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In This Issue

The UPDATED 2005 Roster is an 8-page removable Insert in the middle of this issue.

General Meeting

WordPerfect and Paint Shop Pro "fans", TAKE NOTE:

WordPerfect Office and Paint Shop Pro are coming to Los Angeles Computer Society. We're ready to welcome presenter COREL Product Specialist **Tanya Lux.**

COREL WordPerfect Office 12 is a family of productivity applications including word-processing, spreadsheet and presentation programs in the "Standard" package. Professional, Student and Home editions are variations of the "standard" package.

Recently, JASC became part of the COREL corporate family and at this presentation, Paint Shop Pro 9 will be a featured item.

Tuesday, May 10, 2005, 7 PM
Fellowship Hall, 8065 Emerson Ave., Westchester

Open to the public. Tell and bring friends. Come and learn with us.

NOTE: The usual "computer forums" for beginners and advanced users start at 6:00 PM.

More info at, http://www.lacspc.org, or telephone: 310-289-7177.

APRIL GENERAL MEETING REPORT

by **Charlotte Semple**, LACS

Charlotte opened the meeting by introducing the several guests present. After a short question and answer session, Charlie announced that a corrections list for the LACS Roster was posted at the Greeter's table and asked all present to check their names, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses for correctness. Members were also reminded to go to the web site and click on the "New Address?" button if they do wish to make changes, or send an email to, changes@yahoogroups.com.

Charlie also announced that plans were being discussed for getting Internet Broadband (DSL) into Fellowship Hall. The Church has DSL in the main office and it is thought that proper wiring could be done to bring the service into the Hall.

After Charlie reported that the SIGs were doing well, thanking all the SIG leaders for their support, Leah Clark announced that there was enough interest to start the quarterly Genealogy SIG meetings again. The first meeting was to be a planning session April 27 in the classroom of the Family History Center at the Mormon Temple.

Charlie then introduced our speaker of the evening, Peter Benjamin, leader of WebSpinners, http://lawebspinners.org/, Peter is a knowledgeable person about Firefox, and brought some of his knowledge about this alternative browser to Internet Explorer, Netscape, and others.

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(April G M Report)

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Firefox is a powerful new Internet browser from the Mozilla Foundation that runs on Windows, Mac OS X and Linux. It has an incredible array of features that help you browse faster, safer, and more effectively, including a built-in popup blocker, text zooming, tabbed browsing, built-in search tools, and live bookmarks. Possibly the best reason to use Firefox is its many enhanced security features. A comprehensive set of privacy tools keeps your online activity your business. You can also install a wide range of themes and extensions to customize the browser's appearance and enhance its capabilities to suit the way you surf the web. AND, it's all FREE!

Open Source Product

Firefox is one of the many open source products, along with the Linux operating system, the Apache web server, and the OpenOffice Suite. Open source products are products for which the source code is available for users to examine and, if they wish, to modify. The open source products differ radically from the "closed source" or "proprietary source" used by Microsoft, Adobe and most other software manufacturers, who will do almost anything to prevent outsiders from viewing their products' source code.

Open source software is not freeware (although most open source products, including Firefox, are free), nor does it mean that users can have access to the source code. The licensee for a true open source product must provide such things as free distribution, modified and derivative works (all of which can also be distributed under the same terms as the original product), no discrimination against persons, groups, or fields of endeavor, no restrictions on other software, and software that is not predicated on a specific technology or style of interface (such as Microsoft's .NET technology or a requirement that the product looks like a Macintosh product). Open source products are often released under the General Public License (GNL) or other similar licenses. Firefox is released under the Mozilla Public License.

Themes

One of the coolest features of Firefox is that you can customize the browser's look and feel by installing third-party themes. Think of themes as the best custom paint job you could ever get for your browser. Your recommended first step for themes is the official Mozilla repository, http://www.addons.update.mozilla.org (*UMO*), which can be easily accessed directly from the Get More Themes link on the right side of the Firefox *Extension Manager*. *UMO* contains a categorized list of themes that are updated frequently and can be sorted by platform. In addition to *UMO*, there are several other places on the web where you can find themes for Firefox.

Extensions

Extensions are essentially mini-programs that are written to add some kind of extra functionality or features to the browser. Extensions add a wide range of features - some add icons to the toolbar while others add items to the context menus. Some actually run as powerful applications within Firefox. Some examples of extensions that run as applications include, *ChatZilla*, *Mozilla Calendar*, and the *Mozilla Amazon Browser*. Third-party extensions are written in the XPI (Cross Platform Installable File) format, which means they install as an add-on to the Firefox browser. In all cases, you must download the extension and install it in the browser before it can be used. Installed extensions are managed via Firefox's *Extension Manager* interface.

Thunderbird

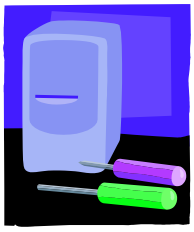
Thunderbird is Firefox's e-mail client – a full-featured e-mail program that allows you to manage your mail in a safe and efficient manner. Thunderbird provides a simpler set of controls, and its relative ease of use makes it perfect for beginners as well as advanced users. If you have been using another e-mail client to manage your mail, Thunderbird provides a mechanism for you to import your mail, address books, and other settings, so it is easy to pick up where you left off. Thunderbird provides a little something for everyone. If you are coming from Outlook or Outlook Express, you will enjoy feature parity because Thunderbird offers many of the same features that are found in both of those clients, such as global inbox, saved searches, filters, and multiple identities. If you are looking for something a little different, Thunderbird has a number of powerful search features that allow you to locate information quickly. In addition, Thunderbird provides a robust spam filter that keeps your inbox spam free.

If you want more information about Firefox, there is a neat book for you to read: Firefox & Thunderbird GARAGE, by Chris Hofmann, Marcia Knous, and John Hedtke, from Prentice Hall. •

HARDWARE SIG REPORT

by **Jordan Burkart**, LACS

The April 19, 2005 meeting was intended to feature a further presentation by Gil Ialongo on converting LPs and tape cassette recordings to CD or DVD.



Before Gil began, the group was presented with the seemingly minor task of assembling a new external drive enclosure and inserting in the enclosure an IDE hard drive that had been used in a failed computer. The owner of the drive intended to use the old hard drive for external

(Continued on Page 3)

(Hardware SIG Report)

(Continued from Page 2)

backup purposes with a new computer. The enclosure had come unassembled in a package without assembly instructions. The first task was to figure how to align the rails for the drive with the drive itself and with a holding bed inside the enclosure. This wound up taking about 15 minutes, interspersed with questions and commentary on the use of internal hard drives in an external enclosure that has its own power supply and fan and links via a USB2 cable with the computer. Once the proper setup was determined through trial and error, the next step was to screw in the various screws (in two sizes, of course) to hold the drive securely in the enclosure. Clearly, this enclosure was not designed to be put together by Canadians with large fingers, and the result was repeated dropping of screws that did not readily go into place. More delays ensued until the enclosure's owner went out to his car and brought in a hemostat to hold the screws while they were being seated. Problem solved–finally.

Next, the separate power supply was hooked up to the rear of the enclosure, and the drive powered up. Then the USB2 cable was hooked up from the enclosure to the computer, and familiar ping-ping USB "connection established" sound was heard. The new drive appeared as drive E, and we knew we were in business. After checking a few of the files on the drive, the USB removal key in the system tray was clicked, and the USB cable could be disconnected from the computer.

Charlie Semple then gave a very brief demonstration of a slightly different approach to external hard drive backup. He connected a standard power supply to a bare IDE internal hard drive (without enclosure) and then hooked up a cable with an IDE connector on one end to the drive and a USB connector on the other end to the computer. Simple as this arrangement was, it worked!

