

THE NEWS MAGAZINE OF THE ALAMO PC ORGANIZATION

PC Alamode

MAPS AND TRAVEL ISSUE

www.alamopc.org

July 2007

\$4.50

Traveling with computers
page 36

Tour the world with World Wind
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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:

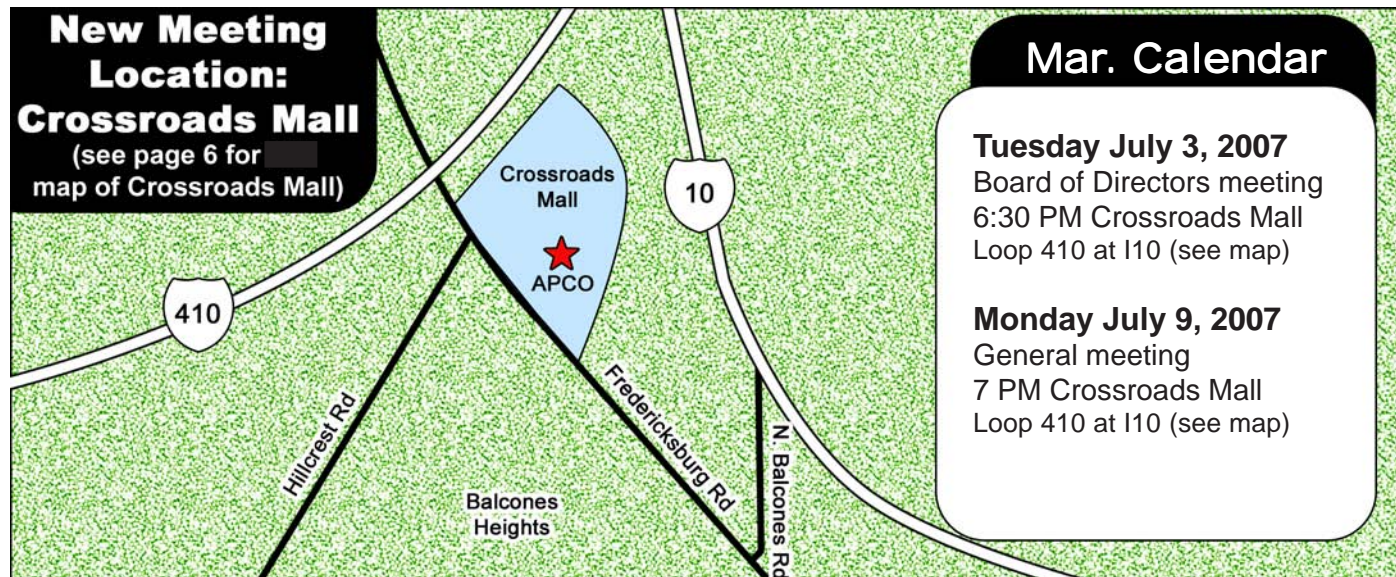
Alamo PC Organization
PO Box 65180
San Antonio, TX 78265-5180

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

Tuesday July 3, 2007
Board of Directors meeting
6:30 PM Crossroads Mall
Loop 410 at I10 (see map)

Monday July 9, 2007
General meeting
7 PM Crossroads Mall
Loop 410 at I10 (see map)



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PC Alamode

(501 (C) (3))

Featured this month

Traveling with computers
 Traveling with a video camcorder
 Free online mapping and driving directions
 Tour the world with World Wind
 Google Earth
 Show me the way to go home

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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.

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

editor@alamopc.org

Joseph de Leon, Editor, PC Alamode

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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

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product reviews

Computer Crimes
 Book Review: Computer Privacy Annoyances
 Software Review: Instant Photo Artist 2.0
 Software Review: Fisheye-Hemi Plug-In
 Software, Hardware Review: Skype
 Hardware Review: Microsoft Zune

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Board of Directors

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Executive Service Officers and other important numbers

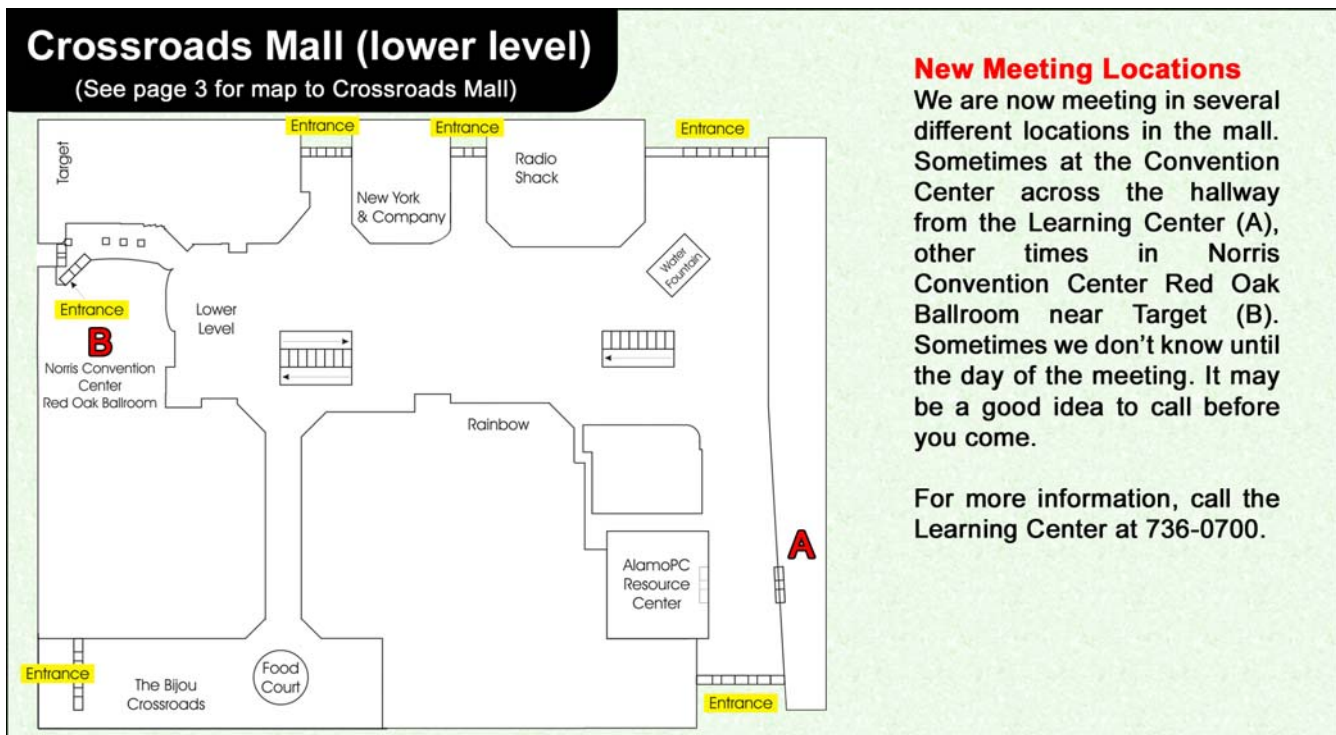
Learning Center, Crossroads Mall

736-0700

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



PC Alamode Links List



Paloozahead

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

Impress your friends with a stage performance on the Lolapalooza stage, a three-day festival featuring today's hottest bands. Upload your favorite picture, pick an outfit and music, then let the show begin.



Interactive Narratives

<<http://www.interactivenarratives.org/>>

Interactive narratives are informational and storytelling experiences designed and produced for the web. They leverage great design, visual journalism and rich-media content.



Summer times brings plenty of traveling. This issue will show you how to travel smart with a computer or even plan a trip.

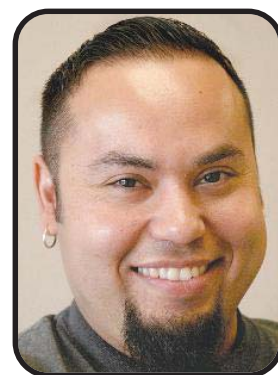
Apple's iPhone launched June 29 to much hoopla. People camped out, stood in line and braved the elements for the combination phone, iPod and Web browser.

I'm not sure when one of our members might submit a review, but the next best thing could be Microsoft's Zune. Check it out on page 56.

If you have any pictures of your summer travels, send them in. You just might find it in the next issue of PC Alamode.

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

"July" - Independence Day, Election Process Continues

This month is even less inspiring than June - School continues to be out, hotter weather has not prevailed (although I have a feeling it is about to start), the humidity is really pushing the heat index and vacations continue. Last month I was sure hotter weather would prevail, but I should have written "Wet weather will prevail!" Guess that prediction pretty well dashes my aspiration about becoming a Psychic, having a website and and a \$19.95 TV ad.

Some July days that should be important to us are: 4th - Independence Day (If you have forgotten your history, Google it up and refresh your memory. It didn't come cheap, and people throughout the world who want the same thing will also pay a price, as will those who help them. It is also another opportunity to fly the Flag.); 10th should be the day for the Alamo PC membership to watch. It is the day of the monthly General Meeting (a scheduled presentation, although I don't have the particulars yet), and the continuation of the annual election process.

At the time of this writing (late June) our Programs official has not informed me of the presenter for the July General Meeting, but I am sure he is trying to secure a good one. (We have been hoping for some time to have Gene Barlow, a 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). Check the website or Learning Center for the latest information, but plan to come and bring some friends.

At the June General Meeting, David Steward provided the presentation. I am sorry that I was not able to be present, but another obligation caused me to be out of town. I hope those present enjoy the event, and were able to benefit from the information that was made available.

Each year when the first day of July rolls around it reminds me that we have finished the first half of the year, and we are starting the second half. I am sure it will bring other thoughts to mind for many others, one of which will probably be, "The older I get the faster the days seem to go by!" (Or should "months" have been used?)

Elections: July is also Alamo PC's annual month for nominations for Board positions that are vacant or expiring. The Elections Committee will try to seek members willing to serve at the BOD level, but since we have operated with one or more vacant positions since Oct 2005 (despite numerous pleas from me in past messages), it would appear the task may again prove to be difficult. Each member also has a stake in this process - "This is OUR organization." Each member should consider themselves to be responsible for trying to identify individuals willing to serve at the BOD level. The opportunity to submit names will be available at the July General Meeting, for members who are present. Once the list of individuals has been identified, individual biographies will be submitted for inclusion in the August PC Alamo. During August, the online election process will be conducted to determine the list of Board members for the coming year (Oct 2007 - Sep 2008).

I continue to ask current members to consider what this organization has to offer, what it has done for you, and what it can do for others. You are our best source of free advertising. Perhaps by thinking about it, you will be prompted to renew your membership and provide some much needed support, at various levels in the organization - marketing, advertising & sponsors, software for evaluation, general meeting set-up & tear-down, trade shows, learning center volunteer, class teacher, etc. Please remember for this organization to survive WE must each continue to be a supportive member, through renewals and participation at some level.

Continue to consider some of the following items available to members (and please talk to others about them): free class benefit - enroll in one or more of the classes; the "Wish List" - if a

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class you would like to have isn't on the list, make it known to the people at the Learning Center so they can put it on the 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 hands-on help with computer problems, at the Learning Center; monthly presentations about current issues in the computer hardware and software; etc.

We continue to review member requested classes to determine if and when a new area of study should be scheduled. If you have a suggestion, let the Director of Education know <education@alamopc.org>. That is how several classes have been started, including the one in the next paragraph.

Don't forget about our popular Digital Camera & Photography classes (4 different levels, each repeated once during the year). Picture opportunities are available throughout the year, not just during holidays. After taking one or more classes, every picture day should be considered a "Photo Holiday," and produce good results.

We are still trying to improve member retention, although new members have almost been sufficient to offset non-renewing members. (At present, almost all of our new members are derived from "walk-in traffic" at the Learning Center.) We want membership to continue to "grow" through each member renewing and trying to encourage others to join. (Please remember that you can help someone to join through the online process. They don't have to come to the Learning Center.) 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 wklutzjr@juno.com). I appreciate all communications, especially those on how we can improve the Alamo PC Organization and increase member interest!

As, I have said before, the future of OUR organization will always rest in the hands of its members. Whether WE continue (or not) depends on OUR interest and involvement. 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."

I look forward to seeing members and guests at the July General Meeting. Without a presenter scheduled, I am not sure if it will be in our Learning Center (LC) or a Norris conference facility (hopefully across from our LC). Check the website for the latest information.

July Program

Bill Klutz

A presenter has not yet been confirmed for the July general meeting. Check the Alamo PC website for more details www.alamopc.org.

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

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

News Brief

Act Locally, Think Globally!

By Steve Bass, Pasadena IBM Users Group

You toss aluminum cans, plastic bottles, and newspapers in the recycle bin without even thinking, right? Well a new dot.com wants you to think the same way about—get ready—bits and bytes. Don't laugh.

The company is Bit-Recyclers (their www.BitRecycle.com web site is often unreachable because of excessive traffic) and their business plan is simple: Don't delete old programs—recycle them.

But there's a twist, one that's going to turn the computing world on its head. And turn a tremendous profit for Bit-Recyclers.

The company has no plans for using or reselling the old software you send to them. Instead, they're simply going to recycle the bits. Like reuse them.

It sounds strange but it makes sense. Every time you delete a program (ironically, not to the recycle bin, but <M>really delete it), untold numbers of bits and bytes are destroyed. Throw away a floppy or CD, and it's gone forever. Toast. History.

The company wants them all, each and every bit.

Jeff Grayschvanser, Bit-Recycler's CEO, proposes reusing the bits for new programs. "Upload unwanted applications, utilities, or even Mac programs, and we'll turn them into new programs."

The company promises to supply individuals who have slow Internet connections with postage-free mailers in order for them to mail in their floppies and CDs.

Who buys recycled bits? You'd be amazed. Start with Microsoft. "Without Bit-Recyclers, Windows 2000 would have never reached the marketplace before 2001," explained a Microsoft representative who requested anonymity.

Producers of clip art, photography images, and MP3 files are also major users of recycled bits.

"Don't send manuals and boxes," warned Grayschvanse, "because they are of no value to us—unless they're in digital form." He recommends dumping the paper docs in the real recycle bin.

Microsoft representatives explained they were all for the new dot.com's idea provided no one actually reused program code, and would probably start their own recycling strategy early next year.

Over the last four months, venture-backed Bit-Recyclers increased their staff level at a rate over three times that of most start-up dot.coms. Joseph Pelassio, account executive with Pelletier Capital Market reports initial earnings could reach those of eBay by the end of Q4 2001.

Me? I'm going to stick those CDs and floppies in a desk drawer. I just can't bear the thought of the next version of Word recycled from Wordstar. (www.bit-recyclers.com)

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:

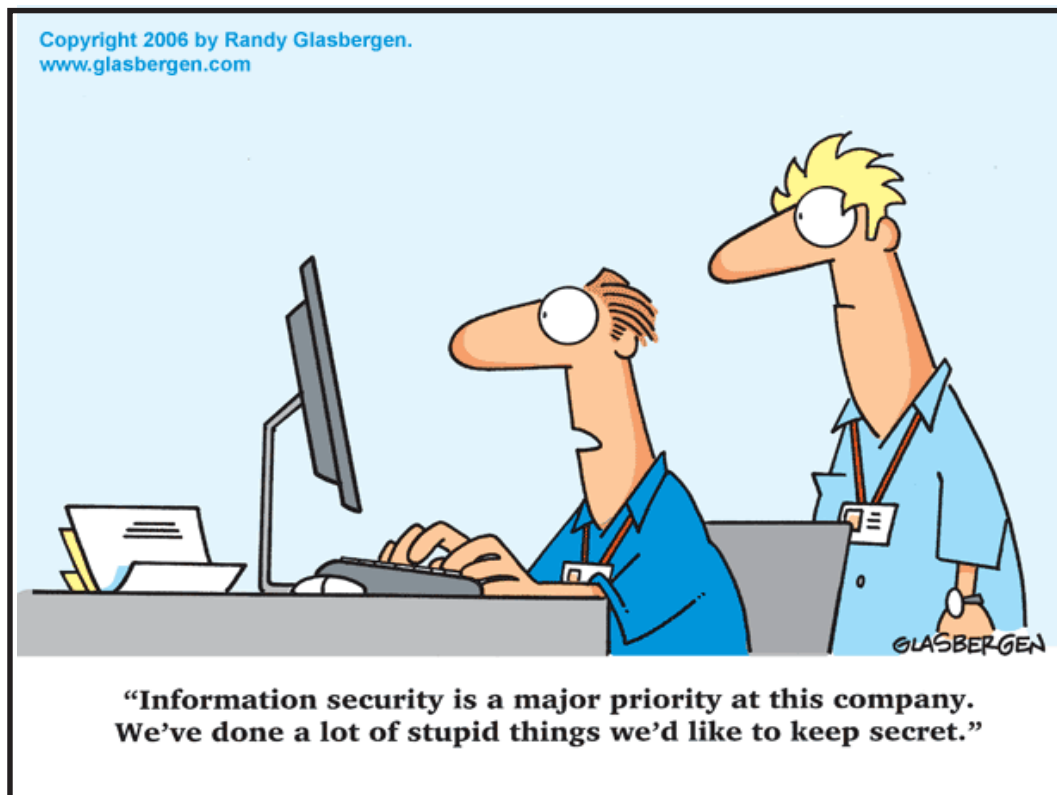
Sept. 29, 2007
Dec. 8, 2007

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



Funny Bytes

Ken Nash & Randy Glasbergen





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.

*Lightning Fast Trades

Here's an interesting article for investors. It explains how modern technology has progressed to the point where stock trades are now processed almost at the speed of light. I found it very enlightening <<http://www.informationweek.com/showArticle.jhtml;jsessionid=R3M3IYXUGJSZGQSNLQSKHSCJUNN2JVN?articleID=199200297&queryText=Richard+Martin>>.

*Microsoft Plays Catch-Up

It's hard to think of Microsoft being behind the times in technology, but that is said to be the case in Web interface design. Adobe's Flash has prevailed so far, but Microsoft will introduce a competitor called "Silverlight" and some tools called Expression Studio that sound interesting. After I read about this in InformationWeek, I saw more in the 5/21/07 "Microsoft At A Glance" newsletter. They made mention of those products and gave the URL to watch a video and download the beta version of Silverlight. It is referred to as a "cross-browser and cross-platform plug-in." They also included the URL for the Expression Studio design products <<http://go.microsoft.com/?linkid=6824909>> where you can download free trials. There was other information included in that newsletter.

*Another Use For Wi-Fi

On another note, I have always thought of Wi-Fi as a connection for my laptop, or a broadband installation of some kind, but one particularly well traveled rail route in southern California will be getting Wi-Fi for security purposes. Because railroads often traverse very remote areas, this project is a difficult one and includes some solar powered nodes. Vandalism is a problem in the area getting that installation. I have often wondered how good the cell phone service was on some rail routes that are less traveled and have remote routes. Some cruise ships offer limited cell phone service and it is slowly being introduced on airlines, but not without resistance from the airlines and from the public. I know I wouldn't want the person next to me talking on a cell phone for the entire trip.

*Reminder

Again, the announcements below are written by the PR people and I edit to shorten them and try to improve on the wording. I have not tried any of these products so check their Web site carefully and do your homework if you are interested.

*This Add-On For Microsoft Windows Might Help

Addintools announced the release of Classic Menu for Office 2007 v.2.18, a user interface enhancement add-on for Microsoft Office 2007. The new interface will replace the system of layered menus, toolbars and task panes with a so-called Ribbon. It lets users retrieve and show the main menu bar, standard toolbar, and formatting toolbar that are hidden or moved away from direct view. The program works with Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. All new Office 2007 features remain accessible in the classic menu and toolbars.

Classic Menu for Office 2007 also lets users add the menus and toolbars to the Quick Access Toolbar so it becomes possible to minimize the Ribbon and finish all operations without having to open it again. The program has been optimized for complete compatibility with Microsoft Office 2007 and supports all major languages, including English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Japanese, Arabic, Korean, and Chinese.

