

THE NEWS MAGAZINE OF THE ALAMO PC ORGANIZATION

# PC Alamode

**TECH ISSUE**

www.alamopc.org  
September 2008  
\$5.00



**Cloud Computing - The Future?**  
page 32

**Windows XP Expires**  
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**Security and Deleting Files**  
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# Alamo PC Organization

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



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

Registration number **210-736-0080**

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

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

**If you have questions about Alamo PC call:**

Learning Center number **210-736-0700**

**If you have comments about classes call**

Linda Bianchi **210-561-2278**

**If you have questions about advertising call**

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

Please send change of address and other correspondence to:

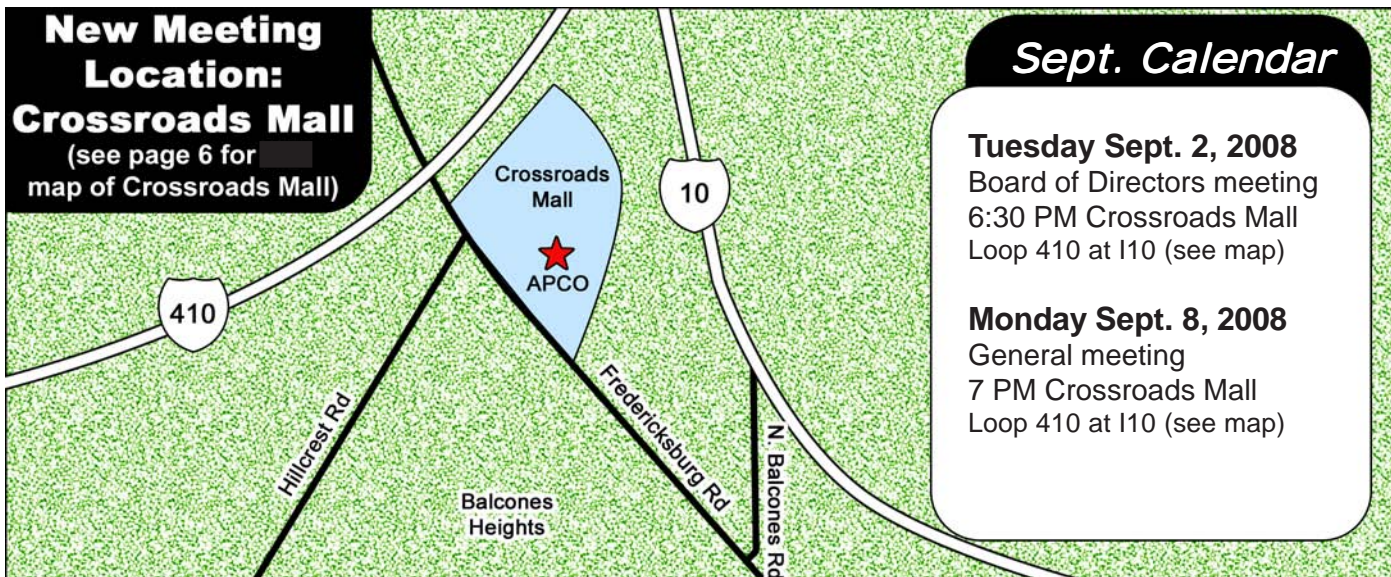
**Alamo PC Organization**  
**PO Box 65180**  
**San Antonio, TX 78265-5180**

## 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)



## Sept. Calendar

**Tuesday Sept. 2, 2008**  
Board of Directors meeting  
6:30 PM Crossroads Mall  
Loop 410 at I10 (see map)

**Monday Sept. 8, 2008**  
General meeting  
7 PM Crossroads Mall  
Loop 410 at I10 (see map)



# Tech Issue

## OS, security, recovery

### departments

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# PC Alamode

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Going Green  
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Using Vista's Hidden Disk Cleanup Options  
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Security and Deleting Files  
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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](mailto:editor@alamopc.org)

Joseph de Leon, Editor, PC Alamode

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Bus. card (3 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> " w x 2" h) **	43	41	39	37

\*Consecutive months

\*\*To be paid in advance

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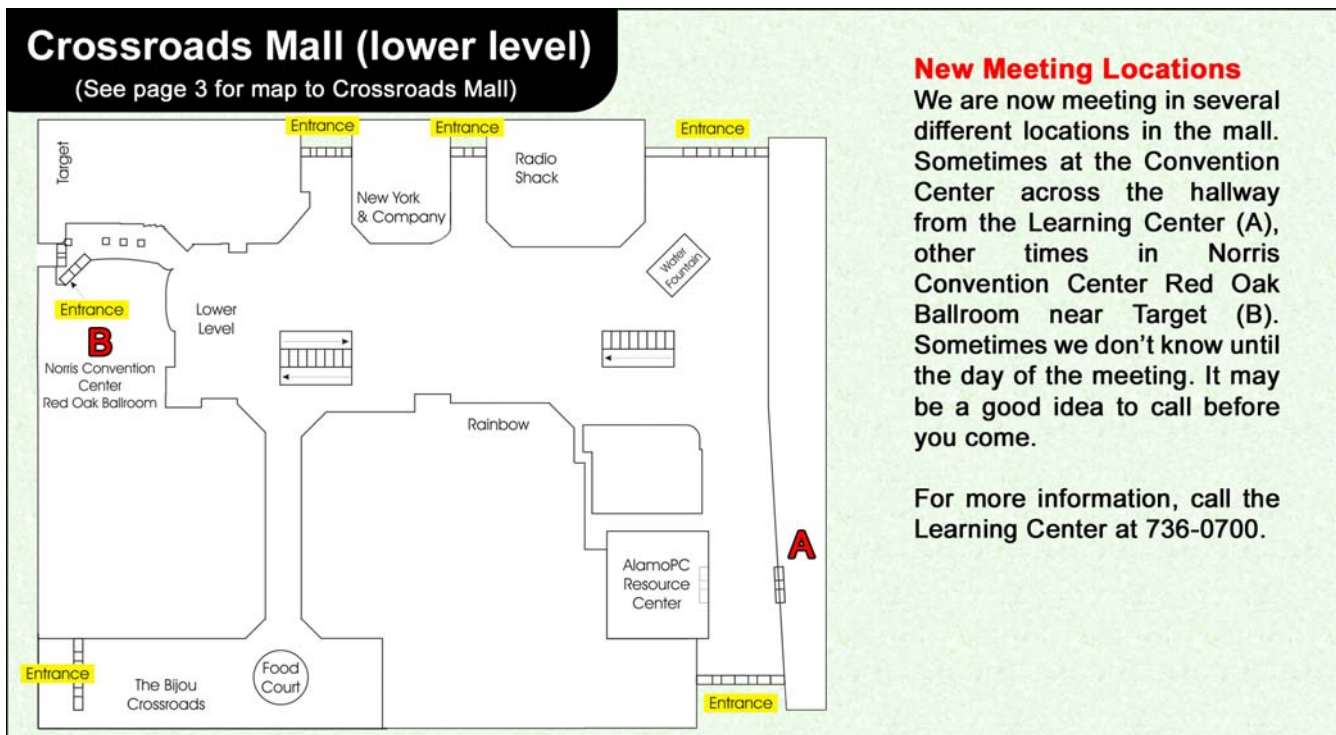
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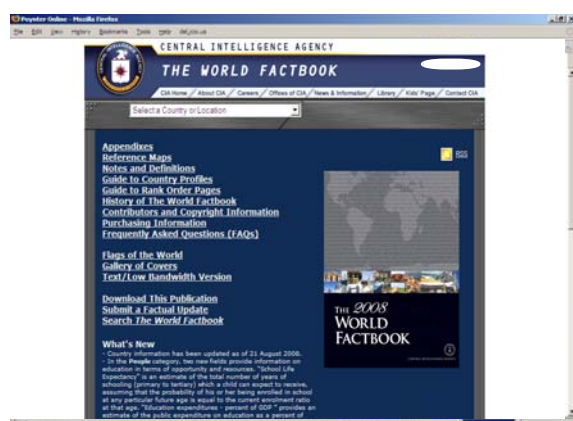
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For Study Groups and Classes, phone: 736-0080 or 736-0700



## PC Alamo Links List



### CIA World Factbook

<<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>>

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**L**ong-time Alamo PC member, John Gould, a desk staff volunteer, and friend, passed away in August. Many will remember John for his bagpipes, stories, humor, and friends-with-everyone nature.

The service for John will be a graveside-only service, as per John's request. It will be held 1 p.m., Friday, September 5th at the Fort Sam National Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, a request has been made for donations in John's name to the Galveston Burn Unit of the Shriners Hospitals for Children, 815 Market St., Galveston, TX 77550-2725. The hospitals web site is at <http://www.shrinershq.org/Hospitals/Galveston/>

John had two cats that now need a loving home, if you can take them in, or know someone who may be able to do so, please let Linda Bianchi <[linda@milin.net](mailto:linda@milin.net)> know right away.

Alamo PC will be sponsoring an Open House and Volunteer Appreciation ceremony at the Learning Center on September 8th at 6:00 pm.

If you have not seen our Learning Center, this would be the perfect opportunity to see what services we have available and to meet the volunteers that help our organization work.

### Joseph de Leon, Alamo PC

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

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



John Gould, a desk staff volunteer, and friend, was known for his bagpipes, stories, humor, and friends-with-everyone nature. Photo from 2004 Alamo PC Open House.



# President's Message

Bill Klutz

## "September" - Labor, Grandparents, Elections Try To Continue

This month marks several things of interest to many: 1st - Labor Day (summer and vacations are pretty much over; work resumes for parents at their job site and children have resumed school); 7th - Grandparents Day (another commercialized day for individuals whom we should remember much more often throughout the year); 22nd - Autumn equinox (At the times when the Sun is crossing the celestial equator day and night are of nearly equal length at all latitudes and so we call these dates the equinoxes. In March, as the Sun is moving northwards along the equator, this is called the vernal equinox and in September as the Sun is moving southwards we refer to it as the autumnal equinox. Also, the leaves begin to change colors and start to fall); 29th - Rosh Hashanah (Begins at sunset and continues, until nightfall 10/1/08; Commonly known as the Jewish New Year).


The August BOD meetings had four members present (first quorum in several months). Some were still plagued by health issues and/or family problems. The monthly General Meeting, was suppose to have had a Microsoft presenter, but there was a glitch and the presenter cancelled at the last minute. David Steward was out of town, so no backup was available on short notice. Apologies to those few who came. Hopefully Microsoft will make up for it during the September meeting (Microsoft again scheduled). Again, the few who were present affirms that overall interest in the organization appears to have waned. This is also reconfirmed through the ever declining membership and the fact that we have not had a full compliment of board members (one or more vacancy) for the past three years.

It is now late in August, and I am hoping that Microsoft will not cancel again, and that we will have a good complement of members present at the September General Meeting to conduct the organization's election process business. Since things can change, even at the last minute, check the website for the latest information about the General Meeting. On the day of the meeting, call the Learning Center for the most current information on location and presenter. I can only hope that David will have made the latest information available for the staff to pass along to those who may call.

The July General Meeting was, to be Alamo PC's annual nomination time for BOD positions that are vacant or expiring. Since a BOD meeting was not held to activate the Elections Committee (accomplished at the August meeting), that effort has been lacking. But since we have operated with one or more vacant positions since Oct 2005 (despite numerous pleas from me in past messages), and no one has unofficially put forth any names (even as of this writing), it would appear the task may again prove to be difficult. (As a note: at least two current board members have indicated they will not seek reelection or will resign at the end of September because of health issues.) As previously indicated, each member has a stake in this process - "This is OUR organization." Each member should consider himself/herself to be responsible for trying to identify individuals willing to serve at the BOD level. Providing we have a quorum, the opportunity to submit names will, hopefully, be available at the September General Meeting, for members who are present. Once the list of individuals has been identified, individual biographies will be posted on the website in the interest of time. During the remainder of September, the online election process (voting) will again be conducted to determine the list of Board members for the coming year (Oct 2008 - Sep 2009).

As in the past, 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, presenter, trade shows, Learning Center volunteer, a 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 (especially at the board level).

Since almost all of our new members are obtained from walk-in traffic at the Learning Center, I am once again asking that you consider some of the following items available to members and talk to other potential members about them: free class benefit - enroll in one or more of the classes; the "Wish List" - if a class you would like is not 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" - Fri-



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*Continued on page 9*



day 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 ones in the next paragraph. Once it is determined that a class should be started, finding a teacher is usually a daunting task.

As stated previously, we have lost our teacher for the popular Digital Camera & Photography classes (four different levels, each repeated once during the year). We are desperately seeking one or more individuals for the classes, as personal issues may not allow the former teacher to return to the classroom until 2009, if then.

During the past few months, we have also suffered the loss of volunteers who have been diligent in giving a few hours each week to be a part of the Learning Center "Desk Staff." This has been related to health issues and even the passing of some. Without someone present at the Learning Center, we may miss the opportunity to gain new members, who are desperately needed.

We are still trying to improve member retention, but are not as successful as we would like to be. Although new members have almost been sufficient to offset non-renewing members, the member number total continues to slowly decline. We want membership 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, with a copy 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." With our past trend of fewer members each month, it may be sooner than later! I hope it does not come to that, as it will be like the loss of a friend or family member, and will impact those in the community desiring to learn about computers or improve their computer skills.

## September Program

Bill Klutz

I have been informed that our September General Meeting presenter will be Microsoft representative. The meeting location (Norris Conference center, across from our Learning Center, or in our Learning Center) will be determined the first week in September. The September meeting will also be the annual meeting for the organization, so it would be appreciated if we could have as many members as possible present. Since things can change at the last minute, check the Alamo PC web site (www.alamopc.org) for information on presenter and meeting location. BUT, on the meeting day please talk with one of the Learning Center desk personnel (210-736-0700/0080). Make plans now to come and bring some friends, as we hope to have an interesting presentation, and possibly some Microsoft "gifts."



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## Volunteer at the Alamo PC Learning Center

# We need volunteers!

Call the Learning Center to volunteer to assist ongoing classes or help keep day-to-day tasks under control. Your computer user group can't function without volunteers.

Please 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

## Visit the Alamo PC Learning Center

# Can you help teach?

We're looking for someone to teach one or more of the following classes:

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Refurbished Systems, Monitors

### Location:

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

### Show Dates:

November 8, 2008  
December 13, 2008



# Funny Bytes

Ken Nash & Randy Glasbergen



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## Technical Support Hotline



**"Your computer has been very bad and it deserves to be punished—no games for a week!"**





# Maintain a Work / Life Balance

## Shane Hicks, (certified certifiable)

Shane runs Windows Server 2008 on his iMac... so take that!  
You can e-mail him at [shane@vpwn.com](mailto:shane@vpwn.com).

**D**o you often find that there just aren't enough hours in the day to get everything done that you need to get done? Do you have a To Do list that just never seems to get any shorter? And, do you find yourself going home at night, spending even more hours on work?

Maintaining a healthy balance between work and life is important. The key to doing this is through proper time management.

Sounds simple, right?

Well, if it was, we'd all be a lot less stressed. But there are things you can do to better manage your time. Here are a few tips for the Microsoft Small Business site:

### 1. Don't Overbook

This may seem like a strange way to start, but, if you really think about it, you rarely get everything you've planned for the day accomplished. If you schedule too many things, you actually waste a lot of time rescheduling appointments, returned missed phone calls, and being frustrated that you didn't get it all done.

### 2. Prioritize

Figure out what things are really important and what can wait. It's easy to just lump everything together as "equally important," but that's just not true. When planning projects, learn to ask questions that help determine the level of urgency. Negotiate longer lead times with your clients and don't get trapped by feeling you've got to give an immediate response to every problem. That just leads to unrealistic expectations and eventual failure to perform.

### 3. Learn to say no

You don't have to be a "yes man," and agree to everything your clients tell you they need. Use your priority criteria to identify truly urgent requests, things that can be accomplished at a later date, and things that simply never need to happen.

### 4. Organize

Possibly the most important part of time management is being organized. Everything you do should follow a logical process, one that anyone needing to find anything could use. Peggy Duncan, an Atlanta-based personal productivity authority, stated that: "Eliminating clutter and the chaos it causes will give you a gift of 240 to 288 hours every year."

Here are a few specific organizational ideas:

- Use color coding.
- Streamline processes.
- Do things when the time is right. Use normal work hours for tasks that can only be done during those hours. Do the other things, such as filing or accounting, at other times.
- Delegate.

*Continued on page 14*


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### 5. Use technology

This probably seems like a no brainer, but even though your personal habits and practices can take you a long way to better time management, don't be afraid to use technology as well. You know that nice new phone you've got that will synchronize with your calendar and contacts? Use it. There's nothing worse than trying to keep up with appointments and contacts relying on sticky notes affixed to your monitor.

### 6. Don't be ruled by technology

It is possible to be too in touch. If you're not careful, your phone can also constantly deliver intrusive e-mails and calls. Part of your effective time management program is also knowing when to turn your technology off. Switching your devices off helps balance your personal and professional time.

### 7. Don't Overanalyze

Time management won't solve all your problems. Don't stress yourself out by obsessing over every second. That worry will just waste more time. Do what you can, then enjoy the time that you have been able to reclaim through the process.

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## Vista, Part VII

### 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.

Microsoft's newly released Service Pack 1 may correct some of the performance glitches in Vista but apparently it doesn't solve all of them. Tests of Vista have demonstrated little speed enhancement. There are still many computer users who want to stick with WinXP until there is a very noticeable improvement of Vista or any other future operating system. Microsoft has recently hinted that the next version of Windows will arrive in 2009, which will be a year than earlier noted by it. Apparently Microsoft wants to cut its losses on Vista because customers have had so many problems with this operating system.

