

THE NEWS MAGAZINE OF THE ALAMO PC ORGANIZATION

# PC Alamode

**TECH ISSUE**

[www.alamopc.org](http://www.alamopc.org)  
March 2009  
\$5.00

**Juice your broadband speed**  
page 28

**Moving to a new Mac**  
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# Alamo PC Organization

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**If you have comments about classes call**

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Joseph de Leon  
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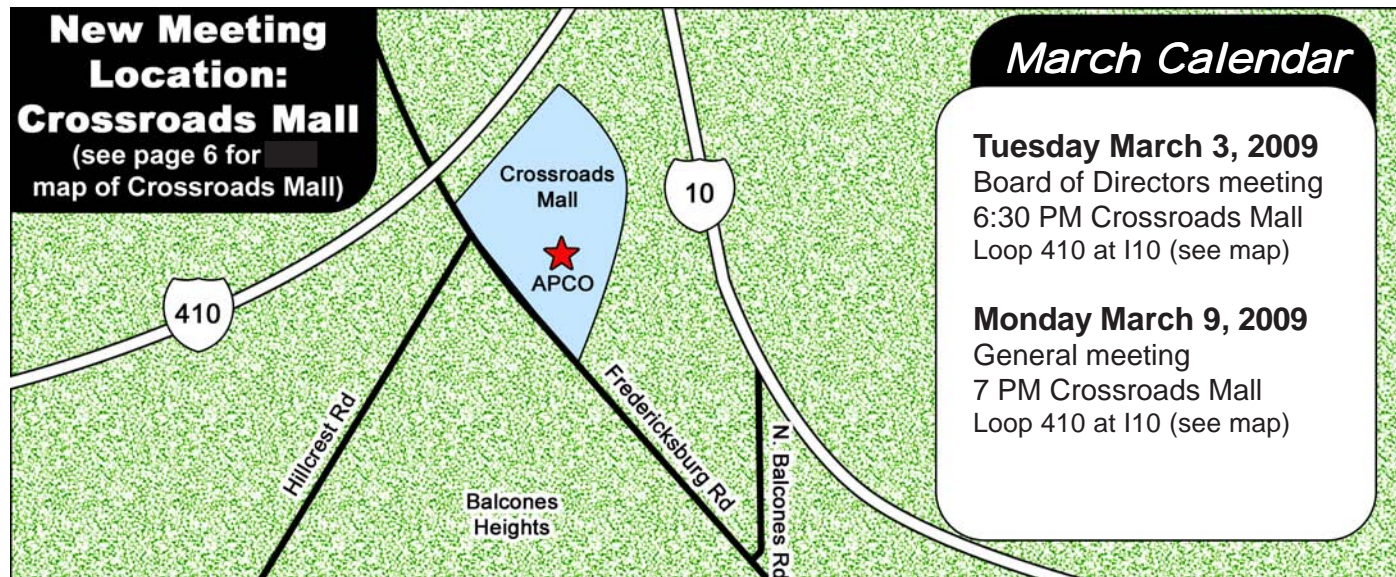
**Alamo PC Organization**  
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**San Antonio, TX 78265-5180**

## 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)



## March Calendar

**Tuesday March 3, 2009**  
Board of Directors meeting  
6:30 PM Crossroads Mall  
Loop 410 at I10 (see map)

**Monday March 9, 2009**  
General meeting  
7 PM Crossroads Mall  
Loop 410 at I10 (see map)



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# PC Alamode

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 Moving to a new Mac  
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 When to turn off personal computers

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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 © 2009 by Alamo PC or the author. All rights reserved. No part of PC Alamode may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means — mechanical, electrical, or otherwise — including, but not limited to, photocopying, recording, or information storage/retrieval, without express written permission from Alamo PC. However, unless otherwise indicated, articles may be reprinted by other user and education groups provided the articles are reprinted unaltered and the publication acknowledges the author thereof and PC Alamode. Articles, programs, reviews, and advertisements are compiled without verification of accuracy or applicability to a specific task, computer, or other equipment. Comments or claims are made solely by the individual author and do not necessarily represent the views of Alamo PC or of any other Alamo PC member. Trademarks have been used at random within the publication and are hereby recognized as such.

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

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Joseph de Leon, Editor, PC Alamode

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### Ad rates effective January 2005

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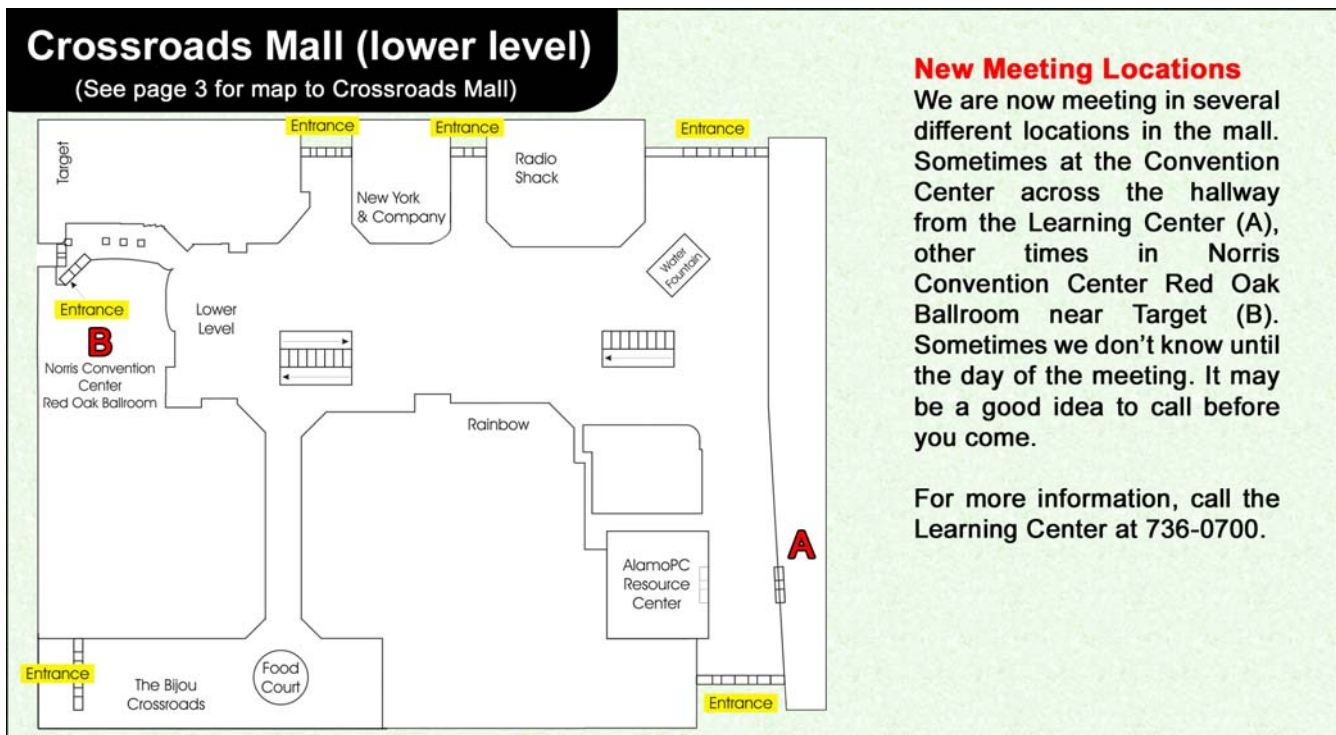
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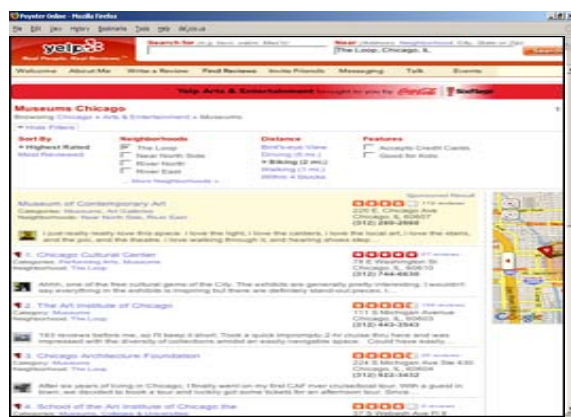
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For Study Groups and Classes, phone: 736-0080 or 736-0700



# PC Alamode Links List



## Yelp!

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

If it's a restaurant, shop or business, it's probably been reviewed on Yelp — an independent site with millions of user-submitted evaluations.



## Flickr

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

It offers some of the smartest tools for managing your ever expanding picture collection — from Photostream, which lets you scan your pics quickly, to a newly added video tool for paid users.

I've been working on reformatting the PC Alamode. This includes getting rid of some guest columnists who are no longer making regular contributions, but more importantly, it means putting together a format that is easy to print.

Over the past two years, many of you have suggested dropping large graphics and large areas of solid colors because it eats up a lot of ink when those articles are printed.

Large graphics and images are one of the big advantages to doing an electronic magazine. Rather than drop those properties, I have been coming up with a separate layout that is designed for printing on a desktop printer.

That means no large areas of a solid color, virtually no graphics and column. This will mean those of you who want to print an article or the whole magazine will be able to do so without fear of using up all of your ink. Check for it next month.

If you have any suggestions or complaints, please let me know!

**Joseph de Leon, Editor**

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



**Joseph de Leon, Alamo PC**

Joseph has worked in the graphics industry for more than 10 years.

# President's Message

Bill Klutz

## "March" - Daylight Saving, St. Patrick, Spring, Goof Off Day

This month has five days that should be of interest to most folks: 8th - Daylight Saving Time begins: The national change two years ago extends the period about four weeks - starts about three weeks earlier, and ends about a week later than the previous decree. To remember which way to move the clock time indicators, keep in mind the phrase, "Spring forward, Fall back;" 17th - St. Patrick's Day: an annual feast day which celebrates Saint Patrick (circa 385-461 AD), one of the patron saints of Ireland.

Don't forget to wear green; 20th - First day of Spring: There is either an equinox (autumn and spring) or a solstice (summer and winter) on approximately the 21st day of the last month of every quarter of the calendar year. On a day which has an equinox, the center of the Sun will spend a nearly equal amount of time above and below the horizon at every location on Earth and night and day will be of nearly the same length; 22nd - National Goof Off Day: Finally, a day created for all of us who have always wanted to just GOOF OFF without any reprisal; 26th - "Make Up Your Own Holiday" day: Although it is not recognized as a national holiday (yet), it can be really good if you let your imagination run free.

As previously mentioned in the last two columns, but primarily for those who are new to the organization, after looking at a number of locations (from north west thru north east, both inside and outside of Loop 410) with rent priced considerably more than was suitable for our then current financial condition, we finally settled on space in late December. We secured a reasonably priced (\$175 per month) single office for our operations (phone lines, computers, etc.) and storage for the things we kept. It is unfortunately an upstairs office that is located at 4888 Whirlwind (78217), in northeast San Antonio (Entering the business park, it is the first building on the corner with "Wilson Development" on the front and the address on the side.).

The February BOD meeting only had three members present. A presenter for the February General Meeting was addressed, but David Steward indicated that he had not been able to secure one. He also indicated that he was to have surgery on the day of the meeting. With that in mind, and no other backup plan in place, it was decided that it would be best if the meeting were canceled. Also reviewed was the aftermath of the closing of the Learning Center in Crossroads Mall: the financial status of the organization, the ever declining membership, major expenses, etc., plus the future of the Alamo PC Organization.

After discussions with the editor of The PC Alamode magazine, also present at the meeting, the magazine will continue in its present form. After that, depending on where things go, the magazine may very possibly continue as is or in a scaled down mode with perhaps a different format. The January membership fee reduction and the reapportioning of current memberships with months remaining (number of months remaining would be multiplied by 1.8 to establish the new renewal date) was also discussed. So far, everyone has appeared to be satisfied with this arrangement. Other issues the board is attempting to address, along with numerous other smaller things that must also be considered, and perhaps added to the growing "To Do" list for the current BOD were also reviewed.

We are hopeful the February General Meeting will take place and be profitable to those attending. However, David Steward has not provided any information regarding the presenter for the meeting. It appears to reaffirmed that overall interest in User Groups is not what it used to be at either the corporate or membership level. As I have pointed out in previous messages, this fact is confirmed by the ever declining membership and the fact we have not had a full complement of board members (at least one vacancy) for the past three years.

Anyone having questions regarding the closure or other matters pertaining to the organization, and future plans may refer them to [membership@alamopc.org](mailto:membership@alamopc.org) and Steven Tech will try to provide information requested.

The six individuals currently serving on the board initially committed to continue through the end of December. After that, there was no guarantee, and any continuation may only be on a month-by-month basis. But, with only six individuals who appear to be willing to continue serving, and one vacant position for the past few years, the future of OUR organization appears to be in serious jeopardy.

I am hoping that we will have a corporate presenter for the March General Meeting. 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 (3/9), call 736-0700

*Continued on page 9*



for the most current information on location and presenter. I can only hope that David Seward will have made the latest information available for the posting on the website.

Again, as previously mentioned, since almost all of our new members were previously obtained from walk-in traffic at the Learning Center, that luxury longer exists due to our move. Unless we have members helping to obtain new members, at some point in time funds will no longer be available to allow the Alamo PC Organization to continue operating.

As things have settled down a little, we are asking for volunteers who would be willing to handle phone calls coming to Alamo PC and answer any questions posed.

We are still trying to improve member retention, but it has not been successful - the member number total continues to slowly decline. If you do not choose to renew, send a comment briefly explaining as to "Why?" to [membership@alamopc.org](mailto:membership@alamopc.org), with a copy to me ([president@alamopc.org](mailto:president@alamopc.org), or privately to me - [wlklutzjr@juno.com](mailto:wlklutzjr@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 additional '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.

## March Program

Bill Klutz

It is late February, and I have not been informed whether or not there will be a corporate level presenter for our March General Meeting. The meeting location will be confirmed at the March board meeting (regardless of the presenter identified). Since things can change at the last minute, so check the Alamo PC web site ([www.alamopc.org](http://www.alamopc.org)) for information on the presenter and meeting location. BUT, on the meeting day please call 736-0700. Make plans now to come and bring some friends, as we hope to have an interesting presentation, and possibly "gifts."

## Volunteer of the Month

Mike Bianchi



## Computer Briefs

With Sean N. Henderson

### Opera Mini Palm TX

You'll recall I had mentioned previously about using Opera Mini on my Palm TX. After a month or so of usage, I'm finding that it works okay most of the time, but it is not really optimized for different networks. In one instance I had to delete all the scanned entries for other Wi-Fi hotspots so that it would stop trying to logon to my distant and not present work network. So currently, I only use Opera Mini on my TX for home use, and the Blazer otherwise. Be forewarned, having installed the particular Java layer and Opera Mini, my Palm TX has tended to crash more when using Opera Mini or Blazer.

