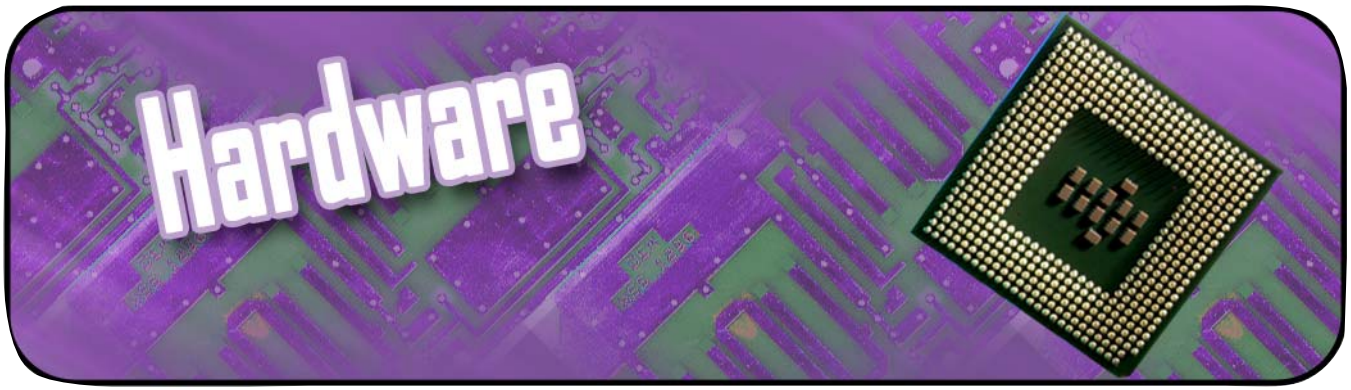
Volunteerism is the very life blood of many civic organizations. Research has verified the positive rewards of doing for others and finding meaning in activities which greatly contributes to an older person's ability to age successfully. Older volunteers with their longer experience, often assume leadership roles within nonprofit organizations whose programs and activities are dependent on volunteers for help. Volunteers sometimes receive only modest recognition - since their activities involve free will, beneficence, and lack of reimbursement.

Research has further verified that staying active contributes to a healthier and longer lived life and that social supports are critical to healthy aging. Fisher and Shaeffer in their book, "Older Volunteers" list the following benefits: "self satisfaction, altruism, potential learning or acquisition of new skills, specific benefits for the receivers of volunteer efforts, relaxation, socialization, status of reward, career opportunities, and community involvement."

National Volunteer Week was created in 1974 by President Richard Nixon who signed an executive order establishing an annual celebration of volunteering as a time to recognize and celebrate the efforts of volunteers at the local, state, and national level. The Points of Light Foundation, based in Washington DC, and the Volunteer National Network together reach millions of people to encourage volunteerism. The Foundation has received national recognition as America's address for volunteering. As President George W. Bush commented, "The Points of Light Foundation embodies America's spirit of volunteerism and the goodwill of its citizens."

Why not make a New Year's resolution (and not break it) to express your appreciation to the past and present members of the "Inner Circle" in your computer club? "A mind is a terrible thing to waste," and like a muscle "use it or lose it." Get involved and volunteer in your computer club in 2007!

Happy New Year from the Computer Club of Oklahoma City and the Association of PC Users Groups!



To Dual-Core or not to Dual-Core?

By **Jim Sanders**, Editor, North Orange County
Computer Club, California, [http://
www.noccc.org](http://www.noccc.org), editor@noccc.org

If you have been in that should I or shouldn't I mode for a while, now is a pretty good time to make the plunge. The prices of dual-core processors has come way down in the last year, at the same time the performance has moved several rungs up the ladder. In May, AMD introduced several new high-end Athlon processors. In July, Intel unveiled it's long anticipated Core 2 Duo (AKA code name Conroe) chips. These are Intel's long awaited response to being out-gunned by AMD. They have the new Core micro-architecture that reportedly out-performs similar models of AMD chips.

Continued on page 37

The introduction Core 2 Duo chips by Intel started a price war between AMD and Intel. One sage speculated that this was a strategic move by AMD to make it difficult for Intel to dump a huge inventory of older technology chips without taking a loss on them and lower the profit margin on the new chips. What ever the case, the end users win. The latest and greatest chips from both vendors are a lot less expensive than they were just a short while ago and the older chips are available at bargain basement prices.

The technology that is in the new chips from both AMD and Intel has been significantly improved in the last two years. Intel has upgraded it's NetBurst architecture with the Core and Core 2 Duo technology. AMD has introduced the new AM2 processor socket which, compared to the older 939/940 socket, effectively doubles the processor-to-memory bandwidth with it's support of DDR2 RAM.

There are a lot of individual engineering pieces or basic building blocks that make up all X86 processors. For years Intel rode the marketing bandwagon that basically touted the "My processor clock is faster than yours, so I am better than you are" concept and that was, more often than not, true. AMD tried to compensate for the fact that their high speed chip technology lagged behind Intel by building more efficient CPUs. There are lots of ways to do that, and doing more things in parallel (at the same time) is one of the ways to build a more efficient CPU. So if the CPU is doing twice as many things at the same time, the processor clock can be half the speed. To pick a number, lets say the AMD chip actually has a clock of 500MHz but it is marketed as a 1000+ and the fine print explains that it "Performs as well as other CPUs that really do have a 1000MHz clock." A number of people feel that back a few years, AMD was overly optimistic with their "Performs as well as" ratings. The concept however remains true. Over the years, AMD improved the efficiency of their CPUs as well as the clock speeds and the "Performs as well as" ratings more closely matched reality. Once Intel started making chips in the over 3000MHz clock range, they started tripping over the difficulty of making chips run that fast at all, complicated by the huge amount of heat it created. Acknowledging the writing on the wall, Intel decided they had to start making more efficient chips as well.

The irony of Intel running into the wall that those irrefutable facts of Physics represent is that Intel had to borrow a page from the AMD marketing manual. They had to convince their followers that these new Intel CPUs with the slow clock speeds were getting just as much or more work done as the older chips with the impressive clock speeds. Both companies had to deal with the problems created by CPUs that generated as much heat as a 100 watt light bulb. Along with other problems, the size of the heatsink/fan assembly was getting obscene. The demand for ever increasing compute horsepower, however, was relentless. In addition to improving the efficiencies of their processor cores, both companies decided the next logical step was to build two complete CPUs inside one chip and really approach doing twice as many things in the same amount of time. Because Intel still leads AMD in the ability to build chips with tinier features (65nano meter vs. 90nano meter), they can afford to put twice as much cache in their chips and run a higher clock speed and still have a good power consumption rating. By moving the memory controller inside the CPU, AMD has a better multi-core memory scheme. And the technical details, and the debates about them, go on and on.

I am going to try and give you enough of an over-all picture of who is offering what in today's processor world that you can at least determine if you want to try and play in the major leagues or the minor leagues. That is really a daunting task and I hope I come somewhere close to success. One master list of currently offered X86 chips (all of those chips that trace their ancestry back to the original Intel 8086) had nearly 400 different models listed. Most of those are no longer made and ranged in price from \$7.00 for a 600MHz Celeron to \$954 for a Pentium Core 2 Extreme 3.2GHz and from \$17.00 for a 700MHz Athlon Slot-A to \$769.00 for a dual core Athlon FX-62 socket AM2, 2.8GHz processor.

There are a lot of very fast single core CPUs available at very good prices. If you are not an enthusiast user (mostly that means gamer) or heavy into video editing, you may not need one of the dual core units. Some of the single core units are the best values (read cheapest) available and any of them that are rated as being in the 3.0GHz or more category should even run the Vista operating system when it is released. Visit the MS Vista hardware requirement site at <http://www.microsoft.com/technet/windowsvista/evaluate/hardware/vistarc.msp> and get the official, albeit optimistic, definition of the minimum hardware you will need to run Vista. Based on my experience with the September RC1 release of Vista running on an AMD 2800+ with 1Gig of RAM, I would not be happy with a slower machine.

If you are an enthusiastic gamer or hard core videophile, and live next door to Bob Jones, plan on spending close to a thousand dollars for your CPU. Not to mention the dual \$500 video cards and 4Gig of RAM. The first of the three categories of processors that we are going to list is the one that you enthusiasts are interested in.

Continued on page 38

**20+ YEARS
SERVING
SAN ANTONIO**

TAKE IT TO BJ's - THE LAPTOP SPECIALIST!
IF WE CAN'T FIX IT, NO ONE CAN!

AWARD WINNING SERVICE SINCE 1982
Residential, Corporate,
Education, Government,
No job is too small.

WE SERVICE ALL BRANDS!

- New/Refurbished Notebooks
- Accessories Notebook Drives
- Ac/Adapters Wireless Solutions
- Batteries Networking
- Parts/Memory LCD'S/Screens



YOUR MOBILE COMPUTING PRO!

BJ ASSOCIATES OF SAN ANTONIO

10823 GULF DALE, ISOM AND 281N NEAR THE AIRPORT
HOURS: 9-6 MON-FRI Carry in/On-site
EMERGENCY/AFTER HOURS SERVICE AVAILABLE

210-344-4563 San Antonio
800-366-7104 Metro and out of Area
www.bjassociates.com info@bjassociates.com










Those categories are; the Enthusiast Dual Core Processors, Main Stream Dual Cores, and Single Core Processors. There is some overlap in both the performance and price of the high end single core and the low end of the dual core processors. One thing to keep in mind, all of the Dual Core chips are 64 Bit processors and most of the single core processors are not 64 Bit.

Enthusiast Dual Core Processors

For the AMD processors you have: Athlon 64 FX-62, Athlon X2 5000+.

For the Intel processors you have: Core 2 Extreme X6800, Core 2 Duo E6700, E6600.

Because Intel and AMD are constantly jostling each other to claim title to King Of The Hill, it changes hands. For many months, through June of 2006, it was AMD. Then, in July 2006, Intel reclaimed the title. For almost anyone except the well heeled enthusiast with a social need to be on the Bleeding Edge, any of these processors would make a great system. As has been the case for years, the price curve for the last three to four speed ranges is geometric in nature. The 2.4GHz E6600 is about 40% of the price of X6800 and provides about 60% of the performance. The same is true for the AMD pricing.

Main Stream Dual Cores

For AMD – Athlon 64 X2 AM2 4600, 4200, 4000, 3800, Athlon 64 X2 S939 4800, 4600, 4400, 4200, 3800

For Intel – Core 2 Duo E6400, Pentium Extreme Edition 965 & 955, Pentium D 960, 950, 945, 930, 915, 840, 830, 820, 805

On the AMD line you can easily see just one of the many things that can be confusing about the different designations for AMD's dual core processors. There is an Athlon 64 X2 AM2 4600 and an Athlon 64 X2 S939 4600. The only visible difference is that one says AM2 and the other says S939. As explained above, the AM2 designation is for the new DDR2 RAM CPUs. AMD uses two different speeds of DDR2 RAM. The DDR2-800 is used with the Enthusiast CPUs and the DDR2-667 is used with the Main Stream CPUs. Faster memory will, in general, improve through-put and is most noticeable on memory intensive applications. Another consideration when trying to decide between the new AM2 socket and the older S939, is the supply and cost of memory. Production of DDR RAM is being reduced while production of DDR2 RAM is being RAMPed up. That means that the price of DDR is going up and the price of DDR2 is going down. You may have noticed the price of the older PC100/133 RAM is almost double the price of PC2700 DDR RAM and I have seen a price for a 1GB DDR2 that was less than the price for the PC3200 1 GB DDR Ram.

Strangely, at the price top of the Intel Main Stream Dual Core line category are the older technology Dual Core models:

D 965 DC Extreme Edition (3.73GHz/775pin PLGA /1066FSB /2X2MB L2 Cache Dual Core) \$1075

D 955 DC Extreme Edition (3.46GHz/775pin PLGA /1066FSB /2X2MB L2 Cache Dual Core) \$995

D 960 DC Standard Edition (3.6GHz/775pin PLGA /800FSB / 2X2MB L2 Cache Dual Core) \$349.