### Annoying Prompts

Vista added the "A Program Needs your Permission to Continue" prompt to help prevent you from inadvertently installing malware or making unauthorized changes to your computer. It's annoying to see that dialog box constantly popping up. You can turn it off by deactivating User Account Control in the User Accounts Control Panel.

### Battery Power

In addition to setting up a Power scheme, Vista can automatically crank down the brightness of the screen via a slide bar or by percentage points when a laptop is running on battery by going to Control Panel, Power Options, Advanced Settings, Display and setting the brightness to 50%. This change can add an extra 20 to 30 minutes' worth of battery time for your computer work.

### Compatibility

If a particular software is not working on your computer with Vista, you can try compatibility mode by right-clicking on the program's EXE file and choosing Properties. Next click the Compatibility tab, check the box that says Run this program in compatibility mode for, and select the operating system that worked best with the software.

### Extras

When Vista was launched, Microsoft promised Ultimate only extras. These extras add fun new features to the operating system. Unfortunately, the Ultimate extras program got off to a slow start. Microsoft has now issued two new extras for Vista Ultimate. The first is a set of two new sound schemes for Vista. They include Glass and Pearl. It also released a content pack for Windows DreamScene. It contains new DreamScenes. DreamScenes are videos that play on your desktop in place of wallpaper. To download the extras, click Start, All Programs, Windows Update. You should see a list of Ultimate Extras available for your machine.

### Live File System

Vista introduced a new format for writing discs called Live File System. Those CDs aren't necessarily compatible with all computers. CDs created by WinXP use the Mastered format. That format requires you to finalize the disc after it is burned and it must be completed in one session. Rewritable discs can be written to again, but must be erased first. By default, Vista uses the Live File System. With this format, you can write files to the CD whenever you want. You can also erase files whenever you want (provided you're using a rewritable CD). A rewritable CD can be used like a floppy disc or USB drive. When the disc will be used on other machines, you will want to use the Mastered format. To select the Mastered format, insert a blank CD in your computer. Click "Burn files to disc" in the box that opens. Enter a name for the disc and click "Show formatting options." Select Mastered and click Next. Your CD will be formatted. You can then add files and finalize the disc. Now, that isn't too complicated—once you know where to look! You don't have to use Windows' burning programs. There are many other programs available such as BurnAware, CDBurnerXP and DeepBurner. There is a solution that will eliminate CD-burning problems. Do away with discs and find a different way to share photos! Photo-sharing sites are the easiest way. My tip will help you select a site. Make sure you know what rights you may be surrendering first. You might like Picasa Web albums. It works seamlessly with Google's free Picasa photo-management program. Again, Picasa is free. You could also use a program like FolderShare. You share the photos directly from your computer. It really works! FolderShare is free. Or, you could use a site where you upload files for others to download. Here are two free sites for you to try MailBigFile and YouSendIt.

### Log-on Screen

To delete the long-on screen every time you boot up, make Vista log in automatically by typing netplwiz into the Start menu's search box. This step will bring up the Advanced User Accounts Control, where you can uncheck the box that reads "User must enter a username and password to use this computer."

*Continued on page 16*

## Movie Maker Software

If you have questions about Windows Vista's built-in Movie Maker software, visit Microsoft's online Windows Vista Community. This site has online forums for many Vista subjects including a Music, Pictures and Video section that includes Movie Maker. To see whether another user has already posted your question in the Vista Community, click the Community link under Help and How-To and select Music, Pictures and Video from the Search Discussions drop down menu and then enter keywords, for example "Movie Maker" in the Search For field.

## Multiple Clocks

If working in different time zones, you can add up to two additional clocks on the system task tray by left clicking on the clock, selecting Change date and time settings, and going to the Additional Clocks tab. You can then enter display name for the clock(s) and choose its time zone.

## Router Test

Did you know your router might be unsuitable for Windows Vista? Vista includes advanced networking features. For example, Vista technologies improve download speeds and online collaboration. Unfortunately, older home routers may not support these features. You may not be getting the most from Vista. But before you replace your router, take a simple test! Just run Microsoft's Internet Connectivity Evaluation Tool <<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/using/tools/igd/default.mspx>>. It will check your router for compatibility with Vista's advanced features and give you a detailed report. The tool requires installation of an ActiveX control. So, run it in Internet Explorer and be patient! The test may take 10 minutes.

## Sidebar

Windows Vista adds many new features to Microsoft's operating system. A very useful addition is Windows Sidebar. Sidebar is the feature you heard about. It's a bar that sits on the side of the desktop. It holds gadgets that can do any number of things. Sidebar may not be turned on by default. To find it, click Start, All Programs, Accessories, Windows Sidebar. You can have Sidebar start along with Windows. It'll show up on your desktop every time you start your computer. Click Start, Control Panel and then click Classic View, select Windows Sidebar Properties, and then check the box labeled "Start Sidebar when Windows starts." The Sidebar gadgets can do many functions and are like specialized mini programs. Several come pre-loaded with Vista. There is a photo viewer, weather utility and RSS reader, among others. You don't have to settle on Sidebar's default gadgets so click the "+" at the top of the Sidebar. You'll see a list of available gadgets. Now double click any gadget to add it to the Sidebar. The initial selection of gadgets is pretty limited but many others are available online. To download new gadgets, click the + at the top of the Sidebar and click "Get more gadgets online" at the bottom of the window, which will open the gadgets site in your browser. There you can explore and rate many popular gadgets. If you tire of a gadget, it's easy to remove. Hold your cursor over the gadget. Small icons will appear next to it. Click the X to remove it. Many gadgets are customizable so you may be able to change how they look or function. Hold your cursor over a gadget and click the small wrench symbol next to the gadget. You'll get a new window with customization options but your gadgets aren't locked to the Sidebar. You can place gadgets anywhere on the desktop by just dragging and dropping the gadget anywhere you want on your screen. Many gadgets have two states. They look and act differently when attached or detached from the Sidebar. For example, when moved to the desktop, a photo viewer will grow in size. A weather gadget may change from current conditions to an extended forecast. You can play with these gadgets to discover new abilities for them.

## Slide Shows

There are a couple of ways to run slide shows of photos in different folders. WinXP's Windows Picture and Fax Viewer will run slide shows of your photos. You can select one or more folders to include in your slide show. Nested folders will also be included. You simply open your My Pictures folder. Select the folders containing the photos you'd like to include in the show. You can use the CTRL key or Shift key to select multiple folders. Next, click "View as a slide show" in the Picture Task Pane. Your slide show will begin. You can use the controls to navigate through the photos, or, you can simply let the slide show run on its own. Things are slightly different in Windows Vista. It uses Windows Photo Gallery to run slide shows. Again, you can include multiple folders in your slide show. Nested folders are also included. From your Pictures folder, select the folders you would like to include by clicking them. For multiple folders hold down the CTRL key or use the Shift key. Then, click the Slideshow button at the top of the windows, or, you can opt to run a slide show of all the photos in your Pictures folder. Don't select any photos or folders in the folder. Just click the Slideshow button at the top of the window. You can let the slide show run through the photos on its own. You can use the navigation tools to move through the photos. If you want more advanced options, try IrfanView. This free program will create slide shows for you. While you have more options, it is more complicated to use. I have a download link on my site to IrfanView. Once you install IrfanView, click File, Slideshow. You can use the navigation tools at the right side of the Slideshow box to find your photos. When you find a folder you'd like to add, simply drag it to the box at the bottom. Nested folders won't be included by default. You can add those separately, or you can select "Include subdirectories (for Add all)." Then, click a folder on the right and click Add all. The nested folders will be included. Add the folders in the order in which you would like them to appear and use the Move up/Move down buttons to rearrange the order. To view your slide show, click Play Slideshow. You'll be able to see how it looks. Tweak the settings of your slide show using the tools on the left. Once your slide show is finalized, you can save it. Click "Save slideshow as EXE/SCR." This will save the slide show as a standalone program. It can also be used as a screen saver. You can save the slide show to CD, too. Click "Burn slideshow to CD." The CD you burn will work on other computers.





## Finding a Home for your Home Page

The Lazy Webmaster

### Susan Ives, Alamo PC

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

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). 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, 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, 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.

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

`.`

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#### STUDY GROUPS

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

#### Volunteer at the Alamo PC Learning Center

## We need volunteers!

Call the Learning Center to volunteer to assist ongoing classes or help keep day-to-day tasks under control. Your computer user group can't function without volunteers.

Please call (210) 736-0700

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 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.

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.

## The Doctor is In

Each Friday from 9:00am until 12:00 noon  
**Diagnose your software and hardware problems**  
**Trouble shoot major applications**  
**Run tests**  
**Solve Operating System mysteries**  
**For information call 736-0700**



Owner must stay with computer during repairs



## From the Deals Guy

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

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

**W**e worked the Cisco show <<http://www.cisco-live.com/>> and they had over 700 computers setup. Classrooms were everywhere and, in spite of tight security, it was said that 26 laptops disappeared one night. Security certainly got tighter after that. There were attendees from many countries.

Last month I mentioned the Web site "Second Life" and its great popularity. I'm told that other companies have countered with similar products. Here is a quote from Mike Ungerman who helped Hewie Poplock with the presentation: "Following the review of virtual 'universes' like Second Life, I came across several other alternatives that offer much the same capabilities. Google has started Lively <<http://www.lively.com/popular>>, a 3-D, avatar based, chatting world. It's still pretty rough, but is billed to eventually offer much the same capability as Second Life.

"For those with gaming consoles, either the X-Box 360 or PS3, 3-D avatar based interaction is being offered in the next several months. X-Box Live is Microsoft's system <<http://tinyurl.com/5awgix>> and Playstation Home is Sony's offering <<http://tinyurl.com/6xckoc>>."

### \*How's Your Registry?

WiseCleaner has released Wise Registry Cleaner v. 3.6.2 and Wise Disk Cleaner V. 3.5.1, a pair of affordable Windows applications that stabilize your computer, and make it run more quickly. Wise Registry Cleaner speeds up the user's computer by cleaning the Windows Registry. The Registry is at the heart of every Windows computer. Each time users install new software, information is added to the Registry. Few uninstall programs remove this information properly or completely. Therefore, over time, as users install and uninstall software, the Registry accumulates junk lines and pointers, and the computer's performance suffers.

Wise Registry Cleaner identifies and safely removes the useless information that has accumulated. In addition to scanning and cleaning the Windows Registry, the program optimizes the PC. If the user accidentally makes a mistake during a tune-up, they can undo all changes with a single click. The latest version of Wise Registry Cleaner includes a useful feature: "System Optimization Tool." Using this tool, users can easily tune up their PC in minutes without being a PC expert! [DealsGuy note: Optimize Your PC appears to only be in the Pro version.]

Wise Disk Cleaner is an intuitive, fast, and easy-to-use application that frees up disk space by deleting files no longer used by any software. In addition to the temporary files, log files, and backup files that accumulate over time, the program can identify more than 50 additional types of unnecessary files that users can safely remove. Instead of sending deleted files to the recycle bin, the program can compress these files and save them to a special directory, allowing users to restore files in the future if they find that they really need them. The latest version of Wise Disk Cleaner contains additional advanced customization options that let users fine-tune cleanup operations. [DealsGuy Note: Move To Location and Advanced Options appear to only be in the Pro version.]

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### Volunteers Wanted

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

## David's Essential Domains



### Website Hosting Starting at \$3.95/month!

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

#### Domain Names

.COMs starting at \$7.85!

FREE with every domain:

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

#### Website Tonight

Click 'n build your site online, in minutes!

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



#### SECURE SSL Certificates

Build trust, build confidence, and build your online business—with a Secure SSL Certificate!



#### TRAFFICBLAZER™

Prepare your site so the search engines find it!

<http://www.davidsessentialdomains.com>



Both applications are designed to be used in tandem, allowing users to streamline their Windows Registry and optimize their hard drive. Whether you are a business user who values a stable and brisk computer, a parent who needs to clean up after the software that their children install and uninstall on the family computer, or a computer consultant who needs applications that will keep their customers' PCs running optimally, Wise

### **Registry Cleaner and Wise Disk Cleaner have the tools that you need.**

Wise Registry Cleaner and Wise Disk Cleaner also offer support for more than twenty languages. It's easy to add additional language support into Wise Registry Cleaner and Wise Disk Cleaner. The User Interface messages are loaded from resource files for all supported languages. This means that you can add a resource file that contains messages in your own language.

Please note that there are FREE versions of both Wise Registry Cleaner and Wise Disk Cleaner. You can choose to pay for the PRO version, or only use the free version if preferred. Wise Registry Cleaner V. 3.6.2 and Wise Disk Cleaner V. 3.5.1 run under Windows 98/Me/NT/2000/XP/XP-x64/2003/Vista/Vista-x64/2008 Server, and cost \$19.95 (US) each. As a bundle, users can buy both programs for \$32.95. Everybody can visit <<http://www.wisecleaner.com/>> to purchase the software securely online, or to download free trial versions. Users can also download free versions of each program without the advanced options and system optimization tool.

### **\*If You Don't Understand, Try This**

LingvoSoft <<http://www.lingvosoft.com>> announced the release of an all-new language learning system for Pocket PC that makes speaking any language simple, fast and enjoyable. Putting everything you need in the palm of your hand, LingvoSoft Language Teacher 2008 makes communicating in a new language easier than ever before. Providing every beginner with the tools necessary to start speaking another language immediately, your success is virtually guaranteed.

With intuitive and efficiently arranged sections that teach the alphabet, words, phrases, and dialogs you will soon have the skills you need to start speaking accurately and comprehensibly. With the advanced voice output and speech recognition built-into the Language Teacher you will always get the pronunciation right the first time, something new learners absolutely depend on. Loads of practice tests and evaluations provide the help new students need to start mastering any language immediately. The price is \$149.95, but a 25% discount is available on any LingvoSoft software title. Simply enter your personal gift certificate code "MY8UZPF7M4" in the 'Add Gift' field of the shopping cart and click the "Add Gift" button <<http://www.lingvosoft.com/info/software/Language-Teacher/>>.

### **\*This Should Help You Copy**

[DealsGuy Note: Be sure to thoroughly read the FAQs on their Web site so you more fully understand the capability of the product.]

DVD neXt COPY released version V2.9.9.1 of DVD neXt COPY, a new and improved version that has the best quality of any DVD Copy software available. DVD neXt COPY triggers the quality king and jumps over the magical quality hurdle of the legendary DVDSHrink. Until now the "old" DVDSHrink possessed the best quality of any DVD copy program available. It was impossible for any competitors to reach this high level of quality and speed. As of now, DVD neXt COPY has broken through this barrier, and provides better quality and faster burns than DVDSHrink (High Quality Mode).

DVD neXt COPY now provides the highest quality of any DVD copy software available. Our extensive quality check was performed on the majority of the latest DVD movies with excellent results. We have compiled test report on two special movies that are often used as quality reference movies, because they are very complicated to recompress. You can see our results in this test report: <[http://www.dvdnextcopy.com/quality\\_messurement.pdf](http://www.dvdnextcopy.com/quality_messurement.pdf)>.

During this special promotional period, everyone can receive 20% off DVD next COPY Xpress, Standard and Pro. Just enter the word "SAVE20" in the coupon field during purchase, to



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receive your 20% discount. Prices are as follows: XPress \$49.99, Standard \$69.99, Pro \$89.99. The license is good for two computers but does require activation. Read more information about the new DVD neXt COPY at <<http://www.dvdnextcopy.com>> Watch the online DVD neXt COPY flash tutorials at <<http://www.dvdnextcopy.com/tutorials.aspx>>.

- Release Date 6/24/08
- Improved Quality Engine
- Improved Software Compatibility Mode
- Added Pre-scan Preview Function
- Product page link: <<http://www.dvdnextcopy.com/overview.aspx>>

#### \*What's That Key?

Everybody knows Windows has a product key used to install it. If you needed it for some reason, do you remember where you put it? It also ends up embedded in your registry so maybe you could edit your registry if necessary to retrieve it, but that's living dangerously. The Magical Jelly Bean Keyfinder V2.0.1 is a freeware utility that will go in and get it for you. It has options to copy the key to your clipboard, save it to a text file or print it for your records. It works on a wide family of Windows operating systems.

It also has support for multiple installations of Office, and the ability to change the Windows XP, 98 and ME installation key. It's at <<http://magicaljellybean.com/keyfinder/>>. Also offered is a neat popup dictionary that is freeware. I read about these long ago in Tim Hoke's freeware column in PC Alamo, newsletter for Alamo PC Organization <<http://www.alamopc.org/index.shtml>>.

That's it for this month. I'll have some other new product announcements on my Web site. Meet me here again next month if your editor permits. 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@bellsouth.net](mailto:bobclick@bellsouth.net)>. Visit my Web site at <<http://www.dealsguy.com>>.



#### Visit the Alamo PC Learning Center

### Can you help teach?

We're looking for someone to teach one or more of the following classes:

**Digital Camera; Photo Editing; Movie Maker; Microsoft Digital Image 2006**

Please call (210) 736-0700

#### Volunteers Wanted

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

#### STUDY GROUPS

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

## PC 101

## Microsoft Works - Sports and Fitness

## 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>

Considering the demographics of our group, I have elected to limit discussion of the Task following the Vehicle Data we discussed in the last issue. I don't see many of us coaching a Sports Team, Organizing a Fantasy Sports Team, or keeping Records for that team. There are however, two areas which could prove useful in the Sports & Fitness Task.

**Fitness tracking**

Get in shape with these handy templates to help track your exercise, training, or nutrition program.

[Start this task](#)

Most of us realize that we should be following the guidelines referred to above. Perhaps having an organized approach to tracking the activities will provide that little nudge needed to get going, or to stick with a program once begun.

Clicking on Start this task will bring up the window seen at the top of the next column. The Aerobic Activity Log is in spreadsheet format, listing all activities you might engage in during the day, beginning with Walking. There are columns for 14 days beginning with your selected start date, and 15 rows for the various activities. Each row is divided into two, one for the minutes involved, the other for your heart rate during it.