Classic Menu for Office 2007 v.2.18 runs under Microsoft Windows XP/2003/Vista and costs \$29.95 (USD) for a single-user license. User group members receive 15% discount on the purchase of Classic Menu for Office 2007 v.2.18 by entering coupon code ADDI-CARU into the coupon box on the order page. Licensed customers are entitled to free updates and technical support for 2 years after the date of purchase.

Product page link: <<http://www.addintools.com/english/menuoffice>>

Direct download link: <http://www.addintools.com/english/menuoffice/Setup_OfficeMenu.exe> (2.62 MB)

Company website: <<http://www.addintools.com>>

Continued on page 14

*File Recovery Product, Might Help In Some Circumstances

Enplase Research Corporation has announced the immediate availability of MultiStage Recovery 2.8 that will recover any file and back it up to a hard disk drive. MultiStage Recovery lets users recover all recoverable files (20 gigabytes in 20 seconds!) The program supports all Windows file systems and comes with a built-in preview for over 60 file formats. Designed as do-it-yourself data recovery software, MultiStage Recovery will restore all file types including audio, images, and documents. It supports all FAT12/VFAT/16/32 and NTFS/NTFS5 file systems used by Microsoft Windows. It helps users restore precious data if files are lost due to a virus, malicious hacker attack or an operating system crash in which a hard disk drive has not experienced physical damage, and restores files from any brand of hard disk drive and type of storage media, including hard disks, floppy disks, flash drives, and digital camera cards.

MultiStage Recovery 2.8 runs under Microsoft® NT 4.0 (with SP4), 2000, XP, 2003, Vista and costs \$39.95 (US) for a single-user license. User group members get 20% off by using the coupon code 8192 (making it \$31.96) at <http://enplase.com/pages/BuyProduct/ProductName-MultiStage+Recovery.html>. For other types of licenses, please refer to Enplase's Software Store at <http://enplase.com/pages/Purchase.html>. Additional information on the product, as well as its free evaluation copy is available from <http://enplase.com/>. Product page link: <http://enplase.com/pages/MultiStage+Recovery+description.html>.

*I Am Not A Fan Of Screensavers, But Here Is An Announcement

DealsGuy Note: Screensavers have long been known to sometimes cause problems so I don't use them. Also, this company only offers a discount for purchasing more than one, but I am including it because there are certainly fans for screensavers, and I get asked for deals on them quite frequently.

FancyBytes Software announces the release of Dolphin Aqua Life 3D Screensaver 3.0, Shark Water World 3D Screensaver 1.5, and Mountain Lake Waterfall Screensaver 1.0. Unique to these screensavers is their dual monitor support and sleek 3D graphics. If you have two monitors installed on your system, you likely have already looked for screensavers that can fit your configuration. With FancyBytes Software you can now enjoy beautiful 3D screensavers with dual monitor support. Of course, the screensavers will look nice on a single screen, but with two monitors, you'll receive a continuous panoramic image, showing the aquatic world in all its beauty. Use these screensavers to make the most of your dual monitor system. The free trial downloads are available at <http://www.fancybytes.com>. Below are the screensavers:

Dolphin Aqua Life 3D Screensaver

Travel to the sea bottom with the most intelligent inhabitant of the sea, the dolphin. See the amazing play of light on its skin as light creates interesting patterns on the sea floor, which is covered with age-old rocks and shells. This dignified creature and a variety of small fishes leisurely swim back and forth, as you admire the aquatic scenery and take a rejuvenating rest.

Shark Water World 3D Screensaver

Find the remnants of ships that once belonged to unlucky Caribbean pirates who now lie in Davy Jones' Locker. Chests containing countless riches peacefully lie on the sea floor, but watch out for the sharks! These hunters guard the treasures from anyone who would dare steal their gold.

Mountain Lake Waterfall Screensaver

See the pristine beauty of Mother Nature. Stand in awe of the majestic waterfall tumbling into a clear mountain lake. Unwind to the sounds of murmuring water. Admire the picturesque lake scenery and nearby forest. Just the kind of place you've been wanting for some rest and relaxation?

Dolphin Aqua Life 3D Screensaver costs \$19.95 (USD). Shark Water World 3D Screensaver costs \$19.95 (USD). Mountain Lake Waterfall Screensaver costs \$14.95 (USD). For a discount on two or more of the registered versions of these products, please visit; http://www.fancybytes.com/orders_special.html. All prices are for a single-user license. The screensavers run under all versions of Microsoft Windows. Licensed customers are entitled to the fully functional version of the product, free technical support and free upgrades. Additional information on the screensavers, as well as free trial copies are available from <http://www.fancybytes.com>.

Product page:

http://www.fancybytes.com/about_dolphin_aqua_life_3d_screensaver.html

http://www.fancybytes.com/about_shark.html

http://www.fancybytes.com/about_mountain_lake_waterfall_screensaver.html

Direct download link:

<http://www.fancybytes.com> Click the Download buttons for the desired file.

Open Source Software and Sun Microsystems

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>

There is an ongoing debate within the software industry that involves open source versus the proprietary coding of Microsoft Windows and its Office programs. Sun Microsystems is on the leading edge of the open source movement.

The Sun approach is based upon Linux as an operating system and StarOffice as the hub for applications. "The industry is ready," said Jonathan Schwartz, executive vice president for software at Sun. "There is a great opportunity for a major systems company to commercialize a full Linux desktop."

Sun Microsystems is an established player in the networking computer environment. Sun also owns the intellectual property rights to Java™. In 1997, Sun sued Microsoft Corp in US District Court for breaching its contractual obligation to deliver products that compatibly implemented Sun's Java™ technology.

On January 23, 2001, Sun Microsystems announced that Microsoft Corporation had agreed to settle Sun's lawsuit regarding the Java™ technology. The settlement protected the future integrity of the Java platform. As part of the agreement, Microsoft agreed to pay Sun \$20 million, to accept Sun's termination of the prior license agreement, and to a permanent injunction against unauthorized use of Sun's "Java Compatible" trademark. In order to protect developers and consumers using Microsoft's version of Java technology, Sun agreed to grant Microsoft a limited license to continue to distribute its current version of the software, provided that all future versions of such products passed Sun's compatibility tests. This part of the agreement lasts for seven years. Beyond that date, Microsoft cannot distribute Java technology or use any of Sun's intellectual property.

"It's pretty simple: This is a victory for our licensees and consumers," said Sun's chairman and CEO Scott McNealy. "The community wants one Java technology, one brand, one process, and one great platform. We've accomplished that, and this agreement further protects the authenticity and value of Sun's Java technology." In summary, Sun has been a thorn in the side of Microsoft and is one of the few opponents that have dared to challenge Microsoft and win. I do not mean to imply that Microsoft is on the "bad guy" side of things. In fact, just the opposite is true. Microsoft strategy and development has driven a lot of progress within the personal computer world. There is no question that their business tactics are aggressive but aggressive tactics are not unique to Microsoft. However, everyone tends to benefit from diversity within an industry.

The presence of Linux is well known. This column does not need to explore that topic any further. However, the Sun approach is to develop StarOffice into a viable competitor to Microsoft Office. StarOffice software is an affordable alternative in office productivity suites that runs on multiple operating systems, including Solaris[tm] Operating Environment, Microsoft Windows, and Linux. The office suite has a simple, easy-to-use interface and contains full-featured applications including word processing, spreadsheet, presentation, graphics and database capabilities. Further information is available at www.sun.com/software/star/staroffice/6.0. The small office/home office package of StarOffice has a suggested retail price of \$75.95.

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STUDY GROUPS

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



There is a companion product to StarOffice called OpenOffice. OpenOffice is free. That is correct ... "free." The following is extracted from a review by Robin Miller.

"The biggest difference between the two is format support. OpenOffice does a fine job with doc, ppt, xls, and rtf files. StarOffice adds support for dBase and databases in general, which OpenOffice does not have. If you work with simple databases in an office setting -- that is, with databases on the level of something like MS Access -- this feature alone is going to make you prefer StarOffice over OpenOffice. You might say that free OpenOffice is roughly equivalent to Microsoft's \$479 Office XP Standard, while StarOffice is comparable to \$579 Office XP Professional. In this context, StarOffice is probably worth \$50 or \$100 more than OpenOffice to most corporate users, especially if StarOffice includes manuals and support, and OpenOffice does not.

"Then there is the fact that StarOffice works exactly the same on Linux, Unix, and Windows. Yes, advances in Wine are making it possible to run MS Office in Linux, but to do this you still need a copy of (expensive) MS Office. I went the other way, myself. My wife recently purchased a new laptop that came with Windows XP, and we will maintain a Windows partition on it for software tests and Web site browser verification, but instead of blowing hundreds for a copy of MS Office, I installed StarOffice on both the Linux and Windows partitions. The CD Sun sent me had both versions on it, so why not? So far we have not been able to tell any difference between the way StarOffice acts in the two operating systems, except for the fact that StarOffice (like almost everything else) runs slower in Windows XP than it does in Linux."

So if you are feeling adventurous, you may want to give OpenOffice and StarOffice a try. If you are feeling adventurous and daring, you may want to install Linux on a separate computer or in a separate partition and play with both. Real computer wireheads are prone to engage in such adventures. I have to admit that I not have done this as of this time, but I may do so at some point in the near future.

There is an open source website at www.opensource.org. The following statement is from the website. "The basic idea behind open source is very simple: When programmers can read, redistribute, and modify the source code for a piece of software, the software evolves. People improve it, people adapt it, people fix bugs. And this can happen at a speed that, if one is used to the slow pace of conventional software development, seems astonishing."

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A First Timer's Step-By-Step Guide to Creating a Web Page

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>

If you have never created a website on the Internet or even a webpage then you are potentially missing what can be some great fun and creativity. Granted, it can also lead to a fair share of frustration. For this reason, my article will show you how to create a single webpage with links to the Internet and some color. It is designed to be simple, practical and yet give a first time user the skills to expand. And since it is summer here in Alaska, and Alaska summers are short, so will be this article!

First, we will be using Windows Notepad to create the HTML document, which in turn will generate the webpage in the browser. To use Notepad click Start? Programs? Accessories? Notepad. In Notepad;

1. On the first line, type <HTML>. This announces to the web browser (Internet Explorer or Opera or Mozilla, for example) that it is reading a webpage. Be careful not to include the periods after any of these "tags".

2. Hit Enter on your keyboard a few times to drop down a few spaces. Now type <HEAD>. This starts the HEAD portion of your HTML document, which typically contains technical information. We will not be adding anything here but it is important to know that it is there for future projects.

3. To finish the Head portion hit Enter on your keyboard a few times to drop down a few spaces. Now type </HEAD>. Notice the slash slanting to the right. Omitting the slash or slanting it the wrong way can cause errors.

4. Now let us start the body of the document. Hit Enter on your keyboard a few times to drop down a few spaces. Now type <BODY>. Notice there is no slash. A tag without a slash starts and a tag with a slash finishes.

5. Hit Enter and on the next line type <body bgcolor="yellow">. This is your background color. You can also use green, red, and blue and so on, but remember in this example your text is black and may not be visible with some colors. Hit Enter.

6. Type on the next line or a few lines down <h2><CENTER>This is my HTML Links Page</CENTER></h2>
. The <h2> tags are header tags and set the size of the letters in this sentence and on your page. The <CENTER> tag aligns it in the center of the page. The
 tag does not need a closing (slashed) tag it does its work all by itself. It means, "break" and creates a sentence or text break to the next line. It is not really needed here but it is important in building bigger webpages.

7. Hit Enter a few more times to space down and type:

CCEL
. This creates a link to the CCEL organization, but you can put any Internet address in between the quotes that you like. I put the part that you see on the web page in italics to give you an idea of how it works. I also included a
 tag to stack the links.

8. Hit enter, type: Gutenberg Bible.

9. Hit Enter and type </BODY>.

10. Hit Enter and type </HTML>. Your document should look like this:

```
<HTML>
<HEAD>
</HEAD>
<Body>
<body bgcolor="yellow">
<h2><CENTER>This is my HTML Links Page</CENTER></h2><br>
<a href="http://www.ccel.org/fathers2/">CCEL</a><br>
<a href="http://www.hrc.utexas.edu/exhibitions/permanent/gutenberg/">Gutenberg Bible</a>
</BODY>
</HTML>
```

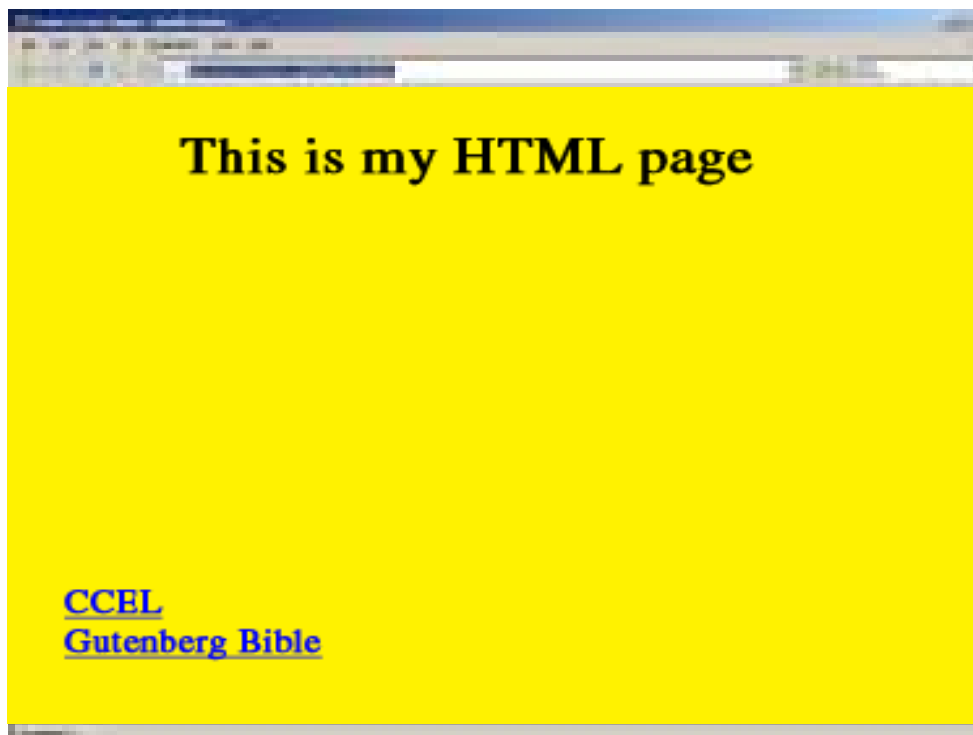
Continued on page 18

11. Now click File? Save As and save it to your Desktop (Use the drop down box at the top of the window to navigate to your desktop. Name it "My Links" or something appropriate.

12. Now go to your desktop and put your cursor on the file. Use the right mouse button to click on the icon and choose "Rename." You want to change the three letters "txt" to either HTML or HTM, either will work. Press "Esc" when done.

Now double click on the icon to view your webpage. If you are connected to the Internet you can click on one of the links to try it out.

Your web page should look something like this:




You now have a web page that is practical and can be expanded and used for experimentation. You can add links change background colors and discover new tags that do neat stuff. You can also add pictures, flashing text, menus – the list is endless and so are the websites that offer help.

To post this webpage on the Internet you would simply follow your webpage or Internet provider's instructions

If something does not show up in your webpage then just check your tags. This is most often the trouble, missing slashes, brackets, etc.

Have fun and be creative!

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Windows XP, Part XIV

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.

If you have a PC with WinXP installed on your machine, and it works well, do not upgrade to Vista. You should keep your WinXP machine updated with the latest security patches and you will be better off with what is already a good operating system. Some programs that Microsoft created for Vista run just fine on WinXP. Windows Defender, the anti-spyware product, works on XP. Vista's initial version of Windows Media Player, WMP 11, also runs without problems as does Internet Explorer (IE) 7 and you can run both on Win XP. If the computer you have only supports Vista Home Basic because of an older video card, don't bother with Vista; stick with WinXP. Many laptops can't run Vista, and video upgrades rate as too expensive. Don't upgrade to Vista unless you have enough video power to drive the Aero Glass interface. For most WinXP users, that's the crucial upgrade decision point: The video card represents the biggest and costliest hurdle.

Adjusting Visual Effects to Speed Up Your Computer

As it crunches numbers in the background for WinXP, its menus and windows open and close with a slow fade. When a folder opens, Windows automatically chooses its appropriate task pane. Windows also organizes the Control Panel's icons into neat categories instead of presenting one folder crowded with icons. All these extra visual decisions require additional calculations on Windows's part slowing it down a bit. To change Windows' attitude from peaceful to performance, go to Control Panel's Performance and Maintenance category and choose Visual Effects. For the faster action, choose Adjust for Best Performance. Windows quickly strips away all the visuals and reverts to Classic Mode which is a faster way of working that mimics earlier Windows versions. Choose Adjust for Best Appearance for a prettier, but slower, Windows. To let WinXP examine your computer's processing power and choose a balance between aesthetically pleasing and physically overburdened, select Let Windows Choose What's Best for My Computer. Experiment with each visual setting by choosing Custom. Choose Apply after making each change; if you notice an unwelcome change in WinXP's behavior, reverse your change and click Apply again.

AutoComplete Word Removal

As soon as you begin to type something online, a Web site address in IE or a name into an online form, WinXP often races in to help. It sends down a little box, listing items you've typed previously. A quick point and click lets you retrieve a word or phrase from WinXP's handy AutoComplete list, sparing you the effort of typing it in yet again. Some people don't like WinXP looking over their shoulder as they type. And it's especially annoying when WinXP keeps listing your typographical errors. To delete a word or phrase from most AutoComplete drop-down lists, press the down-arrow key to highlight the entry and then press the Delete key. Unfortunately, this trick doesn't delete individual Web addresses you type into IE. You must delete IE's History to remove those. To make IE stop listing your previous entries, open IE and choose Internet Options from the Tools menu. Next click the Content tab then the AutoComplete button, and the AutoComplete Settings dialog box opens. Now click to remove check marks from Web Addresses, Forms, User Names and Passwords on Forms, and Prompt Me to Save Passwords. Finally click the Clear Forms button and the Clear Passwords button and then click OK. Those two final buttons delete previously stored AutoComplete entries. It's convenient for IE to store the passwords you use for your Web site. But that makes it convenient for anybody who sits at your computer to log on to password-protected sites. Even if you enjoy AutoComplete, consider removing the check mark from the User Names and Passwords on Forms box in the aforementioned step.

Changing File Systems

Most WinXP systems that begin as WinXP systems are formatted using the NTFS file system. If your system was upgraded a couple of times over the years and finally matured to a WinXP system, it may use the FAT or FAT 32 file system. If that's what your system uses and you don't have a specific need for it, you could benefit by converting to NTFS. The benefit is realized through better disk performance and better data security. It's a good idea to back up your data before you do any file system conversion. To figure out what file system you have, click the Start button, right-click My Computer, and choose Manage. If your system is configured to have a My Computer icon on the desktop, you could right-click it. Either way, Windows opens the Computer Management window. The window shows a hierarchical display of tools and features on the left of the screen. If a plus sign is next to Storage, click it. The tree is expanded and you see a few items under the Storage item. Click the Disk Management option in the hierarchy. A list of your disk drives appears at the right side of the Computer Management window. At the top-right you see a list of all your system's drives. The File System column indicates the file system used for the drive. To convert an existing FAT drive to the NTFS file system, you use a program called convert.exe. You run this program from the command prompt. To convert your D: drive to NTFS, open a command prompt window by choosing Start, All Programs, Accessories, Command Prompt. In the command prompt window, type `convert d: /fs:ntfs`. If you want to convert a different drive, replace d: with the drive letter desired followed by a colon.

