Quicken 2002 deluxe

by Jack Baly

Rochester Computer Society, Inc.

Quicken 2002 deluxe, is a slight improvement on the 2001 version. Existing data must be upgraded to a new file format, so there's no going back if you decide to change your mind. Save or backup your current version before upgrading, which is always advisable.

Investors will find a new portfolio analyzer, a one-click scorecard on Quicken .com that lets you analyze your investments four ways, and a portfolio view that shows tax gains, break-even prices in case you don't want to sell until you recoup your losses (never a good way to manage an investment), and the tax impact of short- and long-term gains.

I'm a long time Quicken user and find the product to be a great tool for personal money management and keeping track of investments. Once you have entered your assets, income/expenses and investments data into the program it's very easy to keep up to date and on top of your financial situation. Your publicly traded investments (stocks, bonds, mutual funds....) in the portfolio can be updated at any time with just a few clicks and the balances of your accounts totaled. This can be done without sending any details to a WEB site (a scary thought), since the process downloads the current price of your assets and then does all the calculation within your computer. That means in less than a minute you can know what the market is doing to you and whether the window or the door is your preferred exit.

Keyboarding challenged users will like the automatic fills and categorization of entries using the names and standard industrial codes of thousands of businesses plus a low-level form of artificial intelligence (if a store has video in its name, for example, the listing is put in Entertainment). If the online and Quicken balances for an account match, Quicken automatically reconciles the account. To help you prepare for taxes, Quicken has improved the withholdings and capital gains estimators so you can do a better job playing what-if situations as you approach year's end. It also meshes well with TurboTax.

Quicken 2002 deluxe lists for $59.95, but upgrades usually get a $20 rebate coupon and other promotions can get the cost below $30. If you're a satisfied with Quicken 2001 deluxe, the improvements are small and you'll need to weigh if the enhancements are worth the investment. If you're using a pre 2001 version of Quicken or looking for a good personal finance manager, then Quicken 2002 deluxe should be on your short list.

System Requirements: CPU Pentium 90 MHz minimum; memory 32MB recommended, 24MB minimum; requires minimum 67MB hard disk space; operating system Windows 95, 98, Me, 2000, XP; CD-ROM 2-speed or faster to install software; 4-speed or faster recommended to view multimedia

Video SVGA 16-bit color recommended, 256-color VGA minimum; audio sound board and speakers recommended; modem 14.4 kbps or faster required to access online features. Browser requires Microsoft Internet Explorer(r) 5.0 or higher (IE 5.5 is included on CD). Printer works with any printer supported by Windows 95, 98, Me, 2000 and XP.

Note: Internet access is required for all online features, including online banking and bill payment.

Don Edrington's PC Chat

Some Computer Terminology

It doesn't seem all that long ago when the only electronic acronyms most of us needed to know were AM and FM on our radios. Then came VHF and UHF on our TV sets. But in the world of computers we're expected to understand the meanings of DSL, USB, HTML, ISP*, along with dozens of others that seem to arrive daily. So I thought it might be time to review some of these, along with a few other quirky PC (personal computer) terms.

Let's start with "hard" and "floppy." If you've been around computers long enough to remember the 5-1/4" disks that came encased in paper envelopes, you know why they were called "floppy." When the hard-cased 3-1/2" disks arrived, many thought these were the new "hard disks" they'd been hearing about. However, if you slide open a 3.5" disk's metal door, you'll see the same flexible plastic inside that was used on the earlier floppies.

Also, on these disks' cases you'll find a tiny "window" in one corner with a moveable "cover." When the window is closed, the disk can be "written" to, as well as "read." Uncovering the window, however, will "write-protect" the disk, meaning it can be read, but not edited.

"Zip" is another word that can be confusing. As generic verbs, "zip and "unzip" have come to mean "compress" and "decompress" the size of a computer file, using programs such as "WinZip" or "ZipMagic." The Iomega "Zip Drive," however, is a hardware device used with high-capacity Iomega "Zip Disks."

As for "hard" disks, the one inside your computer that's normally called "C" is actually made of a more rigid plastic. So why is your PC's "hard disk" sometimes called its "hard drive?" Well, a 3.5" "disk" can be inserted into its "A-drive," but since your internal "C" disk is an integral part of its "C-drive" the two terms have become synonymous.

If all this wasn't confusing enough, a compact disc (CD) is spelled with a "c" while floppy and hard disks are spelled with a "k." (I have no idea why.) Beyond all this, we "write" to hard and floppy disks, but we "burn" CDs.

What's the difference between "Windows Explorer" and "Internet Explorer?" Well, the former is the "file management" utility that comes with Microsoft Windows, and which can be accessed by right-clicking Start and choosing Explore. The latter is Microsoft's Web "browser," and was designed to let us surf the Web, as was its competitor Netscape Navigator.

Well, Mr. Gates' critics contend that Microsoft's ultimate goal was to combine Internet Explorer and Windows Explorer into a single program that would be an integral part of future MS-Windows operating systems, so that competitive browsers (such as Netscape, Opera, and Mozilla) would never be needed. In any case, more confusion was added when "MSN Explorer" was introduced a while back. This is a free mini-browser that appears to have been designed mainly to encourage its users to sign up with Microsoft's "MSN" ISP.

Taskbar and Toolbar are other terms often used interchangeably, although the former is (technically) the gray bar along the bottom of a Windows screen, whereas the latter is used generically to mean any collection of "tool" icons that may come with any program. Beyond this, a "menu bar" is the line of words such as File, Edit, View, etc.,

that's normally found just above a toolbar. These words, as we know, offer drop-down menu choices when mouse-clicked; however, they can also be activated by pressing Alt while typing "f" or "e" or "v" (for File, Edit or View, etc.).

Another question that's often asked is "What's the difference between MS-Word and MS-Works?" Well, the former is a stand-alone word processing application that's usually sold as part of the MS-Office "suite" of programs. The latter is Microsoft's "slimmed-down" suite, which contains a word processor, a spreadsheet program and a database application, along with some other features. Unlike MS-Office's "Word" and "Excel," the word processor and spreadsheet program in Works are combined into one application and can't be purchased separately. Beyond all this,"Wordpad" is a

no-frills word processor that always comes with Windows.

More PC Tips can be found at www.pcdon .com along with all PC Chats from 2000, 2001 and 2002, (not to mention free downloadable music, cartoons and some vintage jokes).

Media Notes

by Bill Petitt

Southern Virginia Computer Users Group

Give Yourself Some Power

I'll let you in on a secret tool that most power users know about: Ontrack's PowerDesk, a particularly useful substitute for Windows Explorer. I want to make sure you know why PowerDesk is a $30 bargain. (BTW, the free version—with less functionality—is available at http://www .ontrack.com/freesoftware/). It has a built-in viewer for practically every file format you'll come up against: PDF, GIF, PowerPoint, Word, and dozens more. There's a built-in File Transfer Protocol program, a useful right-click image conversion feature, and a very handy way to add descriptive notes to files. PowerDesk is a tool I just can't live without.