It also provides a chart to figure various heart rate levels, which which you should use to gauge your level of aerobic activity. I don't see a reference to how you determine your maximum heart rate to begin. Most guides suggest that your maximum heart rate should be 220 minus your age. Thus if you're 60, your maximum heart rate should be 160. The Target Heart rate Chart then gives you suggested rates of 55%, 65%, and 90% of maximum - 88, 104, 144 beats per minute. There is also a place to record the number of beats per 10 seconds, roughly 15, 17, and 24. Normal walking will most likely not cause you exceed the 55% level.



The thing to keep in mind here is that most fitness guidelines do not require continuous periods of activity, such as walking for 30 minutes straight. Cumulative activity spread out over the day can be just as beneficial. Besides walking, you might include stair climbing, or gardening activity - anything that you do for an extended period which can raise your heart rate above

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resting. You might be surprised at how much you might accumulate during a day, if you track it carefully.

The Strength Training Log is another spreadsheet that allows you to track any weight training you do. You track the amount of weight involved and the number of repetitions. I find it difficult to envision one even beginning to fill the 15 rows on this sheet.

The Meal Planner provides another spreadsheet in the form of a weekly calendar, with columns for each day of the week, and rows for Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, and a Snack.

**Meal plan for the week of:**

Monday		Tuesday	
<u>Breakfast</u>		<u>Breakfast</u>	
Calories:		Calories:	
Fat grams:		Fat grams:	
<u>Lunch</u>		<u>Lunch</u>	
Calories:		Calories:	
Fat grams:		Fat grams:	
<u>Dinner</u>		<u>Dinner</u>	
Calories:		Calories:	
Fat grams:		Fat grams:	
<u>Snack</u>		<u>Snack</u>	
Calories:		Calories:	
Fat grams:		Fat grams:	
Calories:	0	Calories:	0
Fat grams:	0	Fat grams:	0
% calories from fat:	0%	% calories from fat:	0%

I don't know where you get the ideas for what to include for each meal. I guess you're on your own to decide what to eat and determine the calories and fat grams for each meal.

Finally we have the Daily Food Diary, another spreadsheet to allow you track in detail what you stow away throughout the day. I imagine we might be surprised by the amount if we track it diligently.

## Daily Food Diary

Name:

Date:

Meal	Food Eaten	Amount	Fat Grams	Calories
Breakfast				
Snack				
Lunch				

The rows go on to include dinner and two more snacks. It sounds like they've been following me around! Finally they include a line to keep track of the amount of water you drink during the day.

As I mentioned earlier, I haven't seen any assistance provided along the lines of menu planning suggestions or guides to fat grams and calories for any of the entries you make. I imagine that they expect you to get that from your doctor or nutritionist. These sheets are just a means to track whatever you select from another source.

If any of the items in the task serve to prod you into doing something about fitness, the task will certainly have been worthwhile. It's all too easy to procrastinate or neglect this activity altogether. I hear from some of my older friends that at an advanced age, they feel that they might just as well go ahead and partake of those things that give them pleasure. I personally think that one should strive to maintain one's health even if it means passing up on certain food or drink, and getting off your duff and getting some exercise. It might not add years to your life, but life to your years.



## Pew Charitable Trusts

Computer Hysteria

### Berry Phillips, Computer Club of Oklahoma City

Barry is a member of the CCOKC and a regular writer for the CCOKC website and the eMonitor

**P**ew could conjure up several images in your mind. For example, you might think of a human expression uttered upon inhaling the exotic perfume of a skunk! Perhaps you might think of an aching back from that hard wooden pew at church! What does pew have to do with computing? Perhaps nothing caution because you are reading in the CHZ, the Computer Hysteria Zone!

The Pew Charitable Trusts, an independent nonprofit, was established between 1948 and 1979 by the children of Sun Oil Company founder Joseph Pew and his wife, Mary Anderson Pew, with the creation of the Pew Memorial Foundation honoring their parents' memory. In 2005, the foundation invested \$177 million to fund the various trusts including the founding in 1999 of The Pew Internet & American Life Project which studies the social and civic impact of the Internet, often considered the most far-ranging, behavior-changing communications innovation since the invention of printing.

The Project produces reports that explore the impact of the Internet on families, communities, work and home, daily life, education, health care, and civic and political life. The Project aims to be an authoritative source on the evolution of the Internet through collection of data and analysis of real-world developments as they effect the virtual world.

The basis of the reports are nationwide random digit dial telephone surveys as well as online surveys. This data collection is supplemented with research from government agencies, academia, and other expert venues, observations of what people do and how they behave when they are online, in-depth interviews with Internet users and Internet experts alike and other efforts that try to examine individual and group behavior. The Project releases 15-20 pieces of research a year, varying in size, scope, and ambition.

Latest trends from the project reports show the number of adult users are now almost equally divided between men and women representing 73% of American adults who use the Internet which currently represents approximately 147 million people. Here is what we do online: Send e-mail (91%), use a search engine to find information (91%), search for a map or driving direction (84%), look for health/medical information (79%), research a product or service before buying it (78%), check the weather (78%), look for information on a hobby or interest (77%), get travel information (73%), get news (68%), buy a product (67%), surf the web for fun (66%), buy or make a reservation for travel (63%), look for political news/information (58%), and for lesser percentages of use on online activities visit [www.pewinternet.org](http://www.pewinternet.org) whose website was used to research this article with my appreciation.

While researching this Pew article, I began wondering if the article might be good enough to be submitted to win a "Pewlitzer" Prize! On second thought that would be just plain "pewlish!"

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# Where memories are made

**Elizabeth B. Wright , Computer Club of Oklahoma City**

Elizabeth is a member of the CCOKC and a regular writer for the eMonitor

The summer seems to have sent my brain on vacation. Most of my computer efforts have been in the nature of trying to edit old digital photographs and seeing if any new ones are worth editing. Recently though we made a trip to WaltDisneyWorld with our son and his children, so naturally there were opportunities for really good pictures. Unfortunately, not many of mine were very good at all. I guess part of the reason was getting caught in tropical storm Alberto. Lots and lots of rain, so getting the camera out of its protective pouch was often not an option. However, I am looking forward to receiving a CD with pictures that my son took, many of which I already know are quite good. So all was not in vain.

One recent software purchase was a Digital Scrapbooking program. I chose Leeza Gibbons Scrapbooking Software from Mountain Cow for one main reason. On the box, it indicated that the software is capable of fitting text to curves. I did not see another program which indicated that feature on the box. The program was somewhat more expensive than others, but the uniqueness of the text option was enough to potentially justify the cost.

However, expectation and reality soon conflicted. One thing that bothered me in particular in the real world was the requirement to install Microsoft network files from the CD before the program would finish the installation process. Possibly this was to make sure the product would be registered since the CD disk only installs a trial version initially. In order to activate the software with all of its features, the installation routine apparently uses the aforementioned network files to access the "activation number" online. This seems to be a new trend in software. I guess the new programs aren't Microsoft compatible for no reason. I now hope the installed files have not corrupted something else on my computer.

And after installing the program, I'm not sure it lives up to the blurbs on the box. Specifically, it is not particularly user friendly. Without some knowledge of how such programs work, it might take a really long time to figure out how to use this one since the help files are tedious, not well written and slow down anything you are trying to achieve. Certainly browsing for images to use is a cumbersome process, although with a lot of trial and error I was finally able to bring my own pictures into a page layout. The single biggest drawback to the software is its inability to handle multiple image manipulation except in one final step for inserting images into a page. Otherwise, each image you want to use must be individually imported which can require up to six steps. There doesn't even seem to be a utility that allows you to copy and paste images from other programs.

As for the touted "curved text" routine, it turns out to be nothing more than predefined shapes for text, a tool available in many other programs which make greeting cards, etc. I mistakenly thought (since the blurb did not spell out the process) that I could create my own shapes and fit text to them, but I guess that is only in high end drawing programs. It was my mistake, so I have no one to blame but myself. If there is more to the utility for curved text than that, I have yet to figure out how to do it. However, this does seem to be the only scrapbooking program which offers shaped text of any variety, at least from what is on the boxes for other software. It is an advantage if you want to add some special touches to your scrapbook pages.

Bottom line: I'm not sure any scrapbooking software is worth the money and trouble. However, if you want to share images with other people, this might be another way to do it in an attractive way. Without actually trying any other program of this type, I just don't know whether any of them are necessarily a good buy. Use your own judgment on this one.

I will keep trying to use the program, if for no other reason than one of these days I would like to print out some scrapbook pages and actually put them in a real book, one with hard covers and everything !

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## Access: Performing a find function

**James D. Duncan , Computer Club of Oklahoma City**

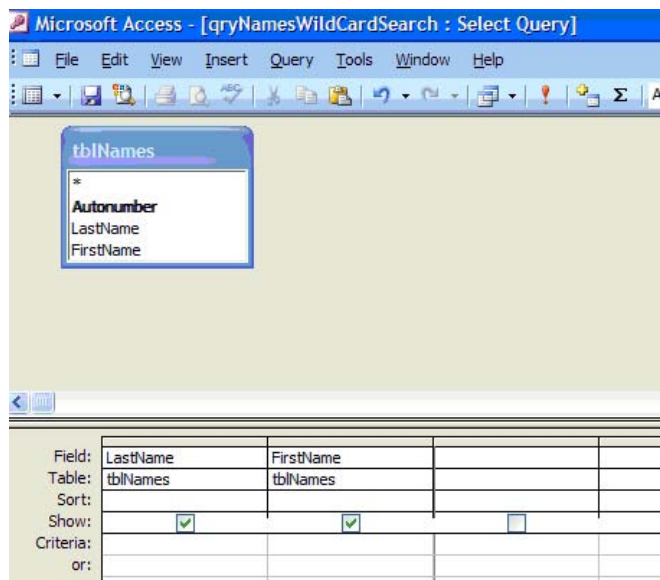
James is a member of the CCOKC and an expert in Access and Excel.

Queries in Access are usually looking for specific values or ranges. I have currently been working on searching for items that contain so set or subset of values. By using wild cards we can find a set of characters contained within a string.

For example, let's put some names in a table.

tblNames	
LastName	FirstName
Smith	Ralph
Best	Katy
Best	Jessie
Woodward	Larry
Ford	Robert
Dallas	Robin

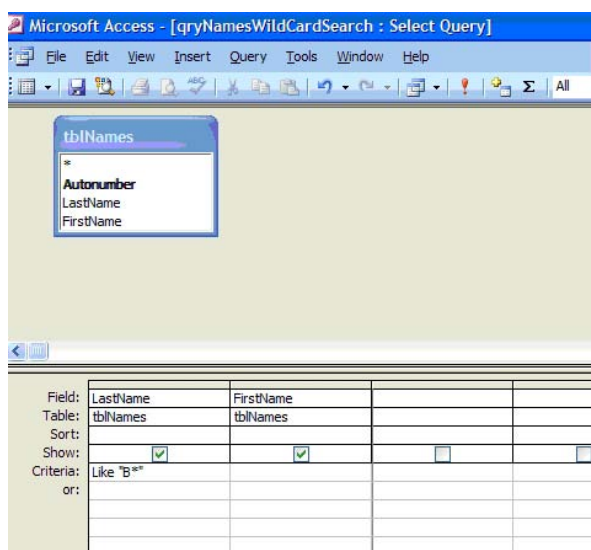
Now, Create a quick query using this table.



All we have done here is drag the Lastname and FirstName field to the grid. If we run this we will get a list of the last names and first names.

qryNamesWildCardSearch	
LastName	FirstName
Smith	Ralph
Best	Katy
Best	Jessie
Woodward	Larry
Ford	Robert
Dallas	Robin

But what if we wanted all the LastNames that began with “B”. That is easy too. In the criteria of the LastName column enter like b and press enter. Access will format the criteria to read “Like “b\*”. The asterisk after the b is called a wildcard. This statement tell the field to display all the items that begin with b and ignore any other characters after that.



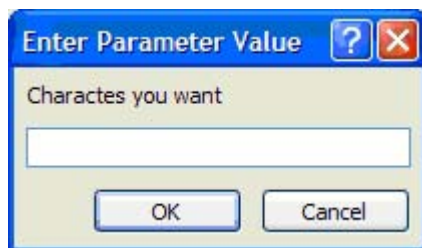
Run the data sheet view and we get a list of the Last names that begin with b.

Now if we wanted to search the LastName field for the characters “es” we just modify our search criteria to have the wild card “\*” in the front and one in the back. The criteria would be “like \*es\*”.

qryNamesWildCardSearch	
LastName	FirstName
Best	Katy
Best	Jessie

In this case we get the same result. You will get a different set with real data. This example is fine for a couple of runs. Now if you want to get prompted for the characters you are looking at let’s change the criteria just a little.

Enter Like "\*" & [Characters you want] & "\*" into the criteria of LastName. Now you get a prompt and do not have to change the criteria for what you want. The prompt looks like this.



Enter the letter s and you get every LastName with an s in it.

Look in help for wild card and you will get a list of all the possibilities for searching using this method. Then just go WILD and create away. This then is incorporated into a form and used to populate a report and you have some real power and nice reports.

Get out there and put this to practice. Generate some errors, search the help for that little clue that corrects your code and makes your program run as you expected it too. This is United Way Fund drive time. I volunteer my time to a United Way Fund agency. They are doing exceptional work for the community. I feel humble to do a very minute part to give back to the community. When you help another you can hold your head up a little higher. You can affect how the community gets shaped.

qryNamesWildCardSearch	
LastName	FirstName
Smith	Ralph
Best	Katy
Best	Jessie
Dallas	Robin



## Top 20 Ergonomic Tips

### John R. Chait D.C. , Sarasota PC User Group

Dr. Chait is a practicing chiropractor in Sarasota and is the SPCUG ergonomic consultant. As an avid computer enthusiast, Dr. Chait knows first hand how important proper interaction between the user and their PC can be. He stresses this in his ergonomic tips column and his lectures. <drchait@hotmail.com> For more ergonomic tips, visit <<http://chaitchiropractic.com/links/Ergonomics/>>

**P**rolonged use of a computer keyboard and mouse can lead to frequent aches and pains unless a few guide lines are followed. Working intensively at a computer without regular work breaks can be harmful. You can work more comfortably and safely if you follow the top 20 ergonomic tips.

1. Keep your feet supported either on the floor or on a footrest when you work to reduce pressure on your low back.
2. Keep your shoulders relaxed with your elbows close to your sides when working.
3. Avoid resting your elbows on the hard surface or edge of your table. Pads can be used to protect your elbows if necessary.
4. Maintain good posture when working at the keyboard. Your back curves should be maintained with the use of a chair with back support.
5. Avoid twisting or bending your trunk or neck when working. Frequently used items should be positioned directly in front of you and angled upward on a copy holder when working.
6. Reduce the number of repetitive motions you complete when working. Keystrokes can be reduced with the use of macros or software programs allowing "sticky keys". Use of scroll locks and keystroke combinations can reduce pointing device movements.
7. Elbows should be positioned at 100 to 110 degrees when working in order to keep a relaxed position at the keyboard. This could require a slight negative tilt (front of keyboard higher than back) when working in upright positions. If reclined in your chair, the keyboard could be at a positive angle to maintain this relaxed position.
8. Take frequent rest breaks during the day. These breaks can be brief and should include stretches for optimal results. If possible, take a 1 or 2 minute break every 15-20 minutes, and a 5 minute break every hour. Every few hours, get up, move around and do an alternative activity.
9. Alternate tasks to make changes in your working position to avoid making the same movements for prolonged periods of time.
10. Your wrists should be in a neutral or straight position when keying or using a mouse device or calculator. Wrist rests can assist you in maintaining a neutral position when used properly during pauses. Float your arms above the keyboard and wrist rest when keying. Avoid planting your wrists on the table or wrist rest. This can result in bending the wrists either up and down or side to side.
11. Avoid hitting the keyboard with excessive force. Studies have shown that the average user hits the keyboard with four times the required force when keying.
12. Use a keyboard tray to properly position your keyboard and pointing device.
13. Rest your eyes by refocusing on distant objects intermittently when working.



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14. Avoid excessive reaching when working at the computer. Your keyboard, pointing device, files and telephone should be within easy reach.
15. Use a copy holder positioned in line with your monitor and keyboard to position copy or reference materials.
16. When writing at the computer, avoid excessive reaching over the keyboard or work materials. A sturdy in-line copy holder can double as a writing surface if appropriately positioned.
17. Position the monitor so that the viewed part of the screen allows you to keep your neck in a neutral or straight position. The monitor should be centered directly in front of you. The top of the computer screen should be slightly below the top of your head, so that you are looking at it with a slight downward gaze.
18. Customize your computer by using your software. The screen font, contrast, pointer size, speed, and color can all be adjusted to maximize your comfort and efficiency.
19. Position your monitor to eliminate excessive glare. Avoid reflections from windows or overhead lighting.
20. Routine use of non-prescribed medications or wrist brace is NOT recommended. If you begin to develop symptoms, seek further information or see your Chiropractor. Slight changes made early can avoid future complications in many cases!

## Stretch Break Pro

by **John R. Chait D.C.**, drchait@comcast.net, Member of the Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, Inc.

Stretch Break Pro software was created by a team of health care professionals with the aim of minimizing repetitive strain injuries (like Carpal Tunnel syndrome), reduce stress and improve ergonomic use of desktop computers and furniture. Each stretch session lasts less than three minutes and has a default of three stretch routines, which you can change. Virtual-reality models demonstrate the stretches on-screen, so you'll be sure to perform the stretches properly. Exercises include shoulder shrugs, wrist and finger presses, eyes around the clock, and 21 other movements. You can specify how often Stretch Break Pro kicks in and the number and duration of stretch exercises per break. When it's time to stretch, a message box pops up. You can start or stop the stretch break at any time.