Continued on page 20

Chkdsk

Users old enough to remember DOS days may remember a utility called Chkdsk, which stands for check disk. It's a command-line utility that checks the operating system and disk drive for any errors, and optionally fixes them. A command-line utility is one that you run from a command-line. The Chkdsk utility is available in WinXP. It doesn't offer anything different from Windows' disk tools, but some people like using a command-line utility. To use it, follow these steps: 1. Open a command prompt window by choosing Start, All Programs, Accessories, Command Prompt. 2. Enter the proper commands to switch to the drive you want to check. For instance, if you want to check drive E:, then type E: and press the Enter key. The drive you specify is made the current drive. 3. Type chkdsk and press Enter. 4. Using Chkdsk without any parameters runs the program in anything; it only reports what it finds. If you want Chkdsk to fix errors, use the chkdsk /f command instead. The Chkdsk program goes through three checks before reporting its findings: 1. Checks the file system to make sure that all the file links are valid. 2. Checks the system indexes for errors. 3. Checks (on NTFS drives) security descriptors to make sure that file security is intact. You cannot run Chkdsk in fix mode on a disk that's in use. (An in-use drive is one that has files open.) If you try, the program informs you that the disk is in use and gives you the opportunity to "dismount the volume." If you instruct Chkdsk to do this, all the open files on the drive are closed and the drive is made inaccessible. This could result in data loss. You should choose to dismount only if you're really sure you won't lose critical data. If the drive is in use and you choose not to dismount the volume, Chkdsk offers to perform the check the next time you start Windows. If you choose this option, the check is completed the next time you reboot.



Customize Windows

1) Customize the Desktop There is a lot you can do to customize the Windows XP desktop so it better meets your needs. You can add shortcuts to the desktop, change the size of the desktop font, change the background of the desktop, and switch the style of the windows. 2) Change Your Windows XP Screen Saver Windows XP provides you with several different screen saver options to choose from. Learn how to change your screen saver in Windows XP. 3) Customize the Windows XP Start Menu The Windows XP Start menu is highly configurable. You can change the size of shortcuts, the number of shortcuts, the email program listed in your Start menu, and more. 4) Add Toolbars to the XP Taskbar One of the easiest steps you can take to increase your productivity in Windows XP is to add toolbars to the XP taskbar. Depending on the toolbars you enable, you'll be able to open a file with fewer clicks, navigate to a favorite Web site with ease, or launch a program with a single click. 5) Change Sound Effects Windows allows you to change the sound effects that your computer plays for different events. Follow these steps to change your Windows computer's sound effects.

Password

If you have lost your WinXP password, here's a tip on how to find it as long as you don't have the normally hidden Administrator account password-protected. First, you'll need to start in Safe Mode. Restart your computer and continuously press the F8 key while your system is restarting. When you see the Advanced Options screen, use the arrow keys to select Safe Mode and then press ENTER. Now wait for Windows to start. When you see the Welcome or logon screen click to select the Administrator account. Unless you had previously configured a password for this account, it should automatically start loading Windows in Safe Mode. Once Windows has finished loading, click the Start menu and Control Panel. Next click User Accounts in Category View or double-click User Accounts in Classic View. If using Classic View, you should already see a list of user account. If using the Category View, you'll need to click User Accounts again. Now click the User Name for which you forgot the password and click "Create A Password/Change A Password." Enter your new password in each of the first two fields and then enter a password hint in the third field. Click Create/Change Password. If you don't want other users to have access to your files, click "Yes, Make Private" when prompted. Once you've changed your password, restart your computer. When the Welcome screen appears again, you should be able to log on with your new password.

If your PC can't display or record TV shows, and you don't want to make DVDs from your camcorder footage, then save a few bucks by sticking with Windows Vista Home. It's fine for word processing, e-mail, and the Internet. If you want to burn DVDs and/or record TV shows on your PC, then pony up the cash for Windows Vista Premium. People who run Web servers on their PC -- and you'll know if you're doing it -- will want Windows Vista Business. Dedicated gamers with hot-rod PCs will want Windows Vista Ultimate for its extra gaming tweaks. Plus, it has everything in the previous versions -- there's no chance of missing a feature you spot on somebody else's PC. Computer techies who work for businesses will argue

with their boss over whether they need Windows Business or Windows Enterprise versions.



Google — The Rest of the Story

Pim Borman
SW Indiana PC Users Group, Inc.

New, Best and Worst

ALAMODE COLUMNS

If you only use Google the way I do, using keywords to search the Web, you're like the polar bear walking on top of an iceberg, ignorant of all that's underneath. As scientists are finding out in the Antarctic, there is an awful lot to be learned from drilling down into the ice below, and there is a lot to be learned by drilling down in the Google menus. Go to www.google.com, click on more..., and in the pop-up window click on even more..., and you'll find a page full of links to Google offshoots.

I'll just list some of them here, as space permits, but you may want to go see for yourself. Google News (news.google.com) presents a current news update worth being bookmarked for a quick check on what's going on in the world. Google Finance (finance.google.com/finance) has all the latest financial news. Google Alerts (www.google.com/alerts) sends email updates on the topics of your choice. Monitor a developing news story, get the latest on a celebrity or event, or keep tabs on your favorite sports teams. This site is still in beta. Froogle (froogle.google.com) is the place to go for online shopping. If you like to browse through catalogs, go to Google Catalogs (catalogs.google.com). Find local businesses as well as directions for getting somewhere with Google Maps (maps.google.com/maps). Use Google Checkout (google.checkout.com) to set up a Google account with which you can order from many participating stores and be protected against online fraud.

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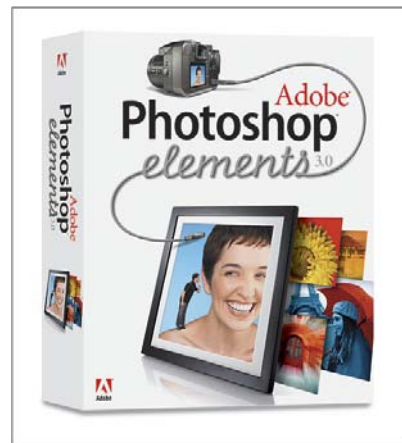
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Get precise answers to specialized queries from your mobile phone or device
-  **Google Desktop**

Continued on page 22

Rebates With Manners?

I recently purchased a copy of Adobe Photoshop Elements. It came with a \$20 upgrade rebate offer for which almost any photo-editing program, including Picasa2, passed muster. I sent in the box tab with a Xerox copy of my old MS PhotoDraw disc and the invoice. To my surprise, I received an email, several days later, acknowledging receipt of my submission. A week later, I received a notice that "Your rebate check was mailed on 09-Apr-2007. Please allow at least 30 days for delivery." So far, so surprisingly good. I received the check on April 25, not had for, maybe, surface mail from India.



Super Internet Creation?

Many newspapers carried an Associated Press article by Anick Jesdanun, dated April 14, 2007, about movements afoot to create a new and improved Internet from scratch to replace the current one. As the article states, "many believe a clean slate approach is the only way to truly address security, mobility and other challenges..." For some time this has been the dream of university researchers trying out new concepts, but now Industry is playing a bigger role this time, and law enforcement is bound to make its needs for wiretapping known. Sounds ominous. The National Science Foundation is sponsoring several projects toward the goal of establishing an experimental network known as the Global Environment for Network Innovations, or GENI. Major universities are involved, as well as the Defense Department. The European Union has its own independent efforts underway.

The current Internet and its World Wide Web superstructure, with all its shortcomings, is a truly wonderful achievement. Twenty years ago, no one in his wildest dreams could have foreseen the worldwide scope and the extent to which it has become an integral part of our civilization. It demonstrates how natural evolution can achieve the unthinkable. And that should now be replaced by a politically correct product, created by committees of programmers and approved by international governments and industry? Lord help us. Let's stick with evolution.

(If you want to read the original article use Google to search for Jesdanun Associated Press. Thanks to Linda Gonse, editor of the Orange County PCUG, for bringing the article to my attention).

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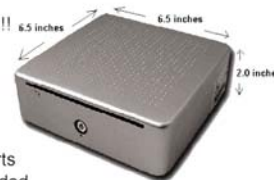
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YouTube Revolutionizes the Internet!

by **Linda Gonse**, Editor & Webmaster, Orange Country IBM PC Users' Group, California, Editor@orcopug.org, www.ocropug.org

Just when I thought creative ideas were running out for ways to use the Internet, along comes YouTube, www.youtube.com. Its content includes movie and TV clips, music videos, and amateur works — such as video-blogging. The innovative site's popularity is staggering. Almost 20 million visitors browse YouTube each month, according to Nielsen/NetRatings. And, in confirmation of YouTube's originality, Time magazine named it the "Invention of the Year" in 2006.

Although I only discovered YouTube in December 2006, it was founded in February 2005. In about a year and a half, YouTube has been so successful Google sealed the deal to buy it in November 2006 for \$1.65-billion! Not bad for a site that was launched with a video of a co-founder's cat playing with a dangling string!

Now, "Users upload 6500 new videos to the site every day," according to a January 2007 Time magazine article. Many of the videos are taken with home camcorders and cell phones. In fact, videos that showed L.A. police repeatedly punching a suspect on the ground, a college student being tasered, and an outraged comedian yelling disparaging ethnic descriptions, were shown on television news after first being uploaded to YouTube. These homemade videos, which were a sensation on the news, initially prompted me to check out the site.

Incredibly, YouTube viewers watch 100 million videos each day — up from 10 million last year. The most-watched clip, with over 36+ million views is a compilation of head-butt animations inspired by the one Zinedine Zidane administered in the 2006 World Cup soccer game.

YouTube is free. You only need to sign up if you want to leave comments about the videos, rate them, or upload your own.



News Bytes

Shane Hicks, (certified certifiable)

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

Stopping USB Devices

Have you ever tried to remove a USB device (like a thumb drive or a removeable hard drive) and had Windows tell you “The device ‘Generic Volume’ cannot be stopped right now. Try stopping the device again later.”? I’ve often gotten frustrated at this message and just shut the computer down. Well, there’s a better way to solve this problem. Just head out to <http://ccollomb.free.fr/unlocker/> and download Unlocker. This handy little utility can be used to tell you what is accessing the device in question. If Unlocker fails, you can also use Process Explorer from <http://tinyurl.com/sjzno> to kill the process yourself. Alternately, if you’ve checked Optimize for Fast Removal in the Policies tab of the Drive Properties window in Device Manager, you can remove the drive without bothering with Safely Remove Hardware.

nVidia and AMD price-fixing?

The Department of Justice recently launched an investigation into the pricing of graphics cards from nVidia and AMD. Although specifics of the investigation haven’t been revealed at the time of this writing, complaints have been filed by smaller system-builders about how similar pricing is between the two major board manufacturers. There are also rumors that AMD and nVidia may have made backroom deals to have AMD do away with the ATI line of products.

AMD back in competition?

AMD took it in the chin after losing its lead to Intel in the processor war over the last year. They’ve announced successful production of their 65nm CPUs, something Intel has been doing since December of 2005. They’ve also announced their intention to ramp up production of a 45nm chip by the summer of 2008—which Intel says it has already completed and has ready for testing.

Phishing for Cell Phones

Malware writers have found a new ground for attack—your cell phone. They are using SMS (Short Message Service), otherwise known as text messages, to deliver dangerous content to your mobile devices. Such messages have been found to state that you’ve been subscribed to a service that will charge you a certain fee per day until you unsubscribe. It provides you with a URL, which leads to a Trojan, a data harvesting site, or any other type of phishing scheme you can imagine.

Cross-site Scripting

By this time, we’ve all become accustomed to warnings about phishing schemes that come into your e-mail claiming to be from your financial institution or favorite Web store. But, if the link points to a legitimate domain and your phishing filter doesn’t send you a warning about the link are you safe?

Not anymore. Online scam artists have figured out how to turn a legitimate website against itself. It’s a method called cross-site scripting (or XSS), and it exploits a hole that affects hundreds of sites. Legitimate websites often use a script to help direct visitors to different parts of the site. But bad guys are constantly probing these scripts as a way to bypass antiphishing filters and get you to click a link that delivers your (and your personal information) right to the attacker.

I found an example in PC World. If you type <http://www.google.com/url?q=http://www.pcworld.com> into your browser, you might think your destination would be Google, but that’s only the first stop. This URL calls a script hosted at Google that tells the search engine you just clicked a link in a search result pointing at PC World’s web site. You are sent there instead.



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Most antiphishing filters only validate the first domain name in the URL, which leaves you vulnerable if the second part is the actual phishing site.

So, how to you avoid this problem? Lance James, chief scientist at Secure Science, a company that tracks cybercriminals who engage in theft of financial information, recommends Netcraft Toolbar (which is found at <http://toolbar.netcraft.com>), which comes in versions for both IE and Firefox. This tool looks for phishing URLs throughout the web address.

Give Your USB Key the Boot

So you don't have a USB floppy drive, but you need to boot a machine and install F6 RAID or IDE drivers? One cheap solution is to grab one of your old 64MB or 128MB USM thumb drives and turn it into a bootable floppy drive. We could spend two pages explaining how to do it manually, but the easiest way is to download Hewlett-Packard's handy-dandy HP Drive Key Boot Utility from <http://tinyurl.com/kaytz>. This app takes all the guesswork out of building a bootable USB key and can emulate either a bootable hard drive or floppy. All you need is your USB thumb drive, an image of the floppy you want to install (available from Bootdisk.com), and a few minutes.

Beating the F6 driver installation floppy limitation

Three options:

1. Buy Vista, which allows you to load drivers from a floppy, hard drive, or USB dongle.
2. Use a USB floppy drive.
3. Slipstream a Windows installation CD, which will automatically install the appropriate drivers without the need for a floppy disk. The nLite utility helps you create such a disk (<http://www.nliteos.com>).

Add HD-DVD support to your PC

Microsoft's external USB Xbox 360 HD-DVD reader, which sells for \$199.00, is capable of being connected to your PC. All you have to do is plug it in to a USB port and connect to Microsoft Update, where Microsoft has added driver support for the product. To have a complete HD-DVD capable system, all you need to add is DVD playback software that supports HD-DVD formats and a video card / monitor combination that supports HDCP. You can check your hardware compatibility by using a Cyberlink utility at <http://tinyurl.com/ybhbwx>.



The Switcher



...the ongoing tale of a Man and his Mac Finance Your New Mac

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

If you're like me, when you see a new line of Macs come out, you start thinking about upgrading. However, my wife and I have a strict "finance" policy. In other words, if I want a new Mac, I have to raise some money by selling the old Mac. In the past, I've found the easiest way to do this is to throw the old Mac up on eBay. But how do you make sure that you're getting the most out of your Mac when you sell?

MacWorld conducted an interview with Jim "Griff" Griffith in April of 2007. He's the author of The Official eBay Bible, and he had some advice in the following areas:

1. What's the first thing someone should do when putting a Mac up on eBay?

Jim advises taking clear and complete pictures of everything. Include as many of the original accessories as possible (to make your system complete). Make certain the picture looks good by placing it against a solid background.

2. How do you know how much your Mac is worth?

Do some research on eBay, itself. You can actually do a search on the model of Mac you're selling and view what previous auctions have gone for. Pay attention to what your system has sold for recently and you'll have a good idea what you might expect to get. Be reasonable with your starting bid. People go to eBay looking for a bargain. If you start the bidding for a \$100 item at \$90, no one is going to start bidding. You're actually better off starting low (like at \$10) to get interest in your system and start a bidding war.

3. Should you use a Buy It Now price?

The advantage of Buy It Now is that, if your system is priced right to gain someone's interest, the Auction can be concluded quickly. While many use eBay for the Auction style of sales it provides, there are several people who don't like getting sniped at the last minute—they'd prefer just to pay a reasonable price for the item. Using a Buy It Now price can help you close these types of sales.

4. How long should you list your item?

As a general rule, Jim points out that the rarer your item is, the more you benefit by leaving it up longer. If you're not in a rush, leave the item up for seven to ten days.

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The Lazy Webmaster

Accessible Web design

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!

We're all familiar with accessible design in the physical world. Grab bars in the bathroom. Sidewalk cuts. Wheelchair ramps bypassing the stairs. Automatic doors. Close captioning for the hearing impaired. We've also all noticed that these modifications are useful even to those of us without disabilities. Sidewalk cuts make it easier for moms with strollers to walk downtown. The ramp is a godsend when you are trailing a wheeled suitcase. That automatic door in the library sure helps when you have your arms full of books.

Accessible design for the Web follows the same principles.

A blind person may use a screen reader program that can't navigate unlabelled graphical icons. The same design principles that make a Web page accessible to the blind user also help people who turn off their graphics because they have a slow modem.

People with low vision often increase the font size on a web page. So do I. Some design techniques allow this; some lock in the font size and are not considered accessible.

A deaf person can't hear the audio track on an online video. Neither can the hearing person who uses the Internet in a public place like a library where the computers don't have speakers and sound cards.

The rules for accessibility can get quite complicated, especially if a site is required to comply with Federal or State accessibility rules. (Read the Federal rules: <http://www.section508.gov/>). However, there are some simple things every webmaster can do to make his or her site more accessible.

The basic rule is to write good code. Screen reader programs are less forgiving than Netscape or Internet Explorer. If you forget to close a tag, for example, the entire process might seize up.

There are tools that can help you get it right. One of them is A-Prompt <http://aprompt.snow.utoronto.ca/>, a free program that will scan your site, identify problems and offer suggestions to correct them, all in a user-friendly interface.

Another tool is Bobby <http://webxact.watchfire.com/>, an online service that will scan through your pages one by one and point out accessibility errors.

One of the neater tools I found is the free Web Accessibility Toolbar, from the National Library Information Service in Australia. It uses a technique called "bookmarklets" to install a toolbar on your browser. You can select from dozens of different tests from analyzing your code to simulating the Web experience for different users. Download <http://www.visionaustralia.org.au/info.aspx?page=614>.

Getting it right the first few times is difficult, but once you become aware of the principles of accessible design it becomes second nature.

As a minimum, graphics should be identified by using the "alt" tag. The format for this is

```
.
```

If a graphic cannot be viewed, the alternate text will appear. If the ALT tag is not used, a blank box will show on the screen – not very useful.

You can include a long description in the alt tag but it has some quirks.

When the graphics are disabled, only as much of the text as will fit in a space the size of the graphic will show permanently on the screen. If it is a big picture, all of it might fit. If it is small, none of it, or only a word or two, will show. When you hover your mouse over the graphic all of the words will show but they will only stay on the screen for about five seconds.

So, keep descriptions short, but make them meaningful. Label them all. If a graphic is purely decorative, I usually call it "decorative doo-dad." Sometimes you may need a longer description than can be fit into the alt tag. There are several techniques for accomplishing this.

First, you can include the additional information elsewhere on the page, perhaps as a caption to the graphic or as descriptive text elsewhere on the page. Your goal is to make sure that everyone can get the information they came for. If you show a map to give directions to your business, also include textual directions.

Second, you can include a “D” link. The D stands for description and is placed to the right of the graphic. It links to another page that contains a more detailed description. It is fairly discreet and people who use screen reader programs will know what it means.

Finally, you can use the LONGDESC (long description) tag. The format is:

```
.
```

LONGDESC is not supported by Internet Explorer or Netscape but is supported by screen reader programs. The link takes you to another page (which you must create) that contains the longer description. You can create a separate page for each description or include all of the descriptions on one page and direct people to the right spot by using the NAME tag. The format for this would be:

```
.
```

Another visual consideration is color combinations. As many as one in twelve of your users may have some sort of color blindness; the most common is protanopia, red/green color blindness, caused by the absence of red cones. I remember one of the first PowerPoint presentations I attended. The poor briefing officer had slaved over his slide show for days. When he showed his first chart the general blew his stack: he was colorblind and all the pie charts and bar graphs were meaningless blobs. The presentation had to be done over using patterns rather than colors for the data fills. Oops.

At Wickline <<http://colorfilter.wickline.org/>> you can run your Web site through 11 different online checks for color problems: it's enlightening!

Hearing impaired users have different challenges.

More and more Web content is multimedia: audio or video files, or Flash files. The ideal solution is to provide a full transcript for such files, but that is time consuming and not always feasible. An alternative is to caption audio files; one free program that helps you do that is MAGpie, the media access generator developed by the National Center for Accessible Media. It's a free download <<http://ncam.wgbh.org/webaccess/magpie/>>.

Accessible Web design is not only a kindness to your users with disabilities; it makes for a better overall experience for all of your users. It's not a lazy technique, but it is an essential one.

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The Graphics Guy

Softening Portraits

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>.