The E6400 Core 2 Duo Processor (2.13GHz/775pin LGA 1066FSB 2X1MB L2 Cache) at \$245 is the better buy. This is a good example of the seemingly weird pricing that occurs with bleeding edge CPUs. The D955 is \$646 more than the D960 which has a faster clock but a slower FSB (Front Side Bus). Even stranger is that the price for the older technology D 955 is more than the fastest Core 2 Duo chip. The oldest technology dual core chips from Intel are the D800 series.

Single Core Processors

After looking at the long list of single core processors that are clocked at 3GHz or greater, I changed my mind about listing them. Instead, I will just repeat the advice about computing needs and price. If you are not into gaming or a videophile, they can make a fine system. I am still using an Intel 3.1GHz P4 with 512Meg of expensive Rambus RAM to produce the Orange Bytes and it works fine most of the time.

The future of computing is going to be 64 Bits for a long time even though it is just now starting to gain traction. Since that is true, if you are going to upgrade at all, going with a dual core 64 Bit CPU is the only thing that make sense if you take a long term perspective. Same thing is true for DDR2 RAM, PCI-Express video, and SATA2 hard disks. So the sweet spot today is a system based on a Athlon 64 X2 AM2 4200, or an Intel Core 2 Duo E6400 and a good 256Meg PCI Express video card, everything else, your choice.



Buying an HDTV?

By **Bob Elgines, Editor**, Colorado River Computer Club, AZ, <http://www.crc caz.com/>, Elginesz@rraz.net

There are three things necessary for true High Definition (HD) Television (TV): an HDTV, HD receiver (or tuner) and HD programming. All TV stations will be capable of HD by 2007.

New HDTVs are here and will be required starting in 2009; but, of course, there will be converters available. The standard for Analog TV was 525 lines per frame vertically. The old mandates of FCC requirements were first 2004, and then 2007. There are many HDTV models out there and some of the description of their characteristics are confusing. Hopefully I can clear up a few items of concern.

First let us consider the three types of TV screens or TV monitors:

1. LCD – Cheaper in price.

They can be wall mounted;

37" weighs about 50 to 60 pounds;

Sizes up to 52"; 4" to 5" thick;

160 degree view angle (with decreasing contrast);

Lasts 10 to 20 years;

The thinnest, lightest sets and have minimum reflection of lights in the room.

2. PLASMA – Moderate in price.

They can be wall mounted;

42" weighs about 85 to 90 pounds;

Sizes 42" and up; 4" to 5" thick;

170 degree view angle (contrast good thru-out);

Lasts 10 to 20 years;

Better color accuracy and displaying the deepest black, but screen's shiny surface can produce reflections of lights in the room and static images can "burn-in" and produce a ghost image.

3. DLP – (digital light processing).

Moderate in price for size;

Not wall mounted;

42" weighs about 45 to 60 pounds;

Sizes 42" and up;

8" to 15" thick;

160 degree view angle (contrast good thru-out);

Lasts 8 to 10 years (bulb or lamp);



Continued on page 40

A "rainbow effect" that some viewers may notice on the edges of bright objects on the screen.

DLP is used in most new projectors.

Second, let's discuss Resolution (pixels are the number of dots per line), the higher the resolution the better the picture, or higher quality. The old Standard Digital TV format is 720 (Horizontal) x 480 (Vertical). The new HDTV formats are 720 and 1080, but most HDTVs also allow using the 480 standard. There are not many things out there for the 1080 "i or p" format. Where "p"= Progressive – draws lines on screen from top to bottom, and is considered the best for high speed movement without blur. Whereas "i"= Interlace – draws odd lines from top to bottom then even lines from top to bottom.

1024 x 768 pixels, 1366 x 768 pixels, and 1780 x 720 pixels all fall under the 720p format and many 720p-HDTVs accept the 1080i format.

1920 x 1080s fall under either the 1080i or 1080p format and most accept the 720p format.

Screen size is measured diagonally. Therefore, if you now have a 32" TV, you will most likely want a 37" to 42" for your replacement. That way you will have basically the same height, but of course it will be wider.

Third, let's discuss other concerns such as inputs and outputs (most sets come with stereo sound speaker systems):

1. HDMI – latest version is 1.3, this is a connector that requires a special cable and is not usually included with your TV. This could be used for 5.1 or 7.1 surround sound systems, video games such as X-Box, HD-Cable boxes, HD-DVD players, etc.
2. Component – One to three inputs are provided, used to connect DVD Players, games, etc.
3. Cable Slot – latest version is 2.0, used for Cable Simm Cards. Most cable companies are not interested, but new FCC mandates starting next year, 2007, may change this. Also some companies are considering including the Cable Card internally.
4. Tuners - Usually two tuners are included, one NTSC (we are now using Antilog & Digital TV, also called Standard TV) and one ATSC (this is the new HD digital TV tuner, required for HDTV). Stay away from a TV listed as "HD-ready", it does not have an ATSC tuner.

GLOBAL TRAVEL TRENDS

We're Going Places!

Global Travel Trends has designed a fun, work from home, Associate Travel Agent Program, to provide an opportunity for people all over the world, a way for them to change their lives for the better.

Take advantage of tremendous savings when planning a family vacation or a romantic trip for two by visiting our website at www.greatratetravel.gttrends.net and click on the "Travel Center" button.

Rudy & Debra Flores

Associate Travel Agents

(832) 259-9910

(832) 372-4527

greatratetravel@sbcglobal.net

**** Cruise for \$40 a day***

**** All-Inclusive Resorts for \$30-\$50 a day***

**** Upgrades on Flights, Car Rentals and Hotels***

STOP PAYING RETAIL! BECOME A TRAVEL AGENT! SAVE & EARN!

TO LEARN MORE, WATCH THIS MOVIE:

www.gttmovie.com/greatratetravel

Upgrading Your Monitor

by **Vinny La Bash**, vlabash@home.com, Member of the Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, Inc.

In December I wrote about buying a PC for 2007, but other than size I was vague about the monitor. Many more folks than I thought are getting the urge to watch high definition video on their personal computers. If high definition has you captivated, pay attention to the technologies known as HDMI and HDCP.

HDMI or High Definition Media Interface is a technology that connects video receivers and DVD players to devices such as a television. It makes no difference to HDMI if your set is high definition or not. The technology handles both standard and high definition resolutions.

HDCP or High-bandwidth Digital Content Protection is a completely different animal. Intel developed the technology specifically to prevent distortion or any kind of electronic interference between source and receiver. For example, HDCP encrypts the digital content of anything that a device such as a DVD player might send through a Digital Visual Interface (DVI) to a television set, a projector or a computer monitor. The encryption used is not a form of copy protection, but a process designed to protect the integrity of the data. In other words, HDMI makes sure that what is sent is what's received.

It's important to understand that HDCP is content protection, not copy protection. It won't prevent you from pausing live programming or recording a program to view at a later time. Any content provider that did this would soon be at war with its customers.

As long as features such as "time-shifting" keep appearing, protecting copyright material becomes increasingly difficult. Copyrights are important because without them there is no protection for the artists, authors, and performers who create material or those who use them.

Your home equipment can implement any kind of copy protection, but a content provider might allow no copies whatsoever. Another provider might let you make a limited number of copies. Still another provider might put limitations on how the material is used. Many factors come into play. The mechanism for distribution, source, equipment design, and equipment configuration all have their unique effect. A content pro-



Continued on page 42

vider will usually insist on enforcing its own brand of copy protection.

HDCP makes its appearance at the DVI connection, the last link in the video chain. HDCP makes no decisions on any type of copy protection strategy, it merely protects the choice.

It may be a let down to find out that HDCP isn't an issue yet. However, it will become more important when high definition takes over. Expect all high definition DVD players to eventually use HDCP.

If you own a DVD player that isn't HDCP compliant, you will still be able to use it even if your TV isn't HDCP compliant. You just won't experience high definition quality images. HDCP will restrict playback to standard quality. This prevents pirates from getting perfect copies of movies or other digital content. Upgrades are definitely in most people's future.

Windows Vista will certainly support HDCP, as will upcoming versions of the Mac OS. What it comes down to is if you want to watch high definition content on your computer monitor, the monitor must be HDCP-compliant.

Almost any television set you buy today will use HDCP, but very few computer monitors are HDCP compliant. Do your research carefully. If you want to watch high definition on your monitor, it must be HDCP compliant.



Volunteers Wanted

Call the Learning Center to volunteer to assist ongoing classes. For more info, call 736-0700.

STUDY GROUPS

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

News Brief

Taskbar Shuffle (free, but accepting donations)

<http://www.freewebs.com/nerdcave/taskbarshuffle.htm>

From the home of the nerd cave, comes a pretty nifty little tool that answers a minor nit I have had with the Windows Taskbar for a while—why you cannot drag and drop the programs listed on the taskbar to better arrange your programs to your preference. With Taskbar Shuffle, you can. That seems pretty simple, and it appears to work quite seamlessly within the OS.

The utility leaves an icon running on your system tray that you can use to turn it on or off, or close it down completely. I've been using it for a few months, and haven't noticed any conflicts with other windows or programs that have caused me to want to shut it off.

Clear Reading With ClearType

by **Vinny La Bash**, vlabash@home.com, Member of the Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, Inc., Florida, www.spcug.org

My students know why LCD displays are superior to CRT monitors. When one of them complained to me that he found text difficult to read on his new 21 inch LCD Monitor, I told him it was probably because the screen resolution made the text too small to read easily. He didn't think so because his teen age granddaughter also thought the text wasn't clear. His comment made me think.

Flat panel LCD Monitors are designed to display information at a specific resolution known as the "native resolution". Manufacturers refer to them as "fixed-pixel displays" because they are limited to displaying only one resolution. If they receive an image signal that is either higher or lower than the native resolution, they convert or scale the image automatically to fit the native resolution.

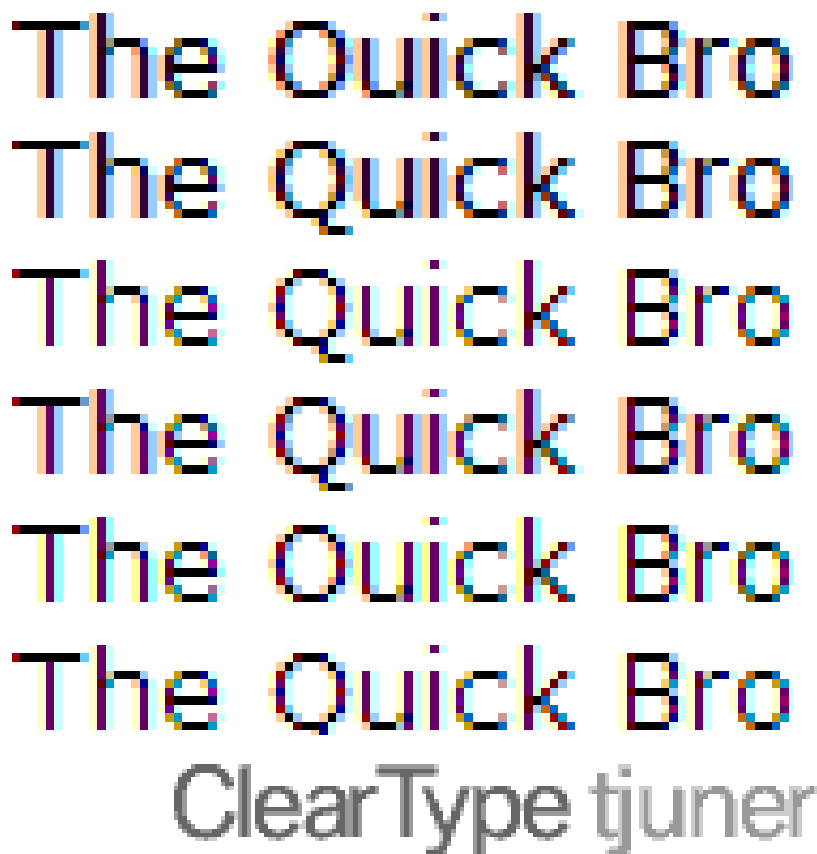
If the incoming source has more pixels than the display's native resolution, you will lose some visible detail and sharpness. Very often you will need to carefully compare the images side by side to see any difference. Only the most exacting applications will suffer from this small constraint.