This Pro version includes a Tracker program to monitor usage and allows you to choose which stretches you'd like to cycle through. Click on the Ergo Hints button for ideas and improvements to how you can relate ergonomically correct to your computer, desk, chair, lights, and so on. All of the stretches can be performed quietly from your chair. Stretch Break Pro should not be used as a substitute to a qualified Chiropractic physician. Be sure to read the disclaimer. Companies would be wise to add this program to their ergonomic improvements and management program. In this update users can choose sequence and duration of stretches and can select the Standard Timer or the Smart Timer which monitors keyboard and mouse activity to determine the time to the next break. The program now plays music during breaks.

To download this nifty little program for a 10 day trial period, go to the Para Technologies website at the following web address: <http://www.paratec.com/>

Stretch Break makes an ideal gift for the computer buffs on your list. It will help them avoid repetitive strain injuries in a gentle and efficient way.





Practicing the Black Art

## Using CrossLoop to Troubleshoot and Control Remote Machines

**Vinny La Bash , Sarasota PC User Group**

Vinny (SPCUG President in 1996-97-98) is a retired IBM'er and teaches computer part time at the Sarasota Vocational Technical Institute. <labash@spcug.org>

Third party Windows applications are rarely examined in this column, but CrossLoop is too good a utility to ignore. Trying to walk someone through a computer problem over the telephone is often an exercise in frustration. There is no substitute for seeing what is actually on a user's screen to find out the root cause of a problem.

Vista has a built-in support tool known as Remote Desktop, but far from making the process easy, it has a tendency to confuse those with no technical background. Remote Desktop makes it rough on those who don't know how to handle the added complications of firewalls and routers. CrossLoop, which is a free remote support utility, could be an excellent solution.

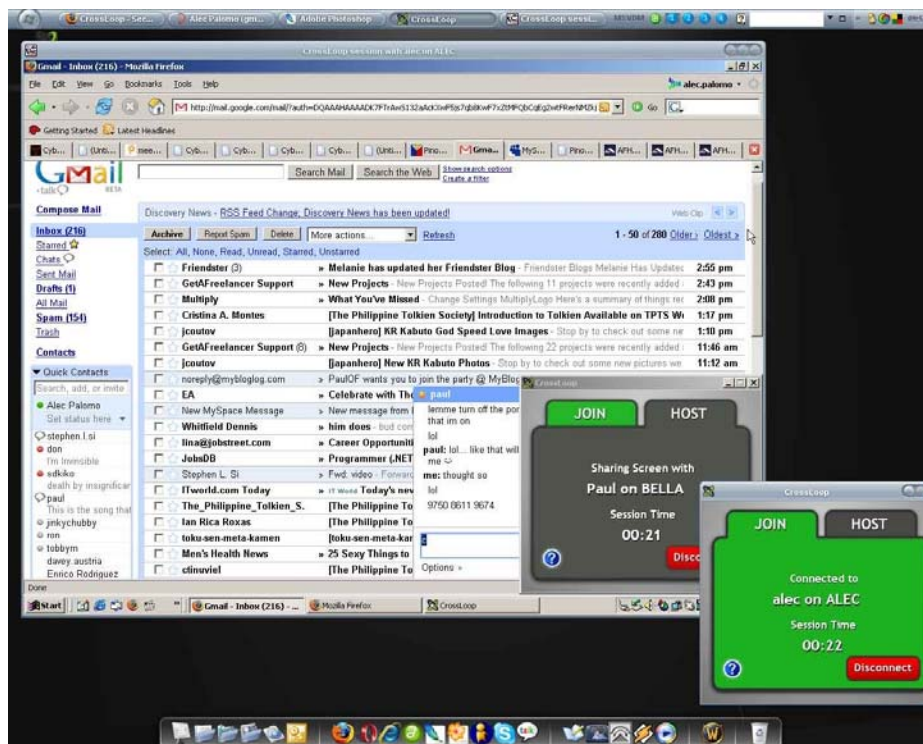
CrossLoop shields users from tricky situations involving communicating through routers, firewalls, and other potential obstacles. Setting up a communications session between two computers physically separated, but connected through the internet, is reduced to a process hardly more complex than turning on your TV. Those concerned about security can relax. CrossLoop uses something called TightVNC which safeguards data with 128 bit encryption.

Crossloop is useful for people who want to train or support others remotely. If you're an experienced web surfer, for example, and need to show someone how to access a disk drive or retrieve a lost document, CrossLoop allows you to take control of their computer screen, and show them exactly how to do it.

Hard core geeks may not be satisfied with CrossLoop. It's not complicated enough. It works better than most similar commercial utilities, and your technically challenged friends and relatives will find it aggravation free.

You can download the program without charge from <http://www.crossloop.com>. The site has a video that demonstrates how to install and use the program which is very helpful for technophobes.

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Once you're up and running, the interface presenting itself is a model of simplicity which effectively masks the complexity behind the scenes. As mentioned earlier, security and remote control is handled by TightVNC. VNC stands for Virtual Network Computing, and is a very well designed software tool that easily allows remote access to Operating Systems with a graphical interface. The technical specifications say you need Windows 98 or higher. A broadband internet connection is also a requirement. Dialup connections won't work. Drive space, processor speed, and memory requirements are negligible given the general power of today's computers.

Another benefit of TightVNC is the built-in 128 bit encrypted security. When you begin a communications session, the program generates a new 12 digit access code. The access code then generates the encryption codes giving you an additional layer of security. Not bad for a free utility.

Running the program is so easy it's almost boring. As you can see from the illustration, the interface is simple and straightforward. Assuming you started the session, the next step is to communicate the access code to the person you are communicating with. You can do this by email, telephone, screaming into the next room, etc.

After starting the session, your friend types the access code into the box and clicks Connect. When the Connect button is clicked on both sides the two PCs are linked.

This method of troubleshooting a remote PC eliminates all the hassles of trying to interpret what an inexperienced user is attempting to explain. It's difficult to imagine anything less complex than a one button interface. With 128 bit encryption built in, it's tough to beat.

Other applications that make such connections possible have been available for years, but nothing I've seen makes it as simple as CrossLoop.

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# Cloud Computing – The Future of Personal Computing?

*By Brian K. Lewis, Ph.D., Member and Contributing Columnist, Sarasota PCUG, Florida, [www.spcug.org](http://www.spcug.org), [bwsail@yahoo.com](mailto:bwsail@yahoo.com)*

**Y**ou may not have heard of it, but “Cloud Computing” is the latest buzz-word in computing circles. The question is, just what does it mean? The problem is that at this point, there is no really solid definition for this term. You can search for it and you'll find a number of interpretations. So, from all that I have encountered, I'll try to synthesize one for you.

Cloud computing is being able to access files, data, programs and services all via the Internet. You would have little or nothing stored on your computer, in fact, your computer might simply be a device, desktop or handheld, that can access the web and all of its services. In addition, cloud computing offers the services of enormous computer networks that function as if they were components of a supercomputer. These networks can process tens of trillions of operations per second compared to three billion operations per second for the most powerful desktop computer. This kind of computing power can be used for analysis of risk in financial portfolios, delivering personalized medical information, and powering immersive computer games. These networks use hundreds or thousands of network servers using PC related technology.

I think this excerpt aptly describes the computer cloud. “What is Google's cloud? It's a network made of hundreds of thousands, or by some estimates 1 million, cheap servers, each not much more powerful than the PCs we have in our homes. It stores staggering amounts of data, including numerous copies of the World Wide Web. This makes search faster, helping ferret out answers to billions of queries in a fraction of a second. Unlike many traditional supercomputers, Google's system never ages. When its individual pieces die, usually after about three years, engineers pluck them out and replace them with new, faster boxes. This means the cloud regenerates as it grows, almost like a living thing.” (Quotation is taken from a Business Week article dated 12-13-2007 by Stephen Baker.)

Although some of these services may appear to be only of interest for corporations and their IT departments, services are also being made available for home and small business users. As you might expect, the availability of this Internet computer access depends on fast broadband access. An area where the U.S. lags behind many other countries. In this country we think that having 10-15 megabits/sec on our broadband is really fast. However, in Japan, 50 megabits/sec is closer to the norm, even for home users.

So who would be providing these cloud computing services? Actually, they already exist in the form of Google Apps, Amazon Elastic Compute (EC2), Sapotek's Desktop2 ([www.desktoptwo.com](http://www.desktoptwo.com)), Zim Desk ([www.zimdesk.com](http://www.zimdesk.com)) and Zoho Office ([www.zoho.com](http://www.zoho.com)). (There are also a number of companies providing these services and more to large corporations only.) Sapotek claims to have 175,000 users of their Desktop2 and their servers can handle 8 – 10,000 of them at the same time. They have a partnership with Sun that will provide the equipment to handle as many as 350,000 users. Every time I look for more information on Cloud Computing I find new companies listed that are offering these services. It is a very rapidly growing industry.

So, if you wanted to take advantage of the services in the cloud, what could you expect to find? Let's take a look at Desktop2. This is a free service that provides normal office applications: writer, spreadsheets, presentations, notepad, and a calendar. It also provides hard drive storage, e-mail, instant messaging, blogs, MP3 player, RSS service and a web site editor. The free version does come with ads as you would expect.

Zimdesks is very similar to Desktop2. Its web applications includes pop3email, file manager, sidebar, RSS, browser, word processor, spreadsheet, calendar, tasks manager, accessories/widgets, web messenger,



*Continued on page 33*

video conference, media player, Internet radio, web TV, games, zimcommunity, zimblog, and much more. It is also a free service that incorporates advertising. Like everyone else they have to support themselves somehow.

The third of these services is Zoho Office. On their home page you not only find a list of the services they provide, they are all available for trial simply by clicking on a icon. As with the previous services, the list of applications is quite extensive.

Google Apps is very similar in its offerings to the preceding services. However, it is more oriented towards business users. It does have a free version which might be useful for the individual user.

Zoho uses Java to run its applications on the web. Other services may use Flash or Java. Either of these allow the applications to run in your browser and to operate at reasonable speeds. I have tried out the word processing and found it to be no different than using a word processor on my computer. This is true even though the speed of my Internet connection is usually only 500 – 750 kilobits/sec. When you are using a wireless card modem it is only on very rare occasions that you can match fast DSL speeds. I'm sure that those of you on cable or fast DSL would have no problem using a web-based application, at least with regard to the speed of the applications response. However, if you are preparing a graphic loaded presentation, then you might experience some slow down depending on the speed of your connection.

The idea of relying on Web-based applications and storing data in the "cloud" of the Internet has long been pushed as a way to do business on the road. Now software companies are making entire Web-based operating systems. They present themselves as a complete computer in the cloud and are aimed at a wider audience. These browser-based services could help those who can't afford their own computer.

There are also those who are convinced that this is the future of computing. However, some security concerns should be considered. Unless you know how secure your data is when you use a cloud system, you should be cautious about what you share with the on-line servers. You need to know how your data is protected from other users of the "cloud". As a service provider they should be willing to undergo external audits and/or security certifications. Also you need to know what kind of data protection and data recovery procedures are provided. As has been demonstrated many times, computers do fail. Finally, you need to know what happens to your data in case the company fails or is sold to another entity. This is also not uncommon in the high tech industry. As is always the case, before allowing sensitive information to be used or stored on the web, remember "caveat emptor".

Lastly, consider what computing might be like should the "cloud" become the method of choice. Certainly there would be no need for computers to have all the bells and whistles we now associate with them. Just think about the possible design of a system destined for use solely with cloud computing. It would only need a minimal operating system that would allow the computer to boot, then start the web browser which would connect to the Internet. Your cloud page would be your home page and display your chosen desktop. As for a hard drive, a 10 - 20 gigabyte solid state drive would probably be adequate. USB ports for printers, scanners, possibly other I/O ports would be included. The one thing you would want to be high end would be the graphics system. This would allow display of high resolution graphics used in online games and for viewing videos. It is possible that the graphics processing unit (GPU) would be more powerful than the CPU (central processing unit) or it might even incorporate the CPU. This could all be contained in a 1-2 pound laptop or compressed further into a handheld computer/cell phone. Although some of these characteristics are found now in smart phones, the spread of cloud computing would enhance the features of these phones. For most of us, the available screen size on these smart phones is not large enough, leaving a market opening for inexpensive laptops such as the ASUS Eee PC or the OLPC (One laptop per child). In neither case would we need an operating system as massive as Microsoft Windows.

One thing is certain, anytime you try to predict the future you usually miss the mark by a mile. So it will be interesting to see what reality brings about over the next few years.


*Dr. Lewis is a former university and medical school professor of physiology. He has been working with personal computers for over 35 years, developing software and assembling systems.*

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# Face Time in the 21st Century

*Lou's Views by Lou Vitale, President, Macon County Users Group, North Carolina, [www.maconusersgroup.org](http://www.maconusersgroup.org), [mug@maconusersgroup.org](mailto:mug@maconusersgroup.org)*

Person to person communication was pretty simple last century. There was the letter, or as we call it today, "snail mail" and the telephone. Our address book contained the physical address of our friends and their phone numbers. It is amazing to me how much we actually got done, we won wars and went to the moon and created the greatest country on earth, and all without a single bit of digitized information.

To someone who grew up in the last 20 or so years that must seem quaint. They probably can't imagine life without a cell phone, email, IM and a dozen other ways of communicating with their fellow human beings. I am beginning to wonder myself. Someone asked me the other day if I "Twittered", I thought it was a neurological disorder. No, it was a form of micro-blogging, another way to stay in touch in the 21st century.

So just how many ways can you keep up to the minute with your "friends" today, let me count the ways. And this is by no means a complete list.

Email has been around since the beginning of the internet. By the late 80s' everyone with a computer had an email account. Now we could send a message to anyone with a computer and they could reply. This was a momentous social change. It significantly accelerated the communication between people. Plus we could "attach" stuff, like pictures of the grandkids, or an excel spread sheet to our email.

In its simplest form, a blog (web log) is an online diary or journal. Prior to the mid 90's online forums and BBS (bulletin board systems) allowed people to have running conversations on a web site with a moderator to keep order. Then some high profile personalities started to keep online diaries which allowed comments from anyone to be posted, and the blog was born.

Today bogging is a serious force to be reckoned with. Anyone can start a blog and thousands do every day. Currently there are an estimated 12 million blogs and about 57 million blog readers. These numbers are deceiving, since it appears that only about 20% of blogs are active and 60% to 80% of blogs are abandoned after one month. As one commentator put it "the average blog has the life span of a fruit fly".

Yet this kind of personal communication has again changed the social landscape. Anyone can comment on anything from personal hygiene to politics and anyone can respond with their take on the subject. Some bloggers have aspired to become journalists and others are just looking for some virtual recognition, either way we are more in touch.



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Personal communication has taken another leap with the creation of social networking sites like Face Book and My Space. These sites and many others like them allow virtual conversation to take place between friends on an almost instant basis. I will confess, I don't know much about them which only proves my age. But without a doubt, and from now on a person's identity will forever be linked to their Face Book page and their list of friends.

Will someone please explain to me why someone would attempt to communicate by text using a device no bigger than a deck of cards and with a "Key Board" consisting of 12 keys? At a minimum IM (Instant Messaging) requires tiny fingers, superb eye hand coordination and a new language consisting of thousands of newly created letter combinations to represent real words. And another thing since this device is a Phone, why not just TALK to the person? LOL

The ultimate "Personal" communication for the 21st century must be in Second Life. In this enormous virtual world millions of people interact with millions of other people, one on one. The whole range of human activity can now take place in a virtual environment. You can be anyone you want and "talk" to a dragon or a real priest, free of the most basic limitation of our human form. In a sense this is probably personal communication on a level never seen before.

Twitter is the newest "form" of communication. It answers the pressing question, "What are you doing NOW?" As you go through your day, you constantly update your "Twitter" page with mini blog entries no more than 140 characters long. Now anyone who is logged o to your page can tell what you are doing, what you are feeling, who you are with and any moment in the day. Why didn't I think of that? It's obvious that I would want to know all the mundane details of all my friends' daily lives.

Face time means actual face to face talk. The words, the eyes, the body language, the context, all convey meaning. Let me know when we can do that online. Until then, don't look for my Twitter page.

### Computer Buffet With Dr. Herb Goldstein



## Foxit Reader for PDF Files

Acrobat Reader is now at version 8 and has been getting more powerful but also more cumbersome with each successive iteration. Steve Bass (PC World, January 2008) found a free program, Foxit Reader and Printer, that is compact, fast, and includes some nice extra features. I especially like that it allows searching all the PDF files in a directory for keywords. I tried that on a directory where I keep all the newsletter files since 2000 and got almost instantaneous results. Impressive! The print function works just fine. Foxit also has more sophisticated tools for annotating and writing PDF files and forms, but adds evaluation marks to the output unless you buy the Foxit Pro version (\$39). You may not need that, since there are several other (free) ways to create PDF files, including openoffice.org Writer and MS Office 2007 (with a special download from Microsoft). My Epson scanner can scan images and also output them as PDF files. But at \$39 Foxit is a bargain compared to Acrobat 8 Standard at \$299.

Dr. Herb Goldstein is SPCUG's Software Evaluation Chairman and Review Editor for the Sarasota PC Monitor. Herb is an avid researcher on all things computer and passes on his acquired knowledge each month. <reviewseditor@spcug.org>

# Tech Issue

## OS, security, recovery

# Windows XP Expires

By Sandy Berger, CompuKISS, [www.compukiss.com](http://www.compukiss.com), [sandy@compukiss.com](mailto:sandy@compukiss.com)

On June 30th, 2008, Microsoft started the death march for Windows XP. As of that date, Microsoft stopped shipments of Windows XP as a stand-alone shrink-wrapped product. So after supplies are exhausted, you won't be able to go into a store and purchase Windows XP. Microsoft also stopped most sales to PC manufacturers. So Dell, Lenovo, HP and others will not get any new copies of Windows XP to install on their mainstream computers. However, Windows XP, Microsoft's longest-lived and best-loved operating system, isn't going to vanish overnight. You will still see copies of the XP software and/or computers with Windows XP in stores until inventories are depleted.

