

THE NEWS MAGAZINE OF THE ALAMO PC ORGANIZATION

# PC Alamode

**TECH ISSUE**

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

October 2008

\$5.00

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Linda Bianchi **210-561-2278**

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

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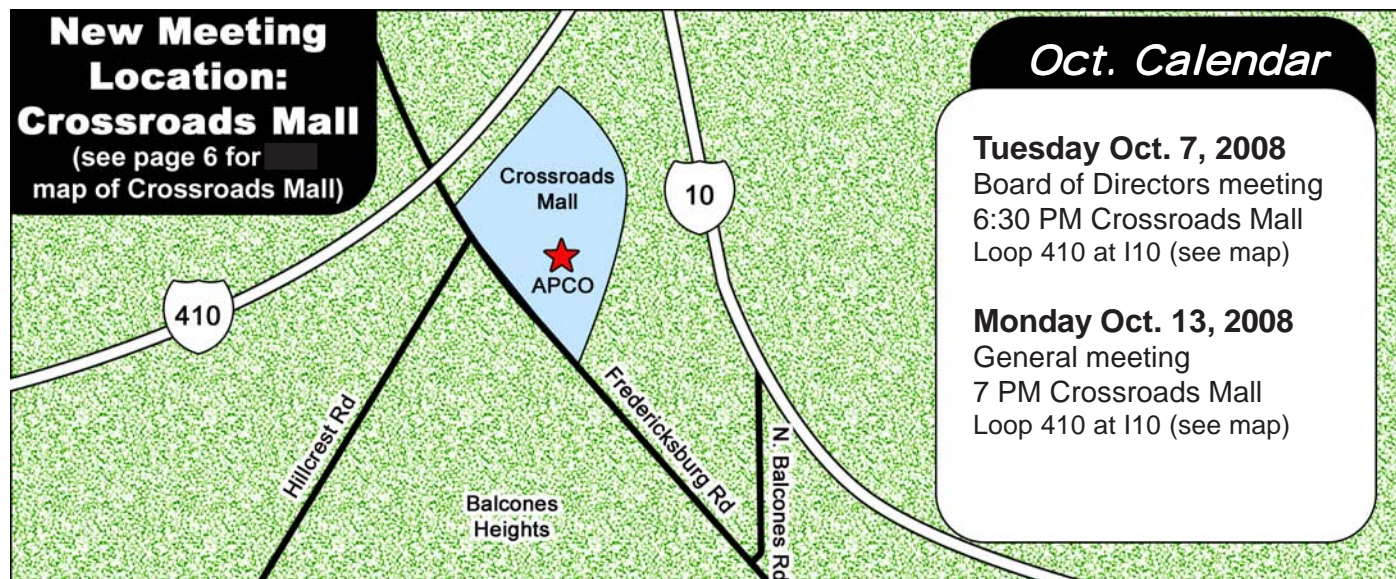
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**San Antonio, TX 78265-5180**

## Meetings

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

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

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



## Oct. Calendar

**Tuesday Oct. 7, 2008**  
Board of Directors meeting  
6:30 PM Crossroads Mall  
Loop 410 at I10 (see map)

**Monday Oct. 13, 2008**  
General meeting  
7 PM Crossroads Mall  
Loop 410 at I10 (see map)



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# PC Alamode

(501 (C) (3))

## Featured this month

YouTube for posterity  
The New, the Best and the Worst  
Anti-virus virus  
BroadSides  
FastStone Capture  
Google's New "Chrome Browser"  
Hacking 101  
Shrinking Computing  
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PC Alamode (ISSN 1065-3708) is published monthly by the Alamo PC Organization, Inc., PO Box 65180, San Antonio, TX 78265-5180, an independent association of personal computer users, founded in January 1983, and incorporated in January 1984 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. COPYRIGHT © 2008 by Alamo PC or the author. All rights reserved. No part of PC Alamode may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means — mechanical, electrical, or otherwise — including, but not limited to, photocopying, recording, or information storage/retrieval, without express written permission from Alamo PC. However, unless otherwise indicated, articles may be reprinted by other user and education groups provided the articles are reprinted unaltered and the publication acknowledges the author thereof and PC Alamode. Articles, programs, reviews, and advertisements are compiled without verification of accuracy or applicability to a specific task, computer, or other equipment. Comments or claims are made solely by the individual author and do not necessarily represent the views of Alamo PC or of any other Alamo PC member. Trademarks have been used at random within the publication and are hereby recognized as such.

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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
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## product reviews

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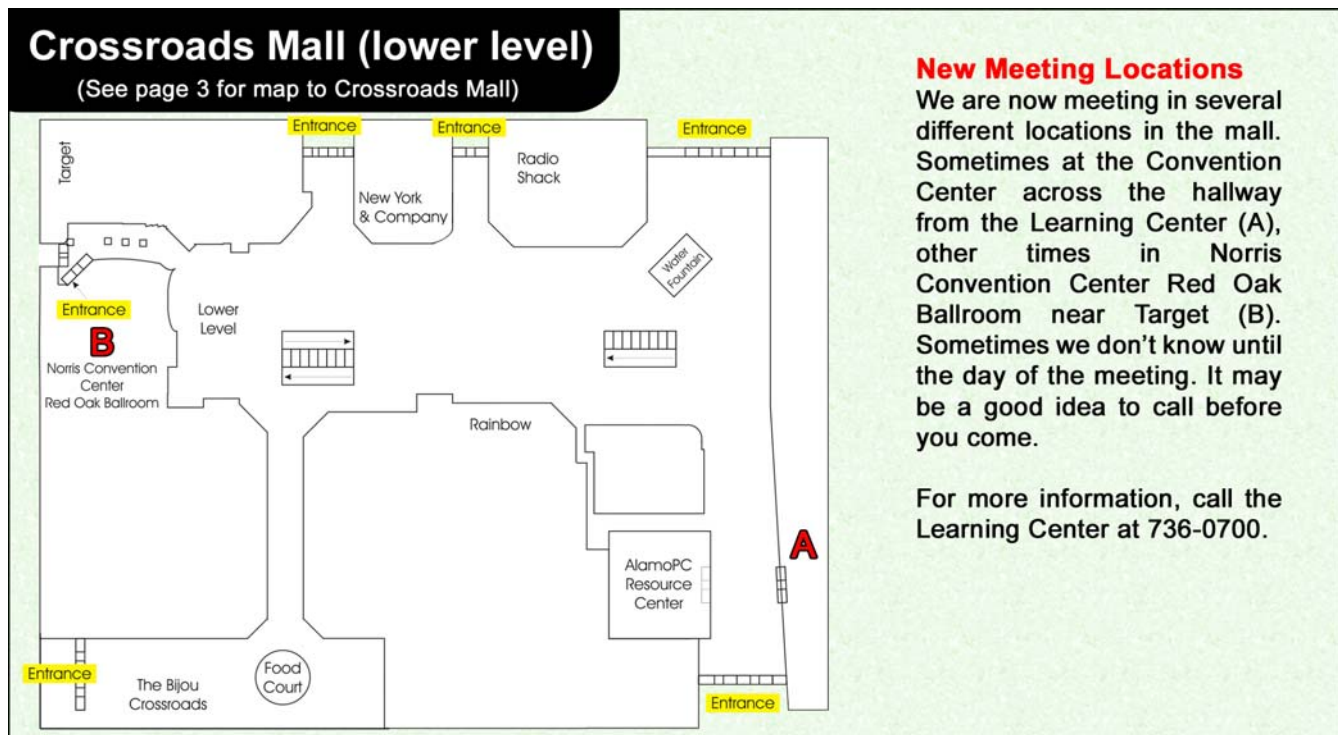
#### Learning Center, Crossroads Mall

736-0700

FAX 736-0032

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



## PC Alamode Links List



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**Joseph de Leon, Editor**

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



**Joseph de Leon, Alamo PC**

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

I hope everyone is enjoying changing the season. It may be warm, but it's fixing to cool down soon. Just like last year, forecasters are predicting a stronger than usual hurricane season. Let's hope they're wrong!

You'll notice some of the articles in this issue are bit on the technical side. While Alamo PC does help novice computer users make sense of that big fancy box with all the wires coming out of it, it's also a club for professionals and advanced enthusiasts.

Let me know what you'd like to see in the magazine and have a safe Autumn!



# President's Message

Bill Klutz

## "October" - Columbus, Bosses, U.N., Difference, MIL, Goblins

This month marks several things of interest to many: 13th - Columbus Day (Thanks for being a "discoverer" of new lands); 16th - Bosses Day (helps workers keep their job and is a commercialized day for those profiting from purchases made); 24th - United Nations Day (because countries represented don't seem to be able to be united on all other days. Meeting day, or day off so as not to spoil their almost daily refusal to be "United?"); 25th - Make a Difference Day (reminds neighbors to help neighbors. But, it should be this way every day!); 26th - Mother-In-Law Day (chance to honor your beloved Mother-In-Law); 31st - Halloween - A time for kids to have some fun in costumes and get some "safe" treats from trusted individuals.

The September BOD meetings had five members present (second quorum in several months). Some were still plagued by health issues and/or family problems, but dealing with them. The monthly General Meeting, was suppose to have had a Microsoft presenter, but a meeting at the corporate offices took president, so the presenter was forced to cancel again at the last minute. David Steward was out of town, so Cary Hall prevailed on Laura Grover to provide a presentation on genealogy. The approximate 40 who were present seemed to enjoy the presentation, but again affirms that overall interest in the organization has 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.


The September General Meeting was also to be the Annual meeting of the organization - conduct the organization's election process and other business as required. The election process for Oct 2008- Sep 2009 (Floor Nominations / Election Committee Names; etc.) essentially ceased at the general meeting when the Election Committee had no names to submit, and a Floor Nomination only included one currently serving board member. (Remember, that last year only three names were submitted [Linda Bianchi, Cary Hall and Billy Samples], and all were also already serving as board members.) 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.

That again leaves us with the six individuals currently serving and one vacancy (total positions available is seven). If there is a desire on the part of one or more of the six to not continue, more vacant positions will be created. With only six individuals currently willing to serve, and one vacant position for the past few years, the future of OUR organization appears to be in serious jeopardy.

It is now late in September, and I am hoping that we will have a presenter for the October General Meeting (have not been so informed). 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.

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" - Friday AM hands-on help with computer problems, at the Learn-



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*Continued on page 9*



ing 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.

## October Program

Bill Klutz

**I**t is the first day of October and David Steward sent the following information in a message (last night) to board members regarding the presenter for our October General Meeting:

"Finally, it is official. We will be hosting Lara Pryor from Microsoft at the General Meeting. I just received confirmation from her, that she will be here. ... the meeting will tentatively focus on 'Live One Care' but will also involve other exciting new products from Microsoft. Should have some pretty good door prizes also."

The meeting location should be a Norris Conference Center facility (hopefully, if available, across from our Learning Center). Since things can change at the last minute, check the Alamo PC web site (www.alamopc.org) for information on the 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 some free "gifts."



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## Volunteer at the Alamo PC Learning Center

# We need volunteers!

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## Visit the Alamo PC Learning Center

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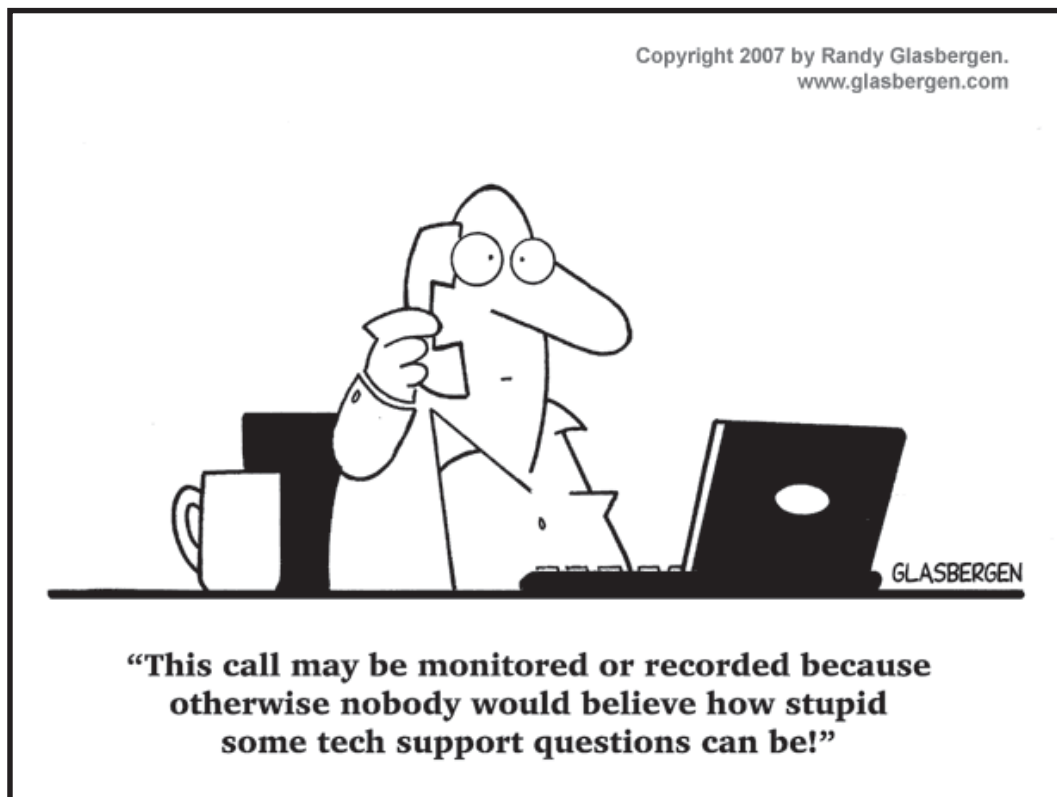
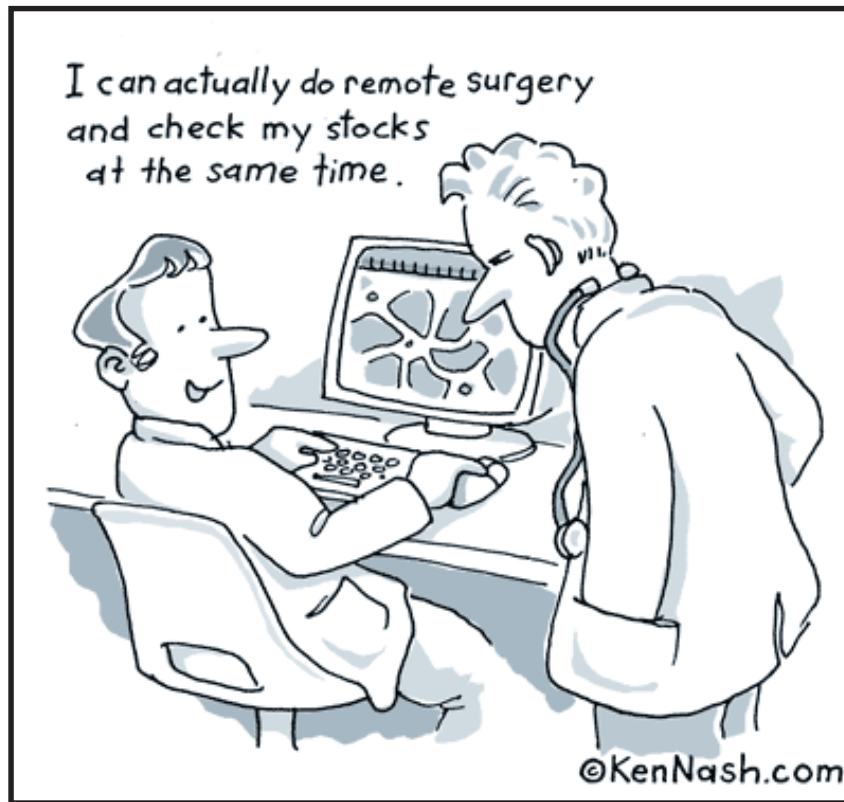
November 8, 2008  
December 13, 2008





# Funny Bytes

Ken Nash & Randy Glasbergen





# Ubuntu 8.04 on Windows

**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).

My friends are always telling me that I need to make the jump to Linux. However, I'm really in no rush to leave the Windows world. After all, when's the last time anyone from one of the Linux camps picked up the tab at lunch?

At the same time, I realize it's foolish not to have at least some rudimentary knowledge of what else is out there. That was the initial reason I tried my hand as Mac OS X, and is why I'm now going to try, once again, to load up the latest version of Linux to see what all the fuss is about.

For this project, I'm using the latest 32-bit desktop ISO of Ubuntu 8.04. Since I don't want to dual-boot my PC with both Windows Vista and Ubuntu, I'm going to employ VMware Workstation 6.0.4.

You can download Ubuntu from <http://www.ubuntu.com> and you can get a trial version of VMware from <http://www.vmware.com>.

In order to install Ubuntu, it's recommended that you have at least 2GB of RAM in your system and 8GB of free HDD space.

First, we need to configure a virtual machine. Open VMware, click on File and create a New Virtual Machine. When the wizard starts, chose the Typical virtual machine. Then, select a Linux installation and you'll find Ubuntu in the list. Enter the name of the virtual machine or accept the default of "Ubuntu." Note where the computer will store the virtual machine files. I actually move mine to a dedicated virtual machine directory on a second hard drive. Next, determine how you want the virtual machine to access the network. I chose "bridged," so that it would have direct access to the Internet using the computers on-board Ethernet card. Determine how much hard drive space you wish to allocate to Ubuntu. You have the option of allocating all the space up front, which would create an 8GB file if you follow my recommendation above. As noted, allocating the space from the start can improve performance. In my case, since I don't plan on using the virtual machine all that much, I left it as a dynamically expanding drive. Click on "Finish" and your virtual machine is ready.