At this stage, we concluded that there was not enough time for Gil to give his planned presentation, so instead he gave a brief introduction to a device called INport, which has a street price of $70. INport functions as an analog-to-digital converter for audio signals. It comes with a 30-foot shielded RCA cable used to connect an amplifier output to a computer. This very compact device is designed to eliminate the hums that sometimes come from ground loops when different devices are connected, while providing a way to convert analog signals from radios, LPs, or CDs to digital files, including WAV files, that can be transferred to CDs or DVDs. Gil also mentioned two much less expensive devices that perform a similar function: Total Recorder, selling for about $12, and LP Recorder. Both of these can also generate WAV files. Charlie advised anybody interested in learning more about converting older media to CDs or DVDs to do a Google search for "vinyl to CD."

Gil's main presentation was pushed back to next month. This will provide a great opportunity for everybody to learn more on this fascinating topic. The price of admission for each attendee at the next meeting will be to bring a digital sound file that has been converted by that attendee from an analog source.•

DIGITAL PHOTO SIG REPORT

by **Elliot Silverstein**, LACS

Questions and comments raised by several people at the March 28, 2005 SIG meeting led to lively discussions of a number of topics. We talked about the types of batteries that can be used in different cameras, and about the effect of the milliampere-hours rating on battery durability. We also discussed various battery chargers, and some of their pros and cons. Several people also talked about their experiences with camera macro (close-up) modes, and this led to discussions of small tripods and focusing techniques for use when doing macro work.

We later fielded questions about storing, organizing, and searching for one's photos. This topic seems to deserve further discussion, so we decided to ask SIG members to experiment with one or more of the available software programs (e.g., Picassa II, Photoshop Elements Album, Paint Shop Photo Album 4, etc.) and to share their knowledge with us at the next SIG meeting.•

WELCOME All

by **Gene Jacobs**
LACS Database Manager

New (0)
Renew (23)
Richard Balsam
Nancy Cattell
Walt Dale
Joe Falcon
Irv Farber
George Fisher
** Marcia Goldenfeld
* Arnie Glick
Marilyn Griswold
Peter Griswold
Herb Gross
Hy Lavere
Todd Martin
Richard Norlin
Nate Shaphran
Bob Shubert
Julia Sumpton
Robert Swarthe
Gail Tibbetts
Jim Vollmer
Marshall Wernick
Jack Younger
Sam Zivi

* Contributor
** Benefactor

TIPS 'N TRICKS

Compiled by **Todd Martin**, LACS

Word 97 Border Patrol

Some graphics are just too naked to sit on a page by themselves. Imagine a snow-covered pine tree against a white background. To prevent each image from getting lost in all that white, apply a narrow border around the image. Here's how:

1. Click once on the graphic to select it. The image grows its eight handles, and the Picture toolbar lurks into view.
2. Click the Line Style tool. A drop-down menu of lines and styles is displayed.
3. Pluck out the line style you want to border your graphic. Click it with your mouse. The picture grows a border.

If you select the More Lines option from the bottom of the Line Style tool's menu you see the Colors and Lines panel in the Format Picture dialog box. From there, you can select even more line styles and whatnot to format your picture. Click the OK button when you're happy with your selections in the Format Picture dialog box.

Getting the Point of Word Fonts

The amount of space that Word sticks between paragraphs is measured in points -- which is a typesetter's measurement. If you've ever messed with the size of a font, you've already worked in points (although the Font size menu doesn't use the pt abbreviation).

There are 72 points to an inch. If you use a 12-point font, which is common, then a space of 12 points between paragraphs adds an extra line. Six points (6 pt) is half a line of text.

The boxes where you enter point values in the Paragraph dialog box use spinner gizmos. If you click the up or down arrows on the spinner, you increase or decrease the spacing between lines in 6-point increments. If you need more specific values, you can type them in directly.

Editing a Macro in Word 2003

If you make a mistake while recording a macro in Word 2003, you can abandon the recording and start over. Or, you can finish the recording and edit the macro to correct the mistake. When you edit the macro, the macro's commands appear in a separate window. You can delete or modify erroneous commands, you can insert new commands if you know how, or you can merely study the macro to try to figure out how it works.

Here are the steps for editing a macro:

1. Choose Tools, Macro, Macros. The Macros dialog box appears.
2. Select the macro you want to edit and click the Edit button. Word launches the Visual Basic editor, with the macro you selected visible in its own window.
3. Make whatever changes are necessary to the macro. Correct misspelled words, delete extraneous commands, and, if you're brave, add additional commands.
4. Use File, Save Template to save your changes.
5. Use File, Close to close the macro window.

Double-Indent in Word

Sometimes an indent on the left just isn't enough when you're working on a Word document. There are those days when you need to suck a paragraph in twice: once on the left and once on the right. For example, if you use a quote from another paper but don't want to be accused of plagiarism, you need to differentiate that text (or set it apart from the rest).

Here's how to indent text on both the left and the right sides:

1. Pick your paragraph. If the paragraph hasn't been written yet, move the cursor to where you want to write the new text. Or put the toothpick cursor into the paragraph or just select multiple paragraphs as a block.
2. Choose the Format, Paragraph command. The Paragraph dialog box appears. Locate the Indentation area.
3. Enter the amount of left indentation. For example, type .5 to indent half an inch, or you can use the up-or-down arrows to increase or decrease the left indentation.
4. Enter the amount of right indentation. Type the same value as you did in the Left box. Check the Preview part of the Paragraph dialog box to ensure your paragraph is indented as you prefer.
5. Click OK.

To un-indent the paragraph, you need to repeat the above steps, but enter zero in both the Left and Right boxes.

Watch out when you try to mix Left and Right indenting with a First line or Hanging indent. It could drive you nuts, until you select (none) from the Special drop-down list. •

CASH FLOW

by **Patsy Bellah**, Treasurer LACS

Liquid Assets
As of Mach 31, 2005

Fidelity Cash Ready Reserve Fund	$ 4,241.46
Bank of America Checking Account	$ 3,052.52
Total Liquid Assets	**$ 7,293.98**

Gross Receipts
March 2005

Bank Interest	$ 0.28
Donations	27.00
Dues	$ 724.00
SIG Room Donations	23.00
Old Computer	80.00
Total Gross Receipts	**$ 854.28**

Expenditures
March 2005

GM Flyers	$ 20.84
Facilities Rental	60.00
February UF Printing	244.10
March UF Printing	292.71
Bank Service Charge	12.00
President's Supplies	27.00
Total Expenditures	**$656.65**
Net Surplus	**$ 197.63**

HARDWARE REVIEW: eDimensional Audio FX Headset

Force Feedback Headphones with Vibration and Lights

by **Bruce Pechman**, LACS

Head Games

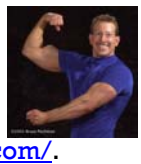
Just when you think you've seen it all, or in this case "heard it all," along comes a new fangled audio headset, which promises not only superior audio quality and comfort, but also pulsating force feedback to boot…with lights!

To be honest, when I glanced at my review pile of techno-goodness I picked up the pretty blister package and thought what's so different about these headphones?" Then I read the package—"Force Feedback PC Gaming Headset with Flash and Vibration." Count me in! Let's fire these puppies up and see what we have here.

Narrowly avoiding a trip to the local emergency room opening the blister pack with my pocketknife (don't you all hate opening those plastic packs?), I was impressed with the overall build quality. The eDimensional Audio FX Headset has some very nice attributes. I really liked the engraved numerical clicking indicators (size settings from 1 to 12) on each side of the adjustable frame—it expands large enough to fit the big headed folks like me. Speaking of big heads, I have to tell you what happened to me in the gym a few days ago. We were goofing around doing dumbbell bench presses and I said, "Does anybody know where the 200 pound dumbbells are?" Some older gentleman in the back shouted "between your ears!" Absolutely classic—you can't make this stuff up.