Often the problem with a well-focused photograph is that every flaw and blemish in your subject's face is too apparent. In short, it is too sharp (Figure 1). This month I will discuss a great method for using Adobe Photoshop to soften your subject without obliterating all of the detail making your subject unrecognizable.



Figure 1

First, duplicate the background layer by selecting Duplicate Layer from the Layer menu (Figure 2). In my example, I have named the new layer "Soft Background."

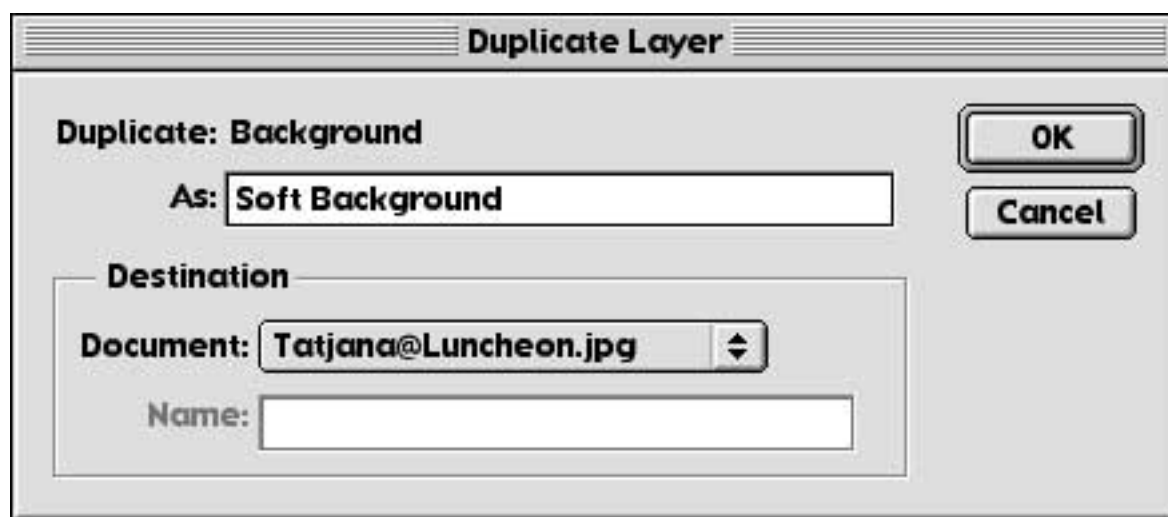


Figure 2

Next, select the new layer and blur it using the Gaussian Blur filter (from the menu choose Filter: Blur: Gaussian Blur) (Figure 3). You need to blur it enough to soften the imperfections, but not so much that it is an unrecognizable mass. For this photograph, I used a five pixel radius blur. Set this layer to about 70% opacity using the Opacity slider on the Layers Pallet (Figure 4).



Figure 3

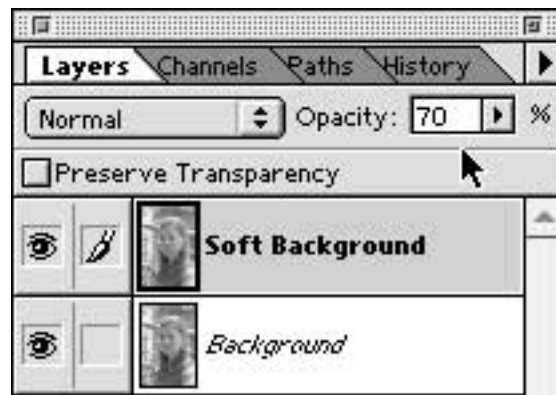


Figure 4

At this point, I want to bring back some of the detail on the critical areas of the face, the eyes and mouth, as well as the earring. These are the areas that we notice first when viewing a portrait. To make sure that your photograph still looks like it is in focus, it is important to preserve this detail.

To do this, add a Layer Mask to the "Soft Background" layer (Layer: Add Layer Mask: Reveal All). Use the Paintbrush tool with a soft edged brush set to a low opacity (about 20% is good) in the Paintbrush Options Pallet. Paint with black on the layer mask to bring more detail from the underlying layer (Figure 5). Paint over the eyes, mouth and earrings especially. With the low opacity setting on the paintbrush, you may have to go over these areas several times to bring back the amount detail that you want.

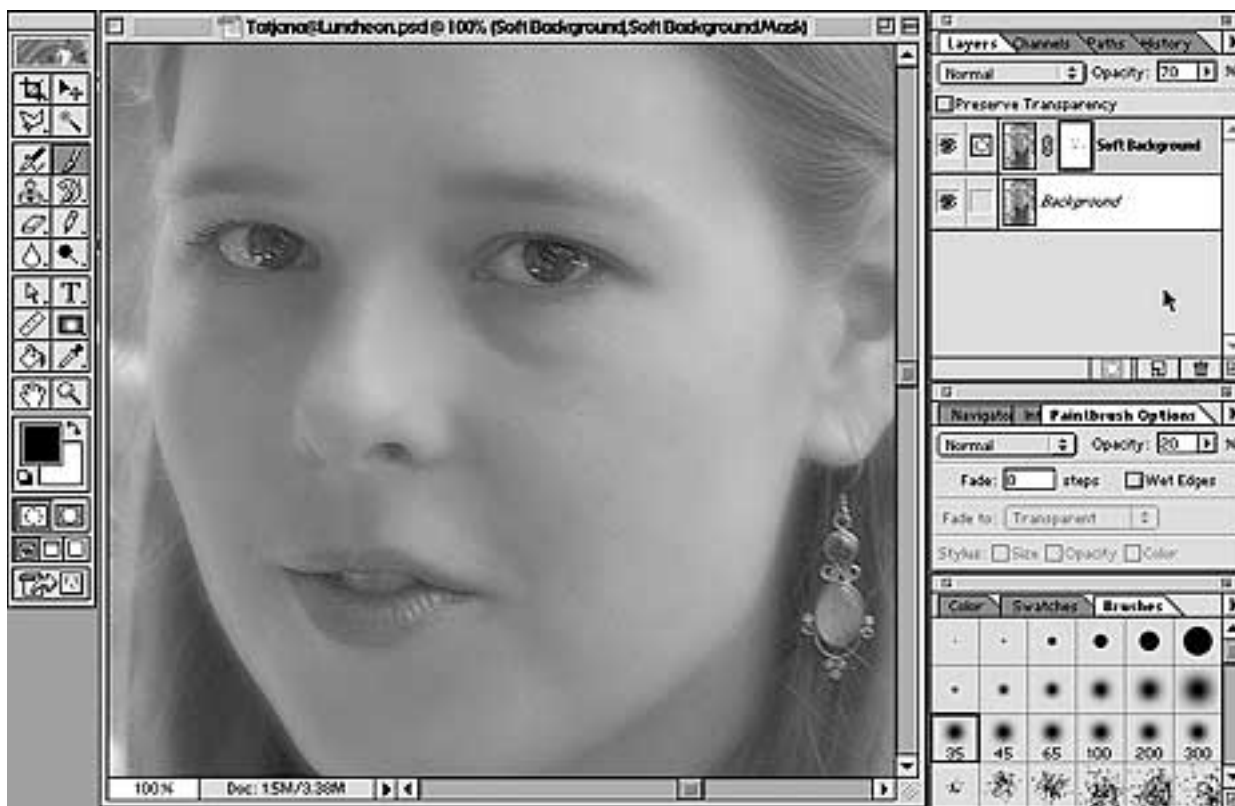


Figure 5

Lastly, after you save off your Photoshop file with the layers (The Photoshop format, .PSD, is the only format that you can save with layers), flatten the image (Layer: Flatten Image)

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Microsoft Works - Word Processing Docs

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>

Last month we finished up with **Use Word Processor Shortcuts**. Now we'll move on to the Related Topics for this area. The list below is found by scrolling

Related topics


[Move or copy text](#)

[Align text in a paragraph](#)

[Change the way text looks in a document](#)

to the bottom of the Works Help window below the Shortcuts. The first topic is seen below. This process can be very helpful when polishing a document. As you

Move or copy text

 What is the difference between moving and copying text?

- 1 Select the text you want to move or copy.
- 2 To move text, click **Cut** on the **Edit** menu.
- or -
To copy text, click **Copy** on the **Edit** menu.
- 3 Click in the document where you want to move or copy the text.
- 4 On the **Edit** menu, click **Paste**.

The selected text appears in the new location.

Note When you cut or copy text, the information is saved to the Clipboard, which is a temporary storage area on your computer. You can continue to paste the copied or cut text until you copy or cut other text or turn off your computer.

Tips

- You can also click **Cut**  on the toolbar to remove the selected text, and then click **Paste**  to paste the text where you want it.
- To copy the selected text, click **Copy**  on the toolbar, and then click **Paste**  to paste the text where you want it.

read over the document, you may decide that you have gotten a sentence or paragraph out of the logical order. This process will allow you to move a word, sentence, or paragraph without having to retype it. You should

note the distinction between moving and copying text.

Essentially the difference is this: To **move** text, you **cut** it from the document. This places the selected text on the clipboard, where it will remain until you **cut** or **copy** different text. The selected text, when cut is removed from the document. You may then paste it in a different location within the document. When you **copy** text, the selected text remains in its location in the document, but a copy is placed on the clipboard. This text may then be placed at another location within the document, but more logically may be placed in another document.

This whole process is available to you not just in Works, but throughout most Microsoft programs dealing with text. One of the best uses I know of is in forwarding clean text in email messages. The procedure here is to select (highlight) whatever text from the source message you wish to forward, copy it to the clipboard and paste it to a new email. This eliminates all the many >>> symbols found in so many forwarded messages. The recipients of your forwards will certainly appreciate the extra effort you expend in doing this.

You should also note that Works provides icons in the toolbar for these same processes.

The next Topic is **Align text in a paragraph**. The associated screen is seen at the top of the next page. Here you will use the **Format** menu to choose the type of alignment you wish to apply.

You may wish to add emphasis to the contents of a paragraph by changing its appearance from that of the surrounding paragraphs. For example, instead of the normal arrangement in most documents of alignment left, you can make the paragraph stand out by justifying the text, as I have in this paragraph. Note here that as in many newspaper columns, each line begins and ends at the side of the column.

Here again I can demonstrate the **Copy** function by copying the above paragraph to the next page and using a different alignment. I'll highlight the paragraph and then use the Copy tool to place it on the clipboard.





Align text in a paragraph

- 1 Select the paragraph whose alignment you want to change.
- 2 On the **Format** menu, click **Paragraph**.
- 3 If it's not already selected, click the **Indents and Alignment** tab.
- 4 Under **Alignment**, click the alignment option you want.
Works displays a preview of the paragraph format in the dialog box.
- 5 Click **OK**.

Note If you don't like the new alignment, click **Undo Paragraph Formatting** on the **Edit** menu.

Tip

You can also use buttons on the **Formatting** toolbar to change the alignment of selected text.

To	Click
Align text to the left	
Align text to the center	
Align text to the right	
Justify text	

I'll then **paste** it into the area below and change the type of alignment to **Center**.

You may wish to add emphasis to the contents of a paragraph by changing its appearance from that of the surrounding paragraphs. For example, instead of the normal arrangement in most documents of **alignment left**, you can make the paragraph stand out by **centering** the text, as I have in this paragraph. Note now that each line is centered in the column. .

You should also note that I edited the paragraph after pasting to reflect what I wanted to demonstrate. Once again, the same functions are available on the **Formatting** toolbar.

As I mentioned earlier, these processes are available in other software. The changes I just demonstrated were effected using the tools in PageMaker.

Finally we'll look at the topic **Change the way text looks in a document**. (You may remember that we touched on this from another angle in the July issue.) This window appears at the top of the next column. The first paragraph gives a brief rundown of the things you can do. The **Quick Tour** will allow you to review everything we've covered on these pages. Note that there are five items listed under **What do you want to**

do? First of these is **Change the font, style, or size of text**.

Change the way text looks in a document

In Works, it's easy to change the way text appears in a document. For example, you can change the **font** from Times Roman to Arial. You can make a word **bold** or *italic*, change the **color**, or make text **larger**. You can even add a shadow behind words or make text appear embossed or engraved.



[Quick Tour](#)

What do you want to do?

[Change the font, style, or size of text](#)

[Apply underlining to text](#)

[Change the color of text](#)

[Add embossing, shadow, or other special effects to text](#)

[Apply strikethrough, superscript, or subscript formatting to text](#)

I have been doing some of this throughout this article. You'll note that again you have two ways to access these changes. The Font menu under **Formatting** allows you to **bold** text, change the TYPE FACE , underline it , or *make it Italic*. There are a number of other effects also offered. The Formatting toolbar also provides these effects.

The second item **Apply underlining to text** you've seen above - it's on the same menu as above.

The third item is **Change the color of text**. This can be done either from the Format/Font menu, or the toolbar. Of course, you may only see this in the pdf version of the Journal.

Item Four is **ADD EMBOSsing, SHADOW, OR OTHER SPECIAL EFFECTS TO TEXT**. These may also be accessed from the Format/Font menu under Effects. There are nine check boxes from which to choose. A Sample window below lets you view the effects before you actually apply them.

Finally, you have **Apply strikethrough, superscript, or subscript formatting to text**. These are also available from the Effects menu check boxes.

If you don't like what you see in the Sample window, just click Undo Font formatting in the edit menu.

That pretty well wraps up this discussion on changing the way text looks in a document. Once again, try out all of these things on your own. You may find that they can be very helpful in creating just the special appearance you want in a document. Remember that the document may be just about anything your imagination suggests to you.

Checkmate

Berry F. Phillips, a member of ccOKC and a frequent contributor to the eMonitor, Computer Club of Oklahoma City, www.ccokc.org, bfpdata@1access.net.

Man-vs-machine has been a theme that has intrigued the public for many ears. The Turk was a chess playing automaton that was a sensation in Europe in the 1770s. The Turk was a wooden cabinet with a chess board on top played by a life-sized mannequin dressed in Turkish style. This mysterious device could play against and often defeat human chess opponents including Napoleon Bonaparte and Benjamin Franklin. In truth, the Turk was a clever illusion as the cabinet concealed a human chess expert who moved the Turk's arm and played the games. The Turk was created by Wolfgang von Kempleur and was not only a success in Europe but later in the United States. Eventually the Turk was no longer popular and was destroyed in a fire in Philadelphia in 1864. Edgar Allen Poe wrote a widely read 1836 essay proposing that the Turk concealed a human chess player.

The best known of the man-vs-machine devices was the world-famous Deep Blue. Deep Blue began as a chess program named Chipset (later Deep Thought) and was created by Fenghsuing Hsu and Thomas Anantharman at Carnegie Mellon University. The creators later joined IBM Corporation which supported the development of the system. Deep Thought was eventually renamed Deep Blue, a twist on IBM's corporation nick name, Big Blue. Deep Blue was a RS/6000 SP parallel processor with specialized microchips for chess and calculated 200 million chess moves per second. Deep Blue lost a six-game match to world chess champion, Gary Kasparov, in 1996. But in the 1997 rematch, Deep Blue made history by defeating Kasparov 3.5 games to 2.5 games.

Many in the chess world believe that Gary Kasparov is the greatest human chess player. He had never lost a game previously and was unnerved at his loss and began ascribing almost human features to the computer. While Deep Blue had access to all of Kasparov's games, Kasparov was not allowed to see Deep Blue's previous games for study. He received \$400,000 for his loss and would have received \$700,000 if he had won. IBM retired Big Blue after the match.

Another famous chess playing computer was Deep Fritz backed by a German company ChessSise and written by two programmers, Franz Marsh and Mathias Feist. The word, deep, is a nod to IBM's Deep Blue. Deep Fritz was in the news in 2001 when a chess match ended in a 4-4 tie with Russian chess expert, Vladimir Krammick.

In 2003, the long awaited chess match between Gary Kasparov and Deep Junior, a three-time world champion computer developed by Amir Ban and Shay Bushinsky who were both from Israel was played in New York City. The match ended in a 3.0 to 3.0 tie. Kasparov quipped to his mother, "at least I didn't lose." Well, this subject is getting too "deep" for me. Now I don't have to worry about anymore literary "moves" since I have been officially "checkmated."



What's Your E-mail License Number?

By Steve Bass, Pasadena IBM Users Group

Washington is considering legislation that will force you to get a license before you can send e-mail. No, don't worry, you'll still be able to receive e-mail without any restrictions. Sure I'm kidding. But it's no joke: People send out lots of email, with much of it needlessly long, valueless, bandwidth-hogging, inaccurate, and, of course, dumb. (Did I miss anything? Right—e-mails full of Fwd: Fwd: Fwd: and >>.) Over the years, I've collected e-mail tips: ways to help you create e-mail that not only doesn't annoy others, but actually makes your e-mail worth reading.

Think in Paragraphs: You'd be surprised how many e-mails have one, long paragraph. Oddly enough, you may be using paragraphs but your e-mail program may be missing the hard carriage returns. Suggestion: send yourself, or a buddy, an e-mail and see how it looks. If necessary, add two "returns" between paragraphs when creating the e-mail.

Write Short: Keep your sentences short and limit yourself to three short paragraphs. Go beyond the Bass Int'l. limit of, say, four paragraphs, there's a good chance it won't be read.

No Subject? Adios: Here's my steadfast rule: If I don't know you very well and your message has a blank subject line, it goes into the trash. The reason is there's a strong possibility a virus or worm is attached.

Use Smart Subjects: Say the right thing in the subject line and your recipient gets fair warning what to expect in the message. For instance, even before I started using Yahoogroups, I started my message subject with "PIBMUG." For one thing, it helps AOL and Hotmail users, the people who get tons of spam, sort out real messages. (Others thought PIBMUG messages were spam, but that's another story.)

More important, it makes applying rules or filters to e-mail easy. For example, after a Home Office column hits the newsstand, I sometimes receive 100 messages a day. That's in addition to the usual stuff from PR flaks and PIBMUG correspondence. So I've encouraged everyone who sends me jokes to start the subject line with "jokes" enabling me to separate them from business messages.

"Fwd Fwd Fwd": Of course if you get lots of email, your threshold for junk isn't very high and subjects can give strong clues for what to delete right off the bat. For instance, if I see more than two "Fwd: Fwd:" in the subject, it's immediately sent to the trash. Adios.

That's Not Funny: Make sure you at least read the joke before sending it. That's a great technique for determining if it's really funny. No, really—people often send me lame jokes that are excruciatingly bad. Keep a mental note of the type of joke you send and match it up with their response (or non-response). You may notice you rarely hear back when you send a text joke but often get an "LOL" from a cartoon.

Want to see if people are reading your mail? Flood them with lame jokes—I mean fifth generation forwards of ribald stories or cartoons that weren't funny when they first ran in Playboy 20 years ago. Then slip in a legit e-mail and see if you get a response. And if you're still going to send jokes, remove the millions of ">>>" brackets. The damn things make everything difficult to read.

No Reply Needed: I send dozens of e-mails each day with an explicit message that the recipient needn't reply. That's only polite because in many times the e-mail's just an FYI. So right above the message, I type, "This is just an FYI so no reply is necessary or expected. —Steve."

Who Are You? Many users haven't changed the "Reply to" name in their e-mail program, and it drives me crazy trying to figure out who's writing. For instance, one person uses a period—that's right, a dot—as his name. So when I look at the e-mail header, I haven't a clue (and still don't) who he is. Another person didn't know what to use so she stuck "Netscape" into the field figuring, well, something needed to go there. Head for your e-mail program's Options and poke around until you find a spot that asks for a "Reply with" or "Real Name" and put in your name.

Avoid HTML: Stick with straight text when replying or sending messages on lists. Not everyone's e-mail program can read all your fancy fonts and formatting.

Keep Files to Yourself: Attachments are usually frowned upon on mail lists to avoid any chance of getting a virus.

Steve Bass is a Contributing Editor with PC World and runs the Pasadena IBM Users Group. He's also a founding member of APCUG.