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

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November 14th  
December 12th

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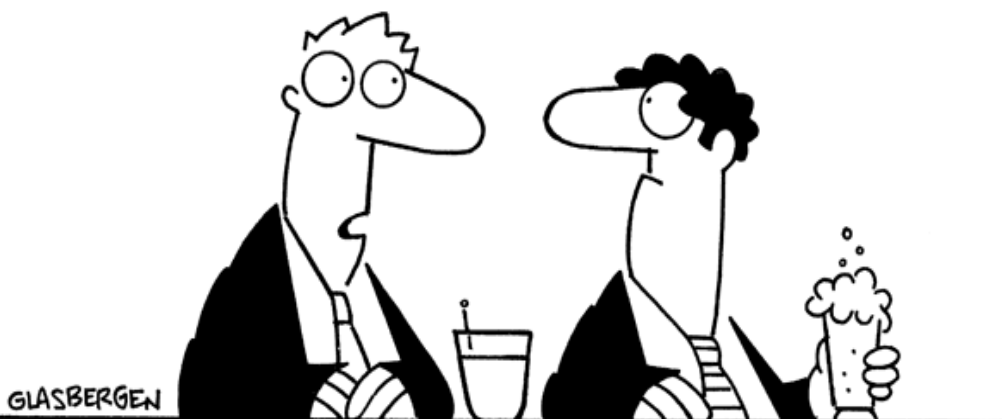


# Funny Bytes

Ken Nash & Randy Glasbergen



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**"While I was thinking outside of the box, someone changed the password and now I can't get back in!"**



## Windows 7: First Install

**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).

I finally downloaded the latest BETA release of Windows 7. I've heard good things about it so far, so I really wanted to give it a try for myself. With the final bits predicted to go out sometime in August of this year, I'm anxious to see if Microsoft will redeem themselves after the poor reception to Windows Vista.

I'm going to perform a comparison load of the 32-bit versions of Windows 7 Ultimate BETA Build 7000 with a fully patched install of Windows Vista Ultimate.

The test platform is a 15" DELL Latitude D820 laptop with 4GB of RAM and a 100GB hard drive. The video card has been upgraded to an nVidia Quadro NVS 120M with 256MB of RAM, with a native 1920 x 1200 resolution.

The machine is loaded with Windows Vista Ultimate 32-bit and Microsoft Office Ultimate 2007 with Service Pack 1. I've also got Adobe Reader and Flash, AVG Free Antivirus, AVS DVD Player (a small freeware program), and Roxio Easy Media Create 8 Suite installed. The footprint for all of this is approximately 30GB. For the Windows Experience score, the system reports: 5.1 for Processor, 4.7 for Memory (RAM), 3.6 for Graphics, 3.1 for Gaming Graphics, and a 5.0 for Primary hard disk.

I inserted the Windows 7 32-bit installation disk at 11:45AM, running the installation program from inside Windows Vista. I told it to go online to download the latest installation updates. It found a small 800kb file and downloaded it, but when I continued the installation, Setup would not allow me to repartition the hard drive. I had to reboot the system using the DVD.

There weren't any repartitioning tools available in the installer, so I rebooted again into Vista and used the Disk Management tool. I was surprised to find that, even though Vista only used about 30GB of the drive, it only allowed me to reclaim 30GB of the 100GB drive (presumably due to recovery points and other non-movable system files). I grabbed what I could and restarted the Windows 7 installation at approximately 12:15PM.

The system entered its final reboot at 12:30PM, and proceeded to optimize itself for performance.

I then entered a user name and password, named the computer, and entered the product key. I performed the install at a local restaurant, with free WiFi, and the installation program picked up their network and offered to connect. I allowed it, setting the type of connection to public in order to protect the laptop as much as possible in my test environment. The system continued to boot.

I was presented with the desktop at 12:35PM.

I then inserted the disc I'd downloaded the first Windows 7 32-bit update to, installed the update, and restarted.

I reconnected to the wireless network and started Windows Update. The system found an updated nVidia driver for the Quadro card, and also installed two other minor updates (one to update the definitions for Windows Defender). I rebooted again.

The system came up with the correct screen resolution and with the soundcard properly configured. At that point, Windows reported no further updates were available. Time: 12:50PM.

The total installation time was approximately 35 minutes.

*Continued on page 14*


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I then decided to go ahead, download, and install the free version of AVG Antivirus before continuing configuration.

When I opened IE8 for the first time, it asked me if I wanted to turn on discovery of websites based on websites I visit. I decided to try this feature and clicked to “Turn on Suggested Sites.” I then selected to “Use express settings” to configure the rest of the browser.

When I went to download the AVG installation file to the hard drive, I noticed that the system did not automatically recognize the Vista partition I maintained on the computer. It only offered the C: drive, where I’d installed Windows 7. I downloaded the file to a temporary directory on this partition.

Once I finished antivirus installation, I went into the device manager to check for any missing devices. I was pleasantly surprised to see that every piece of hardware on the laptop was recognized. I applaud the driver support in this BETA version of Windows.

For the Windows Experience score, the system reports: 5.4 for Processor, 5.4 for Memory (RAM), 3.6 for Graphics, 3.5 for Gaming Graphics, and a 3.0 for Primary hard disk. By these numbers, the score for the video card went up, but the overall score dropped due to a lower rating for the hard drive.

#### SOME FOLLOW ON POINTS:

1. The base install size for Windows 7 appears to be 11.5GB.
2. This first installation went so well, I tried the 64-bit version on the DELL D820, and found equal quality driver support.
3. I’ve attempted three additional trials: loading 32-bit and 64-bit versions on a Toshiba X205 system, as well as upgrading the 32-bit Vista Ultimate it came with. The 32-bit load went well, but needed additional drivers installed. One device was not supported. The 64-bit version failed to find four devices, and Toshiba wouldn’t provide 64-bit support for these devices. The upgrade went fine, but the current nVidia video card driver conflicted with the latest Windows 7 version and wouldn’t allow it to install. I had to remove the nVidia drivers, download the driver patch from Windows Update, and install it manually.

I wish you all the best of luck with your own loads.

**Computer Briefs**  
With Sean N. Henderson

## On Software Installations

I received as a Christmas gift Ahead's Nero 9 – a CD/DVD burning suite with some authoring and backup tools as well. I have a combination of software pieces already on my laptop that in some way do some or all of what Nero 9 claims it can do. However, the promise of having all these tasks integrated into a single package seemed appealing, so I decided I'd give it try. I had also recently reinstalled my copy of Nero 6 on my downstairs PC and was pleasantly reminded how much better I liked Nero 6's interface, so this was another push to try Nero 9.

The Nero 9 installation took 45 minutes on my laptop. One colleague mentioned that maybe I should have tried the install with my antivirus software turned off to speed up the process. Except for operating systems, I'm curious why a software package would take 45 minutes to install in this day-and-age of high-speed processors and drives.

Nero 9 is much more involved than Nero 6 and similar versions, where Nero 9 includes media players, some authoring tools, and looks like it will replace the need for other software items. In my case, my laptop had separate programs already for viewing DVDs and authoring DVDs/VCDs.

Remember when installing any software, and especially anything that's a “suite” to make a restore point first and backup your system. I'd also recommend if the install left some installation related files, to keep those around, since some software titles need the leftover installation files to uninstall themselves.

First impressions of Nero 9 are that it will extensively “hook” into the Desktop environment, changing file extension associations, and adding context-menu options. For myself, I'm more fond of applications that do not touch the registry and or are “portable” in nature, so Nero 9 has already a bad score in my book before I've even done anything with it yet. While the installer gives options for which components and templates to install, there is no expert mode to prevent Nero 9 from messing with the file extensions. Also, Nero 9 claims some file extensions that are common or else used by another application.





## WindowsVista – Part IX

### Bill Beverley, Alamo PC

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

Microsoft has recently dropped hints that the next version of Windows, which will be Windows 7 (Win7), will arrive in late 2009 or early 2010. Apparently Microsoft wants to cut its losses on Vista because some customers have had so many problems with it. However, the recent release of Vista's first service pack, a roll-up of tweaks, security patches, and bug fixes, smoothed out a lot of its problems. Vista been on the streets for sometime now and hardware developers have worked the kinks out of flawed drivers that were released early in Vista's life cycle. Win7 will include new globalization support that will make it easier to change the languages and other location related features of application. Many of the Vista application will apply to Win7. It should have improved graphics and be more energy efficient.

Even if WinXP is running fine on your PC, Microsoft hopes the following improvements in Windows Vista will push your hand toward your credit card. Streamlined Start menu: The bright-blue Start button in the bottom-left corner of the desktop is always ready for action. Your Start menu will change as you work constantly updating itself to list your favorite programs on its front page. That's why the Start menu on your friend's computer is arranged differently than the Start menu on your computer.

Quick Search: Instead of forcing you to search for your files time and again, Vista automatically remembers your files' locations. For example, search for every document mentioning "celery," and Vista lets you save the results as a Celery folder. Whenever you create new documents mentioning "celery," Vista automatically drops them into the Celery folder for easy retrieval. Live taskbar thumbnails and other visual cues: Microsoft spent some time decorating Vista with a three-dimensional look. When you can't find an open window, for example, hold down the Windows key and press Tab. All the open windows appear on your PC in a Flip 3D view.

Hover your mouse pointer over any name listed on your desktop's taskbar, and Vista displays a thumbnail picture of that window's current contents, making the window you're looking for much easier to retrieve from the sea of programs. Integrated multimedia experience: Vista's new version of Media Player sports streamlined, easier-to-use controls. The big star, however, is Vista's Media Center, which lets you watch television on your PC and even record shows onto your hard drive for later viewing. Recording TV shows requires two important things, however: a TV tuner in your PC and the proper version of Vista. (Vista comes in a startling five versions.) Installing a TV tuner can be as simple as plugging a box into your PC's USB port or sliding a card inside your PC.

### Here are some thoughts before you purchase Vista.

1. Microsoft has just released its Vista Compatibility Center Web site. You can quickly see which of your peripherals will run under Vista.
2. Microsoft recommends 1 gigabyte of RAM for Vista. However, you should probable double that number. Down the road, you might want to do video or photo editing with Vista.
3. Vista is very heavy on graphics. Vista takes about 15GB of space on the hard drive. Most computers today come with a hard drive of 160GB or more, which is sufficient for the majority of users.
4. The other major component is the microprocessor. Microsoft recommends a 1 gigahertz chip. Virtually everything sold today exceeds that number.
5. If you need an easy way to view and manage your movies, music and photos, there's a Media Center Edition of Windows XP. With Vista, Microsoft made Media Center a program. It is available with Vista Home Premium and Vista Ultimate. You must set up Media Center before using it. The process helps you configure your display and speakers for optimum results. It also scans your computer for media. After configuring Media Center, you're ready to watch movies or listen to music and peruse your photos. If your PC has a TV tuner card, Media Center can also record shows. A program guide helps you schedule recordings.

### Administrator Account

WinXP has a hidden Administrator account. It can be used to troubleshoot the computer's other accounts, which includes changing passwords. To get to it, you'll have to boot your computer in Safe Mode. First, restart the computer. As it starts, repeatedly press the F8 key. Instead of the familiar Windows screen, you'll see a text-only Advanced Options Menu. Use the

*Continued on page 16*

arrow keys to select Safe Mode and then press Enter. Now select the Administrator account. By default on most computers, it requires no password. Once logged in, you can change the password of the account you normally use. To make the change, click Start, Run. In the box, type "control userpasswords2" (without the quotes) and click OK and select your normal account name in the list. Next click the Reset Password button. You'll be prompted for a new password. You can restart the computer and use the new password on the Administrator account.

For Windows Vista there is a built-in password reset feature but you have to plan to use it. When you create the password, make a Password Reset disk. While logged into the Administrator account, click Start, Control Panel and Classic View from the sidebar. Double-click User Accounts and select "Create a password reset disk." This will open the Forgotten Password Wizard. Insert a USB drive. Click Next and select your USB drive from the dropdown menu. Click Next, enter your current account password, and click Next. Finally, click Finish. Store that USB drive somewhere safe. Dig it out if you forget your password. Try logging into your Administrator account with the wrong password. You'll be notified that the password is incorrect. Click OK. A new button labeled "Reset password" appears below the password field. Click it. You'll be instructed to insert that USB drive. You'll then be able to reset the password. Let's say you never created a Password Reset disk in Vista and the XP solution has been disabled. But that may not work for you, either. Your only other option is to crack the password. Several programs can be used. Try NT Password and Registry Editor or Login Recovery.

You use these programs to burn a boot disk onto a CD. If you can't download programs in the limited account, use another computer. Boot from the disk and follow the instructions. You'll be guided through changing the password. If you forget again, Windows can provide you with a password hint. It will help you remember your password if it slips your mind. You'll set it up by managing your password in Windows. In XP, click Start, Control Panel. Double-click User Accounts. Select your account and click "Change my password." You'll be prompted for a new password. You'll also be able to enter your hint. In Vista, click Start, Control Panel, and Classic View from the left sidebar. Select User Accounts and select your user account and click "Change your password." You'll create your hint here. If you enter the wrong password, you'll get your hint. Hopefully, the hint will still make sense to you. You could also use a password manager. These programs allow you to store passwords in an encrypted vault. You'll only need to remember one password to access them all. Three free password managers are Keepass, LastPass and Password Safe.

## Health Report

Vista can run a complete and well-organized diagnostic report highlighting potential problems. In the Control Panel, click System and Maintenance Performance Information and Tools. In the Tasks list along the left, click Advanced tools. The last item on the resulting list is Generate a system health report.

## Vista Features

There are a number of Vista features which can be disabled to enhance the performance of the operating system. Before disabling any of the following features, make sure you create a restore point. You can disable the Sidebar to give your computer a significant speed boost at startup. To remove the Sidebar from view, right-click anywhere on it and select Close Sidebar. Uncheck Start Sidebar when Windows starts, and then click OK. If your computer is underpowered or overloaded, Aero may be more trouble than it's worth. To shut it off, right-click the Windows desktop and select Personalize, Window Color and Appearance. In the resulting "Window Color and Appearance" dialog box, click Open classic appearance properties for more color options. Then select Windows Vista Basic and click OK. You can save more clock cycles by retiring Assorted Interface Beautification Options. To see the options, click Start, right-click Computer, and select Properties. Click the Advanced System Settings link, the Advanced tab, and then the Settings button inside the Performance box. You can uncheck all of the listed items by selecting Adjust for best performance, or you can simply uncheck just the ones that you don't like.

If you run Vista Business or Ultimate, you can use Remove Assistance to control one computer from another. If you are not providing long-distance support, or if you prefer a third-party remove-control application, Remote Assistance is just a waste of resources. To get rid of it, click Start, right-click Computer, select Properties, click Remove Settings, and uncheck Allow Remote Assistance connection to this computer. If you don't print documents over the Internet, then you might want to disable Vista's Internet Printing Client. Open the Programs and Features control panel and click the Turn Windows features on or off link on the left. You'll get the Windows Features dialog box. Expand the Print Services section and uncheck Internet Printing Client. Click OK and then wait a few minutes for the system to ask you to reboot it. Windows Meeting Space lets you share files across a network while editing them with a remote colleague. If you don't use it, shut off Windows Meeting Space by unchecking Windows Meeting Space while you're in the Windows Features dialog box. One of the better changes in Vista Ultimate Edition is to turn off the pointless Windows Ultimate Extra features found in it. Eliminate these features by going to Windows Update, click Start, All Programs, Windows Update, click View available updates, and check out all the extra Microsoft features there. If you don't have a Tablet computer, then you can turn off the Tablet features.

Open the Programs and Features control panel and click the Turn Windows features on or off link on the left. You'll get the Windows Features dialog box. Now uncheck Tablet PC Optional Components. If you are not employing the ReadyBoost feature, turn it off. You turn off ReadyBoost in Services. Click Start, type services, and press Enter. Find and double-click ReadyBoost. In the "Startup type" drop-down menu, select Disabled, and then click OK. If you have Business or Ultimate and still don't need Offline Files because you don't work on files stored on a server, turn it off by clicking Start, typing services, and pressing Enter. Find and double-click Offline Files. In the Startup type dropdown menu, select Disabled, and click OK. Perhaps one of the unhelpful services is Windows Error Reporting Service. To disable it, open the Services window, click Start, type services, and press Enter. Find and double-click Windows Error Reporting Service. In the "Startup type" drop-down menu, select Disabled, and click OK.