You can review your virtual machine settings at this point, making any changes you feel are necessary. I opted to leave the memory set at 512MB, as the Ubuntu site says the OS works with 256MB installed.

Insert the Ubuntu CD into your drive, or point VMware to the ISO file, to access the installation files. Start the VM, and you will see the Ubuntu LiveCD desktop. Click in the window and cursor down to "Install Ubuntu." The installation process begins. Select your language, and then click "Forward" on the Install window.

I found the "Where are you?" window annoying. It's cool that you can point at a map and click on where you think you're located, but I couldn't locate any Texas cities represented on the map. I selected "Chicago" to place myself in the United States in the CDT time zone. I was also annoyed that I couldn't change the system clock.

I continued by selecting the default keyboard and standard partitioning scheme, which uses all of the 8GB disk image. Next, I entered my personal information, password, and named the computer. Click "Forward" once more, and the OS installer goes to work.

The system will request a reboot, then ask for your user name and password. The next thing you need to do is configure Ubuntu

*Continued on page 14*


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to use all your hardware. Insert your installation CD and allow it to mount in the system. Then, click Applications, Accessories, and Terminal.

Type the following:

```
sudo aptitude update
```

```
sudo aptitude install build-essential
```

Next, you need to install the VMware tools, which are the drivers needed by VMware to optimize the performance of your virtual machine. On the VMware menu, select VM and Install VMware Tools. A window will open up, showing two files. One is a tar.gz file. Double-click on that and Extract it into your home folder, by clicking on your logon name at the left hand side of the screen. Once this is done, open the Terminal again. Type `cd vmware-tools-distrib` to change directories. Then type `sudo ./vmware-install.pl`. You will then be prompted with a LOT of questions saying that Ubuntu needs to recompile several pieces of software for compatibility. Just keep accepting all the defaults until you get to the question about screen resolution. Here, you need to select the resolution that you want the VM to run at. I chose 1280x1024 so that the OS could run in a window and fit on my screen. Once you've completed all this, you'll see an "Enjoy, the VMware team" response. You'll need to go to System: Quit: Restart to reboot the virtual machine.

Once rebooted, the OS informed me that there were 153 updates required. I attempted to connect to the Internet, and nothing happened. After clicking around for awhile, I located the wired connection icon at the top right of the screen. By clicking that, and the button for wired network, the OS connected. The updates required a download of approximately 140MB.

That was a painful installation.

The steps to load any version of Windows in a VM are much simpler, and don't require searching for any files or dropping to a command line. I couldn't imagine a general user being able to pull this installation off on their own. And now, I've got to figure out how to get anti-virus and anti-spyware programs loaded?

No thanks. I'll stick with Windows.

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## Games, Part III

### 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.

**T**he Art of Theft <<http://www.komando.com/downloads/category.aspx?id=4484>> puts you in the shoes of Trilby, a British cat burglar. The goal is to pull off a number of daring thefts. You should watch for alarms and human enemies as you play this game. It's important to keep your wits about you. Fortunately, you have plenty of tools at your disposal.

#### Brain Teasers

AskOxford <[www.askoxford.com](http://www.askoxford.com)> features crosswords, hangman, and other fun word games. You could spend all day on this site! Some of the games are more difficult than they seem. But, after playing with them for a time, you'll notice your skills will quickly improve.

#### Catch a mouse

Do you remember watching Tom and Jerry cartoons? It seemed that the mouse was always outsmarting the cat. No matter how hard he tried, the cat just couldn't catch the mouse. Maybe you can do a better job of catching the mouse. Well, now's your chance. At this site <[daflax.com.br](http://daflax.com.br)> you can construct your own mousetrap. You can use all the popular props from cartoons: mini cannons, roller skates, bowling balls and a bevy of other tools.

#### Cheat Codes

Many computer and console games have "cheats." These give you certain advantages when you're playing the games. Some people may find it objectionable, but others may find it a source of fun. At IGN Games, <[www.games.ign.com](http://www.games.ign.com)> you can find cheat codes for hundreds of games. To get started, you must search by the game's name. Then amaze your friends as your gaming skills "improve." But even if you insist on taking the high road, IGN Games won't disappoint you. You'll find reviews of the latest games and price comparison tools.

#### City Planning

Few video game franchises are as popular as the Sims <[www.komando.com/downloads](http://www.komando.com/downloads)>. We're probably all familiar with the Sims game with simulated people. But before Maxis started making games with people, it made games that let you build cities. There were other versions, too. You can plan your city and see how well it turns out. This game is free to play online. You can also see what other people have done with SimCityscape.

#### Excel

When someone mentions Microsoft Excel, you probably think of budgets and charts. Generally speaking, spreadsheets aren't exciting. So, what if I told you about a game based on Excel? You'd probably think I was joking, but it is an Excel-based game found at <<http://www.kongregate.com/games/Krystman/excit>>. Believe it or not, it is really fun. Your sole goal: Escape the worksheet and advance a level. Sounds easy, doesn't it? It's not. There are plenty of obstacles and getting around them isn't an easy task. This game just might change your opinion of Excel!

#### Fun Games

The games at this site <<http://www.k2x1.com/>> seem deceptively simple at first glance. For example, one requires that you press the spacebar when told. But you'll soon discover that the games are challenging.

#### Jigsaw Puzzles

Now you can solve jigsaw puzzles on the Web. The site <<http://www.shockwave.com/sw/content/jigsawpuzzles>> has a new jigsaw puzzle every day. You can change the difficulty of each puzzle by choosing the number of pieces. You can save a puzzle and come back to it later. Best of all, you don't have to worry about losing any pieces.

#### Letter Game

If you are into word games, check out his fast-moving Scrabble-like game at <<http://www.kewlbox.com/games/game.cfm?gameID=83>>. You have to create words from the letters presented which is no easy task. Speaking of sounds, if the

*Continued on page 16*

game's sounds bother you, there is a button on the game to turn the audio off. You can play two minute games for free, but if you want unlimited time, you have to pay.

### Marbles

If you like Marbles or want a fast-paced game to play, try Speed Marbles <[www.netives.com/Games/SpeedMarbles/index.shtml](http://www.netives.com/Games/SpeedMarbles/index.shtml)>. You can knock out colored marbles by clicking on them. You need to have two or more touching marbles to remove them from the board. The more marbles touching each other, the higher the point score. Once you're done, you can upload your score and compare it with others.

### Mindless Game

At <<http://uk.download.yahoo.com/ne/fu/dodge.html>> is one of those mindless little games that will drive you to distraction. You have to click and drag a red square, avoiding the blue blocks. The game is over if you leave the white area or get hit by a blue block. Here's a little tip: When you click on the red square, drag it straight down.

### Miniclip

Miniclip, <[www.miniclip.com/Downloads.htm](http://www.miniclip.com/Downloads.htm)>, has over 100 free games. Some of them are challenging or just plain silly while others are irreverent, but they're not mean spirited, and they'll give you a good laugh. There's a game called Flashman, which is really just Pac Man. You can play the games online or download them to play later. You can even put them on your Web site, if you have one. Flash and Shockwave are required. You'll be directed to download the free players if you don't have them.

### More Games

You'll find pinball, tennis, foosball and other popular virtual and real-time games at <[www.moregame.com/](http://www.moregame.com/)>. If you like original games, there are plenty at this Web site. You can register with the site to post your high score. Enter Guest as both the user name and password to play anonymously. A mindless little game that will drive you to distraction is at <<http://uk.download.yahoo.com/ne/fu/dodge.html>>. You have to click and drag a red square, avoiding the blue blocks. The game is over if you leave the white area or get hit by a blue block. Here's a little tip: When you click on the red square, drag it straight down

### Music Catch

For Music Catch <<http://www.reflexive.com/index.php?PAGE=WebGamePlay&WGID=94>> all you need do is catch shapes using your cursor. The shapes change color and size. Combined with the background music, the game becomes hypnotic. It's great for relieving stress! There isn't much you need to know about the game. Yellow shapes are good; red shapes are bad. Purple shapes give you purple power! Other shapes become magnetized to your cursor.

### Network Solutions

If you feel yourself becoming addicted to Internet gaming, here are some tips and tricks to make sure things run as smoothly as possible. 1. Windows' Internet games work fine through a home network. Everybody on the network can play a different game with a different person. Or, if they chance upon the right opponent, they can play against people in the same house. 2. Normally, you receive a random opponent. To choose your own opponent or meet friends online, head for the MSN Gaming Zone <<http://zone.msn.com/Default.asp?hb=f>> and sign up for a free membership. 3. Although the Internet games work well when connected through a single modem on your home network, they're not the best at connecting through more elaborate networks that use proxy servers. 4. When you first connect, the Internet assigns you a beginner skill level and matches you up with beginning level players. To look for more skilled players, change your own skill ranking by clicking on the Game menu, choosing Skill Level, and choose between Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced.

### Online Investment Game

Investing isn't a game, of course, but you can make one of it. These Web sites offer investment games to sharpen your strategies and skills. Here, you can play the game for a few months before graduating to the real thing: Fantasy Stock Market <<http://www.fantasystockmarket.com>>. Start with the requisite \$100,000 in play money and try to beat the other players in building a healthy portfolio. Players are ranked and a new game starts each month. You can also research stocks from this Web site. Investment Challenge <<http://www.ichallenge.net>>: "The most realistic stock market simulation for students," boast the makers of this site. Here, you again start with \$100,000 in your fictional account. Different games are designed for middle school, high school, and college students.

### Pac-Man Central

Video games are a big business. The latest gaming systems run hundreds of dollars, and they're flying off shelves. Of course, developers are spending big bucks to make games for these consoles, and these sophisticated games have stunning graphics. But maybe the controllers are too difficult for you to use. With some game consoles, you need a degree to understand the remote! If this sounds like you, visit <<http://www.webpacman.com/>> for some old-school fun! There are several versions of Pac-Man. If you're a purist, stick with the original version of Pac-Man, while others will want to try some of those additional fun games.



## 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!

**B**LOG is short for Web Log and is a free and easy way to get timely information onto the Internet. It is a combination of software tools and web hosting that allows anyone to keep and maintain an online journal without having to learn complicated computer or Web design skills. It's a personal publishing system that gets your thoughts into cyberspace instantly. There's no way to count the number of blogs, but estimates start at a million and go up from there.

Seeing a blog is more enlightening than reading about them, so have a look at my newest blog at [lazywebmaster.blogspot.com](http://lazywebmaster.blogspot.com). In fact, you can finish reading this column there.

The first thing that you will notice is that it is arranged chronologically, with the newest entry on top. This diary format is the defining characteristic of blogs. They are intended for instant and frequent communications.

I found that the service called Blogger, owned by Google, is the easiest to use, especially for beginners. Another good free service is Journal Space.

With all of the blog services the first thing to do is to set up a free account, which essentially means giving the service your name and e-mail, selecting a password and a name for your first blog.

The blog name will become part of the address - [yourblogname.blogspot.com](http://yourblogname.blogspot.com). In Blogger, you can have unlimited blogs. Journalspace gives you one, and your user name becomes your blog address, so pick it carefully.

So you don't get confused, Blogger is the name of the service and the address you visit to manage your blog. Blogspot is where the blog is actually hosted, and the address that your visitors use. They are the same service.

The other required action is to pick a blog template, or the look and feel of your blog. The service will give you a set of templates from which you may choose (and easily change if you change your mind.) More experienced users can download other templates from third-party sites, design their own templates or modify the ones provided (they are created in HTML and Javascript: you have access to the code.)

That done, start blogging! Each entry is called a post. You type in your post, then



publish it (click a button) to make it go live onto the Internet. If you want, add a few hyperlinks and format the text, just as you would with a word processor. There's even a spell checker (hint, hint.) That's it. You can master the basics of blogging in about five minutes.

But why stop with the basics?

Most blog hosts allow you to post pictures onto your blog. Blogger doesn't have an innate photo capability so you have to use a third-party program or service to transfer photos to your blog.

Hello, from Picasa Software, is a free program that is installed on your computer. You can download it from [www.hello.com](http://www.hello.com). Hello is sort of an instant messenger optimized to facilitate sharing photos with friends, but an added feature is a "bloggerbot" (bot is shorthand for robot) that sends pictures to your blog. It's quite simple to use. Master this in about a half hour.

Another way to add photos to your blog is through another blog (are you confused yet?) BuzzNet is a photoblog, sometimes called a Moblog. The MO stands for mobile: many people use these to share photos taken on their mobile phones. You can send photos by e-mail over the wireless access protocol, or WAP, as well as using BuzzNet's easy Web-based interface.

After you set up your free account with BuzzNet you can upload up to 60 photos per month. If that's not enough, you can buy more photo storage (100 more images in a month for \$5; \$15 for 300 images, or go for it and get their premium service - no banner ads, custom templates, password protected galleries and 250 photos a month - for \$36 a year.)

BuzzNet is optimized for photos rather than text; it's set up more like a gallery, although there are ways to add comments to photos. One of the options is "Blog This!" which will send a photo and text to your Blogspot blog with the click of a button.

BuzzNet is especially handy if you are traveling and are using someone else's computer - at a cyber café, for example. Since the interface is Web-based, you don't have to worry about installing any software. Hint: if you do a photo blog while traveling with a digital camera, get a USB-based card reader (something like the SanDisk 12-in-1 Memory Card Reader, about \$35) so that you can read your memory card directly into the alien computer. If you are in the US and taking photos with your digital camera this is not necessary.

I set up a BuzzNet account: you can see my moblog there at [susanives.buzznet.com](http://susanives.buzznet.com). Sign up for your own BuzzNet account at [www.buzznet.com](http://www.buzznet.com). If photos aren't enough, how about audio? Both Blogger and Journal Space allow audio blogs, which are sound files that you call in from any telephone and are automatically posted to your blog. These work through 3rd parties and are considered "add-ins" to the blog. You can listen to one at [lazywebmaster.blogspot.com](http://lazywebmaster.blogspot.com). I used a service called audioblogger [www.audioblogger.com](http://www.audioblogger.com) which is free and lets you post an unlimited number of 5-minute long messages by calling them in over your phone. Some other audioblog services allow much longer posts - up to an hour! - and allow you to record them on your computer using a microphone. Some people are actually doing full-length "radio" shows using audioblogs. Sometimes this is referred to as "PodCasting," as people download the audio from the blog onto their MP3 players (an iPod, for example) so that they can listen to it away from their computer. Video blogs (Vblogs) are also starting to show up. Look at [www.audioblog.com](http://www.audioblog.com) for more info: their service is \$50 a year. This really just skims the surface of blogging. You can set up team or group blogs that multiple people can post to. You can enable a feature that allows others to add comments to your blog. There are blog communities that interact with each other.

Most blogs, including Blogger, will automatically set up an RSS (syndication) feed for you.

If you have your own Web space, Blogger allows you to integrate it with your web content so that it uses your URL.

Blogging can be serious business. Last summer, Express-News military reporter Sig Christenson maintained a daily blog from the battlefield in Iraq. They can also be silly and superficial. What you blog is up to you.

For personal use, a blog can be used for vacation photos - while the vacation is still happening! They can be used for family photos - a wedding? New baby? Or even just to post your musings. If you have the Google toolbar installed, there is a Blog button on it. If you click it, it will automatically post a link to the page you are currently viewing to your BlogSpot blog. Many people use this feature to share interesting sites with friends.

But blogs can be used for business, too. They are an excellent way to get current news up onto the Web fast; even someone with no technical skills can do it without waiting for the office Web guru to fit you into her busy schedule.

Here's a warning. Any free service, blogs included, can go out of business. Weblogs, a free service started by blog pioneer Dave Winer, suddenly shut down last summer, leaving thousands of bloggers homeless.

Give it a look. A blog might be all you need, or it could be a trendy and useful add-on to a full blown Web site.



## 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.

About three months ago, I bought a basic new Toshiba Satellite A-205 laptop with a Celeron processor, one gig of RAM and Vista Home Basic. It was also Wi-Fi ready. I thought I would probably only use it when I go out of town, mostly for e-mail and MS Office 2003. I booted it up to look at Vista and decided to register it with Toshiba, but before I finished the registration, a message told me McAfee had finished installing, which frustrated me since it had not asked my permission. After taking a quick look at Vista, and being hounded by more advertising, I set it in the closet until I had more time to work with it.

About three months later it was time to finish preparing it for a trip out of town, so I started by downloading the free PC Decrapifier <<http://www.PCdecrapifier.com>> to remove the trial products on the laptop. There were five columns of icons for all kinds of stuff that I would mostly not want. Decrapifier puts itself into a temporary folder and then searches your machine for all the items it has on it. I selected everything I wanted taken off and it proceeded to remove all except the MS Office trial; and when it finished, only two columns of icons remained. I found a bargain to add more memory, giving me noticeably better speed loading, and later upgraded to Vista Home Premium since I was repeatedly told that Vista Home Basic doesn't offer much.