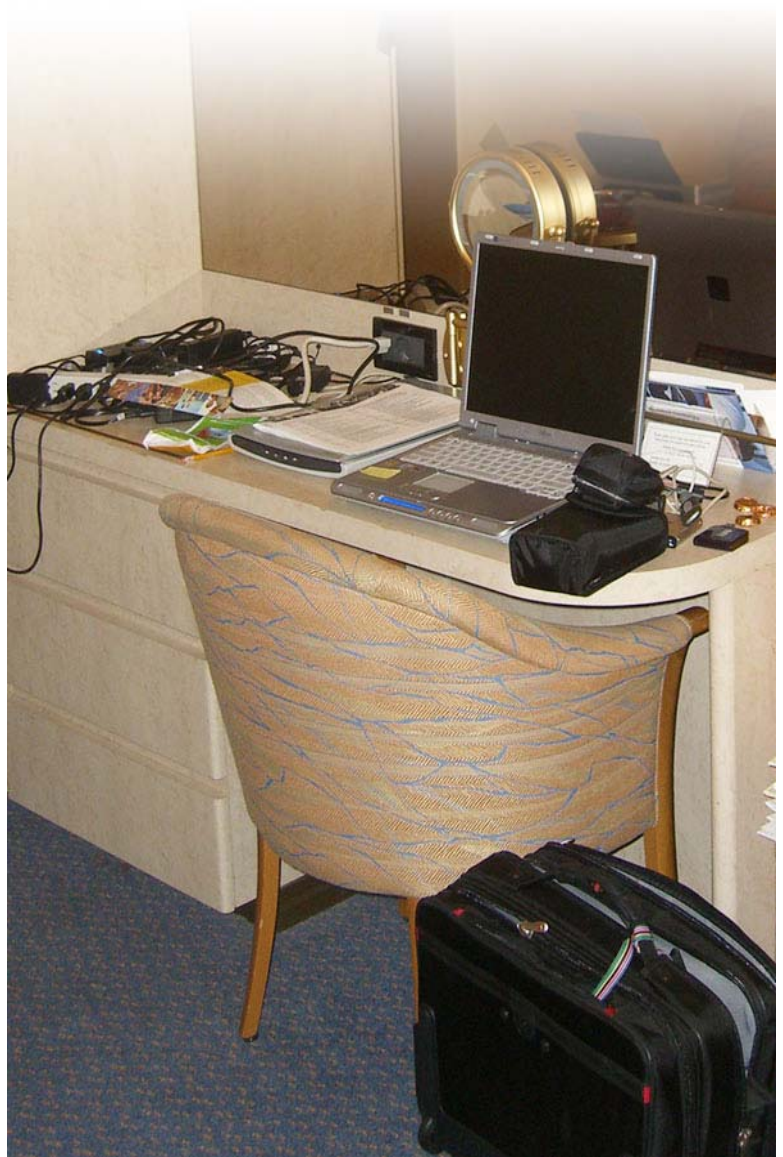


Traveling with Computers

by Diane George, Webmaster, PC Community,
Hayward, Calif., <http://www.pcc.org>,
digeorge@sbcglobal.net

My husband and I have taken several cruises and both of us do some other traveling for business and pleasure that keeps us in a hotel for several days at a time. Being addicted to using our computers, it's impossible to travel without our notebook computers. We both take our own notebook computers. As a result we need to do a little additional planning to take what we need to connect and use both computers.

Continued on page 37



First item is a small power strip. We found some lightweight ones with a short power cord and four outlets that are easy to fit into a computer bag. Because we also take digital cameras, it helps to be able to plug in several devices at once, computers and chargers. While most hotels have multiple outlets, cruise ships typically have one outlet so the strip is doubly important.

Did I mention that we use bags on wheels that can be carried on an airplane? The basics need to fit into that bag. Usually there is enough space for some personal items (e.g., toothbrush, underwear, medications).

We take lots of spare batteries—neither one of us can stand to use the touch pads on our notebooks so we use cordless mice. The cameras also use batteries. Plan to bring the used batteries back with you as most places don't provide for disposal of spent batteries.

When we are going to be staying in a hotel, we take a small wireless access point—it's designed for travel and comes with a carrying case that includes the Ethernet cable that is needed. The one we have is made by Linksys and is slightly larger than a deck of cards. For some hotels, this will allow us to simultaneously use an Internet connection. This will usually work where hotels provide free Internet access—it doesn't help when there is a charge because they track the user's IP address for billing purposes.

Expect to pay about \$10.00 a day for Internet access at those hotels that charge—they may have wireless access, but be sure to pack an Ethernet cable in your computer bag in case they don't. There are still some hotels that only offer a modem connection, but in general most hotels now offer some type of Internet access.

On board ship, connections are provided via satellite and the cost is fairly high. On our most recent cruise, the basic charge was 75 cents per minute on a pay as you go basis. You could also purchase longer time periods for a lower rate per minute, e.g., 100 minutes for \$55.00. Connections suffer from some lack of reliability due to weather and satellite positions. The ship offered wireless access in a few locations for people with their own computers. The charges applied whether you used the ship's computers or your own. We opted not to use the on board access because the cost did not seem reasonable. On other trips, we used on-shore Internet cafes to review email, in Mexico, Costa Rica and the Caribbean. This trip (Hawaii) we did not find any that were near the port.

One of the conveniences of having Internet access on board was the ability to check-in online for our flights while we were still at sea. Southwest Airlines, in particular, allows you to check in 24 hours before your flight time. If you check in online within the first couple of hours, you will usually be assigned to the A group—first in line to board. The ship offered a short (30 minutes) package for \$12.95. I was able to check in four people at Southwest and had a few minutes to spare—nobody said it was fast!



Online check in requires you to print your boarding passes. At many hotels, you can get the concierge to print your boarding pass—you give them the confirmation number and they will do it for you. On the ship, we could have paid for the Internet access and to have the passes printed, but instead we took a printer with us so we were able to print our own. I saved the passes as PDF files and then took them back to our stateroom for printing.

In prior years, we took a small photo printer with us, but found that to be too limiting. We bought an HP 460, an inkjet printer, which prints photos and 8 ½ x 11 pages as well. It was designed to be mobile, so is fairly compact and lightweight. It can be tucked into a suitcase among your clothes. The printer has an AC adapter and a USB connection. We took a small supply of paper, both plain and photo paper tucked in the bottom of a suitcase.

Aside from printing boarding passes, we also used the printer to print photos to give to some of the friends we made during the cruise, passengers and staff. The pictures were much appreciated.

This leads to the main reason for taking the computers—we take a lot of pictures with two digital cameras. On cruises, in particular, we have to download the images in order to recover space on the memory cards. Even with multiple cards for the cameras, we would never have enough storage space without off-loading the images. We get pictures from our in-laws who travel with us and spend some time on the trip organizing the images before we get home. On the last cruise we had five days at sea before we got home, so there was plenty of time to work on them.

Another item that has been useful is a small external drive. We have a 40 gigabyte drive that is about 6 inches by 3 inches and ¾ inch thick. It connects via USB and does not require a power supply if you connect it to your computer directly. This allows us to back up the photos and to share them with each other or our traveling companions. You may also want to take a card reader if your notebook doesn't have a built-in card reader. A USB hub may also be useful.

We take a small scanner (about 1 inch thick) and a folding table. Because there is usually one desk in hotel rooms or in state-rooms, the second notebook user has to resort to using the coffee table, a chair or the bed. It's really inconvenient and hard on the back, so we have a small plastic table that comes apart and is easy to reassemble. It folds to less than 2 inches thick and fits in a medium size suitcase. You can work with a notebook and have room for a mouse. It weighs about two pounds so it's not a big burden to include it and it saves fighting over who gets the desk.

Before you leave, double check to make sure you have all the USB cables that you need, as well as the adapters for your devices. If you take a printer, be sure to include extra ink cartridges. Depending on where you travel, you may or may not be able to find what you need.



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Traveling with a video camcorder



by Joseph Asling, Video Project Coordinator, MBUG-PC (Monterey Bay Users Group – Personal Computer), Jasling@pacbell.net, www.mbug.org

Summer is here and it's time to go somewhere interesting and photogenic. Many people carry cameras when they travel and not a few of us take camcorders. Here are a checklist and a few suggestions for coming back with better video.

Pre-Departure

Equipment Checkup - Make sure your camcorder is in good shape. Run a few minutes of tape and see that it looks and sounds OK, otherwise take it in for cleaning. Allow at least two weeks for turnaround.

Camcorder Size - If you haven't bought your camcorder yet, consider the following: if you plan to do candid shots of people, buy a small, unobtrusive camcorder. Not only will it fit better in your carry-on luggage, but it will attract less attention. Also, some museums allow them in where they will reject larger camcorders because the big ones look professional.

LCD Screen - I usually shoot through the viewfinder, but an LCD screen is useful.

Computer Connection - Make sure your camcorder has an IEEE-1394 ("Firewire") or USB2 connector, whichever you need to capture to your computer.

DVD vs Tape - Some newer camcorders record to a DVD instead of tape; since it is more difficult to do computer editing with these, I recommend a camcorder which uses mini-DV tape.

Filters - ALWAYS keep a filter on your lens – a scratched filter is cheaper than a scratched lens. A transparent or UV filter is fine for most uses; tinted lenses are of less use because the auto-white balance of the camcorder tries to compensate for it. For sunny days I like a circular polarizer to suppress reflections on glass and water and to make the sky appear bluer. It also doubles as a neutral density filter. Pay the extra for good double-coated glass filters.

Sunshade - If your camcorder has a sunshade with an atypical connector, buy a sunshade which screws onto the front of the filter (I use a round rubber collapsible one).

Camcorder Stand - Tripods are big, heavy, and slow to set up. A monopod gives you much of the stability of a tripod, and if you buy one with a quick-release extension it takes only five seconds to set up. Plus, it doubles as a walking stick on difficult terrain. Spend an extra \$20 for a quick-release for the camcorder.

Lights - I don't recommend you travel with any lights. Unless you're on a professional shoot they aren't worth the trouble.



Continued on page 40

Tape Supply - Take plenty of tape – I take at least 10 hours' worth! Buy good quality brands such as Sony or Panasonic (people I trust have said bad things about TDK).

I buy Sony at www.taperesources.com but there are other reliable websites which will sell packs of five for as little as \$3 per tape. (As an aside, NEVER record with the extended time setting on your camcorder – you may not be able to play it on any other camcorder.)

Head Cleaner - Carrying a head-cleaning tape is probably a good idea, although I've never had to use it in the field.

Batteries - If you run out of power you are going to be distinctly unhappy. Buy at least one high-capacity extra battery. And don't forget to pack your recharger. If you are going abroad make sure you have two plug adapters (research what type of adapter you need for where you'll be), and that your recharger is multi-voltage.

Headsets – These are nice to have but not essential. If you have a microphone monitor output, take a compact headset (like Walkman earphones) for monitoring music. Make sure the plug is compatible.

Weatherproofing - Bring some paper adhesive tape — if you are going to be in a dirty or sandy environment seal the tape door with it so you don't get sand into the works. If you may be in the rain figure on bringing some kind of plastic cover (maybe large plastic zip lock bags).

When You're There

Rule 1: tape is cheap! - If you might want a shot, shoot it! Every shot should be at least ten seconds long if possible and if you are going to zoom, shoot several seconds before and after the zoom. You'll thank yourself when you're editing.

When you put a fresh tape in your camera, run about a minute of "throwaway" video. Most dropouts occur at the beginning and the end of a tape, and some capture programs can't handle the first few seconds of a tape.

Watch the Background - Many a shot has been ruined by a telephone pole growing out of someone's head or a distracting item behind the subject. Often moving a few feet to one side will fix the problem. A corollary to this is to find a good angle: one with clear sight lines and no-one in the way. And don't get in the way yourself. Years ago, I was in Chichicastenango and a funeral procession happened by. The mourners stopped in front of the Church – and a German tourist with a big camcorder shouldered them out of the way and started videotaping the coffin and the deceased! I cheered when the locals drove him away with rocks.

Tricks for Big Crowds- If you are in a crowd which you can't see over, hoist the camcorder up on your monopod. If you open the LCD screen and tilt it down you can see what you're shooting (so, there is a use for that screen).

Tricks for the Kids - One more use for the LCD screen — see if you can reverse it so that the people you're shooting can watch themselves while you are recording. You'll get terrific reactions from kids.

Candid Camera - If you are trying to take candid shots, hold the camera at waist level and watch the subject through the LCD screen. Before you do that go into the menu and turn off the red recorder indicator light so your subject won't know you are recording. It doesn't always work — in Morocco, one sharp-eyed fellow noticed from 30 feet away what I was doing and came over with his hand out for money. I paid him, of course.

In the Rain - Check the lens frequently when shooting in the rain. Raindrops on your video are understandable but disconcerting.

Narration - If you are shooting something which needs describing, just dictate in a low voice while you shoot; your voice will be audible on the tape. Of course you'll have to cut out the audio when you edit, so you don't want to do this over anything you will want to hear as well as see.

Consider what you will say on the voiceover when you edit the video, and make sure you have names and events correctly. I write them down in a little journal every night.

Music - Think about the music you'll use with the video and record it if you hear local musicians. I have sometimes let a tape run most of an hour just to capture live music (another reason to have plenty of tape).

Background "Chatter" - When traveling with friends, I delicately remind them that anything they say will be picked up by the camcorder. It cuts down on extraneous conversation and four-letter words in your audio!

Documentation - Make sure you label each tape with the trip, location, and tape number. When you put it back in the plastic cover, slide the little switch to lock it so you can't accidentally record over it. I keep camcorder, tapes and critical accessories in my carryon baggage. The accessories I can't fit in the carryon go in the checked luggage.

X-Ray at Security - The X-ray machines at security checkpoints have never hurt my videotape, but I'm not sure about the more powerful X-rays of checked luggage.



Free Online Mapping and Driving Directions

By Ira Wilsker, APCUG Director, Iwilsker@apcug.net,

Many of us like to use maps when we travel. Maps can be used to display driving directions and points of interest. Fortunately there are several excellent and free mapping utilities available on the internet, such as those provided by Microsoft's "Live" service, Google, Yahoo!, and AOL's Mapquest.

Mapquest (www.mapquest.com) has the honor of being one of the oldest online mapping services, and during its tenure has earned a large following. The interface on the startup page is simple, giving the user the options to enter the "Maps" option to display the image of a single location, or "Directions" to calculate driving directions. Maps generated can be displayed either in traditional graphics format, or as an aerial image with key streets labeled. If an individual map is selected, a bar at the top of the screen allows the user to locate and select from a lengthy list of local facilities including restaurants, banks, pharmacies, colleges and universities, hospitals, auto repair, and several other options. Any of the attractions listed have a link to "map", "directions to", and "directions from" such that the user can easily find the desired destinations. This feature can be invaluable to travelers and locals alike to find points of interest. Since most hotels currently offer internet access to guests, the ability to locate any activity or points of interest using the internet can be a major contributor to the joys of any trips.

One of the most useful features of any mapping website is the creation and printing of driving directions. Mapquest offers a fully featured driving direction service where up to 10 intermediate points or stops can be selected. Options include the choice of shortest distance or shortest time, avoiding busy highways, and avoiding toll roads. For those who prefer detailed return directions there is a selection "Reverse Route" which will generate detailed directions back to the starting point. One very good capability of the Mapquest driving directions is the easy option to create turn-by-turn maps to go along with the driving directions. When the driving directions are displayed on the screen, each segment has a "Map" option on the right edge of that segment. If "Map" is selected, a detailed map of just that segment will be inserted showing that turn in great detail. When the "Printer-Friendly" link is clicked, the resultant map printed will include the directions along with any map segments selected, along with a large map displaying the entire route, with smaller maps detailing the starting point and destinations.

WEBSITES:

<http://maps.live.com>

<http://maps.google.com>

<http://maps.yahoo.com>

<http://www.mapquest.com>

Start 795 Willow St
Beaumont, TX 77701
End IAH - George Bush
Intercontinental Arpt/Houston
Airport
Travel 103 mi (about 1 hour 42 mins)

Notes You can enter notes here.

795 Willow St
Beaumont, TX 77701
Drive: 103 mi (about 1 hour 42 mins)

1. Head south on Willow St toward US-90 S 289 ft
2. Turn left at North St 259 ft
3. Turn left at N Pearl St/US-90 N
Continue to follow US-90 N 0.3 mi
1 min
4. Take the I-10 W ramp to Houston 0.2 mi
5. Keep left at the fork to continue toward I-10 W and merge onto I-10 W 79.5 mi
1 hour 14 mins
6. Take exit 775A to merge onto I-610 N 6.7 mi
7 mins
7. Take exit 19B for Hardy Toll Rd N 0.5 mi
1 min
8. Merge onto Hardy Toll N 9.8 mi
8 mins
9. Take the exit toward Intercontinental Airport 0.5 mi
1 min
10. Merge onto Hardy Toll E 2.7 mi
3 mins
11. Take the exit toward JFK Blvd/John F Kennedy Blvd 0.6 mi
1 min
12. Slight left at JFK Blvd/John F Kennedy Blvd 2.1 mi
3 mins
13. Slight right at Terminal Rd N 13.1 ft

Hide Maps Overview

Start

End

Continued on page 42

The newest entry into the online mapping fray is Microsoft's Live service at maps.live.com. Microsoft uses maps created with its "Microsoft Virtual Earth" using street data NAVTEQ. One interesting feature of Live maps is the ability to show both aerial views as well as hybrid maps which combines the aerial view along with the street map. Much of the aerial imagery is from the United States Geological Survey (USGS). Live also offers a most interesting service, a 3-D "birds' eye view" where images can be displayed in a virtual 3-D window, complete with buildings and major landmarks that can be displayed from any perspective, from straight above to any selected angle. The search bar at the top of the page can display the location of any points of interest, such as restaurants.

Live offers detailed driving directions using either the flat 2-D maps, or the more sophisticated 3-D maps. When printed, the output includes detailed directions along with detailed maps. One interesting feature on Live is a display of real-time traffic conditions for major cities. As I type this, Live is displaying a Houston area map with some "moderate" incidents displayed on the map, but the color code for the Houston area highways indicates that traffic is flowing smoothly around most of the city.

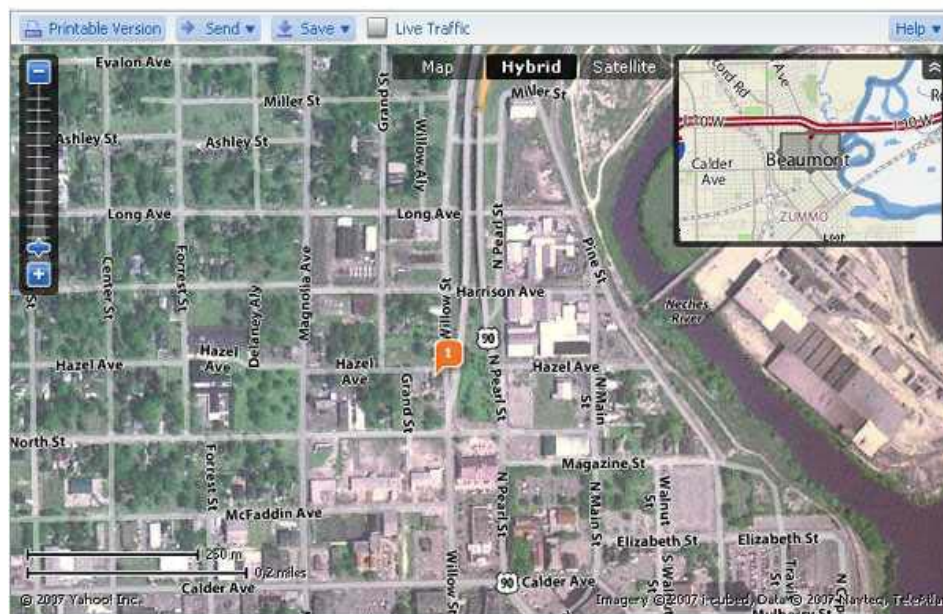
Yahoo! has recently upgraded its mapping function (maps.yahoo.com). For those who may prefer the older format, but still very usable maps and directions, Yahoo! offers a link at the top of the page "Dial-up Map Original" which will open the prior mapping service. The new Yahoo! Maps offers a choice of a traditional road map, satellite view, or hybrid combining the roads with the satellite image. Options to display attractions such as restaurants and hotels are included in Yahoo! maps.

