

Help! My Computer Is Down and I Can't Get It Up

by Ira Wilsker

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I am embarrassed to say this, but I had a major problem with my computer recently. It would only boot to a blue screen that said that it had a problem, and Windows XP stopped to prevent any damage, and gave an error code. It said to uninstall any recent programs or hardware, and recommended starting in safe mode. This can happen to anyone at any time, and has happened to me before. Most of the time, a simple power-off then reboot will resolve the problem, as these blue screens are often itinerant, and may not recur, and a simple reboot may rectify the problem. I turned the power off, waited a few seconds, powered on, and attempted to reboot, and that discouraging blue screen reappeared, instead of my desktop. I rebooted again, and selected safe mode, allowing the computer to fully boot in that manner. As designed, since many drivers and programs do not load when booted into safe mode, it loaded normally. Usually, when I had this problem in the past, exiting from safe mode, and rebooting generally rebooted the computer properly, and I could do my work. Not this time, the computer was being stubborn; now I could better sympathize with some of the callers on my show who express frustrations, and even state that their computer hates them.

I went into safe mode again, and uninstalled the Microsoft Critical Update I had downloaded and installed the previous evening. Confident that this was the problem, as there are often such complaints posted online after every critical update, I was sure that this would resolve itself, and my computer would then reboot normally. Feeling twangs of anger, my computer rebooted into the now familiar blue screen of boot failure.

While approaching despair, I knew that all was not lost because the previous evening I had performed an incremental backup (only new or changed files since the previous backup are saved) to my external hard drive, so I was certain that all of my critical data could easily be restored if that option became necessary. Still the frustration of being unable to boot the computer was mounting. Fortunately, in addition to a very current backup which could be restored as a last resort, there are other less stressful and viable options to overcome whatever was creating my problem.

Windows XP and ME have a not very well known feature "System Restore" as an integral function. Ideally, the system restore function should take a snapshot of critical system files and settings at each successful boot, and prior to any major changes. I have been certain to make sure that my system restore is always functioning, and also manually create another restore point prior to making any changes in software, registry, or other critical items. It is important to note that those people

who leave their computers on 24 hours, may not have new restore points periodically created automatically by the system, making it quite possible that a restore may not use the most up to date information. System restore can be located in XP at Start > Programs > Accessories > System Tools > System Restore.

When opened, two choices will be presented: create a restore point, or restore the computer to an earlier date. By default, unless intentionally changed, XP will save restore information until 12% of the hard drive is used for that purpose. Once the limit is reached, older restore points are deleted using "FIFO" (first in, first out). Other than a few minutes of time, it almost never hurts to create a restore point, unless the hard drive is approaching capacity. Many users are not aware if there has been a recent restore point created, and it is easy to find out by opening the system restore function, and clicking on "Restore the Computer to an Earlier Time." A calendar will appear, and dates that contain restore points will be in bold. Clicking on a date will show the restore points created on that date. To restore the computer to that time, click on the date and time desired, and the automated process will run, rebooting the computer upon completion, and making the computer as it was at that date.

Once created, restore points cannot easily be modified, which may create problems if an unknown virus or Trojan is infecting the computer. When this happens, the virus or Trojan is saved along with the requisite necessary data. If such a restore point is selected, then the malware is restored along with the desired data, re-infecting the computer. This is a surprisingly common way of re-infecting a computer after antivirus software deletes active threats.

A system restore function is not included with Windows 95, 98, NT, or 2000, but there is an excellent alternative, that also works well with ME and XP. WinRescue, available at www.superwin.com, creates a separate registry backup each time the computer is booted. With WinRescue, the system registry can be easily restored if problems occur.

Now I have to get back to work, and restore my computer.

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Beware!

by Kim Komando

A new and very dangerous Internet attack was reported this week in Brazil. This is something you need to know about. This new danger is a phishing attack. Phishing is computer slang for attacks in which criminals pretend to be a bank or other institution. They try to trick you into giving up your password and user

name. Most people have learned not to fall for this. But this new attack could fool the most careful people.