Back to the Audio FX attributes, which include an integrated control switch on the cable. This lets you adjust the vibration effects to be on or off, the amount of vibration you prefer, as well as the volume. I also appreciate the comfortable plush padded ear cushioning (albeit the headset is a bit on the heavy side—they are packing quite a bit of electronics). Other nice touches include gold plated jacks, which are clearly labeled for speaker and microphone, built-in attached noise-canceling microphone with adjustable arm (great for speech recognition software or trash talk gaming), and flashing lights on each side of the speakers, which respond to the current volume level.

Listening to music with Audio FX is a pleasurable experience. I'm not an audiophile, but my perception is they sounded darn good with MP3 tunes and CDs. Now let's talk about using the Audio FX with games—simply amazing! It really creates the sensation of being in the game with a 5.1 sound system. The directional sound makes you totally aware of your game environment and conditions…especially being blown up with Flak cannon in UT 2004! In case you haven't figured this out yet…the Audio FX Headset represents an absolutely amazing value at $49.99! To learn more about the eDimensional Audio FX or any of eDimensional's other products, visit http://www.edimensional.com.



Brice Peckman is The Muscleman of Technology® and can be found at, http://www.mrbicep.com/.

SOUNDING THE ALARM

Over Spyware Threats and Antispyware Cooperation

by **Linda Gonse**, OC IBM PCUG

When I first learned about spyware makers iSearch and iDownload threatening anti-spyware advocates and anti-spyware makers in February to cease and desist listing them as candidates for removal or face legal action, I was incensed. http://www.windowssecrets.com/050224/.

Several sites have received the letters and now face steep legal fees in fighting this brazen and outrageous threat to consumer rights to share information and protect ourselves from being victimized by spyware. http://www.edbott.com/weblog/archives/000491.html

What these spyware makers are saying is that their products are not spyware, although available studies and articles all show that the products are indeed spyware. http://www.dslreports.com/shownews/60608.

But, wait. It gets stranger. Another spyware company, WhenU, actually struck a deal with Aluria to be delisted as spyware. Aluria develops anti-spyware technology used by AOL and several other ISPs affecting millions of users. Aluria actually agreed to remove WhenU from the definitions it uses for Spyware Eliminator. WhenU products are now declared "Spyware SAFE" and are left intact on the systems of users, although WhenU's products did not change! What's more, Ad-aware and Pest Patrol have also stopped listing WhenU's spyware. http://www.dslreports.com/shownews/58023 and http://tinyurl.com/6b96j.

Why is this happening? And, what effect will it have on users?

Apparently, spyware vendors, in anticipation of looming anti-spyware laws, are attempting a public image makeover that includes buying legitimacy from anti-spyware developers. http://tinyurl.com/4rj9o.

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(Sounding The Alarm)

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The spyware makers are being driven by money. And, antispyware makers who cooperate with them do so for the money, as well.

If we cannot learn who makes spyware from advocacy sites, and we cannot rely on antispyware makers to list them for removal, we computer users are the ultimate targets/victims for the sleazy programs that install and run on our computers without our knowledge and approval, that affect the performance of our computers and programs, and invade our homes and our privacy, without fear of litigation or removal.

Isn't this where computer users and user groups must band together and pressure antispyware companies to keep these perpetrators in their databases? Shouldn't we lend our support to antispyware vendors and tell them not to cave in to these demands or we won't buy or use their products? Isn't this a good time to write to your legislator? NOW! Before you lose the right to protest and deny these companies access to your computer and private information.

Names and addresses of your elected state and federal officials are at http://www.congress.org/congressorg/home/. Find contacts at antispyware companies by clicking on links at https://netfiles.uiuc.edu/ehowes/www/soft6.htm.

Linda Gonse is a member of the Orange County IBM PC Users' Group and Editor of their newsletter, Nibbles & Bits, http://www.orcopug.org. •

NEW MICROSOFT ANTI-SPYWARE IS A WINNER

by **Ira Wilsker**, APCUG

WEBSITES:
http://www.microsoft.com/security
http://www.safer-networking.org
http://www.lavasoftusa.com
http://www.pestpatrol.com
http://www.trendmicro.com
http://housecall.antivirus.com

Spyware, typically a type of malware transmitted over the Internet, may now be a greater threat to computer users than viruses, Trojans, and worms. Spyware comes in a variety of types, some of which spawns pop-up ads, some of which hijacks your browser, others which can dial out on your phone line to high cost overseas pornography websites, and possibly the most dangerous are those spyware types that log your keystrokes and capture your personal information for the purposes of identity theft.

There are several fine anti-spyware products available for free or for a price. In recent columns I have written about my personal favorites, Spybot Search and Destroy, http://www.safer-networking.org, Ad-Aware, http://www.lavasoftusa.com, and others. Both Spybot and Ad-Aware have free versions available for personal use that have been well regarded by the computer press. In tests I ran and wrote about almost two years ago, a commercial product, PestPatrol, http://www.pestpatrol.com, outperformed both Spybot and Ad-Aware by detecting and removing more threats. PestPatrol was recently taken over by Canada's huge Computer Associates (CA), for inclusion in its new suites of Internet security software. The inclusion of anti-spyware utilities into security suites is now becoming the norm, with one of the top rated security suites, PC-cillin Internet Security Suite 2005, http://www.trendmicro.com, now including an excellent spyware detector and killer, in addition to its firewall, antivirus, anti-spam, and other utilities.

Recently Microsoft, a company that has been publicly chastised for the insecurities of much of its software, purchased a small anti-spyware company, Giant Company Software, and has released a public Beta version (pre-release) of its Microsoft Windows AntiSpyware software. Available for free download at http://www.microsoft.com/security (click on "Get rid of unwanted software – Spyware" at the top of the page), the file is about 6.4 megabytes in size, which will download in about a minute on a broadband connection, and about 15 minutes at dialup speeds.

I recently had the opportunity to try Microsoft's AntiSpyware in a real-world environment, with a rough comparison of capability with my prior favorites, Spybot and Ad-Aware. One of my daughters had a computer that was badly infested with viruses, Trojans, and spyware. Some of that malware initially prevented me from running the excellent new version of Housecall, http://www.housecall.antivirus.com, which would typically be my first step in recovering an infected computer. I first downloaded, installed, and updated Spybot, which detected and removed 43 pieces of spyware. This was followed by a download of Ad-Aware, which after being installed and updated, detected another 51 suspicious items (this behavior is typical, as no product is totally effective).

I was then able to run the new Beta of Housecall, which detected and deleted over 20 viruses, worms, and Trojans, as well as 14 more spyware items. At this point I was fairly confident that my daughter's machine was clean, as it was now running smoothly without apparent software problems. As a lark, I downloaded, installed, and ran Microsoft's AntiSpyware, and was surprised when it detected over 30 more pieces of spyware. Just to be fair, some of the

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(New Microsoft Anti-Spyware is a Winner)

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spyware it detected was isolated files left behind after Spybot, Ad-Aware, and Housecall removed the major components, but I was quite impressed at the thoroughness of Microsoft's search and detection capabilities.

The current Beta of Microsoft's AntiSpyware expires in July, but Microsoft should have the full version available before then. Microsoft has already announced the personal version of AntiSpyware will be free, but there will be a fee for a commercial version.

Once installed, Microsoft's AntiSpyware checks for updates, and runs very quickly. It shows all of the files detected, as well as a description of the spyware found, along with an indication of the threat level of the spyware. A memory resident portion of the code is loaded every time the computer boots, which continuously protects the computer from new infestations. I also noticed that Microsoft is releasing updated spyware data for its software on a very frequent basis, as there were two distinct updates in the three days I had access to my daughter's computer.