Yahoo! offers driving directions either direct or by adding desired stops or waypoints, and the printed output contains very clear text along with a detailed route map. Yahoo! also displays real-time traffic conditions for major cities showing incidents and average speeds along the major roadways.

Google also offers a competitive mapping service at maps.google.com. As with most of the others' services, maps can be displayed as a road map, satellite view, or hybrid. Google merges its popular search engine with the ability to locate attractions and local points of interest. As is now common, Google offers road maps, satellite images, or hybrid maps. Google also offers real time traffic conditions.

Google was recently rated as the most popular source of driving directions, and its printed directions are among the most precise and easiest to read. Small maps display the details of the starting point, destination, and route summary.

With the summer upon us, and as we enter the peak driving season, a good map or two may be most helpful on our journeys. With near universal internet access in most hotels, local information can be just a few keystrokes and mouse clicks away, by utilizing these services. I would suggest that readers experiment with two or more of the above mapping services to determine personal preferences, and print driving directions from one or more of the services.



Tour the World with World Wind

by Rob Rice, a member of the Computer Club of Oklahoma City, and a computer specialist in Anchorage, Alaska, <http://www.ccokc.org/>, articles@isp.com

Lots of folks are familiar with Google Earth the free downloadable virtual globe program. Yet, I am finding that many have never heard of NASA'S World Wind. World Wind is developed at the NASA Ames Research Center and is an open-source competitor to Google Earth. While it has been around for several years, it is a fascinating piece of software that can keep you glued to your monitor for hours on end.

Like Google Earth, this free program maps the earth by superimposing images obtained from satellite imagery and United States Geological Survey aerial photography over a 3D globe. Once the 60 megabyte program has been downloaded and installed, you are treated to a true-color image of the entire Earth from space upon opening the program. The globe can be manipulated with your mouse. Use the mouse wheel to zoom from satellite altitude down to any place on earth. Hold the left button and move the mouse to rotate the globe and the right button to tilt it.

The Landsat satellite imagery and Shuttle Radar Topography Mission data allows one to experience Earth terrain in 3D, just as if you were flying low over the landscape. Visit any place in the world.

But as they say on TV, "Wait! There's more!" World Wind also comes with virtual globes of the Moon, Venus, Jupiter, Mars and the Sloan Digital Sky Server, which allows you to explore outer space.

A variety of views are available. Below is a summary from the World Wind website Blue Marble.

World Wind has a full copy of the Blue Marble, a spectacular true-color image of the entire Earth as seen on NASA's Earth Observatory: the Blue Marble.

Put together from data of a variety of satellites such as MODIS and Terra, the Blue Marble can be seen in all its glory at 1 km per pixel resolution.



Continued on page 44

Land Sat 7 – Land Sat

Using World Wind, you can continue to zoom past Blue Marble and reveal the extremely detailed seamless mosaic of Landsat 7 data.

Landsat 7 is a collection of images from 1999-2003 at an impressive 15 m per pixel resolution. It includes other color bands such as the infrared spectrum. Users will be able to browse these different sets as they become available. Any changes and updates are automatically inherited by World Wind.

Landsat 7's resolution makes it possible to see your own city, neighborhood, or landmarks in your vicinity. Seeing the whole globe like this puts the world in context with scientifically accurate data.

The complete Landsat 7 data set is too large to fit on a single machine so World Wind only downloads what you see and stores a compressed copy on your computer for later viewing.

Combining Landsat 7 imagery with Shuttle Radar Topography Mission (SRTM) Data, World Wind can display a dramatic view of the Earth at eye level. Users will literally be able to fly across the world in any direction.

In addition, World Wind can exaggerate these views so a user can easily pick out the details.

NASA SVS

Goddard Space Flight Center (GSFC) has produced a set of visually intense animations that demonstrate a variety of subjects such as hurricane dynamics and seasonal changes across the globe.

World Wind can take these animations and play them directly on the world. Anyone can immediately grasp where the event is taking place as World Wind rotates automatically into view.

MODIS

Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer or MODIS produces a set of time relevant data that's updated every day. MODIS catalogs fires, floods, dust, smoke, storms and even volcanic activity.

World Wind produces an easily customized view of this information and marks them directly on the globe. When one of these color coded markers are clicked, it downloads the full image and displays them.



Continued on page 45

MODIS images can download publication quality material at a resolution of 250 m per pixel. A new fresh set of images can be downloaded every day.

World Wind also has a "tour mode" to automatically skim through any number of samples.

World Wind is capable of browsing through and displaying GLOBE data based on any time the user wants. For example, a user can download today's (or any previous day's) temperature across the world.

You can view rainfall, barometric pressure, cloud cover, or even the student GLOBE samples themselves. Each sample comes with a temperature scale.

Country & (USA) State Borders

World Wind has a complete set of borders that traces every country and state. As you zoom into the world, the boundaries become more precise.

You can observe where mountain ridges and rivers have formed the political boundaries of today.

Place names

World Wind has a full catalog of countries, capitals, counties, cities, towns, and even historical references. The names update dynamically, by increasing in number as the user zooms in. This prevents too many names from cluttering up the screen.

It's likely that you'll find your own town no matter how big or small it is in World Wind.

Visual Tools

World Wind comes with a variety of visual guides that help the user's experience such as latitude and longitude lines, as well as extremely precise coordinate data.

These helpers can be toggled on or off any time and are viewable with any of World Wind's other features turned on.

Landmark Set

World Wind has the capability to display actual 3D models of landmarks on the

Earth. This helps to see the world in context to places a user may have been to. Those landmarks that do not have 3D models for it yet have place markers similar to how MODIS displays places of interest.

Las Cruces, NM – GRAPHIC #7

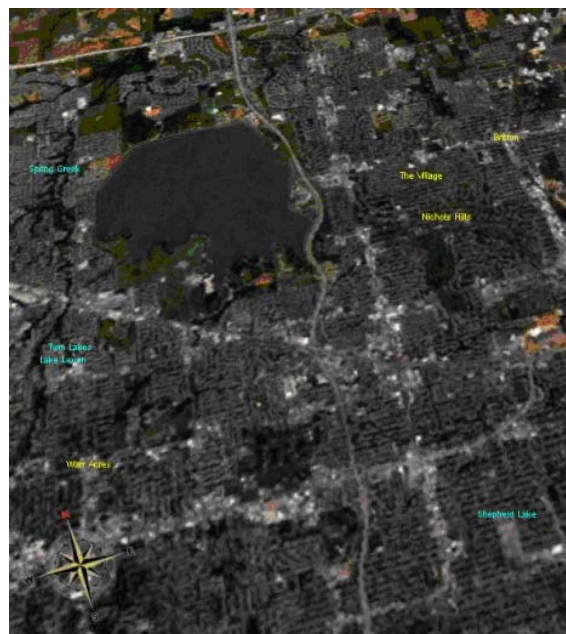
World Wind is an incredible and highly addictive program that anyone with a high speed Internet connection should not be without. Give NASA'S World Wind a try and you won't be sorry you did!

Minimum system requirements:

- Windows 2000, XP, or 2003
- 3D graphics card
- Internet connection
- Sorry, no support for Linux or Macintosh yet
- Microsoft .NET 1.1
- Microsoft DirectX 9.0c

World Wind Home Page

<http://worldwind.arc.nasa.gov/index.html>



Google Earth

By Joe Schmitt, Member of the Tampa Bay Computer Society,
jschmitt@tampabay.rr.com, www.tampa-bay.org

One of the greatest tools of the internet has always been that of maps. From the early days of the Internet www.mapquest.com was a great source for online geography. Now a myriad of new tools is available to home internet users to navigate through the world. Believe it or not, one of the biggest uses for online maps is not for that big long trip to the Grand Canyon with the kids but for finding local addresses. How many times recently have you used a service such as www.mapquest.com or maps.google.com to find that new restaurant or new store? While the online services available can be used to find the next route cross-country they are more often used locally.

Another popular role that current cartographic sites such as mappoint.msn.com serve is where a particular place is in relation to your current location. There are many times when we are watching the news and someplace like Jumbo, WV pops up; there is now a great new tool to let you explore the world virtually.

Google Earth (<http://earth.google.com>) is a new offering from Google that offers a unique spin on online cartography. While most mapping services try to offer you a straight forward approach to mapping, Google's newest tool takes quite a different tact. Described by Google as "a globe that sits in your PC," Google Earth offers a new perspective on mapping software. Like all its major competitors, Google Earth will allow you to find addresses, points of interest, or a driving route. What makes Google Earth different is the way in which items are displayed to the user. Google Earth has to install software on your machine, and once installed it needs an internet connection to display its images. Also be advised that Google Earth is resource intensive: it requires a fairly fast machine with 3D graphics capability.

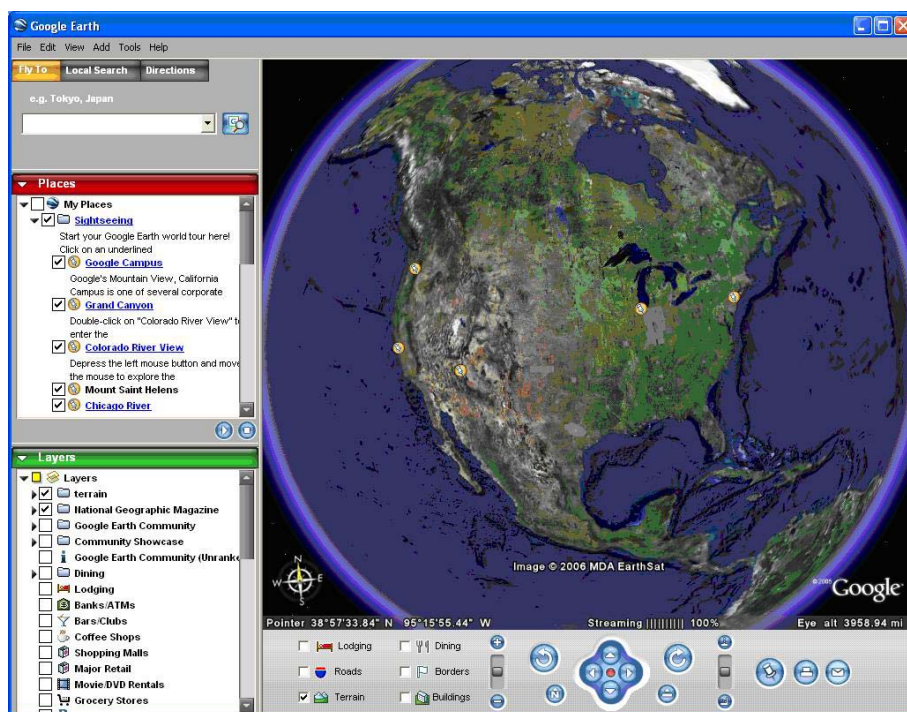
When you first start up Google Earth you see the image below:

Google Earth generates an image of the planet taken from a mosaic of satellite and aerial photographs. If you enter an address such as your home in the search bar, Google Earth doesn't just pop a map of your neighborhood but actually flies to the location. You see the image of the earth get larger and larger as if you were descending on the location from outer space. All the time as the planet moves closer, the program continually generates more detailed pictures of the surface until you are sitting above the location you are searching for.

Another great feature of Google Earth is angular display. Not only are dead top center views available but you can also tilt the plane of the viewing area to see things in the distance. Now this sounds like I should be able to tilt the image and see the windows on my house, but that just isn't possible. All the images are from satellite or aerial photographs that are also taken from straight overhead.

Topography is another feature that Google Earth incorporates makes the tilting feature quite impressive. Topography is how the terrain rises and falls in any given location. Google earth uses 3D technology to render the rise and fall of the land based on radar data gathered from multiple space shuttle missions. The images are melded with the topography and you have the impression of seeing mountains rise and canyons fall.

Not only does Google Earth provide these new ways to explore the world but they have also included the ability to include data files of your own. If you choose to upgrade to the "plus" version you can im-



port data from any of the popular GPS (Global Positioning System) receivers currently available. You can import waypoints, routes, and tracks from the unit.

Also, you can import images, such as a topographic map, and orient them as overlays on the satellite images. The application will let you resize and rotate the map until it fits. Google Earth will also let you save data in files that can be shared with other users. One interesting aspect is files that can utilize data available on the web for dynamic interaction. Click on this link to see some examples: <http://earth.google.com/tour/thanks-win.html>. For example there is a link to a file that will track flights around the US live. It displays an icon for the plane and shows it in relation to where it is in the air.

Google Earth offers some new and interesting ways to explore our world. With thousands of user files, it can be customized to any number of needs to suit your tastes. A great resource for new ideas involving Google Earth is the Google Earth blog at: <http://www.earthblog.com/> or at the community: <http://bbs.keyhole.com/ubb/ubbthreads.php/Cat/0>.

The only limits to Google Earth are what your imagination and determination can achieve.

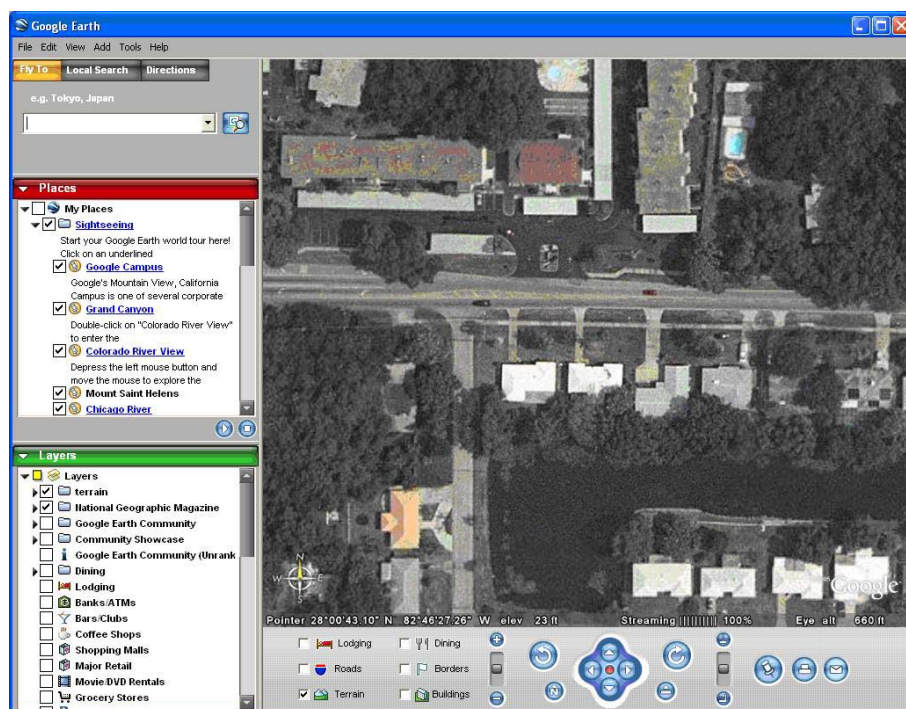
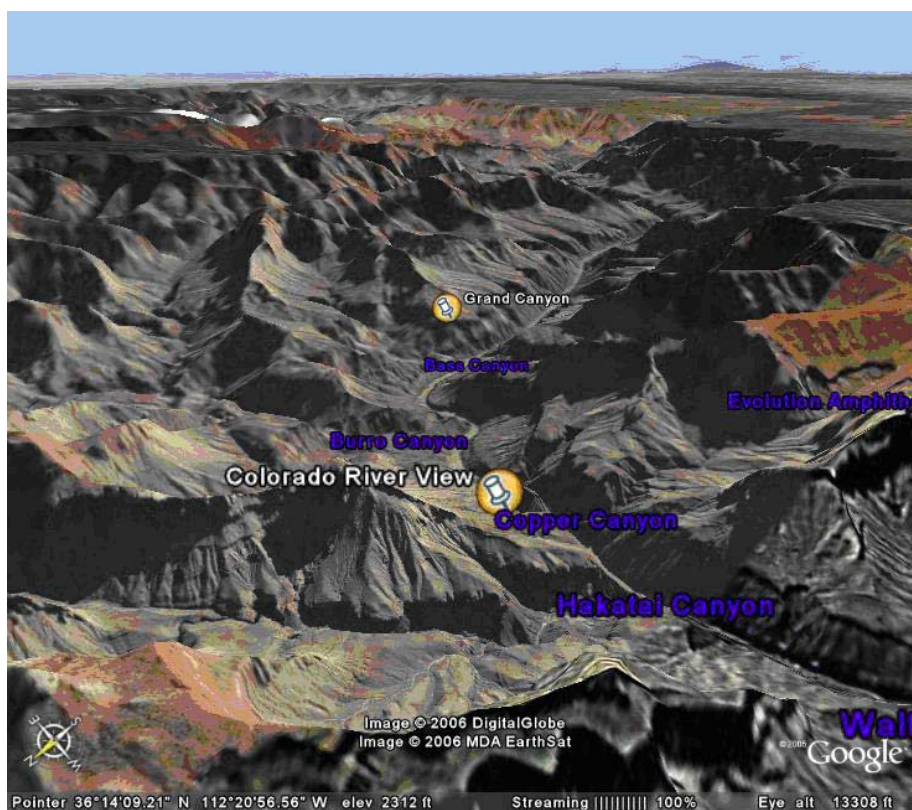
Joe Schmitt is a computer and technology guru, who also has a love for the outdoors. He can often be found tromping around the woods with his GPS and digital camera.

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STUDY GROUPS

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



Show Me the Way to Go Home

This mapping program Really works

By Steve Bass, Pasadena IBM Users Group

I was talking to the tree trimmer about—what else?—computers. You know how it works. The second you mention your line of work, they're asking if it's okay to pick your brain. Only this guy wasn't waiting for permission.

"You think AMI's new Double Duty Dual BIOS with VirusGuard is any good?" he said, shouting over the chainsaw.

Oh, hell, lemme get back to work, I thought, hoping he wouldn't start asking about BIOS error beeps.

"I dunno much about..." I started, but he was turning off the chainsaw, digging in for a one-way tête-à-tête.

"Well," he went on, "whaddya think of those mapping programs, the kind you type in an address and they tell you where to go?"

Of course, I was thinking the same thing, but telling him where to go wouldn't stop him. "Not worth a hoot," I said, backing towards the door, making a getaway. "Because you can do it for free on the Internet with MapBlast. It's just as good and, more important, it's up to date."

But boy, was I wrong.

Coincidentally, Microsoft had sent me a copy of their \$50 Expedia Streets and Trips 2001 a couple of days earlier. I stuck it under the desk, holding it for the monthly giveaway. But after that conversation, I decided to try it, figuring it wouldn't take more than an hour or so to install and play with it. Besides, the only deadline I had was hours away, and I needed something to help build the stress.

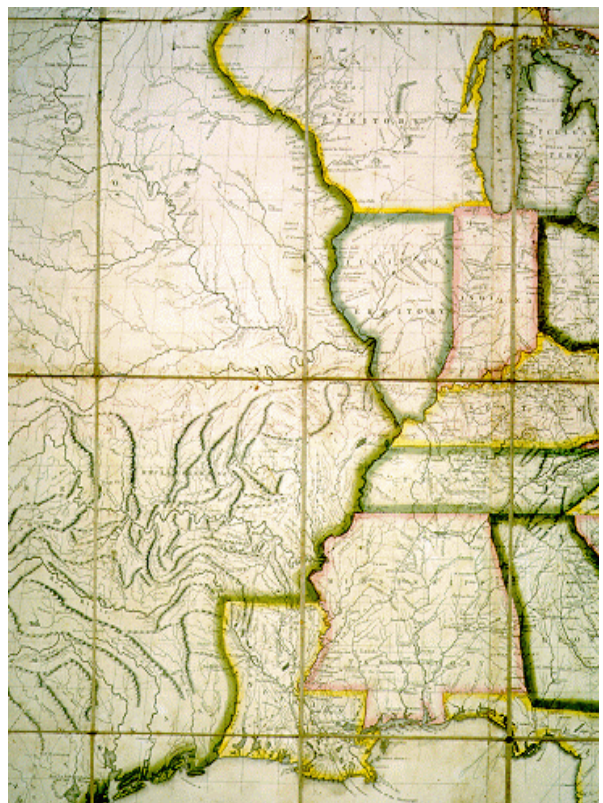
Streets and Trips is in an oversized box with, as you've guessed, a case with two CDs. (Don't worry about the waste, Bill, what's important is getting shelf space.) One CD's the installer, the other holds the data. You can choose to insert the data disk when you're ready to use the program, and that's a good choice.