Here's how it works: The criminals send you an e-mail (spam). When you open the e-mail, a small program called a script runs. Note that you only need to open the e-mail; there is no attachment. The scripting program goes to your HOSTS file, located deep in your computer. The actual path in Windows XP is: C:\Windows\System32\Drivers\Etc\HOSTS. It enters your bank's Web address—for instance, www.YourBank.com—in the HOSTS file. It also enters an Internet Protocol (IP) number for the criminals' address.

The next time you need to surf to your bank, you attempt to go to www.YourBank.com. When you enter that address, or any other address, the browser first goes to the HOSTS file to find the IP number. If it isn't there (it normally would not be), it goes to a special computer on the Internet to find the IP number. However, the criminals have put your bank's address in the HOSTS file, along with their IP number. So you are automatically sent to that IP number, which is the criminals' computer. It looks like the bank's Web site, so you enter your user name and password. That gives the criminals the information they need to enter your account and steal your money. How can you protect yourself? Some anti-virus programs guard against this kind of thing; others do not. To be safe, you must disable your computer's scripting ability. To do that:

- In Windows XP, click StartMy Computer. Click ToolsFolder Options. Select the File Types tab. Click File Types, then scroll to and click VBScript Script File. Click Advanced. In the Actions box, click Open. Click Remove. If you need to restore scripting, click New. Put Open in the Action box. In the next box, click Browse. Find wscript.exe in C:\Windows\System 32. Double-click it.
- In Windows ME and 2000, the procedure is similar. If you need to restore scripting in Windows ME, the wscript.exe file is in C:\Windows.
- In Windows 98, you must disable Windows Scripting Host. Click Start Settings Control Panel. Double-click Add/Remove Programs. Select the Windows Setup tab. Double-click Accessories. Click the box next to Windows Scripting Host to deselect it. Click OK Apply OK.

This attack is not yet a threat in the United States. But it is only a matter of time. Do not fail to protect yourself.

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Will Santa Clause Bring Orcs and Aliens to Your Door?

by Timothy Everingham
TUGNET

There is a big buzz about the new video game consoles now in development, but they will not be here this holiday season. We have to continue to look at titles for the Playstation 2, Xbox, and GameCube, along with the ever-evolving platform, the PC.

Two big titles coming out in the summer and fall of this year for the PC have been ID's Doom 3 (Activision) and Valve's Half Life 2 (Vivendi Universal Games), both first person shooters. Both require a 3GHz processor or higher, a top of the line 3D video card that has come out in the last year, and 512-1024 MB of RAM to play effectively with all the options turned on. Even then some people are reporting their computers are too slow. The game play on Doom 3 is not as good as expected, and in parts so are the graphics. Based on the information at this writing Half Life 2 is your better bet on a graphically high-end video game for your PC. If you want a tried and true graphically high end first person shooter get with Far Cry or possibly the less hardware intensive Electronic Arts' Battlefield Vietnam, both which came out earlier this year.

Of course the biggest game probably this holiday season will be Bungie's Halo 2 for the Xbox (Microsoft Game Studios). The original Halo is why so many people bought the Xbox in the first place, and the new version looks even greater. It is a first person shooter and is best played in multiplayer mode with the players in your home with 1-4 Xboxes connected together or via Xbox Live (I have played the original Halo with two teams of 7-8 playing against each other and it is was fantastic fun). I expect people will be lined up outside the stores on November 9 when it will go on sale. It should be out later for the PC just as the original was, but most Halo fans will not wait.

Another favorite is expected to be Lucas Arts' Star Wars Battlefront for the PC, Xbox, & PS2. There you can fight the battles in the Star Wars movies as an individual soldier with all the neat vehicles. You can chose between soldier types within each side of the conflicts. Multiplayer is available for LAN & Internet. There will be no additional fees for Internet play for online play on PC or Playstation 2 if you have a network adapter for them. For Xbox you will need to subscribe to Xbox Live (up to 16 players on Playstation 2, 24 players on Xbox, and 32 players on PC).

There is a split screen mode for offline multiplayer play. As has been the past with Star Wars games developed by Pandemic Studios in Los Angeles, the game is reported to be fantastic and a blast to play. If you want something of more sword fighting in your role playing game try Ubisoft's Prince of Persia 2: Warrior Within for Playstation 2, Xbox, GameCube, and PC. Another sword fighting RPG is Onimusha 3: Demon Siege from Capcom

for the Playstation 2. Also on the Game Cube is Nintendo's Metroid Prime 2: Echoes.