## 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.

**T**hanks for your feedback from my remarks last month. I had no negative responses, but I was assured that there probably were some people out there who didn't bother to write me. Probably so, but I appreciated the responses I did receive. I read an article in Information Week about a disgruntled employee who was alleged to have planted 50 to 70 malicious lines of code, amounting to a "logic bomb," before he left the company." It disabled about 2000 servers and brought the company system to a standstill. After four years, they have still not repaired all the damage. It is titled "The Threat Within" and revealed how much damage a disgruntled employee in an organization can really cause. The accused perpetrator is in court, but that doesn't change the damages done. Try these URLs to read more about it: <<http://www.informationweek.com/security/UBStrial/>>

I have packed a lot into this column so be sure to check the product Web sites for better information. I cut a lot of description info out to shorten the items. Also, check the Web site's privacy statements. I have not tried any of these. Be sure to check the information closely.

#### \*Get Those Drives & Petitions Back!

DiskInternals NTFS Recovery can scan any physical drive or virtual image. It doesn't make any changes to the drive itself and can be safely used even on the system volume. While scanning the drive, its recovery wizard shows the progress with the number of found files and folders. When the scanning is over, the user can change some disk properties. You can, for instance set up a new cluster size or proceed with the existing one. The program displays all recoverable files and folders in the explorer-like window. A search engine helps find desired files and moves them to a safe location. With DiskInternals NTFS Recovery, you can access files that the system fails to see.

DiskInternals NTFS Recovery v1.5 runs under Windows 98/ME/NT/2000/XP/2003 Server platforms. A single user license costs \$99.95 USD. DiskInternals offers a 15% discount using the link <[https://www.regnow.com/softsell/nph-softsell.cgi?item=11238-8&ss\\_coupon=NTFS-RAJ9-PR](https://www.regnow.com/softsell/nph-softsell.cgi?item=11238-8&ss_coupon=NTFS-RAJ9-PR)>. The coupon code is NTFS-RAJ9-PR. Registration entitles all users to free technical support and minor upgrades. A fully functional evaluation version of the program is available for download at <[http://www.DiskInternals.com/download/NTFS\\_Recovery.zip](http://www.DiskInternals.com/download/NTFS_Recovery.zip)>.

Product page link: <<http://www.DiskInternals.com/ntfs-recovery/>>

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

Postal Address: Pacific Business Centre, DiskInternals Research, P.O. Box 34069 #381, Seattle, WA 98124-1069, USA

Fax: 206-984-3919

They did not respond to my message when researching the information so I hope the discount is still good. Also, check close to see if there are any catches with the "fully functional" downloadable copy.

#### \*Monitor What The Kids View

Adult Photo Blanker guards computer users from the ubiquitous expansion of pornography and violence in our life. This program not only prevents your children from accessing unwanted websites, but also controls the content of video files and photos loaded into your computer memory from the hard disk. This smart tool monitors nearly all multimedia content. Adult Photo Blanker uses 11 special criteria to reveal objectionable films, websites, images and the like. The program combines this built-in artificial intelligence scanner with the keyword filter, which recognizes unwanted content by specified words, and it is concealed from inexperienced users. Adult Photo Blanker is protected with a password, so if you want to turn it off and watch an adult film, you must use the password you previously specified. It features Block and Safe lists to customize each user settings individually. Each family member can configure options of the program in his/her own way. By the time you read this, a newer version will be introduced.

Adult Photo Blanker runs under Windows 98 (partially) / ME (partially) / 2000 / XP and costs \$49.95 (USD.) Users group members receive a 20% discount. Just enter DEAL-LSFQ-GUY where it calls for a coupon when downloading the paid version. A fully functional trial version of the program is available as a free download at <[http://www.oreware.com/download\\_prog.php?id\\_prog=25](http://www.oreware.com/download_prog.php?id_prog=25)> (4.09 Mb)

Product page URL: <<http://www.oreware.com/viewprogram.php?prog=25>>

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



### **\*This Product Claims To Further Improve Your Windows Operation**

True Launch Bar gets the best of MS Windows OS and streamlines it for greater comfort of use. Its unique system of switching toolbars and expandable menus gives instant access to files, applications, and settings from the taskbar. In addition, overlay images and skins give the system polish and slick looks. The latest update offers support to Windows Vista. You can also group shortcuts into menus that expand and collapse at a click, or float on top of other windows. The use of Drag-n-Drop helps quickly fill the menus with shortcuts for files and applications, system settings and controls. You can customize its color scheme and add gradients and transparency effects. Its plug-ins will equip your taskbar with a newsreader and the weather forecast. You will be able to monitor resources and network activities, access the address book and control media players.

True Launch Bar v4.0 runs under Windows 98/ Me/ 2000/ XP/ 2003/ Vista platforms. A single user license costs \$19.90 (USD). The company also offers a home license for 4 installations priced at \$49 USD. All registered users are entitled to free technical support and program updates. Additional plug-ins and skinning libraries are on the company web site. A fully functional evaluation version of the program is available for download at <<http://download.truelaunchbar.com/install/tlb4.exe>>. True Launch Bar V4.0 will be available at a 30% discount to user group members on these special links to the order pages: True Launch Bar Personal License: <<http://www.regsoft.net/purchase.php3?productid=51538&pc=7L0L7>> True Launch Bar Home License: <<http://www.regsoft.net/purchase.php3?productid=53346&pc=7U0I4>> Product page link: <<http://www.truelaunchbar.com>>

### **\*Lets Improve That Password Protection!**

Double Password, a new security manager, creates your security token on your flash drive (or other USB gadget, such as an MP3 player, PDA or even a USB-pluggable mobile handset). This device becomes the key to your OS. Double Password makes sure that no one can interfere with the work of your computer or get access to your data. It encrypts your password, which can accompany your security token. No external spy program can intercept your password. This is attained thanks to a special "double-bottom" password, which Double Password applies to protect your computer. This means that you enter one password, but the program remembers another (it remembers it in a special encrypted way, which cannot be seen from the outside).

Double Password offers security levels in low, medium and high. "Low" means all users can get access to your computer. "Medium" means that a user can log into your OS only with the help of a special security token (total security is guaranteed as you resort to the described "double-bottom" password). "High" is similar to "Medium", however in this case you cannot even work if your security token is out.

Double Password runs under Microsoft Windows NT/2000/XP. Users group members get a 20% discount using the coupon code YTR79G3 where requested. Discount prices are: Personal license, \$29.95; Family license, \$79.95 and Business license \$59.95.

Product page link: <<http://www.doublepassword.com/>>

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

### **\*This Game Is A Blood-Chiller**

From the creators of "Gunner 2" comes a new breath taker called JetJumper. The plot of the game implies that you become the pilot of an outlandish jumping machine equipped with a powerful jet engine. As soon as the jet engine sets the jumping machine into motion, you will have to jump from one platform to another. JetJumper helps you to collect a variety of useful items, which you are sure to come across; gems, magnets, green keys and the like. All these items help you to score and eliminate some obstacles on your way and to get new lives. Magnets help you to collect more gems. Once you have grabbed a magnet, all gems on your way start sticking to you like flies to an adhesive pad. Once you have jumped aside and have fallen from a platform, the game leaves no chance for your JetJumper to survive. During a takeoff, your JetJumper's jet engine exerts a force of thousands of newtons, so only a professional pilot can handle this aircraft.

JetJumper runs under Windows 9x, Me, 2000, XP (DirectX 8.0 or higher required). The game costs \$19.95 (USD) and they offer a 10% discount to all group members by using TAB000BL code and this URL: <<https://secure.bmtmicro.com/servlets/Orders.ShoppingCart?CID=949&PRODUCTID=9490005>> Registered customers are entitled to unlimited game play and a multitude of unlocked levels.

Product page link: <<http://www.warlockstudio.com/jetjumper.html>>

A trial version offering 60 minutes of game play, is available as a free download at <<http://www.warlockstudio.com/download/jetjumper-setup.exe>>

For more information about the company or games, please visit <<http://www.warlockstudio.com>>



## Reducing exposure to stress

### 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/>>

**M**ake sure that any paper documents that you are reading are placed as close to the computer monitor as possible and that these are at a similar angle - use a document holder where possible. The computer monitor should be placed as follows:

Directly in front of you and facing you, not angled to the left or right. This helps to eliminate too much neck twisting. Also, whatever the user is working with, encourage them to use the screen scroll bars to ensure that what is being viewed most is in the center of the monitor rather than at the top or bottom of the screen.

Center the monitor on the user so that the body and neck are not twisted when looking at the screen. However, if you are working with a large monitor and spend most of your time working with software like MSWord, which defaults to creating left aligned new pages, and you do not want to have to drag these to more central locations, try aligning yourself to a point about 1/3rd of the distance across the monitor from the left side.

Put the monitor at a comfortable height that doesn't make the user tilt their head up to see it or bend their neck down to see it. When you are seated comfortably, a user's eyes should be in line with the middle of the screen. Sit back in your chair at an angle of around 100-110 degrees (i.e. slight recline) and hold your right arm out horizontally, your middle finger should almost touch the center of the screen. From that starting position you can then make minor changes to screen height and angle to suit. If the monitor is too low, you will flex your neck forwards and will end up with neck, shoulder, or mid back pain.

Bifocals and progressive lens - even if you wear bifocals or progressive lens, if you sit back in your chair in a reclined posture (with you back at around 110 degrees) that is recommended for good low back health, rather than sitting erect at 90 degrees, and if you slightly tilt the monitor backwards and place this at a comfortable height you should be able to see the screen without tilting your head back or craning your neck forwards. Postural problems with bifocals can occur if you are hunched forwards. The problem with low monitors is that they cause neck flexion and suffer more from glare. Recent studies have shown that the best position for a computer monitor is for the center of the screen to be at around 17.5 degrees below eye level. Try to align your eyes with the top of the viewing area of the screen, and this should put the center about right geometrically.

Viewing distance - the monitor should be at a comfortable horizontal distance for viewing, which usually is around an arms length (sit back in your chair and raise your arm and your fingers should touch the screen). At this distance you should be able to see the viewing area of the monitor without making head movements. If text looks too small then either use a larger font or magnify the screen image in the software rather than sitting closer to the monitor.

Screen quality - use a good quality computer screen. Make sure that the text characters on your screen look sharp, and that they are a comfortable size (you can change the screen resolution to find a comfortable and clear character size). If you can see the screen flickering out of the corner of your eye you should try increasing the refresh rate of your monitor (with a PC you can change monitor resolution and refresh rates using the Monitor control panel in your Settings folder). You can also consider using a good quality glass anti-glare filter or an LCD display (like a laptop screen).

Eye checkup - there are natural changes in vision that occur as people age. It's a good idea to periodically have your eyes checked by a qualified professional.

If any screen adjustments feel uncomfortable then change them until the arrangement feels more comfortable or seek further professional help.



## Diagnosing RAM Errors in Vista

### Vinny La Bash , Sarasota PC User Group

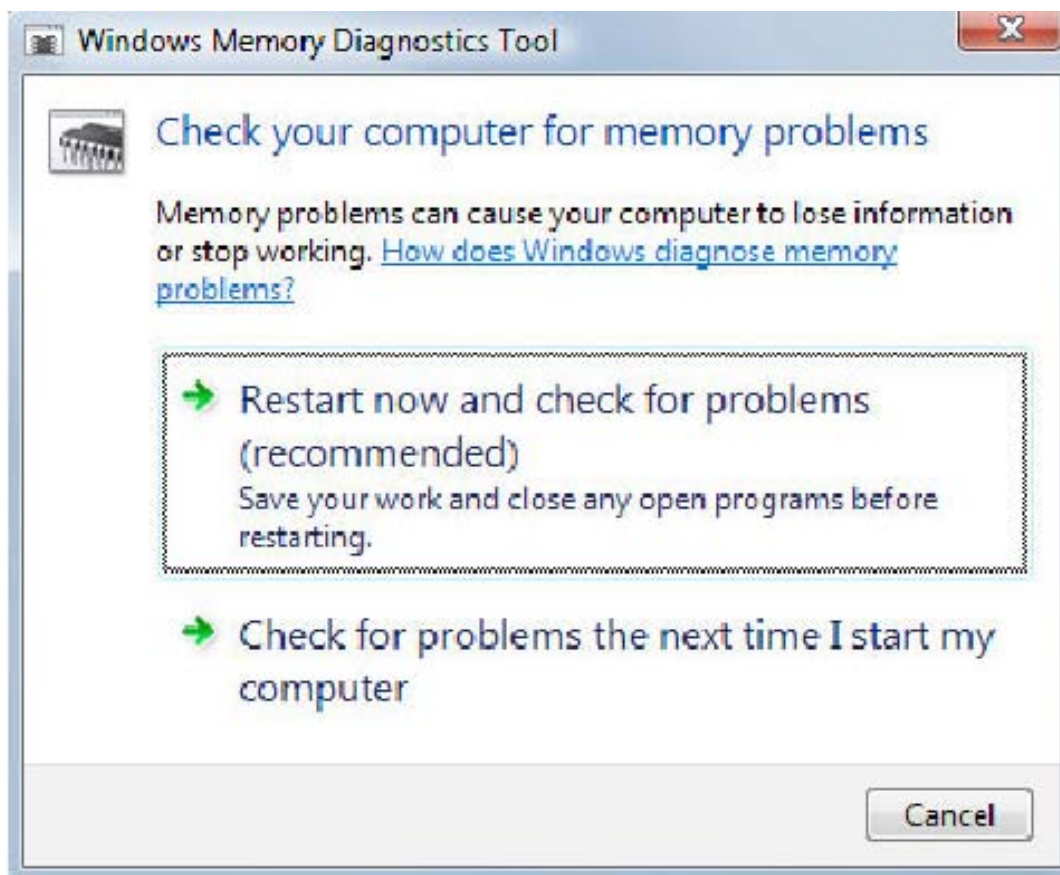
Vinny (SPCUG President in 1996-97-98) is a retired IBM'er and teaches computer part time at the Sarasota Vocational Technical Institute. <labash@spcug.org>

There is nothing useful that can happen in your PC without RAM. That's why it's essential to have high quality, reliable memory chips installed on your equipment. Defective RAM shows up as application errors, messages that your operating system is not quite right, and stop errors which bring your system down hard and unexpectedly.

Testing your machine's RAM with Vista's Windows Memory Diagnostic will either find your problem or assure you that your RAM is in tip-top condition.

With your system up and running, close all applications before launching the diagnostic tool to prevent data loss. Click on the Start orb, select Control Panel, and click the System and Maintenance icon. Select Administrative Tools, and from the right pane click on the Memory Diagnostics Tool icon. An alternate way of starting the tool is to click on the Start orb, type Memory in the Start Search text box, and then click the Memory Diagnostics Tool icon.

When the dialog box appears left click on the portion that starts with Restart now. The dialog box will close and your computer will restart. Eventually the Windows Memory Diagnostic Tool's dialog box will appear and the test will begin automatically.





Watch the white progress bar as the test advances through its various stages. You will be able to track progress as the tool repeatedly writes information to memory and then reads the data to verify that nothing changes from the write to the read.

The default is a standard memory test, but there are two other types of memory tests available to you depending on how much time you want to devote to testing, and how thorough you wish to be. Pressing the F1 key will bring up the Options screen.