On my trip north, I visited my friend Bob Clyne who I had previously spoken with on the phone and mentioned upgrading the laptop. I had not upgraded Vista yet when I got there and asked him to help install the Vista Home Premium upgrade. What followed sure didn't seem like routine for such an install. On the package, it stated that the upgrade included SP1 for Vista. After starting the upgrade installation, it suddenly stopped with a message stating that before the package could be installed over Vista Home Basic we would have to install Vista SP1. I finally left the machine with him to finish the job and he said it took several hours to get it done.

He said that even after installing all the updates from Microsoft Update and several updates from the Toshiba site, Microsoft Update would not make Vista SP1 available as an update. He finally called Toshiba who told him he should download the entire Service Pack from Microsoft and install it manually. After installing SP1 and the Vista Home Premium upgrade, there were about 18 additional updates showing in Microsoft Update. After installing them as a batch, the machine would not reboot. He repaired that using the Repair option from the Vista Home Premium Update disc. He then installed the updates one at a time, which took ages because several of the updates required a reboot after installation, but that did work better. We have no idea why Microsoft Update would not offer Vista SP1 and the Toshiba tech support person would not address the problem other than to refer us to Microsoft.

Originally, I wanted to reformat the HD and install XP Professional, but was warned that might be a major problem because the XP drivers might not be available for the new machine. I was told to check for and download the XP drivers before attempting to install Windows XP.

I had already installed AOL (my backup ISP) software, some of which Bob felt was rather obtrusive, but had rejected installing their free antivirus and antispyware software. Bob suspects that the AOL software might have been part of the problem with the updates after the Vista Home Premium upgrade, but that was merely conjecture. Maybe I should have let him remove the AOL software to find out, but I didn't know the correct settings to use for AOL without using all their software.

#### \*Help For People Who Can't Attend Meetings

I've previously mentioned Hewie Poplock and Mike Ungerman at Central Florida Computer Society trying different online meeting software to help members attend meetings, even when a member can't do it physically. At the Tech SIG this week, Hewie



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*Continued on page 20*

used <<http://www.Ustream.tv>> to capture the video and sound during the meeting and put it in a file to post on the Internet. Attendees can also join the meeting from home and watch the proceedings, even typing in a question for the moderator to bring up at the meeting. This experiment still needs refinement, such as a dedicated camera operator and more microphones, but see it for yourself at: (Part 1) <<http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/664934>> and (Part 2) <<http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/665065>>.

The reason for two parts is that Denny's Wi-Fi connection dropped us in the middle of the meeting. Hopefully everyone that speaks will be included in the future. If you look closely, it could also be called the Pig SIG/Tech SIG since the SIG meets at a Denny's and they enjoy food as well <G>. Hewie and Mike will be demonstrating different methods at the Florida Association of Computer Users Groups (FACUG) one-day fall conference Oct. 25, 2008 in Clearwater, FL. A couple folks had minor complaints about the recordings, but I was very impressed. Contact Hewie at <[Hewie@hewie.net](mailto:Hewie@hewie.net)> if you want more info.

### **\*iTURNS, A Freebie That Could Be A Big Help**

DVDneXtCOPY Inc. announces DVDneXtCOPY iTURNS, a tool to make hardware linked music FREE. This brand new one-step tool breaks no laws because it uses procedures not restricted by DRM (Digital Rights Management). DVDneXtCOPY iTURNS is available in a completely free version. (DealsGuy Note: The free version has limitations compared to the Pro Version) iTURNS software is a virtual program that emulates a CD recorder in your computer system. A built in encoder can transcode any burn job to a portable MP3 music file. Just burn your iTunes music and create a freely portable music library. iTURNS will do automatic ID3 tagging on the fly, which allows information such as the title, artist, album, track number, or other information about the file to be stored in the file itself. Just create your portable library and import it to any new computer system, mobile audio device or music player.

Create your own "free library" and move it anywhere without the message "you are not allowed to play this audio file on this system." Read more information about the new DVDneXtCOPY iTURNS at <<http://www.dvdnextcopyiturns.com>>.

### **\*Clean Off Your Discarded Drive With Confidence**

Are you replacing your old HD, but want to make sure your data is completely removed? Consider Active@ KillDisk hard drive eraser <<http://www.killdisk.com>>. I've seen this in a few UG newsletters so it must be pretty reliable. It is powerful software that will destroy all data on your hard drives, and even your floppy drives, completely. They claim this product will make restoration of your deleted data next to impossible. It can also erase a partition, according to their Web site, although I didn't use the product myself. It's free, but there are also pay versions. In fact, the pay version actually conforms to the US Department of Defense cleaning and sanitizing standard DoD 5220.22-M. Visit their Web site for better information.

Here's another popular product to wipe your drive that many people like. Check <[http://www.heidi.ie/node/6#Eraser\\_Features](http://www.heidi.ie/node/6#Eraser_Features)>. This freebie offers multiple types of drive wiping and one that also uses the US Department of Defense cleaning and sanitizing standard DoD 5220.22-M. Like any product, satisfactory results are all in the eye of the beholder.

### **\*Excuse Me, But What Time Is It?**

How good is your PC's clock keeping time? Windows XP and Vista have a built-in code for setting your clock via the Internet, but that only happens once a week. If you have broadband Internet service, you could change the frequency that your Windows OS will update the clock. Check out <<http://www.thinkman.com/dimension4/index.html>> where you can get Dimension 4 at no cost and it will set your computer's time from servers on the Internet. There are lots of options including how often to update the time. Check out their Web site for further information on how it works and for the free download.

Another way to do this is to try installing the Internet Time Sync Utility from [[http://www.dougknox.com/xp/utills/xp\\_inet\\_time.htm](http://www.dougknox.com/xp/utills/xp_inet_time.htm)] that will also reset the computer's time at whatever interval you wish. Again, it is free and their Web site has further information and the free download.

As with the other items, I have not tried this product.

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## **STUDY GROUPS**

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



## Computer Buffet

With Dr. Herb Goldstein



# MediaMonkey

Not happy with Windows Media Player or your current media player, or are you just looking for an alternative? Then give the free MediaMonkey a try. It's an excellent tool for playing media, organizing your media library, and ripping and burning music. It'll play pretty much every music file that's out there, will synchronize with your iPod and MP3 player, and includes a tag editor. It will also automatically find album art for the file you're currently playing as well. MediaMonkey organizes your music in multiple ways, including by artist, title, album, genre, year, rating and so on. Unlike Windows Media Player, it loads fast. Fans of Internet radio will like this program as well; it automatically connects you to the Shoutcast and Icecast online radio directories, and plays any stations you want <[www.mediamonkey.com/](http://www.mediamonkey.com/)>

*Please also note: Most of the software mentioned here is freeware. It is gathered through researching usually reliable sources. I do not personally try most references, time being the obvious factor.*

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](mailto:reviewseditor@spcug.org)>

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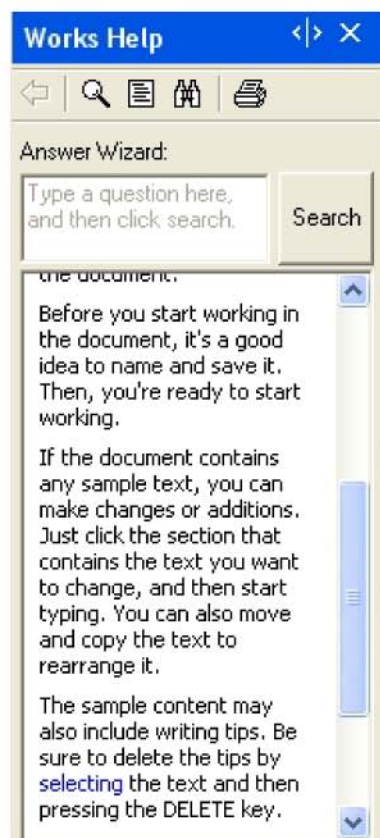
## Ron Ingraham, Space Coast PC User Group

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

Last month we finished a discussion of the Calendar. If you'll refer to page 24 in the February issue the left column contains the list of Household Management tasks. If at all possible, I'd recommend that you bring the program up on your computer, to enable you to follow these discussions and perform the various tasks as you read about them.

Following Calendar you'll see Caregiver instructions. These can be instructions for something as simple as directions to a house sitter for care of houseplants, a baby sitter for the obvious, a pet sitter for special needs of a pet, or a major task such as caring for an infirm person. Basically all it entails is selecting from a wizard which offers templates for the various types mentioned above. Each of the templates has an outline of suggested information to be included, as well as a space for additional information.

As with all of the wizards there is a Help pane on the right side. In this case the default is Create a document



with the Word Processor Wizard. Take a look at the window on the left, noting the references to making changes to the document on which you're working. If you're following on the computer, note the Related Topics at the bottom of the window. These are available in most of the wizards and contain a wealth of information relative to the job at hand.

I really want to stress the value of the use of these wizards and the various Help offerings. If you can read, these will guide

even the newest user in the use of the program. It has always been my contention that if you can read, you can do anything you set your mind to.

Next on the task list is Chores and Errands Lists. We all have chores and errands of various kinds to perform. We may or may not take the time to make lists appropriate to these tasks. I won't print the opening window, but it shows a variety of lists from which to choose. For instance, Boat Maintenance, Child's Job Chart, Daily Chore Schedule, Daily Household Chores, Emergency Preparation, Housecleaning Chore List, Weekly Errands, and a Weekly Planner.

Once again, when you select a list, an appropriate Works function opens, with the attendant Help pane. I selected Emergency Preparations (2006 Hurricane season will be upon us before you know it!). In this case the list is in the form of a spreadsheet. The

### Create a Spreadsheet with the Spreadsheet Wizard

The Spreadsheet Wizard has created a spreadsheet with the choices you made.

You can now perform the same tasks that you would in any spreadsheet. You can type text or numbers to create a list, use the information to create a chart, and perform calculations.

Before you start working, it's a good idea to name and save the spreadsheet. Then, you're ready to start working.

If the spreadsheet contains any sample text or numbers, you can make changes or additions. Just click the cell that contains the information you want to change, and then start typing.

accompanying Help window is seen at the left. Others in this area may use a Calendar format rather than a spreadsheet. Whichever list you select, there will be pertinent instructions to accompany each one. Working on down the task lists, you'll see

Home Improvement Worksheets, and one I believe could be most useful, a Home Inventory Worksheet. If you haven't done something in this area, you really should consider it. It can be invaluable when dealing with your insurance company regarding a loss.

This Wizard offers a basic inventory document in the form of a database. There is a complete listing for the description of each item, to include Category, Location, manufacturer, Model, serial number, purchased

*Continued on page 23*



from, and so on. Armed with this information, placing a loss claim should be a snap. In general, the Database

### Create a Database with the Database Wizard

The Database Wizard has created a database with the choices you made.

You can perform the same tasks that you would in any database. You can type information in **records**, see the information in different views, add and modify **fields**, perform calculations, and print reports.

Before you start working in the database, it's a good idea to name and save the document. Then, you're ready to start working.

If the database contains any sample text, you can make changes or additions. Just click the field that contains the text you want to change, and then start typing.

format provides an excellent guide for collecting the desired information and storing it in a useful form. As you can see from the accompanying wizard at the left, the database is not set in concrete and may be modified to fit your specific needs.

The Task Lists include a number of areas such as Home Lists, Home loan finder on the Internet, and Homes for sale on the Web, which I won't go into here. If they interest you, you can access them directly from the Task List.

Another interesting and potentially very useful section is Important Household Documents. Once again you're offered a menu of various types of records, from Contacts, to Credit Card Log, Family Genealogy, Food and Drink Planner, Insurance Policy Log, Long Distance Call Log, Party Budget, Party Planner, Potluck Food List, Spouse Family History, Thank You Card List, and Wedding Organizer Pages. They certainly seem intent on getting you super organized! Again, each of these items comes in the appropriate format, be it Calendar, Spreadsheet, Word Document or Database. A couple of other interesting



#### Instruction sheets

Use these templates to create simple reminders about how to use household items like the phone or the remote.

 [Start this task](#)



#### Journals

Capture your personal reflections and experiences on a variety of topics with these helpful and attractive journal pages.

 [Start this task](#)

items extracted from the lists appear above. Both of these could be very helpful if they fit your needs.

Moving on down the lists, a very useful one is measurement conversions. How often have you been presented a measurement of some sort in a totally unfamiliar form? Here you are given the option for a variety of measurements for conversion; Area, circular, Linear, Liquid and Dry Measure, Metric, Nautical, Temperature and Troy weight.

Selecting Liquid and Dry Measure Conversion opens a spreadsheet in which you enter a measurement in a field offered in a selection measurements and the equivalents are provided in a separate list.

#### Type a measurement

in one of these fields:

<input type="text" value="32"/>	Fluid ounces
<input type="text"/>	Pints
<input type="text"/>	Quarts
<input type="text"/>	Gallons
<input type="text"/>	Gills
<input type="text"/>	Cubic inches
<input type="text"/>	Liters

Equivalents:

<input type="text" value="32.00"/>
<input type="text" value="2.00"/>
<input type="text" value="1.00"/>
<input type="text" value="0.25"/>
<input type="text" value="8.00"/>
<input type="text" value="57.76"/>
<input type="text" value="0.95"/>

#### Type a measurement

in one of these fields:

<input type="text"/>	Pints
<input type="text"/>	Quarts
<input type="text"/>	Pecks
<input type="text" value="1"/>	Bushels
<input type="text"/>	Cubic inches
<input type="text"/>	Liters

Equivalents:

<input type="text" value="64.0"/>
<input type="text" value="32.0"/>
<input type="text" value="4.0"/>
<input type="text" value="1.0"/>
<input type="text" value="2150.4"/>
<input type="text" value="35.2"/>

The Tasks List goes on to include a few more to include Medical Records, Menus, Move into a New Home, Moving Lists, Organize the Household, and a Recipe Book. I haven't looked at all of these, but am quite confident that Works treats them all in a manner similar to those that we've looked at here. I feel any further space devoted to this area would be redundant and non-productive. By this time you should be able to make your own way thru whichever tasks you wish to include.

In this vein, I wonder how useful you are finding these articles? Are they helping you to make use of this suite of programs? Do you find them too basic, or perhaps redundant in returning to the trough too often.

I would appreciate your comments in order to plan how to continue this series,





## Earth Probe

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

One stormy night, a long, long time ago, at the witching hour, I was reading "scifi" being a bibliophile at one of my favorite haunts that seemed to be a kind of nocturnal magnet. At the long table next to me, a strange conversation was going on that I could not cipher. I glanced out of the corner of my eye to see if they might be aliens but there were no antennas or a third eye on their foreheads. However, they could be humanoids! I then confessed to the strange group I had been listening and understood nothing that they were talking about and was curious about their group. (I did not ask them whether they were aliens wanting to be polite.)

They explained they were "BBSers" who were humans of a strange tribe called "Geeks" who seemed to enjoy the fact that I could not understand their conversation with a strange kind of hilarity. Well I was relieved they were not aliens but simply strange human "Geeks" and perhaps disappointed at the same time but still curious. I had been warned many times in my life that curiosity killed the cat, but I always reminded those skeptics that cats have nine lives!

The female Geek explained that they were all "SysOps" (System Operators) running local Bulletin Board Systems ("BBSes") in our area. While they were friendly to me, I sensed some social discomfort since they apparently preferred to interact with machines (computers) more than people unless of course they were members of their "Geek" tribe or the same breed of cat whichever you prefer. I further categorized them in my mind as "machine people."

Further, the female "Geek" said that I was a natural for computers since I was a reader. I then became paranoid thinking that she might be a humanoid using some kind of "Vulcan mind link" to know that I was a bibliophile. She further explained that she had seen me reading several times previously at our haunt during their various "Geek" tribal meetings. She then seemed to be determined to take me on as a "Geek"

transformation project especially when I explained that I was not technical and knew then nothing about computers and was from a liberal arts background. I soon learned that "Geeks" love challenges!

Let the learning begin! The Bulletin Board System (BBS) was created from software that allowed remote users to connect via an analog phone line run by a "SysOP" to perform various social and recreational tasks and communicate with others on the system. Remote users could perform functions like downloading software ("Shareware" was very popular.) and data, uploading data, listening to music, playing games, reading news, and exchanging messages with other users.

From the early 1980s to the mid 1990s, "BBSes" were run as a hobby free of charge by the "SysOps" while other BBSes charged their users a subscription fee for access. Internet Service Providers often had BBSes as part of their service to subscribers. The BBS was a local phenomenon and in many ways was a precursor to the World Wide Web and the Internet.

To avoid costly long distance charges, many "BBSers" were from the same area and often would meet socially but also were a bit reluctant to leave their computers for very long, lest they experience acute machine withdrawal.

The BBS survives today as a nostalgic hobby and via telnet offers free email accounts, web interfaces, ftp file downloads, irc chat, and all the protocols on the Internet. The website [www.textfiles.com](http://www.textfiles.com) has a collection of historical data involving the history of the BBS.

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# Curing Lens Distortion

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

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

**F**irst, the good news. The camera which quit working on our vacation last month was still in warranty (just barely) and Sony repaired it at no cost and it has been returned to me in working order. I was out the postage to send it to Sony, but I didn't mind that since I now have a working camera back.

On to more about the replacement camera I bought to use during the rest of our vacation. Many of you will remember the recent past when serious photographers tested their film camera lenses for flaws. There were all kinds of tests for "vignetting", "distortion", etc. The photo magazines were full of articles on the subject along with suggestions for what to do if bad problems were encountered. I shudder to think of what those solutions involved using darkroom techniques. But now we have: (drumroll) "Digital Cameras".