Dig this

Have you seen the newspaper ads for full body scans? I'll bet you wondered what a scan really looked like. (And even if you didn't, I know you're curious enough to look.) Frankly, it's a little unnerving watching a video of a body scan-but it's also fascinating. Buckle up your seatbelt and check out the Visible Human Project Gallery (http://www.nlm.nih.gov/research/visible/), from the National Library of Medicine. If you were intrigued by the body scan-and you're interested in anatomy-you'll get a kick out of the Visible Human Radiologic Atlas of Sectional Anatomy. (http://www. nlm .nih.gov/research/visible/visible_gallery

.html) This program lets you interactively view a human cadaver (who, strangely enough, looks like my sister-in-law) and examine 1000 labeled anatomical structures.

Netscape flaw exposes hard drives

An Israeli software firm has discovered a flaw in Netscape and Mozilla software that allows code hidden in a Web page to read files from the user's PC. The bug is a more serious variant of one patched in Microsoft's Internet Explorer in February.

GreyMagic Software reported that the problem affects XMLHttpRequest, which allows Web pages in the browser to send and receive XML data via HTTP, the standard Web transfer protocol. XML is an Internet language for describing just about any sort of data.

According to the report, verified by other developers, XMLHttpRequest doesn't properly check the security settings for some types of data requests in a Web page, allowing them, if properly disguised, to request data from the user's hard drive. The Internet Explorer bug required an attacker to know the name of a file on the user's PC in order to exploit that file, but the Mozilla bug also allows the contents of directories on the local drive to be listed. GreyMagic created a demonstration of the bug that allows a Web page to display a window for exploring the viewer's own hard drive.

The bug is found in versions of Mozilla from 0.9.7 to 0.9.9 on various operating system platforms, and in Netscape versions 6.1 and higher. The flaw doesn't affect Mozilla 1.0 release candidate 1 because XMLHttpRequest appears to be broken in that release, according to Mozilla developers. A patch for the bug was not available as of May 1st.

GreyMagic also criticized Netscape's system for reporting bugs, saying a 24 April attempt to report the bug was not acknowledged. Following the firm's public report of the bug, another developer reported the bug to Mozilla's bug-tracking system, whose developers have confirmed the flaw. The flaw has also been distributed on the BugTraq security mailing list.

Netscape, a division of AOL Time Warner, uses Mozilla technology in its commercial browser. Mozilla itself is open source, meaning that its original programming code is freely available for alteration and re-distribution so long as any software that uses it is made available under the same terms. Mozilla software is used in other open-source browsers, such as the Galeon browser for Linux. Netscape was not immediately available for comment.

Wireless Nets Go Public

Free and fee-based 802.11b network access points are expanding, and hopping on them is getting easier than ever.

Got a Wi-Fi network card and a notebook or a PDA? Then you've got Net access--if you happen to be in the right place. And if you're really lucky, it might even be free. In a growing number of locations, from airports and cafes to homes, wireless access points based on the 802.11b (Wi-Fi) protocol are making broadband Internet access available to anybody within antenna range. Some of these access points (also called APs or "hot spots") are free, set up by public-minded individuals and organizations, while others charge for access.

Surfing for Dollars Public Wi-Fi networks that require an access fee are typically set up by companies that share revenue with

the location's owner. To get on the network, you must create an account with the network operator and enter the appropriate settings (network name and encryption key, if any) on your computer or handheld. If you use several access points, changing settings and managing bills from different operators can be time-consuming. A few companies are working to simplify the process.

Boingo, a service launched by EarthLink founder Sky Dayton, has partnered with several Wi-Fi networks, including the Surf and Sip Network and Wayport, to form an uber-network that, at the end of April, had about 600 locations nationwide. When used on a PC equipped with a Wi-Fi card, Boingo's free software will detect any Wi-Fi network within range of your computer, including free hot spots.

Boingo account holders can use the software for easy log-on to fee-based partner sites; if security is a concern, the software offers a Virtual Private Network option. Boingo bills users by the connect-day--a unit that includes all log-ins to a single location within a 24-hour period (log-ins to separate locations, even during the same day, count as additional connect-days). Infrequent users can pay $8 per connect-day; heavier users can opt for monthly plans costing $25 for up to ten connect-days or $75 for unlimited connect-days.

In my tests with a Windows 98 notebook and an Orinoco Wi-Fi card, the Boingo software easily logged me on to a Surf and Sip access point at a San Francisco cafe; it also detected about a dozen non-Boingo Wi-Fi networks during a 20-minute drive on the highway. However, Boingo's software works only with Wi-Fi cards that support the latest drivers (NDIS 5.1). If you've successfully installed your card on a Windows XP PC, you're probably in good shape, but Windows 98 users will need an Avaya, Cisco, D-Link, or Orinoco card, and you'll have to upgrade the driver.

Access for All?

Joltage takes a more grassroots approach to network building. Anyone with a broadband hookup and a Wi-Fi access point can install Joltage's AP software, which allows access to Joltage account holders.

Joltage tracks how much an AP is being used by subscribers and then reimburses member sites accordingly. Joltage, which began operating in late March with a handful of APs, charges by connect time: $2 an hour, or $25 a month for up to 60 hours. Don't feel like paying? Try sniffing out 802.11b Net access with no-cost programs like Boingo or NetStumbler, or by checking the listings on Web sites such as Freenetworks.org.

Internet service providers are keeping a close eye on public Wi-Fi networks, which suck up bandwidth without adding to ISP revenue. "While our policy does not prohibit this, it's not the intended use of our service, and we discourage it," says SBC spokesperson Fletcher Cook.

Those who offer free access to their unsecured wireless network face security hazards as well. To address this, Sputnik offers free software that turns any Intel-based PC with a wireless card into a Wi-Fi hot spot with a firewall and other security features. The Sputnik Gateway software also is intended to help Sputnik build a Joltage-like network—it's configured to grant access to other Sputnik Gateway users, and eventually to participants in a planned subscriber service.

Public Wi-Fi APs are still too scarce to be a reliable source of Net access for business

Listen at 12:20 pm every Saturday on 1180 am. Call 222-1180 to ask your question.

travelers. But they are the fastest and cheapest source of public connectivity — and for those who chase them down, well worth the investment of $100 or so in a Wi-Fi adapter.

Sun Posts OpenOffice for Free Download

Free edition of StarOffice provides budget alternative office suite for Linux, Windows, and Solaris.

A free version of Sun's StarOffice business productivity suite is now available for download from OpenOffice.org (http://www .openoffice.org), an open-source developer community sponsored by Sun.

OpenOffice.org 1.0 provides a selection of software nearly identical to Microsoft Office's. Both suites feature word processor, spreadsheet, and presentation programs, said OpenOffice.org representatives.

OpenOffice.org 1.0 is a less expensive alternative, however, and supports more operating systems.

The source code from the previous release, StarOffice 5.2, supplied the code base for OpenOffice.org 1.0 and StarOffice 6.0, but both products are advances over that version. The StarOffice 5.2 software was distributed as a free download until the release of version 6.0. Sun's desire to capture business customers led it to offer paid support contracts for 6.0. It still permits free downloads of an improved release, Open Office.org 1.0, for users who don't require support or training.