But the tree trimmer said that when he got back to the office, he'd have 15 or more calls to return, some asking for quotes, others wanting work done. He didn't want to spend time asking directions of customers. So he'd likely put everything on the drive—a hefty 750MBs. That way addresses just popped on screen, he could verify, say, the cross streets, and move on to another call. Later he'd quickly crank out maps and directions so they'd be ready for his crew in the morning.

Take me Anywhere

The program claims to have every street-level map for the United States and Canada, (go ahead, try to test it!), as well as addresses and directions, although they coyly don't say how many they supply. Nonetheless, I took a stab at places I know—my relatives' addresses, parents, friends, and landmarks, such as N.Y.'s Aquarium, Eliot Middle School, PIBMUG's meeting location, and Pasadena's La Fornaretta restaurant. Streets and Trips found them all. One question remains unanswered: Did the restaurants pay a fee to be included?

Once I found a spot, a right mouse click brought up Find Nearby Places, including restaurants, museums, hotels, movie theaters, and user groups. Everything I do, by the way, can be permanently saved to disk, printed in a dozen ways, or with a click, sent as e-mail. If you have a Windows CE handheld device (yeah, I didn't think so), Streets will download maps and directions to it.



Routing options include fastest, shortest, or preferred road. And I could figure in the amount of gas I'd need for the trip as well as the cost of the fuel. No surprises here. But what I liked lots was the program's real-time, drag and drop routing skills. I could plop a start and end point onto the map and see both the route and driving instructions immediately. If I want to make a quick sidetrip, a right mouse click adds a stop. Again, the route changes while I watch.

Danger Will Robinson, Danger!

A quick aside: When Microsoft demoed Windows 95, the presenter showed us an encyclopedia program reaching out to the Internet to get current information. Pretty silly idea six years ago. I mean, they asked us to believe that anyone would sit around and wait for their phone to dial and make a connection. At 33.6-kbps, no less. (Ha ha, I thought shortsightedly.)

While broadband has made headway, the vast majority of people are still using 56-kbps dialup accounts, making Streets and Trips an attractive program. That's because Streets is on your local drive and tremendously faster than anything available on the Internet, even with a broadband connection.

The program also makes good use of the Internet, no matter what your connection speed. For instance, while I was routing a trip to Long Beach, California from here in Altadena, Streets asked if I wanted to check for construction problems or detours. A very cool feature. Read about Streets and Trips: www.microsoft.com/streets.

Listen, I've got to go. The gardener is tapping on the Window asking me about the USB port on his leaf blower.

Steve Bass is a Contributing Editor with PC World Magazine, frequently writes for Forbes ASAP, and is the president of the Pasadena IBM Users Group. He often writes with his tongue in his cheek. Write to him at stevebass@earthlink.net.



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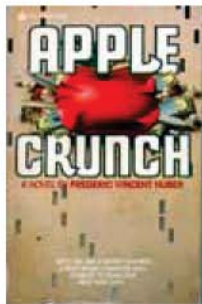
Computer Crimes

Susan Ives, Alamo PC

Apple Crunch by Frederic Vincent Huber

Paperback, Avon, 1981, \$2.95, 264 pages

A computer consultant and a young hacker, their lives ruined by sloppy glitches in New York City's municipal computer system, team up to get revenge on a corrupt system by stealing the city's budget data and holding it for ransom.



This is a lighthearted caper – if you like John Sandford's Kidd novels, this will be right up your alley. The charm of this book is in its relative antiquity: 1981! Remote terminals are described with awe and the city is struggling with defining what constitutes a computer crime. The Big Apple Computer Club – a charming collection of Nerds not

unlike Alamo PC – figures prominently in the plot. Out of print, but a copy is in the Learning Center library.

Interrupt by Toni Duggins

Paperback, Tor, 1993, \$4.99 319 pages

Computer engineer Andy Faulkner is stunned when 40,000 phones in the Silicon Valley – phones on his switch! – suddenly go dead and the glitch is tracked back to his deaf 11-year-old son's TDD device. Suspended from his job and unfairly framed for the outage and the murder of a co-worker, he takes matters into his own hands when his son is kidnapped.

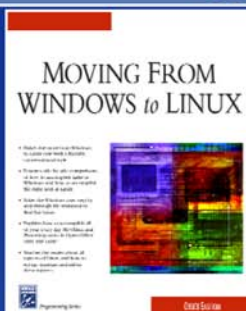


Lots of details about telephony, written during an era when PacBell was

switching over from a manual to a digital system. Interesting plot twists computer code, compilers and the Stanford University telephony lab that will interest the geek set. Out of print, but a copy is in the Learning Center library.

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

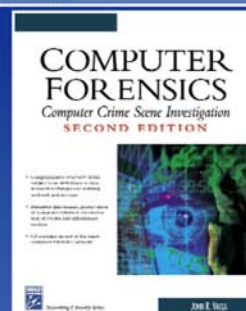
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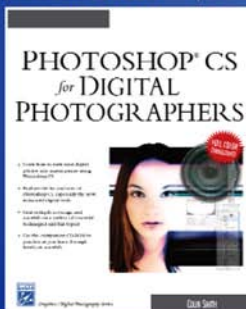
1-58450-280-0 \$44.95



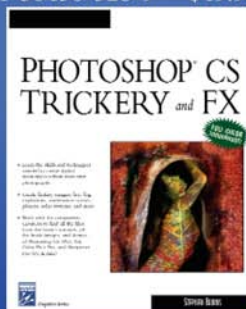
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Book Review

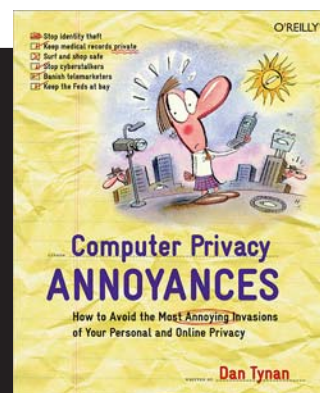
Online Privacy Annoyances

by Dan Tynan

\$19.95

Published by O'Reilly

Reviewed by Bayle Emlein, Secretary and APCUG Representative,
PC Community, CA, www.pcc.org, pcc@ix.netcom.com



Dan Tynan starts off with a couple of personal revelations, such as how he got to be writing this book and how much of himself he'll share. He also notes his discovery that "...privacy is, well, personal. Everyone has an individual definition of what's an acceptable level of privacy and when that limit has been exceeded." For example, his wife loves receiving the catalog offers that he loathes. As a result, he reports a variety of ways to address most privacy annoyances and potential problems.

Though just this side of full-blown paranoia most of the time, Tynan does distinguish levels of vulnerability and sensible precaution. Is it clear that your online banking needs better password protection and encryption than your records of your kids' Little League schedules? He didn't say it out loud, but his cautions frequently reminded me that way back when a computer took up a good-sized storeroom and needed a dedicated air conditioning system, we had a saying: "Just because you're paranoid doesn't mean they aren't after you." But now the ageist cry has turned around to "Never trust anyone under 30."

Annoyances has explanations replete with screen shots. Unfortunately, a lot of the screen shots are too small to be completely readable. This might be OK for a graphic whose purpose is to give a general idea of the configuration of the desktop at a given point. However it's a major annoyance when an essential detail is obscured in the screen shot. Exactly which one is the radio button I'm supposed to pick in order to make my life safe and secure without limiting my freedom or spending all my waking hours covering my tracks? And what are you hiding in that black-on-gray fine print? Something else I'd like to see in the next edition are page references when another section is discussed. In this edition, Tynan rarely tells me where to look when he refers to a Table, Chart, Figure, Tip, or Sidebar. Is it coming right up? Is it two pages back, or in the last chapter?

Given the publishing cycle, a book on any technology topic has to be out of date by the time Amazon gets it. However, this nearly-three-year-old edition of Annoyances agrees surprisingly well with the October 2006 issue of Consumer Reports (pp. 41-45).

Of course, Tynan goes into much greater detail. He includes phone numbers and internet addresses for following up, checking for various potential problems and security leaks and for plugging them where possible. He subdivides privacy concerns into the areas of life where they occur: at home, at work, on the Net, in public, with governments mostly Federal, though he has some discussion of interesting state variability in managing citizen privacy and security. Moving the data in all these areas to computer databases has enabled access by almost anyone; the ease with which databases can be combined means that information that formerly sat in isolated dusty drawers and files can now be linked and massaged to easily relieve the typical citizen of her rights, reputation, and/or cash. The "Privacy in the Future" section discusses implications of current trends, precautions that could be taken to prevent further erosion of privacy and to limit unauthorized access and potentially harmful use of one's data.

This could be an intense, dense technical tome. Instead, varying from straight exposition to sidebar to tip and including many tables and charts helps make it comprehensible. Tynan's conversational style adds to the readability, though a couple of times, his vernacular sent me scrambling for the dictionary. There have been some changes in focus since Tynan wrote: renewal of the Homeland Security Act was just gearing up as he wrote and college campuses were trying to figure out how to cope with the original Napster. On the other hand, RFIDs (Radio Frequency ID chips) were just moving into the public consciousness beyond a way of identifying a lost pet and potential abuses of medical and genetic records were becoming apparent. His information is still surprisingly current, given the annoying speed of change in areas computer-related. I had intended to read Computer Privacy Annoyances and then pass it on. Given the amount of useful information and the number of useful web addresses and telephone numbers, I'm going to hang on to it for a while.

While details change, and specific companies and scams come and go, computer safety has to be added to crossing the street in the instructions for growing up in the 21st Century. Computer Privacy Annoyances provides a sound set of guidelines for protecting your identity (or rescuing it if stolen); fighting back against aggressive marketers; stopping (or at least slowing) spam, viruses, adware, spyware and other invasions; avoiding cyber-stalking; shopping safely; protecting your home network; coping with work-place monitoring of surfing and information and the number of useful web addresses and telephone numbers, I'm going to hang on to it for a while.

In summary, computers being a powerful tool, they can be used for good or ill. Just as truck drivers need more training than the drivers of passenger cars, we as users need training in how to manage computer email or our own benefit. While details change, and specific companies and scams come and go, computer safety has to be added to crossing the street in the instructions for growing up in the 21st Century. Computer Privacy Annoyances provides a sound set of guidelines for protecting your identity (or rescuing it if stolen); fighting back against aggressive marketers; stopping (or at least slowing) spam, viruses, adware, spyware and other invasions; avoiding cyber-stalking; shopping safely; protecting your home network; coping with work-place monitoring of surfing and email; and telling those folks who are profiting from use of your personal data to cease and desists. **July 2007** Using all the resources to address these issues is (was for 51) Dan Tynan) a major project. Make use of his work: go forth and protect yourself without hiding from all public contact and unplugging totally.

Software Review

Professor Franklin's Instant Photo Artist 2.0

\$ 59.99

Published by Streetwise Software

Reviewed by Tom Ekvall, newsletter editor for Northeast Wisconsin PCUG,
www.webpages.charter.net/newpcug, tekvall@new.rr.com

Can someone create a photo art masterpiece from a snapshot within a matter of minutes without going through a lot of training and reading manuals?

This was my challenge for this month's column of Creative Imaging and the subject of this review of Professor Franklin's Instant Photo Artist 2, developed by Streetwise Software. The company promotes that anyone can create a masterpiece in just minutes even if someone who is a beginner.

Unlike some image editing programs that apply filters to create "instant" artistic effects, those using Instant Photo Artist use their mouse to paint over the picture with a cursor that actually looks like a paint brush. The result is a painted look based on the style desired.

Version 2 of this interesting software recently was released and is designed to be compatible with Microsoft Vista as well as all other previous OS releases including Windows 95. I first became interested in this product when it came out a number of years ago. The new version supports high resolution images and sports a redesigned interface that keeps most of the tools readily at hand.

The software was shipped on a CD with a four-page quick start guide. No problems in installing the software. The product is very intuitive to figure out and I was able to start photo painting without needing to access the help section or user guide.

Photo artists have their choice in painting in the artistic styles of Van Gogh, Cezanne, expressionists, pointillists or creating watercolor, acrylic, charcoal, and crackle antique images.

Each style from the "styles of the Masters" browser has its own pre-set brush, color, opacity, and added effects.

You can also select one of the painting tools on the palette, such as the airbrush, paint brush, colored pencil, and tip style associated with the painting tool.

Or if you want to get creative, you can use the freehand tool and apply color manually.

For me, I prefer using the "styles of the Masters" palette and then selecting the brush size, which is based on a series of five dots graphically representing the size of the brush. No custom controls here to tweak the size settings. The different types of painting styles is also significantly more limited than in high end programs, but give you a decent selection to choose from to create your masterpiece without feeling overwhelmed.

A nice feature of the program is what is referred to as the "realistic" mode which when selected will paint back the actual photo image as it looked before you started the painting activity. This is particularly helpful when you want to feature specific detail without it looking somewhat abstract. An example of this is facial features. I took a photograph from my wedding, applied oil paint effects and then restored my face with the "realistic" brush. Nice touch. The brush also helps to remove flaws created when painting.



The brushes (also known as the mouse) create strokes based on the direction and speed of each movement. This simulates how an actual artist would create a picture. If you move the mouse in random directions, it may create unwanted effects.

The secret behind creating your new artwork is a blue outline created of the picture selected on the canvas. This provides the basis for selecting brushes and seeing how the image will look as it is being painted, accessing the color of the original painting rather than choosing paints to use and mess up the results. You can though select to choose colors and manually paint, which may be a desirable situation when creating a monotone print. Another option is creating paper texture effects, such as canvas.

Once the picture is finished, Streetwise Software offers another exciting product to jazz it up. It's called Instant Photo Effects, which also has been improved in the present Version 2. Instant Photo Effects creates a wide variety of edge effects, frames, accents, photographic effects such as antiquing, and even artistic images similar to that created by Instant Photo Artist.

The special effect options are fabulous and easy to apply to create a piece of "fine art" ready to be framed and hung on the wall.

The difference between the two products in creating painted effects is that Instant Photo Artist requires applying brush strokes whereas the Instant Photo Effects "instantly" creates the image with little outside intervention.

You can even apply multiple effects to the same image for some interesting artwork.

Both programs also allow you to add text to the picture with varying levels of effects, controlling size, type style, warp effect, color, and transparency.

I installed both software on an Acer Laptop Aspire 5570Z running Vista Premium OS with Intel Pentium dual-core processor at 1.6 Ghz and 2 gigabytes of RAM. The products operated without problems, although the RAM quickly gets consumed as more effects are added to the image.

Each product sells for \$59.99 and is available from the software manufacturer through their website at www.swsoftware.com. A special deal for both products is available for \$99.99. I have talked to the company and they are willing to give APCUG member groups a 10% discount through August by entering the word "PCUG" in the promotion code on the purchase order form. Trial copies can also be downloaded from the site so that you can check it out first.

The verdict. Both products are great for those who want to create "painted" photo art with little effort and training. However, just remember that the selection of styles and brushes is limited, which in some cases may be an asset.



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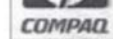


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Software Review

Fisheye-Hemi Plug-In

\$29

Published by Image Trends Inc.

Reviewed by Neil Longmuir, Imaging SIG Laeder, Winnipeg PC User Group Inc., Canada,
www.wpcusrgrp.org, longmur@ms.umanitoba.ca

The Fisheye-Hemi Photoshop plug-in from Image Trends Inc. corrects distortions present in fisheye lens images. This is a terrific plug-in filter that retains more of the original image resolution allowing the end user to display the original composition as seen through the viewfinder when the image was taken. The Fisheye-Hemi plug-in package contains three plug-ins that support a wide variety of camera and lens combinations. The plug-in options are: Circle; Full frame; and Cropped.

Fisheye Lens History

In photography, a fisheye lens is defined as a wide-angle lens that takes in an extremely wide 180 degree angle. Fisheye lenses were originally developed for use in astronomy and were called "whole-sky lenses." Fisheye lenses became popular in the late 1960's for general photography because of their unique distorted image appearance. Photographers often used fisheye lenses for taking broad landscapes to suggest the curve of the earth. Another very popular use of fisheye lenses was to photograph the interiors of churches.

As fisheye lenses became more popular in general photography, the major camera companies began to manufacture fisheye lenses to cover the entire 35 mm film frame. The first full-frame mass produced fisheye lens was the 16 mm made by Nikon in the late 1960s. The focal length of fisheye lenses made for the 35 mm film format typically are between 8 mm and 10 mm for circular lenses, and 15-16 mm for full-frame lenses. All the major camera manufacturers have fisheye lenses available for their cameras.

All ultra-wide angle lenses display some of distortion, although the latest computer designed and produced wide angle lenses have significantly less distortion than their older versions. Ultra-wide angle distortion can be corrected for moderately wide angles of view. On the other hand, rectilinear ultra-wide angle lenses with angles of view greater than 90 degrees are more difficult to design. The first fisheye lenses to be developed were circular. These lenses took in a 180-degree angle and projected this angle was projected as a circle on to the film frame. Some of the early circular fisheye lenses were used in orthographic projection models for scientific applications.

The test images used in this review were taken with a Nikon D200 and the 10.5 mm f2.8 ED AF DX Nikon fisheye lens. This lens is an example of a cropped fisheye lens designed to be used with the APS sensors of digital cameras.

Actual Use of the Fisheye-Hemi plug-in

The Fisheye-Hemi plug-in is fully automatic and requires no end user intervention. The fisheye image used for this demonstration is the construction site of the new Manitoba Hydro office tower building being built in downtown Winnipeg, Manitoba. The construction site is a full city block.

I choose Fisheye-Hemi 3 (Cropped) to correct the image shown in figure 1. With this particular lens the full frame and cropped plug-in produced virtually the same after image. The only slight difference was the cropped plug-in produced a street that was less distorted. In the before image shown in Figure 1 the lines of the building are curved due to fisheye lens distortion. Figure 2 shows the image after applying Fisheye-Hemi (full frame) plug-in.

The Fisheye-Hemi plug-in costs \$29 US. Be sure to visit www.imagetrendsinc.com and download the trial version. The plug-in works like a charm producing a very useable image without losing any visible resolution. Prints made from this image were clean and crisp with excellent sharpness. If you have a fisheye lens, then this plug-in is a must have.