Last month I talked about buying a replacement digital camera for the one which quit working suddenly while we were on vacation. The original camera was a mid-range priced camera, not cheap but also not out of the ballpark. It took great pictures and had a lot of good features. The second camera was too expensive for what it is, but again, not unaffordable as long as I didn't buy anything else while on vacation. I had a similar one at home which I have used on occasion and should have had with me as a backup. Lesson learned.

So why am I rehashing old news? The explanation is that SONY, in my estimation, really goofed with the Cybershot DSC-S600. While still touting their line of Carl Zeiss, Vario-Tessar lenses, the lens itself had a terrible barrel\* type distortion. I discovered this when I downloaded my pictures at home and found pictures I had taken of a doorway looking like something seen in a funhouse mirror. My immediate reaction was that SONY had accidentally put a defective lens in the camera. I now have a replacement DSC-S600 instrument, and it has the exact same distortion as the first one. I feel my money has been poorly spent, but that might be another story for later.

What to do with the pictures. Ah, that was a challenge. The doorway pictures were obvious, so it was back to finding an imaging program which could easily make the necessary corrections. JASC PaintShop Pro9 turned out to be quite adequate for the repairs. Below you will see the original picture and the one using the effect tools in PSP9 and the final cropped image. As usual, there was some trial and error to get the right combination of effects, but eventually I got something that resembled the actual door.

1. After starting JASC PSP9 and using the browser, open the picture to be adjusted. The first step for my picture was to rotate the it 90° as I had originally turned the camera to take a vertical view of the doorway. Once this was done the following steps are as follows:
2. Click "Effects" on the menu bar, then click "distortion effects / lens distortion". This will open the dialog box where you enter values to change the picture.
3. Since my picture demonstrated a "Barrel"\* type distortion, I needed to use the option that would reverse this phenomenon.

Under "Settings", I chose "pincushion" from the drop down menu (accessed by the small downward arrow at the right edge of the "Distortion type" choice line) for the effect I wanted to create. After trial and error for this particular picture, I chose the values under "Center offset" of: Vertical 0, Horizontal 25 and in the "Strength" box I input a value of 15. I chose "Color" for the "Edge mode".



4. When the program made the calculations and came up with the altered picture, I then had to crop out the black spaces created by the pincushion effect. Obviously you will lose some of your picture when cropped, so if there is any element you want to keep, you might choose to live with the black pinched edges. The pictures below will show the results of these actions.

\*Digital Photography Review website at: [dpreview.com/learn/?/key=barrel+distortion](http://dpreview.com/learn/?/key=barrel+distortion)

"Barrel Distortion By Vincent Bockaert" "Barrel distortion is a lens effect which causes images to be spherised or "inflated". Barrel distortion is associated with wide angle lenses and typically occurs at the wide end of a zoom lens. The use of converters often amplifies the effect. It is most visible in images with perfectly straight lines, especially when they are close to the edge of the image frame. See also the opposite effect, pincushion distortion."



## Access: Performing a find function

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

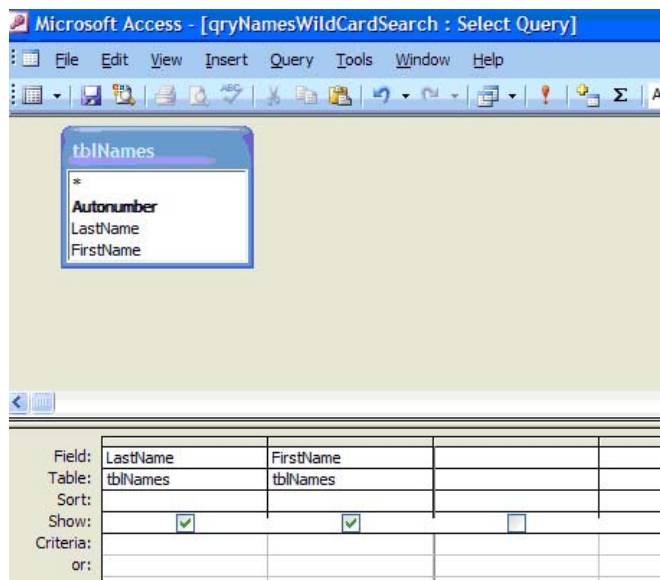
James is a member of the CCOKC and an expert in Access and Excel.

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.

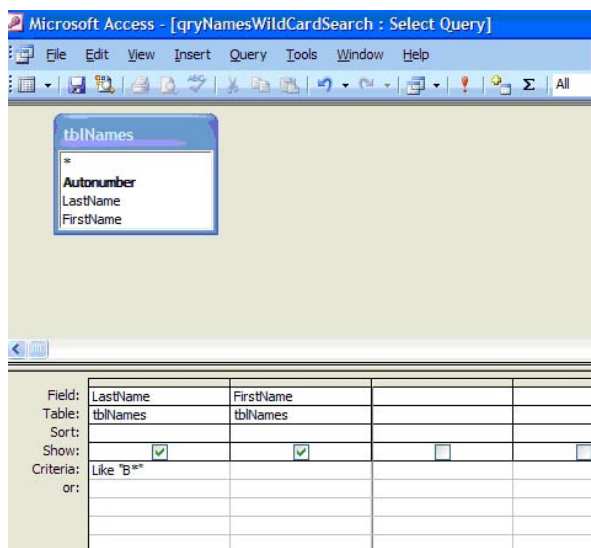


All we have done here is drag the Lastname and FirstName field to the grid. If we run this we will get a list of the last names and first names.

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.



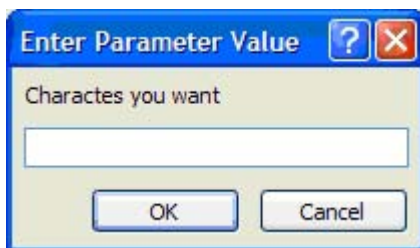
Run the data sheet view and we get a list of the Last names that begin with b.

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



# Home-brewed ergonomics

## 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/>>

**S**ore-bought ergonomic devices may not always provide the most comfortable solution for you. Before you go out and spend big bucks on any ergonomic device, try making it first and test it out to see if it is right for you.

**Back rest:** Try a small pillow, rolled up towel, or rice or bird seed filled bag. Make sure it is centered in the small of your low back.

**Keyboard or mouse Wrist rest:** Try a rolled up hand towel, rolled bubble {short description of image}wrap wrapped with masking tape, or bag filled with rice.

**Cold press:** Keep a few plastic bags of peas or corn in the freezer at work and at home to use as ice packs on whatever hurts. Keep re-freezing them.

**Back-foot tension reliever:** Try placing a tennis or racquet ball between your back and the wall. Lean against the wall to apply pressure to sore spots. Hold for thirty seconds and release. You can also use this technique with a golf ball on the bottom of your feet. It feels wonderful.

**Foot rest:** Try Thick books such as telephone books piled up or a low box about the height of a shoe box, so you'll know the exact height you need. Make sure your knees are not boosted above your hips. There should be a very gradual descending slope between your hips and knees.

**Travel pillow:** Try a bag filled with rice or bird seed.

**Monitor stand:** Boost the height of your computer monitor with a small box {short description of image} or boards stacked on top of one another.

You may also want to consider reasonably priced ergonomic devices that you can't easily make yourself. For example:

A lumbar support can be purchased at a relatively low cost.

An ergonomic mouse is typically larger and easier to hold. There are also trackball mice and touch pads.

A document holder holds your paper at a comfortable eye level next to your computer. Some types attach to the side of your monitor; others are free-standing.

Consider buying a headset so you don't have to cradle the receiver in your neck and cause vertebral misalignment.

Ergonomic devices can get pricey. A little ingenuity and creativity can go a long way.

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# Stress injuries cost real dollars

by John R. Chait D.C., drchait@comcast.net

A national study shows a computer work force of 18 million Americans at significant risk from repetitive stress injuries, including carpal tunnel syndrome and lower back injuries. Stress injuries cost real dollars; the personal pain is real and lost productivity is astounding.

Symptoms of carpal tunnel syndrome include numbness, burning, tingling and a prickly pin-like sensation over the palm surface of the hand, and into the thumb, forefinger, middle finger and half of the ring finger. Some individuals notice a shooting pain, which goes from the wrist up the arm, or down into the hand and fingers. With continued median nerve compression, an individual may begin to experience muscle weakness, making it difficult to open jars and hold objects with the affected hand. Eventually, the muscles of the hand served by the median nerve may begin to grow noticeably smaller (atrophy), especially the fleshy part of the thumb. {short description of image} Untreated, carpal tunnel syndrome may eventually result in permanent weakness, loss of sensation, or even paralysis of the thumb and fingers of the affected hand.

Poor CPU setup heads the list of safety problems discovered. 51 percent place keyboards too high-contributing to neck, shoulder and wrist strain which can as lead carpal tunnel syndrome causes.

The monitor is placed too low for 65 percent of workers, contributing to neck and shoulder stress, and 47.8 percent cradle the phone between the head and shoulder during phone calls instead of using a headset.

Extremely bright, high-glare offices are another recurrent finding. 53 percent {short description of image} experience monitor glare from office lights, sunlight or window glare.

More than half (51.2 percent) of respondents report they support the upper body by resting on their wrists when keyboarding, which can be especially unsafe over time.

A real problem is that 59.8 percent suffer from wrist discomfort during computer work. However, the good news is that this is down slightly from the 62.6 percent reported in the 1998 study.

The cost to business from carpal tunnel syndrome absenteeism frequently exceeds \$50,000 per employee when wrist surgery is required. The surgery is ineffective in many of the cases.

There are hidden costs-for example, when a valuable employee must be moved to a less keyboard-intensive job and a new employee found and trained to replace him. The key issue is that much of the costs absolutely could be avoided with simple changes in equipment placement and employee involvement in ergonomics. This is a case of an ounce of prevention being equal to a pound of cure.





## Outlook & Xobni, a Good Match

### 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>

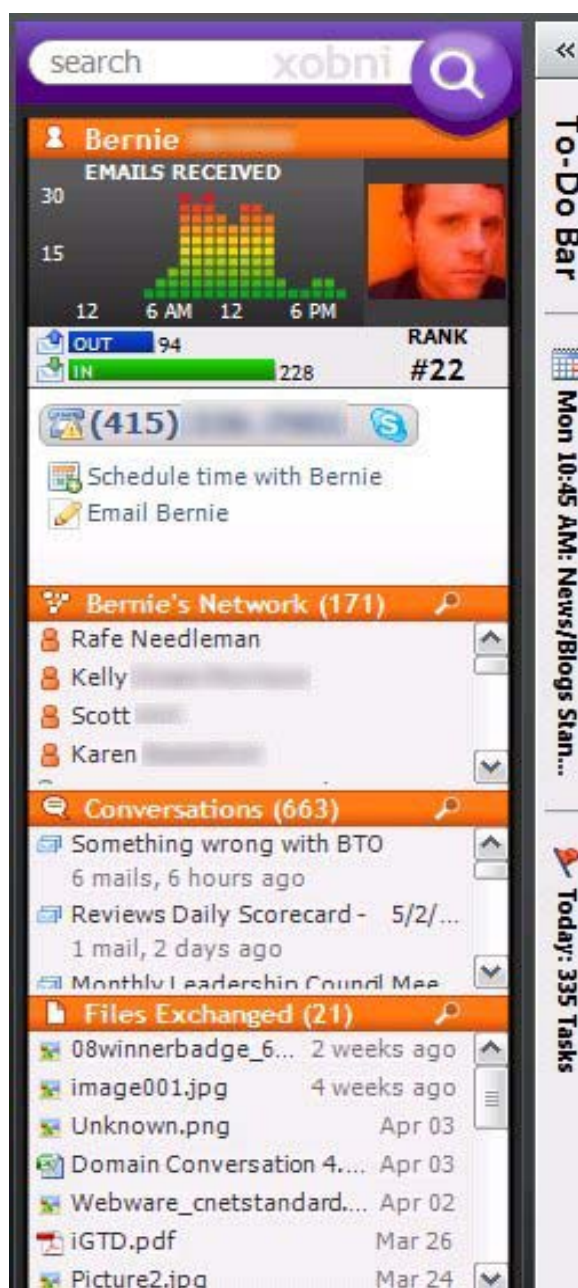
**X**obni is Inbox spelled backwards, but there is nothing backward about this free plug-in module from [www.xobni.com](http://www.xobni.com). The more email you receive, the more you will like and appreciate Xobni. The program works as a data mining machine for your stored emails. Without Xobni, the best you can do with Outlook is to organize your email by folders, messages, and dates. With Xobni, you can organize your email by people, email histories, and personal, social or business relationships.

You need Outlook 2003 or 2007 to use Xobni. Either XP or Vista will work fine with the program. The folks at Xobni are also working on versions for other email programs such as Gmail and Yahoo Mail. How long this will take is unknown. Downloading and installation is quick, easy, and seamless. The program requires some time to synchronize itself with outlook. The amount of time will be determined by the size of the email data base you have accumulated. I had slightly over two thousand emails in eighteen different folders, and that took about ten minutes.

If you keep a lot of information on your contacts, it's difficult to extract that information in a way that can be useful with Outlook. All that changes once Xobni is installed. Changes begin with an attractive panel that sits on the right side of your Outlook screen and doesn't infringe or interfere with any of Outlook's standard functions. The panel interface slides open when you need it, and discretely closes when you don't.

You get two options within this panel. The first brings up a blank email which is nice. For you organizational types, the second option lets you send meeting requests. A real time saver is the simultaneous display of open time slots that Xobni drags from your Outlook calendar.

Your contact profiles display at the top of the Xobni panel with pictures if one is in the profile. That's followed by the phone number and a thread of any conversations you've had along with



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files you've exchanged. Specific topics are quickly found with Xobni's search tool, and there is a handy slider that exposes or hides lines of email text. While it appears you could be getting bogged down in details, the material is organized so that navigating through the information is an easy, pleasant journey filled with discovery.

Skype's VoIP service integrates with PC, Xobni quite well. A mouse click on a phone number within a Xobni profile generates a SkypeOut call.

You can use Xobni for simple searches within Outlook, and Xobni searching is lightning fast in comparison. That's probably because it's integrated within Outlook rather than running on top of it like most third party applications. Xobni gives you more than express searching. It organizes social information logically with additional functions that Outlook simply can't match. How often have you given up searching with Outlook because the program lacks even the simplest logic for intelligent searching?

Instead of treating mail conversations, contacts and calendars as separate entities, Xobni weaves them together in a responsive, intuitive interface. It's hard to go wrong with this tool. Go to [www.Xobni.com](http://www.Xobni.com) and get started.

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# YouTube for Posterity

*By Mike Moore, Editor, Bowling Green Computer Users Group, Kentucky,  
www.bgamug.org, ml.moore@insightbb.com*

The video sharing websites, such as Google Video and YouTube, are either great resources or the world's biggest time-wasters, depending on your viewpoint. YouTube for example, allows users to view and share video clips with ease, and anyone can upload a video clip on this site without cost, making it a kind of "America's Funniest Videos" of the internet.

In an effort to keep users coming back to their site (and thus generating more ad revenue), YouTube encodes its video files in the Macromedia Flash format (SWF), with Flash video (FLV) data embedded within, which also prevents viewers from downloading files and making digital copies. Instead, the video files are streamed directly to the embedded player in your browser (Internet Explorer or FireFox). There is no obvious download link for users to save the video locally for offline viewing or for transferring to a portable media player. You might think of this in terms of your desktop: you get the link, but not the file.

One of the things I like about the internet is it's a little bit like a dream that you can control. Or, if you like, some kind of software heaven. If you can just imagine a solution for some perceived problem, often times you can look out there, and a solution will have already been created, like magic. In reality, this arises from the very large number of creative folks that use the internet and come across the same difficulties that you and I do, and are actually able to whip up a solution. More often than not, they don't want any money in exchange for the solution, they just want the problem to be fixed.

There are, in fact, multiple solutions for this problem—that YouTube offers no handy download link and no apparent way to put its videos on your iPod or computer for later enjoyment. I will present only one, but I also want to tell you how I found it, because that process is one that will help you with locating future solutions like this.

You can find YouTube video recorders at download.com and a host of other download sites, but I have a problem with programs found on these sites. I look for well behaved programs that only minimally solve the problem and do not try to do too much. And the distinction between well-behaved programs and ad-ware and spy-ware is getting to be very small indeed. The word "free" on these sites, in reference to someone's program, usually means anything but free.

It is difficult to find a site that presents only open-source, well-meaning programs that respect my desktop and my time. Such programs are like finely crafted European or Japanese tools. They are understated and unassuming, and behave exactly as expected and are documented well. The closest I have ever come to a site that presents such tools for download is <http://sourceforge.net>.