One of the most interesting games is Lionhead Studios' Fable for the Xbox (Microsoft Game Studios). This game has been in development for a long time because it has wanted to be a break through in the area of role playing games, and I think they have succeeded. You start out as a 17 year old boy and journey through life until you are 45. Every action has a consequence for the future. It will determine how other characters in the game treat you and even how your physical appearance changes over time. You can wind up as the hero that people cheer every time you arrive in a town and your wife thanks God every day that she married you, or a villain that everyone wants to avoid except for possibly other villains.

If you are into real time strategy you should definitely look for The Lord of the Rings: The Battle For Middle Earth (Electronic Arts). It is a step above anything that has gone before in the RTS games from the viewpoints of graphics, animation, and game play. If you have seen the History Channel's Decisive Battles, you have already seen the game engine and animation in Rome: Total War. The technology from it was used in the series to show how actual battles were fought in the ancient world. It also looks to be a good RTS game.

If you want to experience the difficulties of what the US and its allies face in Iraq, try THQ's Full Spectrum Warrior, a real time squad based game developed from a US Army training aid that revolves around a fictional Middle Eastern country in the present day. Also developed by Pandemic Studios in Los Angeles, it is for the PC and Xbox with online play available. If you want to be the bad guy in the James Bond universe check out Electronic Arts' Goldeneye: Rogue Agent for Playstation 2, Xbox and GameCube. Of course if you want to play the good secret operative there is the stealthy Sam Fisher of Ubisoft's Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell series. The third installment "Chaos Theory" has been delayed until March, but Pandora Tomorrow that came out last spring is still good for the PC, Playstaion2, Xbox, and Game Cube.

Sony Online Entertainment's Everquest II is a world 500 years after the current Everquest; but with enriched graphics, better game play, and better adventures. Unlike a lot of these games, Everquest II does not just throw you into the virtual world to fend for yourself the best you can. You start off on a large sailing ship with only you and a bunch of computer generated 3D characters where you find out how the world works before you get to the first town and interaction with other players. It's designed for the experienced massively multiplayer online role playing game player, but to the novice as well. Unlike Everquest, there will be no Mac version and will be for Windows only.

For those of you Star Wars Galaxies fans who have been disappointed that you can't journey into space and duke it out in an X-Wing Fighter, Lucas Arts/Sony

Online Entertainment's Star Wars Galaxies: Jump To Light Speed expansion pack will be out in time for the Holidays

One of the games that is the best selling game ever is Electronic Arts' The Sims. The Sims 2 is very different. Your characters are fully 3D, detailed, and you get up close with them. They have motivations that cause them to act in certain and sometimes unexpected ways. You can control up to four characters and are creating a story of a family over multiple generations. It sounds serious, but you can have some fun by creating episodes right out of a soap opera. If you want to laugh while you're playing a game go for Destroy All Humans! from THQ and Pandemic Studios. It is a parody of all those 1950s alien invasion movies where you play the alien. It is for Playstation 2 and Xbox. Sony's Grand Turismo 4 car racing sim for the PS 2 is finally coming out before the end of the year and it looks like it is worth the wait. With great graphics, 100 courses and 500 cars to drive plus online play with up to 6 players.

Microsoft Game Studio's Forza Motorsport is for you racing fans on an Xbox. A good racing sim for the hardcore and novice is NASCAR 2005 Chase for the Cup (Electronic Arts) for Playstation 2, GameCube, and Xbox. Of course there is always Electronic Arts' Madden NFL 2005 for PC, Playstation2, Xbox, and GameCube (Electronic Arts is usually a good bet for sports games).

For the younger set I would look at Microsoft Games Studios' Zoo Tycoon 2 and some of the offerings from THQ.

Nintendo also has been known for having good games for kids, but they are for GameCube only.

Yes, this holiday season there will be celebrations all over. However, that will include the individual celebrations of those who on their gaming platforms protect the human race from orcs and aliens.