Some Features Dropped

StarOffice 6.0, announced in March and scheduled for release last month, comes with additional features such as a database and special fonts. Sun also provides training for StarOffice, which will be priced at under $100, according to an earlier Sun announcement.

E-mail and calendar functions that users of StarOffice 5.2 disliked have been removed from OpenOffice.org 1.0, said Zaheda Bhorat, a community manager for Open Office.org and a marketing manager for Sun. Future releases will restore those functions when the community agrees on the best way to do so, she said. The product also contains support for XML, so users will be able to save files to personal digital assistants and other mobile devices. Plug-ins to support that type of file transfer are still being completed, said Sam Hiser, co-leader of the marketing project at OpenOffice.org and chief information officer of ReelAmerica. Users running Linux, Windows, Solaris, and other Unix flavors will be able to run OpenOffice.org 1.0. A port for Macintosh users is in the works, said Bhorat. The software was set up to work with several different file formats, too, so users can keep and use Microsoft Word and Excel files with

in the new version. Macros and other specially created programs for the Microsoft products, however, will not work with OpenOffice.org 1.0, Hiser said.

Budget Alternative

Schools, public-sector organizations, and companies in developing countries are among the targets of OpenOffice.org 1.0, Hiser said.

"(The software) is a natural companion to Linux," and organizations can significantly cut their technology budgets by installing free products like OpenOffice.org 1.0 on their networks, he said. The software was initially available only in English, according to the OpenOffice.org Web site, but versions in other languages were released in May, Bhorat said. OpenOffice.org 1.0 will consume 49MB of storage space on a Windows system, 67MB on a Linux machine, and 69MB under Solaris, according to data on the Web site. The development effort for OpenOffice.org included more than 10,000 developers, marketers, and end users worldwide. Developers used CollabNet's Source Cast application for distributed software development teams to write and debug code. Whoops! I think I've heard this story before. Hacker: Vulnerability lingers in AIM AOL Time Warner failed to properly fix a security hole in its AOL Instant Messenger application, leaving its users vulnerable to a new way to exploit the same flaw, a security researcher said in early May.

The glitch's latest incarnation could have been just as dangerous as the previous version, publicized in January, opening the way for malicious AIM users to execute any program on a vulnerable user's computer, said Matt Conover, a hacker with a security research group known as "w00w00." "This is almost identical to the problem we found

originally, and that's saddening," he said. "By using a slightly different method, we are able to get around the filtering they used to protect against the last flaw."

Last time, the error occurred in how the "add game" command handled a request from another user. This time, it occurs when a malicious AIM user sends an overly long "add external application" command to another user. Known as a buffer overflow, the error allows an attacker to execute a program on the victim's computer. After being notified by w00w00, AOL Time Warner fixed the problem by again applying a filter to its instant messaging servers, said Conover. Because the fix can be done to AOL's own machines, the protection is immediate, he added. Attempts to confirm the fix Sunday with an AOL Time Warner representative were unsuccessful. Though Conover said AOL responded quickly to the flaw this time, the group still had to use private contacts formed during the last security incident; AOL Time Warner still does not publish a central security contact for its software.

"There is still no way to publicly contact them, which means that they haven't learned anything from the last incident," he said. Moreover, while AOL Time Warner's fix prevents the current hole from being used to attack another user or to spread worms or viruses through instant message chats, Conover worries that an online vandal may find another method that could also elude AOL's fix.

"I definitely don't think they did enough to secure the IM client," he said. "They responded quickly to this instance of the flaw, but if they stop there, I think they are being lazy." Because AOL Time Warner fixed only a specific instance of the flaw

rather than the network security problems that lead to the vulnerability, the company could see a third strike against its instant messaging client, he said.

"All the code that requests one user to add something from another user needs to be looked at," he said. The statement echoes another that the w00w00 security team made in its January 1 advisory for the original flaw. "This may be more generic and exploitable through other means, but AOL has not released enough information about their protocol for us to be able to determine that," the group warned. Conover said that until AOL takes its security to heart, he believes instant messenger users should think about moving to a new software provider.

"We recommend that people use an IM provider that has a means to deal with security issues, because — right now — AOL doesn't," he said. Thanks for checking in this month. I'll have more in the next issue — more stuff to check out and more things to watch out for.

Windows XP: As Good as it Gets

Bass discovers few crashes, great performance, and a minimum of headaches with XP Pro

by Steve Bass
Pasadena IBM Users Group

Kvetching about an operating system is therapeutic. Believe me, I've done lots, saving regular visits to my shrink. But my complaining has almost bottomed out since I made the full-time switch to Windows XP Pro.

You caught that, right? I said almost. The reason is that even though I'm wildly pleased with XP, there are still a few features—and loose ends—I don't like. I'll describe a few of them in this and subsequent columns, and show you how XP has built-in ways to make the changes. (Of course, that's one of my primary kvetches -- finding the spots to modify XP isn't obvious and requires digging.)

To play fair, I have to warn you that I'll also do some proselytizing. I'm going to do my best to win you over, so to speak, for your own good. That's because once you get over the hassle of Product Activation, and Microsoft's annoying single license policy, I really think your computing experience will increase substantially.

I need another soapbox minute or two. Many of the PC World letters I receive complain, sometime bitterly, of a Microsoft conspiracy to force you into upgrading your system. Readers go on to say that in order to use XP, they'll need to replace some of their devices (printers seem to be the first one not to work), or stop using old, 16-bit programs written for Win 95.

I'll concede and agree with many of the readers that Microsoft should have done a better job with previous Windows versions, then we wouldn't be stuck in the corner having to upgrade.

But the reality is that if you want a slick operating system, one that's likely to make your computing day smoother and your workday more productive, you'll have to upgrade. [Set Soapbox to Off].

No More Stinkin' Crashes
You probably know that XP is a pretty interface hung on Windows 2000's architecture, so it resists crashes extraordinarily well. That's true for XP but not necessarily for programs that still plow headfirst into the bit bucket. For instance, Eudora, my e-

mail program, locks up when I try embedding what it considers a too large image into a message. And Internet Explorer also has a way of choking and freezing on some sites, doing its best to imitate a deer in headlights.

With Win 9x, the Eudora and IE crash could bring the system down; even if it didn't, I'd reboot to clear out any leftover holes in memory. Win XP contains the crash and stops it from contaminating the rest of the system. Using Control/Alt/Delete, the three-finger, soft-boot salute, calls up Task manager, one of XP's shining lights. Click on the toasted app and it's history.

Crash Reports? No, Thanks
Of course, with Microsoft at the helm, nothing as cool as Task Manager's handling of a crash can be left alone. Microsoft insists on meddling by sending itself the details of the crash. No doubt, the crash report does provide clues, often vital ones that you can review, to explain why a program crashes.

But once I've looked at a report — say, Eudora's paige32.dll bug that Qalcomm won't fix — I'm no longer interested in seeing it pop up. So I've turned parts of the feature off. (From Start, Control Panel, Advanced tab, Error Reporting.) This dialog gives me choices, and they're good ones. I can get the report but not send it, opt to hear only about programs or XP's errors, or even add specific programs to watch.