Locate the Test Mix section and choose either the Basic or Extended mix. The Basic mix runs a decent basic test, but is superficial in comparison to the Extended mix. Up to eight hours can be required for the Extended mix, so don't run it unless you have exhausted all other options.

Each test mix was designed with certain default cache settings which are optimized for that particular test mix. You can change the defaults and create a custom mix of your own, but unless you have an advanced level understanding of how memory works and is tested, you are probably better off leaving the default settings alone.

Some analyses use the cache on the microprocessor to see if the microprocessor is retrieving data properly from the memory modules. Other tests disable this cache to force the microprocessor to access all its data directly from the memory modules.

The tests are run twice, but by pressing the Tab key you can access the Pass Count section and specify how many times you want to repeat the tests. Make your changes and save them by pressing F10.

Messages will appear on the Status area if problems are found. If you wish to do other things while the tests are running, you can because if problems are found the Windows Memory Diagnostic Tool will reroute data around the trouble areas and allow Vista to restart without crashing. When you return, look in the notification area to access the test results. The System Event Log also stores the test results. Look under MemoryDiagnosticResults.

What if Vista won't boot? Start the system and continually press the F8 key until the Windows Boot Manager appears. The Windows Memory Diagnostic option is at the bottom of the screen and you can select it with the arrow keys.

If it's impossible to get to the Boot Manager, run the tool from the Vista installation disk. Follow instructions until the Install Now prompt appears. Look for and select the Repair Your Computer option. You will find the Windows Memory Diagnostic Tool on the System Recovery Options menu.

The Windows Memory Diagnostic Tool is an excellent utility, but it sometimes delivers a false positive. In addition, many knowledgeable people believe that hardware based testers are superior. Regardless, the utility is an excellent diagnostic instrument provided it is used with those limitations in mind.

## Computer Briefs

With Dave Gerber

### Killing a Window

Have you ever had one of those windows that misbehave? By "misbehave," I mean you cannot get it to Maximize or Minimize. Sometimes Web programmers want to splash a screen onto your PC with no controls and will use this technique so that you can't get their junk off your screen. For some bizarre reason they think this is a good thing. Anyway, you do have some control with the standard Windows window control options.

Click anywhere in the misbehaving window and hit Alt + Spacebar.

On the resulting menu, you can choose Close and kill the window.

# Tech issue

## Consumer Electronics Show 2009

Written by **Joe Nuvolini**, President, Pikes Peak Computer Application Society, CO, <http://ppcompas.apcug.org>, [Nuvo@nuvolini.com](mailto:Nuvo@nuvolini.com)

**T**he trip to Las Vegas was uneventful. The line to get a cab was about 20–25 minutes long as many were arriving for the show. The Somerset House Motel was surprisingly pleasant. The room had two beds, lots of closet space, a nice bathroom, and a kitchenette with a frig, sink, and stove. The walk from the motel to the press room in South Hall was about 15 minutes.

*Continued on page 23*

Wednesday evening, I attended the Sony press conference at the LVCC. The presentation lasted about 30 minutes and was about all the “new toys” they would be

showing at CES. One was the Sony Vaio P series. It is an Ultra Mobile PC (UMPC) weighing 1.4 lbs with wireless WAN/LAN, an 8” hi res screen and built in GPS. It runs

about \$900. They showed some of their Bravia LDC HDTV’s in the 26” to 56” range. Other Sony items were their 10–12 Mp digital cameras and digital picture frames. It was a nice affair with wine, beer, cheese and crackers, and fruit.

The press room featured sweet rolls and Starbucks coffee for breakfast. Chatted with

member Frank Fraser on my ASUS using Skype. It worked fine. While checking out Skype, I found my daughter, Marie, in Portland online so I got to see her and my granddaughter, Sara.

The South Hall opened early the first day so I hit the floor at the opening gun. Stopped at the SDCA (that’s an FLA for SD Card Association). They reported that the next generation of SD cards (SDXC) will hold up to two terabytes of data and will

have read/write speeds of 104 Mb per second with a road map to 300 Mb per second. Hopefully we will see them later this year. At that rate you could buy a camera for a newborn with one of these cards and take photos his/her whole life and never erase any. Imagine, one’s whole life on an SD card. UMPCs were everywhere at this show. I had no idea how popular they had become. I spent some time in the morning of the first day in the South Hall, Central Hall, and North Hall (automotive area). I was working my

way over to Piero’s for Lunch@Piero’s sponsored by Pat Meier Johnson. I missed this event last year and wanted to make sure to get there first thing this year. Pat was as lovely and gracious as ever. They did not serve lunch this year, but I had planned to have lunch at the Press Room.

I attended the Sandisk press briefing. They announced several new items. The first was their line of SSDs (Solid State Drives). They now have them in sizes up to 240 GB. Prices range from \$149 for a 60 GB to \$499 for a 240 GB; still a bit pricey. Next was Slot Music. These are devices that play pre-loaded micro SD cards. We all were given

a slot player. It will have to wait until I get home to report on it. They also have a slot radio that plays the micro SDs and is also an FM radio. It will sell for about \$99.99. Slot radio cards will run about \$39.99 but will be loaded with music. A couple of other items

of news: iTunes will change their pricing structure with songs going from \$.69 to \$1.39, depending on the popularity of the song. They will also no longer be protected.

While at CES, I watched the BCS football championship; first half at the Riviera and the second half in my room. Was glad to see Florida win and also to see that Utah was rated #2! At lunch on Thursday, I sat next to a gentleman from Rome whose family had relatives in Civita di Bagnoregio, one of my favorite spots in Italy. I saw him again at the

Victorinox press conference. More on that later.

The Central Hall was loaded with big screen LCD panels from an assortment of vendors with spectacular high definition displays. I spent some time wandering around there. As mentioned earlier, Victorinox, makers of Swiss Army knives, held an affair for the press

at the end of the third day. Their big news item was the announcement of Presentation Pro. Many of you have seen their knives. Well, Presentation Pro lets you load a presentation on their flash drive which is part of a Swiss Army knife. The presentation data is encrypted when loaded on the drive using an algorithm based on your finger print so it is totally secure. The unit also has an LED pointer for use during the presentation. The button to advance the slides is also on the unit, using bluetooth technology. Victorinox has been in the business of making Swiss Army knives for close to 125 years and has always tried to stay on the cutting edge of technology. It was quite an impressive presentation which, by the way, was made using their new device. The attendees received a device which looks like a pocket knife but, in fact, contains a flash

drive, pen and flashlight. The flash drive contained their press kit.



On Saturday I went over to the Sands/Venetian area to see what all was in that venue. It was home for many gadget devices as well as the home for the Asian vendors' displays. One really neat device I saw was by Pogoplug. This unit is about the size of the electrical conversion transformer I take to Italy with me each year. It plugs into

an AC wall outlet. There are two jacks on the other side. Into one you plug your external USB hard drive. Into the second, you plug an RG45 CAT5 cable from your router. You log into the vendor's Web site and register the units registration number, your e-mail address, and password. Once registered, you can access the drive from anywhere in

the world. It then appears as a local drive on the computer you are using until you log off. Pretty neat. It runs about \$79.

Speaking of remote access, I have been writing daily reports from my home desktop computer using logmein.com, which I wrote about a few months ago. It works great. I

even downloaded Windows 7 beta onto my home desktop when it was released that weekend. It was about 2.5 GB so it took a while. However, the ISO file was sitting there for me when I got home. I plan to borrow an unused computer from the office to run it on. I'm sure I will have to add a bit of RAM.

By Sunday, the last day, many of the attendees had departed so there was not a lot of activity. The effects of the recession were obvious at this year's show. There were fewer vendors. Attendance was down 23% from last year (110,000 versus 140,000). Hopefully, if the economy improves a bit this year, next year the show will return to its old robust size. That's it for CES 2009. I look forward to CES 2010!





# File Management – Part One

by **Ron Hirsch**, Contributing Editor, Boca Raton Computer Society, Florida, [www.brscs.org](http://www.brscs.org), [ronhirsch1439@comcast.com](mailto:ronhirsch1439@comcast.com)

What exactly do I mean when I say file management? And, I can hear you saying “Who needs to fool around with that stuff. I have too many real things to concern myself with. My computer takes care of all those things anyway, doesn't it?” Well, the answer is yes and no. If you went into a restaurant to dine, would you rather select your own choices from the menu, or just have the waiter bring you what he feels like bringing? Very few of you will answer with the latter. But, most people don't bother to establish/customize their file preferences on the computer. It's easier to just take what the computer has been set to do. And, they don't have to learn anything (they think) if they just accept all the defaults.

Please note that I'm making the assumption that you know how to use a mouse, and right or left click on things. And, when I say “scroll down” or drag, you know what to do. If you haven't reached this point yet, I think it's time to take a very basic beginner's course before proceeding.

The simplest way to understand the way your computer stores things is to consider the following. Suppose you saw a line of text as follows -

USA\Florida\Boca Raton\123 Broadway\2nd floor\room 24\gray file cabinet\top drawer\3rd folder\2nd document.

I'm sure that everyone would understand exactly where to look for the document in question. The line above is actually a descriptive path to get you there. Well, computer hard drives store things in a very similar way. A path to get to a document in your computer might be -

c:\My Documents\Letters\Personal\Aunt Emma's Birthday.doc

This path states that the filename is “Aunt Emma's Birthday.doc”, and it is in a folder named “Personal”. That folder is a subfolder of “Letters”, which is a subfolder of “My Documents”, which is a folder on the hard drive C. To define paths in computer language a “\” is used to separate the various elements of the path. Note that this information is not case sensitive. That is, upper or lower case makes no difference. Just having learned this already puts you well on the road to understanding file management.

File management includes things such as establishing certain folders which will be the storage areas for your documents, and other files. You direct where files will be stored in various of your programs by saving your files in folders you establish or define. This makes things easier when you want to do backups also. Many programs allow you to specify what those folders are. So, when you go to save a file, that folder comes up as the default. A common cry from beginners is “I saved the file, but I don't know where it is.”

Within a folder you can have sub-folders. For example, if you had a folder c:\letters, you could put in subfolders for business, personal, club, etc.. This way, you have an organized filing system. If you have a file drawer that you use for filing things, most people will have separate folders or hangers for different categories. Throwing everything in the same area make it much more difficult to find things, just as putting all your different socks into the same drawer, unpaired, and mixed up, makes life tougher also.

Most people are intimidated by their computers. Remember, it's only a machine, and you should be the boss, not the computer. The more you understand, the more in control you will feel. But, that doesn't just happen. Like all things in this world, you must make it happen.

Reading these articles, and doing the practice can help you along the road to that end.

Once you become reasonably proficient in the subjects to be presented, you will be prepared to move files around, copy them to a floppy or ZIP disk to back them up, or delete them. The exercise below should help you in this area.

Please note that the protocols used here are applicable not only to PC's, but also to Mac's. These protocols are very logical once you understand them. The term “Windows” will be used throughout the article. This means that all versions of Windows, 95, 98, ME, or Windows 2000 will follow the same procedures

## Exercise on next page

## EXERCISE NUMBER 1

1. Open up Notepad - if you don't know where it is, click on the START BUTTON on the bottom left of your screen  
START>PROGRAMS>ACCESSORIES. Double click on Notepad, and the standard Windows text editor will open. Notepad is simply a small program in which you can generate and edit text documents. It offers almost nothing in the way of formatting, but is a bare bones text editor, as opposed to WordPerfect or Word which are capable of elaborate activities.
2. Type “This is a test.” in the Notepad window.
3. Save the document by clicking on FILE>SAVE. A window will open. At the top of the window is an area with the notation “Save in”. It will probably show your C: drive. If not, use the scroll arrow to select the c: drive. Once you have done this and double-clicked on it, there should be a listing below of all the folders on the C: drive. Scroll to the one named “My Documents”, and double click on it. (My Documents folder is a standard folder that Windows installs.) The focus is now on that folder. Next, go down to the bottom of that window and in the field at the bottom, select “all files(\*.\*)” just to see what else is in that folder. There is a field with “File name” alongside of it. In that field, type testfile.txt. Then click on the save button. You have now saved that file in the “My Documents” directory. Now, exit Notepad.
4. Open Windows Explorer. If you don't know how to do this, it's time you learned. Click on START>PROGRAMS>EXPLORER. Or, click on the Windows key and the “e” key on your keyboard at the same time. Navigate around to display the list of folders on the C: drive. If that's not what showing, find C: on the left and double click on it. This should bring up the list of all the folders on the C: drive. Find the My Documents folder, and double click on it. There should be at least one file there, the one we just saved called “testfile.txt”.
5. Before continuing, I suggest that you configure Explorer to show all file extensions. This makes working with Explorer easier. At the top of the Explorer Window, click on VIEW>OPTIONS, and then uncheck the line which reads “Hide file extensions for the types that are registered.”

# How can I keep my PC clean and tidy?

Written by Gabe Goldberg, Computers and Publishing, Inc., [tiplet@gabegold.com](mailto:tiplet@gabegold.com)

Like changing your car's oil or replacing your home's air conditioner filter, a little PC cleaning pays off with a faster, more reliable, and longer-lasting computer.

Although nothing suggested here is either rocket science or inherently dangerous, always follow the medical adage, "First, do no harm". So don't do anything that makes you uncomfortable (perhaps have a more experienced person clean up while you watch and learn), and back up your system and data. Then reboot, to get a clean start, and don't open any programs,

Before starting, to measure what your cleanup deletes, determine how full your hard drive is. Open My Computer, Right Click your hard drive (usually labeled "Local Disk (C:)"), and click Properties. Note how much space is used and free, then close the dialogue box.

Next, use Windows' built-in disk cleaning tool. Click Start, All Programs, Accessories, System Tools, Disk Cleanup, and the drive to clean, likely C. Choose what to clean; default selections are usually what you need. To be extra thorough, if your system has been running problem free, click the More Options tab and then Clean Up System

Restore. Confirm your choice and click OK.

Delete Web browser temporary files. Using Internet Explorer, click Tools on the Menu Bar, Internet Options, and Delete Files under the General tab. Other browsers provide similar functions, sometimes using "cache" to refer to the collection of temporary files.

Delete unneeded personal files, items outdated and no longer used. While most Microsoft Office programs (Word, Excel, etc.) store their files in the My Documents folder, you may have changed this default location. And other apps likely have their own favorite places to stash files. Look around, since cluttered files make Windows work harder to get things done and waste time and resources when they're backed up. If you collect photos, music and such, delete those you no longer want or need, perhaps

saving them on CD/DVD or ISB drive. Sorting files by size or date helps find deletion candidates.

If you run PC-based email software, it's worth periodically purging Sent and Trash folders, perhaps pitching material older than a certain date. Then look for a Compact Folders option, sometimes on the File pulldown menu, which squeezes out unused space from email folders.

Weed out software no longer used or useful by uninstalling applications with Window's Control Panel Add/Remove Software tool.

The Recycle Bin, which preserves erased files for recovery until it's emptied, has likely grown during this cleanup process. To empty it, Right Click its Windows desktop icon and click Empty Recycle Bin. Note that programs such as Norton Utilities may offer other cleanup options for the Recycle Bin and other Windows components.

Finally, remember that when writing to your hard drive, Windows places bits of each file in the next available open space on the hard drive.

While Windows can reassemble them, having many files fragmented slows access to them. So, to store all files as single entities, periodically defragment the hard drive. To do this, click Start, All Programs, Accessories, System Tools, Disk Defragmenter, select a drive, and click Defragment.

When finished, compare the amount of hard drive space used and free to what you saw initially. If this is the first cleanup you've done in a while, the amount of space recovered may surprise you.