Microsoft has made four important concessions that will also keep XP alive:

1. Microsoft will support Windows XP until April 2014. They will offer updates, security patches, and technical support until that time.
2. Smaller local PC makers can continue to sell PCs with Windows XP until January 2009.
3. Computers with limited hardware capabilities which are sometimes called ultra-low cost PCs (ULCPC) can sell with Windows XP Home until June 2010.
4. With the purchase of Windows Vista Business or Windows Vista Ultimate, the two most expensive versions of Vista, a customer will be able to move back to Windows XP Professional via what Microsoft is calling "downgrade rights." Details on how this will be handled have not been clearly defined to the public at this time. It is even possible that different manufacturers will handle this in different ways.

To the home users, this all means very little, unless you need a new computer and are violently opposed to Windows Vista. To business users, these new policies and extensions mean that they will be able to keep their fleets of Windows XP computers running for several more years. Microsoft has announced that Windows 7, the next version of Windows, will be available in 2010 so many businesses will be able to skip Vista entirely instead to Windows 7. Intel has already announced that they will do just that.

What this means for everyone is that Microsoft, while not writing off Vista, has made it an "interim" operating system. Microsoft is still pushing Windows Vista. They recently announced that Vista now supports 77,000 printers, cameras, speakers and other devices and components. They also brag that more than 140 million copies of Windows Vista have already been sold, making it the fastest selling operating system in Microsoft history. So Windows Vista is not a flash-in-the-pan like Windows ME which was quickly replaced by Windows XP.

In my opinion, Vista is both better and safer than Windows XP and if you are already using Vista or plan to make the move, it is not a bad choice. Yet Vista has become a lame duck. Microsoft definitely has a dilemma on their hands. The only way they will come out of this is if they can get Windows 7 out quickly while making it faster, safer, and easier to use. They also need to give it a good name and get the members of the press behind it. I'm not sure if the lumbering giant can pull that off – especially if Apple and/or Linux find a way to take advantage of this Microsoft predicament!

# Window Pains – Task Manager

By **Bob Balogh**, President, Boca Raton Computer Society, Florida,  
www.bracs.org, helpbracs@yahoo.com

**T**ask Manager is a helpful application that is part of the Windows Operating System (2000, XP & Vista). You can open it with the three fingered salute – Ctrl/Alt/Delete, or more easily, my preferred way, by a right click on an open space on your Taskbar, and clicking on Task Manager. You may also open Task Manager by going to Start-Run and entering "taskmgr" (without the quotes).

Most of us have only experienced dealing with the Task Manager when a program no longer seems to be functioning. We then open the Task Manager and click on the Applications Tab, see the list of running programs, and highlight the program we are having difficulty with, then click on "End Task" at the bottom of the page. Voila, the program is shutdown and is no longer causing you a problem. Of course, you still will want to find out why the problem began or why the program froze in the first place. However, that is for another time.

## PROCESSES

You can also click on the "Processes" tab, to see exactly which programs are running in the background.

Go on open yours up and see what is running. Here is part of mine:

Of course all these programs do not have to run. In fact while many of these programs are useful and are needed others are not needed and may at times cause problems. The problem is what determining what these programs do. Even if you are not inclined to stop any of these programs it is a step forward to know what these programs do so at least you have an idea as to what may be causing a particular problem when it arises.

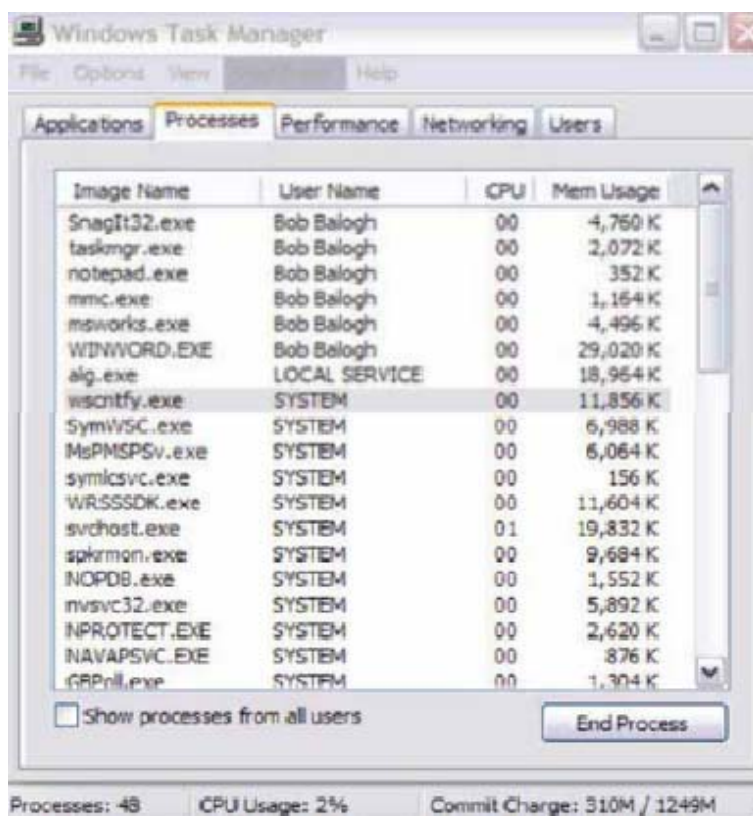
To see a list of most of the possible programs that are running in the background just go to this web site [http://www.answersthatwork.com/Tasklist\\_pages/tasklist.htm](http://www.answersthatwork.com/Tasklist_pages/tasklist.htm) and peruse the programs from A-Z. Well, you don't have to look at all of them, just the ones you have listed in your Task Manager.

Remember, all the programs, that are listed in your Task Manager, may not be listed at "Answers that Work". Why you might ask? Well, just look at my list and you will see a program listed called Snagit32.exe. That is a program that I added to my computer, and use often.

Actually, it is the program I used to create the picture of the Task Manager above. So it is listed, since it was still "running", when I made the screen capture. Could I turn it off? Sure, all I have to do is close the program.

If you want to turn off a program that is running in Task Manager, don't change, or disable it in the Windows Task Manager. Instead, go to the Control Panel | Administrative Tools | Services, and change them there.

Double click on the entry, and change it from the dropdown list where it says "Startup Type". Carefully read what it does, and what it is related to, before making a decision. Write down what you changed, in the event you wish to change it back.



*Continued on page 38*



If you have System Restore or Go Back operating, write down the date and time, in case you want to return to an earlier time, when all was well. Additionally, set a

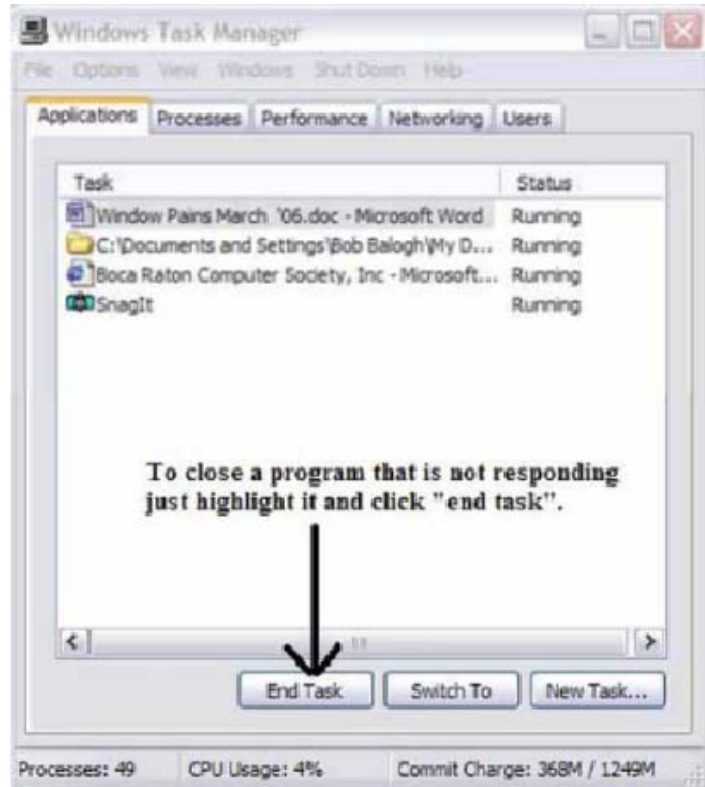
new restore point, prior to doing anything. If the service isn't listed in there, then more than likely it was added by an application you added after the install. You'll need to

decide if it's necessary, or if you only want it running when you decide. There also comes a time when a particular program "freezes" and is not functioning as we mentioned at the outset of the article. What should you do? Simply use Ctrl+Alt+Delete, open the Task Manager, and simply close down the program by selecting it and clicking on "End Task". The following figure demonstrates it for you:

The Performance tab displays an overview of your computer's performance, including graphs for CPU and memory usage as well as the total number of processes running. Google such other items displayed if you are interested in the purpose they serve. I do not wish to get too technical here.

The remaining tabs, Networking and Users are basically self explanatory. If you are running a home network it will show up under Networking and inform you of its function ability. As far as Users is concerned you will see a list of those using your computer.

Peruse the headings in the toolbar, just to get an idea of what they are and do. Of course the Help tab, as usual, is the most important in explaining the program at hand. Use it and you will learn much.



## Burj Dubai Babel Babble

**Computer Buffet**  
With Dr. Herb Goldstein



Reading about the tallest tower at 2625 feet now under construction, the Burj Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, makes me think of that earlier venture, the Tower of Babel, also in the Middle East, but a few thousand years ago. As you may remember, that project came to grief because the contractors spoke different languages. Now we have computers, of course, who keep in touch wirelessly. Let's hope they all use the same operating system, regularly updated and patched, with protection against viruses and rootkits!

Dr. Herb Goldstein is SPCUG's Software Evaluation Chairman and Review Editor for the Sarasota PC Monitor. Herb is an avid researcher on all things computer and passes on his acquired knowledge each month.  
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# Going Green

by **Jerry Grommes**, Past President, Sandwich Computer Users Group,  
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During our June program, there was quite a discussion about whether to leave your computer on versus shutting it off when not in use.

I, personally, like to leave my computers run so they are kept up-to-date with auto updates and backed up with scheduled backups. These tasks are done in the early AM so my computers are fully functional when I sit down to use them.

However, others asked why not just leave them on the nights that the backup runs instead of 24/7. I didn't think it was using much energy by running 24/7 but decided to check it out and run some tests using my "Kill-AWatt" meter. (Measures watts, amps, hours, kill a watt hours, ect.) I started with my newest computer (which is approx 2 years old and probably the most efficient). This machine is running Vista and I had the Power Options set to turn off the monitor after "20 minutes" and put computer to sleep to "never". With these settings the computer was drawing between 110 and 140 Watts of power with a total average of 2.63 KWH (kill-a-watt hours) per day. Cost per day was \$.026 (\$7.87 a month) based on my most recent bill.

I then changed the Power Options to turn off the monitor after "20 minutes" and put computer to sleep "after 2 hours".

The watts dropped from between 110 and 140 while I was using the computer to 6 while in the sleep mode and the total average of KWH dropped to 0.65 per day. Cost is now down to 6 cents a day (\$1.94 a month).


With the current power options (turn off the monitor after "20 minutes" and sleep "after 2 hours") the computer will wake up and get updates as well as run the scheduled

backups. So with a simple change to a power option, I was able to reduce power consumption by approx 76% and save \$5.93 per month with out affecting my user experience.

I plan on testing my XP machine next to see what it is costing and to see if it can be reduced. Thanks go to Louise and the rest of the group for a great discussion on energy

use.

To get more info and tips on energy savings try one of Louise Dieden's favorite links: <http://www.energy.gov/forconsumers.htm> Louise is a SCUG Board Member at Large.



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Continued on page 40

## Computer Buffet

With Dr. Herb Goldstein



# Amazon

Recently I was called upon to edit this newsletter, a seemingly simple task since it only consists of 8 Xeroxed pages, mostly text in a 2-column format. Using OpenOffice Writer, but with no experience in page layout, I found the task harder than expected. The formatting clearly had a mind of its own, the help files did not help, and it is a wonder that I finally cobbled something together that looked OK.

In order to be prepared for the next time this might happen, I visited Amazon to look for a helpful book. Surprisingly, there was not a great deal to choose from, but one book stood out as the best-looking choice. The OpenOffice.org 2 Guidebook by Solveig Haugland received rave reviews from 9 reviewers. It was also pricey, at \$59.99, but at the bottom of the listing Amazon provided a link to "2 used & new available from \$36.00." Clicking on that link led to an offer of the book, in new condition, for \$36.00. The choice was easy and I ordered the "used" book.

Amazon sent me the usual confirmation, but the following morning I received another note, from the author, Solveig Haugland, thanking me for my order and she was shipping the book the same day. Because the book is self-published, the author is free to sell her books directly at lower cost than the advertised store price. Anyway, a great way to save \$24! More about the merits of the book in a forthcoming newsletter.

Dr. Herb Goldstein is SPCUG's Software Evaluation Chairman and Review Editor for the Sarasota PC Monitor. Herb is an avid researcher on all things computer and passes on his acquired knowledge each month. <reviewseditor@spcug.org>



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# Moving on to Vista – Part 9

by **Neil Stahfest**, Librarian, Tacoma Area PC User Group,  
WA, [www.tapcug.org](http://www.tapcug.org), [ncstahfest@msn.com](mailto:ncstahfest@msn.com)

As I mentioned last month, Vista's Service Pack 3 is out. I didn't see any real changes in my computer after I installed it, most of modifications are supposed to deal with computer security. I have since encountered a problem with my printer.

I don't print too often from my "Vista computer" so the problem wasn't immediately obvious. When I did try to print some documents they "disappeared" without printing.

My first thought was that I had changed the firewall on my print server and locked out connections from other computers on my home network (I've done that before). No that wasn't it. After checking and finding that I could transfer files between my computers, I went to the printer section of my control panel.

That's where I discovered that Vista wanted a new printer driver installed. I don't remember any problems with the printer when I started using this computer. As I recall, Vista recognized my printer (a fairly new HP ink jet printer) and it just worked. Anyway, a search of Hewlett Packard's web site didn't reveal a new printer driver. In fact it told me to use the one built into Vista. I turned to the installation CD that came with the printer and reinstalled the printer driver from the CD.

It worked and I can print over my home network using a wireless connection again. I have no idea why this happened but at least one other TAPCUG member also discovered a printer driver problem after installing Vista SP1.

Speaking of security (see paragraph 1), Windows Vista, like Windows XP, comes with a firewall program pre-installed. As all you computer gurus know, a computer firewall is a hardware or software tool that examines all Internet traffic letting only "safe" traffic into your computer. The firewall for Vista was supposed to scan Internet traffic both entering and leaving your computer.

I can hear some of you saying, "If I scan incoming traffic to be safe, why do I care about outbound traffic?". Well, incoming traffic is the bigger threat to you. Using pre-defined rules it determines which programs are allowed to use your network connection or which ports can be used for communications. If some spyware, Trojans or or malicious "phone home" software slip past your firewall they may allow someone to take remote control of your computer to attack it other computers through your Internet connection (that's why Microsoft is always sending you those security updates). So a firewall that scans outbound traffic attempts to stop this. To make a longer story short, contrary to plans, the ability to check outbound traffic has not been provided with Vista's firewall.

Another shortcoming of Vista's firewall is that it does not create a log of all attempts to contact your computer from a local network or the Internet. This kind of record can be useful if you suspect a hacker has been visiting your computer in the middle of the night.

Actually, there is a way that you can modify Vista's firewall to create a log and examine outbound traffic. The process to set this up is probably more complicated than most of us would like to deal with so I offer a much easier solution. Turn off Vista's firewall and install a third party firewall program. Do not try to use two or more firewall programs at the same time. They do not play well together.

There are a number of firewall programs that you can purchase as well as some that are free. I've been using the free version of Zone Alarm for many years and I'm satisfied with its protection. It also creates a log that I can use to examine attempts to connect to my computer. You can find it on the Internet at [www.zonealarm.com](http://www.zonealarm.com).

# Using Vista's Hidden Disk Cleanup Options

by **Vinny La Bash**, Member of the Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, Inc., Florida, [www.spcug.org](http://www.spcug.org), [vlabash@comcast.net](mailto:vlabash@comcast.net)

There are many things to like about the disk cleanup utility in Windows Vista. It's built into the operating system, it works, and it's free. It's also a tool that removes many potential problems such as corrupt files that may be causing difficulties or could cause computer ills in the future. One of its minor shortcomings is that it doesn't detect and eliminate wasteful duplicate files. This is a very insignificant quibble as Microsoft never claimed it could do that in the first place. That ability is an item on my wish list for the next version. Overall it's a very useful tool that everyone should be familiar with.

There is more to Disk Cleanup than removing junk files and recovering gigabytes of disk space. It's amazing how 'temporary' files can hang around for months in the little used crannies of a disk drive. Poorly written install and uninstall routines are largely responsible, but software glitches and power hiccups leave their own share of digital detritus laying about.

Systems with more than a terabyte of storage are becoming common, and it's easy to lose track of even the largest files. Try locating a suitcase sized patch of land in an area with the dimensions of a football field and you'll have an idea of what I'm talking about. Aside from taking up space, these useless files can slow down searches, bloat your backups, and make Vista's slow defrag process even slower.