Zap, You're Restored
GoBack was the first successful utility to save snapshots of a PC's hard drive and let you restore the drive to a time when things were running well. It shouldn't surprise you to see a similar feature in Windows XP. (Roxio's GoBack, $40, download at www .roxio.com.)

Quick aside: Many of Microsoft's niftier features are from the brain trusts of third-

party companies. Woody , creator of dozens of Office, and specifically Word add-ons, said that to me in a private e-mail recently. More in another column.

XP's System Restore does just about everything GoBack does, just not as well. Nonetheless, it's an improvement over the way it worked in Windows ME, and a handy tool. I create a Restore point just before installing a new application. If the installation goes kaflooey, I use System Restore to jump five minutes into the past and get my system going again.

I use it so often, I pinned it onto my Start Menu for easy access. Try it: Find System Restore in All Programs, Accessories, System Tools and right mouse click on the icon and choose Pin on Start menu. Easy, no?

System Restore's Problems
The problem? System Restore isn't perfect. While I haven't had a problem in the 25 times I've used it, some reports on the Internet talk about DLLs that should be gone after a System Restore, are still on the system.

One thing Microsoft doesn't tell you is that each Restore Point (and system check-points, those restore points XP does automatically) takes up disk space.

You can dump all but the last system point by using XP's Disk Cleanup tool. Open Disk Cleanup, by clicking Start, choose All Programs, Accessories, System Tools, select Disk Cleanup, and choose the More Options tab. (Shortcut: From Start, Run, type cleanmgr.)

In the next series of columns, I'll show you other features built into XP that can keep you focused on productivity rather than rebooting two or three times a day or recovering from crashes.

Steve Bass is a Contributing Editor with PC World *and runs the Pasadena IBM Users Group. He's also a founding member of APCUG. Check* PCW*'s current edition at www.pcworld.com /resource/toc/index.asp and sign up for the Steve Bass online newsletter at www.pcworld.com /bass_letter.*

From The DealsGuy

by Bob Click

Greater Orlando Computer Users Group

I have very little this month because vendors are not responding, and two deals are still cooking, not to mention the lack of time. One item is from our good friend Dave Whittle for MGI software. Roxio recently acquired MGI and since Roxio hasn't communicated any plans for supporting users groups, Dave is proactively reducing his inventory of MGI-logo software.

Another item is something I saw demonstrated at a user group meeting I attended, and the members all liked it. Let's take a look at them.

Dave's Deals

I'm inserting Dave's words: "PhotoSuite is the all-time best-selling, easy-to-learn and easy-to-use digital photography favorite. It's an all-in-one package offering digital photo editing, stitching, touchup, organization, enhancement, ready-made templates, web site creation, e-mail sharing, and much more.

"VideoWave 5 is an all-time favorite digital video editing package offering easy-to-learn video editing, plenty of special effects, transitions, text effects, slow and fast motion, automatic scene detection, and now, DVD authoring and CD and DVD burning. Make up to a 20-minute DVD with just a CD-R and a CD burner!

"PhotoVista 2.0 is the best way to create an immersive 3D panorama that gives you the power to share that 'being there' feeling with family and friends.

"MGI Cinematic is video at its very easiest for home users and novices. You shoot the video; we'll make the movie! Offering much of the power of VideoWave, it has a wizard-driven interface and extra transitions and templates especially for home movies.

"PhotoSuite Mobile Edition is for Palm-OS handhelds, including any Palm, Handspring or Clie, including color or black and white units. It simplifies the storing and sharing of your digital pictures and video on your Palm-powered handheld device.

"MGI PhotoSuite 4 Platinum Edition – (retail, $49.99). Special $18.00, saving $31.99.

MGI VideoWave 5 – (retail $129.99). Special $50.00, saving $79.99.

Bundle of PhotoSuite 4 + VideoWave 5 – (retail $179.98). Special $65.00, saving $114.98.

MGI PhotoVista 2.0 – (retail $49.99). Special $20.00, saving $29.99.

MGI Cinematic – (retail $89.99). Special $35.00, saving $54.99.

MGI PhotoSuite Mobile Edition – (retail $24.95). Special $10, saving $14.94.

Any 3 products – (retail up to $269.97) – only $80, saving $189.97.

Any 4 products – (retail up to $319.96) - only $90, saving $229.96.

"Add $7.95 for shipping. (Dave says he'll offer FREE S&H *IF* you write 'DealsGuy' on your order!)

"You may order by US mail if you pay by check or money order, or by e-mail, fax or phone if you pay with VISA or MasterCard. Please provide your name, complete mailing address, phone number and/or e-mail address along with the product(s) you'd like

and the total price you expect to pay based on the above. Mail orders to: Webworking Services, 653 N 600 E, Springville, UT 84663. Phone orders to 1-801-489-0605. Fax orders to1-801-489-0609. E-mail orders to orders@webworkingservices.com.

"Don't miss out on the great prices for these highly popular, highly-touted products. Tens of thousands have been sold to user group members nationwide during the past three years. These are the easiest to learn and the easiest to use products you can find, yet they're powerful enough for almost everyone, including many professionals!"

I've watched Dave's presentation a number of times and have always been impressed with what he can do with all these products. I own one MGI product and it certainly did what I wanted easily.

What, Another Free Office Suite!

I was at a Space Coast PC Users Group meeting one evening and their very able Webmaster, Curt Potsic, did a great demo on this fine office suite that will do the job if you don't need the gargantuan work of MS Office or Corel Office Suite. He was even using voice recognition during his demo. I took the description below off the Web.

"EasyOffice 2001, a Powerful but easy-to-use office suite. EasyOffice includes Easy Word, Easy Spreadsheet, Easy Presentation, Easy Bar Coder, Easy Web Page Creator, Easy Contact Manager, Easy Bookkeeper and Easy Speaker. EasyOffice is self-explanatory — No manuals to read. Easy-Office automatically gets you working with the Internet — one click sends your document as e-mail. Save your files on the Internet. Create great looking Web pages. EasyOffice 2002 is compatible with Microsoft files."

It's hard to find the freeware version, but when I looked it was at [http://www.e-press .com/demo_downloads.html]. I'm told it's also on ZDNet and c/net. [http://www .download.com], doing a search for Easy Office. Or try [http://www.winsite.com], [http://www .tucows.com] and [http://www .zdnet.com] doing a search for Easy Office.

It is only free for personal use. However, I saw it on the Provantage.com site for $21.00 and it would be worth that to be able to avoid the nag screens and be able to download the upgrades to it when they come out, if I understood it right. Be sure and read all the latest improvements introduced this year, such as its EazyZip, EazyBackup, etc. What a deal this is.

That's it for this month. Meet me here again next month if your editor permits. This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of products, no matter how enthused, or disgruntled, I might sound.

Bob (The Cheapskate) Click [Bobclick @dealsguy.com]. Visit my Web site at [http://www.dealsguy.com] for past columns. There are also interesting articles from user group newsletters on my "Articles of Interest" page for viewing or downloading.

Taming the "Cookie" Monster

by Beverly Rosenbaum

Houston Area League of PC Users

Have you ever heard of "DoubleClick?" If not, then finding "cookies" from them on your computer would probably surprise you.