Many books give much more detailed instructions for PC cleanups. Search Amazon.com for "degunking windows" and "cleaning windows" to see choices (but don't be distracted by instructions for cleaning house, office, and car windows!).

# Juice Your Broadband *Speed*

Written by **Vinny La Bash**, a member of the Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, Inc., FL, [www.spcug.org](http://www.spcug.org), [vlbash@comcast.net](mailto:vlbash@comcast.net)

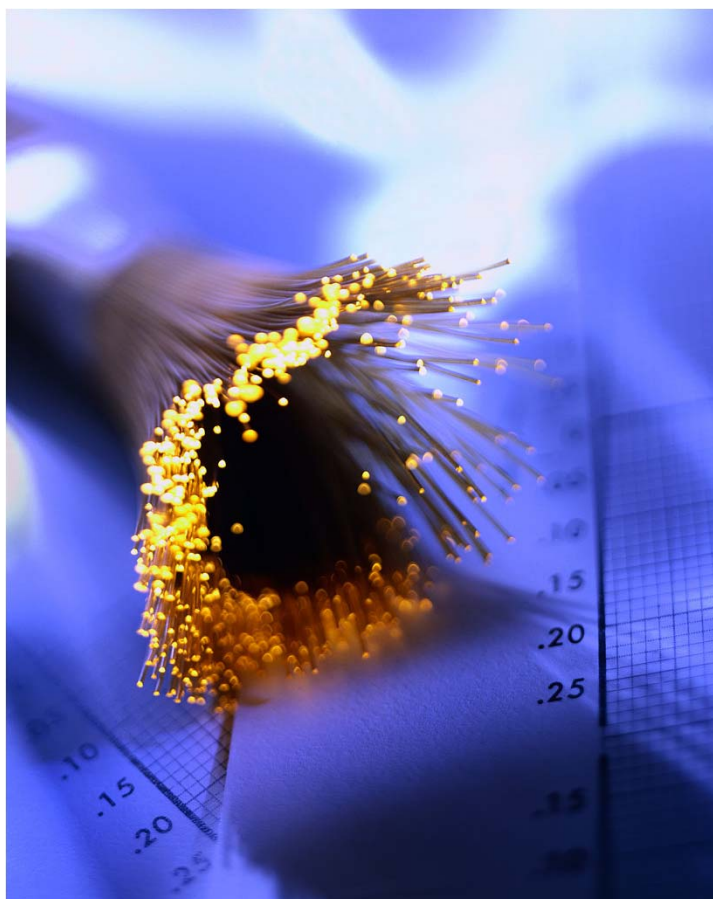
**P**eople prefer broadband internet connections because of the obvious speed advantages over dial-up and satellite links. Then why is it that broadband never seems to be fast enough? Are you getting the speed promised by your ISP? Broadband can cost \$100 a month or more, but does the provider really provide the advertised speed? Is the connection reliable or does the modem need a reboot several times a day? Fortunately, there are ways to achieve high, reliable throughput without having to have an engineering degree. Here are some suggestions to get every bit per second possible from your modem without any technical hiccups or interruptions in service.

Start with your computer and TV equipment. A common source of line noise can be traced to improper grounding of anything that plugs into household electrical circuits. This can seriously degrade performance of cable equipment. Every electrical device, especially those in the same room as the cable modem, should be plugged into properly grounded outlets. The best connections are with polarized plugs oriented in the correct direction, and please don't use any three prong to two prong adapters. Get up-to-date gear. Electric outlet testers are cheap. Buy one and use it to test for excess voltage on your cable wiring. Any problem could indicate a serious safety hazard. Engage a licensed electrician to fix it.

Almost anything manufactured today in the consumer electronics world is light years ahead of its predecessors manufactured only two or three years ago. Cable modems are no exception, so if yours is more than three years old get a new one from your provider. Most providers will make a free exchange, but some will require an extension of your contract. You want to do this because the latest modems conform to the DOCSIS 2.0 standard. This offers higher upload and download capabilities and supports other advanced broadband applications, including online gaming and peer-to-peer computing.

Ask your ISP if they automatically update firmware for the modem. If they don't, have them supply the website address of your modem's manufacturer so you can download the most recent firmware. Check the website about twice a year for new updates.

Next, go to a test site such as PC Pitstop, and check your upload and download speeds to see if they match the terms





of your service contract. If they don't, give your ISP a call and have them reset the modem's settings. While you're at it, have them check the signal-to-noise ratio. Too much noise can cause interference, and your modem will then have to resend information cutting down on your throughput.

It's possible that your cable wiring may contain too many splices or simply be too long. That can be fixed by a visit from your ISP technician. Have the technician check the line quality leading to your house. If the signal is good and you're having problems, the house wiring may be the culprit. The definitive answer for cable modems is to create a split directly after the junction box and then run a new cable directly to your modem. The other side of the split will take care of your television sets which aren't nearly as sensitive to line noise.

After you've done everything from a hardware and firmware standpoint, and your cable connection is as clean as possible, you're ready to fine tune the system for best performance. Vista users don't have to do much of anything to optimize the operating system since Vista does TCP stack tuning dynamically. Any internet performance adjustments can be made through the browser. Firefox users may want to try Firetune or Fasterfox. They are both free utilities and allow adjustment to cache memory, capacity and other settings such as pipelining.

If you do a lot of downloading, you can save time by installing a download manager like Flashget. This widely used utility claims the highest number of users on the internet. It uses MHT (Multi-server Hyper-threading Transportation) technique. It's very easy to use and comes with exceptional document management features. Best of all, it's free.

After all this work, it would be a tragedy if you didn't keep in mind that sometimes the simplest solutions are the best ones. Most cable modems and routers have reset features. Many a mysterious internet ailment has been corrected simply by resetting the equipment. Turn off the computer and the modem. Un-plug the modem for a few minutes and then power everything back on. You may be pleasantly surprised.

## Computer Briefs

With Dave Gerber

### Rename a Series of Files

If you have a series of files you want to rename, but want to keep the sequence intact, here's how:

Using Windows Explorer, locate the files. Be sure you're in "Details" mode.

Go to the last file in the sequence and select it.

Hold down the Shift button and select the first file in the sequence.

All the files should now be highlighted.

Go to File/ Rename. You should now be able to rename the first file. Be sure to keep the file extension. All the files should now be renamed in sequence with the new appellation.



# Improving Vista Performance

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

Microsoft has added security features in Vista which didn't exist in XP. There are new functions and while the graphics are really neat, they can give your system a big performance hit if you don't have enough memory. Thanks to up-to-the-minute technology, and great manufacturing improvements, RAM is cheap. There is no good excuse for not loading up with as much memory as possible.

Vista is the most RAM hungry modern operating system in existence. One gig is about the lowest amount of memory you can have without feeling that you're slogging through a lake of molasses. Two gigs should give you acceptable response time, and four gigs will put wings on your PC with some afterburner boost thrown in. Don't be a cheapskate. It's false economy to starve your system of RAM.

If you are already loaded with Ram, you can use Vista's built-in ReadyBoost feature in conjunction with a flash memory card or USB key to give an added kick to system memory. You need a high performance flash card or USB drive. Insert the device and Vista will politely ask you if you wish to use the device to speed up system performance. Answer yes, and then tell Vista exactly how much of the device to devote to speeding up the system. ReadyBoost will be active as long as the device is plugged into the system.

Once you have enough memory, examine your video card. If you want to experience the full graphic capabilities that Vista offers, buy a video card that's Vista Premium Certified.

To see how your video card checks out, open up Control Panel, switch to Classic View, and then activate the Performance Information and Tools utility. Look at your base score. This number represents the overall graphic capability of your system. Notice that your base score is not some combination of all the subscores. Your base score is the lowest performing member of all your subscores. That doesn't seem fair, but that's reality. You can try updating your score, but it probably won't change.

If you get between 1 and 3, general operations which include word processing and spreadsheet tasks will work fine. Email and web browsing should be OK, but web sites with large amounts of embedded graphics will take a long time to load. Video applications will be problematical.

A base score between 3 and 4 can run Aero and the majority of the new Vista features, but Vista's more advanced capabilities may bog down your system. For example, your monitor will be satisfactory even at its highest resolution, but multiple monitors may slow down your system severely. You will be able to watch most TV shows, but a high definition broadcast could be a slow motion disaster.

A base score higher than 4 should handle anything that Vista throws at it, including HDTV and 3D gaming. If what you want or need from Vista requires a higher base score than your system can provide, you need to replace one or more of your components. Use the subscores to determine what stays or goes. A low score may require you to either turn off the Aero interface or upgrade your video card.

Go back to the Control Panel. From the Classic View activate the System icon and then select Advanced system settings. When the System Properties dialog box comes up, click the Settings button in the Performance section. You're about to make some tough choices.

If you can't make decisions, you can Let Windows choose the best settings for my computer and be done with it. Adjust for best performance disables all the great visual effects that make Vista a terrific graphical interface. Adjust for best appearance makes your system look spiffy, but you'll take a hit on speed.

Choosing Custom allows you to make some reasonable compromises while keeping full control of your PC. Some features like sliding menus are pure eye candy and do nothing useful. Turning them off gives performance improvement with no loss of function.

There are options in the Advanced tab where you can control how the CPU processes work. What's more important to you, adjusting for visible performance or making sure that the housekeeping services Vista performs are performed efficiently? Make your choice and monitor your system. You can always change it back later.

Unless you know what you are doing, leave the Virtual memory section alone. Virtual memory is a portion of a disk drive that's configured to masquerade as memory. Because it's part of a disk and not physical memory, it can't work as fast as real memory. When the system runs out of physical RAM it can use a disk drive to keep going instead of stopping dead in its tracks.

You can change the location of the file to a different disk, resize it, or do both. Each choice has consequences of its own. Making the wrong choice won't destroy your system, but it could noticeably slow down performance. The default choice is to let Vista manage the file. That's the best choice for most people.

There are many other things that you can do to get the best possible performance from Vista such as modifying the Index Options, but that's a subject for another article.



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# Moving on to Vista – Part 13

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

**T**he chances are the first peripheral device you purchased for your computer was a printer. You may have even received a “free” printer when you purchased your computer. Vista makes it easier than ever to connect a new printer to your computer than ever before. The Plug-and-Play feature really works (unless, like me, you have an old laser printer that Windows Vista does not support. :- ( ).

So you connect your printer, follow the Printer Wizard's directions, it works and you're happy. But wait. Have you examined your printer to discover all of its functions? Did you know that many modern printers, even the inexpensive models, can print on both sides of the paper, print sideways on the paper (called landscape mode), print in gray scale as well as in color and allows you to control print quality (to save ink when you don't need high quality print). Here's how to find out what you can do and manage it.

Create or open a document using your favorite word processing program or WordPad. At the top of your screen, click on “File” and then scroll down to “Printer Settings” and click again. When the “Printer Setup” window opens, click on the “Properties” button. At this point what you see depends largely on your individual printer.

In the case of my HP printer, I see a window with tab labeled “Paper/Quality”, “Finishing”, “Effects”, “Basics”, “Color” and “Services”. Selecting the appropriate tab allows me to select print quality (Normal, Draft, Enhanced, etc.), Portrait or Landscape mode, page order, color, single or two sided paper printing and many other options. In the case of my HP printer, when I select two sided paper printer, the printer prints on one side of the paper and then an on-screen message shows me how to reinsert the printed sheet in the paper tray to print of the other side. These print options are actually determined by the printer, not Windows. Windows just provides the means to control the printers features.

Windows frequently provides more than one way to do the same thing. Desktop icons provide a shortcut to run programs listed in the Start Menu. You can easily create new desktop icons by opening the Programs section of the Start Menu, Selecting a program, right clicking on it and drag it to a blank area on your desktop. When you release the right mouse button a short menu appears with the option to “Create Shortcuts Here”. Select it, and left-click once to create the icon. You can rename this icon to anything you wish.

If you right-click on a desktop icon, one of the menu option is “Properties”. Select Properties and left-click once. Under the “Shortcut” tab notice the entry line labeled “Shortcut key”. It probably contains the entry “None”. By selecting a suitable key (letter or number), you can create a key combination shortcut to your program. It's a convenient way to access frequently used programs, spreadsheets and documents.

Before we leave this menu, notice the button labeled “Change Icon”. When you left-click on this button you'll see an array of icons that you can use to substitute for your default icon. Pick an icon, click on the “Okay” button and then click on “Okay” again. Your new icon will appear on the desktop.



# Moving to a New Mac

Written by **Richard Corzo**, Director, Danbury Area Computer Society, CT, [www.dacs.org](http://www.dacs.org), [rcorzo@dacs.org](mailto:rcorzo@dacs.org)

After work one evening, I tried hopping on to my iMac G5. It was unresponsive, and several attempts to reboot it got it to various stages. Sometimes no further than the familiar Mac boot chime to a black screen, sometimes all the way to a full desktop before the machine froze. It was past the three-year AppleCare period, and I'd long since grown tired of the fan noise it had developed over time. I had figured on keeping the iMac until next fall, by which time I expected Snow Leopard to be out. But, this behavior seemed to press the issue and accelerate my intended schedule. The Apple Store was just a few minutes away, and I'd already thought about what I wanted for my next Mac.

I couldn't resist the temptation for immediate gratification, so I headed over to the Apple Store. Although I didn't really need mobility within my own household, I thought it would be convenient if I could have a laptop this time that I could take with me to the Macintosh SIG. I'd read about the sleek and solid aluminum unibody construction of the new MacBooks and MacBook Pros. The one thing that was holding me back a little was the smaller hard drive size of the laptop compared to my iMac. The 320 GB of the higher model 15.4" MacBook Pro is probably generous for most people, but I had ordered my iMac with a 400 GB drive, and used more than 300 GB in the Leopard partition. After a few questions and some hands-on time, I decided to go ahead with the MacBook Pro and brought it home.

The Apple Specialist had mentioned that when I first booted up, the Setup Assistant would offer me the option of transferring data and settings from a Time Machine backup. Fortunately, I had one on an external drive, since my iMac wouldn't stay up long enough to expect a reliable direct transfer through the network or FireWire. I plugged in the external drive and the Setup Assistant recognized the available Time Machine backups. It took about 2 hours and I had just 8 GB left of my 320 GB. I had chosen to transfer the machine settings as well as the data and settings from my two home folders. (I find it useful to have an additional "admin" user in addition to my own normal logon.)

The next evening I started to settle in to the new machine. One of the first things I tried was starting iPhoto. It asked me if I wanted to automatically start iPhoto the next time I plugged in my digital camera. I said Yes, and continued on to verify that my photos were all showing up. The next time I started iPhoto I got the same question, and it started to become apparent that something was amiss. Talking to our Mac guy at work the next day gave me the idea that I needed to check the permissions on the Preferences folder, which is located inside the Library folder of my home folder.

Indeed, that folder showed a small no access symbol superimposed over the folder icon, as did several other folders within my home folder Library. Doing a Get Info on the folder revealed that there was No Access to Everyone, which explained why preferences were not sticking. In the Get Info window I changed permissions to give myself read/write permission on the folders in question, and requested that the permission change be applied to any enclosed items. If I haven't lost you yet, I'll mention one more thing that may have been a factor in the wrong permissions. On my iMac I had recently changed the numeric user ID to 501,



which is the default for the first account created, so I could access my own home folder when booted from the Mac installation on my external drive. If you understand UNIX, this might make some sense to you. Otherwise just ignore the last few sentences and enjoy the rest of the article.