In the good old days of computing, with the now antique 300 speed modems, viruses existed, but were scarce. As computing power, access, and availability increased, the threats from viruses increased to where antivirus software continuously updated became a necessity. The threat of hackers trying to break into our computers was low, but is now endemic, requiring that all users, including those with dialup Internet access, now must have a firewall to protect themselves from cyber-intrusions. Spyware has switched from a nuisance generating popup ads and planting tracking cookies on our computers, to a significant personal threat today. According to the Federal Trade Commission's recent report on Identity Theft, 12% of the victims were acquired through the Internet. In recent weeks spyware has become even more common and sophisticated, which will likely result in a much higher Internet rate in the next FTC report.

It is absolutely vital now for all Internet users to have antivirus software, a firewall, and anti-spyware software installed and updated, in order to maximize our protection from those intent on doing us harm via our computers. The Microsoft AntiSpyware would be an excellent choice for the spyware portion of that triad.

Ira Wilsker is a member of the APCUG Board of Directors and columnist for the Examiner, Beaumont, TX, and can be reached, iwilsker@apcug.net .

TECH NEWS

By **Sue Crane**, Big Bear CC

Molecular Computer Would Be Faster, Smaller & Cheaper

Researchers from Hewlett-Packard have created devices called crossbar latches that can be used to perform calculations in microprocessors, the same function silicon transistors now have. Crossbar latches--which consist of a grid of microscopic wires linked by molecules at their intersections--are far smaller and, potentially, far cheaper to make because they are produced using processes more like inkjet printing than the etching processes required for today's chips. HP has already shown how crossbar latches can be used in memory. "This is the final piece of the puzzle for building a molecular computer," said Phil Kuekes, senior computer architect and primary inventor at HP's Quantum Science Research (QSR) unit.

New Laser Chip

Intel has created a chip containing eight continuous Raman lasers by using fairly standard silicon processes rather than the somewhat expensive materials and processes required for making lasers today. The lasers emit a continuous stream of light that can then be modulated, or chopped up, into a stream of impulses that can represent data. Cheap optical parts could not only lead to faster computers but also to less expensive and more accurate medical equipment.

Faster Hard Drives

Dataslide proposes to abandon hard drive rotation in favor of vibration. A new prototype drive has a rectangular plate coated with magnetic storage material. A second plate hovers above with an array of lithographed heads on its surface. The lower plate vibrates from side to side at 600 times per second, a process that delivers data 10 times faster than a15,000 rpm rotating disk drive. Dataslide envisions tweaking the product to increase the vibration to 100,000 a second -- equivalent to a disk rotating at 12 million rpm.

Your Cell Phone Could Infect your Car!

A report by IBM Security Intelligence Services predicts that viruses spreading to mobile phones, PDAs and wireless networks could infect the embedded computers that increasingly are used to run basic automobile functions. The average new car runs 20 computer processors and about 60 megabytes of software code, raising more opportunities for malfunctions.

New Technology Could Bring Sight to the Blind

A small camera mounted on spectacles and connected to the optical nerve could restore the sight of thousands of people suffering from deterioration of the retina, European scientists said Monday. The technology could also help people with the retinal disease macular degeneration, which can lead to loss of fine-detail sight and which is one of the leading causes of visual impairment in the United States. A camera mounted on glasses sends images to an electronic device implanted behind the eye and stimulates the optic nerve, which passes the information to the brain.

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(Tech News)

(Continued from Page 7)

Edible origami by Canon?
The Canon i560 inkjet printer doesn't just print menus. It prints menus you can eat. Homaru Cantu, the executive chef at Moto Restaurant in Chicago, prints menus and many other items onto edible starch-based paper. Instead of using the typical CMYK inks--cyan, magenta, yellow, and black--Cantu has filled the cartridges with edible solutions. Think SSSB: sweet, sour, bitter, and salty. Cantu uses combinations of these four liquids on the edible paper to create dishes unlikely to be found anywhere else, such as "baked map of Alaska" and a type of maki sushi that he wraps in flavored paper bearing images of sushi, instead of seaweed.

Antispam Tools Initiate New HIV Vaccines
At the Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections in Boston, workers for Microsoft Research said they have been using database and antispam software to identify previously unseen patterns in genetic mutations of HIV. The researchers said their work illustrates how medical experts can use machine-learning, data-mining and other software methods to sort through millions of strains of HIV and improve vaccines. By seeking out genetic patterns that could be used to train a person's immune system to fight the virus, they are already making headway, the researchers said. The group reported that the first of its proposed vaccine designs is already undergoing laboratory testing.

Databases Charged as Lax With Personal Information
After the huge security breach by ChoicePoint, releasing personal information of 145,000 individuals earlier this month, Senators Charles Schumber and Patrick Leahy have requested hearings, declaring: "It's time to turn some sunshine on these developments so the public can understand how and why their personal information is being used." A Schumer spokesman claimed that a researcher at a major corporation not involved in investigations was able to get the complete social security numbers from Westlaw's information database using the "People-Find" feature. Other companies have recently acknowledged that they may have inadvertently left consumer information unprotected. The payroll records of at least a dozen companies were exposed to the Internet by a flaw in the online W-2 service of PayMaxx. A flaw in the PayMaxx Web site exposed the financial information of customers' workers, the payroll-services firm acknowledges. In addition, cellphone service provider T-Mobile has dealt with ongoing security problems that have led to the publication of celebrity Paris Hilton's personal information and the phone numbers of many Hollywood stars.

Microsoft Authentication Changes Again
Customers who find themselves reinstalling Windows XP should be ready for a headache: Microsoft will no longer support activation over the Internet for PCs with Windows pre-installed. Intended to curb stealing and selling of Certificates of Authenticity, the new security measure will initially be limited to the Windows XP software preinstalled on systems shipped by the top 20 PC sellers.

Battlestar Galactica Available for FREE Download!
In an unprecedented move, The SciFi channel has made Episode '33' (Season 1 Episode 1) of Battlestar Galactica (season 1 hasn't even concluded) available for free, uncut and commercial free, online at http://www.SciFi.com. Also available are deleted scenes from the series.

Sue Crane is the Editor of Bearly Bears, the newsletter for Big Bear Computer Club, CA.
http://www.bigbearcc.org •

BROWSER DOOHICKEYS, DOODADS & GIZMOS

by **Vinny La Bash**, SP CUG, Inc., FL

Most people change their surroundings to suit themselves. Your desk probably has some pictures that trigger pleasant memories. You may have added some new plants to your garden. Whether you have engaged in something as monumental as redecorating your house or as trivial as changing the default ring on your cell phone, your general point is to make your surroundings look and act they way you want them to, not the way someone else thinks they should.

Tweaking your internet browser isn't any different. Due to the number of software add-ons available, you can change or add many different features. Some allow you to change the appearance of the interface; others help you to retrieve information more quickly. Several of them may even make using the internet easier. Despite their sophistication, most install quickly, and the majority of them are free.

Almost everyone who searches the Web uses Google, Yahoo or both. There are many other search engines, but these two dominate the bulk of the traffic. Switching between the two sites gets old quickly, so why not try Google's tool bar? It maintains a link to Google's web site, allowing instant access to many of Google's features no matter where else you may be on the Web. You can search, spell-check, block pop-ups, even turn UPS tracking numbers into web links.

Yahoo's tool bar has similar features, and it lets you search on-line yellow pages. You can check local movie and TV schedules. Yahoo has a nice email element, and it's very strong in financial features. You also get an anti-spyware tool.

Yahoo's tool bar is easy to find. Go to http://www.yahoo.com. Look toward the upper right hand corner of your browser window, click on the link, and follow directions.