If you're not familiar with how Disk Cleanup works, you can access a good tutorial by clicking the Start icon, and then Help and Support. In the search box type Disk Cleanup, and you will get a list of items directly and indirectly related to the subject. You want the first three or four items in the list.

Let's access the normal version of Disk Cleanup by opening up the Computer icon on the Desktop, right-clicking the C: drive, and choosing Properties.

On the General tab locate the Disk Cleanup button just below and to the right of the disk graphic. You might want to make a note of how much used and unused disk space you have for a before and after comparison. Left-click on the Disk Cleanup button and you will get a message that Windows is doing some calculations. Eventually, you get a dialog box which displays various categories of files you can remove. Windows will let you peek at many of these files, but it's largely a waste of time. I've never found anything worth examining. Make a note of how many types of files Windows can remove, and then close all the dialog boxes.

You've just seen the standard way to access Disk Cleanup. Let's now examine Disk Cleanup with its deep cleaning options exposed. Vista's official file name for the Disk Cleanup utility is `cleanmgr`. Open the Start globe again and type `cleanmgr` on the Start Search box at the bottom of the menu. Press Enter and The Drive Selection dialog box appears. This is a great way to eliminate mouse clicks if we want a fast way of getting to a specific drive. However, this method doesn't display the extra functions we're looking for so close the dialog box down.

To access the enhanced options we need to use something called the System Agent or `sage` in conjunction with `cleanmgr`. Click the Start globe again and in the Start Search box type

`Cleanmgr /sageset:1`



Notice the space between `cleanmgr` and the forward slash. `Sageset` is a variation of the System Agent utility, and the number 1 allows you to select different cleaning options. You can use any number you want, even zero or negative numbers.

Disk Cleanup will now be running in a special setup mode that offers more cleaning options than the standard default. In addition, the System Agent will remember whatever cleanup options you select. When you run Cleanup again you don't have to make the same selections as long as you use the same number. That's what the System Agent set part does.

Press Enter to run the utility and wait for the Disk Cleanup Settings dialog box to appear. Highlight the individual cleanup options and in some cases there is additional information that is missing from the default dialog box. You also have more cleanup options.

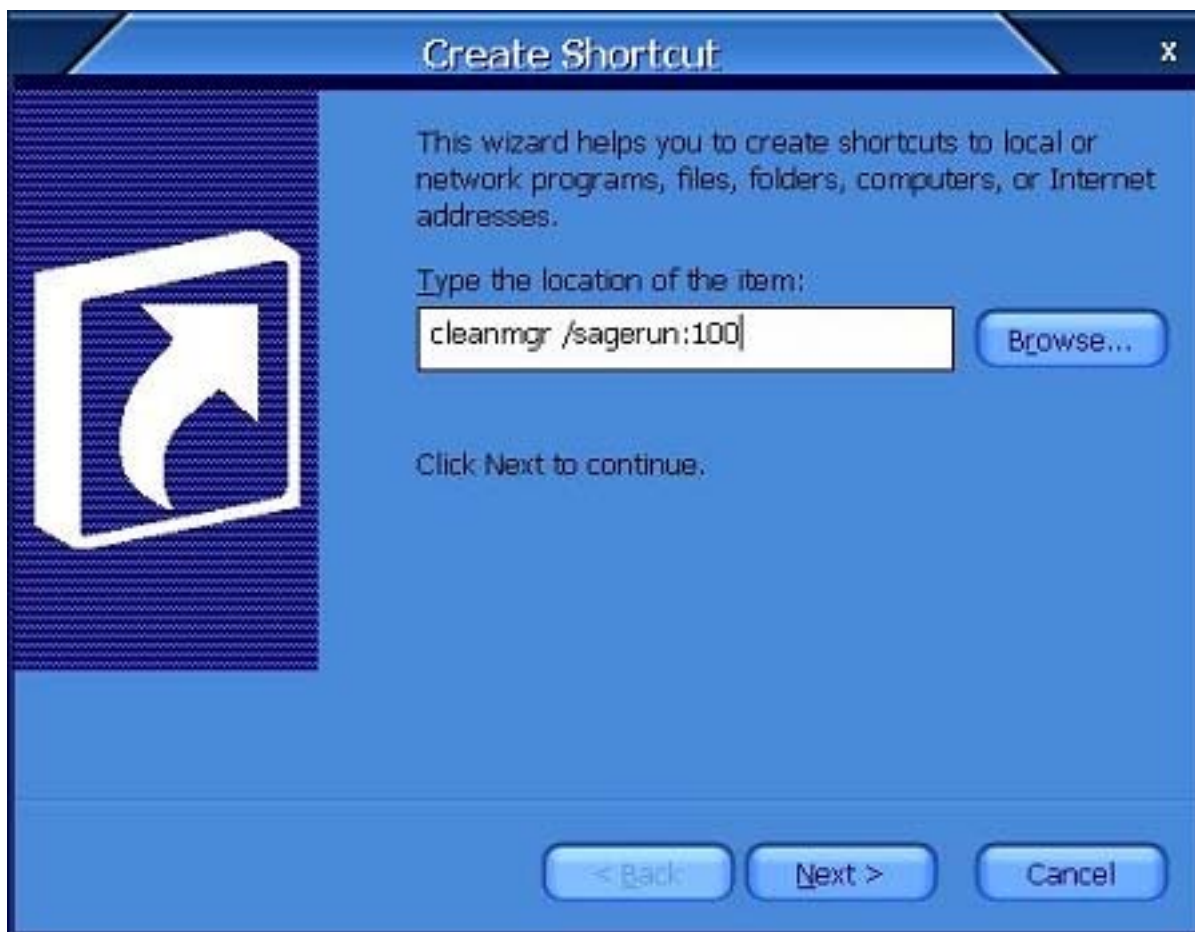
You can select any number of options from just one to all of them. For maximum cleaning, select everything. When you're satisfied with the options you've selected, click the OK button and run the utility. When the job is done, go back and see how much disk space you've recovered. You could be in for a pleasant surprise.

We used the `sageset` command to set the cleanup options. The system keeps track of what you've done, and it will run the utility according to your specification in the future, but you can't use the `sageset` command for that. You need to ignore `sageset` and run the `sagerun` command instead. From the desktop click the Start globe, and in the Search box type:

```
Cleanmge /sagerun:1
```

Press Enter and the system will automatically run in enhanced mode with the preference previously recorded. Run this command anytime you wish from now on. You can always change preferences by rerunning the `sageset` command with the `cleanmgr` utility.

Chances are good that a lot of clutter will be removed from your system, and you will see an increase in free space on your system. If you wish to automate the process, you can use the Task Scheduler to run the tool automatically at your convenience.





# Protect Yourself against Identity Theft

By Marjie Tucker, Editor, Mountain Computer User Group,  
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We've had several programs and articles that mentioned Identity Theft, but I thought it might help us all to have one document with a checklist of symptoms and solutions for this horrific problem. Make certain that you're not a victim.

## What is Identity Theft?

Identity theft is an act of impersonation. Someone gains the ability to use your personally identifying information to commit fraud or some other crime. The item stolen may be as simple as your name, address, phone number, or date of birth. Or, it can be

an actual number or document such as your social security number, mother's maiden name, bank account information, credit card number, driver's license number, signature or passwords. The thieves may rent an apartment, open a new credit card, or open a cell phone account in your name. You may not even know about the theft until you review your credit report or are contacted by a debt collector. Some victims spend hundreds of dollars and many, many hours repairing damage to their good names and credit records. People have been denied mortgages and car loans, lost out on job opportunities, and even been arrested for crimes they didn't commit because of identity theft.

## How Do Thieves Steal an Identity?

Basically identity thieves are looking for an opportunity to steal your social security number, credit card number, or other financial account information. They may use a variety of methods to get hold of your information including the following:

1. Dumpster Diving - They actually go through trash bins and dumpsters looking for discarded credit card bills, bank statements, and items containing your social security number. Your best defense is to shred any trash that contains sensitive information.
2. Skimming - Store clerks and restaurant workers can use a special device that records your credit card number while it is being processed. Always peruse your credit card bills carefully to look for unauthorized charges. If any are found, notify your credit card company immediately.
3. Phishing - These attacks are sent to you as email messages, supposedly from your bank, the IRS, PayPal, or another company that might have your information on file. They usually send you to a web page that looks legitimate, but actually sends your username and password to a server owned by the thieves. Never respond to a website that has been emailed to you. If you think the email is legitimate, go directly to the company's website before you login.
4. Changing your Address - Identity thieves can obtain your credit card and bank information by completing a change of address form at the post office. This way they are personally delivered your bank and credit card statements. If you stop receiving your mail go to the post office and make an inquiry.

## How Can You Protect Yourself?

1. Always carefully review your credit card and bank statements for discrepancies. Immediate report any suspicious activity.
2. Order reports from the credit reporting bureaus at least once a year. Review them carefully for any entries that are not legitimate.
3. Shred credit card statements, bank statements, credit card offers, and any other papers that contain your personal information.
4. Never throw away credit card receipts in a public place. Watch out for credit card receipts that may print out (particularly at gas stations) and be left for someone else to pick up.

5. Do not respond to credit card or mortgage offers from unknown sources.
6. Do not respond to emails asking you to go to a website address that is embedded into the email. Do not give your personal information over the phone unless you initiated the phone call.
7. Do not carry your social security card with you.
8. Do not post your personal information on a website.
9. Change your passwords frequently and use a secure password.

#### What Should You Do If Your Identity is Stolen?

First file an Identity Theft police report. This will give you specific legal rights and automatic notification to the three major credit reporting agencies. These legal rights

permanently block fraudulent information from being added to your credit report and prevent companies from collecting debts that resulted from identity theft.

You should also file a report to the FTC ID Theft Division. You can find an online form at <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/microsites/idtheft> To ensure that the problem has been solved you should monitor your financial records for at least three months after you

discover the crime and order credit reports on a quarterly basis for at least one year. The best way to fight ID Theft is to remain alert. Monitor your personal information and alert your family members of the importance of security.



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# Security and Deleting Files: A Common Misconception

by **Bob Schwartz**, Member of HAL-PC, Texas,  
www.hal-pc.org, bobx@hal-pc.org.

**Y**ou have just deleted a file from your hard drive. It's gone, isn't it? Sorry! It is still there. You want to clean up your hard drive, so you format it. It is now clean. Nothing is on it anymore, right? Nope! Everything is still there, except for the file directory.

How can this be? Doesn't Delete mean remove? Doesn't Format clean the disk?

Each file system - has a file directory which records the file name and it's location.

To delete a file, the disk system only alters the file's name in the file directory, usually by changing the first letter of the name. Formatting goes one step further, it just empties the file directory. Neither does anything to the files on the disk! They remain.

To clean a drive, either overwrite the whole drive or the unused space. The most common way to clean drives, especially older drives, is to write fixed or random data obliterate the old files.

Fortunately, all ATA drives over 15-20 GB produced since 2001 have an internal drive command that will clean the drive sufficiently that it will meet DOD requirements. At the University of California at San Diego's Center for Magnetic Recording Research (CMRR) you can download their free program for Secure Erase, entitled "HDDerase.exe". Its use meets U.S. Government requirements for disk erasure. Secure Erase should provide the greatest peace of mind. Internet Commentary suggests it is even better than mechanically shredding the disks.

If you have a good machine with good software that you would like to pass on to some else, and you don't have all the original disks - remove personal information. I suggest this approach:

1. "Delete" the contents of: all the "My" folders - My Documents, My Pictures, My Music; Recent; Temp or Temporary folders; Recycle Bin; Cookies; Downloads; and the entire folders for Quicken and Tax preparation software.
2. Clean your Registry of all personal data. For XP, go to Start/Run, type regedit and press Enter. Go to edit and click on find. Enter your last name, click on find next. When the first entry is found, go to edit and select modify. Delete your name (it should be in color). Depressing the space bar may clear it. Go back to edit and click on find next, etc. Keep on until you get a message that you have reached the end. Then repeat the above with your first name, then your street, your phone number, bank name, broker name, and anything else of a personal nature that you used.
3. Find and download a registry cleaner. Use it to remove unnecessary items from the registry. Ccleaner is an example.
4. Defragment the drive. This condenses the files and moves them toward the beginning of the drive.
5. Locate and download a wipe application such as bcwipe. Use it to wipe (overwrite) all unused space.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Before editing your "registry", back it up first, please.

This should effectively sanitize your disk, leaving it clean, safe and usable.

Loss of personal information and the risk of identity theft is a risk for you. For a business, the loss of personal, financial, or medical data may subject it to risk from recent laws, both federal and state.

I have been repairing or rehabilitating older machines as a hobby to give them a second life. There are many good machines and plenty of worthy recipients. If there is good software worth keeping, remove all personal data. If the software is not worth keeping, then wipe the disk clean to install an operating system and applications.

*Continued on page 14*



Removing the hard drive before you dispose of an old machine is not a solution, unless you plan to use it in your new machine, or store it permanently - you still ultimately have to sanitize it.

Programs available, free or fee, include: Secure Erase (mentioned above), Secure Delete, Wipe Drive, Acronis Privacy Expert, East-Tec Eraser, East-Tec Dispose Secure, Eraser, SysInternals SDelete, Darik's Boot and Nuke (dban), OverWrite, Wipe, Kill Disk, BCWipe, and Autoclave. This list is NOT exhaustive. And, you have to determine which is suitable to (1) wipe the entire drive or (2) wipe only the unused space.

Bottom line is, when you give away or dispose of a used computer, either clean the hard drive yourself or give the machine to someone you can trust who will do it for you. The comments and opinions here are wholly mine. I welcome alternative perspectives.

Bob Schwartz is a HAL-PC member, retired EE, 14 patents, technical writer, active in civic affairs: President, Brays Bayou Association; Vice President, Marilyn Estates Civic Association; Correspondence Secretary with the Willow Waterhole Greenspace Conservancy.

## Computer Buffet With Dr. Herb Goldstein



# Super Jigsaws

If you like jigsaw puzzles as well as computers you may have tried some computer versions of jigsaw puzzles. In my limited experience they were primitive and unsatisfactory, but I may not have looked long enough.

Bertram Nicolay of the Fraunhofer Institute for Production Systems and Design Technology and his colleagues have greatly improved the state of the art. When the Berlin Wall came down and East Germany was to be reunited with the West, the East's State Security Service was in a panic to destroy mounds of secret, incriminating documents in a hurry. Available shredding machines weren't up to the task, so they tore up some 45 million documents by hand. The resulting 600 million pieces of paper are stored in 16,250 bags. To piece the fragments back together would take 30 persons an estimated 600-800 years. Computers to the rescue!

First all the pieces have to be scanned, on both sides, a gigantic task, made possible by technology developed by a daughter company of Bertelsmann, AG. Then the pieces are presorted, based on color and texture of the paper and ink. The scientists have developed algorithms to speed up the matching of edges, and the original documents are reconstituted one piece at a time.

Subsequent work now makes it also possible to reconstitute documents that have been shredded by machine. That task is much more difficult, since all the edges are identical. But already, for Germany's Tax Authority, a bag full of shredded documents has been successfully reconstructed. (From The Economist, 9/8/07, with thanks to Louis Ritz. See also <http://www.ipk.fraunhofer.de/pr/pressekonferenz>)

**Dr. Herb Goldstein is SPCUG's Software Evaluation Chairman and Review Editor for the Sarasota PC Monitor. Herb is an avid researcher on all things computer and passes on his acquired knowledge each month.**  
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# iPhone for Boomers

by Sandy Berger, CompuKISS, [www.compukiss.com](http://www.compukiss.com), [sandy@compukiss.com](mailto:sandy@compukiss.com)

According to the data from the International Communications Union, the world now has more than 2 billion cell phone or mobile phone subscribers. While some business and high tech users are using their phones for email and the Internet, I venture to say that most of those 2 billion users are only using their cell phones to make calls and to text message. In fact, I am sure that many users don't know how to do much more than that, even though their phones are capable of much more.

The reason is that up until now, cell phones with their tiny buttons and complex menu systems have frustrated many average users. The recent introduction of a fast, stable, and more affordable iPhone is poised to change all of that.

While the twenty- and thirty-something's are flocking to the iPhone as the latest status symbol, the forty-, fifty-, and sixty-something's are acquiring iPhones because there are no tiny buttons and no complex menu systems. In fact, the large bright touch screen, big icons, and the on-screen keyboard make the iPhone extremely easy to use.

One button brings up the Home screen of icons. The screen is clear and uncluttered. The icons are all easily identifiable by their picture, so the iPhone experience is very visual. The four most used icons are placed on the bottom of the screen. By default, they are Phone, Mail, Safari (the Internet browser), and iPod. You can put whatever you use the most on the bottom row. You can also rearrange all the icons to suit your taste.

The way you rearrange the icons is indicative of the ease of use of the entire gadget. To rearrange the icons on the Home screen, you simply press any icon and hold your finger down until all the icons start to wiggle. Then you drag the icons from place to place. To put an icon on the second page of the Home screen, you simply drag it off the screen to the right. The second page will appear with the icon on it. To return to the first screen of the Home page, just drag your finger across the screen in leftward motion. To stop the wiggling and confirm that you are done moving the icons around, you simply touch the Home button. You can't miss it because while other cell phones seem to have million buttons, the Home button is the only button on the surface of the iPhone.

As you can tell by this explanation, the iPhone is also very tactile. You can move things around the screen with your finger. To make a web page larger, you simply flick your two fingers apart on the screen. Bring your fingers together and the webpage gets smaller. Double-tap the screen and the page fits the screen. To take a picture, you press the camera icon, aim the camera on the back of the iPhone and press the icon on the bottom of the screen. It is so intuitive that it is actually fun!

On top of that Apple has added an App store to its iTunes Online Store. They have over 500 applications that you can add to your iPhone. Many are free. Others cost \$1. Most of those which you have to pay for are under \$10. Some of these applications are just for fun, some are for productivity. For instance, if you download an application called Recorder, you can turn your iPhone into a voice recorder. But you can also choose an application that turns it into a light saber or one that lets you pop bubbles on the screen.