That seemed to do the trick. iPhoto now remembered my answer, and I was on to iTunes to verify that my music was all there. Things seemed to go well until I started setting up MobileMe syncing on my new machine, going into the Sync tab of MobileMe preferences to initiate my first sync. It seemed to start but then stopped immediately with the status still saying Never Synchronized. Checking the Console available in the Application:Utilities folder, I found no messages between the sync start and stop that would give me a hint as to what was wrong. I expected to have to visit a Mac Genius at the Apple store, but a conversation with the Mac guy at work made me realize that I was going to have to start with a fresh account and home folder. I canceled my Genius appointment.

When I got home I backed up my home folder to my external drive. (If you don't already have one, have I convinced you yet that you need an external drive for your Mac or PC?) Then logging into my other admin account I deleted my main account and home folder, and recreated a fresh account. I brought back my data one major folder at a time, Music, Pictures, Movies, etc. I did not however copy back my Library folder, except for the Mail and Mail Downloads folders. Folders inside the Library, such as Preferences and Application Support are presumably what were causing my sync problems. So I didn't want to bring back the bad karma. This means that preferences will have to be reestablished for all your applications, although you could try copying back some individual preference files on a case-by-case basis. My new home folder was a success, because I could now sync with MobileMe. This allowed me to bring down my Mail account definitions, and then successfully start Mail.

I'd like to make a small plug here for the Mac OS design over Windows. The Windows equivalent to the individual Mac preference files is the monolithic Windows registry. If you've ever had to pick through the registry to try to eliminate traces of a failed application on Windows, you'll appreciate the ability to just delete a Mac preference file without fearing that you'll mess up some other application or part of the OS.

One issue that you may run into by starting with a clean home folder is that licensed software may require you to reenter the license key. If you installed from physical media, you'll need to go find the sleeve it came in. Much of my software was downloaded and a key was sent in an e-mail. I have a mail folder called Software Licenses to keep those important e-mails. I recommend that you use an IMAP e-mail account such as that which MobileMe offers. IMAP accounts keep mail on a server, so it doesn't matter if your hard drive crashes. You'll still have a copy of that e-mail. If you don't want to pay for MobileMe, then of course go for a free IMAP account such as AOL or AIM Mail (<http://mail.aim.com>), or second best, a Web mail account.

One other thing I wanted to mention is that I migrated from a PowerPC-based Mac to an Intel Mac, and one might wonder if any issues might arise. Many of my applications were already Universal, meaning they were compiled to run on either PowerPC or Intel architecture. On the other hand two PowerPC-only applications got two different results. Happily my Macromedia Dreamweaver (before they were bought by Adobe) runs without a hitch. Yet Adobe Reader 8, a PowerPC application from my old machine, gets an error message: You can't open the application because it is not supported on this architecture. I'm sure downloading the Intel Mac version of this will easily resolve this.

I'm still working through some issues with Spotlight and getting my first complete Time Machine backup, but so far I really like this new MacBook Pro. It's a beautiful machine. I may have an advantage over those used to a trackpad with a separate button, but this being my first Mac laptop, I'm having little trouble getting used to the trackpad.



# Sandbox Computing

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

I spend a lot of my time surfing the web looking for research material; computer tech sources, genealogy data, vocal music and other information. This means that I am downloading many web pages, clicking on many links and generally opening up my computer to all types of malware. I always have to be aware that there are many traps on web pages that are just waiting for the unwary surfer. It used to be that having an up-to-date virus checker, a working firewall and parasite scanners, you could adequately protect your computer.

That changed to some degree when the "drive by" downloads appeared. Now with the constant appearance of "holes" in the Windows operating system (XP & Vista) and the various web browsers, it is less obvious that you can protect your computer from unwanted visitors. Microsoft recently (October 22, 2008) released an out-of-cycle patch (patch 958644) for Windows for what has been described as a very serious opening that could be exploited regardless of the browser you are using. There have also been recent articles on "clickjacking". In this situation "buttons" or links are floated behind the link you think you are clicking. The only option to prevent this is to disable JavaScript.

That creates more problems as JavaScript is a very important part of the whole web experience and is used on almost every page. So when you do know that you can run a script and when you can't? Well, the "Sandbox" may be a way to surf safely and avoid the installation of malware on your computer without having to disable JavaScript.

My Sandbox experience is based on using the software application "Sandboxie" ([www.sandboxie.com](http://www.sandboxie.com)) with Windows XP and Firefox 3.0. As with everything related to computing, your results might be different. Sandboxie is a very small program, approximately 450 KB. So it is quick to download and doesn't require a lot of memory to run.

Next, let's take a look at what is meant when I talk about a computer sandbox. The sandbox is a complete "virtual computer" running in your computer's memory. This virtual computer is isolated from the real operating system files and creates any files it needs for use within the sandbox. When the sandbox closes, everything in it disappears unless you chose to keep it. It's like having a bank vault within a building where everything can be locked within the vault and nothing is removed without special permission. The neat thing is that nothing that happens within the sandbox can have any effect on your computer. This means that Trojans, rootkits and other malware have no chance to affect the operation of your computer outside of the sandbox. If a problem occurs when you are running in the sandbox, all you need to do is shut it down, you are returned to your normal computer operations and the malware is erased.

When Sandboxie is started it creates a sandboxed folder which contains a drive folder, user folder, and Registry "hives". The "hive" is Microsoft's term for collections of related Registry keys stored together. The parts of the Registry needed for sandboxed operations are stored in a hive which is then integrated into the Registry. There are also instances of Windows services stored within the sandboxed folder that can be accessed by applications running within the sandbox. These are referred to as "process objects" and are needed for normal operations. When the sandbox is running there may be instances of these objects running both sandboxed and non-sandboxed. Also, you can run an application within the sandbox at the same you are running it outside the sandbox. The complete operating system is not loaded into the sandbox. This reduces the memory required for the sandbox operations.

Applications running in the sandbox can not hijack non-sandboxed programs. Therefore they can not operate outside the sandbox. New files or other created objects have a path assigned by Sandboxie which directs them into the sandboxed folders. Sandboxie prevents any programs running inside the sandbox from loading drivers directly. It also prevents programs from asking a central system component, known as the Service Control Manager, to load drivers on their behalf. In this way, drivers, and more importantly, rootkits, cannot be installed by a sandboxed program. This is one of the features that prevents rootkits from being installed outside the sandbox.

*Continued on page 36*

In actual operation, using Sandboxie is very simple. To make it even simpler, there is a short tutorial available on the Sandboxie web site. This can be accessed from within the program the first time you run it or directly from the Sandboxie home page by clicking on the "FAQ & Help" link.

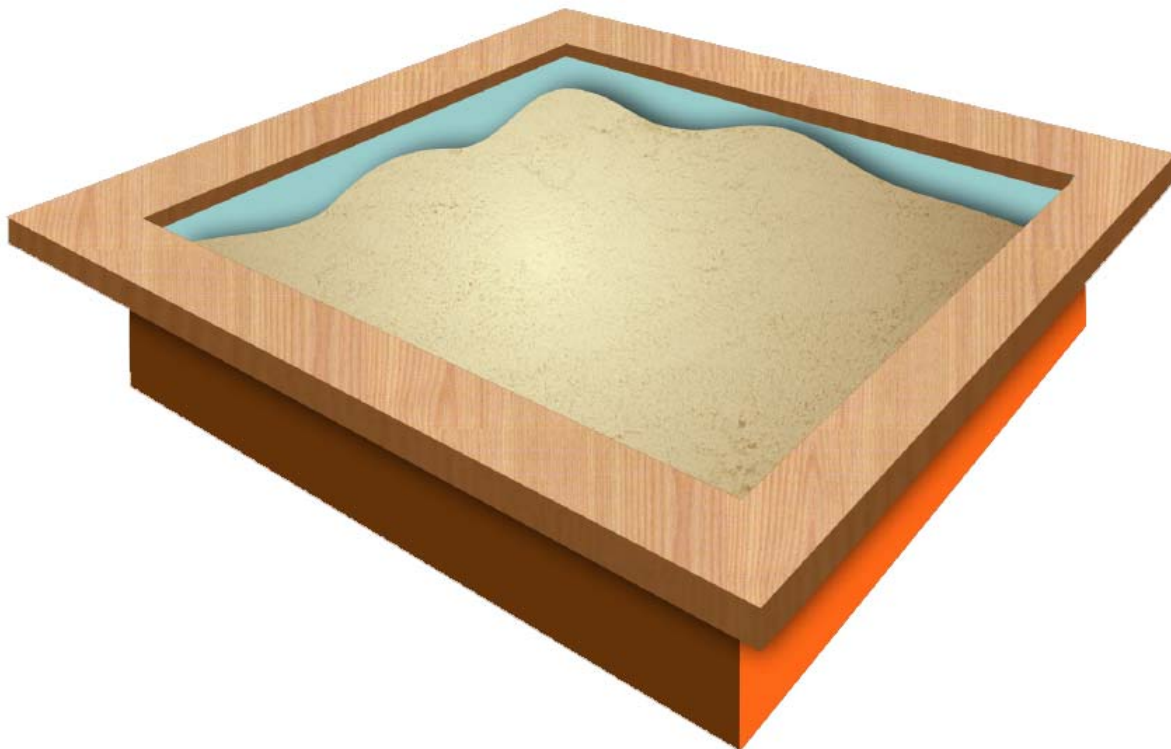
After installation it can be set to load whenever the computer is started. This puts an icon in the system tray. Clicking on this icon brings up the Sandboxie Control Center. This window lists all sandboxed applications and object. When I started it, the window indicated nothing was sandboxed. So, using the menu I selected run an application and then selected Firefox. This changed the list in the window to show Firefox as well as the two RegHive files. With Firefox up, I did my usual web surfing. Along the way I received a message from Sandboxie that a new version was available that I could download. At this point, I really couldn't tell that anything was different from my previous surfing experience with Firefox. So I went to the Sandboxie page and downloaded the new version. After finishing I closed the Sandboxie Control Center. Then I went looking for the download so I could install it. Well, it didn't exist anywhere on the hard drive! I had closed Sandboxie without marking the update to be saved! As a result the download was deleted, along with all the other sandboxed files when I closed the Control Center. So I opened the Control Center, restarted Firefox and downloaded the update. This time I selected it to be saved before I closed the Control Center. Then I was able to install the update.

I should also point out that now I have an icon on the desktop which automatically runs Firefox sandboxed. Sandboxie can be set up to isolate your browser automatically whenever you open it. To do so, add the name of your browser's executable file, such as firefox.exe or iexplore.exe, to the list of programs Sandboxie always opens in a sandbox. If you don't do this, Sandboxie will not set your browser to open automatically in the sandbox.

As you can tell from these comments, Sandboxie does not require a reboot to start the sandbox process. Sandboxie does sandbox access to files, but not to the complete hard drive. It does sandbox access to registry keys. It also sandboxes access to many other classes of system components, in order to trick the sandboxed program into believing that it isn't being tricked. So you can open and close Sandboxie repeatedly while you are using your computer without having to do any rebooting.

If this discussion has interested you and you would like to take Sandboxie for a test run, the free version can be downloaded from: [www.sandboxie.com](http://www.sandboxie.com). This application is free for personal use. However, there is a Pro version available for \$30.00. If you like the program and can afford it, buy the Pro version. This software is the work of one person, Ronen Tzur, and this payment is his means of support to continue working and improving this software. After some experience in running Sandboxie, I can highly recommend it as an excellent method of protecting your computer from malware. :

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





# Tech News That Affects Everybody

Written by Sandy Berger, CompuKISS,  
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Some of us scour the technology and business sections of the newspaper and the Web to get the latest news. Some of us head for the lifestyle and community sections, without much of a care about technology. Yet, today's technology news is often news that will affect everyone's life in one way or another.

Let me give you a few examples. The Pope recently announced opening of the Vatican YouTube channel ([www.youtube.com/vaticanit](http://www.youtube.com/vaticanit)) which will feature short video clips of Pope Benedict XVI's activities and links to news and information about the Catholic Church. The Pope is posting two or three videos each day. Most are short clips showing the Pope's speeches, activities, and participation in important events. In a recent speech, the Pope praised the Internet as offering rich opportunities for dialogue, friendship and spreading the Christian message.

There is a lot of irreverent stuff on YouTube, but the Pope's participation shows how mainstream this popular video website has become. YouTube, FaceBook, MySpace, and other social networking websites have become more and more popular. If you haven't yet visited any of these, YouTube is a great place to start. ([www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com))

Another recent news announcement was the Palm Pre, which is a smartphone that will be available in a few months through Sprint. You might think that this is just another phone, and you would be right. But the implications for cell phones are quite dramatic. Palm has developed a totally new version of the operating system for this phone. Google now has their own cell phone operating system as do Microsoft, BlackBerry, and Apple. These are some pretty big name and you will notice that the software that runs these phones is called an operating system. That's because these phone are really mini-computers that can do email, surf the web, and perform many other functions. Cell phones are changing dramatically. They are turning into handheld computers that will change the lives of those who use them.

We also should not overlook Apple's recent announcement that they will be dropping the DRM (digital rights management) for all songs in their iTunes store. The DRM crippled the songs so they had limited use. For instance, they could only be played on a certain number of devices or be copied a certain number of times. So music lovers the world over will be rejoicing to see that by April of this year, all of iTunes 10 million songs will be DRM-free. There is one caveat. Those who have previously purchased music and/or videos on iTunes that included Apple's DRM will now have to pay to get the DRM removed. Apple will be charging 30 cents a song. iTunes has sold six billion songs since going online in 2003. They did not offer any DRM-free music until recently. So most of those six billion songs had DRM. If every purchaser pays Apple 30 cents for taking away the DRM, Apple would make \$180,000,000. A boon to Apple, a pain-in-the-rear for honest music lovers who previously used the iTunes store.

Microsoft was also in the news recently with their announcement that the beta testing version Windows 7, their next operating system could be downloaded and tried for free. Their website was inundated by curious Windows users. So many came, that they had to add more servers and download services. They originally said that they would limit the downloads to 2.5 million, but recently removed that restriction and will continue to offer the beta trial until February. Don't think that you will be getting something for nothing, though. The beta of Windows 7 will stop being functional on August 1, 2009. At that time you will either have to reinstall your previous operating system or pay for Windows 7.

Last but not least in the technology news is the announcement that Western Digital has created a 2 terabyte hard disk drive. Believe it or not, this may have one of the biggest effects on individual users. As we can store more and more digital data at reasonable prices, more and more data will be digitized. We are already living in a digital world, but that world gets more reliant on technology every day.

# Simple file management enhancements are at the top of a wish list for Windows 7

by **Linda Gonse**, Editor, Orange County IBM PC Users' Group,  
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Besides the obvious - a stable system that performs fast, without vulnerabilities - I have thought of a few things I'd like to see integrated into the Windows 7 OS which may be released in 2009/2010. When it comes right down to it, I don't care if I can use 10 fingers to Paint with or other iPhone-like multi-touch features, or if Internet Explorer can recall a previous browsing session. Simple file management enhancements are at the top of my wish list.

I want to be able to print a list of my files and file information - a print directory feature. In the "old days" of DOS, you could do this. And now, you can use third party programs to accomplish this, but why isn't this already built-into Windows?

In Windows 3.11, there was a simple undelete feature. In later versions, the Recycle Bin gives you a chance to recover files you delete in haste or ignorance. But, what about files you deleted from the Recycle Bin? If you don't have a third party program installed, the files are really history.