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May 2005 into June 2005

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2 May BoD Meeting 7 PM Sharp!	**3** Luncheon SIG Noon Office Apps. SIG 6:30 PM	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
9	**10** **General Meeting 7:00 PM** **Forum 6 PM**	**11**	**12** Wi– Fi SIG 6:30 PM	**13**	**14**
16	**17** Daytime SIG 1 PM Hardware SIG 7 PM	**18**	**19** Membership Committee 7 PM	**20**	**21**
23 Digital Photo SIG 7 PM	**24** Beginners/ Internet SIG 6:30 PM	**25**	**26**	**27**	**28**
30	**31**	**1 June**	**2**	**3**	**4**
6 BoD Meeting 7 PM Sharp!	**7** Luncheon SIG Noon Office Apps. SIG 6:30 PM	**8**	**9** Wi-Fi SIG 6:30 PM	**10**	**11**

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGS)

SIG meetings are run by and for LACS members. Visitors are welcome to attend up to six SIG meetings (three of the same SIG) before joining LACS. To inquire about a SIG, please call or e-mail the contact person in advance. SIG Coordinator: Charlie Semple, sig.coord@lacspc.org.

SIG	Contact	Telephone	When, Time, and Where
After Meeting	Cap Kierulff	310-472-9206	Dinah's Restaurant
Begin/Internet	Dorothy Miliman	310-473-1391	4th Tuesday, 6:30 PM, Culver City CompUSA
Computer Forum	Beginners Welcome		2nd Tuesday, 6:00 PM before General Meeting
Luncheon	Fred Kong	323-293-6810	1st Tuesday, 12-1:30 PM, New Panda Buffet
Daytime	Hy Lavere	310-837-6517	3rd Tuesday, 1-3 PM, Felicia Mahood Center
Digital Photo	Elliot Silverstein	310-670-1544	4th Monday, 7 PM, American Legion Hall
	Nancy Cattell	310-452-2130	
Genealogy	Leah & Joe Clark	310-677-2792	Day and Place TBA
Hardware	Charlie Semple	310-398-5052	3rd Tuesday, 7 PM, American Legion Hall
Membership	Gene Jacobs	310 397-8457	3rd Thursday, 7 PM
WiFi	Charles Mahan	310 574-8690	2nd Thursday 6:30 PM. Culver City Comp USA
Office Apps.	George Wolkon	310-459-2671	1st Tuesday 7 PM. Culver City CompUSA

Addresses:
American Legion Hall, 5309 Sepulveda Blvd., Culver City (across from Coco's)
CompUSA, 11411 Jefferson Blvd., Culver City (between Sepulveda and I-405)
Dinah's Family Restaurant, 6521 Sepulveda Blvd., LA (just south of Sepulveda and Centinela)
Felicia Mahood Senior Center, 11338 Santa Monica Blvd., West Los Angeles (at Corinth)
New Panda Buffet, 5120 Rodeo Road, Los Angeles (at La Brea Avenue, next to KFC)

(Browser Doohickeys, Doodads & Gizmos)

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For Google's entire bag of goodies, direct your browser to http://www.google.com, and then click on the more button. You may need to scroll down the list of other tools to get to it. When you're finished make a trip to http://labs.google.com and enjoy the feast. This is Google's technology sandbox. These are prototype projects Google is currently working on, meaning they are not quite finished yet. Even if you're not particularly adventurous, try the new Map feature. You may be so impressed you'll never use Mapquest again.

I do a lot of research online, and I have become a fan of Net Snippets because I can straightforwardly save a snapshot of a web page or any part of the page. The utility lets me save these "snippets" to organize for offline viewing. This eliminates the need to search for the same page multiple times, and is a godsend if the site ever goes offline. Net Snippets is the kind of tool you never knew you needed, but now you can't live without it. There is no one thing that grabs you, but a host of little things like the ability to highlight and annotate that make Net Snippets a "must have" tool. Get it at http://www.netsnippts.com.

RSS readers are rapidly emerging from obscurity to necessity. Depending on whom you ask, RSS stands for "Rich Site Summary", "RDF Site Summary", or "Really Simple Syndication". RSS is a dialect of XML and its "geek-speak" nature has probably contributed to its slow acceptance, but its benefits are undeniable. The technology notifies you whenever something on your favorite web sites changes.

The original RSS was designed by Netscape as a format for building portals of headlines to mainstream news sites. It has rapidly evolved into something far different and much more useful. Get news headlines, stock quotes or alerts when an item you've been waiting for is available. You can save yourself a lot of time because you don't have to visit individual web sites to see what's new. A large bonus is that RSS feeds can't be tampered with. What that means is they are immune from attacks by spyware, viruses, Trojans, and other assorted evil-intentioned software.

In Windows, Pluck is the most popular RSS add-on. It's easily downloaded from http://www.pluck.com. If you're still using the basic plain vanilla browser, try at least one of these tools to boost your web experiences.

Vinny La Bash, vlabash@home.com is a member of the Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, Inc., FL, http://www.spcug.org . *This article is from the April 2005 issue of the Sarasota PC Monitor, the official monthly publication of the Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, Inc., P.O. Box 15889, Sarasota, FL 34277-1889.*

BRINGING HOME BABY

Getting Started with a New PC

by **Gabe Goldberg**, APCUG

Most purchases provide instant gratification -- you buy, you bring home (or have delivered), you enjoy. Groceries, clothes, toaster, furniture, etc., don't involve study, burdensome chores, or required add-ons for safe usage. While it's worth reading a new car's owners manual, and installing home electronics sometimes requires assembly and cabling, no other burden matches that of a personal computer.

Wait, you might say: Plug it in, turn it on -- simple. But reality isn't so simple. There's a lot to do before a PC can safely be used on the Internet, and still more is required to ensure long-term problem-free operation. This article outlines what to do; more info is available on this site and by Googling for specific terms used.

No matter where you buy your PC -- brand-name Web site, electronics store, custom builder -- get all CDs, manuals, registration cards, and warranty material for hardware/software that's installed. You may need this material to purchase discounted upgrade versions or to apply fixes.

Similarly, warranty material facilitates getting hardware/software support if you can't get satisfaction from your system's vendor. You may pay a little extra for software installation CDs or an image restore CD (which restores your hard drive's delivery-date contents); this is a worthwhile expense.

Assemble and turn on the system, but don't go online. Make sure the system boots properly and that all components operate. There's often a short "no questions asked" period during which dead or defective systems can be returned or exchanged easily. You may have trouble later getting problems resolved, and the vendor may insist on repairing the system instead of replacing it.

Note terms of rebates your purchase includes and submit them promptly. Many vendors won't pay rebate claims submitted even one day late.

Record hardware model and serial numbers for your PC and components. My PC builder provided all boxes and packing material, since it often contains useful information. Submit product registration material; though it may generate junk mail, it lets vendors notify you of problems or new updates/versions available.

At this point you may feel the need to get organized. Good idea! Just as you've likely organized files for auto repairs, health records, and such, your PC deserves a filing system. You can pick the structure -- file cabinet folders, PC-specific storage

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(Bringing Home Baby)

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containers, whatever – filing everything makes things much pleasanter later.

Part of my system -- optional but valuable -- is recording changes I make to my PC, software I install, upgrades I download, problems I have, configuration settings, and communications with vendors, so I can later refer to the log and be sure what happened. Some people print screen shots -- image captures -- of important configuration settings, for reference in case they must be recreated.

Plan how to separate data from software, to simplify backing up and restoring what's most valuable and hardest to recreate. This can be as simple as establishing a directory or folder in which you store all applications' data, or it may involve dividing your hard drive into data and software partitions. If you're replacing a PC, copy data you're migrating onto the hard drive and ensure that it's complete and readable. Don't discard the old PC until you're sure you copied everything you need. Plan and implement a backup scheme and test it occasionally by restoring files.

A standard PC likely included a "software bundle". If you're lucky, this includes applications you want. In most cases, bundles are apps you'll never use. To remove clutter, consider deleting what you're sure you won't need, using application-specific uninstall tools or Windows' built-in Add/Remove Software tool.

If hard drive partitions have meaningless labels (e.g., "IBM Preload") you can set them to useful values ("Dad's PC", "C:", etc.). Run scandisk and disk defragmentation tools to ensure you're getting a clean start.