If the incoming source has fewer pixels than the native resolution, there is no benefit from the higher resolution. Extra pixels will not improve the appearance of a lower-resolution source.

Converting images from either a higher or lower resolution to the LCD's native resolution hardly affects the quality of graphic or video images, but it can make text appear blurry. Early LCD displays had no ready solution for this problem. All one could do was experiment with various font styles and sizes until an acceptable compromise was reached.

Microsoft didn't want to keep its customers waiting while it found an answer so it licensed TrueType fonts from Apple. The advantage of TrueType fonts was that text could be made larger or smaller with little distortion. Text became easier to read, and Microsoft made some improvements to the technology, but TrueType proved to be an interim response.

While Microsoft was working on Windows XP, it was also developing a new software technology designed to enhance text readability on flat panel LCD monitors, laptops, PDAs, Pocket PCs, indeed any device that used an LCD screen, no matter how big or small.



The Quick Brown Fox Jumps Over The Lazy Dog
 The Quick Brown Fox Jumps Over The Lazy Dog
 The Quick Brown Fox Jumps Over The Lazy Dog
 The Quick Brown Fox Jumps Over The Lazy Dog
 The Quick Brown Fox Jumps Over The Lazy Dog
 ClearType tuner

Microsoft claims that its development people spent two years studying typography and the psychology of reading to create ClearType. Instead of affecting individual pixels which are either treated as "on" or "off", ClearType works with a different type of pixel that is constructed of three individual pieces tinted with red, blue, and green stripes. The technology varies the brightness of the sub-pixels, making the screen characters appear smooth, clean, and sharp around the edges.

Now that you know what it is, how can you use it? You have three ways to turn on or "enable" ClearType for your LCD display. Let's start with the easiest way.

Go to <http://www.microsoft.com/typography/cleartype/tuner/Step1.aspx>

Follow the online directions to enable ClearType on your system.

Another way is to download the PowerToy version of the online tuner. This lets you do the same thing that the above procedure does, but you do it by accessing the Control Panel and activating the ClearType settings from there.

Go to <http://www.microsoft.com/typography/ClearTypePowerToy.msp>

Follow the online directions to download, in- stall, and use. It's easy.

Finally, for the propeller heads and bit twiddlers in the audience, you can access the Registry. To enable ClearType for all users of your system:

From the Start button, select Run and type Regedit in the Text box. (As if you didn't know).

Navigate to HKEY_USERS/.DEFAULT/Control Panel/Desktop.

Create or Modify the Data Type and Value Name as detailed below.

Data Type: String Value

Value Name: FontSmoothing

Setting for Value Data: [Set Value to 2]

Data Type: Dword

Value Name: FontSmoothingType

Setting for Value Data: [Change Value to 2]

Exit Registry and Reboot

Enabling ClearType only for the current user instead of all users is identical to the above procedure except that instead of HKEY_USERS, work with HKEY_CURRENT_USER instead.

When you're finished, check the Desktop and examine the icon titles. Open the Start menu while you're at it and observe the readability of the text. You may find the text too small to read even though it is sharp and clear. If this is the case:


Right click on the Desktop

Choose Properties from the popup menu.


Click the Appearance tab.

Click the Advanced button and make changes there.

Decide which technique is best for you, and enjoy text that is clear, crisp and sharp.



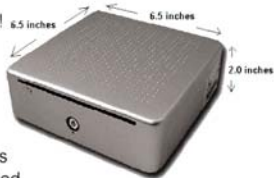
The miniPC: The smallest Windows / Linux PC ever
 * small spaces * CAR COMPUTER * any room * point of sales machine *



microphone
stereo
audio out

BASE MODEL FEATURES:

- * Window XP computer
- * dimensions: 6.5 in X 6.5 in X 2.5 in !!!!
- * 1.4 GHZ Pentium M (Celeron)
- * 512 GB RAM
- * 40 GB hard drive
- * DVD / CD-RW combo drive
- * 10/100/1000 (GIGABIT) LAN
- * 2 x USB, 1 X firewire (IEEE 1394) ports
- * DVI video output - VGA adapter included
- * TV output, S-video & component **HDTV out!**
- * Sound: stereo out, mic input, internal speaker
- * Software included: Nero CD burning, Drivers, Windows XP, full Office suite (Open Office)
- * **Unlimited expansion** via USB and firewire



UPGRADES

CPU	up to 1.7 Ghz
Hard drive	up to 160 GB
RAM	up to 1 GB
b / g wireless LAN	
Optical Drive DVD Recordable	
Install your own OS	subtract \$50

ALL this for just \$599
 (Only \$549 if you install your own operating system)
Call Jason, 210-669-2156

Changing Hard Drives

By **Richard Kennon**, Newsletter Editor, Amador Computer Users Group, California, <http://www.acug.net>, [drtrdguy\(at\)volcano.net](mailto:drtrdguy(at)volcano.net)

The time came when the bearings in my hard drive began to sing a little after running all day. So, being the wise person I am, I decided to replace it as a preventative measure. It turns out a job like that requires planning. I am not a planning person. I don't do planning. I am more spontaneous. That is a euphemism for "lazy." My grandmother used to tell me, "Lazy people work the hardest." Oh, how true.

First, I thought I was covered because I had a backup by Acronis True Image 8.0 – wrong! I had one main hard drive with one partition, "C:," and I had never dreamed of running with more than one partition. So, I bought a second hard drive to use for the backups. After the new main hard drive was installed by a professional, I brought it home and tried to restore the backup. It was then I learned you can't restore an Acronis backup to the active partition. When I tried, it wiped out everything. Back to the Pro for a new XP reload with two partitions on the new hard drive. It has gigabytes to spare. The two partitions were named "C:," and "F:," for whatever reason.

The spare hard drive was renamed "D:," and the CD drive was renamed "E:." Go figure. I was able to restore my old C: drive contents to the new F: drive. So now I have everything on the new F: drive but my machine boots up on the new C: drive and I can't figure out how to utilize the new F: drive. Of course, real men don't ask directions, so I decided to slug it out on my own. I thought I saw a bright side to this as the old C: drive was cluttered with years' accumulation of garbage. I would start afresh!

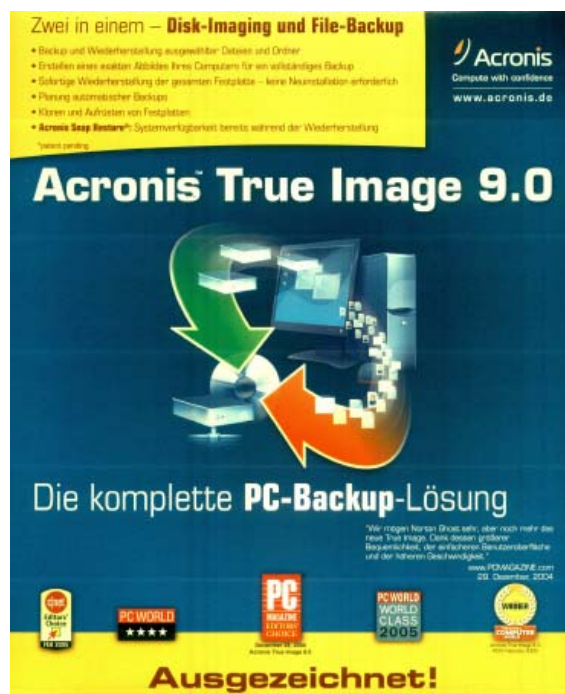
The first thing to do is get back on the air, the Internet. So, I went to Outlook Express. First I had to call the ISP to find out how to reconnect. A nice lady walked me through the process, no sweat. Then I discovered I had no address book. Of course, it is on the F: drive. How to find it? After some searching on the web, I found out the address book is in files named, *.wab. Cinch! Just search the F: drive for *.wab files. Not there.

Then I noticed the fine print that says it does not find hidden files. A click on "Advanced" led me to a box that allows finding hidden files. It turns out the hidden files are in a hidden folder so it was doubly challenging. It was relatively easy to copy these files and paste them in the same hidden folder in the new C: drive. Whaddayu know? It worked. The message files are empty but I can't think of a good reason to try to repopulate them.

Now, if I am on the air, it seems the next urgent step is to reestablish some protection. But, first, I downloaded SP-2 and a host of other Microsoft updates. I think I saw a note flash across the screen that said they sent 60 updates. Then came Microsoft Windows Defender (beta). However, apparently all it does is look for spyware. I am not clear on this so, since I subscribe to McAfee firewall and virus protection, I went to their site and downloaded all that. Now, I feel better.

I did do one bit of smart planning Ta-Da! I had simply copied all my Documents and Settings files and sub folders to the backup drive. Copying all this back to the new C: drive was a cinch and it saved all my valuable writings and pictures. Now if I could just find that great picture of Aunt Edith from two Christmases ago. If you ever transfer to a new computer or hard drive, do lots of this copying. Disk space is cheap and copying it back is so easy.

Finding the original software disks that were loaded years ago was not so easy. They were tucked here and there in many different convenient places. That is, convenient until you want to find them. I was mostly lucky and had to purchase a newer version of only one program. You see, I am neither a planner nor an organizer. You wonder how I have survived these many years? I am very lucky.



One other aspect of “afresh” I decided to try was going to Open Office instead of Microsoft Office. This is another ungood idea. Doctors warn against experiencing dual traumas like retiring and immediately moving to a retirement community. Adding this stress to the disk change stress was probably not a good idea. Besides, Outlook Express won’t use the Open Office dictionary. I did find the old MS Office disk but I decided to try this as an experiment. So far so good but there are a number of features I don’t like because I am used to the other features. I will keep with it for a while

In conclusion (this is what our pastor says ten minutes before the end of his sermon), you will be faced with changing computers and/or hard drives. As the weatherman and some politicians are fond of saying, “It is not if but when.” I do not recommend my approach. I have spent many hours on it. Plan, plan, plan. Talk to some knowledgeable people and perhaps even search the Internet for help. Good luck.

PS. I sent a copy of this to Gene Barlow who sold me the Acronis program and this is his reply:

“Acronis True Image has a cloning function that will copy your entire hard drive to the replacement hard drive in one easy step. When you are done, you simply place the new drive in the place of your old c: drive and it becomes your new c: drive. This feature of True Image would have had your old hard drive replaced in just a few minutes and with one easy step. Next time you need to do something with hard drives, send me a note and I’ll try to help you do it quickly and with the least work possible.”


Maybe the next time I will ask before! But, that would have transferred all the garbage, as well.



Student Practice Lab

Polish those new skills - A specific time period for students taking Alamo PC Courses to use Computer Lab (Classroom One) to practice their class assignments. Students may also make up missed class days, if the instructor has provided the course material to the individual. Seating is limited and on a first come, first serve basis.

Call (210) 736-0080, or (210) 736-0700



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

Free Up Megabytes of Disk Space

By **Vinny La Bash**, a member of the Sarasota PCUG, Florida,
vlabash@comcast.net, <http://www.spcug.org>

Look in your Windows folder and count how many folders you have that start with "\$NtUninstall". They are all related to various patches, updates and service packs for XP. Those \$NtUninstall folders are created when you install a Microsoft Service Pack, a hot fix, or certain security updates. Some of these folders could date back almost to the day you first installed your computer.