Wouldn't it be great to have autofiltering in Windows Explorer? Clicking on the top tab in a folder allows you to sort by Size, Date Modified, Type, etc. - but you still have to scroll through all the files in a directory to get to the specific file you are looking for. If you could set an autofilter, such as Excel has, you could choose which extensions would be viewable, click on one, and only those files would be visible.

Windows 3.11 had the capability to only show certain types of files. This was closer to what I'd like, but it was a little involved to set it up and then be sure you reverted to the default file view afterward. And, what about being able to flag a file and see the flag in Windows Explorer? Or, jot a post-it like note and attach it to a file?

DOS also allowed you to rename extensions on an entire directory of files. That would be a handy tool now. What happened to the "quick view" inside of a word processing file in a directory? I want it back again.

A constant aggravation is the Open and Save As boxes in Windows and applications. Sometimes there is a miniscule box to view an entire directory in bitesizes. Why can't all the boxes be large ones? And, why can't they be modified permanently so you can always view them the way you like them, such as you do in Folders?

Another drawback to these windows is that despite file names that are not very long, to the right of the file name I have to slide the first two columns - Size and Type - closer, scrunching them together, so I can see the Date Modified tab in the same window. Sometimes you can scroll to see the Date Modified tab, but that is still not handy.

I have rearranged the headings to suit my need for selecting files by the most current. But, after closing and reopening an application, I have to modify the list again. Why can't my modifications be permanent? Also, I'd like to see these types of windows open up larger or have a resizing option to drag a corner border to make them larger.

Why do directories sometimes get scrambled? They aren't alphabetized or in any other order. Before I can open a file (not every time), I first have to click on the Name bar to alphabetize the directory. (Yes. There is a trick to closing a window to retain the order when it's reopened. Hold the Shift button down as you click on the "X" in the corner. But, you shouldn't have to do this.)

I'd also like to be able to format file names and related information in a directory. Maybe make some bold and orange, or some a bit smaller. Or, add stars or a ranking notation to files. The logical next step would be to set-up a sort function to be able to look for all items in a certain color or in 8 point type, or the file ranking.

Do you see the usefulness of these changes in sorting files? Modifying directory listings can be very helpful. It would allow users to see at a glance which items are important, or used most often, etc.

This is my short list. Have I mentioned anything on yours?

# When to Turn Off Personal Computers

**U.S. Department of Energy - Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy. A Consumer's Guide to Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, [www.energy.gov/forconsumers.htm](http://www.energy.gov/forconsumers.htm)**

If you're wondering when you should turn off your personal computer for energy savings, here are some general guidelines to help you make that decision.

Though there is a small surge in energy when a computer starts up, this small amount of energy is still less than the energy used when a computer is running for long periods of time. For energy savings and convenience, consider turning off

- the monitor if you aren't going to use your PC for more than 20 minutes
- both the CPU and monitor if you're not going to use your PC for more than 2 hours.

Make sure your monitors, printers, and other accessories are on a power strip/surge protector. When this equipment is not in use for extended periods, turn off the switch on the power strip to prevent them from drawing power even when shut off. If you don't use a power strip, unplug extra equipment when it's not in use.

Most PCs reach the end of their "useful" life due to advances in technology long before the effects of being switched on and off multiple times have a negative impact on their

service life. The less time a PC is on, the longer it will "last." PCs also produce heat, so turning them off reduces building cooling loads. For cost effectiveness, you also need to

consider how much your time is worth. If it takes a long time to shut down the computer and then restart it later, the value of your time will probably be much greater than the value of the amount of electricity you will save by turning off the computer.

## Power-Down or Sleep Mode Features

Many PCs available today come with a power-down or sleep mode feature for the CPU and monitor. ENERGY STAR® computers power down to a sleep mode that consume 15 Watts or less power, which is around 70% less electricity than a computer without power management features. ENERGY STAR monitors have the capability to power

down into two successive "sleep" modes. In the first, the monitor energy consumption is less than or equal to 15 Watts, and in the second, power consumption reduces to 8

Watts, which is less than 10% of its operating power consumption.

Make sure you have the power-down feature set up on your PC through your operating system software. This has to be done by you, otherwise the PC will not power down. If your PC and monitor do not have power-down features, and even if they do, follow the guidelines below about when to turn the CPU and monitor off.

Note: Screen savers are not energy savers. Using a screen saver may in fact use more energy than not using one and the power-down feature may not work if you have a screen saver activated. In fact, modern LCD color monitors do not need screen savers at all.

## Software Review

### Photoshop CS4

Published by Adobe

A review by Ron Hirsch, Contributing Editor, Boca Raton Computer Society, FL, [www.brcs.org](http://www.brcs.org), [ronhirsch1439@comcast.net](mailto:ronhirsch1439@comcast.net)

Actually this is Photoshop version 11, since Adobe still does keep a number ID for Photoshop. Adobe has been releasing new version about every 18 months, and they are right on track for this newest version. I've been reviewing Photoshop since version 2.5, and it really has come a long way. With each new version, I ask myself what they can possibly add in to warrant a new version. Adobe has always surprised and delighted me with the new features.

Most of my activities in Photoshop are related to image retouching and restoration. I closed my custom darkroom and switched to all digital about 5 years ago. Color processing in the complete dark, along with the smell of chemicals can't hold a candle to processing in Photoshop. It's like comparing the stone age to today's hi-tech world. And with all the digital tools in Photoshop, pure magic can be accomplished when compared to what could be done in the darkroom era.

I consider Photoshop to be the finest program ever written for the PC.

### SOME OF THE NEW GREAT FEATURES

Adobe has been refining and improving the program's ability to work better, faster, and more smoothly, using new approaches for many of the tools and processes that Photoshop incorporates. There are a number of new capabilities that build upon existing tools to make using them better, and more flexible. And, there a number of totally new features which allow users to improve their work flow. Many of these are described below.

### ADJUSTMENTS PANEL

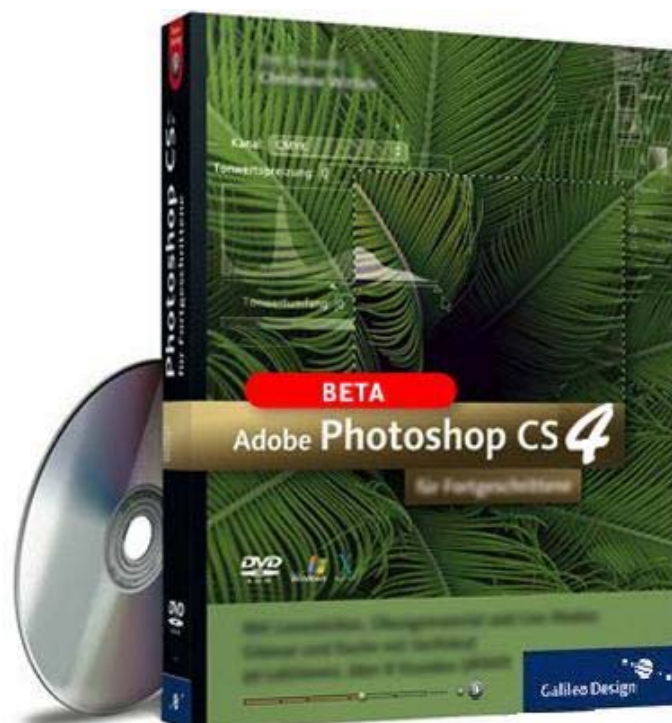
Up to CS3, the various tools such as curves, etc., were individually selected from a dropdown menu. Using them in an adjustment layer required that the user click on a different menu path to create a specific adjustment layer. Adjustment layers are the best route to take, as one can go back to that layer at any time, and change the adjustments made. Each adjustment layer had to be called up from the dropdown menu lists.

In CS4, there is a new Adjustment Panel with a choice of 15 icons, all representing the various adjustments that are possible, such as Levels, Hue/Saturation, Exposure, Channel Mixer, Color Balance, a revised version of Curves, and also a brand new Vibrance adjustment tool. All these adjustment layer capabilities can now be created from a central panel. With each choice, there are also a number of preset adjustments, along with the ability to create a custom "adjustment", and save it for future use. The user can readily turn off/on any adjustment, delete it, or reset that adjustment to the starting no change default.

There is enormous flexibility in the adjustments panel. You can resize it to take up more or less space than the default size. When any of the various buttons on it are selected, the display in that panel changes to what one would normally see for that adjustment. Having the ability to use the default presets, and custom user saved presets, make it all the more powerful

### THE MASKS PANEL

Masks are an indispensable feature of Photoshop. They allow the user to block/pass material from one layer as needed. Painting with white on a layer mask will allow the painted material in that layer to become visible. Black will block it. Gray will partially pass it. A mask is actually a selection that is created. The selection can be "adjusted" via the usual selection modifiers, to soften expand, contract, etc., the selection boundaries. And it can also use other selection tools to modify the actual selection mask. The Mask panel has a collection of all these tools in one place to make working with masks much more efficient. And this panel can handle both pixel and vector based masks.





An update color range feature is included in the Mask panel. “Density” and “Feather” sliders are also included. In the Mask panel, you can select the color range to apply the changes to, use a brush to change the mask, and adjust the mask edge to suit your needs. All in all, this panel makes using masks much easier, and more powerful.

## ADOBE CONFIGURATOR

This is something totally new to Photoshop. Configurator is a utility that enables the user to create custom “panels” within Photoshop CS4. Running this utility brings up a window where you can create (drag to size) an empty panel. Then you can drag just about anything that Photoshop has in the way of commands, tools, actions, et al, to build a custom set of Photoshop activities, with all of them at your fingertips. Configurator provides you with a good-sized window on the left of the Configurator program window, where all the tools, menu items, et al are displayed. And, for those tools where there are multiple tools for a given tool choice, all the choices are displayed for one to choose from. The same goes for all the dropdown menu items in CS4. Every one is displayed.

Now, just drag the things you want to be available into the custom panel. You can position them where you like, and in any order you want. If you need more room in the new panel, just drag an edge to adjust the size. When you want to call up that custom panel, click on Window>Extensions, and select it from the menu. Then drag the panel to the desired location on your screen, and you can now click on any of the buttons in the panel to make things happen. Configurator does not give you any added activities that were not in CS4 to begin with. But it makes accessing them much quicker, much as the Adjustments and Mask panels do.

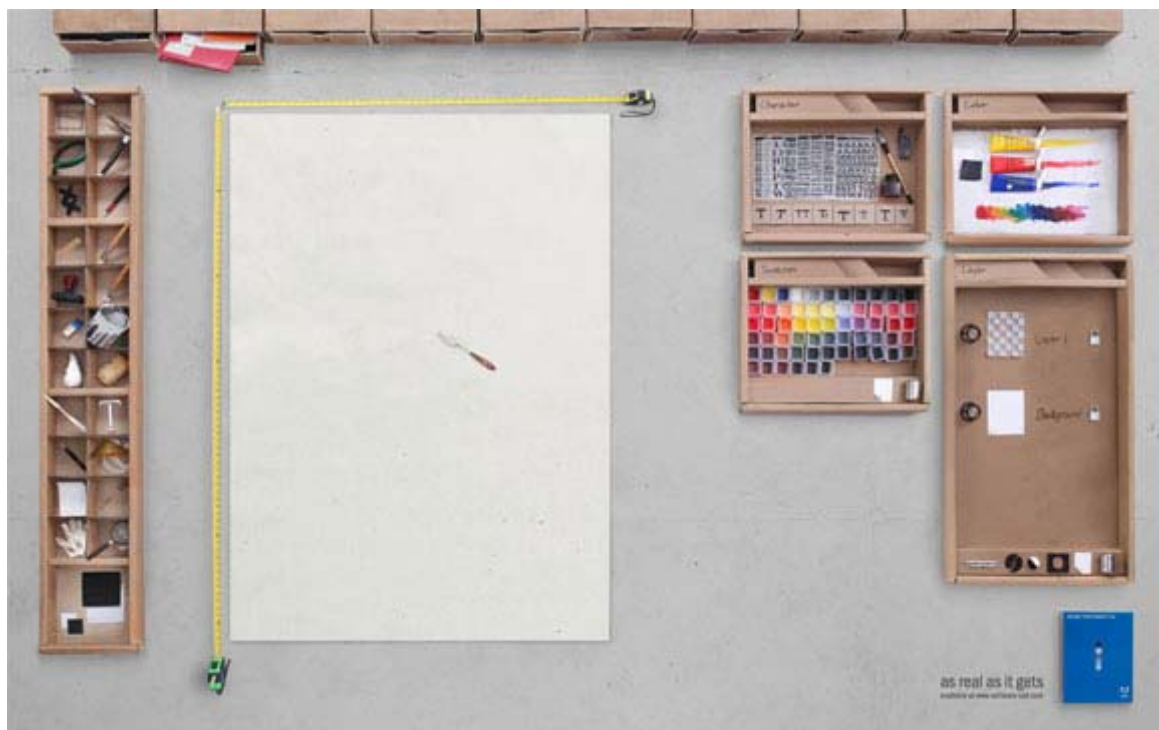
## BRIDGE CS4

Bridge has been the “file manager” for Photoshop and other program in the “CS” suites since the suites started. Bridge is more than just a file manager however. It has a wide range of features and customization capabilities that make it the tool to use when browsing, selecting, rating, and editing the EXIF information in images.

Users can customize the display, set the thumbnail sizes, and the size of the individual right side image display for the image selected in the left side thumbnail area. It can mark images via a user set rating value, and of course sort images via the many choices of parameters. Any custom settings can be saved and recalled for specific tasks. Files can be renamed in batches, via a comprehensive set of rules which the user can customize. And contact sheets can be designed in Bridge, and saved as PDF files for printing and other uses.

CS4 does not appear to have any significant changes from CS3. But it is a powerful tool to use in viewing, ranking, selecting, evaluating, and ranking your images prior to opening them in Photoshop.

## ADOBE CAMERA RAW 5.0



Adobe Camera Raw is the intermediate step for users to open RAW files from their digital cameras et al, and do some preliminary “processing” before then moving them to Photoshop for the final retouching. All the activities in Camera Raw are non destructive, that is the file in question is not permanently changed. And Camera Raw has the equivalent of a “Panel” of very comprehensive image adjustment features, some of which are not in Photoshop, such as color temperature.

Prior to version 5.0, adjustments made in Camera Raw covered the entire image. Now, however, the user has the ability to restrict the areas where adjustments are made, essentially functioning like a layer mask does. The “Adjustment brush” is the tool that does this job. One can paint onto and limit the affected areas. There is also a Graduated Filter that applies a selected effect using a gradient, which tapers the effect from full to none. This filter was previously only available in Lightroom, but has now been included in Photoshop CS4.

When CS3 was introduced, it included the ability to open a JPG file in camera raw, which was not possible earlier. So, that gave the user the ability to work with the “Panel” of adjustments that camera raw offers, even if the file is not a RAW file. This became a usual route for me when working on JPEG images, as the clustering of tools in Camera Raw moved most retouching tasks along much faster.

#### DODGE & BURN IMPROVEMENT

The dodge and burn capability in CS4 has been improved considerably. In earlier version, when dodging and burning, the tone of the are being worked on suffered a shift in the actual color/tone. Now an option to “Protect Tones” has been added to the options for these tools. When dodging in CS3, without the “Protect Tones”, the area being dodged looks as if a whitish color is overlaying the dodged material. When “Protect Tones” is checked, this whitening is greatly reduced, and the tone/color seems more vibrant after being dodged. The same saving of the tonal quality is preserved when burning.