If you're working on a Windows XP system, install Service Pack 2 before going online. You can order this on CD from Microsoft or borrow a copy. This large set of fixes will protect you against many -- but not all! -- online risks by (among other things) upgrading and enabling Microsoft's software firewall.

If you're on a broadband (cable or DSL) connection, install a router between your ISP connection and your PC and configure it to be secure.

Now install/update/run anti-virus and anti-spyware software.

Run Windows Update (click Start, then All Programs) to download and install recent fixes. This may require repetitions and reboots until no additional fixes are available. Run this periodically -- at least monthly.

You can ensure that device drivers (software links for hardware components) are current by visiting Web sites for your PC manufacturer and hardware components.

Install your applications one at a time with a "cooling off" period in between. This ensures that each works properly and helps identify problems. A good rule when working on PCs is to change one thing at a time, or else you can't pinpoint what effects changes cause. After each installation, run any "check for updates" functions.

Consider downloading a Web browser to use instead of the built-in but insecure Internet Explorer. Many alternatives such as Mozilla Firefox improve security and provide better browsing functions. If you use IE, set options to be more secure than default values.

I'm not sure whether it's good or bad news that Windows is infinitely customizable. As you use different Windows functions and applications, browse their Options/Tools/Settings/Customization menus. You'll likely find simple changes that accommodate your preferences.

Finally -- and in spite of warnings about risks -- don't be afraid: enjoy your PC and the Internet it brings to you. But be careful and sensible. Don't open unexpected attachments; don't answer e-mailed requests for personal information; be cautious about installing software from unknown vendors.

This article appeared originally on AARP's Computers and Technology Web site, http://www.aarp.org/computers . (c) AARP 2005. Permission is granted for reprinting and distribution by non-profit organizations with text reproduced unchanged and this paragraph included. Gabe Goldberg is a member of APCUG Board of Advisors and columnist for AARP Computers and Technology Website. ggoldberg@apcug.net

SCREEN CAPTURE TOOLS

Put Windows Data At Your Beck and Call

by **Gabe Goldberg**, APCUG

When you have a problem with your car, you bring it to the repair shop. When you're sick, you visit the doctor. But computer problems sometimes show up as nasty messages plopped in the middle of the screen. So it's hard to capture information needed to research and fix the problem. And someone trying to help you via email or phone may ask questions about system settings or application options which may be tedious to record and communicate. A previous article describes information that's useful for solving problems. http://www.aarp.org/computers-howto/Articles/a2004-07-12-getanswers. But sometimes the best information is a picture of what happens or what's wrong.

The good news is that all Windows versions provide basic tools to capture the entire screen or just the active application window.

You may have tried to use the PrintScreen (or PrtScr on some keyboards) key and not seen anything happen. This is because that key doesn't really *print* anything, it simply copies the entire screen (or just the active window if you press Alt-then-PrintScreen keys) to the Windows clipboard (an invisible Windows area for storing temporary data).

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(Screen Capture Tools)

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Here's a tip: if you're capturing the entire screen and you'd like to datestamp the image, move the mouse cursor over the time shown at the right side of the Windows taskbar. That will pop up the date, which will be included in the captured image.

While you can't see the clipboard, you can paste the captured image from it into a word processing or graphics program from which you can print or save it. Open an application you like - Microsoft Paint or its equivalent (included with Windows), Microsoft Word, or any graphics program. Position the cursor where you want to place the image and press Ctrl-V (Ctrl and V keys simultaneously). The image will appear. If you like, you can add descriptive information such as the date, the nature of your problem, your Windows version, applications that were running, etc.

You can now print the image from the application (click File and Print); you're also close to being able to save or email the captured image! To save it, within the application click File and Save As. Specify a location (hard drive, floppy disk, USB key, etc.). Programs may offer different choices of filetype for saving. Common choices are JPG (good for photographs, can be compressed), PNG (new/free standard format, good for non-photos), GIF (commonly used, produces relatively small files, limited to 256 colors), and BMP (produces large files, Windows-only format, usable if files won't be transmitted). Once the file is saved you can attach it to an e-mail.

But Windows' built-in screen capture is primitive and inflexible. That's led many people and companies to develop tools providing more functions. Searching Google for "screen capture" produced about 227,000 choices! Many of these are free, available for download. You can find good choices at Web sites such as *Tucows Downloads*. http://www.tucows.com. Some are shareware - free to try, priced to continue using. A modestly priced choice that is powerful and easy to use is *CaptureWizPro* from *PixelMetrics*, http://www.pixelmetrics.com.

Costing $30 and requiring a one-megabyte download, it provides a small toolbar that allows capturing any part of the screen, not just the full screen or the active window. The toolbar can be docked anywhere on the screen edge. It will hide until you mouse near it, then several selection tools (area, frame, scroll, etc.) allow precisely selecting what to copy.

Area selection allows simple selection of a rectangular section to copy. Frame selection displays rulers that show the selected area's size in pixels and inches; the frame border opens fast, remembers its position, and lets you interactively prepare applications below it. Scrolling selection tools solve a nasty problem: how to capture an image that doesn't fit on the screen. You can select a scrollable area, energize Full AutoScroll, and the image will scroll before your eyes as CaptureWizPro collects it.

Once an image is captured, you can copy it to the clipboard for saving as described above, or you can do many more fun things with it: save it directly to a disk file, print it directly, make an on-screen PostIt-style note out of it (to keep visible something needed for reference), e-mail it directly, manipulate it with a built-in editor, etc.

CaptureWizPro installation offers a friendly list of tips for use. It also does something I wish more applications did: allows printing a one-page guide including capture basics, Q&A, and suggested uses. The tool is handy for recording configuration changes, comparing results of testing applications, sending information to people who don't have the same applications as you, creating paper checklists from screen lists, etc. A little imagination will suggest many more uses for the friendly fly-out capture tool bar.

No matter how you capture information - with Windows' built-in PrintScreen handling or any of the many add-in tools - you'll never have to describe what you saw on the screen; you'll be able to show it. You'll never laboriously transcribe option settings to report to a help desk; you'll send a picture. You'll wonder how you did without this powerful and simple tool.

 Gabe Goldberg is a member of the Capital PC User Group, Alexandria, VA, and is an APCUG Advisor for Region 2 (NJ, DC, MD, VA), gabe@gabegold.com. •

HACKERS ARE NOT CRACKERS

by **Berry F. Phillips**,
Computer Club of Oklahoma City

The media loves to publish stories about so-called hackers breaking into computer systems and causing destruction. It is time to set the record straight, based on historical truth.

The hacker culture actually started in the 1950s when computers were huge to say the least, and programming then meant connecting wires to electrodes. While they did not call themselves hackers then, that for the most part explains what a hacker is. A hacker may be defined as a person who enjoys exploring the details of programming systems and how to stretch their capabilities as opposed to most computer users who prefer to learn only the minimum necessary.

Hacker as a term was first adopted as badge in the 1960s by the hacker culture surrounding the Tech Model Railroad Club (TMRC) and the MIT

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AI Lab. All computer systems that we use today are based on early hacker research. Much of this research was done out of love for the subject and the fame within the hacker community. One must be recognized as a hacker by the hacker community, which is a certain ego satisfaction. Several famous hackers from the first computer club, the Home Brew Club, were instrumental in founding major computer companies.

Around 1980, a new breed of computer-fed kids evolved, due to easy access to the Internet in the United States and Europe. They soon learned that they could break into other people's systems. Unfortunately, the media called them hackers and the name sort of stuck, when in fact hackers do not consider such illegal security breakers to be hackers, but crackers. Hackers build things; crackers break them!

Much of the freeware on the Internet comes from hackers. It would seem that hackers have been given unjustly a bad name by the media and deserve an apology at the least, while crackers should be prosecuted to the full extent of the law for their illegal actions.