Sourceforge.net is not perfect. One of the pervasive problems on the site is that you won't always know if a particular program is for Windows, Linux, Unix, Mac or some other more exotic computer. Another problem is sometimes program-

The screenshot shows a search results page on SourceForge for the query "youtube recording". The results are sorted by Relevance. The top results are:

Name	Relevance	Activity	Rank	Registered	Latest File	Downloads
<b>MPlayer Youtube Video Streamer</b>	100.00%	02.05%	37,814	2007-03-12	2007-03-15	2,000
Want to watch Youtube video, but you don't have flash plugin? (ie: on windows pc's), so try this great project to watch Streaming Videos from Youtube! You don't need to download videos on your disk - you can stream directly the FLV videos from Youtube!						
<a href="#">Members (1)</a> Tools: Playback, Streaming						
<b>Lora Youtube Player</b>	85.30%	35,602	2003-05-20	1973-01-01	0	
Lora Youtube Player is a simple application to manage Youtube videos: playlists and play Youtube videos.						
<a href="#">Members (2)</a> Tools: Players						
<b>Ultimate Youtube Downloader</b>	85.05%	31,503	2003-05-17	1973-01-01	0	
Ultimate Youtube Downloader is a platform independent GUI application that downloads movies from Youtube. Planning: re-encoding flash video to other formats.						
<a href="#">Members (1)</a> Tools: Conversion						
<b>YouTube Downloader</b>	00.95%	982	2003-04-16	2003-05-17	35,253	
YouTube Downloader is a free portable utility that will help you find and download your favorite videos from youtube. The application is platform-independent and runs in Windows, Linux, and Mac OS.						
<a href="#">Members (1)</a> Tools: Video Capture						

*Continued on page 33*



mers jump right into the middle of their story when documenting the program and forget to tell us what the heck the program is supposed to do.

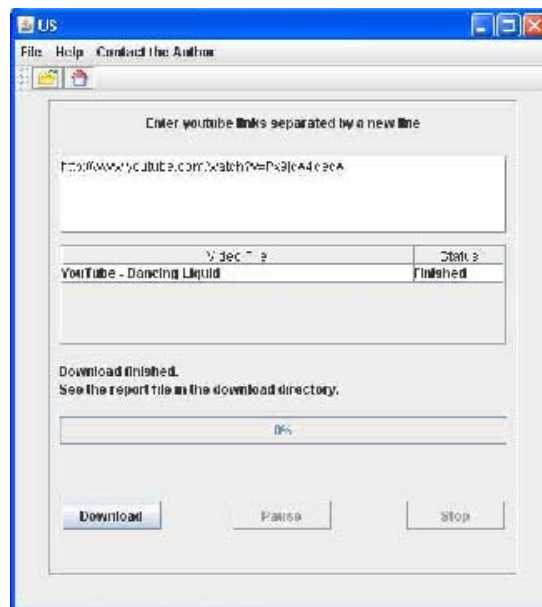
Anyway, I browsed to sourceforge.net and typed in two keywords: youtube recording ...and got 45 hits. Try that on Google and you be lucky to get less than 45,000!

Since SourceForge is about teams of programmers communicating towards a solution to a particular problem, we find far less junk on here than we do on one of the more popular download sites. But we also find projects that have only just started, and don't really have anything for us to download yet. To help me decide which of the 45 solutions to look at, I focus on the last column, which tells me the number of downloads and therefore the relative popularity of the program.

Please turn to page 7 for a screen capture of what the SourceForge search looked like.

Based on over 35,000 downloads, it looks like "Youtube Downloader" is a good choice. Note: SourceForge is not known for creative program titles either!

Note that the description of this program indicates the program is "platform independent," meaning that it does not matter whether you have a Mac or PC, this should run on both. Platform Independent usually means that the program runs inside of a for more information on how Java manages to do this. If you have the latest Internet Explorer or Firefox browser, you probably have Java. If not, it's easy to download it from Java.com if you have a fast internet connection.



The file comes down as ytd17.zip. After I unzip the file to a directory (a good choice would be My Videos), I notice there are two directories, one labeled YouTubeDownloader and one called simply, bonus. Without even being tempted by the "bonus" directory, I navigate into the other directory and find two more directories, "full" and "opensource," and I chose full. Inside there is a file called ytd.jar. It carries a little blue and orange coffee-cup logo which is another giveaway that this is a java program. I double click on this file and hope for the best. Windows asks me if I want to open it, and I click OK. It opens, but I am also directed to a web site automatically. I hope the programmer just wants me to know something about the program and is not wanting to sell me anything!

Here we see another benefit of Java programs—no installation needed. Just double click and it goes to work for you.

I opened my browser and went to YouTube.com, selected a video and then copied the URL (from the browser address window) using CTRL-C, put my mouse cursor in the space where it says "Enter youtube links separated by a new line" and hit CTRL-V to paste the URL in there. I guess you could type it in too, if you were very accurate. [In Europe, they refer to the ENTER key as a "new line." ]


I clicked on the download button and when the download was complete, the program rather cryptically referred me to the download directory, which turned out to be where I installed YouTube Downloader, My Videos. There was a file in there called YouTube-Dancing Liquid.flv, which was indeed my video, but there was a problem—the FLV file extension was not associated with any of my applications! No matter, when I double clicked the FLV file, Windows gave me a choice of what to open it with. I chose my trusty VideoLAN player (on your BGAMUG CD), and it worked just fine.

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# The New, The Best, and The Worst

by **Pim Borman**, Webmaster, SW Indiana PC Users Group, <http://swipcug.apcug.org>, [swipcug@gmail.com](mailto:swipcug@gmail.com)

Let me digress. I suspect that most of my readers, like myself, have reached that stage in life when our wisdom exceeds our wits. To make sense of our surroundings we must keep our glasses clean and a fresh battery in our hearing aid.

Recently my son, Mike, and I were watching a DVD from his vast collection (Batman Begins, in case you're wondering). Mike turns on the subtitles for me, so it wasn't until we took a break for some light refreshments that I noticed that my hearing aid battery had died. As I proceeded to insert a fresh battery, Mike marveled at the tiny disk that successfully powers a small in-ear hearing aid for several weeks. I told him that they are unlike watch batteries and that they are air-powered to the best of my recollection. Before the first use, they are activated by removing a small foil tab to admit air. Mike appeared to question my wisdom, if not my wits.

Just to be sure of the facts, back home I fired up Google and searched for "zinc air battery." That yielded 433,000 results, confirming that my recollection of the technology was correct. One of the results made me sit up and take notice:

## Zinc Air Batteries.

With the removal of a sealing tab, oxygen from the air is introduced into the cell. A zinc-air battery usually reaches full operating voltage within 5 ...

I often have trouble getting a new battery to work right away and have been scratching the electrodes with a pen knife to assure good electrical contact. The incomplete reference snippet teasingly suggested that the battery simply needed 5 somethings (minutes maybe?) to activate. Maybe the scratching had nothing to do with it? I tried to retrieve the full article, but the link was dead and the cache was empty. None of the other Google retrievals mentioned anything about activation time.

I recently read about a new search program, called Cuil (pronounced "cool"), meaning "wisdom" in Gaelic. Reportedly it improves on Google by scanning articles for organization of ideas, instead of number of links. It was mostly created by former Google employees and can be accessed at [www.cuil.com](http://www.cuil.com).

Early reviews of Cuil have been mixed, so I thought this was a good time to give it a try.

As a result of my query about "zinc air battery," Cuil produced exactly 8 results, including 5 virtually identical ones from a single vendor site, [www.batteriesplus.com/](http://www.batteriesplus.com/). Not very helpful. So much for Cuil, as it stands now.

The same query on Yahoo yielded 4,270,000 results, with the first page mostly from hearing aid battery sellers that probably paid to be listed first. The teasing reference found earlier with Google was listed by Yahoo at the bottom of the page, but it also ended in 5... (what?).

I went back to Google and narrowed the search to "zinc air battery activation." That yielded the mysterious reference right on top, adding that the activation time was 5 seconds.

*Continued on page 35*

## STUDY GROUPS

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Well, it takes longer than 5 seconds to insert the battery and check the hearing aid by holding it in the closed fist and listening for its feedback squeal.

With a magnifying glass I detected 3 tiny air holes under the tab in the positive top of the battery. Certainly, it would take some time for sufficient air to diffuse through those little holes to activate the battery. I ran a quick experiment, checking how fast the voltage builds up in the hearing aid battery after removing the seal tab, and found that it took about 1 1/2 minutes. With the battery under load in a hearing aid it may well take a little longer than that.

Next time my hearing aid needs a new battery I may only need to wait a few minutes for it to get up to speed.

Meanwhile I'll stick with Google for my searches until Cuil has added more wits to its wisdom.

### **Zinc-Air Batteries**

Zinc-Air batteries, as used in hearing aids, are great performers in comparison to other types of batteries. On an equal weight basis they carry 4-5 times as much charge as lead-acid, nickel-cadmium and nickel-hydrate batteries, and 30% more than lithium ion batteries. They maintain a constant power output over better than 85% of the time to full discharge. Because of inexpensive ingredients: zinc, aqueous caustic, carbon and some plastic membranes, encased in a metal container, they are inexpensive to manufacture. The batteries are non-toxic and pose no danger to the environment on disposal. They are not a fire hazard, like lithium batteries.

They have two major shortcomings: a limited life time when air is admitted, and they are not rechargeable.

Zinc-Air batteries are fuel cells that consume zinc. In comparison to the much-ballyhooed hydrogen fuel cells, zinc is inexpensive, easily transported and stored, non-hazardous, and the spent fuel, zinc oxide, is easily regenerated electrically from renewable sources.

Large-scale experiments have demonstrated that the batteries can power city buses for a full day's use, using recyclable zinc-electrolyte cartridges for fuel. The US Army is a large-scale user of Zinc-Air batteries in battlefield operations. They provide 4 to 6 times the run time of conventional batteries, and are used with portable equipment, in locations where reliable electrical power is not available.

### **Desktop Publishing With Scribus**

Now that the format of this newsletter is no longer restrained to eight Xeroxed pages for mailing, I will add some color and variety to the layout. That requires switching from the OpenOffice Writer word processor I have been using to a desktop publishing program, preferably inexpensive and easy to use.

I considered my old copy of MS PictureIt! Publisher, but that uses a proprietary file format not easily converted to pdf.

I found an offer of a free desktop publishing program online, PagesPlus, list price \$129.99, with a special download offer for only \$10. Inexpensive enough to be worth a try. I paid my dues, downloaded and installed the program. The interface was not very intuitive, so I started with chapter 1 of the tutorial. That pointed me in the right direction and I eagerly went on to chapter 2. Surprise! The rest of the tutorial required downloading or ordering a CD at a cost of \$99.99! I quickly lost interest.

I am much in support of OpenSource (free) programs, many of which are quite sophisticated, such as OpenOffice Writer and The Gimp. At one time I had looked at Scribus, an Open Source, full-featured desktop publishing program, available in versions for Linux, the MAC and Windows. At the time I was scared away by its extensive set of icons and cascading menus since I could not find a helpful manual.

I decided to give Scribus another try and went looking for online help. Happily I found an excellent tutorial at [http://wiki.scribus.net/index.php/Get\\_Started\\_with\\_Scribus](http://wiki.scribus.net/index.php/Get_Started_with_Scribus). I am still learning as I am writing this, but if the newsletter looks different when you read this you'll know that I learned at least the basics of Scribus and desktop publishing. As usual, it all seems so simple when you follow the tutorial, but when you are on your own the feared unintended consequences rear up. Fortunately there is a lot of helpful information to fall back on in the aforementioned reference, so I'm getting there.

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# Tech Issue

## Anti-Virus Virus

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

I hate writing about computer viruses. It always reminds me of how many unscrupulous, money-hungry people there are in the world. Yet, there are times when I feel that I must write about a certain virus because it is causing so much havoc for everyday computer users. Unfortunately, that time has come again. In the past two weeks, my company has removed a very bad group of viruses from six different computers. So I feel it is time to send out a warning.

There are many different variations of this virus and its cousins. They have many different names, including Antivirus 2008, Antivirus 2009, SpywareScanner 2008, and AntiVirXP08. Some experts are calling them viruses. Some are calling them malware. Symantec calls them misleading applications. McAfee lists them as a PUPs (potentially unwanted programs). Whatever you call them, they are terribly invasive.

By most accounts, these awful applications piggy-back on programs that are downloaded from the Internet. However, some experts are warning that your computer may become infected by simply visiting certain websites, especially if your operating system and/or antivirus software is not up-to-date.

The gist of the matter is that once your computer is infected, you will begin to see pop-up windows that give an exaggerated report of the number of threats that your computer is infected with. The window may say something like "Your computer has become infected with 231 computer viruses and spyware." These pop-ups try to scare you into purchasing their antivirus or antispyware software. If you purchase it, they send you a registry key, but it doesn't work because the program they sell you doesn't exist. These viruses are also being spread by malicious websites that sell fake antispyware software.

On top of that, there are many other viruses or pieces of malware that can piggyback on the main virus. So this malware can dramatically slow down or even stop your computer. The infections being caused by these viruses and malware programs are extremely harmful and can be very difficult to remove. They often require a cleanup by a professional or a complete reformatting of the hard drive and reinstallation of the software.

As an everyday computer user, you need to be very careful about the software that you download from the Internet. Make sure that it is from a source that you know to be reputable or a website that has been recommended by a trustworthy source. You can also use a program like the McAfee Site Advisor to help you assess the validity of the website before you download the program. McAfee's Site Advisor is a small program that is used by your Internet browser to indicate the safety of websites. It is a free download available at [www.siteadvisor.com](http://www.siteadvisor.com) and it is a valuable tool.

Also, as usual, be sure that you update your operating system and antivirus software regularly. Don't fall for any program that pops up on your computer trying to scare you into purchasing antivirus or antispyware software.

Yes, the bad guys are out there and they have a lot of computer savvy. So we all need to be smart about the software we download and the websites we visit.

# Broadsides

by **Ron Broadhurst**, a member of the Space Coast PC Users Group, Inc., Florida, [www.scpcug.com](http://www.scpcug.com), [ringram728@earthlink.net](mailto:ringram728@earthlink.net)

These ideas are compiled from years of accumulations from various magazines, books, on-line sites, and my own personal experience. I claim neither originality nor ownership to any of its contents. My only intent is to share the various “tips”, “tricks”, & “hints” in hopes of helping & maybe enhancing your computing experiences. They are all intended for anyone who uses a PC. It is for beginners as well as advanced users. Enjoy and use as you will.

## HOW TO GET RID OF “SEND ERROR REPORT TO MICROSOFT

- Right click My Computer on the desktop or in the Start menu.
- Click Properties.
- Click the Advanced tab.
- Click the Error Reporting button at the bottom.
- Click Disable error reporting. You can select the checkbox under it if you still want to be notified when errors occur.
- Click OK.

Note that you can disable error reporting for the operating system only, or for programs only, by unchecking the appropriate box under the Enable error reporting option.

You can also configure error reporting only for specific programs by clicking the Choose Programs button.

## ALPHABETIZE START MENU LISTINGS

When you install a new program on your system, it will often appear at the end of your Start menu. Reorganizing files alphabetically in the All Programs menu does not affect how they appear in your start menu. In order to alphabetize your start menu, you’ll want to click Start and select All Programs. On any file or folder right-click and then select Sort By Name. Now all of your Start menu programs are in alphabetical order. You can also sort subfolders in your Start menu the same way.

## MAKE YOUR QUICK LAUNCH ICONS BIGGER

- Unlock the Toolbar
- Right click the QL toolbar
- Select the View tab
- Select large icons

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## PIN AN APPLICATION TO START MENU

The Windows XP Start menu includes an area where two or more Microsoft applications, usually Internet Explorer and Outlook Express, are permanently positioned for easy access. You can add your favorite application to this same convenient location. Open Windows Explorer and locate the executable file for the application.

Right-click the file and select Pin To Start Menu. The application will now appear in the Start menu. To remove an application, locate it, right-click it, and select Unpin From Start Menu.

Alternatively, you can right-click the app in the Start menu and click Unpin From Start Menu.

## CHANGE SYSTEM SOUNDS

Through the Control Panel you can change your system's program event sounds. Click Start and Control Panel. If you're using Category View, click Sounds, Speech, and Audio Devices; and Sounds and Audio Devices. If you are using the Classic View, click Sounds and Audio Devices.

This loads the Sounds and Audio Devices Properties dialog box. Choose the Sounds tab. Select the sound you'd like to change in the Program events box, and then select a new sound from the Sounds drop-down menu. Or select a sound you've saved to the hard drive by using the Browse button to navigate to the sound file. Change as many sounds as you like. Save your changes as a sort of theme from the Sound Scheme drop-down menu above the Program events box. (Select the blank line and click Save As.) You can also choose to disable program event sounds. When you're finished click OK.

## SAVING E-MAIL MESSAGES

To save e-mail messages highlight the message you want to save, then click on File -Save As. Select where you want to save the message and then save it as a txt file.

### Computer Buffet With Dr. Herb Goldstein



## Burj Dubai Babel Babble

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.  
<reviewseditor@spcug.org>



# FastStone Capture

by **Ron Hirsch**, a Member and Contributing Editor of the Boca Raton Computer Society, Florida, [www.brcs.org](http://www.brcs.org), [Ronhirsch1439@comcast.net](mailto:Ronhirsch1439@comcast.net)

## THE BEST SCREEN CAPTURE PROGRAM I'VE EVER USED

Since it is possible that some of you may not know what a “screen capture program” is, I’ll start off by defining that program type.

### WHAT IS A SCREEN CAPTURE?

When you are working on your computer, the material you are working on/looking at, is displayed on your monitor screen, as a bunch of pixels. Often, it is nice to be able to “save” the info onscreen, or parts of it, for further uses.

Windows does offer a “Print Screen” capability, to send info to the clipboard or printer, but as with many of Windows utilities, it’s a pretty barren utility, with very few options. Fortunately, there are several 3rd party utilities out there, one of which I consider the best I’ve ever used.