Their names are in blue, and they are all marked as hidden and read only. If you don't see them in the Windows folder, open the Tools menu, and select Folder Options from the drop down menu. After the Folder Options dialog box appears, activate the View tab, then left-click the Show hidden files and folders radio button. Click OK to close the dialog box and the hidden folders should appear. If nothing happens close down Windows Explorer and restart it. You don't need to restart your computer; simply open Windows Explorer again.

Why should you do this? If you're getting low on disk space and the usual remedies haven't freed up enough space, these folders could be the culprits that are chewing up valuable storage area. If you have had Windows installed for more than a year and you are conscientious about keeping your system up-to-date, these useless folders are probably tying up gigabytes of data. Enough of them can have the unfortunate side effect of noticeably slowing down virus and spyware scans. It also takes longer to defrag your disk drive. An accumulation of unnecessary or extraneous data on your system will eventually affect system performance and in extreme cases cause drive errors.

"... these folders could be the culprits that are chewing up valuable storage area."

The files within the \$NtUninstall folder provide instructions on how your computer uninstalls a Windows update. Each folder has a specific name ending in the name of a particular Windows modification. If you were to go to add/remove programs and select a Windows update to uninstall, the information on how to run this process would come from the corresponding \$Ntuninstall folder.

You can safely delete all these folders if you have no plans to uninstall any of the related patches. As updates and patches accumulate, these types of folders will continue to grow and take more disk space.

One solution is to delete only those folders older than three months. Chances are, if you haven't uninstalled a Windows update after three months, you won't ever do it.

Alternatively, once you've made a backup or disk image of any "\$NtUninstall" files, you can delete the files from the hard drive immediately, because you can always restore them from backups, if you need them.

One thing Microsoft should have done is tuck these folders away in a sub-folder someplace so you don't have to scroll through them every time you want to locate something in the Windows folder. I've seen machines with over one hundred of these folders. Then again, you could always mark them as hidden.

Should You Upgrade to Vista?

by **Brian K. Lewis, Ph.D.**, a member of the Sarasota PCUG, Florida, <http://www.spcug.org>, bwsail@yahoo.com

As regular readers of this column know, I have been using the beta version(s) of Vista and writing about my experience. I'll grant you that I haven't covered every aspect of the Vista experience. However, it is difficult to touch on everything in an operating system as massive as this. The best I can do is pass on comments on the parts I use frequently. As to the answer to the upgrade question – it's "maybe". I'll give you some of the pros and cons related to my experience.

In deciding whether or not to upgrade you need to determine if your hardware is adequate to run Vista. The system I am using has 768 MB of RDRAM, a 1.2 GHz Intel processor, and an NVIDIA GeForce 2 MMX video card (a correction from previous articles) and an 80 GB hard drive. Frankly, I don't think you would want anything less. A faster processor combined with 1 GB of RAM would be the minimum in most situations. You will also need a DVD drive, as Vista will be sold on DVDs only. From what I have learned it appears that Microsoft will produce only one DVD, but it will contain all the consumer versions of Vista. When you pay for the Vista Basic version and start the installation, the product key that you have to enter tells the setup program which version to install. Then if you decide you need to upgrade to a version with more bells and whistles, you get a new product key that unlocks and installs the upgrade version you paid for. I've already seen some comments on the web that the hackers will be paying for Vista Basic and then will hack the DVD to install the Ultimate version. Let's hope not!

So if you have sufficient hardware then you can go to the next step. What is there about Vista that's better than XP? (Note that if you are still running Win98 or WinMe, plan on upgrading. Both Vista and XP are vastly superior to either of these older, non-supported operating systems.) One thing I found that I really like is Vista's ability to go to the Internet to find device drivers for hardware. It did this very successfully for my sound system. I also installed an external hard drive that usually requires me to dig out the manufacturer's disk to get the necessary drivers. XP frequently forgot the driver and would have to reinstall it whenever I plugged the drive into the USB port. When I plugged the drive into a USB port on my Vista computer, there wasn't even the usual found new hardware notice. So I went looking and in "Computer" I found the hard drive identified and was able to access the file on it. So I just went ahead and did a complete backup. Vista's backup software found the drive and did the complete backup in the background while I continued working. This process did not work with my Epson scanner. Vista did some searching and then said I needed to visit the manufacturer's web site to see if software was available. So you can see that this Internet process doesn't work with all hardware.

Another thing I like in Vista is the added security. I don't like that the firewall is only a one-way blocker, but the scheduled daily parasite check is valuable when you have a cable or DSL connection to the Internet. I don't find the User Account Control (UAC) system to be intrusive as some others have reported. Even when I am working in the Administrator account it is not a problem. I think having to enter a password to carry out operations that affect the system/registry is a good idea. It is one more barrier for any malware to overcome. In addition, when I am working in User mode and want to install a new application, I don't have to remember to right-click the install file and select "Run As". Instead, when I double-click the file I get a permissions window with the Administrator name and a box to enter the password. Much easier and much quicker way to get on with the installation.

I also like the change that has been made in the Start/All programs menu. It keeps you from having to search through multiple columns of programs to find the one you want. Scrolling through a single column list is something I find easier to do. For new computer users, the use of an icon in place of a "Start" button may not be intuitive. However, placing your cursor on the icon does cause the word "Start" to pop up just above the icon. One of the interesting little facets is the speed with which informative small windows pop up when you place your cursor on an icon. There is really no apparent delay, which is quite helpful.

Another change I like is that there is a search box in every directory window. You don't have to go back to the Start menu to initiate a search. Also, your searches can easily be saved. You have the options in each window to select files to burn to a CD/DVD, e-mail, or print. These selections are made using a menu across the top of the window.

When it comes to CD/DVD burning there is one aspect I don't like. That is that the default mode calls for formatting the CD or DVD so that it functions like a removable drive. Microsoft refers to this as the "Live File System". The problem with this is that the CD/DVD may not be readable in other computers. Their warning implies that the "Live File System" can be read in computers using the Windows XP operating system. However, I found this to be inaccurate, at least as far as the beta versions were concerned. It may be different in the final release version.

You can change the formatting method to "Mastered". This is the usual way you burn a CD/DVD by copying all the files for that disk at one time. CD/DVDs formatted for the "Live File System" can have files added by "dragging and dropping". You can also add and erase files. However, on a non-rewriteable disk the file is still there even though it is not accessible. Frankly, there are other burner software programs that I prefer. The third party programs also work much faster than the Vista application.

In Windows XP when you have a file folder open you can move or copy a file that has been selected. When you click on the move or copy icon on the right side of the window you get a browse window which allows you to select a destination either on your local computer or a computer on your network. Vista does not have this function. To move a file or files, you must first select

them to be copied. Then you have to go to the destination window and select paste from the right-click menu with your mouse. Then it's back to the original window to delete the files you have copied to the new location. If that sounds like a roundabout procedure, well it is. The XP procedure is cleaner, faster and easier.

Networking is another area where there have been some improvements made. However, if you have a network with both XP and Vista computers, there are still some bugs that have to be worked around. The Windows Help files have eliminated the references related to networking with XP computers. There are no references to the fact the new Internet protocol, IPv6, needs to be installed on XP computers for them to be networked with Vista computers. I couldn't even find the web page reference in the Help file that give me the details on installing IPv6 on XP computers. Again, this may be changed in the final version or the current build I'm using may not need to have IPv6 installed on the XP computers. But that is something I haven't be able to determine.

The biggest drawback I see to Vista is the pricing. The \$99.95 upgrade for the Home version is the same as with XP Home. Except, this lowest cost upgrade gives you only Vista Home Basic. This version has fewer capabilities than does XP Home. The version of Vista that comes closest to matching XP Home is Vista Home Premium and it carries a premium price; \$150.00 to upgrade. Vista Home Basic lacks the Windows Media Center, DVD video software, and wireless networking provisioning. This latter capability, if available, would provide automatic configuration of laptops in WiFi hotspots. Vista Home Basic does not allow for scheduled backups and does not include backup to a network device. Neither Basic nor Premium allow for image-based backups. They also do not support motherboards with two processor sockets. How this will play out with the Intel Core 2 Duo processors, I really don't know. Vista Home Basic also does not have the new Aero graphic interface. That is found only in the Home Premium, Business and Ultimate versions. Unfortunately I can't tell you about the Aero interface as my computer doesn't support it.

Vista Business is the next higher priced version. It is \$199.99 for the upgrade. Although it has the image-based backup capability and wireless networking provisioning, it lacks Media Center capability and as well as the Movie Maker and Video production capabilities. You would have to obtain third party software for these functions if you have a need for them.

So if your only interest in using a computer is for e-mail, web surfing, word processing, then you might be satisfied with Vista Basic. However, you would be just as well off to stick with XP Home for the time being. If you are running a small business from your home you would probably be quite satisfied with Vista Home Premium. So who would need Vista Business or Ultimate? The business version might be useful in a small business with a wired or wireless LAN or where employees require laptops with wireless functions. It also has integrated Fax & Scan software. However, if you needed the Movie Maker, Media Center, or video production capability, then you would have to move up to Ultimate. That has an upgrade price of \$259.00.

If you are concerned about the security of Windows XP and the frequent security patches Microsoft has to release, then you can consider that Vista is more secure. That doesn't mean it will never need security patching. Quite the contrary. Any OS, especially one as complex as Vista will have hackers attempting to find its weak points and that will result in the need for security patches.

My concluding thoughts on this are that you will eventually have to move to Vista, unless you want to try an alternate OS such as a Linux version or a Macintosh OS. There are emulator programs for both Linux and Macintosh that permit you to run most Windows software. If you aren't one that always needs the "latest and greatest", then you might consider waiting until you purchase a new computer with Vista pre-installed. I certainly wouldn't recommend that anyone rush out and upgrade as soon as Vista hits the market. Wait a while, possibly until the first patches are available or further reviews of the final market version are available. There also may be some "street pricing" that will lower your cost of upgrading. Vista appears to be an improvement over XP, but for the average user, it is not a "great leap forward".

Dr. Lewis is a former university & medical school professor. He has been working with personal computers for more than thirty years. He can be reached via e-mail.

WaterWare

**Home and Small Office
Computer (Win & Mac) Support**



210-219-2560

support@waterware.net

In business since 1983

- All Types of Computer Training
- Hardware & Software Installation
- Web Page Development
- Your Location / Your Schedule

www.waterware.net

Durand C. "Randy" Walters



Paying too much for healthcare?

discounted fees on:

- ♦ doctors
- ♦ dentists
- ♦ prescription drugs
- ♦ vision care
- ♦ chiropractors
- ♦ alternative health care
- ♦ and more



United Service Association
For Health Care

visit online:

<http://ushealthadvisors.net/davebobst>

The Windows XP Services Manager

by **Dick Maybach**, a member of the Brookdale Computer User Group, New Jersey,
<http://www.bcug.com/>, N2nd@att.net

Windows, like any multi-tasking operating system, is complex, with dozens of processes running, even when your PC appears to be idle. Some of these are independent, but many rely on other processes. In simpler times, our computers did only one thing at a time, but few of us want to return to the days when, for example, everything stopped during printing. Fortunately, XP provides some tools to help you understand what is going on behind your back, and one of the more helpful of these is its Services Manager. First, a caveat – this will help you figure out what only the benign processes are doing; it is not effective in identifying viruses and spyware, which often hide from you.

To start the manager, right-click on My Computer and then left-click on Manage. When the Computer Management Window opens, click on Services and Applications, double-click on Services, and click on the Extended tab at the bottom of the window. (You will want to enlarge the Window to see all the information.) You can now see a list of all the services available on your machine. My laptop has about 100 services, about 60 of which are running as I write this article. If you single-click on a service, you can see its status and description. For example, on my laptop the ClipBook service has the following description, “Enables ClipBook Viewer to store information and share it with remote computers. If the service is stopped, ClipBook Viewer will not be able to share information with remote computers. If this service is disabled, any services that explicitly depend on it will fail to start.” The Manager also shows that this service is disabled on my laptop. You can learn more by double-clicking on the item. Again for ClipBook, the executable file is C:\Windows\system32\clipsrv.exe. Clicking on the Dependencies tab shows that this service depends on the Network DDE and Network DDE DSDM services and that no other service depends on it. You can learn more about these dependent services by clicking on their names in the window.