While it is true that many hackers possess the skills for cracking, they outgrew any desire to do so except for immediate, benign, practical reasons. Contrary to non-hacker belief, there is no thin line between being a hacker and being a cracker.

Hackers built the Internet, maintain Usenet, work in IT computer security, and all Internet related businesses owe their origin to hackers. We can demonstrate our respect for their considerable IT achievements by making sure we do not use the term, hacker, when we mean cracker, who is involved in illegal cybercrime.

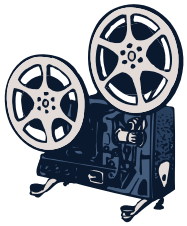
My thanks to Philip Tellis who did considerable research that was the basis for this article to correctly inform the public.

Berry F. Phillips, Member of the Computer Club of Oklahoma City, http://www.ccokc.org. •

HOW I MADE A MOVIE

by **Chuck Guion**,
Rockport Computer UG, Inc.

Many of our club members saw Patty Beasley's movie that she made on Joe Files. She used Windows Movie Maker 2 (WMM2) to make it. I thought I would also create some movies. Patty gave me some hints on how she made her movie. One very helpful tip she gave me was to first create your movie in PowerPoint and save each slide as a JPG. You can add text, templates, etc. while you are in PowerPoint. Another way to make a movie is to use WMM 2.1. (You don't have to use PowerPoint; you can use Video Effects, Video Transitions, and add text within the program.)



If you haven't downloaded XP's Service Pack 2, then you should download and install it since WMM Version 2.1 is included. Open up WMM 2.1 and make a Collection (import all of your slides from PowerPoint into the Collection). Start a New Project and drag the slides into Storybook View. Import a music file (MP3) from Windows Media Player (download Version 10 from http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windowsmedia/mp10/default.aspx, and install it) and drag it to the far left in Timeline View. You can also use a microphone to narrate your movie. But you cannot narrate and play music at the same time.

You can play the Storybook and Timeline and shorten your music by moving the corner arrow to the left and cutting it off. You can add Transitions and Video Effects in the Timeline View (in WMM 2.1). You can also lengthen the time your slide stays on the screen. If you want to take a break, you can give your project a name and save it.

When you are satisfied with your movie you can save it as a WMV file in My Videos or put it on a CD. The music files are large so you may want to save them on a CD.

You can bring video clips into WMM 2.1 and add them to your movie. You can also take slides from Digital Video Recorders and bring them into WMM 2.1 but you may have to buy a special video card to get your Analog and Digital recorders to work with WMM 2.1.

Windows Movie Maker has the usual help files but you might to go to http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/moviemaker/21/intro.mspx, for more help on using WMM 2.1.

I have made several movies for the CAUG DigiCam SIG and have also made some on architecture, boats, and birds. WMM 2.1 is a good way to make a family movie. Gather old pictures, cards, poems, etc., scan them, and bring them into WMM 2.1. You can also record your children and grandchildren's voices and put them in the movie. The possibilities are endless. Why don't you try making a movie? It's a lot of fun!

Chuck Guion is a member of the Rockport Computer User's Group, Inc., and Editor

CYBER SECURITY IN 2005?

by **Pim Borman**,
SW Indiana PC Users Group, Inc.

As more and more computer users gain fast, always-on, broadband access to the Internet via cable or ADSL telephone lines, computer security becomes a critical issue. This was convincingly illustrated in an article in *USA TODAY* (11-30-2004, thanks to Duane Morrow). The paper teamed up with Avantgarde, a tech marketing and design firm, to see what kind of attacks were attracted by variously equipped computers

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hooked up to a broadband DSL connection. Relatively unprotected computers, wide open to the Internet, underwent attacks at a sustained rate of 340 per hour, or once every 10 seconds on average.

These computers consisted of a Dell Windows XP with Service Pack 1, and an Apple Mac X. Most of the attacks were no more than "door knob rattlers" and did not result in actual penetration. Nevertheless, out of 139 thousand attacks in two weeks nine managed to take over the Windows XP computer and started to tie it into a larger network of hijacked systems. Another computer, equipped with Windows Small Business Server, underwent 25 thousand attacks in two weeks, 61 per hour on average, of which one managed to take over the system. The Apple computer was not compromised, probably because it uses an operating system not targeted by most intruders.

Computers protected by an active firewall underwent far fewer attacks, from 2 – 4 per hour, because firewalls hide the presence of a computer on the Internet from casual passers-by. These computers used Windows XP with Service Pack 2, Windows XP with the ZoneAlarm firewall, and a Microtel Linspire (Linux-based) computer with a basic firewall in the operating system.

Note that these "honey pot" systems were totally passive. Attacks did not depend on users' actions, such as visiting infected Web sites or downloading email attachments that might cause infiltration by worms and viruses. It is also clear that fairly simple protection measures, such as a firewall, thwarted the vast majority of malicious attackers.

The foremost obstacle to achieving a safer Internet is the ignorance and/or indifference of too many computer users, especially those with a broadband connection; but notice that with an attack rate of once every 10 seconds even Internet browsers using a limited telephone connection can be vulnerable!

Here are the important safety measures once more:
1. A firewall, stand-alone as in ZoneAlarm, or part of a package as in ZoneAlarm Plus, Windows XP SP2, or Norton Internet Security (combined with anti-virus and more). Optimally also a hardware router, even if you don't need one for a home network, to add additional firewall protection.

2. An anti-virus program, if not already included in the firewall software. Norton is good, or you can use a free program such as AVG from http://www.grisoft.com. It is essential to update the virus data files weekly or more often.

3. Regular updates of your operating system and Office programs with newly issued patches from the providers (e.g. Microsoft).

4. A spyware blocking/removal program such as AdAware (free) or AdAware Plus (extra features), or the excellent, free Spybot Search and Destroy.

5. Disconnect from the Internet when not needed, or turn the computer off altogether when not in use for a longer period (use Hibernate with Windows XP for faster start-up).

Use common sense!

Don't trust e-mail attachments unless you expect them. If you have any doubt whatsoever, ask the sender to confirm that it is OK. Even then, be skeptical. Delete obvious chain mail unread.

Knoppix to the Rescue!
Sooner or later something is likely to go wrong with your computer. A nasty virus or spy program may take over and lock you out, or Windows starts acting weird and refuses to be of service any longer. Maybe the Knoppix rescue disk can help you to recover your precious data files, at least, and maybe to remove a virus or restore Windows to good health.

Knoppix is the brainchild of Klaus Knopper, a guy who makes it his business to go around fixing peoples' computers. In doing so he uses a variety of software tools that he carries around on CDs and floppies for use on the affected systems. He also carries a boot CD to start computers that won't start up because of a nasty virus or other problems. Knopper eventually added his repair tools to this boot CD, running Linux. The CD includes programs to detect peripherals, including networks, USB ports, Internet connections, sound and graphics cards, as well as Open Source programs such as OpenOffice and The Gimp to make it possible to access and copy text and graphics data on the infected computer. In the spirit of Open Source programming, he invited others to join in the effort. The resulting CD goes way beyond being a technician's repair tool; with the addition of numerous utilities, games, emulators, sound and graphics programs, the current CD, called Knoppix, is a full-fledged Linux distribution for non-Linux geeks, comparable to Linspire and Xandros. The difference is that the whole program can run from the CD without using the computer drives.

Some 1700 MB of programming is contained in compressed form on a single 700 MB CD. The latest version of the program can be downloaded for free or you can order a CD from a variety of vendors for $5.00 and S/H. Booting the program takes only a few minutes; as many of the essential features of the program as possible are copied to RAM. As a result, the programs run surprisingly fast. The Linux-based KDE windows program is a clone of MS Windows and easy to use by non-Linux users.