### MY HISTORY WITH FASTSTONE

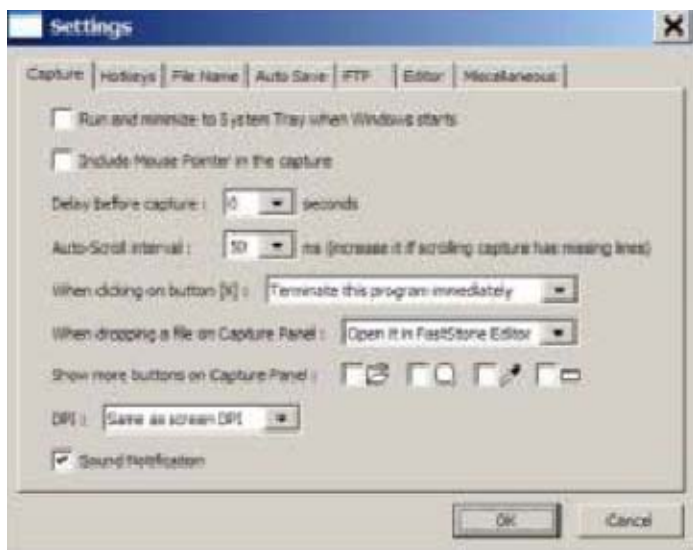
When I started using FastStone Capture in early 2007, it was still freeware, with a request to send in a “contribution”, if one liked it. I liked it so much, I sent off a contribution immediately, and received a very nice “Thank You”.

Shortly after my contribution, it became a “paid for” utility. For \$19.95, you get the program, and updates are free forever. There is a 30-day free trial period, during which you can use a fully functional version, to convince yourself that this is indeed a program that you want to keep using.

### FASTSTONE MAIN SITE

The link to the FastStone site is: <http://www.faststone.org/index.htm>.

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**Bruce Cramer**






*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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While here, check out the other excellent programs, all of which are free, or click on the Download button for FastStone Capture to download it.

### FASTSTONE CAPTURE PAGE

The link to page for this program is: <http://www.faststone.org/FSCaptureDetail.htm>

or just click on the “capture” program when you are on the first link noted above.

### WAYS TO USE SCREEN CAPTURES

Below, I've included some of the ways I use this screen capture program – which, by the way, I use just about every time I'm on my computer.

Remember, this program can capture a wide variety of areas on your screen - see the listing below in one of the screen captured images.

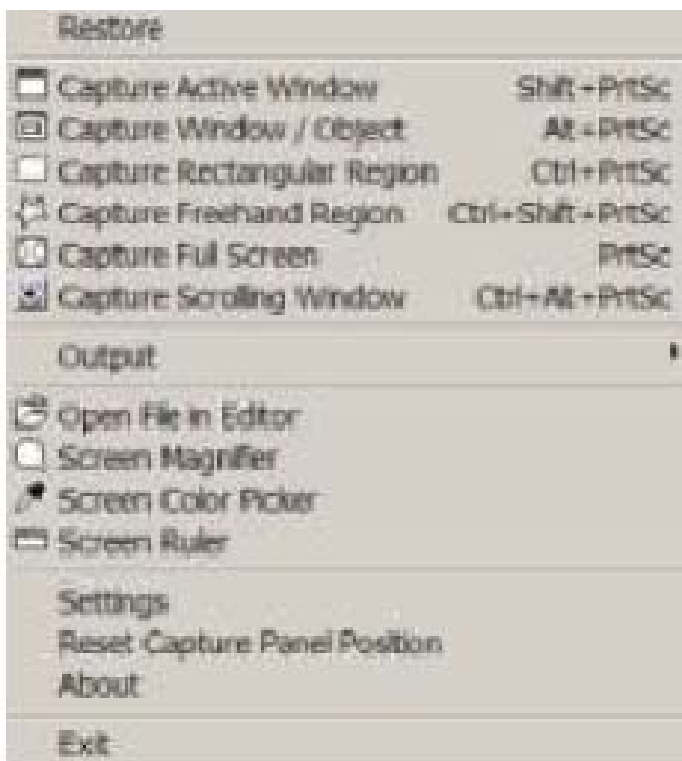
1. Have you ever installed something where a variety of screens and dialog boxes came up, and had to be filled in with info for various options, etc.? Sometime later on - weeks, months, or even years, you need to know what info and options et al that you filled in. No problem - just save each screen and store the saved screens in a named folder. Then all that info is available at a moments notice. All you have to remember is where you stored it. And you can also print out each of the screens after saving them, and file those pages in a loose leaf notebook.

2. You have some digital photos that you'd like to send to someone in an e-mail. If you just “insert” the pix into the e-mail message as many people do, they may come out to a very large size - much larger than you wanted, or expected. There are of course a variety of ways to “resize” image files, but there is one that is pure simplicity. What I do is to display each picture file in a program such as Windows “Picture and Fax Viewer”, or the free Fastone Viewer offered on their site. Then adjust the size of the displayed image on the screen, to what you'd like the size to be in your e-mail. Then capture the image. When inserted into your e-mail it will be exactly the size that you captured, since it captures pixels, and monitors all have very similar pixels/inch.

3. You're on a web page, and there is something interesting that you want to save, but you don't want to print out the whole page. Just select the desired area using Fastone Capture, and save/print that area only.

4. You're watching a video on your TV, and there was an image of someone/something you wanted to capture. Just pause the video, and select the area you want in Fastone Capture. Your image is captured. Remember, screen captures are just pixels. The capture process doesn't care what created those pixels.

Remember, this capture method saves things as an “image” (I use the jpg choice). It will not save text in editable form. If you want to do that, you must copy and paste into a text editor, such as Notepad. But, if you have a program such as “Omnipage” which is generally included when you buy a flatbed scanner, you can use it to convert a jpg image of text to an editable page of text.





# Google's New "Chrome Browser" (Beta)

## Not Yet Ready for Prime Time

WEBSITE: <http://www.google.com/chrome>

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

As I type this, the national media is playing up the fact that last month was Google's tenth anniversary. In that time it has become the predominate player in the search industry, with a market share of about two-thirds. By more than coincidence, Google also recently announced the public release of a beta version (pre-release) of its free new browser with the moniker "Chrome". It is no secret that Google is in a competitive war with some parts of the Microsoft dynasty, and Chrome is intended to be a competitor of Internet Explorer (IE). By design, Chrome may be a superior browser to IE, but in the few days that I have used it, I have to conclude that the current beta version is "...not yet ready for prime time." Several of the websites that I routinely visit, including two different webmail accounts, My Yahoo, my weather page, and some other sites would partly load and display, and then disappear with a black window with a white font and graphic displayed. The graphic is of a frowning web page, and the expression "Aw Snap! Something went wrong while displaying this webpage. To continue press Reload or go to another page." Reloading would not fix the problem on any page where the error appeared. This is why I believe that this beta version, while fast, attractive and feature rich, is not quite ready to take its place as a primary or secondary browser. For the record, every page that failed to load in Chrome, loaded flawlessly in IE and Firefox. Despite this nagging bug, Chrome is still a worthwhile free download, because it has several interesting features lacking on the competing browsers, especially its obvious target, Chrome's nemesis, Internet Explorer.

Chrome (beta) was fast and easy to download from [www.google.com/chrome](http://www.google.com/chrome), and effortlessly installed on my XP machine. During the install I was given the option to import bookmarks (favorites), cookies, and passwords from Internet Explorer, which I chose to do. While unstated by Google, it appears obvious that later versions of Chrome will be able to import data from Firefox. Chrome will also run on Vista, and versions for Mac and Linux are in the works.

After reading about Chrome and its features, I was excited about its potential. It is written in open source code using some of the best features of other open source products such as Firefox and Apple's WebKit. The code is tight and compact, and when it works, appears to load and display websites much faster than IE. Some of the technical websites have actually tested the load times of popular websites, and Chrome may be the fastest browser available. One feature about Chrome, which I was especially interested in, was its default display of thumbnails of the websites most frequently visited by the user. Clicking on the thumbnail would instantly open the website either in that window, or in another tab (window) at the user's discretion. The appearance of the Chrome browser is clean and uncluttered. Each Chrome tab or window is loaded in a virtual "sandbox" such that if one web page crashes, it will not take down the entire browser, but instead only close the affected tab.



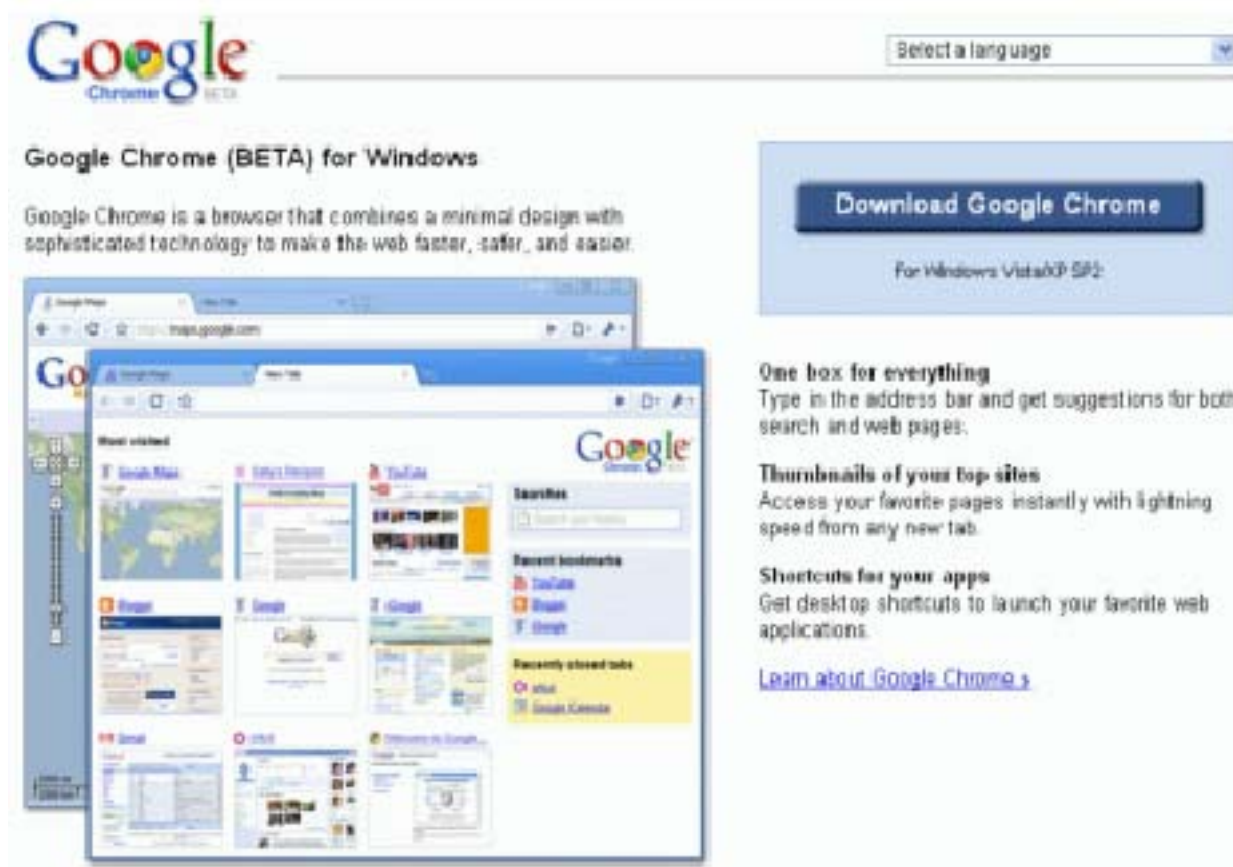
More and more applications are being integrated, many of which can be run directly from Chrome. Clicking on the control icon on the toolbar of Chrome gives several options, one of which is to create instant application shortcuts which can load applications into Chrome. An icon is created and placed on the desktop by Chrome, and clicking on that icon directly opens the application in a Chrome tab, even if Chrome is not loaded or is offline. This can give near instant access to such services as Gmail, Google Calendar, or most other applications.

Utilizing a concept "one box for everything" enables the traditional address bar of the browser to perform several simultaneous functions. As information is typed in the address bar, Google (by default) will identify previous websites visited as well as suggested search topics which become more detailed as more is typed. While Google is the factory default search setting, it can be easily changed to other major search engines, such as Yahoo. Multiple sites, such as EBay, Amazon, and others can also be selectively searched as determined by the user.

Chrome uses tabbed browsing long a staple of Firefox, but fairly new in IE. The tabs are dynamic, in that they can be dragged changing their order on the top of the screen, or into a window creating a new window. This gives the user total control over the appearance of the pages displayed for comparison or other purposes, and is an attractive feature. Another useful feature in Chrome that also previously appeared as a default in Firefox is a safe browsing function. Chrome dynamically checks websites entered in the address bar against a continuously updated database of malware and phishing (identity theft) websites, and displays the following in a red warning window in a large font, "WARNING: Visiting this site may harm your computer!".

Many users like to create lists of bookmarks and favorites, and Chrome makes book marking sites very fast and easy. There is a small star on the address bar, and clicking on the star creates the bookmark, with the option to modify the bookmark. Another common task that Chrome handles very well is downloading files. Rather than using a download manager, Chrome displays download progress in the bottom of the window. When completed, the downloaded file can be dragged to the desktop or elsewhere, or opened directly by clicking on the filename in Chrome.

Chrome has been a lot of fun to play with, despite my frustrations trying to open some web sites. Google will be releasing frequent updates, and hopefully the page loading bug will be quickly remedied. If you want to try the latest in browser technology, being fully cognizant that it is currently a beta version, then Chrome may be a worthy browser to download and install. Chrome coexists just fine with IE and Firefox, and does not interfere with them.



# Hacking 101

**By Marjie Tucker**, Editor, Macon Computer User Group, North Carolina, [www.mcug.org](http://www.mcug.org), [mcug@dnnet.net](mailto:mcug@dnnet.net)

**W**e are being bombarded with warnings about securing our data and the entry to our computers. Do you ever wonder what the big fuss is all about? How can a hacker possibly get into your data? And, what would he be looking for? Let's spend some time answering those questions.

## How Does A Hacker Get In To Your Computer?

When you give your computer access to the Internet, you need an IP (Internet Protocol) address. The IP addresses that we are currently using have 4 octets with periods between them. They will be something like 192.168.100.1. When you access the Internet, that address is read by the router, modem, whatever that links you to your Internet Service Provider. Then it is read by the routers that route all the data through the Internet. This address makes it possible for you to send data, such as e-mail or

requests for web pages. And, in turn, that same address is used to direct incoming e-mail and web pages into your computer. There are several websites and programs available that will translate these IP addresses into the name of the company that purchased them. In many cases, like our residential usages, the company name will be the ISP. For commercial use, it will be the name of the company that rents the block of IP addresses. Hackers use this IP address information to find their targets much like we use a physical address to find a house or office.

Once a hacker finds out your IP address it's relatively simple to send your computer a Trojan horse program, spyware, or a virus that will open a port that you usually don't use. Once that port has been opened, he can freely enter into your operating system and browse around just like he was there in person. He would look for programs that store valuable data like social security numbers and credit card account numbers. (Do you have that information entered into your Quicken or Money program?)

He would look through your My Documents folder for password lists and search your Internet Explorer favorites for financial sites where you saved the username and password. And, before he leaves he usually plants another Trojan horse that will give him the ability to take control of your computer in the future.

## Commercial Websites

The most common way to hack into a company's website through the Internet is by using a Denial of Service attack. These DoS attacks use multiple computers to overload a website with bogus requests for information. The hacker usually creates a Trojan horse program that he sends into the computers of unsuspecting people (remember that program that was left behind when your computer was invaded above?) The message that he creates usually contains a header saying that it comes from an IP address that doesn't exist. When he is ready to attack, he calls up all the computers that he infected with his Trojan horse and tells them to contact a specific IP address. Those computers follow his instructions and send his preprogrammed message to that website. Servers that control websites always check to verify that IP addresses requesting information or webpage downloads are legitimate addresses. When a server is hit by a bombardment of these false address requests, it tries to track down every one of the fake addresses. Before long the server becomes overwhelmed by the fruitless process and crashes. When it crashes, the website will vanish and the hacker will be given access to a prompt for the server. He can then use Linux or DOS commands to request and view information on that server other servers.

## How About Wireless?

Let's put this hacker into an airport where hundreds of people are sharing a wireless network. It's like leaving a child alone in a candy store. In this case the airport's wireless system usually provides the IP addresses through DHCP and he can easily look at the list of addresses that have been supplied. He can test each of the addresses for available ports and it's quick work to access the most vulnerable. The same principles apply in hotels and restaurants that provide wireless Internet access. If you have a wireless network in your home, our hacker can drive down your street using a laptop or PDA to search for wireless networks. This process is called Wardriving. If he finds one that has not been secured at all, he doesn't even have a challenge. If you have added a password, he simply has to crack the password.



## What Tools Do They Use?

It's very easy for a potential hacker to find the tools of his trade. There are many websites that offer program tools and tutorials for using them. Here are some of the popular:

**Anonymizers and Remailers** - Anonymizers are online services that eliminate the trail of information that is left behind. These sites use anonymous proxies that a hacker

can use to access computers and servers without leaving his IP address on any log. Remailers strip the header off a message and replace it with a meaningless header that can't be traced.