The companies that provide the software supply the descriptions. Microsoft’s descriptions are helpful, but others can be less so. For example, Symantec SPBBCSvc is described as, “Symantec SPBBC.” In such cases, you can try a Web search for the name, although I ran out of patience before I found out what SPBBC does.

As is common for Windows programs, you can sort the services list by clicking on a column heading. For example, clicking on Status, lists the started service last; clicking on it a second time shows them first.

If you suspect that a service is causing problems, you can turn it off by double-clicking on its name and then clicking on the Stop button. This stops the service only for the current session; it will start again when you restart Windows. Thus, this is a safe way to trouble-shoot process problems. You permanently stop a process by double-clicking on its name and changing the Startup type from Automatic to Manual or Disabled. A disabled service never runs; and a manual one can be started by clicking the Start button. If you do this, keep a record so you can reverse anything that causes problem.

While you have the Computer Management window open, look at its left pane. In particular, click on Disk Management (under Storage) to see a text and a graphical description of all the hard and removable disks on your system. This shows the partition sizes and types, what file system they contain, how full they are, and their health. If you right-click on a partition in the graphical display, you can explore it, change its drive letter, or (be careful) format or delete it.

Student Practice Lab

Polish those new skills - A specific time period for students taking Alamo PC Courses to use Computer Lab (Classroom One) to practice their class assignments. Students may also make up missed class days, if the instructor has provided the course material to the individual. Seating is limited and on a first come, first serve basis.

Call (210) 736-0080, or (210) 736-0700



Computer Experts

Is your PC acting strange?
 Wonder if it has a virus?
 We've been fixing weird problems
 since 1995. For PC or Mac
 solutions, Call the experts...

Computer Experts

(210) 771-7075

Crash!

Windows Will Not Come Up!

by Irene Ganas, a member of the Chicago Computer Society, <http://www.ccs.org> , iganas@aol.com

My HP desktop suddenly crashed. The screen came up black with the following white text: "Windows could not start because the following file is missing or corrupt: "Windows root\system32\hal.dll Please re-install a copy of the above file". My computer with its two 120GB internally-installed hard drives is still dead or, more descriptively, a vegetable on life support.

We continually discuss "How to Backup Your Computer" at our meetings, in Hard-Copy and on Yahoo! eGroups. It always looks so easy to do a "One Touch Backup." But, I have always wondered, and I have heard many others of you similarly wonder, whether the backup that we made is good and will work.

I religiously make backups and use Drive Image v2i Protector from PowerQuest, now Symantec. My Drive Image backup looked like it was good and I know it worked because I could read the data on the DVDs on another computer.

Using my Sony notebook to access the Internet, I looked up that missing file and a solution to the problem.

All the directions I received told me to "Insert and boot from your Windows XP CD." I need that Windows XP CD. I do not want to restore the computer to its as purchased condition that the HP recovery set accomplishes. I want to replace that one file. I need to boot from the Windows XP CD to install another copy of the hal.dll file to fix the problem.

HP refuses to supply the Windows XP Home Edition CD and Microsoft, for all its "authentication" and "genuine Windows" gibberish, backs them up. Microsoft lets them get away with not giving us the "genuine Windows XP CD" it advertises that we should be sure we are getting when we buy a computer with the operating system installed.

I have only a set of HP Recovery CDs that begins by reformatting the drive wiping out all the added drivers, updates, authentications and authorizations for programs from Microsoft, Adobe Photoshop CS2, Intuit, etc., that took forever to obtain via dialup Internet. I just want to replace one teeny file not wipe out my whole drive and start anew with a fresh computer as it was purchased.

My Drive Image v2i Protector 120 GB C:drive backup totaling 76GB used was made and copied by the Drive Image backup program to the second internal 120GB drive in 3900 MB blocks so that I could burn them to DVD disks. I have 19 DVDs Drive Image backup and the Power Quest Recovery Environment CD from which to boot.

All would have been well and the computer fixed in 15 minutes if the second hard drive had been large enough to accommodate at least one more 76 GB backup. But, alas, that second backup would require 152 GB and the backup drive is only 120 GB.

(IMPORTANT: my first mistake was buying a backup drive the same size as the C drive) I spent 4 days copying the backup images to DVDs so that I could remove the 76 GB backup from the internal second backup hard drive to make a current backup. After checking the DVDs, I deleted the image to make room for the new backup. With Murphy at work, that is when the computer crashed.



When computers crash

So, I have ALL MY DATA and it is readable from those DVDs on my Sony notebook. I just need to get Windows XP going again on the HP desktop by getting the missing hal.dll file into the system 32 folder of Windows.

Here is how I tried to solve the problem.

Since Windows is set by default to boot first from the Floppy A drive and then the C:drive, I had to change the boot order to be able to boot from the boot CD in the DVD drive. I needed to boot from the DVD drive because the backups were on DVDs.

After booting the HP desktop and pressing F11 to get into the SETUP, I changed the boot order (by using up and down arrows to highlight the drive and moving it up by clicking + and - buttons) to reorder the drives from the original:

1. floppy A;
2. C drive;
3. CD-ROM drive; and,
4. Int Network

To: 1. Int Network (which I used to get the DVD drive to boot by inserting the PQRE boot disk in this drive instead of the CD-ROM drive as the backups are on DVDs;

2. C drive;
3. CD-ROM drive; and,
4. Floppy A.

Booting from the DVD drive (the computer now calls it the G drive) worked and I selected the System Recovery option from the PQRE. It asked me to locate the Image folder and file name.

I had to take the PQRE CD out of the DVD drive to insert the first of the 19 backup DVDs. Look in: My Computer, CD Drive (G:) where the backup DVD was inserted. That was confusing because the computer called it a "CD Drive (G)" even though it is a DVD drive. I needed that drive instead of the CD-ROM drive (D) because the backups are on DVDs.

I got the error message:

"Disk is not formatted"

Windows cannot read from this disk. The disk might be corrupted, or it could be using a format that is not compatible with Windows.

The disk is definitely not corrupted and it is compatible with Windows in my Sony notebook. I can read it well.

That attempt at fixing the problem did not work!

Must take another tack and try new ideas. Next three ideas to try are:

1. Again change boot order to CD-ROM to run the PQRE boot CD, then DVD drive to feed in the backup image on the 19 DVDs, then C drive so Windows will start next, then Floppy A drive and HOPE THAT IT WORKS! Or,
2. Buy a Windows XP CD for \$95 + tax to run to get the missing or corrupted file, hal.dll, replaced in the <Windows root>\system32\ folder so that Windows will work again and I can run the backup DVDs and HOPE THAT IT WORKS! Or,
3. Buy a removable USB hard drive enclosure for \$39 + tax + \$8 shipping. Remove all the wires from the desktop, unscrew the computer case, open the case, disconnect the cable and remove the second 120 GB hard drive and plug it into the removable USB enclosure. Attach that enclosure as a removable USB hard drive to the Sony notebook, feed in the 19 Drive Image backup DVDs and copy them to the 120 GB removable USB drive. Safely remove the USB hard drive from the notebook, open the enclosure



GOOD THING VERN INSTALLED THE PROPER PROTECTION BEFORE HIS COMPUTER CRASHED...



and unplug the hard drive (because without the hal.dll you can't use USB on the desktop), reinstall the 120GB backup hard drive into the HP desktop in its former place as backup drive, reassemble the desktop case and replace the screws, plug in the monitor, keyboard, mouse and all the other wires again. Turn on the computer with the PQRE CD in the drive and boot. Run the System Recovery and locate the Drive Image backup that has now been copied back to the second drive where it had been originally. Now that you have played the game, "plug-n-pray," you can now HOPE THAT IT WORKS!

Of course, even if it works, solution #2 would require a change to a larger backup hard drive or you are right back in the same situation of having too small a backup drive to be able to put the recommended child, father and grandfather set of three backups to rotate saved backups in the future.

Fixing that problem requires all that rigmarole AGAIN! Remove all the wires from the desktop, unscrew the computer case, open the case, disconnect the cable and remove the second 120 GB hard drive and plug it into the removable USB enclosure. Buy a 120GB x 3 = 360 GB or larger hard drive for about \$300 including tax. Put that drive into the desktop for the second backup drive. While you have the case open, you may as well install that USB 2.0 plug (this four year old desktop has the slow USB 1.0) so that the USB 2.0 peripherals will run at the speed for which they were designed. Reassemble the desktop case and replace the screws, plug in the monitor, keyboard, mouse and all the other wires again.

May I remind you, I am still HOPING that it will RUN when it is turned back on again? God bless its little heart!

A review of all that work gave me a fourth idea that would solve all my problems, be less work and would stand me in good stead for future recovery after a crash that will probably never come again.

Idea #4 is:


Get a new computer with a second hard drive installed that is at least three times the size of the C: drive! THAT SHOULD WORK!

Why spend all that time and money and on a four year old computer? (Because I was hoping to hold out until Vista arrives in 2007, that's why.) Run the HP recovery set on the old desktop and relegate it to making labels and printing cards. Maybe it would work for a main computer to attach to a wireless router if cable Internet ever becomes available in my out-in-the-country, forested neighborhood. The cable company is getting closer and may, at last, be here. Ah, the possibilities never end!

The Moral of the Story:

Get that second internal hard drive at least three times larger than your main C: drive, back up an image of your drive every few months until you have three backup images. HAVE MORE THAN ONE BACKUP IMAGE AND DON'T ERASE MORE THAN ONE AT A TIME!





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

Holiday Ink

Compatible inkjet Cartridges starting at \$5

www.tdinksales.com
tdinksales@satx.rr.com

L & M Bookstore
1716 N. Main Ave.

Qwik Pack & Ship
1205 N. Loop 1604 W Suite 221

Great Northwest Postal Center
8745 Grissom Road

American Shipping & Mail Boxes
8452 Fredericksburg Rd

Ink Spot
6420A Bandera Road

Computer Crimes

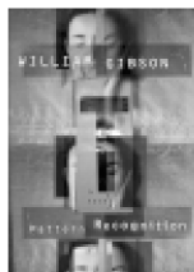
Susan Ives, Alamo PC

Pattern Recognition, by William Gibson

Paperback, Berkley, 2003, 356 pages, \$14.00

Cayce Pollard, a market researcher with uncanny intuition and a physical allergy to name brands, is hired by a tycoon to uncover the source of "the footage," video snippets that appear on the Internet a disjointed clip at a time, attracting a cult following. Her search takes her to London, Tokyo and Moscow, following a trail of marketing, globalization and terror.

William Gibson is an iconic writer: he invented the word "cyberspace." This is his first novel set in the present day,



although there is something futuristic in his depiction of everyday objects, events and relationships. Lots of technology – mostly Internet centered – but also a thoughtful, deep analysis of the human condition. Beautifully written, with an engaging plot and delightful characters. Highly recommended.

The Footprints of God by Greg Iles

Paperback, Pocket Star Books, 2003, 528 pages, \$7.00

Medical ethicist David Tennant works for Project Trinity, a secret government organization attempting to build a quantum-level supercomputer. Using advanced magnetic resonance imaging techniques, six top scientists have supplied Trinity, the experimental computer, with molecular

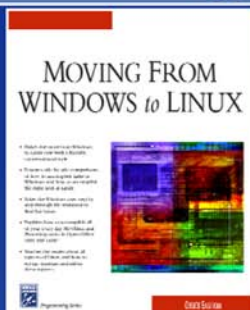


copies of themselves as models for a neurological operating system. When the scientists start suffering neurological malfunctions from the high-level MRI they underwent to map their brains, he is forced to flee.