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Can You Email Your Doctor? Should You?

by Gabe Goldberg

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We rarely think about how the Internet and email have changed society and our lives in just ten years. For finding information, conducting personal and professional affairs, and simply doing business, it's hard to remember or imagine doing without them. No other technology achieved such wide use so fast.

But email acceptance and use isn't universal, and some areas are slower to adopt it. While I routinely exchange email with my stock broker, accountant, car dealer, veterinarian, realtor, and nearly all my service providers, my healthcare professionals are much less uniformly available electronically. In fact, there's no uniformity of opinion among patients, doctors, ethicists, insurance companies, the medical establishment, and government about how this new-fangled technology should be handled and regulated.

My primary care doc, an internist emphasizing cardiac health, gave me the idea for this article by being available via email starting about two years ago. He finds it—as I do!—great for direct, simple communications, and reports that email decreases phone calls and phone tag, achieving office efficiency and economy. I've asked simple questions such as how often it's advisable to give blood and what kind of blood pressure monitor to purchase. He makes email contact available to all his patients with the understanding that if specific therapies are required after email contact, an office visit is needed. Before any emailing, he ensures that a patient is using a private home computer, rather than a workplace system. And he considers email conversations to be informal, not necessarily entering patient records, with any recommendations requiring specific therapeutic intervention warranting a carefully documented office visit.

It's clear that there aren't yet standards for high-tech medical communications, and healthcare providers are individually exploring and defining opportunities. Some doctors use email for administrative matters only, such as booking appointments and handling prescription refills. Some respond to email with telephone calls. Still others won't accept or send any patient email, citing concerns about privacy and security, or email's cold ("low touch") nature as inappropriate for something as important and personal as healthcare.

There are valid technical concerns: email is not private or secure, or even completely reliable: email can be forged, sender and receiver are usually not authenticated, email containing a warning or diagnosis can be delayed in transit, etc. And risks such as incomplete recordkeeping, misunderstandings and miscommunications—even a patient denying that a note was received—add to the already sadly high risk of litigation.

An ethics expert draws a sharp line, commenting that he's "been around this issue in several professional settings." He continued, "The legal profession has OKed email for confidential communications IF the client requests/approves it and if the system is secure. Work computers are often monitored, so it is not reasonable to regard them as secure. I'd say the same standards apply to doctors." And he identifies an additional risk; "Unlike with lawyers, simply communicating with an oncologist (for example) gives information with confidential overtones." He suggests that doctors avoid email communications with patients, patients avoid communication with

doctors from work, and patients avoid research from work on medical Web sites.

The American Medical Association (AMA) offers resources describing advantages and risks of healthcare-related email. Guidelines for Physician-Patient Electronic Communications <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/2386.html> notes that "Email has taken on increased significance as a mode of communication that is readily available to patients and health care professionals" and strongly recommends that email must never replace crucial interpersonal contacts. And it provides a number of clear/specific and mutual guidelines for patient/doctor email.

Ethical Guidelines for Use of Electronic Mail Between Patients and Physicians <http://www.bioethics.net/journal/infocus.php?vol=3&issue=3&articleID=120> includes a longer discussion of email issues, including a brief history of doctor/patient communications from the 17th century. Perhaps its most crucial recommendation is that email "should not be used to establish a patient-physician relationship, but rather to supplement personal encounters."

The government endorses use of email; William Pierce, Deputy Assistant Secretary of HHS, said that the HHS Secretary encourages use of information technology for efficiency and to improve health. He notes that under HIPAA's new healthcare privacy rules, use of email is permitted, with informed patient consent and control, and responsible patient usage.

Another issue may be more challenging than deciding whether and how to email: working out a way for doctors to be paid for added value services such as access-by-email. In the era of managed care, my doc notes, many patients feel entitled to administrative services—FAXing referrals and prescription refills, copying records, filling out forms for handicapped parking and travel insurance, etc. -- because they have health insurance. Since insurers don't presently reimburse those services, some medical practices have tried to establish fee structures to cover their costs. Of course, new fees aren't popular with patients or insurance companies. So a new administrative services package may emerge, including emailing, FAXing, form completion, etc. for a modest annual fee. And the AMA has defined temporary codes "for identifying emerging technology, services and procedures," such as online medical evaluations.