Look and see for yourself. You can search your PC for the file called "cookies.txt" or folder called "cookies" (that's "MagicCookie"

Computer RENAISSANCE

has a weekly listener call-in computer talk show featuring news, product reviews, helpful tips, and special guests. It's broad-cast live on Monday evenings from 6:30 to 7:30 with a taped replay on Saturday mornings from 8 to 9. It's simulcast live on the web at www.wysl1040.com

if you use a Mac). Open the file with a text editor and take a look at the contents. If you've been doing any browsing at all, you'll find a cookie in there from someone called "doubleclick.net".

If you're convinced that you never went to a site called "DoubleClick," how did they give you a cookie? After all, the idea of the cookie (according to the original specs published by Netscape) is to make a more efficient connection between the server that delivers the cookie and the client machine that receives it. This variant is what's known as a third-party cookie.

Now if you connect to the Internet and browse www.doubleclick.net, you can see their site list of participants (www.double click.com/us/advertisers/media /brand/site-list.asp) and read all about their data collection to deliver targeted marketing based on our cookies and our profiles. What is really happening is that subscribers to the DoubleClick service are putting a third-party cookie request on their home page for the DoubleClick cookie. [Every step of the way you'll collect cookies from them, at least

until you can make your way to the new page they've recently added that now provides you an "Opt-Out" option (www .doubleclick.com/us/corporate/privacy/).]

So when you hit one of these sites, it requests the cookie from your computer to see who you are, and gets any other information that happens to be in your cookie file. It then sends a request to "DoubleClick" with your ID, requesting all available marketing information about you. Then you're supposed to receive specially targeted marketing banners from the site. In other words, if you and I log on to the same site at the exact same time, based on our cookie information I might see ads for printers, while you would see ads for cameras. If you log in to a "DoubleClick" enabled site, and it sends a request for your "DoubleClick" cookie, and you don't have one, then each and every one of those sites will hand you a "DoubleClick" cookie. Pretty sneaky way to roll in the cookie dough, don't you think?

DoubleClick is the Web's largest ad company, sponsoring PlazaDirect.com (formerly NetDeals.com), which invites you to sign up for various sweepstakes or catalogs and other "special offers." That's how they get you to willingly give them personal information, such as your name, mailing address, and email address.

Fortunately, several privacy organizations have taken up the cause to protect us, because the main concern is that all this could be done without anyone's knowledge. Even though the use of this information is harmless in itself as long as you know the limitations of these networks, many people still feel that gathering information in this way is invasive to their privacy. Everyone agrees that one of the main issues is awareness.

To add more information to their collected profiles of individual behavior, DoubleClick completed a merger in November 1999 with Abacus Direct, a giant in offline marketing information. Then things got worse; DoubleClick had to personally identify all the information they previously collected in order to merge it with the data in the hands of Abacus Direct. By February 2000, the Electronic Privacy Information Center in Washington, D.C. (www.epic.org) filed a complaint against them alleging "unfair and deceptive" business practices, because DoubleClick had deceived consumers by claiming in multiple earlier privacy policies that the information collected would remain anonymous.

Another independent non-profit privacy initiative is TRUSTe (www.truste.org), dedicated to building users' trust and confidence on the Internet through the use of their oversight seal, awarded to web sites that adhere to established privacy principles and agree to comply with an oversight and consumer resolution process.

In four years DoubleClick served ads and tracked users on more than 11,000 web sites, collecting 100 million profiles of Internet users. Industry analysts estimated that 45.8% of Internet users in the United States visited web sites in the DoubleClick advertising network in a single month. And while a New York court recently announced a proposed settlement in the EPIC litigation, it's not a total victory for consumers. The settlement would affect all Internet users who "had DoubleClick cookies placed upon their computers or browsers between Jan 1, 1996 and March 28, 2002." The agreement will, among other things, require future DoubleClick cookies to expire within 5 years. (That's two years after the typical user has changed computers!) The company will also

be required to ensure the protection and routine purging of data collected online. The DoubleClick Opt-Out option was added after the complaint was filed, and the company has also posted a TRUSTe-approved privacy policy. DoubleClick has now become a member of the Network Advertising Initiative (www.network advertising.org/), and are audited for compliance with NAI principles by PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Selecting their offer to let you "opt out" actually provides a persistent "blank" cookie containing the string "id=OPT_OUT," preventing them from assigning any future cookies or uniquely associating any information with your browser. This way, you can opt-out of the ad-serving cookies without erasing or altering other cookies associated with your browser. Note that if you erase or otherwise alter your browser's cookie file after opting out (including upgrading certain browsers) you may need to perform this process again. You can opt out of four different ad networks (Avenue A, DoubleClick, L90, and 24/7) at one site through NAI (www.networkadvertising.org/), but that doesn't cover all the cookies you may find in your cookie jar.

The setting in Netscape or Internet Explorer to accept, reject, or be prompted about cookies is pretty much an all-or-nothing choice versus constantly being asked if you want a cookie (what a polite approach). And don't forget the related annoyance, pop-up ads. Getting rid of them would require disabling Javascript in your browser, and since many java applets, links and games on web sites run from pop-ups, doing this across the board would not have the best results. So it seems to me that we still need to take the matter of controlling cookies, banner ads

and pop-ups into our own hands with customized programs.

I've investigated the available freeware and shareware programs to do just that, and I found 61 different programs that work with varying degrees of success. A number of them used an HTTP proxy to accomplish the task, and that can make them difficult to configure if you are using a firewall or already have other applications that require proxy servers. If you get a conflict, your web access can be cut off entirely. Many of the others were much easier to use, and after a great deal of trial and error, I found several that did an adequate job. In the process, however, I discovered that I was being handed cookies with expiration dates ranging from 10 to 27 years from now, and that I got anywhere from 7 to 14 cookies on a single web page, sometimes more. At one time privacy advocates counted 93 cookies from a single site at www.planetrx.com, but most of them have now been removed.

I tested Cookie Pal, Jar, Smasher, Crusher, Cruncher, Cleaner, and Eater specializing in just cookie removal, and many more. I finally got comfortable with a combination of Burnt Cookies (www .andersson-design.com/bcookies/), which has a $5 registration; Cookie Jar (www .jasonstoolbox.com/cookiejar.asp), free for personal use; and Cookie Pal (www .kburra.com), 30-day shareware with a $13 registration. I liked Surf Pal from www.panicware.com/ to control both pop-ups and cookies. Panicware's new update of SurfPal is coming soon, but in the meantime, you can download the free version or 30-day trial of their Popup-Stopper.

I also tried the free version of Anonymizer (www.anonymizer.com/) to filter banner ads and scramble my web page requests with a simple plugin to Internet Explorer. It works by rewriting the web pages you view on their protected servers, and I was prevented from reaching www.microsoft.com at all! It noticeably delayed the loading of each page and drove me so crazy with popup windows to upgrade their product to the full version ($49.96 /year) that I couldn't wait to uninstall it. They even tried to give me a cookie that expired in 2037!