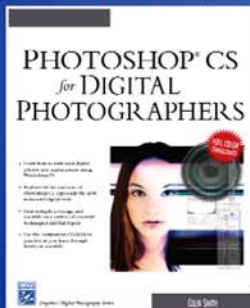
There is a bizarre subplot of Tennant having mystical visions in which he inhabits the body of Jesus, which Iles just manages to bring off. There is lots of technology, bordering on sci-fi, most interesting in its exploration of the ethical and religious implications of technology. This is a good techno-thriller, trying to be more profound than it really is.

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 and Lockhill-Selma), (210) 344-7776, tries its darnest to keep the recommended books in stock.

COMPUTER BOOKS THAT DELIVER



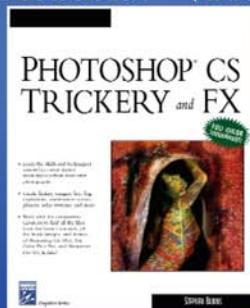
1-58450-280-0 \$44.95



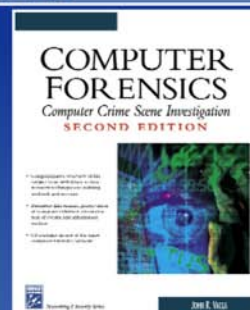
1-58450-321-1 \$39.95



1-58450-328-9 \$49.95



1-58450-297-5 \$39.95



1-58450-389-0 \$49.95



1-58450-387-4 \$41.95



20% OFF AT WWW.CHARLESRIVER.COM

ALSO AVAILABLE AT AMAZON, BARNES & NOBLE, BORDERS, AND OTHER FINE RETAILERS.



NeatReceipts Scanalyzer

\$170.00

Made by NEATRECEIPTS

Review by Mike Wayte, a member of the Boeing Employees' Computer Society, Washington

The SCANALIZER by NEATRECEIPTS is a hardware/software package that allows you to organize the paper products in your life. It is specifically geared to copying, analyzing, organizing and filing receipts (with provisions to identify and present Income Tax info) and business cards, and copying, sorting and storing documents.

One might say, I store my receipts and tax information in a file cabinet, my business cards in a cardholder and my documents in notebooks---why do I need a SCANALIZER?

Those thoughts were on my mind as I read the information on their web site. But the more I read, the more intrigued I became with the description of their product. After a few calls, one showed up on my doorstep, one week before the October membership meeting, where I was to give a demo of its capabilities.



Let's start with first impressions: the scanner is small as you can see from the figure. I thought, yes, it is small, but I already have a scanner, why do I need this one? If you travel, you can plug this little thing into your laptop via the USB cable and you are ready to copy and organize your expense receipts, catalogue those business cards you picked up and save that literature you collected. Now everything is orderly in one place. If you are at home, you will find the SCANALIZER quickly scans your material, rotates the receipt on the screen and puts the information in the proper storage slot. I have an HP 6110 all-purpose office machine and quickly learned it is much easier and quicker to push the receipt, business card or document into the scanner. I also learned that I had to adjust my 6110 to 200% so business cards could be read and stored into the database. For those of you who do not have photocopier capability, enter SCANALIZER. Run the document through the scanner and print out a copy.

We have all been exposed to sales pitches. I wanted to see if this thing could really do all the purported analysis of receipts and business cards.

The interface is very user friendly. The types of items we wish to file are an easy click away. When a feature comes up we see all the information categories into which data will be catalogued. There are about 20 choices and if you don't like those you can change the name of one you don't like to something you want.

I started with receipts: I collected as many different receipts as I could. One of the features is that the SCANALIZER has a database with 1500 stores/ vendors. Thus, many of your receipts will match the database and be so identified. For those that don't, you type in the name the first time (I was surprised to learn that COSTCO was not in their database) and it will be remembered. My receipts covered a wide range of sizes, shapes and suppliers. Everything from gas station receipts from Costco to Hertz Equipment rental statements. There were a few glitches, such as missing names, reading Costco zeros that look like phi () as 8 or adding digits to the receipt.

Overall, however, receipts entered top up, top down, sideways (width limit of 8-1/2 inches) or anywhere between gave the same result. The accuracy was truly impressive. It also has the capability to allow you to split expenses from a single receipt, which can be multi-page. At present they do not have an archiving system but are working on it. Categories and vendors are determined by the user to catalogue and save receipt information. Sales tax is captured and isolated as a category. You can also identify a tax-deductible item. Tax-deductible items are gathered up and summarized for entry into your 1040. The IRS accepts the electronic receipt format.

Being a packrat I have many different kinds of business cards. A couple of my old Boeing cards resulted in a flawless copy and catalogue job. Other cards ranged from a complete job to an almost incomplete job. I showed 15 different cards at the meeting. Those with graphics (e.g. car repair shops with figures of cars) did not fare as well as a "strictly business" type of card. The information that can be copied and catalogued includes name, company name, phone and fax numbers, email addresses and

websites. Clicking on the website in the database takes you directly to the site. You can recall the card information by one of several methods including the person's first or last name, the company name, address or, like an internet search, information containing some data.

Finally, there is the document copy feature. Tell the SCANALIZER how many pages and how you want to file it, and copy away.

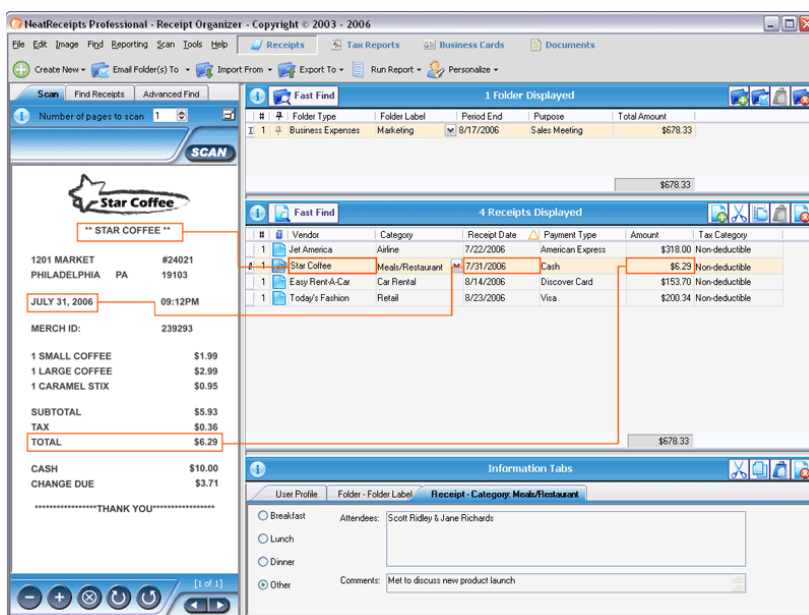
Did I also mention they have a great Help Desk using a version of instant messaging (or telephone if you really need help)? Top notch!

OK, how much does the SCANALIZER cost? The list price is \$229.00. On the web I've seen it for as low as \$180.00. NEATRECEIPTS has offered us the product for \$170.00 at your front door. UPS ground shipping will be used to send the product to you.

The procedure for ordering it is:

Call Guilia Umile of NEATRECEIPTS (pronounced Julia Umilay) @ 1-866-632-8732, ext 106; If she is not at her phone, leave your name and phone number; she will call you back. They take the major credit cards: Visa, MC, Amex and Discover.

<http://www.neatreceipts.com/> Cost is \$170.00, which includes shipping.



Alamo PC Organization now offers members private or semi-private tutorials

- Keyboarding/Typing
- Basic Computer Skills
- Microsoft Word

Rates for one student

\$35 per hour
\$300 for 10 hours

Rates for two or three students

\$20 per student per hour
\$150 per student for 10 hours

Enjoy private instruction on days and at hours that fit **your** schedule at our modern facility in Crossroads Mall.

Call or visit the Learning Center to register
(210) 736-0080

THE DOCTOR ... IS IN

EACH FRIDAY FROM 9:30 TO 12 NOON
DIAGNOSE YOUR SOFTWARE & HARDWARE
PROBLEMS

TROUBLESHOOT MAJOR APPLICATIONS
TROUBLESHOOT HARDWARE, RUN TESTS

SOLVE O/S MYSTERIES
PROVIDE ASPIRIN AS
NEEDED

MAJOR SURGERY
ACCOMPLISHED BY
OTHER FACILITIES

**ALAMO PC
RESOURCE
CENTER**

Laptop Desk - Simple Accessory Provides Comfort and Ease of Use

\$30.00

Made by Lapworks

Review by Gabe Goldberg, Columnist for CompuKISS.com; APCUG Advisor; Program Coordinator & APCUG Rep, Capital PC User Group, Inc.

It's the rare simple device that hitches a ride on multiple trends simultaneously. How simple? Three moving parts. Which trends? First, folks downsizing living quarters as their nests empty; second, increased use of laptop PCs as primary, only, or secondary computers; and third, laptop computers operating hotter as they become ever more powerful. The device? The Laptop Desk from LapWorks.

It's an elegantly simple laptop stand. My wife calls it, "a seemingly insignificant piece of plastic, which I love". Before she had it, she was constantly trying to find things to put under her computer to prop it up. She tried books of varying sizes, pieces of wood, parts from other office equipment, TV remotes, whatever came into view. None of them worked and the laptop's utter flatness drove her crazy.

Now, she takes it everywhere she takes her laptop. "It's great!", she says. She props it up at varying angles, depending where she's working...on her lap, a table, a desk, wherever she moves, and she moves around a lot. Folding flat and sliding into the laptop case, it's not in the way when she's on the move. It allows customizing the keyboard angle for easy typing. And because of the elevation, our cats no longer walk across or lie down on laptop keyboards.

The stand consists mostly of two sturdy hinged plastic pieces with raised rubber pieces that hold the laptop in place. A smaller third piece fits into slots providing five different elevation options.

The hinged pieces, rippled in design with raised rubber pieces, hold the laptop in place and allow air to circulate underneath it. So the computer's heat is well-vented, avoiding discomfort from resting the laptop on your lap or major damage to the computer.

Three models of The Laptop Desk are available: the UltraLite, for newer/lighter laptop computers; the Laptop Desk 2.0, for heavier PCs; and the Laptop Desk 1.0, a simpler version not providing elevation, intended for human-lap use only.

Costing less than \$30, the Laptop Desk is a handy addition to portable PC computing. And unlike most computer accessories, it needs no assembly or installation, doesn't require reading instructions, and includes no software that will become obsolete.