**Command.com** - When this command is typed into a server it will basically give you administrative rights. You can then see all the folders and files. It's also very easy for the hacker to create a new administrative account that he can re-use in the future.

**Password Crackers** - These programs try random passwords at lightening speeds. They are usually very successful.

**Key Loggers** - Hackers frequently install these on computers, especially public PCs. The programs actually record every stroke that you make. Hence, when you type in a username and password, it has been captured.

**Port Knocking** - This is a method of externally opening ports on a firewall by mimicking the process you normally use to add a port to your firewall.

**Wireshark** - This popular program captures and analyzes the data on a network. It's used by hackers to find information they want and it's also used by network administrators to manage networks.

**Aircrack** - This program is used to crack wireless WEP and WPA passwords.

**Metasploit Framework** - This is a tool that can be used by hackers to search the Internet for sites that have dubious code. These are the sites that are the easiest to hack - especially when this program does the searching for you. Networks identifying the types of data and the internal addresses of this data. It's a valuable tool for administrators, but can save a great deal of time for a hacker.

**NMAP** - This is a port scanner. Since a hacker knows that he needs to use a port to access your computer or network, he can use this program to see which ports you have open.

**NetStumbler** - This program finds any wireless networks that are in range. Wardrivers drive through residential neighborhoods using NetStumbler to search for available wireless networks.

**Kismet** - This program takes NetStumbler one step farther. It searches for wireless networks that are not broadcasting their SSID.

**NSLookup** - If you type a domain name into this program, it will give you the company's IP address

**Traceroute** - This is a very valuable troubleshooting tool for technicians. It will trace a packet on its route through the Internet. It shows every IP address it visits along the way.

**Snort** - This is an open-source intrusion detection system. It shows traffic analysis and packet logging on networks.

**TCPdump** - This is the most widely used network sniffer/analyzer for UNIX networks.

**Net Cat** - This has been called the Swiss army program for hackers. It performs many sniffing and cracking tasks.

This was really just some of the basics. But, if we know why security is so important, we may remember to take the right precautions. Hope your web surfing stays secure.

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# Shrinking Computing

## Intel Plays In All the Fields But...Size Matters!

By Andy Marken, President, Marken Communications,  
www.marken.com, andy@marken.com

**B**right Idea – Just so no one missed the fact that Intel's Craig Barrett was talking about another bright idea that the company's engineering teams had developed the events folks put him in front of a light bulb. It didn't work because we could barely see the itty-bitty device he held in his hand at the opening of IDF this year. Source -- Intel

"Well, that's right, Professor Frederickson, and that all matter is made up of not only density but of empty space, and if we can proportionally reduce the amount of empty space in any given object, we can, thereby, shrink the object." – Wayne Szalinski (Rick Moranis), Honey I Shrunk the Kids (1989)

We always enjoy the Intel Developers Forum (IDF) because 98 percent of the time the demos work.

When they don't work, you're pretty sure no one will get sent to the Bering Seas to work on The Deadliest Catch series.

No sweat this year! Craig Barrett, Intel's chairman, wanted everyone to know that the company was just flush with fresh ideas (see photo) so he waved around and talked about an itty-bitty something you couldn't really see.

Heck could have been one of his new fishing lures...who'd know?

Of course Paul Otellini, Intel Prez, had to show off their huge silicon platters with a gazillion chips on it.

To hear him talk you'd think that everything we use everyday would be useless without his chips. Look around...he may be right.

Life would really be great if you only had to have one work/communications/entertainment device as all of the manufacturers would have you believe. Problem is people seem to want different things for different activities. So our collection continues to grow...and grow. Source -- Forrester

For him it was all about performance, raw speed.

With every speed and performance advance, consumers raise their expectations for speed and performance. It never seems to be powerful enough or fast enough. Good thing because that only fires the demand for newer and better devices for work and play. Source -- Intel

Obviously if you need an excuse to upgrade your devices every six months it is all about speed, performance!

Glad the wife wasn't there. She would have been so ticked about her new, barely used, now outdated Dell notebook.

### Notebooks Still Cool

What's not to like about a good notebook computer?

You can do everything with the sucker!

People like today's notebook computers because they are relatively light and deliver versatile storage and playback – photos, videos, music and even work. They also aid people in staying connected around the globe. Source – NY Times

Photos...music...video...search...work...study...stay in touch.

*Continued on page 47*

It's no wonder notebook sales have equaled and surpassed desktop sales. The numbers just keep growing.

Notebook computer sales show steady potential as they become lighter, more powerful and more reliable. Users can stay in touch, enjoy hours of music/video entertainment and carry filing cabinets of work with them in a unit that usually weighs less than five pounds. Notebook sales today surpass desktop sales. Source – IDC

They're so popular, so versatile that we have two categories...those you work with and those you slip into an envelope.

Where's the machismo with the light systems from Apple, Lenovo and others? Used to be a badge of honor to have you knuckles drag on the floor from carrying your luggable computer. Sheess now first graders stuff the units in their backpacks and take them to school. The power systems are "pretty" light...ok pretty! The envelope systems are downright ridiculous. People keep trying to make them lighter but there is only so much you can do... Add all the parts together and you've got a weight "problem".

While component and system engineers work creatively to drive cost and weight out of computers while increasing performance and capabilities, the laws of diminishing returns also comes into play. As you add features and applications they add to the weight of the system. The laws of physics still apply. Source -- Intel

Since they can't change the laws of physics they figured they'd simply make you change the way you think about and use computers.

One of the first out of the chute (right after OLPC) was Asus with their eee – dumb name, pretty good idea.

*Continued on page 48*

## Super Jigsaws

**Computer Buffet**  
With Dr. Herb Goldstein



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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If you want to drive a lot of weight, power consumption and cost out of your portable computer look closely at the new netbooks. The systems are light, decently powered, have good data life, respectable battery life, some storage capacity. It's all good if you can connect to the Internet. Source -- Asus

Oh sure it was light weight, used socialist (Linux)-based operating system, (small) solid state drive and was relatively cheap. Barrett convinced them of the errors of their ways though and brought Asus out into a Windows/hard drive world. True, that raised the price a little.

But folks come on??? We're talking Windows! We're talking HDs !!

As Wayne Szalinski said..."I think that went well."

Teens and Tweens like the idea of a netbook and operating in the cloud. But then...they didn't know life BI (Before Internet). Netbook prophets say it's going to be a huge market WW. So big that every manufacturer on the planet is bringing out their small, cheap netbook...and cheaper...and cheaper and...Otellini loves it...more chip sales!

Asus wants to keep ahead of the game so they have started offering their flavor of storage in the cloud. Then they added fashion systems that smell (ok they call them fragrances but really...). At the really low end of the shrink-your-tools spectrum lots of us learned to tolerate the Blackberry. Not a half bad phone...good for email...lousy for typing. Everyone mimicked them, largely to no success.

### Thanks Steve

Then Jobs had to come along and muck up the waters. Ok so the phone part of his iPhone sucked but sheess...gotta admit it is cute.

Steve announced his new approach to phones and the world hasn't turned back. The clean, crisp design and ability to do everything (ok not a great phone call but...) with a single device got engineers around the globe rushing back to their labs to reverse engineer their version. Source -- Apple

You now surf the web...watch your videos...look at your photos...play your iTunes...email...shave...cook eggs...all the really important stuff! And people quickly glommed onto the new mobile activities.

If you're a teen or tween the idea of using a smartphone as your all encompassing communications/entertainment device is a logical next move. The better units let you call, text, im, take photos, listen to music, shoot videos, email, clean your fingernails (ok maybe not right now but ...). Service providers like the new everything devices because it means more data service program sales. Source -- IDC

It no surprise that a recent Simmons New Media study found that there are more mobile phones in use than cars (800M) or computers (1.2B).

But what they're doing shows people need to be constantly connected:

- 59% text messaging
- 49% taking photos
- 20% emailing
- 19% accessing the Internet
- 13% taking videos
- 6% banking
- 5% accessing GPS positions
- 2% shopping

If you listen to Jobs, the mobile everything sellers and the Kool-Aid drinking forecasters you're probably asking the same question Professor Frederickson asked... "Mr. Szalinski, are you trying to tell me that suddenly size is no longer relative?"

Oh they're good, they're fun, they're useful. The pocket-sized, thumb-dislocating multimedia devices show plenty of growth potential.

*Continued on page 49*

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## Mobile Growth

In fact, the entire mobile device market continues to show promise. But profit margins are grim ...except for Steve

Mobile device manufacturers have a phone for every segment of the market. Highly industrialized countries are ready markets for iPhones/smartphones. People in developing countries will want feature phones. Users in third-world countries want food, work, an occasional phone call. Source -- iSuppli

The iPhone and "enhanced" versions will do well in today's mature markets (Canada, US, Korea, Japan, Australia, most of the EU). Money may be tight but folks justify the coolness factor. Emerging countries (Brazil, Mexico, India, China, Russia, etc.)?

Somewhat.

### The ROW?

They'd be happy to make a call, let alone worry about emailing or online banking!

Barrett and Otellini aren't concerned about one device (design win) replacing another.

Petaluma (CA) is not going to replace their World Armwrestling Contest for thumb wrestling.

Our kids schlep their notebooks with them. They have their iPhone look-alikes. They have their iPods. Son has his netbook and PSP. Daughter has her camera. We've got their battery chargers! Pile 'em On

People don't suddenly discard one communications/entertainment device for another.

They add to their arsenal of work/play toys.

Sure it would be cool if you could shrink and unshrink them in the blink of an eye because then as Wayne emphasized, "And given that my machine can substantially reduce the size of bulky payloads."

That isn't possible...yet. So we buy pants with bigger pockets...bigger purses...stronger backpacks.

We're certain that Otellini's team (in some deep, dark lab) is working on a computer on a chip that can be implanted because let's face it, that's a six billion market that overshadows PCs and phones!

With the industry's growing ability to shrink circuitry and technology it may not be long before your cellphone and perhaps even your everything phone can be so small you'll have to use a magnifying glass to watch your shows, make your calls. Of course kids (little kids) will learn how to adapt while adults struggle. Source - Walt Disney Pictures

Of course if its Windows based you'll probably crash periodically or need to reboot. Remember those problems never happen with Macs or Linux systems. And of course no one sends those folks viruses or Trojan horses or hacks 'em!

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## Computer Buffet With Dr. Herb Goldstein



# MediaMonkey

Not happy with Windows Media Player or your current media player, or are you just looking for an alternative? Then give the free MediaMonkey a try. It's an excellent tool for playing media, organizing your media library, and ripping and burning music. It'll play pretty much every music file that's out there, will synchronize with your iPod and MP3 player, and includes a tag editor. It will also automatically find album art for the file you're currently playing as well. MediaMonkey organizes your music in multiple ways, including by artist, title, album, genre, year, rating and so on. Unlike Windows Media Player, it loads fast. Fans of Internet radio will like this program as well; it automatically connects you to the Shoutcast and Icecast online radio directories, and plays any stations you want <[www.mediamonkey.com/](http://www.mediamonkey.com/)>

*Please also note: Most of the software mentioned here is freeware. It is gathered through researching usually reliable sources. I do not personally try most references, time being the obvious factor.*

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](mailto:reviewseditor@spcug.org)>



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# Ubuntu & Linux Software

by **Brian K. Lewis, Ph.D.**, Member of the Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, Inc., Florida, [www.spcug.org](http://www.spcug.org), [bwsail@yahoo.com](mailto:bwsail@yahoo.com)

I suppose some of you might be wondering why I have been writing about the Ubuntu Linux operating system and Linux software. As I noted in last month's article my laptop is now my sole computer. Although it has a Pentium 4 processor it only has 512 MB of RAM. Naturally, that means it is incapable of running Windows Vista. But it does easily run Ubuntu with more than enough memory to do multi-tasking with no reduction in speed. I also know that there are a number of the members of the SPCUG that use computers that are running Windows 98 or Windows XP. The point is, that it is not necessary to try to upgrade these computers to run Vista or to buy a new computer. Instead you have the free alternative of installing Ubuntu or another version of Linux. This article will discuss some of the range of free Linux software and how easy it is to install it.

The original installation CD of Ubuntu included the OpenOffice software. OpenOffice includes a word processor, spreadsheet and presentation applications. These are fully compatible with the components of Microsoft Office. I frequently receive documents prepared in MS Word and they open directly into OpenOffice Writer. I can edit, comment and save a copy in the OpenOffice format. Then I can return the modified document to the originator in MS Word format with all the edits and comments intact. The same is true for spreadsheets. The OpenOffice presentation application (Impress) reads, writes and modifies PowerPoint files as easily as Writer works with documents. OpenOffice also includes a Drawing application. Drawing is an application that I haven't used.

Other included software with Ubuntu are Ekiga (internet phone software), Pidgeon (internet messenger), Evolution (e-mail), and a remote desktop viewer. Graphics software includes the F-Spot photo manager, GIMP Image Editor and Xsane scanner software. Also, there is a CD burner, movie player for DVDs and two music players.

I grant you that the included software doesn't always meet all the needs for many users. So Ubuntu has several ways of installing additional software. I mentioned last month about installing the drivers for my printer, scanner and the wireless modem. This month I will continue with other applications that are the equivalent of those that I used under Windows. The installation of these applications was much easier than installing drivers for the accessory hardware.

The first step in installing any application is to go to the Applications – Add/Remove menu. When this application runs it provides you with a list of all the software available through Ubuntu and its third-party providers. On the left side of the window are listed various categories that you can highlight and the appropriate applications are then listed on the right side. When you highlight a specific application, a description appears in the lower portion of the window. There is also a search box that you can use to find a specific program or a group of programs.

Since I maintain my financial records on my computer I wanted a financial program that ran under Ubuntu. Not knowing the specific name, I just searched on the term "finances". This brought up a list of financial software. One of the interesting aspects of the Add/Remove application is that programs are rated based on feedback from users using 1 to 5 stars. There was a 5 star application listed, GNUcash, which can import files in the Quicken format. So I put a check mark in the box by the application name and then clicked on the "Apply Changes" button. This brought up another window for verification of the changes to be made. After clicking on "OK", the application was downloaded from the Internet and installed on the hard drive without

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*Continued on page 52*

any further action on my part. A shortcut icon was also added to the Office portion of the applications menu. There was no reboot required to complete this process. After the installation, the "Add/Remove" application reported the successful installation and remained open in case I wanted to use it further.

My Windows financial software was Microsoft Money. Supposedly it will export its data files in the Quicken format. I did that and then copied the files from the Windows partition to the Ubuntu partition. However, the import into GnuCash was not really successful. I'm not sure why but I suspect there was information missing which resulted in misidentification of some of the accounts. Anyway, I selected an arbitrary date and entered opening balances for that date. So now, it is working perfectly and is in agreement with my bank balances. Using it is even somewhat easier than working with either Money or Quicken. Plus, the price is right.

Another application that I needed for Ubuntu was a genealogy program. Here again I was able to find a five star program, GRAMPS. (Very appropriate name I thought.) It was also available through the "Add/Remove" application so installation was completed quickly. GRAMPS imports GED files as do many genealogy programs. So I exported my files from my Windows software in the GED format then copied the GED file to the Ubuntu partition. The import into GRAMPS was essentially a two-click operation. Everything, including notes and references, were now available in an Ubuntu application. GRAMPS also has more report formats than my Windows software included. So I consider it a very successful replacement.

For quite some time I have used a PDA, specifically a Sony Clie which runs Palm Pilot software. The Sony CD loaded the Windows version to the hard drive and also included software to synchronize with the PDA. Since I have considerable contact information in the Clie along with many memoranda, I really wanted to be able to run this under Ubuntu. In the System-Preferences menu there is a selection for PalmOS devices. Now that sounded like it would be quite simple to install the applications necessary to run the Clie. Clicking on the selection runs the Gnome-Pilot application which helps the user to determine the settings for synchronizing with the Clie. Unfortunately, it could not find the Clie PDA. So I had to go back online to the Ubuntu forums to see if I could find the secret.

It turns out that getting a PDA recognized and synced with Ubuntu is not always simple. After spending considerable time reading various solutions I came across a command line entry that showed the entries where my Clie was being recognized by Ubuntu. The PDA was properly identified by vendor and product ID's. Now all the information I had gathered indicated that the PDA should be listed as using a USB connection and usually ttyUSB0 and ttyUSB1. Much to my surprise my printout showed the Clie as using ttyUSB9 and ttyUSB10. The Gnome-Pilot software refused to accept either of these as valid locations. However, another application, J-Pilot, accepted ttyUSB10 and synced with the Clie when the sync button was clicked. The synchronization transferred all of my information directly into the J-Pilot software. This software works on the desktop in a very similar manner to the Clie and Pilot software I had used under Windows. Successive synchronizations have also been successful. So that was one less application that would need to run under Windows.

There has been one big disappointment in the hardware setup. I have a multi-function media card reader built into the laptop. It reads SD cards as well as xD, MMC, and memory sticks. This reader works great under Windows as a way to transfer photos from my camera to the computer. However, there is apparently no driver available for this to work under Ubuntu. The card reader is manufactured by O2 Micro and they apparently don't believe Linux is here to stay so they have no plans to create Linux drivers for any of their products. At least that's the quotation from a response to a query from a Ubuntu user. So when I have photos to transfer to my computer I can either reboot into Windows, or I can connect the camera with a USB cable. The USB cable works fine as Ubuntu recognizes the camera right away. It also opens the F-Spot Photo Manager which allows me to choose the pictures and the location where I want them saved.