The Privacy Foundation's free Bugnosis (www.bugnosis.org/) really opened my eyes to the number of third party cookies hidden on various web pages, and I've uncovered a great deal more to tell you than I ever expected. Come back next month for more details about controlling popup windows and web bugs you can't even see. In addition, I'll tell you about how the same bits of code are now being delivered to you through e-mail in enhanced messages that share the look and feel of Web pages. Since e-mail marketing is not subject to the same policies that have been developed to protect consumer privacy on the Web, we may indeed have a new battle on our hands.

From the May 2002 issue of HAL-PC Magazine. *Beverly Rosenbaum, a HAL-PC member, is a 1999 and 2000 Houston Press Club "Excellence in Journalism" award winner. She can be reached at brosen @hal-pc.org.*

Ponderings
by Meredith Poor
Alamo PC Organization

Workday mornings are best spent sitting cross-legged on the recliner with a mug of hot tea and the day's Wall Street Journal. This is the best vantage for directing my vast army of sprites, trolls, elves, and freehands.

Pooter Hall
We live in the time where "Woz" (Steve Wozniak) meets "Wiz" (Harry Potter). In the dim recesses of our past our ancestors would call on the spirit world for relief and or support, given that other options were missing entirely or limited in their effectiveness. Sometimes these were combined with more mundane things like herbs and changes in lifestyle that would, in themselves, solve problems. At least for awhile.

The assumption in all this was that there is some agency (God, the devil, the goddess of fertility, and so forth) that is sentient, powerful, and available. I will avoid getting into theological discussions; the point here is that it is now possible for us to create our own agents. In doing so, we are in our own 'wizard's school'.

Voice recognition has been effective for at least the last five years, so it's not really a surprise that someone could intone a chant or spell and make something actually happen, such as turn on a light or light a fire. After all, we have the 'Clapper'.

The MIT Media Lab is working on the 'emotionally sensitive computer', which reads the expressions on the face of the user to find out whether the direction it's taking is appropriate. If the interface is hidden (rather than sitting in front of a computer, a camera is embedded in some part of an ordinary room, and can decipher your objective without anyone else hearing or seeing you do anything) then it appears that you control something mysterious and unplumbable, when in fact it's probably an embedded microcontroller and some software. A way of understanding how much computing power is needed to do this is to look at the reverse, which is to render faces with varying expressions in real time, such as one sees on the Sony PS2 or the X-Box. These cost from $300 to $400. If it can be rendered, the rendering can be compared to a real world image, and an expression can be associated with a command.

Much of this requires the maintenance of a vast amount of context. A classic scenario is: you pull into the driveway, get out of the car, the computer recognizes that you're home and automatically unlocks and opens the door. What it does next has a lot to do with where you've been. If you've been working, maybe you want quiet music and a stiff drink. If you're home from the theater with the spouse, all you want to do is go straight to bed. If you have a bunch of boards and hammer, it's time for 'home improvement'. Maybe you have a bag of groceries under each arm.

One way the computer knows where you've been is to download history from the GPS module you installed in the car. Up till now, these have been used for tracking commercial vehicles or your teenager; now you are spying on yourself. What the computer knows is that if you've spent all day at the mall, you're broke and exhausted. If it's Friday, there'd better be cold beer in the fridge.

The usefulness of this in computational terms is scheduling and resource allocation. You might have a weakness for chocolate, the computer translates this into a $2 a day habit. It also figures out you drive twenty miles to work and back, and this will require significant service work three months from now. If this and the other factors are plotted on a graph, they show you slowly dying in a sea of debt. All you have to do is earn or conserve another $1,000 per month (after taxes) and you will retire a millionaire.

What you wanted was something that would clean house and make dinner, what you got was a system for reminding you to quit spending money. There are already lots of people around doing that; why do you need any more from a machine?

MP3's Aren't
Just Music Anymore

by David Navratil
1960 PC Users Group

Just about everyone with a computer has probably tried their luck with downloading MP3 files. In the past two years I've put together quite a collection of songs from the 1920's through the 1970's, accumulating almost 3,000 songs during that time. I've covered the Big Band era, easy listening, holiday music, country, folk, classical — just about every genre you can imagine. During one of my many afternoons of surfing the net looking for that one elusive MP3 that would fill another CD-R, I came across a genre that was new to me but may be of interest to members of our club.

The name of these new finds is "Old Time Radio Show" or OTR's for short. What could be a better use for the MP3 format than OTR's! Most OTR's length is from 15 minutes to 1 hour. In regular "wav" format the size of one of these files could be from 60 MB to 400 MB but in MP3 format an average show is from 3 MB to 30 MB. Another advantage is that since most of these shows are from the 1920's through the 1950's the sound quality of course are not up to par with newly recorded material. This again saves you room on your hard drive because you don't have to use a bit rate of 128 kbps but can use 24 to 64 bits. (Most OTR's I've downloaded from the net are in 24 to 32 kbps.) This lower bit rate saves much space and

when played back kind of gives the performance that "old time radio sound." You can easily record 60 hours of OTR's onto one CD-R, using the lower bit rates, without sacrificing sound quality.

As to the quantity of OTR's available on the net, I have found at least 560 different series and as many as 57,000 different programs. Some of the more popular and easy to find are — *Amos & Andy, The Shadow, Fibber McGee and Molly, Tarzan, Sherlock Holmes, Dragnet, Inner Sanctum, I Love a Mystery* and the list just goes on. Most of these shows include the original commercials that were aired at that time. The shows started becoming popular in the late 1920's and I have some from as recently as the 1980's.

I have many of the "Classic Books" presented in OTR format as well. These are not audio books where one person just reads to you, but full productions with sound effects, music and such. Most of these last from one hour to three hours. The late Orson Wells was involved with many of "Classics." Some titles are *War of the Worlds, A Christmas Carol, Pride and Prejudice, Time Machine,* etc.

Finding these programs on the net is even easier than music. There are thousands of individuals who collect OTR's as a hobby. Most of them have their own websites and offer a few selections to download changing the selection each week or month. Many sites will also send you an e-mail when new offerings are available. You can go to Google or any search engine and key in "OTR" or "Old Time Radio Shows" and you will get thousands of different sites. Also using one of the many music download sites, such as KaZaa, keying in the name of the series will bring up hundreds of results. You can join

OTR clubs at any of the major websites like AOL, Yahoo, and MSN. There are OTR trade and share sites where you post a listing of the shows you have and can trade via CD-R with others for shows you need.

If you are running out of hard disk space or don't have a CD burner you can still enjoy the experience of OTR's. There are many sites on the web that broadcast the shows over the web in different formats. All you need to listen to these is one of the many free media players available on the web.

Turn off the TV some night, relax and listen to one of these shows and you to may find that MP3's are not just about music!!

Here are a few sites to get you started:
http://old-time-radio.com/
http://www.starcreations.com/ot
    /links/MP3links.htm
http://www.homestead.com/repsonline
    /BrowserDownloads.html
http://users2.ev1.net/~ey/audio.html
http://www.otrcat.com/index.html
From the July 2002 issue of PC News, *the newsletter of the 1960 PC Users Group of Houston TX.*

Computer Tuneup

Oak Run Computer Club

There are several things you can do routinely to ensure your computer doesn't get sluggish. These mainly consist in keeping its files uncluttered with broken and unused chunks of data.

Clearing your "cache"
Dumping your "cookies"
Running "Disk Cleanup"
Scanning your hard drive for broken parts with "Scandisk".