Next time your computer suddenly goes on the blink, you might be able to continue some work and copy your data to a safe location simply by booting from the Knoppix CD-ROM. I have recently received a review copy of the book "Knoppix Hacks" by Kyle Rankin from its

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publisher (O'Reilly, ISBN 0-596-00787-6, $29.95, user group member discount available) and I hope soon to discuss more details of this interesting program.

Pim Borman is Web Site Editor and AP-CUG representative of the SW Indiana PC Users Group, Inc. (SWIPCUG). The above article appeared in the January 2005 issue of the P-See Urgent, SWIPCUG newsletter. Permission is granted to other non-profit computer user groups to use this article in their publications with credit to the author and the SW Indiana PC Users Group, http://www.swipcug.apcug.org.

COMPUTER APPLICATIONS IN ARCHAEOLOGY

Graphic Information Systems (GIS)

by **Charlene Brown**, BB&C

The use of Geographic Information Systems is a significant, and relatively new, development in archaeological research. GIS, which developed out of a computer-aided design and mapping (CAD/CAM) programs during the 70s, links databases of information to maps. Many different types of data – historical information, archaeological site plans, satellite images, aerial photographs, topographic maps, and GPS readings – can be integrated in a multilayer GIS.

One of the most useful applications of GIS in archaeology has been the construction of non-destructive predictive models. Where a comprehensive surface "dig" of a large area is impractical, a multi-layer GIS can be used in a logistic regression to determine how likely a given location is to contain an archaeological site. Jordan, for example, lies in the heart of one of the most historically important regions on earth. The impacts of Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Greek, Nabatean, Roman, Byzantine, Islamic, and Ottoman civilizations are seen in the kingdom's rich archaeological heritage. There are more than 10,000 known archaeological sites, and it's been estimated that there may be as many as 200,000 undiscovered sites – some likely in danger of being overrun by expanding urban population and infrastructure.

An advantage in the use of GIS for collecting and analyzing data directly in the field is that it makes possible the organization of massive quantities of data with high levels of accuracy. In isolated areas of the Andes, archaeologists have used GIS software for on-site recording and mapping of complex, multi-level artifact counts. This has increased the capacity and adaptability of the analysis process, enabling them to complete significantly more work in each limited "field session".

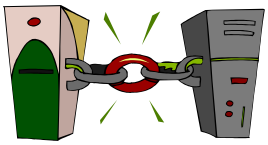
Valuable, but complex and much less easily measured, qualitative factors can also be integrated in a GIS. Important cultural and social aspects of a landscape, such as viewshed – the distance in all directions, which you can see, and from which you can be seen – can be determined. The visual components of a Geographic Information System are, in fact, sometimes more informative than regular illustrations or photos of buildings or ruins, particularly if the topography was an important factor in the locations of a structure. Examples are Santorini, a Greek island where buildings are situated atop the steep cliffs of a volcanic crater rim, and the ancient Jordanian city of Petra, barely accessible at the bottom of, in fact, carved into, the surrounding precipitous cliffs.

Finally, marine archaeology, with its inherent additional logistic problems, is benefiting from the use of GIS. Tel Shigmona was an exposed, barely habitable point on the coast of Israel. It had no harbor or port construction, and was nowhere near the inland trade routes – but was, for some reason, an important archaeological site for hundreds of years. GIS analysis of the coastal platform and continental shelf is answering questions about the previously hidden potential for maritime trade.

Charlene Brown is a member of the Big Blue and Cousins, The Greater Victoria PC Users Association, Victoria, B.C., Canada, and also an editor for their newsletter. She also has a waterpainting web site, http://www.painteverymountain.ca.

WiFi SIG REPORT

by **Charlie Semple**, LACS



We've been concentrating on learning how to operate in "ad hoc" mode. (That's when there isn't a router and each machine is communicating with the others directly).

Part of our frustration has been because we each use different makers' WiFi cards and the setup and graphical interfaces of each is different. (Oh for some real standardization in those! - - manufacturers please note!)

At last, at the April 12 SIG meeting, the 3 of us who brought our laptops made real progress. By the time we finished, we were looking at files on one another's computer, sending brief messages back and forth and feeling pretty happy that our earlier frustrations should now be part of the past (if we can repeat the performance).

Next month we hope to refine the operation and do some other experimenting. If you have a laptop and WiFi capability bring them along. If you have a laptop but no WiFi, bring it along, we have a few extra WiFi cards you can use for the evening and consider if you want to buy a card of your own.

User Friendly

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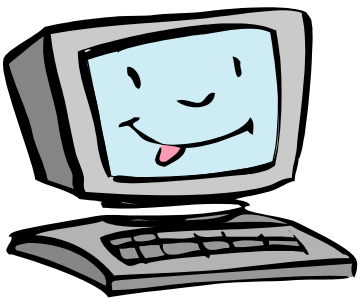
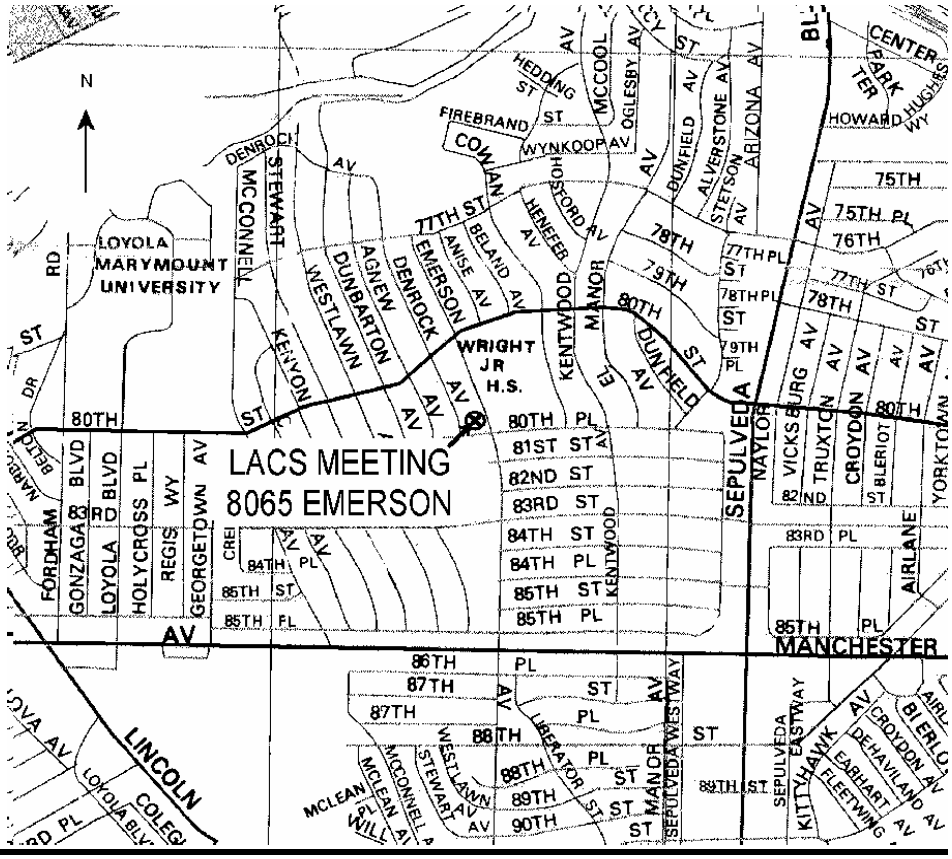
Directions to General Meeting

From the North: Take Sepulveda Blvd. SOUTH to W. 80th St. Turn WEST/right and go about one mile to Emerson Ave. Turn SOUTH/left and go one long block to W. 80th Place. Fellowship Hall is on the Northwest corner of Emerson and W. 80th Place.

From the South, East or West: Take Manchester Ave. to Emerson Ave. Turn North and go about eight blocks to W. 80th Place. Fellowship Hall is on the Northwest corner of Emerson and W. 80th Place. There is plenty of street parking and a small parking lot West of the church.





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