Manufacturer: LapWorks


Web site: <http://www.laptopdesk.net>

Retail: About \$30



STUDY GROUPS

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



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

January 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 We are closed. No classes today! Genealogy Students (No class until Feb 2007) Happy New Year!	2 BOD 6:30 P.M.	3	4 Student Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon Class 1 of 8 *PRR* Photoshop 7 12:30 - 4:30 P.M. (a/r) High Growth Stock Investing 6:30 - 8:30 P.M. Study Group Net 7 - 9 P.M.	5 (a/r) SBS 2003 - 8 - 10 A.M. Clinic Computer Diagnostic Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon Class 1 of 8 *PRR* Photoshop CS/CS2 12:30 - 4:30 P.M. *PRR* PC Alanode Magazine Adobe PDF 7 - 9 P.M.	6 Study Group *PRR* MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon Study Group C++ 2:30 - 4:30 P.M.
7	8 General Meeting @ Crossroads 7 - 9 P.M. Presenter: Photoshop by Beverly Bihn	9 Class 1 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1:30 - 3:30 P.M. Class 1 of 4 *PRR* Microsoft Word 6:30 - 8:30 P.M.	10 Power Internet 10 A.M. - Noon Class 1 of 6 *PRR* Intro to Windows 10 A.M. - Noon Class Home Page Jumpstart 5:30 - 7 P.M. Class 1 of 2 *PRR* Microsoft PowerPoint 7 - 9 P.M. (Class rescheduled to Jan 24.)	11 Student Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon Class 2 of 8 *PRR* Photoshop 7 12:30 - 4:30 P.M.	12 Clinic Computer Diagnostic Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon Class 2 of 8 *PRR* Photoshop CS/CS2 12:30 - 4:30 P.M.	13 Class *PRR* Intro to Photo Editing 8 - 10 A.M. Study Group *PRR* MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon Class *PRR* Intro to Photo Editing 10 A.M. - Noon Study Group Commodore 1 - 4 P.M.
14	15 Martin Luther King Day	16 Class 1 of 3 *PRR* Digital Camera & Photography 9 - 11 A.M. Class 2 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1:30 - 3:30 P.M. Class 2 of 4 *PRR* Microsoft Word 6:30 - 8:30 P.M.	17 Class 2 of 6 *PRR* Intro to Windows 10 A.M. - Noon Class 1 of 2 *PRR* Microsoft PowerPoint 7 - 9 P.M.	18 AARP Tax-Aide Training Class 9:00 A.M. - 4 P.M. Student Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon Class 3 of 8 *PRR* Photoshop 7 12:30 - 4:30 P.M.	19 AARP Tax-Aide Training Class 9:00 A.M. - 4 P.M. Clinic Computer Diagnostic Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon Class 3 of 8 *PRR* Photoshop CS/CS2 12:30 - 4:30 P.M.	20 Study Group *PRR* MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon Study Group C++ 2:30 - 4:30 P.M.
21	22 CorelDRAW X3 6 - 8 P.M.	23 Class 2 of 3 *PRR* Digital Camera & Photography 9 - 11 A.M. Class 3 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1:30 - 3:30 P.M. Class 3 of 4 *PRR* Microsoft Word 6:30 - 8:30 P.M.	24 AARP Tax-Aide Training Class 9:00 A.M. - 4 P.M. (Class 3 of 6 *PRR* Intro to Windows 10 A.M. - Noon (Class 2 of 2 *PRR* PowerPoint 7 - 9 P.M.	25 Student Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon Class 4 of 8 *PRR* Photoshop 7 12:30 - 4:30 P.M. Study Group DotNetNuke Portal 7 - 9 P.M.	26 Clinic Computer Diagnostic Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon Class 4 of 8 *PRR* Photoshop CS/CS2 12:30 - 4:30 P.M.	27 Study Group *PRR* MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon Learning Center Desk Staff Meeting 1 - 3 P.M.
28	29	30 Class 3 of 3 *PRR* Digital Camera & Photography 9 - 11 A.M. Class 4 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1:30 - 3:30 P.M. Class 4 of 4 *PRR* Microsoft Word 6:30 - 8:30 P.M.	31 Study Group (a/r) WordPerfect 7 - 9 P.M. Class 4 of 6 *PRR* Intro to Windows 10 - Noon Class 1 of 6 *PRR* World Wide Web & E-mail 1 - 3 P.M.			

AlamoPC Organization



The Learning Center

Alamo PC Organization classes and study groups

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)

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: ★

STUDY GROUPS

Student Practice Lab

A specific time period for students taking Alamo PC Courses to use Computer Lab One (Classroom One) to practice their class assignments. Students may also make up missed class days, if the instructor has provided the course material to the individual. The Practice Lab is monitored and the instructors will help when possible. The Practice Lab is for Class Work Only. Those abusing the system will be asked to leave. Seating is limited and on a first come, first serve basis. If necessary a time limit will be imposed.

Lab Instructors: Joe Gentry, Sarah Thomas
When: Thursday mornings, except Holidays, 9 am to Noon.

Where: Computer Learning Center

Pre-registration: No

Technical Rating: ★

C/C ++ Study Group

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

Contact:
Bruce McAlexander
<mcalexb@satx.rr.com> 210-680-0231
Murry Adams
<mnadams@texas.net> 210-696-0047
Carl Deneke
<cdeneke@Texas.net> 210-496-6397

When: First and Third Saturday, 2:30 pm

Where: Learning Center.

Pre-registration: No

Technical Rating: ★★ - ★★★

Commodore Users of SA

Contact: Diana Jones
830-303-1220

When: Second Saturday, 1-4 pm

Where: Learning Center.

Pre-registration: No

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★★★★

Genealogy Study Group

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

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

When: First Monday, 7-9 pm

Where: Learning Center.

Pre-registration: No

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★

HGSI Study Group

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

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

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

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

Pre-registration: Call Maynard

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★

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.

STUDY GROUPS (cont.)

DotNET 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 ★★★

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: ★

MCSE Advanced Study Group

The MCSE Advanced SIG, affectionately known as 'The Geeks', is currently studying Microsoft Dynamics CRM (Customer Relationship Manager) version 3.0 (www.Microsoft.com/CRM). The group will prepare for the three CRM certification exams. The study group is lead by Microsoft MVPs (Most Valuable Professional) in CRM, Larry Lentz. There are only 15 MVPs for CRM in the world. More information on the Microsoft MVP program can be found at www.Microsoft.com/MVP. The group has recently completed its study for the CRM 3.0 Applications exam and are now starting study for the CRM 3.0 Customization exam. The group 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 Small Business Server Special Interest Group, APCO SBS SIG, held its November meeting, Friday November 3rd, at the Alamo PC Learning Center in San Antonio, Texas. Naturally we started off with our traditional Taco Talk with tacos supplied by Albert Obar. Our main attraction was Peter Gallagher, Microsoft Small Business Server Support from the Las Colinas (DFW) regional office. Peter explained many things including how to configure e-mail enabled Public Folders to save attachments to SharePoint document libraries. Apparently one has to do it a bit differently in SBS than in a non-SBS SharePoint server. He also explained how to set up a Site-to-Site VPN using ISA on SBS. Apparently that also needs a little extra TLC in SBS due to the ISA being on the Domain Controller. All in all, Peter spent about 2 hours imparting his vast knowledge on the group. Afterwards the group adjourned to Mamacitas Mexican restaurant for lunch where we continued to pelt poor Peter with questions. Peter has promised to come down again, hopefully in February. 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.>

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 ★ - ★★★★★

Alamo PC offers Free and Fee-Based classes. Classes showing a \$ next to the title indicate that either a Registration Fee or a Tuition Fee will be required.

Student Practice Lab

A specific time period for students taking Alamo PC Courses to use Computer Lab One (Classroom One) to practice their class assignments. Students may also make up missed class days, if the instructor has provided the course material to the individual. The Practice Lab is monitored and the instructors will help when possible. The Practice Lab is for Class Work Only. Those abusing the system will be asked to leave. Seating is limited and on a first come, first serve basis. If necessary a time limit will be imposed.

Lab Instructors: Joe Gentry, Sarah Thomas

When: Thursday mornings, except Holidays, 9 am to Noon.

Where: Computer Learning Center

Pre-registration: No

Technical Rating: ★

CLASSES

The next three free or low-cost classes provide instruction on the basics of using a computer, the Windows Operating System, and how to use Adobe Acrobat to obtain your PC Alamode online magazine. The successful completion of the Windows XP class (or classes) would then enable those students to take the other classes offered by Alamo PC.

Introduction To Windows - \$

The Introduction To Windows class is designed for people who do not have a computer yet or have just obtained one and don't know how to "turn it on". Students will learn about the parts of the computer, acquire keyboard and mouse skills used in many software programs, and some word processing. Instruction proceeds at a slower pace than most computer courses and time is allotted for "hands on" practice. Taking the next course, Windows XP, 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 Windows XP Instructor is teaching. Internet and Email will NOT be covered in this course.

Instructors: Andy Roca, Donna Dudley

When: Six sessions, Wednesdays; 10 am to noon

Jan 10, 17, 24, 31, Feb 7, 14

Fees: Registration fee is \$10.00

This class will use the Easy Windows XP book, purchase of the book will be helpful and is strongly recommended but is not required. The book may be purchased from Alamo PC for \$20

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

Where: Learning Center

Technical Rating: ★

Windows XP - \$

Our Windows XP course reviews the fundamentals of using a computer, and provides instruction on using the Microsoft Windows XP operating system. 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.

Prerequisites: Students should have completed the Introduction To Windows course or have the equivalent knowledge.

Choice of two class sessions:

Instructor: Audrey Henkin

When: 6 sessions, Tuesdays 1:30-3:30 pm; Jan 9, 16, 23, 30, Feb 6, 13 or choose

Instructor: Don Robinson

When: 6 sessions, Saturdays 1-3 pm
Dates to be determined

Fees: Registration fee is \$10.00

This class will use the Easy Windows XP book, purchase of the book will be helpful and is strongly recommended but is not required. The book may be purchased from Alamo PC for \$20

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

Where: Computer Learning Center

Technical Rating: ★

Adobe Acrobat - PDF Class

How to download, install, and use Adobe Acrobat Reader. How to view the PC Alamo magazine online or download it to your computer or a CD. Students who want to download the magazine to a CD in class should bring a blank CD-RW (a read / writeable or recordable CD)

Instructor: Steve Tech
stephentechnr@yahoo.com

When: first Fri. of the month, 7 pm to 9 pm

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

Where: Computer Learning Center

Technical Rating: ★

APCO Retro (Antique Computer Users Group)

We're initially only going to meet on-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 Class

Digital Cameras have become an integral part of our computerized lifestyle. They come in all shapes and sizes; some are simple, some not. Yet many of us look at this wonderful tool and think, "Now what is that doohicky for?" Sometimes learning to use our digital cameras can be a confusing and frustrating experience and the manual may even make it worse. Then when you do figure out how to use the camera, the photo never seems to come out quite right. Learn how to use your digital camera, plus all the tips and tricks to get better pictures when you take them. This class will include field trips to interesting local spots to learn photography techniques. Topics of discussion may include understanding your camera manual, camera optics, composition, tips, choosing the right camera, lighting, how to take night shots, silhouettes, portraits, action shots, and close ups.

Instructor: Joe Davis

When: Class meets once a week for 3 weeks - choose one set:

Set 1) Tuesdays, January 16, 23, 30 9 am to 11 am (some sessions may be longer)

Set 2) Tuesdays, July 10, 17, 24 9 am to 11 am (some sessions may be longer)

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

Where: Computer Learning Center

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★

Digital Photo Editing Classes \$

A series of Photo Editing Classes ranging from basic to advanced skills. The Microsoft Digital Imaging 2006 software is not required for these classes but it would be helpful to have on your home computer. Students will need recordable CD's or Flash / Thumb drives to be able to save their class work.

Intro to Digital Photo Editing \$

Remedial computer work as it relates to the use of Image 2006. Any computer skills that will be essential for success in Image 2006. We will learn how to place files into the work area. How to control the work area. We will learn the use of the essential photo editing tools such as; color balance, sharpening focus, removing red eye, crop, straighten photo, etc.

Prerequisites: Students should have completed the Windows XP course or have the equivalent knowledge.

Instructor: Joe Davis

When: Class meets once a week for 4 weeks - choose one set:

Set 1) Tuesdays February 6, 13, 20, 27 9 am to 11 am

Set 2) Tuesdays August 7, 14, 21, 28 9 am to 11 am

Fees: registration fee \$10

Where: Learning Center

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

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★

Digital Photo Editing \$

Students will learn the basics of digital photo editing using Microsoft Digital Imaging 2006 and if time permits, extra tips and tricks about matting and framing plus interesting uses for your photos. The photo editing basics used in this class can be applied to almost any photo editing program.

Prerequisites: Students should have completed the Windows XP course or have the equivalent knowledge.

Instructor: Joe Davis

When: Class meets once a week for 4 weeks - choose one set:

Set 1) Tuesdays March 6, 13, 20, 27 9 am to 11 am

Set 2) Tuesdays September 4, 11, 18, 25 9 am to 11 am

Fees: registration fee \$10

Where: Learning Center

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

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★

Advanced Digital Photo Editing \$

This class is for the student who is very serious about digital editing. It involves the manipulation of photos whether they are new or old. We learn to use the tools to do everything from making greeting cards to photo refinishing.