"Defragmenting" your hard drive to close up empty spaces to speed up your drive search.

And, finally, if you have Win ME, setting a fresh "Restore Point".

So, let's get busy!

Clearing Your "Cache" and Dumping Your "Cookies"

Truly, the "cache" in a computer is a superfast buffer memory that "sits" beside your processor and holds, for tiny bits of time, pieces of program data the processor needs to have handy to carry out its instructions. When the processor stops, this memory goes blank.

People erroneously use the term "cache" to designate the Temporary Internet Files where Windows allows websites you have visited to place URLs of their sites to make them readily available when you visit them again. In theory, they will open up more quickly. The difference in speed is hardly noticeable, however.

Cookies are tiny files placed on your drive by websites you have visited that allow those sites to keep track of your Internet use by sending back information to a visited site every time you return.

Both of these files allow business sites (and others properly equipped) to monitor your Internet usage. For your privacy's sake, you should routinely dump these files. If you spend a lot of time surfing the Net, you should probably clear them out at the end of the day. It's easy and here's how:

Go Start/Settings/Control Panel/Internet Options. In the open Dialog Box, in the second pane is Temporary Internet Files. You can see where to Delete Files. But, lets go further. Click Settings. Now click View Files. If you scroll down you will be surprised at the accumulation of URLs and Cookies.

Now go back by clicking OK. Now click on Delete Files.

To see what you have done, click on Settings again. You see, you have erased the URLs but not the Cookies.

Now, click Edit/Select All and hit your Delete key. This should dump the cookies also.

And while you are here on the Internet Properties page, you might want to hit CLEAR HISTORY. This is the history of the sites you have recently visited, which you can access by hitting the HISTORY button on the toolbar at the top of any webpage. However, I have mine set at 20 days which will prevent a large pile up. I find I rarely use this, but sometimes when I should have made a Favorite and didn't, it helps a lot.

Running "Disk Cleanup," "ScanDisk," & "Defrag"

These next three functions are accessed from the same page.

Open My Computer, right click Local Disk C:, click Properties, click Disk Cleanup. This may be redundant because there you see TEMP.INT FILES again and the RECYCLE BIN which you probably empty regularly, right. No, well here's your chance. As you can see you can choose what you want to delete. If you haven't emptied RECYCLE for a while, it can accumulate a lot of junk and consume a lot of memory.

Ok, now click the Tools tab. At the top is ScanDisk and below it, Defrag. Also it tells you how recently you ran these two. I would suggest running Scan Disk weekly and Defrag once a month.

Scan Disk inspects all the data on your hard drive looking for broken fragments of unassociated data which, if found, allows you to discard or keep, your choice. I would choose Discard. This program will take fifteen or twenty minutes.

After Scan Disk is finished, run Defrag. It requires you to run Scan Disk first, then it scrolls through the hard drive closing up empty files and moving everything to the front of the drive to allow it to search faster. It may take over an hour so allow enough time for it to finish before shutting down.

Epilog

These maintenance functions can be set up to run automatically, if you like. For Homework, figure out how to do that and set it up on your computer!

Also, if you have Win ME, set up a new Restore Point.

Go Start/Programs/Accessories/System Tools, click System Restore and follow directions.

Back up Your Win98 Registry with Scanreg

Before making any registry changes to your Win9x PCs, you should always back up the registry. Windows 98 includes the ScanReg program, which comes in two flavors—the Windows Scanregw.exe and the DOS Scanreg.exe.

By default, ScanReg runs every time you start the system and backs up the registry once a day into a .cab file in the c:\windows\sybckup directory. If you can start your system in MS-DOS mode, you can run ScanReg with the /restore switch to restore your entire registry.

That's useful to know, but you can also start Scanregw.exe manually at any time before a system change. It may tell you that the backup has already taken place that day, but it also gives you the option to back up again, providing a quick and easy complete registry backup.

President's Column
by Ron Matteson

We have lots of things going on, even though we're supposedly in the slow time of the year for meetings. We have meetings in July for Special Interest Groups, the regular Program meeting, and a Planning meeting. The July Program meeting will be about designing simple web pages, using WYSIWYG software available in every Windows package from Windows 95 up. In August we'll have our annual Picnic, computer games, and something new- a computer flea market. The latest merchandise may not be available, but it will be cheap, and it will be for a good cause- the RCSi. We are low on funds, and need some creative ways to raise money- the flea market is an attempt at that.

Another way we can raise money is to increase our membership rolls. If everyone tries to think of one new person who might be interested in RCSi, and signs them up, we would be in good shape. In order to get a sudden influx of cash right now, we are offering a combined 2002-2003 membership for $50 instead of the usual $60. If you've already paid the usual $30 for extending your membership into 2003 that's ok; just pay another $20 now for an additional year.

Another possibility is to sell more ads for the Monitor. If you all mention this to computer store owners when you're in their stores, maybe you can help get some ads.

If we try to think of some goals for the next year, we could include some or all of the following:

‣ More Special Interest Groups (web design, Internet usage, home networking, Windows XP, database software, to name a few possibilities)
‣ One or more short courses on a topic of interest
‣ A community service project
‣ Increased membership

Unfortunately, each of these items requires manpower. If you feel qualified and/or motivated to work in any of the above areas, fell free to speak to any of the Board members about volunteering. The RCSi could sure use your help!

Program Meeting Minutes
June 11, 2002
by Charles Grover

Our June 11, 2002, meeting began with Helps Half Hour at 6:30 pm. Greg Wolf led the question and answer session. (During the course of the discussion I noted two questions about Windows XP, two about anti-virus programs, and one each about digital photography, printing, use of the clipboard, and Microsoft Excel.)

The business meeting was begun at 7:05 PM by Ron Matteson, President. Ron told us about the updated web page, at rcsi.org. Bob Avery and Joe Varga have been working on it, with help from Bill Statt.

Ron is concerned to improve finances. To improve cash flow this year, a special rate for a two-year renewal is in effect. A flea market at the picnic will raise money. Members are invited to donate computer related items. Books from the library will also be sold. Items to be donated for sale at the picnic should be brought by noon in order to be price marked. The flea market will run from 2 to 7 pm. Leftover items may be sold in any of several ways.

Steve reviewed arrangements for the picnic. Munchies are assigned to people whose last names begin with A through I; salads to J through Q; and desserts to R through Z. Five dollars will be charged per

person for meat and drinks. The picnic will be held Aug. 11 at Brighton Town Park, Westfall Road. We will use the same pavilion as last year, at the back of the park, on the water. The pavilion can be reached from the parking lot of the adjacent office/medical complex (Sawgrass Drive).

After a break we had our program presentation by Gordon Brown on Digital Photography: One Pixel @ a Time. Our speaker is an author and lecturer. He gave us an entertaining and comprehensive overview of various aspects of digital photography.

Next month, Helps Half Hour will be led by Arpad Kovacs. The program topic is Developing a Web Page. We adjourned at 8:58 PM with the 50/50 drawing.