At \$199 for the 8GB model, the iPhone has a lot to like. To use it you must subscribe to AT&T for two years. That is not unusual for a cell phone service contract. You also have to have an additional data plan that costs \$30 a month. While this might seem costly, you get a lot for your money.

Not only is the iPhone intuitive, visual, and tactile, but it has access to the Internet and lets you send and receive email. It is like having a mini-computer in your hand. For many it will replace the laptop they drag along when traveling.

The iPhone is also a full-blown iPod that plays both music and video. Since it has its own speaker, you don't even need earbuds or headphones as you do with most other music players. Oh, and did I mention, it has the best audio quality of any cell phone I've ever used.

Am I hooked? You bet I am..... And the same thing will happen to many others who try the iPhone. It is poised to change the way we use cell phones.



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# Concepts and Tools

By Elizabeth B. Wright, Member, Computer Club of Oklahoma City,  
www.ccokc.org, wright599new@sbcglobal.net

One day in the near future there will be no computer “beginners” at the adult level. The children born into the world as it is today are exposed to computers from conception. After they are born, many have very sophisticated hands on use of the machines from the minute they can reach out from their parent’s lap and touch the keyboard. There is no mystery to them.

But while there are still older adults who want computer knowledge, someone has to be available to instruct them. And adults do not learn the same way that babies and children learn. Sometimes, when leading a group or teaching a class, it is difficult to explain to students why they need to understand the difference between how a computer or a program works and how to make it actually do something.

In my opinion, concepts are far more useful in the long run than specific techniques, especially when dealing with someone using a computer for the first time or who has gone just beyond the basics. But how do you teach a concept?

First, accept the fact that it will take more time in the beginning to teach concepts, but it will save time later on. The real trick is to make the process interesting and easy to understand

The simple fact that a computer is basically thousands of off and on switches, the same as a light switch, seems to be information that many people find irrelevant. But once a student gets some idea of the actual simplicity of the machine, much of the mystery is removed from the learning process.

Second, CONCEPTS, once understood, are usually far easier to remember than techniques. Anyone who “gets the idea” of a computer fundamental can usually find the tools later to accomplish the end result, even if the specific steps are not used often enough to remember them in sequence.

Many first session lesson plans skip computer functionality and plunge straight into using software. As an example, the concept of organizing files on a hard drive seems to be much harder for new users to comprehend than teaching them to open the file manager, aka Windows Explore or some similar program.

So many teachers go through the cumbersome task of showing people how to open the file system, only to become bogged down in the steps needed to find a particular file, then later to continually have people complain they have lost a file and firmly believe it has disappeared from their machine.

Most new users find it difficult to make the connection between finding a file on the computer and why understanding how to find it is important. It is the instructors job to help them make the connection. The CONCEPT of hard drive storage is not easy to absorb, so the instructor must make it easy. Also many new users find it difficult to transfer keystrokes learned on a classroom computer to their own computers at home. The reason for this is that no two computers are exactly alike, so the steps learned on one machine may or may not work on another one. But if the student comprehends the idea behind digital file storage, the actual keystrokes will begin to make sense, regardless of what computer they are using.

In my opinion, rote learning is not the best way to become even moderately proficient on a computer. Real understanding of basic computing processes is vital.

Since many new users have little idea of what hardware is on their own computers, talking about C:\ drives and other drives in relation to specific files means little to them. But a well developed discussion of what basic hardware CAN be on a computer and how it works is not a waste of time, answering questions along the way.

Many new users won’t see the value in a technical discussion, so it is important to present hardware demonstrations using common sense terms rather than obscure technical language. It is never necessary to impress new students with what you know, but rather to make the information as easy for them to understand as possible.

*Continued on page 50*

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With practice, a teacher or presenter can develop the dialog necessary to convey essential information and still keep the listeners engaged. Students appreciate being encouraged in the idea that they may not know much to begin with, but they will leave each session armed with useful information and techniques that will build a good basic foundation for them. Biblically we were taught not to build our houses on sand.

Why are the pyramids in Egypt still standing? Because underneath all that sand there are foundations built on bedrock. Good computer skills begin the same way.

Nearly all programs are far too comprehensive to be taught in detail to beginners. But if the most basic use of the program (the program's CONCEPT) can be presented in a way that is useful to students, they will get their feet wet. From there they can then be encouraged to not only attend study groups and advanced classes, but to explore their favorite programs on their own. Again, the difference is between teaching new users the fundamental use of the program itself as opposed to teaching them to use specific program "tools".

Obviously some techniques need to be taught in early sessions, but teaching the use of most tools is best done in intermediate and advanced classes. My experience has been that only when people have a need for or enjoy using any computer software will they continue to explore and expand their knowledge of the program.

How long did it take you to figure out that the "d" in d:\ stands for any non-specific "drive" when dealing with program instructions (often installation procedures) and not specifically for the "d" drive on your personal computer? Admit it, there was a time when you didn't know that. Just think how confusing the term is to new users. There is a concept here if you can find it.



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# Prepare for Hard Drive Recovery

by **Bob Hudak**, Greater South Bay User Group Hardware SIG Leader  
(California), <http://gsbug.apcug.org>, [uags@aol.com](mailto:uags@aol.com)

**W**hen you lose control of your computer due to a virus or some sort of malware, or your O.S. becomes corrupted for one reason or another, be ready to fix the problem.

1. Start by setting up your hard drive with 2 partitions at least. Put all programs on 'C:' & all Data on 'D:'

2. When hard drive is clean and all programs are loaded, it is time to make an image file of 'C:.' Use Acronis True Image to do this or whatever program you like. Put it on 'D:' drive in the root. Name it using date. Remember you do not have a backup till you have two copies in two different places. So now copy this image file to an external USB drive. The reason is if 'C:' goes bad you can reformat it and start over without losing any data. If your computer will not boot and you did not put all your data on another drive or partition, you will want to save your data before reinstalling your operating system. What can you do?

A. Open computer case and remove drive. Install drive as a slave drive in another computer. Now you can copy and paste your data or burn to a CD. This means opening two computers and moving the drive in and out and resetting the jumpers.

B. Hook up the drive you removed from your computer to a second computer using a USB adapter, like the one we have at the Hardware SIG, to another computer and copy and paste or burn the data you want to keep.

C. Here is my first choice in a case like this. Use a Live Linux CD to boot up. Plug in a USB drive before booting. After booting, mount your 'C:' drive and your USB drive. Copy your data from 'C:' drive to the USB drive. With this option there is no case to open and drive to remove.

3. Backup your data as necessary to a CD or another drive. Use a USB drive. This drive can also fail so putting backup on a CD or DVD is better way to go. Also, there is an on-line service at Carbinite.com that will automatically back up your data. This service costs \$50.00 a year for unlimited backups. How important is your data?

Here are a few key folders to have on 'D:' drive:

Data — In this folder make sub folders for each application you use. Include one called Pictures. Under this folder have another sub folders for different events. Like: Christmas07, Vacation08, Dog, etc.

D/L — Use this folder for all your downloads. Then you will always know where your down-loads are. Set it up so the last thing you downloaded is on top.

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Owner must stay with computer during repairs

*Continued on page 52*

E-Mail. If possible. You wanted your e-mail off the 'C' drive

My Stuff. Cut and paste from 'My Documents' on 'C' items that were sent there without asking you where to send. Documents that you want to keep.

### Using Acronis True Image

Use Acronis True Image to backup to your USB drive. Make a full backup the first time.

This is going to be pretty easy because all your data is in one folder on 'D:' called DATA. If you want to backup your downloaded items, back up the 'D/L' folder. E-Mail is not something I backup but you may want to. Once again it should all be in the 'E-MAIL' folder.

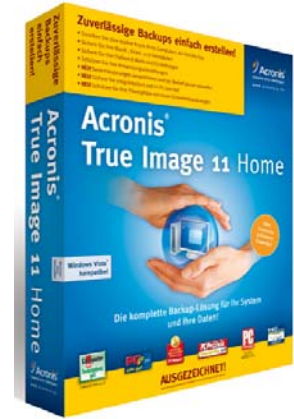
You already loaded the Acronis program and made a rescue CD that is bootable. Right?

Now open your CD drive and insert the CD. Do not close the drive. Shut down your computer. Close the CD drive. Wait a minute and then reboot.

If you have your BIOS set to boot from a CD first, you are good to go. If not you will need to enter into your setup screen at boot-up and change the boot order.

After booting up with Acronis, follow the prompts to select what you want backed up. Practice this before you need to use it.

Make notes on how to select each step. Acronis will not do anything until you give it the final OK.



## Computer Buffet With Dr. Herb Goldstein



# Mobile Supercomputers

Ever since Compaq designed a "portable" version of the old IBM PC there has been a trend to make computers easier to carry around. Soon there were laptops, then notebooks, and by now some are cellphone add-ins. But what if you need more computer power than a desktop can provide?

Large enterprises depend on computerized data centers that support the various administrative aspects of the business and support a network of desktop computers. Those data centers are typically arranged in bulky stacks of servers and memory banks, located in air conditioned rooms to keep them from overheating. Such expensive data centers are typically custom-built, take months to construct, occupy expensive real estate in office buildings, and are as immobile as the Empire State Building.

Sun Microsystems has come up with a (more) mobile version of the typical database center by putting all the hardware in a standard 20-foot shipping container. It has up to 250 servers with seven terabytes of active memory (what we usually call RAM I guess) and up to 2 petabytes (2 million gigabytes) of storage. It can support 10,000 desktop users. The individual servers use Sun's proprietary 8-core Niagara chips that are not only fast but also at 70 W per chip use a lot less power than common server chips.

Because of the standard construction, such a center can be much more quickly built and delivered at a fraction of the cost of a custom data center. It can be parked in a parking lot or basement of an office building or moved to a disaster zone, battlefield or third world aid center. Rumors have it that Google is interested for their ever-expanding data storage needs.

Of course, there are still some minor problems. Air blown across the electronics boxes has to be cooled with heat exchangers requiring 60 gallons of water per minute that may have to be recycled through external coolers. It will take a sizable, dedicated fiber optics cable for data input and output, and a big wall outlet with a super extension cord to power it all. And don't forget the nerdy teenager to program it all.

The Stanford Linear Accelerator Center (SLAC) will be the first end-user to get a Project Blackbox portable data center from Sun Microsystems. The 20-foot shipping container (which will be painted white, not black) will sit on a concrete pad behind the computer building with hookups to power, a 10-gigabit network connection and a chiller located on an adjacent pad. It will allow the SLAC to expand its computing capacity even though its existing data center has maxed out its power and cooling." (From Scientific American, with additional details from the Internet)

**Dr. Herb Goldstein is SPCUG's Software Evaluation Chairman and Review Editor for the Sarasota PC Monitor. Herb is an avid researcher on all things computer and passes on his acquired knowledge each month.**  
<reviewseditor@spcug.org>



# Computer Crimes

Susan Ives, Alamo PC

## Women's Place, by Linda Grant

Paperback, Fawcett, 1994, \$5.99, 248 pages

Private investigator Catherine Saylor and her partner, Jesse, are hired to go undercover in a software company where the women are being harassed. While Jesse handles the technical aspects, such as stolen passwords, Catherine insinuates herself into the company. The harassment escalates, a woman is murdered, and Catherine becomes the next target.

This is a compelling case study of sexual harassment in an industry where women were – and still are – in the mi-



nority. Interesting look at the software industry, just as corporations were starting to drift away from their mainframes and over to networked PCs. Good writing, tense plot, interesting characters. This is an excellent series. Recommended.

## Disclosure, by Michael Crichton

Paperback, Random House, 1993, \$7.99, 496 pages

A happily married executive at a Seattle computer company is seduced by his new boss; when he declines, she claims he started it. He counters with a sexual harassment suit. The company, on the verge of a delicate merger, has a hidden agenda in try-

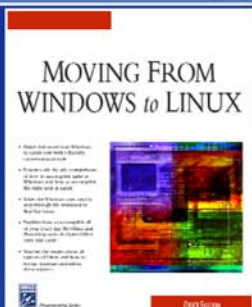


ing to resolve the case quickly (I won't give it away!)

Crichton says in an afterward that it is based on a true story, and the role reversal, although disturbing in places, helps you think more deeply about sex and power in the workplace. Lots of high-tech details, especially virtual reality-enabled databases and the process of bringing a new product to market. The miniaturization foreshadowed in the plot – tiny cell phones and DVD players – has come to pass. Made into a 1994 movie starring Michael Douglas and Demi Moore. Recommended.

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

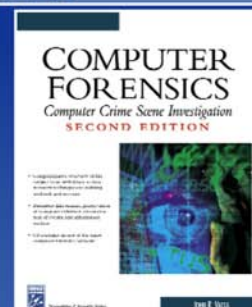
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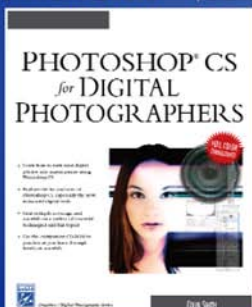
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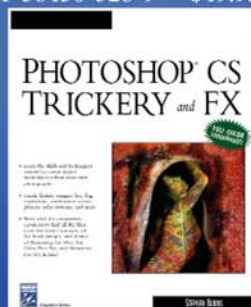
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## Hardware Review

### IOGEAR Digital Scribe

Published by IOGear

Reviewed by Rebecca Feinstein, a member of WINNERS – WINdows usERS,  
[www.windowsusers.org](http://www.windowsusers.org), [editor@windowsusers.org](mailto:editor@windowsusers.org)

I was thrilled when I first found out there was a digital scribe product at the last WINNERS meeting. As many of you recall, I was well, somewhat reluctant shall we say, to give up the raffle donation item. At the 35% discount I could not wait to get it.

The IO Mobile Digital Scribe took six days to get here from the Illinois. It comes with the pen, cable, mobile unit, two program CDs something that looks like a green tipped stylus (turned out to be the pen/refill), two small (hearing aid size) batteries and a Quick Start Guide.

Installation of the software was easy, Mobile Digital Scribe (Note Management) and My Script Notes Lite (handwriting recognition software); as was charging the mobile unit and installing the batteries into the pen. However, installing the pen was a bit puzzling as in the reference guide, IOGEAR never shows the actual size of the refill in the pictures. It also took a few e-mails to Customer Support and product management to find out where you can purchase the re-fills as well.

Okay, I got it up and working, I did a few test runs with it at home with the mobile unit attached to the computer. The note management software required a bit of a learning curve, but still was fairly easy to use. Included with the software is a .pdf users guide for the entire kit (58 pages). The handwriting recognition software was pretty impressive. With my handwriting I expected it to have a problem with my convoluted shorthand as well as my capital Is, js and my contractions. To my surprise, the software only had a problem with the Is. It even captured my signature scrawl quite well! As with a regular pen, the program doesn't erase; but recognizes crossed out information as crossed out.

With all this practice under my belt, I decided it was time to haul out the big guns, – WORK! As a technical writer, as with many other positions, I attend a lot of meetings. My expectations were high for my new tool. No more having to rewrite all

*Continued on page 55*



my notes into electronic format for distribution. I was armed and I was ready for combat. After receiving permission to install the software on my office unit, I got set up and ready to rock. I attended three meetings that day.

On the big plus side, it was very nice to have my notes appear in e-form without having to transcribe them at all. This made putting them into agenda form a breeze.

On the problem side of using the scribe, a major drawback is the mobile unit clips are made to only grab a few pages of paper at a time. Unless you are intending to take one page's worth of notes, you have to remove the mobile unit to turn pages to take more notes. This proved to be distracting and inconvenient in one of my meetings. And I found it to be very unwieldy when I was standing to take note as the mobile unit added weight to the top of the paper pad.

The pen, which is thicker than I'm used to (standard stationary pens) felt unwieldy in my hand to begin with. The button that allows you to switch between pen mode and mouse mode is located in the lower part of the pen, towards where it writes on the paper and I kept inadvertently clicking it as I was writing. So some of my notes from the first meeting resembled a word game puzzle.

Another problem, though a lesser one, is the quick reference guide itself. The print is so small, I had to borrow a friend's magnifying glass to read some of it. Keith Renty was correct when he said at our meeting that the user information was not written well. Nowhere in the users guide, or quick reference material is a description of everything that was to come with the kit (the graphic that points to everything in the kit to make sure you know the stylus is actually the pen cartridge). There is no technical support information listed in the users guide, but contact information is listed in the back of quick start guide.

Overall, I'm pleased with the performance, and not so-pleased with the customer support.





## Software Review

### System Mechanic 8 – A PC “Swiss Army Knife”

Published by Iolo

Reviewed by Ira Wilsker; APCUG Director, Columnist, The Examiner, Beaumont, TX, Radio and TV Show Host, [Iwilsker@apcug.net](mailto:Iwilsker@apcug.net)

Frequent readers of this column will be well aware that there are many computer utilities in cyberspace that can improve the performance of our PCs. As we use our computers, the registry becomes cluttered and inefficient; useless files consume valuable real estate on our hard drives; and other maladies caused by the software on our computers deprive us of the performance we paid for and deserve. While I admittedly use several different utilities to maintain peak operating efficiency of my computers, if I had to choose only a single utility for computer maintenance, it would be Iolo's System Mechanic ([www.iolo.com](http://www.iolo.com)). I have used System Mechanic for many years in its earlier versions, but now Iolo has released the latest iteration, System Mechanic version 8.