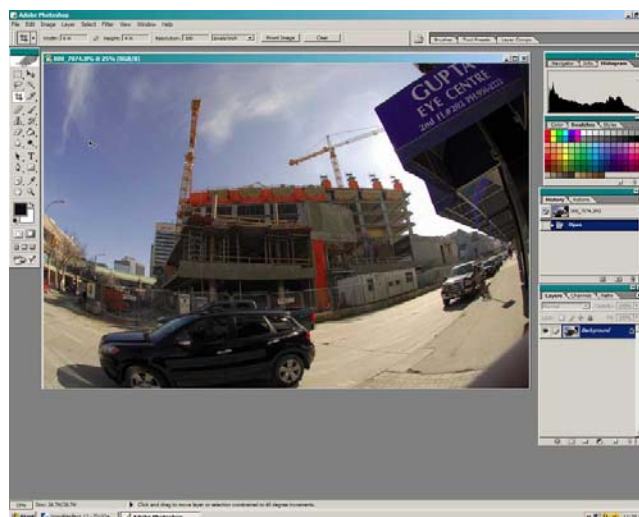


Figure 1

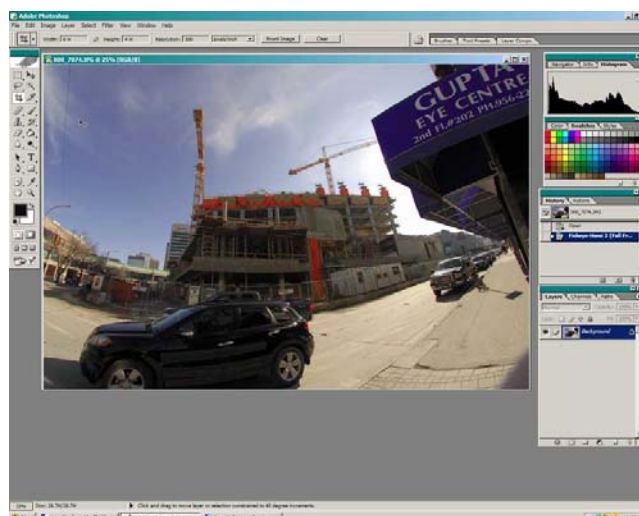


Figure 2

Software, Hardware Review

IPEVO Free-1 Skype USB phone

Phone \$34; service \$29.99 per year

Published by Skype

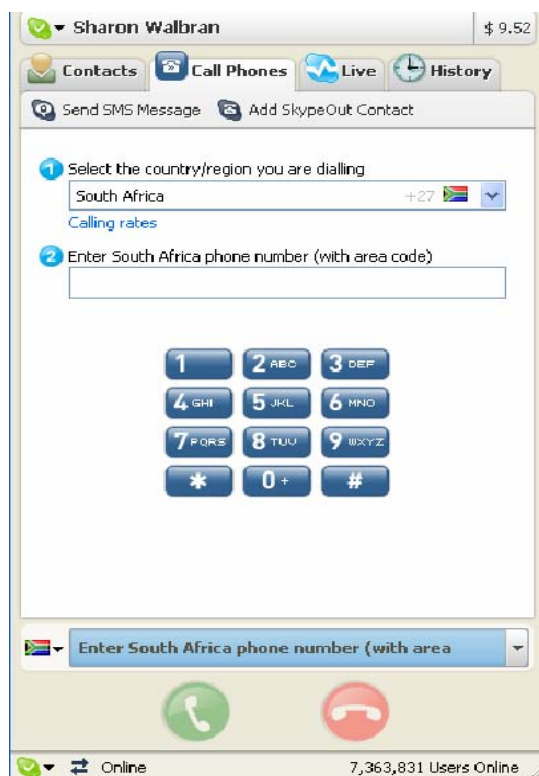
By Sharon Walbran, Twin Cities PC Users Group, Minnesota, www.tcpc.com,
sqwalbran@yahoo.com

VOIP, Voice Over Internet Protocol, using your Internet connection to make phone calls, has become very popular with the major bell companies offering programs with unlimited calling for one price per month, usually around \$30 per month. But Skype (rhymes with “type”), a free VOIP program, offers free computer-to-computer calls anywhere in the world if both computers have Skype installed. For calls from a computer with Skype to standard phones and cell phones in the U.S. and Canada, Skype.com offers unlimited free calling with an annual charge of \$29.95 a year. The real advantage of using Skype is if you make frequent international calls that can run your phone bill up. Calls to phone numbers across the world cost much less using Skype. A list of rates is available at www.skype.com.

In order to use Skype, you will need to install the program, of course, and you will need an Internet connection, preferably high-speed for best quality, and a microphone or headset with microphone.

Recently, USB Skype phones have come on the market. The one I purchased was the IPEVO Free-1 Skype USB phone from Microcenter. It is both Windows- and Mac-compatible, but requires Windows XP. It cost \$34.00, but there were others with more features for up to \$100. The IPEVO phone is small, just 1.5 inches wide by 6 inches long and has a generous 8 foot long cord. The phone comes with a CD with the USB driver and the Skype program. Installation was speedy. The Skype interface is simple with tabbed pages for holding your contacts’ Skype addresses on one page and phone numbers on the other. To call a Skype computer requires point-and-click on the contact in the list. Calling a phone number involves adding your credit card information and setting up a credit account of at least \$10 to start, then clicking an on-screen dial pad to input the number. The sound is as good or better than a land-line connection.

Try it out. You can install Skype and do a test call to see how it works. The test involves you speaking for 10 seconds, then Skype plays that back to you so you can hear the results. Better yet, get one of your friends in Paris or Rio to download the Skype program to their computer and talk for free for as long as you like.



Hardware Review

Zune

by Microsoft

\$230

Reviewed by Ash Nallawalla, APCUG Director, Melbourne PC User Group, Australia, www.melbpc.org, anallawalla@apcug.net



Are you older than 50? Have you tried to use an MP3 or video player but found your thumbs and fingers were all mixed up? Perhaps the text was too hard to read? A solution is at hand, in the form of the Microsoft Zune player. Its large fonts and simple controls make it quite suitable for the 50+ age group. The buttons give positive feedback, unlike the capacitive touch pads on others where you might click more than you intended to. Available in stores and online for around \$230, this gadget is a portable picture viewer, video and music player, as well as a radio. It is about the size and weight of a pack of cards.

The Zune has a 3x2-inch (320x240 pixels) color screen and a 30 GB hard drive. Its circular control is a 4-way switch and the centre is a push-button. There are two smaller Back and Play/Pause buttons. At the base there is a docking socket and at the top is an earphone socket and a lock. The only accessories that you get are a soft pouch, earphones and a USB connector. The two earbuds are magnetized, so they snap together when not in use and do not get tangled up.

There is built-in WiFi, but it only communicates with another Zune, with which you can transfer music (not video). These shared tunes only last for three days and you can only play each one three times. Once you name your Zune (its "tag"), you can participate in the community of nearby Zunes within WiFi range and share your music or let them see what you are listening to.

How much can you fit on the 30 GB Zune? The official estimate is about 30 hours of video, 25,000 pictures, or 7500 tunes. Some people have hacked it to take an 80-100 GB drive, but this will void the warranty.

In use

Installation was dead easy on my Windows XP desktop, once I swapped the USB connector from the front of my PC to a slot at the back. The Zune was recognized and the process updated the firmware and the Zune software. It fetched the latest data from the Zune Marketplace, which is the online music store.

I tried the 14-day free trial (included in the box) of the Zune Pass, which normally costs \$14.99 per month or \$44.95 for three months. You can download all the songs you want and they can be played while your subscription is current.

The Zune software found all music, video clips and pictures on my PC - there wasn't a lot to begin with, so this was quick. I found a couple of CDs and some music clips online and synchronized them with the Zune. There is still 27 GB free so I might get a converter program that will let me load some full-length movies that I could watch on a round-the-world flight later this month.

The Zune's ability to store digital images and home-made videos makes it easy to bore your relatives and workmates with your family's latest activities and archival footage featuring at least four generations! Think about it - if you lost your home in a fire or flood, wouldn't it be great if you had transferred all your pictures and home videos to the Zune?

I am more of a radio listener than a pure music listener. The Zune displays the radio frequency in a large font so you'd need to be almost blind not to read it. My favorite FM station supports the Radio Data System (RDS) which is also known as the Radio Data Broadcast System (RDBS) - this means the name of the song being played and the performer are displayed on the Zune.

You can store song lyrics if you have them, but you cannot see them on the Zune screen. In the future we might see synchronized lyrics but I am not sure if there will be a bouncing dot to go with the words.

I noticed a clever feature when listening to music and I pulled out the headphones in the middle of a tune. The music pauses - so you don't lose your place and it can be resumed when you plug back the headphones.

Audio quality is fine, at least for what you can expect from basic earphones. I didn't test the battery capacity but most people report about 11 hours with the WiFi switched off.

Quirks

The main irritation for me is that while the Zune is being charged, it is unusable for anything else. You can click the buttons and nothing will happen.

My next nag is the inability to connect to the Internet with the built-in WiFi. This could be a future possibility. Closely related is the inability to get podcasts into the Zune easily. The latter is easily solved with the free, third-party program FeedYourZune, which is also an RSS reader.

You cannot use the Zune as a data storage device and so it is not visible through Windows Explorer. It would be handy if we could use it for occasional data storage. I had to use a third party hack (to my Windows registry) to achieve this.

Community

There are many sites that feature the Zune. Here are a few:

* Zune Insider - Cesar Menendez (MSFT): <http://zuneinsider.com>




* Zune Guy - Bill Wittress (MSFT): <http://zuneguy.com>


* Zune User Group: <http://www.zuneusergroup.com>

Recommendation

You will enjoy using a Zune! I have a white Zune but you can get it in pink, red, brown and black. You can buy numerous accessories such as docks, cables, protective cases, chargers, cables, and so on. For more information, visit the official site <http://www.zune.net/>


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
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July 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 Genealogy 7 - 9 P.M.	3 BOD 6:30 P.M.	4 Independence Day Learning Center Closed	5 Student's Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon (a/r) HGSI 6:30 - 8:30 P.M.	6 *PRR* Small Business Server 2003 8 - 10 A.M. Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon Class 1 of 6 *PRR* Intermediate Photoshop CS2 1 - 4:30 P.M. PC Alamode Magazine & PDF 7 - 9 P.M.	7 *PRR* MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon Class 1 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1 - 3 P.M. C++ 2:30 - 4:30 P.M.
8	9 General Meeting @ Crossroads 7 - 9 P.M. Presenter: Adobe	10 Class 1 of 3 **PRR** Digital Camera & Photography 9 - 11 A.M. Alamo Coders (DotNET - Web Development Technology 7 - 9 P.M.	11 Power Internet 10 A.M. - Noon Class 1 of 6 *PRR* Internet & E-Mail 1 - 3 P.M. Home Page Jumpstart 8:30 - 7 P.M. Canceled class will start again in the fall Class 1 of 2 *PRR* PowerPoint 7 - 9 P.M. (Canceled)	12 Student Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon	13 Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon Class 2 of 5 *PRR* Intermediate Photoshop CS2 1 - 4:30 P.M.	14 *PRR* MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon Class 2 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1 - 3 P.M.
15	16	17 Class 2 of 3 **PRR** Digital Camera & Photography 9 - 11 A.M.	18 Class 2 of 6 *PRR* Internet & E-Mail 1 - 3 P.M. Class 2 of 2 *PRR* PowerPoint 7 - 9 P.M. (Canceled)	19 Student Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon	20 Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon Class 3 of 5 *PRR* Intermediate Photoshop CS2 1 - 4:30 P.M.	21 *PRR* MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon Class 3 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1 - 3 P.M. C++ 2:30 - 4:30 P.M.
22	23 CorelDRAW X3 6 - 8 P.M.	24 Class 3 of 3 **PRR** Digital Camera & Photography 9 - 11 A.M.	25 Class 2 of 6 *PRR* Internet & E-Mail 1 - 3 P.M. (a/r) WordPerfect 7 - 9 P.M.	26 Student Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon Class 4 of 5 *PRR* Intermediate Photoshop CS2 1 - 4:30 P.M.	27 Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon Class 5 of 5 *PRR* Intermediate Photoshop CS2 1 - 4:30 P.M.	28 *PRR* MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon Class 4 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1 - 3 P.M. Learning Center Desk Staff Meeting 1 - 3 P.M.
29	30	31				

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: ★★ - ★★★

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: ★ - ★★★

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.

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.)

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 ★ - ★★★

CLASSES

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: ★

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 Alamo 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, Wed.; 10 a.m. to noon

Set 1) March 14, 21, 28, April 4, 11, 18

Set 2) May 16, 23, 30, June 6, 13, 20

Set 3) August 15, 22, 29, Sep 5, 12, 19

Set 4) October 10, 17, 24, 31, Nov 7, 14

OR

Instructors: Cary Hall, Jean Hall

When: Six sessions, Mon.; 10 a.m. to noon

March 12, 19, 26, April 2, 9, 16

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 days Tue. or Sat. Choose one set

Instructors: Audrey Henkin, Ed Henkin

When: 6 sessions, Tue. 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Set 1) March 13, 20, 27, April 3, 10, 17

Set 2) May 15, 22, 29, June 5, 12, 19

Set 3) August 14, 21, 28, Sep 4, 11, 18

Set 4) October 9, 16, 23, 30, Nov 6, 13

OR

Instructor: Don Robinson

When: 6 sessions, Sat. 1 to 3 p.m.

Set 1) March 31, Apr 7, 14, 21, 28, May 5

Set 2) May 26, June 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

Set 3) July 7, 14, 21, 28, Aug 4, 11

Set 4) Sep 15, 22, 29, Oct 6, 13, 20

Fees: Registration fee is \$10.00

This class will use the Easy Windows XP book, purchase of the book will be helpful and is recommended but is not required.

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 Alamode 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
stephentechnjr@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@yahoogroups.com>." Or, if you're reading the electronic version of the PC Alamode 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@yahoogroups.com>

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★ ★★

CoreIDRAW 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

<stephentechnjr@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: ★ - ★★

Open Source And Freeware Software

Students will learn how to download, install, configure and use Open Source and Freeware applications such as Mozilla Firefox, Open Office, AVG Free Antivirus and many others.

Instructor: Tod Bruning

TodBruning@Hotmail.com

When: The first four Tuesdays in May 6:30 to 8:30 pm

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

Where: Computer Learning Center

Technical Rating: ★

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

Photoshop CS2 Classes are open to any Alamo PC member who has Photoshop 7, CS, or CS2. Students must have one of these software programs on their home computers. All students are provided a CD with images we will use in the classes plus written lessons to go by and practice at home. Texts will be recommended for those who want to purchase their own as reference.

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. 2) Students need the Software for Photoshop 7 or Photoshop CS or Photoshop CS 2 on their home computers to join these graphics instruction classes.

Beginning Photoshop CS2:

This course includes Lessons on Tools and Palettes, Adobe Bridge, Resolution, Cropping, Tonal Range, Color Cast, Restoring Images, Colorizing, Cloning Layers, Channels, Extract, Gradients, Camera Raw, Vanishing Point, PDF Presentations. New Students need to attend free CS2 workshops on Thursdays (or a different day if scheduled) during the beginning session to receive extra help (lead by Jane Montgomery) from 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.

When: May - June; Thursdays May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 June 7, 14, 21, 28; 1 to 4:30 pm

Tuition Fee: \$90 for new students \$50 for returning students

Intermediate Photoshop CS2:

Lessons on Typographic Designs, Paths and Shapes, Clipping Groups, Layer Sets, Adjustment Layers, Liquefy Filter, Actions Palette, Layer Styles, Adjustment Layers, Contact Sheets, Picture Package, Text Along Path, Creating Links

When: set 1) Fridays March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

set 2) Fridays July 6, 13, 20, 27 and Thursday July 26; 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Tuition Fee: \$25 for the course

Advanced Photoshop CS2

Lessons on Rollovers, Animations, Warp Tool, Image Adjustments, Creating Curled Edges, Lighting Effects Creating Patterns, Creating Pencil Sketches, Creating Posters and Post Cards

When: set 1) Thursdays April 5, 12, 19, 26 and Friday April 13; 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

set 2) Fridays August 3, 10, 17, 24, 31; 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Tuition Fee: \$25 for the course

Fancy Photoshop CS2 Class 1

Lessons on Custom Brushes, Stamping, Painting, Design Techniques, Creating background, Papers, Template Designs, Photomerge, Creating Kaleidoscopes, Hangovers, Frameups

When: Fridays September 7, 14, 21, 28 and Thursday Sep 27; 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Tuition Fee: \$25 for the course

Photoshop Holiday Lessons

Holiday lessons using all of the procedures in CS2 (or possibly a Playing Cards class instead)

When: Fridays October 5, 12, 19, 26 and Thursday Oct 25; 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Tuition Fee: \$25 for the course

Photoshop Calendar Class (taught by Jane Montgomery)

When: Fridays November 2, 9, 16, (skip the 23rd), 30; 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Tuition Fee: \$25 for the course

Instructor: Beverly Bihn assisted by Jane Montgomery

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

Where: Learning Center

Technical Rating: ★★-★★★

eBay - Bid with Confidence: An Introduction to Internet Auctions

The four session class will allow you to buy and sell at Internet auctions effectively and with confidence using the eBay À system. The class will cover searching & browsing, registering, buying, selling, how to research your items to buy or sell, how to evaluate your prospective customers and sellers, basic html, digital photo hosting and much, much more! You will also actually use the system in a real-time mode and you can feel the adrenaline rush during the last few seconds of our auctions. Automobile and real estate are excluded.

Instructor: William Hudson
WilliamTheRebel@gmail.com

When: Four sessions, choose one set: (Preference will be given to those who have placed their name on the waiting list for this class)

Set 1) Tuesdays April 17, 24, May 1, 8; 7 to 9 pm

Set 2) Thursdays April 19, 26, May 3, 10; 7 to 9 pm

Where: Learning Center, Room 1

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

Technical Rating: ★

Microsoft Excel

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 should be familiar with operating a mouse, keyboard and Windows Operating

System. Knowledge of another program such as Microsoft Word is helpful.

When: Four sessions, choose one set
Set 1) Thurs May 3, 10, 17, 24; 7 to 9 pm
Set 2) Thurs June 7, 14, 21, 28; 7 to 9 pm

Where: Learning Center

Instructor: Cheng Yuan

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

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★★

Home Page Jumpstart

This is a general introduction to developing your own Internet web page. It is not a course on HTML. Includes a 20+ page manual, training disk, and a walk through the development process.

Contact: Susan Ives

<suives@texas.net> 210-694-4582

When: ONE session, the second Wed. of the month 7 to 9 pm. Class does not meet each month, please check the calendar or call the Computer Learning Center to confirm meeting dates 210-736-0080

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

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. |

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

Set 1) March 28, Apr 4, 11, 18, 25, May 2

Set 2) May 16, 23, 30, Jun 6, 13, 20

Set 3) July 11, 18, 25, Aug 1, 8, 15

Set 4) Sep 12, 19, 26, Oct 3, 10, 17

Instructor: Don Robinson

Fees: Registration fee is \$10.00

Where: Learning Center

Pre-registration: YES call 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: No class in July. Two sessions, 2nd and 3rd Wed. 7-9 pm of Odd numbered months

Instructor: Wade 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: ★ - ★★

Microsoft Word

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.

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

When: 4 sessions per class

MS Word Basics: The first four Tuesdays in June 6:30 to 8:30 pm

MS Word Advanced: to be announced


Instructor: Tod Bruning

TodBruning@Hotmail.com

Where: Learning Center

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

Technical Rating ★ - ★★



100% gray cotton golf shirts with pocket and embroidered full-color

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\$20.00

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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.

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Classified Ads

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

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 rpramert@sbcglobal.net.

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

Wanted Non-profit organization seeks donated working, or small repair cost, copier(s) . Latest model with low operating cost (toner & drum) preferred. Pickup of item will be arranged. Call 210-532-9122 to provide make, model, features available or additional information.



100% gray cotton golf shirts with pocket and embroidered full-color

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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

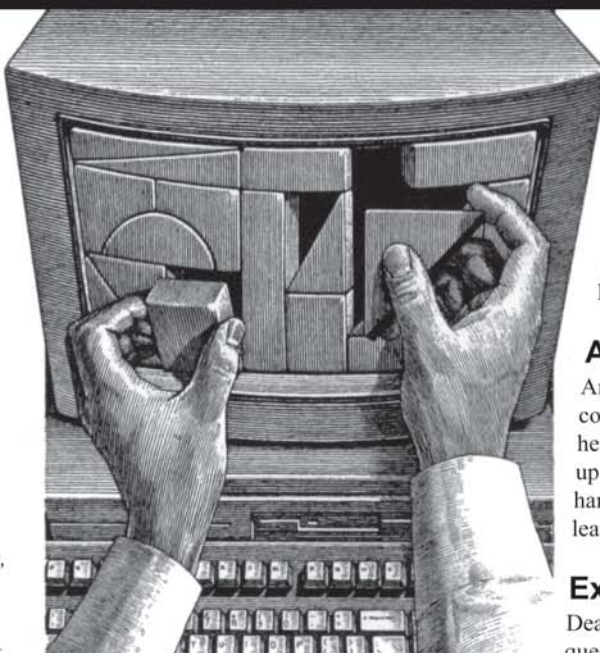
Every month you can attend a presentation meeting, which is open to our 2,500 members. Local and national companies provide the first glimpses of new products and discounts on existing products. There are also drawings for FREE hardware and software.

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.