Planning Meeting Minutes
June 18, 2002
by Charles Grover

The Board of the Rochester Computer Society met the evening of June 18, 2002, at the home of Sally Springett. Present were Ron Matteson (President), Steve Staub (Treasurer), Jim McGrath, Sally Springett (*Monitor* Editor), Larilyn Bauer (Secretary-elect), Bob Avery, Dan Rothfuss, and Charles Grover (Secretary). Arpad Kovacs (Vice President) arrived at 7:20 pm. Ron called us to order at 7:07 pm.

Old business: in evaluating the program meeting, we thought that Mr. Brown's presentation was well appreciated and highly enjoyable. He has more to share if we would like to have him back in the future.

Treasurer: Steve informed us that finances are improving. A member of the club has sent a contribution of $100, with recognition of "the excellent content of the *Monitor*." Jim will get the letterhead to Ron, who will thank the donor. Steve reported $918.89 in the treasury.

We discussed *Monitor* costs again. We considered how often to produce the newsletter and whether to use electronic distribution. We are distributing many copies to others. Steve will do a little more research on rising postal costs. We discussed whether to combine the July and August *Monitor* issues. We will combine them. The July-August issue will be assembled June 29.

Larilyn will prepare a form to acknowledge contributions.

Web Page: Bob Avery informed us that we get 25 MB of space for $7 per month, paid quarterly. We are using almost the entire 25 MB. If we pay annually we can double the space for a cost of $120. Bob reported further changes in development of the web site. Steve moved, Arpad seconded, that we increase the Web space to 50 MB. The motion carried. After Ron informed members at the last program meeting that the site had been updated, there were 60 hits.

Returning to matters having to do with the Treasurer, the Secretary suggested a resolution to authorize signatures on our checking account. Resolved, that those authorized to sign checks on the account of the Rochester Computer Society, Inc., are Steve Staub, Treasurer, and Ron Matteson, President. The resolution was moved by Larilyn, seconded by Arpad and carried.

Picnic: only a few have signed up so far for the picnic. We are using the pavilion at the rear of the park. There is easy access by car from the parking lot at the end of Sawgrass Drive.

Bob brought us back to the Web Page to tell us about how he hopes to protect e-mail addresses.

Software Chair: Ron announced that Jim McGrath is to be listed in *Monitor* now as the Software Chair.

Programs: the subject of the next meeting is "How to Make a Simple Web Page, Using Front Page Express."

Larilyn Introduced the subject of our Mailbox. She asked if there were an alternative to continuing our arrangement with Mailboxes Etc. They can receive items shipped by such firms as UPS, FedEx, etc. Larilyn will inquire whether St. Stephen's Church could receive our mail.

Steve will get library books for the flea market at the Picnic. Several persons have indicated they have things to donate. Other details of picnic and flea market arrangements were discussed.

Our July 9 program meeting will have to be in the cafeteria at Element K. Larilyn will take the minutes in the absence of the Secretary. We talked about the need to buy a spare bulb for our projector.

Market Pro: a show will be held in June, and *ComputerLink* magazine shows it to be scheduled again for July 21.

Advertising Committee: Ron asked for suggestions of persons to serve.

SIGs: the Digital Photography meeting in July will be moved to the second Thursday. Bob would like to put information about SIG programs on the Web site.

Goals: we are working on (1) Financial Solvency and (2) Web Site. Some ideas for (3) 2 More SIGs were suggested: games, web site development, networking were among the possibilities. (4) Short Course offerings is another idea. There are some practical difficulties. (6) a Community Service Activity is another idea. Helping WXXI by volunteering to answer phones as a group was suggested. Dan will check this out with the station. (5) Increased Membership seems to be our greatest immediate need.

Membership Committee: Ron asked for suggestions of persons to work on this committee also.

Other: we noted the pending sale of Element K's classroom building. It is likely that the new owner/operator will let us continue to meet there. We thought about some alternatives, if needed. Ron then called our attention to the need for us to do audits. Larilyn is going to check with an acquaintance who was a CPA. We noted the following dates:

Program Meeting July 9

Planning Meeting July 16

No Planning Meeting in August unless a special meeting is needed.

No Program Meeting in August other than the picnic.

We realized that Steve had a copy of the Bank's formal corporate resolution to authorize signatures for our account. Charles moved and Steve seconded that we adopt the Bank's formal resolution. The motion carried. The Secretary signed the attestation on the resolution form.

We adjourned at 9:15 PM

Treasurer's Report
by Steve Staub

Balance as of 05/22/02	$856.55
Income	
Dues and picnic	$361.00
Expenses	
Lease	$86.72
Postmaster	125.00
Paper	66.66
St. Stephens	100.00
Total expense	$378.38
Balance as of 06/24/2002	$839.17

AOL to Buy Hell

DULLES, VA (DPI)–AOL Time Warner, Inc. which owns America Online, Inc. offered the souls of its 30 million AOL users in exchange for a controlling interest in Hell, Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Good & Evil, Inc. Barry Schuler, Chairman and CEO of AOL said, "This acquisition will allow us to provide additional services to our users. It will save them time because there will be no long lines or waiting to get in. Just enter the keyword 'HELL' and see what happens."

AOL Time Warner Chairman Steve Case added, "We view this as a cost savings for the forces of good. They will be able to reduce staff at that pretty gate thing and maybe only work the saint guy half time. We'll even throw in 3 million CompuServe members for free, just sweeten the deal."

Hell, Inc. Head Demon, Mintaka Alnilam Alnitak, who spoke on the condition of anonymity stated, "My master, He-Who-Shall-Not-Be-Named, is going to be one pissed Prince of Darkness when he returns from his vacation in Yuma. There'll be hell to pay. Hell, we consider this to be a very hostile takeover bid. Hello, most of those AOL users were going to end up here anyway. Hell, we used the soul of Jane Fonda to transform Ted Turner into our lap puppy, what the hell do we need AOL for. Hell, if we wanted to be treated like puppets we would have let our good friend Bill Gates buy us."

Lawyers are scrutinizing the merger with Hell, but that in itself may present a conflict of interest.

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Cool Web Sites
by Don Singleton
Tulsa Computer Society

Old computer museum http://www.old-computers.com/news/default.asp
Remember when monitors weren't flat and computers had lights and switches on them? Relive the old days at this museum.

Insectlopedia research portal http://www .insectclopedia.com/
Searchable or browsable by categories like insect control, identification, research, databases. Or for a chattier approach, visit The Bug Page http://www.thebugpage.com/, which includes an insect gallery, insect sounds, and more.

Pollen count http://www.pollen.com/Pollen .com.asp
Allergy season is here again. This Web site gives an overall rating of local pollen levels and tells which flowers are the culprits.

Auto theft http://www.cccis.com/news /moststolen/2001/2001veh.htm
See if your car is a hot target for thieves. It provides state-by-state listings of the most stolen vehicles and other car theft statistics.

Common Errors in English http://www.wsu .edu/~brians/errors/index.html
How errors and confusions between words affect meaning.

HumanSpellcheck.com
Why copy editors are still needed. Don't overstress yourself giggling.

Satellite views of Earth http://www .digital globe.com/
DigitalGlobe's QuickBird satellite currently offers the best commercially available images of Earth from space. You can tour some kool images and download free desktop wallpaper.