Prerequisites: Students must have completed either the Introduction to Digital Photo Editing Class or the Digital Photo Editing Class or completed one of Joe Davis' prior Digital Photo Editing classes

Instructor: Joe Davis

When: Class meets once a week for 8 weeks - choose one set:

Set 1) Tuesdays April 3, 10, 17, 24 May 1, 8, 15, 22 9 am to 11 am

Set 2) Tuesdays October 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 November 6, 13, 20 9 am to 11 am

Fees: registration fee \$10

Where: Learning Center

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

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★

Photoshop Classes for use with Photoshop 7, CS, CS2 - \$

These courses will teach you how to modify and combine images to create realistic composite images. You will learn to use several tools for selecting parts of images, and will move, duplicate, and resize images. You will also learn to use layers, and to apply layer effects and filters to create special effects. Additionally, you will use painting tools and blending modes to create blending effects, and will perform adjustments to enhance images. A CD with the images for the entire class is provided. Photoshop Classes are offered as three separate classes, teaching the basic tools, palettes and procedures. Instruction class "A" using Photoshop 7. includes adaptations for Photoshop CS and CS2. Instruction class "B" with different lessons and text, using Photoshop 7 includes adaptations for Photoshop CS and CS2 Photoshop Basic Instruction for Photoshop CS and CS2 (focuses on CS and CS2 but those using Photoshop 7 can take this class).

Prerequisites: 1) Students need to have completed the Windows XP course or have the equivalent knowledge to be able to function properly and progress in these graphics programs This is Not a course for beginning computer students. 2) Students need the Software for Photoshop 7 or Photoshop CS or Photoshop CS2 on their home computers to join these graphics instruction classes.

Instructor: Beverly Bihn <bihndolls@att.net> will be assisted by Jane Montgomery <janealys@satx.rr.com>.

When: Workshop class "A" using Photoshop CS2 get extra help or reviews and further practice; will meet 8 weeks on Thursdays, 1:00 to 3:30 pm Jan. 11, 18, 25, Feb 1, 8, 15, 22 Year 2007.

When: Photoshop Basic Instruction for CS and CS2 will meet 8 weeks on Fridays, 12:30 to 4:30 pm Jan. 5, 12, 19, 26, Feb 2, 9, 16, 23 Year 2007.

Fees: \$90 for New Students, \$50 for Previous Students who have attended a Photoshop 7, Instruction Class A or B class, or CS2 class.

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

Where: Learning Center

Technical Rating: ★★-★★★

Photoshop Workshop for use with Photoshop 7, CS, CS2 - \$

Written creative lessons are given to participants and demonstrations of the lessons are given during class for students to follow. Extra exercises at the end of the lessons encourage students to do similar tasks on their own without demonstrations. They can bring a blank recordable CD or a jump drive, to copy the images for the lessons to take home for more practice.

Prerequisites: 1) Students need to have completed the Photoshop Instruction Class A or Photoshop Instruction Class B, or have the equivalent knowledge with the permission of the Instructor. 2) Students need the Software for Photoshop 7 or Photoshop CS or

Photoshop CS2 on their home computers to join these graphics instruction classes.

Instructor: Beverly Bihn assisted by Jane Montgomery

When: September on Fridays (Sept. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29) from 1 to 5 pm Working on "fancy" procedures beyond the basics.

When: October on Fridays (Oct. 6, 13, 20, 27) from 1 to 5 pm Working on more "fancy" procedures beyond the basics.

Fees: Tuition fee: \$25 per month

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

Where: Learning Center

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: Date and time. To be announced. Call the Alamo PC Computer Learning Center at (210) 736-0080, or (210) 736-0700 to place your name on a Waiting List for the class. You will be notified when the next class is available.

Where: Learning Center, Room 1

Pre-registration: Yes

Technical Rating: ★

Excel Class - Basic

This class is intended for people who want to do significant projects or develop skills for the workplace. As such it moves at fairly brisk pace and includes homework assignments. Students will become familiar with Excel 2000's basic functionality, menus, toolbars, icons and shortcut keys. Learn how to create, format, save and print an Excel spreadsheet. Also, understand and use formulas, work with worksheets and workbooks, and learn the basic productivity elements of Excel.

Prerequisites: Students must have completed the Windows XP course or have the equivalent knowledge.

When: to be determined

Where: Learning Center

Instructor: Instructor needed

Pre-registration: Yes, Call Learning Center at 210-736-0080

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★★

Student Practice Lab

A specific time period for students taking Alamo PC Courses to use Computer Lab One (Classroom One) to practice their class assignments. Students may also make up missed class days, if the instructor has provided the course material to the individual. The Practice Lab is monitored and the instructors will help when possible. The Practice Lab is for Class Work Only. Those abusing the system will be asked to leave. Seating is limited and on a first come, first serve basis. If necessary a time limit will be imposed.

Lab Instructors: Joe Gentry, Sarah Thomas

When: Thursday mornings, except Holidays, 9 am to Noon.

Where: Computer Learning Center

Pre-registration: No

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: ★ - ★★

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

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.

To register e-mail Mike at
<webmaster@alamopc.org>

Technical Rating: ★★

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.

Prerequisites: Students must have completed the Windows XP course or have the equivalent knowledge.

When: 6 weeks, Wednesdays, 1 to 3 pm
Dates to be determined

Instructor: Don Robinson

Fees: Registration fee is \$10.00

Where: Learning Center

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

Technical Rating: ★

Power Point class

Microsoft's PowerPoint presentation program is the defacto standard for making presentations to a large audience. This class will show students how to create a PowerPoint presentation, how to add graphics and photos, business graphs, and sound clips. We will also learn how to use special transitions and animations in presenting your slide show to an audience.

Prerequisite: Students must have completed the Windows XP course or have the equivalent knowledge.

Contact: Learning Center 736-0700

When: Two sessions, 2nd and 3rd Wednesday 7-9 pm of Odd numbered months

Instructor: Vade Forrester

Where: Learning Center

Pre-registration: Yes - Call Learning Center at 210-736-0080

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★

Movie Maker

A fun class learning to use the Movie Maker program included with Windows XP, to create slide shows with voice, music, text, and special effects. It is a very simple program, yet will do fades, wipes, special effects, sound, and moving text, etc.

Contact: Joe Davis

When: Class meets once a week for 4 weeks - choose one set:

Set 1) Tuesdays June 5, 12, 19, 26 9 am to 11 a.m.

Set 2) Tuesdays November 27, Dec 4, 11, 18 9 am to 11 a.m.

Where: Learning Center

Prerequisite: Students must have completed the Windows XP course or have the equivalent knowledge.

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

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★

Word Class

Students will become familiar with and understand Word's basic functionality, menus, toolbars, icons and shortcut keys. Students will learn how to create, view, format, save and print a Word document. Also work with templates, multiple documents, insert files, objects and pictures and email documents.

Contact: Linda Bianchi at
education@alamopc.org

When: 4 sessions - Choose one set:

Set 1) Tue. Dec. 5, 12, 19 and Wed. Dec. 20th 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Set 2) Tue. Jan. 9, 16, 23, 30 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Instructor: Tod Bruning
liveoakhomenetworks@gmail.com

Where: Learning Center

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

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★★

Student Practice Lab

A specific time period for students taking Alamo PC Courses to use Computer Lab One (Classroom One) to practice their class assignments. Students may also make up missed class days, if the instructor has provided the course material to the individual. The Practice Lab is monitored and the instructors will help when possible. The Practice Lab is for Class Work Only. Those abusing the system will be asked to leave. Seating is limited and on a first come, first serve basis. If necessary a time limit will be imposed.

Lab Instructors: Joe Gentry, Sarah Thomas

When: Thursday mornings, except Holidays, 9 am to Noon.

Where: Computer Learning Center

Pre-registration: No

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. |

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: ★

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 Linda Bianchi at 226-2460 or email her at <education@alamopc.org>.

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

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

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

Step One

1 Computers for Beginners

2 Windows 98

3 Windows XP

Microsoft Office

4 Word

5 Excel

6 PowerPoint

7 Publisher

8 WinFax Pro

Corel Office

9 WordPerfect

10 CorelDraw

11 Quattro Pro

12 Paint Shop Pro

Photoshop

13 Adobe Photoshop

Internet and E-mail

14 Internet Basics / ISP Connection

15 Web Page Development

16 Internet Explorer

17 MS Outlook Express

18 Opera

19 Mozilla

20 Dreamweaver

21 .Net

22 Flash

23 RoadRunner

Open Office

24 OpenOffice

Financial

25 Quick Books

26 Quicken

Auction Online

27 eBay

Genealogy

28 Family Origins for Windows

29 Genealogy

Communications / Management

30 Time&Chaos

31 Act

32 Goldmine

Data Base

33 Access

34 AlphaFour

35 dBase

36 Paradox

37 MySQL

Networking

38 Networking

Other

39 Hardware / Setting Up A New PC

40 Maintenance and Security

41 Home Help

Step Two

Expertise	Name	Phone	Availability	E-mail
(1, 5, 6, 3, 12, 23, 26, 38, 41)	John Bolton	658-3060	6pm-9pm M-F	
(1, 3, 14)	Joe Barth	696-5783	7pm-9pm Tu, Th, Sat	jbarth@swbell.net
(2, 3, 4, 16, 17, 23, 29, 38, 39, 40, 41)	Bruce Cramer	865-2933	9am-3pm M-F, Sat	service@pcpro4u.com
(3, 5)	Bill Eastridge	223-8743	10am-6pm M-F, Sat, Sun	
(4, 15, 17, 33)	Bill Hudson	490-6513	7pm-10 pm M-F, Sat, Sun	bhudson3@satx.rr.com
(4, 9, 14, 27)	William Hudson	824-6910	3pm-8pm M-F, Sat	rwsh@earthlink.net
(19, 24, 30, 37)	Chris Montgomery	490-2415	7pm-9pm M-F / noon-6pm Sat, Sun	
(3, 16, 17)	Ted Ressler			catechist@gmail.com
(1, 3, 14, 16, 17, 40)	Don Robinson	497-3737	9am-5pm M-F, Sat, Sun	dl7266@swbell.net
(10)	Stephen Tech, Jr	675-2880	5:30pm-9pm M - F	stephentechjr@yahoo.com
(9)	Cynthia Thompson	655-1058	7pm-9pm M-F / 10am-4pm Sat, Sun	cynthom@satx.rr.com
(4)	Christel Villarreal			christel.villarreal@gmail.com

If you are unable to find help in the list above, consider contacting the desk staff volunteers at the Alamo PC Computer Learning Center. 736-0700 or 736-0080. 10am - 4pm M-F, Sat Remember these volunteers are all levels of expertise and some may not be able to answer your questions, but may be able to find someone who can.

Advertisers Index

BJ Associates of San Antonio	37
Charles River Media	54
Computer Experts	50
Computer Fest	11
Cramer's Computer Services	15
David's Essential Domains	25
DV Nation	44
Global Travel Trends	40
Holiday Ink	53
Inksell	IFC
Laura B. Grover, E.A.	23
New Life Toner	IFC
SA PC Help	33
United Service Association for Health Care	49
Water Ware	49


Classified Ads

E-mail your ad to the Editor, PC Alamode at: editor@alamopc.org. Copy deadline is 10th of month preceeding publication. Classified ads are free to members of Alamo PC.

For Sale 3 Camera Bags - Universal Style 5" wide X 9" long X 6" deep, Sony DSC F828 case with shoulder strap Lowepro Micro 100 Trekker. All in good condition. Contact Bob Ramert rramert@satx.rr.com.

Wanted Classified ads from members of Alamo PC. It costs nothing and it's a good way to sell or buy any computer-related thing.

Missing Alamo PC members from the classifieds section. Answers to the name of 'Apconian.' Last seen about 8 issues ago. Reward: free classified ad.



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)

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

Alamo PC SeniorComp

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

Expert Help

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

APPLY FOR YOUR NUMBER -- JOIN NOW!

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

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



Membership Application -- Apply for your number today!

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

FIRST: _____ MI _____ LAST: _____

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.