#### THE VIBRANCE TOOL

This was a tool only available in Camera Raw in CS3, but it is now available in Photoshop CS4. It appears to similar to the older Hue/Saturation tool. But Adobe has improved the results here, similarly to the way they improved the old Brightness/Contrast tool. Vibrance does add saturation to a color, but the more saturated it is, the less it gets changed. Avoiding the garish results when using the older Saturation tool.

#### SPRING LOADED KEYS

Photoshop has always had several keys that can switch to different tool functions while the key is held down. This feature allows you to access a tool temporarily by holding down the key for that tool, similar to using the spacebar for the hand tool - only for many more tools now. After learning the letter for the tools you use often, you can quickly invoke that tool temporarily, by holding down that letter key. This can be a great time saver.

#### IMPROVED GRAPHICS PERFORMANCE

Photoshop CS4 makes use of the power of a good graphics card to improve your screen display. Users with a graphics card with 256 Mb (or more) of card memory and a GPU can now do smoother scrolling, zooming, and panning. The capabilities of the “better” card in your system will now be recognized by CS4.

#### IN CONCLUSION

The new features in CS4 that I've presented are only a partial listing. I've concentrated mainly on those which I feel are most important to me, in my tasks of retouching and restoring images. Photoshop can of course do much more than that. It has creative capabilities far beyond what most people realize. The more I use it, the more things I discover. It is a bottomless pit of wonderful tools and capabilities.

To discover more of its wonders, sometimes I just open Photoshop and start browsing around in the many menus and command listings, and just “play”. And every time I do this I come away with more knowledge of it what it can achieve. It's hard to imagine what CS5 will bring, but I can be sure that it will be more and greater tools and capabilities.

Here's a number that I find amazing. I did a search for “Photoshop” on Barnes & Noble, probably the largest book vendor on the Internet. There were 1080 items found. That is a testament to the widespread popularity of Photoshop.

## Software Review

Circuit Writer Version 6.6

Published by Adobe

Review by Jim Scheef, Director, Danbury Area Computer Society, CT, [www.dacs.org](http://www.dacs.org),  
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**Y**ou remember Richard Stallman, right? He's the founder of the Free Software Foundation ([fsf.org](http://fsf.org)), creator of the GNU operating system ([gnu.org](http://gnu.org)), and has been called "the last true hacker" for at least 20 years.

His take on cloud computing could not differ more from John Patrick. Stallman would tell you that you give up your freedom when you give your data to a remote site rather than keeping it on your machine with free software. There are many, many blogs discussing the comments Stallman made in an interview and I referenced one of them last month – InformationWeek, November 19, 2008 ([tinyurl.com/6zztcc](http://tinyurl.com/6zztcc) to save you from digging).

Here is a quote from the interview:

"One reason you should not use Web applications to do your computing is that you lose control," he said. "It's just as bad as using a proprietary program. Do your own computing on your own computer with your copy of a freedom-respecting program? If you use a proprietary program or somebody else's Web server, you're defenseless (sic). You're putty in the hands of whoever developed that software."

Another name for cloud computing is "software as a service". SaaS has been a hot ticket for the last few years for all sorts of enterprise level applications. Some say that cloud computing is just a new name for buying your software and having it hosted remotely. One of my sons just completed a successful SAP implementation for his company. With people using the system at distribution depots all over the country, it made more sense to have the system hosted than to invest in all the data center infrastructure needed to provide enough bandwidth for adequate response times – not to mention the people needed to manage that equipment. In this case, cloud computing is just business reality. By the way, their hosting service is in New Jersey.

When we look at the cloud services that we mere mortals might want to use like Zoho Applications ([zoho.com](http://zoho.com)) or Google Apps, some are free as in free beer but none are free as in free speech. When you sign up for such a service, no matter what the service agreement might say about your privacy, your data is at the mercy of that site and its security. And, unlike open source software, you cannot modify the software used by the service to make it suit your needs. The service agreement may even prohibit you from reverse engineering the software and the DMCA could make doing so a crime. Do you begin to see his point? On one hand we have John Patrick telling us to embrace the cloud to free ourselves from worries about backup and data loss with easy access from wherever we might be; and on the other hand we have Richard Stallman. As always, the truth is likely to be found somewhere in the middle. We will explore this more next time.

In the meantime, where did cloud computing begin? How is cloud computing different from timesharing on a minicomputer or mainframe? Was CompuServe and similar services the original consumer cloud? You can comment on my blog at [circuitwriter.spaces.live.com](http://circuitwriter.spaces.live.com).

### The CAN-SPAM Act as a warning

One of my favorite columnists is Scott Bradner who writes in Network World. His column in the January 12 issue ([tinyurl.com/aytbvu](http://tinyurl.com/aytbvu)) is especially noteworthy. As news coverage of the inauguration reaches a crescendo, all the business press can talk about is all the new regulation expected from the new Congress. There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that regulation is needed in several areas. However, as Scott points out, the legislation intended to regulate spam isn't. He points out that the act was written by the spam industry and thus legitimized spam as a business model. Lesson number one, regulatory legislation must be written by and enforced by someone who wants it to be effective. In the case of the Internet, no regulation is often the better policy as the various attempts at suppressing porn have shown. However our recent experience with the financial industry has proven that no regulation is just not a viable option.

### Is your DSL router vulnerable?

Read this article (<http://tinyurl.com/8faqxt>) on Dark Reading to see if your DSL router might be vulnerable to attack. The affected routers are commonly used on AT&T DSL service. A quick web search shows a simple DSL gateway device, not the common "2-Wire" device. Apparently the Motorola/Netopia 2210 device does not require authentication to change configuration. Imagine that.

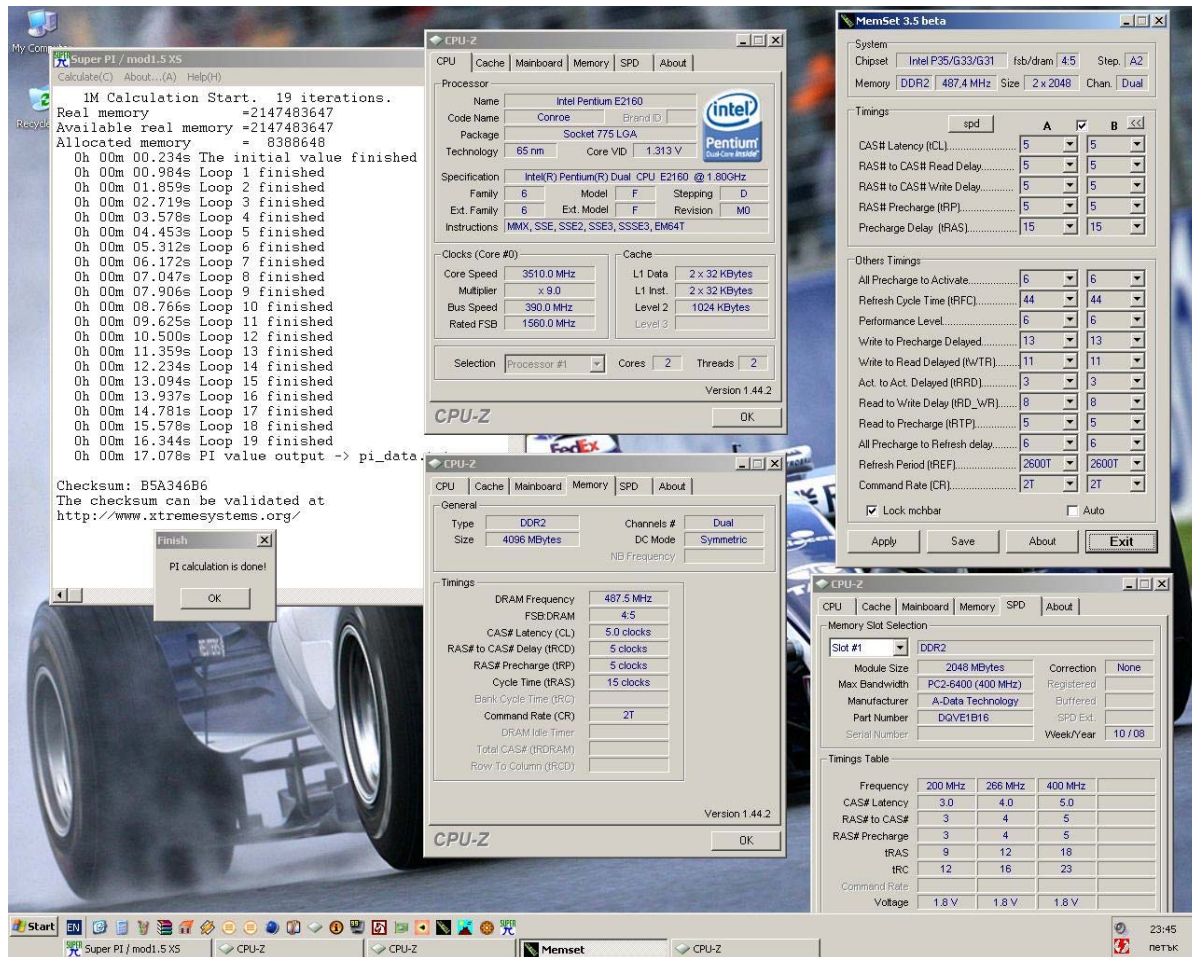
The Julie Amero ordeal is finally over.

Back in November, in a nearly total absence of press coverage, Julie Amero pled guilty to a misdemeanor, paid a \$100 fine and lost her teaching credentials. In my opinion, she should have been totally exonerated and reimbursed by the state. You can read a good synopsis of the case at [reasononline \(tinyurl.com/6gq3yr\)](http://reasononline.com/6gq3yr) and [julieamer.blogspot.com](http://julieamer.blogspot.com).

Events to remember?

An upcoming "I remember" moment may be the transition to digital television broadcasting. Any bets?

There is no doubt that the current financial crisis and the ensuing recession will be remembered for some time to come. So what are people doing about it? eWeek reports ([tinyurl.com/7g8b6w](http://tinyurl.com/7g8b6w)) that IBM CEO Sam Palmisano told the Obama transition team that government investment could lead to the creation of more than 900,000 jobs in areas such as broadband access, health care IT and upgrading the electrical grid. Wouldn't that be rewarding? In addition, Palmisano suggested that the government convert existing data centers to green ones. Gosh, I wonder where he got that idea.





## Software Review

Microsoft Streets and Trips 2009 with GPS

Published by Microsoft

Review by Joseph Kluepfel, Director, Broward Personal Computer Association, Inc.,  
www.bpca.com, joekuepfel@bpca.com

Install this on your laptop and you have the luxury of setting up your trip at home and then use it in the car. A laptop screen is four times bigger than a navigator installed in a car or fifteen to twenty times bigger than a portable GPS.

Microsoft Streets and Trips is a powerful mapping program, loaded with maps of cities and towns with nearby lodging, food and points of interest. The text directions for the trip include construction warnings, and these can be updated just before you leave.

One great feature is the ability to click on a section of your route and drag the route to another road or location.

You can preset your trip with choices, such as start and end times, stops, speed, freeway or non-freeway, shortest distance or shortest time. I've learned to be careful of using Shortest Distance; it may take you off a freeway to city streets to save a fraction of a mile.

### Installation

Installation of the application is simple and quick, the GPS connects to the laptop through a USB port, powered by an included car lighter adaptor. If your trip is extensive, you'll need a car adaptor to power the laptop, and a gadget to connect two adaptors if the car, like mine, has only one cigarette lighter. The GPS attaches to the windshield with a small suction cup and it can fall off occasionally. I found that the GPS will work fine just laying on the dash. You should have a floor or dash mount for the laptop, and every time you start the application, you will have to accept the warnings from Microsoft about using it in a car. The best way of course is to have a co-pilot and a lap table or cushion will make it comfortable, remember how hot laptops get.

There is a choice for male or female voices for the verbal directions. These will warn you as you approach exits or turns. I found that some of the directions were a little late, especially if you're driving fast. I did have a few occasions where the directions were wrong, right instead of left, or a left turn when the exit ramp was to the right.

It's best to print out the maps and directions, especially maps for the turns and highway exits. Names of the streets are not given, but I would find it annoying to hear the names as you cross each street. Hearing the name of the route or street where you will turn would be helpful.

The screen shows your actual speed, the distance to and direction of your next turn, and distance and time to your destination.

### Conclusion

All in all, Microsoft Streets and Trips 2009 with GPS is a very useful aid for traveling and getting directions to unfamiliar locations.



# March 2009

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> Board of Directors Crossroads Mall @ the Food Court 6:30 - 8:30 PM. (Members are welcome to attend)	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> High Growth Stock Investing (a/r) 6:30 - 8:30 PM.	<b>6</b> Small Business Server 8 - 10 A.M. *PRN*	<b>7</b> MCSE Study Group (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon *PRN*
<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> General Meeting @ 7 - 9 P.M. Presenter:	<b>10</b> Alamo Coders (DotNET - Web Development Technology) 7 - 9 P.M.	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> MCSE Study Group (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon *PRN*
<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> MCSE Study Group (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon *PRN*
<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> MCSE Study Group (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon *PRN*
<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>				

# The Learning Center

## Alamo PC Organization classes and study groups

### Alamo PC Coders

Alamo Coders is a FREE San Antonio area IT professionals Users Group that focus on the tools, technologies, and programming languages that help a software developer/architect/manager in today's industry. If you would like to learn more about software development or the tools that are involved in that process, or if you just want to learn more about what Alamo Coders has to offer the San Antonio area IT community, then please join our group.

More information about this group may be found at <http://www.alamocoders.net/Home/tabid/36/Default.aspx>

**When:** Second Tuesday of every month

**Time:** 6:00:00 PM: Food, drink, meet & greet

6:30:00 PM: Presentation

7:30:00 PM: Q&A, meet & greet

**Location:** ALL meetings are held at New Horizons Learning Center, 8200 West IH 10, Suite 500, San Antonio, Texas 78230, (210) 308-8200.

**Directions:** New Horizons is located at 8200 West IH 10, Suite 500. From IH 10 West Exit Medical/Callaghan. Take the turnaround and remain on the access road. The New Horizons building is located on the right side pass Benihana. Turn right on Mid-Horizon Boulevard the parking garage is located on the right side. From IH 10 East exit Medical/Callaghan. Remain on the access road. The New Horizons building is located on the right side pass Benihana. Turn right on Mid-Horizon Boulevard the parking garage is located on the right side. Parking for New Horizons students is provided in the parking garage or on the parking area under the trees.

### 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.

### 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** ★ - ★★★

### 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:** ★

### MCSE Advanced Study Group

The MCSE Advanced Study Group is designed for those who already have their MCSE certification.

Since space is limited and the subject matter is advanced, membership is restricted. Please contact Larry Lentz before attempting to attend.

**Tuition fee:** Cost of any books and registered tests.

**When:** Every Saturday morning from 8:30 am to 12 pm

**Where:** Communities in School, 1616 E. Commerce

**Study Group Leader:** Larry Lentz, (210) 826-8188

### Small Business Server Study Group (SBS)

This is a forum for discussion and presentation of topics related to Microsoft's Small Business Server. The target audience includes, computer consultants, small business owners, and network administrators. The meetings begin with a "Taco Social" from 8 to 8:30 am followed by our presentation. Please contact Larry Lentz before attempting to attend.

**When:** First Friday of the month from 8 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

**Where:** Flexware, 10444 Gulfdale (about block off Isom)

**Contact:** Larry Lentz for information and registration. Phone (210) 826-8188. Visit the group web site at <http://www.LentzComputer.net/SBS>.

# 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.



# Classified Ads

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

**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 -\$25

☐ 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.