One of the applications included with Ubuntu is Brasero, a CD/DVD burner. When I first tried to use it, it refused to recognize my DVD+R discs. It would read and write DVD-R/RW with no difficulty. Since I had a supply of the +R discs I decided to look for other DVD burning software. In the ADD/Remove application there were several CD/DVD burners listed. One of them was five star application called K3B. It was written primarily to work with the KDE desktop that is an alternative to the GNOME desktop. The KDE desktop comes with Kubuntu and has an interface that is closer to the one found in Windows. Anyway, K3B will work with GNOME, so let ADD/Remove install it. Any software that you add through Add/Remove can be removed simply by locating it in the list and removing the checkmark that indicates it has been installed. So now I have both Brasero and K3B installed. I also found, the next time I wanted to burn a DVD, that Brasero would now work with my external burner and the +R discs. I do like the interface for K3B better than Brasero, but they both work.

As you can see one of the nice attributes of using open license software is the ability to install it and use it at no cost. If you don't like it, you simply remove it. It's certainly not that simple in Windows. So, if you want to try a Linux OS on your computer download a "Live CD" and try it out. Also check out the online help forums. I think you'll find them easier to understand than much of the material Microsoft makes available. Whatever you decide, enjoy your computing!

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

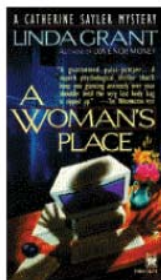


# Computer Crimes

Susan Ives, Alamo PC

## A Woman's Place

By: Linda Grant,  
Reviewed by Susan  
Ives 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 minority. 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.

## Monkeewrench

By: PJ Tracy, Reviewed  
by Susan Ives Hardcover, Putnam's, 2003,  
\$23.95, 384 pages



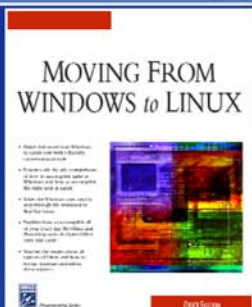
The staff of Monkeewrench software is devastated when three local murders follow the scenarios of the beta release of their new computer game, Serial Killer Detective. They are an oddball crew, college friends who had been traumatized by a friend's murder. In fear for their own lives, they changed their names, skipped town and developed a game where the killer is always caught. Initially hesitant to blow their cover by calling the St. Paul police, they come to the sober realization that there are 17 more scenarios available for download from their

Web site - and 17 more potential victims. The killer could be one of the beta testers, their old nemesis come back to haunt them - or one of the Monkeewrench crew themselves.

P.J. Tracy is the pseudonym of a mother-daughter writing team. This is their first book and it is a sure-fire winner. The plot was fast-paced, the ending a shocker, and the Monkeewrench crew crackled with tension and energy. The technical challenge of figuring out which beta testers have progressed far enough into the game to have knowledge of the fatal scenarios is a clever puzzle that database gurus will enjoy. Highly recommended.

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

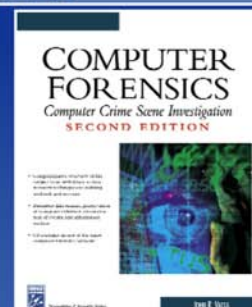
## COMPUTER BOOKS THAT DELIVER



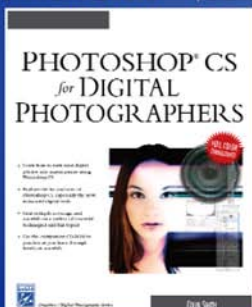
1-58450-280-0 \$44.95



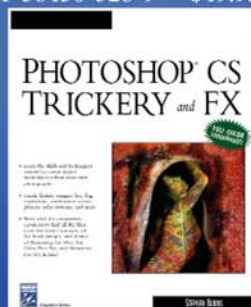
1-58450-328-9 \$49.95



1-58450-389-0 \$49.95



1-58450-321-1 \$39.95



1-58450-297-5 \$39.95



1-58450-387-4 \$41.95



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## Software Review

Media Show

Published by CyberLink

Reviewed by Terry Oden, President, Macon Computer User Group, Georgia, [www.mcug.org](http://www.mcug.org), [terryo@brmemc.net](mailto:terryo@brmemc.net)

There may be hundreds of ways to gather, store, view, edit and show off your pictures and videos. This is one of the best and easiest I have found so far. Your own operating system will do a fairly good job of getting your pictures and videos into your computer for you. On the net you also have programs that are free like Picassa, Flickr and You Tube which all do a very good job of storing and displaying your own work to family and friends.

One of the things that I liked best about Media Show was ease of operation. There are only 5 buttons to control the whole program. Below you'll find a screen shot of the second screen you'll see select the Pictures button.

Starting with the # 1 button, or the Home button here you can see all of your different folders and how many pictures or videos you have in each folder.

For the # 2 button you have Create. Here you can do things like make your own Screen Saver, compose a movie or DVD. You can print your own pictures or order prints on line.

Next you have the # 3 button or the Share button. Here you can share your pictures with friends and family or up-load them to Flickr. Also, you could upload them to U-tube with a single click of your mouse, if desired.

The next button # 4 is the View button, here you can adjust the size of your thumbnails or add any captions to your pictures. You can also change the color of the skin of the program (appearance).

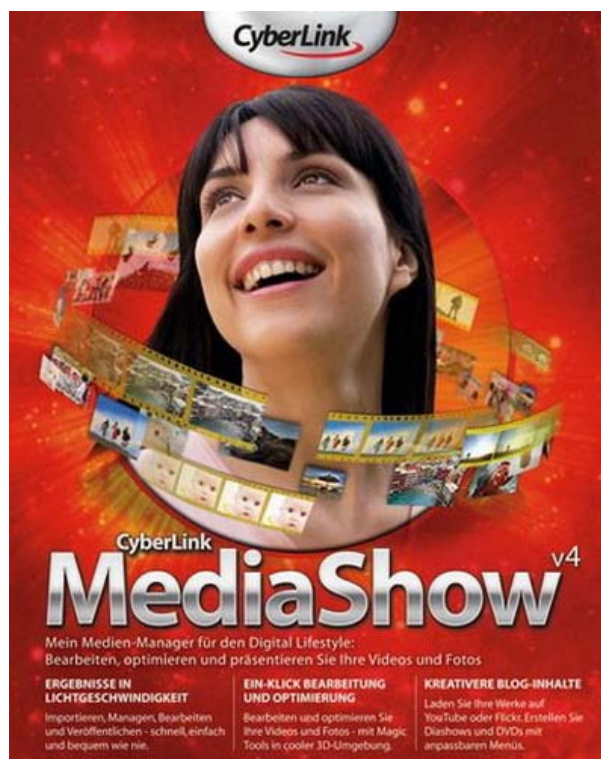
The last button or # 5 is the Folder Tools button. Here you edit, sort, locate, delete or hide some pictures if you like.

This Media Show 4 is one of the top programs when it comes to ease of operation, not to mention what the finished product will look like. To create a movie or slideshow with sound and motion, fading or cell you only have to make about three clicks of the mouse. First you have to decide if you want background music or not, next select what format you want to use, and where to save your work in your computer. Yes, you do have to tell it what pictures or videos to use! At last, all you do is click the Burn button and that's it. Zap you're done!

Yes, you do have to tell it what pictures or videos to use! At last, all you do is click the Burn button and that's it. Zap you're done!

To create a DVD it's very easy. First decide a name for your DVD. Then pick out a menu style for your DVD. Now comes the hard part. You must decide which videos you want to use and if you want any still pictures in it or not. Yes, once again you have to tell the program which videos or pictures you want to use.

Next. click on the preview button to see what your work looks like. If you like it, click on the burn button and you're done.



*Continued on page 55*

## System Requirements

1. Operating System- Windows Vista / XP (with Direct X 9 or above)
2. Screen Resolution- 800 x 600
3. Printers- All
4. CPU- Intel Pentium D 3.0 GHz, AMD Athlon 64 3500+ or above
5. Sound Card- PCI sound card or on-board audio
6. Memory- 512 MB RAM minimum, 1GB recommended
7. Hard Disk Space- 1 GB required, 20 GB recommended for DVD production
8. Graphics Card- Intel 945GM or above-64 MBVRAM or above
9. Optical Drive- A DVD burner (DVD+R/RW or DVD-R/RW) is required to burn content onto DVD's
10. Import Devices- Cameras via removable disk interface-Cameras support Windows Portable devices interface-Camcorder DV devices via IEEE 1394 (Firewire)
11. Internet Connection- An Internet connection is required for some upload/download features.

As for the overall way the program works, I've not found a program this large at this cost that operates so easily and simply. I have found no shortcomings with this program yet. This is the best program for the money that can be found, under \$50.00.



## Hardware Review

### TV Converter Box Notes

Published by various

Reviewed by Mike Morris, a member of the Front Range PC Users Group, Colorado,  
www.frpcug.org, twriterext@gmail.com

Regarding video (and audio) hardware, I have to admit to being an Old Analog Guy (the acronym = OAG and is pronounced "ogre"). I have 2 old analog TV's. I don't intend to buy a new HDTV until they both quit working. I don't intend to sign up for satellite or cable TV. I don't, actually, watch very much TV (or movies), and I am not interested in computer games. For the "Digital TV Transition" coming in February 2009, a TV converter box is the solution for me; especially now that I have my two \$40 coupons.

The question is, which converter to buy?

There are 52 DTV converter box models from 33 manufacturers listed on the enclosure that came with my converter box coupons (and many more listed on the website provided at the end of this article). Not all converters are equal. It is still "Buyer Beware," so you need to decide what features and specs you want (and/or don't want), and then check the specs of each unit carefully.

Perhaps there are a few others like me, who are considering buying a converter box. For my fellow OAG's (male or female), I have collected links to information on 6 of the converters that I will share with you.

Do check prices, with reputable online sellers and with your local big box or electronics store (local or national). Prices vary widely. I have picked some prices in order to provide an approximation of the "MSRP (Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price)".

### Channel Master CM-7000

A recent price: \$79.99 (less \$40 coupon)

Exact phrase Google search: 3860 hits

A few of those pages were investigated. One with information and specifications is Channel Master 1.

Channel Master is part of Andrew Corporation (known for its antennas, among other things), which is now part of CommScope. The CommScope HQ are in North Carolina. For more information on these companies and their products, connect to CommScope.

Check out the discussion of this unit on AV Science Forum:

This is part of a message posted in March of 2008:

"The specifications on page 2 of the information sheet:


Demodulator input for 1080i, 720p, 480i, and 480.

Video output is 480i ONLY.


480i is Standard Definition DTV only. The CM-7000's claim to "Get Free HDTV

Without Monthly Fees" is inaccurate."

*Continued on page 57*

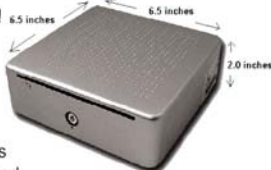


The miniPC: The smallest Windows / Linux PC ever  
\* small spaces \* CAR COMPUTER \* any room \* point of sales machine \*



**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**



**Echostar TR-40**

A recent price: Unofficially, \$40, which means, effectively, free with the coupon.

Exact phrase Google search: 10,100 hits

Lots of information on this unit on the AfterDawn website. This website also provides comparisons to other similar units.

Digital Stream D2A1D110/20

A recent price: \$69.99 (less \$40 coupon)

Exact phrase Google search: 2 hits, plus 2 ads. None of the links from the Google search provided information on the model number listed above.

There are four other Digital Stream model numbers listed in coupon enclosure, one of which is described at Solid Signal.com.

**GE 22729**

A recent price: \$79.99 (less \$40 coupon)

Exact phrase Google search: 39,200 hits

For (limited) specs connect to this After Dawn web page.

**Insignia NS-DXA1**

A recent price: \$59.99 (less \$40 coupon)

Exact phrase Google search: 44,700 hits

Check out the information on the World-Wide TV-FM DX Association website.

There is also a detailed CNET review.

From the spec sheet: “(This unit)...displays digital TV at standard-definition (480i) screen resolution.”

**RCA DTA 800A**

A recent price: \$49.99 (?) (less \$40.00 coupon)

Exact phrase Google search: 412 hits

There are two versions of this product: the 800A and the 800B. The difference is the tuner manufacturer. For more information on this, connect to the AV Science Forum and scroll down to posting #39.

Remember this acronym, courtesy of the late Robert Heinlein (Science Fiction author): TANSTAAFL. That translates to “There Ain’t No Such Thing As A Free Lunch.” If you have decided to stay with your old analog TV, and you do not plan to sign up for satellite or cable TV, then you must do your homework in order to find the right product before spending your hard-earned money on a converter box.

Remember also that the word “converter” has real meaning in this context. The converter box is converting an HDTV signal into something an old analog TV can display. That “something an old analog TV can display” is definitely NOT HDTV (no matter WHAT the advertisements say).


You will likely find one other obvious difference between using your old analog TV to receive analog broadcasts, and using your old analog TV with a converter box. If you tuned (or tried to tune) to a distant station with your old analog TV, you would get a terrible picture (lots of noise, etc.). With the converter box, you simply won’t know a weak station is even there. You need a strong signal--the converter boxes have a “threshold” effect. With a strong signal, everything looks good. With a weak signal, you get a black screen. So, when you are setting up your converter box and TV, you may want to move your antenna (or Rabbit Ears) around to get the maximum strength signal possible.

For more information on digital TV, connect to this Wikipedia article.

For more information on the TV Converter Box Coupon Program, connect to: <https://www.dtv2009.gov>

For an up-to-date list of qualifying products, connect to: [https://www.ntiadtv.gov/cecb\\_list.cfm](https://www.ntiadtv.gov/cecb_list.cfm)

# October 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>5</b> HTML and Beyond 2 - 6 P.M., class 5 of 6 *PRR*	<b>6</b> Genealogy 7 - 9 P.M.	<b>7</b> Internet & E-mail 10 A.M. - Noon class 2 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1:30 - 3:30 P.M. class 2 of 6 *PRR* Board of Directors 6:30 - 9:30 P.M. (Members are welcome to attend)	<b>8</b> Power Internet, 10 A.M. - Noon Introduction to Windows 10 A.M. - Noon, class 1 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1 - 3 P.M., class 1 of 6 *PRR*	<b>9</b> Student Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon (a/r) High Growth Stock Investing 6:30 - 8:30 P.M.	<b>10</b> Computer Diagnostic Clinic Dr. Is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon Photoshop, Advanced CS2 1 - 5 P.M., Lesson 15 *PRR*	<b>11</b> MCSE (Adv) Server 2008 8:30 A.M. - Noon Programming C++ 2:30 - 4:30 P.M.
<b>12</b> HTML and Beyond 2 - 6 P.M., class 6 of 6 *PRR*	<b>13</b> General Meeting @ Crossroads 7 - 9 P.M. Presenter: Microsoft	<b>14</b> Internet & E-mail 10 A.M. - Noon class 2 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1:30 - 3:30 P.M. class 2 of 6 *PRR* Alamo Coders (DotNET - Web Development Technology) 7 - 9 P.M.	<b>15</b> Introduction to Windows 10 A.M. - Noon, class 2 of 6 *PRR* Introduction to Windows 1 - 3 P.M., class 2 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1 - 3 P.M., class 2 of 6 *PRR* IBD / Vector Vest, 6 - 8 P.M.	<b>16</b> Student Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon	<b>17</b> Computer Diagnostic Clinic Dr. Is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon Photoshop, Advanced CS2 1 - 5 P.M., Lesson 16 *PRR*	<b>18</b> MCSE (Adv) Server 2008 8:30 A.M. - Noon Programming C++ 2:30 - 4:30 P.M.
<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> Internet & E-mail 10 A.M. - Noon class 3 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1:30 - 3:30 P.M. class 3 of 6 *PRR*	<b>22</b> Introduction to Windows 1 - 3 P.M., class 3 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1 - 3 P.M., class 3 of 6 *PRR* (a/r) WordPerfect 7 - 9 P.M.	<b>23</b> Student Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon	<b>24</b> Computer Diagnostic Clinic Dr. Is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon Photoshop, Advanced CS2 1 - 5 P.M., Lesson 17 *PRR*	<b>25</b> MCSE (Adv) Server 2008 8:30 A.M. - Noon Learning Center Desk Staff Meeting 1 - 3 P.M.
<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> CorelDRAW X3 7 - 9 P.M.	<b>28</b> Internet & E-mail 10 A.M. - Noon class 4 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1:30 - 3:30 P.M. class 4 of 6 *PRR*	<b>29</b> Introduction to Windows 1 - 3 P.M. class 4 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1 - 3 P.M., class 4 of 6 *PRR*	<b>30</b> Student's Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon	<b>31</b>  Clinic Computer Diagnostic Dr. Is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon Photoshop, Advanced CS2 1 - 5 P.M., Lesson 18 *PRR*	
<b>AlamoPC Organization</b>						
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  
stephentechnjr@yahoo.com

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

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

**Where:** Computer Learning Center

**Technical Rating:** ★

### APCO Retro (Antique Computer Users Group)

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

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

210-675-2880

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

**Where:** Learning Center

**Pre-registration:** No

**Technical Rating:** ★★

### Digital Camera & Photography Class

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

**Instructor:** 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 - \$120 ☐ 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.