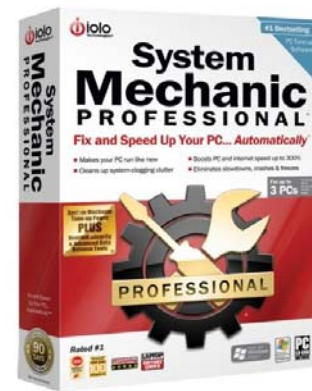
Simply, System Mechanic 8 is arguably the most comprehensive PC maintenance utility available, with over 40 distinct performance and security tools included, giving it “Swiss Army Knife” features. According to published sales figures, System Mechanic is the #1 best selling PC tune-up software on the market, and has won awards for excellence from dozens of computer publications, including Cnet's Editors' Choice, Windows Magazine, PC Computing, ZDNet Editors' Pick, Computer Shopper's Top 100, Computerworld, and many others.

Rhetorically, why would I choose System Mechanic 8 over all of its competitors? Because of what it does, its power, versatility, and features; that is why. Compared to its major competitors, none of them offer the feature rich set of functions that System Mechanic offers. According to Iolo, “Over 98% of PC problems are caused by clutter and faulty settings that are the result of everyday PC use.” System Mechanic 8 can repair or otherwise remedy virtually all of these problems. Many of a PC's problems can be traced to problems and errors in the registry, a large data file that contains information on the hardware and software installed on the computer. The registry is almost constantly written to, and read, often leaving obsolete data in the registry. This obsolete, and eventually erroneous data left in the registry consumes some system resources, and can promote errors and other problems as faulty data is read and processed. The registry must be periodically purged of useless data, defragmented and compacted in order to contribute to better PC performance, a function that System Mechanic 8 excels at.

Our computers are constantly reading from and writing to the hard drive, and that drive often becomes cluttered, fragmented, and may also have some errors in the data stored on it. While almost all flavors of Windows have some type of “defrag” and “chkdsk” software to defragment the hard drive, and check it for errors, the Windows integral versions of those utilities are very basic and lack the power to do a truly thorough job, as System Mechanic will do. Clutter and useless files consume a lot of the storage space on our hard drives; System Mechanic 8 can identify and remove that clutter, freeing up that hard drive space, making for a more efficient hard drive.

Sometimes, and it will likely happen eventually to each PC user, the computer will not properly boot. For that particular eventuality, System Mechanic 8 will allow the user to create a bootable emergency CD that may be able to revive “crashed” systems. Another irritant that many of us suffer through on a regular basis is the

*Continued on page 57*



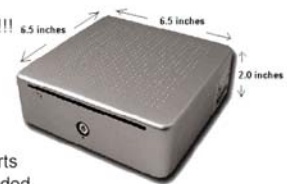
## dvnation.com

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



### BASE MODEL FEATURES:

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



### UPGRADES

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

**ALL this for just \$599**  
(Only \$549 if you install your own operating system)

**Call Jason, 210-669-2156**

boringly slow boot process itself, where we wait and wait for our computer to become usable. System Mechanic 8 claims to have 19 different ways that it can speed the boot process by making it more logical and efficient. Another way that we are losing performance that we are paying for is by having improper internet settings. Many of these settings are mundane and not readily accessible to the typical user. By modifying these settings to their ideal point, internet throughput can be improved, in some cases tripled. System Mechanic 8 will analyze our internet connection, and make any changes necessary to maximize performance.

PC security is a major issue that all of us must deal with on a constant basis. System Mechanic 8 contributes to system security by fixing settings that would otherwise allow an intruder to access the computer, making cyber attacks that more difficult. Sometimes we have files that we want to securely delete, being well aware that normally deleted files are easy to recover, which may create another security problem. This utility offers the user a military grade wiping function that can securely delete unwanted data.

System Mechanic 8 retails for \$49.95 for a one-year license, and can be used on up to three computers; discounts are available online ([www.iolo.com](http://www.iolo.com)) for longer licenses.

For those who want an even more feature rich product, Iolo offers System Mechanic Professional, version 8 (\$69.95 for 3 computers). This Professional version is an integrated bundle which includes most of Iolo's other popular products. The bundle includes Iolo's antivirus software, renowned for its hourly updates; and its Personal Firewall to protect from intruders and malicious software. Another program included with the Professional bundle is another personal favorite of mine, Iolo's Search and Recover. This program can recover files that were deleted, including photos, videos, documents, email, music, and other data that may have otherwise been lost. Search and Recover can undelete files from hard drives, digital cameras, memory cards, and almost all other digital media.

Professional also includes DriveScrubber, a utility that can securely erase data from hard drives. This is necessary when donating a computer, selling it, or recycling it. Without securely deleting our personal data, others can access it and use it for a variety of purposes, including identity theft. DriveScrubber overwrites the data using methods that meet strict government and military standards, ensuring the destruction of that data, without harm to the drive itself.

iolo has a winner in System Mechanic 8. For those who like to try software before they purchase it, Iolo offers a free, 30 day, fully functional trial version of each of its products at [www.iolo.com/downloads.aspx](http://www.iolo.com/downloads.aspx). If you try the software, you will probably like it as much as I do, and find it indispensable.



# SEPTEMBER 2008

<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	<b>THURSDAY</b>	<b>FRIDAY</b>	<b>SATURDAY</b>
	<b>1</b> Genealogy 7 - 9 P.M.	<b>2</b> BOD 6:30 P.M.	<b>3</b> Introduction to Windows 10 A.M. - Noon class 4 of 6 *PRR*	<b>4</b> Student's Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon (a/r) High Growth Stock Investing 6:30 - 8:30 P.M.	<b>5</b> Small Business Server 8 - 10 A.M., *PRR* Computer Diagnostic Clinic Dr. Is In, 9:00 A.M. - Noon Photoshop Intermediate Class 1 - 5 P.M., class 4 of 5 *PRR* PC Alamode Magazine & PDF 7 - 9 P.M.	<b>6</b> MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon *PRR* C++ 2:30 - 4:30 P.M.
<b>7</b> HTML and Beyond 2 - 6 P.M., class 1 of 6 *PRR*	<b>8</b> General Meeting @ Crossroads 7 - 9 P.M. Open House and Volunteer Recognition Ceremony Presenter: Microsoft	<b>9</b> Alamo Coders (DotNET - Web Development Technology) 7 - 9 P.M.	<b>10</b> Power Internet 10 A.M. - Noon Introduction to Windows 10 A.M. - Noon class 5 of 6 *PRR*	<b>11</b> Student Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon	<b>12</b> Computer Diagnostic Clinic Dr. Is In, 9:00 A.M. - Noon Photoshop Intermediate Class 1 - 5 P.M., class 5 of 5 *PRR*	<b>13</b> MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon *PRR*
<b>14</b> HTML and Beyond 2 - 6 P.M., class 2 of 6 *PRR*	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> Introduction to Windows 10 A.M. - Noon class 6 of 6 *PRR* Introducing Vista 1 - 3 P.M. class 1 of 2 *PRR* IBD / Vector Vest 6 - 8 P.M. *PRR*	<b>18</b> Student Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon	<b>19</b> Computer Diagnostic Clinic Dr. Is In, 9:00 A.M. - Noon Photoshop Restorations 1 Class 1 - 5 P.M., class 1 of 1 *PRR*	<b>20</b> MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon *PRR* C++ 2:30 - 4:30 P.M.
<b>21</b> HTML and Beyond 2 - 6 P.M., class 3 of 6 *PRR*	<b>22</b> Core!DRAW X3 7 - 9 P.M.	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> Introducing Vista 1 - 3 P.M. class 2 of 2 *PRR* (a/r) WordPerfect 7 - 9 P.M. Call the Instructor	<b>25</b> Student Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon	<b>26</b> Computer Diagnostic Clinic Dr. Is In, 9:00 A.M. - Noon Photoshop Restorations 2 Class 1 - 5 P.M., class 1 of 1 *PRR*	<b>27</b> MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon *PRR* Learning Center Desk Staff Meeting 1 - 3 P.M. (Please Check)
<b>28</b> HTML and Beyond 2 - 6 P.M., class 4 of 6 *PRR*	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>				

# ALAMOPC ORGANIZATION

PRR = Pre-Registration Required



# 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 fix 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. We do the work at the 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

**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> 680-0231

Murry Adams

<mnadams@texas.net> 696-0047

Carl Deneke

<cdeneke@Texas.net> 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

<jcinqury@earthlink.net> 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.

**Contact:** Maynard Burstein

<maynardb@juno.com> 735-3288

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

**Where:** Contact Maynard for location

**Pre-registration:** Call Maynard

**Technical Rating:** ★ - ★★★

#### IBD / Vector Vest Study Group

The group determines current market direction and applies Investors Business Daily and Vector Vest methodologies to make a profit.

**Contact:** Kim Murphy

**When:** 3rd Wed., 6-8pm

**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](http://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](http://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:** ★★★★★

### 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.

### Volunteers Wanted

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

## STUDY GROUPS (cont.)

### 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](mailto: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](mailto: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, 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. 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) Jan 9, 16, 23, 30, Feb 6, 13

Set 2) Mar 5, 12, 19, 26, April 2, 9

Set 3) May 14, 21, 28, Jun 4, 11, 18

Set 4) Aug 13, 20, 27, Sept 3, 10, 17

Set 5) Oct 8, 15, 22, 29, Nov 5, 12

**Fees:** Registration fee is \$10.00

**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) Jan 8, 15, 22, 29, Feb 5, 12

Set 2) Mar 18, 25, Apr 1, 8, 15, 22

Set 3) May 13, 20, 27, Jun 3, 10, 17

Set 4) Oct 7, 14, 21, 28, Nov 4, 11

OR

**Instructor:** Don Robinson

**When:** 6 sessions, Wed. 1 to 3 p.m.

Set 1) Jan 9, 16, 23, 30, Feb 6, 13

Set 2) Mar 19, 26, Apr 2, 9, 16, 23

Set 3) July 9, 16, 23, 30, Aug 6, 13

Set 4) Oct 8, 15, 22, 29, Nov 5, 12

**Fees:** Registration fee is \$10.00

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

**Where:** Computer Learning Center

**Technical Rating:** ★

### Introducing Vista

This course is an overview of the Vista operating system that is the replacement of Windows XP. Students will be able to see what Vista looks like but is NOT hands on. The training will be more of a visual demonstration and discussion of the major differences between the two operating systems from a user's point of view. The course includes what Vista is, the various versions available, hardware requirements, pros's and con's of converting and new functionality. The main focus will be demonstrating how to accomplish the user basics (navigating, menus, control panel, files and folders) in Vista versus Windows XP.

**Instructors:** Don Robinson

Choose one set

**When:** 2 weeks, Wed., 1 pm to 3 pm

Set 1) May 21, 28

Set 2) Sept 17, 24

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

**Where:** Computer Learning Center

**Technical Rating:** ★

### Adobe Acrobat - PDF Class

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

**Instructor:** Steve Tech  
stephentechnr@yahoo.com

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

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

**Where:** Computer Learning Center

**Technical Rating:** ★

### APCO Retro (Antique Computer Users Group)

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

**Contact:** Shane Hicks

<[shane@absolutepowercomputing.com](mailto:shane@absolutepowercomputing.com)>

**When:** Anytime

**Where:** Cyberspace

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

<[APCORETRO@yahoogroups.com](mailto:APCORETRO@yahoogroups.com)>

**Technical Rating:**★ - ★★★★★

### CorelDRAW I Class

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

**Contact:** Steve Tech

<[stephentechnr@yahoo.com](mailto:stephentechnr@yahoo.com)>

210-675-2880

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

**Where:** Learning Center

**Pre-registration:** No

**Technical Rating**★★

### Digital Camera & Photography Class

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

**Instructor:** need instructor

**When:** to be announced

**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:** needs instructor

**When:** to be announced

**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:** needs instructor

**When:** to be announced

**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:** needs instructor

**When:** to be announced

**Fees:** registration fee \$10

**Where:** Learning Center

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

**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.

Visit the Alamo PC Learning Center

## Can you help teach?

We're looking for someone to teach one or more of the following classes:

**Digital Camera; Photo Editing; Movie Maker; Microsoft Digital Image 2006**

Please call (210) 736-0700



## 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. They 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.

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.

**Please Note:** All students requesting fee based classes will be placed on a standby list for that class until the fee is received. Please continue to register in advance for the classes.

### Beginners Photoshop

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

**When:** Beginners Photoshop (nine sessions) June Fridays 6, 13, 20, 27, July 11, 18, 25, August 1, 8, 1 pm to 5 pm

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

### Intermediate Photoshop:

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

**When:** Intermediate Photoshop  
Fridays, August 15, 22, 29, September 5, 12  
1 pm to 5 pm

**Tuition Fee:** \$25 for the course

### Advanced Photoshop

Lessons on Rollovers, Animations, Warp Tool, Image Adjustments, Creating Curled Edges, Lighting Effects, Creating Patterns, Photo Restorations, Photo Edits

**When:** Advanced Photoshop  
Fridays October 3, 10, 17, 24, 31  
1 pm to 5 pm

**Tuition Fee:** \$25 for the course

### Restorations 1 and 2 Photoshop Lessons on Photo Restorations

#### Restorations 1 (one session)

**When:** Friday September 19  
1 pm to 5 pm

**Tuition Fee:** \$5 for the class

#### Restorations 2 (one session)

**When:** Friday September 26, 1 pm to 5 pm

**Tuition Fee:** \$5 for the class

### Photoshop Holiday Lessons

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

**When:** Fridays, 1 to 5 pm, dates for 2008 to be announced 1 to 4:30 pm

**Tuition Fee:** \$25 for the course

### Photoshop Calendar Class (taught by Jane Montgomery)

**When:** Fridays, 1 to 5 pm, dates for 2008 to be announced 1 to 4:30 pm

**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:** ★★-★★★

### 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 basic functionality, menus, toolbars, icons and shortcut keys. Learn how to create, format, save and print an Excel spreadsheet.

**Prerequisites:** Students must have completed the Windows XP course or have the equivalent knowledge. It is also best if the student is familiar with another software package such as Microsoft Word.

**When:** 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.; Thursdays  
April 3, 10, 17, 24

**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. Class does not meet each month, please check the calendar or call the Learning Center to confirm meeting dates and time. 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:** Six Sessions, Sundays; 2 pm to 6 pm  
Classes are held in March and September

**Where:** Learning Center

**Prerequisite:** Students should have familiarity with the Windows OS.

**Pre-registration:** yes, e-mail Mike at <webmaster@alamopc.org>

**Technical Rating:** ★★

### Internet And E-Mail - \$

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

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

**When:** 6 weeks, Tuesdays, 10 a.m. to noon

Set 1) Jan 8, 15, 22, 29, Feb 5, 12

Set 2) Mar 18, 25, Apr 1, 8, 15, 22

Set 3) July 8, 15, 22, 29, Aug 5, 12

Set 4) Oct 7, 14, 21, 28, Nov 4, 11

**Instructor:** Don Robinson

**Fees:** Registration fee is \$10.00

**Where:** Learning Center

**Pre-registration:** YES call 210-736-0080

**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.     |

### Alamo Coders Class

This is a class on using the DotNetNuke portal software for hosting your website and for those interested in developing Windows and Web applications using Microsoft's .NET. This portal is a service available to Alamo PC members. The class will discuss the portal framework and configuration of a DNN site. We will also setup web pages, insert modules on the pages, modify and edit the look of the pages as well as the data in the pages. Modules will include Calendar, Announcements, Forums, Blogs, Contacts, Links, Surveys and HTML. We will use development modules and applications for the DNN Portal using VB.NET and C# as a basis for demonstrating .Net development. Guest speakers occasionally present new technology and development tools available for .Net Developers. Door prizes (books, software, shirts, etc.) are distributed at most meetings.

**Contact:** Joe Brazell 345-2207

**When:** 2nd Tuesday, 7 - 9 pm

**Where:** Learning Center

**Pre-registration:** no

**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:** ★ - ★★

### Volunteers Wanted

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

### 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:** need instructor

**When:** to be announced

**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.

The course outline is as follows:

Wk 1: Opening the application, selecting a template, and saving documents

Wk 2: Formatting, Using Bullets and Numbered Lists

Wk 3: Headers, Footers, Pagination

Wk 4: Developing, Inserting, and Tables

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

**When:** 4 sessions, 6:30 to 8:00 pm, question session afterwards; Tues. March 4, 11, 18, 25

**Instructor:** Belinda Ramirez

**Where:** Learning Center

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

**Technical Rating:** ★ - ★★

### Private or Semi-Private Tutorials - \$

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

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

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

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

**Where:** Learning Center

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

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

**Technical Rating:** ★

## 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. Enjoy a comfortable seating area. Call (210) 736-0700.

### 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.

# 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 Alamode at: [editor@alamopc.org](mailto:editor@alamopc.org). Copy deadline is 10th of month preceeding publication. Classified ads are free to members of Alamo PC.

**For Sale** Windows XP Professional disk. New and unopened. Discount. Contact Carl Marmion at 494-6797

**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](mailto: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.



100% gray cotton golf shirts with pocket and embroidered full-color **Alamo PC logo**  
Available at the Learning Center in a wide variety of sizes.

**\$20.00**

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

# Alamo PC Organization has your Number!

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

## Monthly Meetings

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

## Award-Winning Magazine

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

## Special Interest Groups and Classes

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



## Internet ([www.alamopc.org](http://www.alamopc.org))

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

## Alamo PC SeniorComp

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

## Expert Help

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

## APPLY FOR YOUR NUMBER -- JOIN NOW!

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

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



## Membership Application -- Apply for your number today!

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

FIRST: \_\_\_\_\_ MI \_\_\_\_\_ LAST: \_\_\_\_\_

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

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE H: \_\_\_\_\_ W: \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ OCCUPATION: \_\_\_\_\_

EMPLOYER: \_\_\_\_\_ TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_ EXP DATE: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

PCA JAN05



# Alamo PC Organization, Inc.

## *Renew Now!*

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

For more information call the Learning Center at  
210.736.0700



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

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

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

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