A middle ground is outlined by Jim Harper, editor of Privacilla.org, a Web-based project that seeks to capture "privacy" as a public policy issue: "A physician should strike the balance carefully between the security risks involved in emailing and the importance of quick, effective communication. Email is fine for ordinary treatment information about conditions that carry no stigma. More sensitive conditions, or diagnoses and so on, probably deserve better than e-mail." He notes that the relatively new HIPAA law may have lawyers advising doctors to avoid using email with patients. If this happens, he feels that this "probably needlessly degrades

communication with patients who would benefit from getting written information quickly.”

And a bit of practical reality comes from my doc, who notes that “This is the 21st century. If patients want my time (which unfortunately is finite) they have to get it any way that works for me.” So taking appropriate cautions and precautions, requiring informed patient consent regarding email’s tradeoffs and limitations, and recognizing the potential need to pay for the enhanced service, email complements other technologies—telegraph, telephone, and FAX. These, after all, were new in their time and not accepted without reservations by both patients and physicians, but are now routine rather than threatening.

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Macintosh Pioneer Bill Atkinson at RIT

by Ron Matteson

Rochester Computer Society, Inc.

A lecture at RIT on October 26 featured Bill Atkinson, one of the pioneer developers of the Macintosh computer, and its forerunner the Lisa. The two-hour lecture actually consisted of two lectures: In part 1 Atkinson talked about the early days of the Macintosh development. In part 2 he talked about his current occupation as a nature photographer. He takes color photographs of quality gem stones and prints them using the latest color printing and color management technologies. He has developed techniques for printing these photos at extremely high quality, and has published the book *Within the Stone*, which shows 72 of his most striking captures.

Part 1: The evolution of the Macintosh

Joining Apple Computer in 1978, he was a key contributor to many of the innovative features developed there. He contributed heavily to the design of the graphical user interface, drop-down menus, the mouse interface, and the original QuickDraw, MacPaint, and HyperCard software applications. When he joined Apple he was one of the group of 5 people who started the Mac design.

He gives credit to Englebart for starting work on the GUI in 1968. He talked about two trips he and Steve Jobs made to the Xerox Palo Alto Research Center in December of 1979 to see work being done by Alan Kay and others on the GUI. The Xerox work on the GUI was incorporated into the Xerox STAR personal computer. Contrary to folklore, however, the Xerox designs were not used in the Mac, but were highly inspirational in that they showed what could be done. Eventually Microsoft got into the act, actually suing Apple for stealing GUI technology from Microsoft. Atkinson was one of the witnesses testifying in the suit against Apple.

The short-lived Lisa was first shipped in 1983. The Macintosh was released in 1984, offering a much less expensive version of most of the capabilities of the Lisa (\$2,500 versus \$10,000). Before Lisa, computers used the command line interface, had no GUI, no mouse, no point and click selections, no drag and drop, no windows, no menus, no graphics capability, no choice of fonts or font styles, and used a black CRT with white or green text. I remember it all well, do you?

The first Mac had all of these missing features and more. It was truly a revolutionary machine, and people loved it. In addition to all the user interface features, it included MacPaint, Write, Finder, and other software applications. 3.5-inch floppies (360 KB) were the main storage devices. It had 128 KB of RAM, and sold for \$2,495. Alan Kay, one of the researchers at Xerox PARC, referred to it as “a Ferrari with a one-pint gas tank.” Steve Jobs was the driving force behind the Lisa/Macintosh philosophy. The objective was to design a personal computer user interface that was so intuitive, that no manuals would be needed. (For more on the Macintosh lore and background, visit <http://www.folklore.org>. Googleing “Inventing the Lisa User Interface” will also lead to some other interesting *.pdf files.)

Atkinson showed several rare photos with screen shots, showing the evolution of such things as scroll bars, drop down menus, task bars, etc. Many of these features went through many iterations, including user tests, before being incorporated into the Mac. As examples, documents were originally called folders; menus were originally at the bottom of pages; copy and paste had different names; the wastebasket and clipboard were called a variety of things. Even the I-beam cursor was created to replace the arrow and the highlighting of a character when moused, to clarify its use. One-button, two-button, or three-button mouse? One-button was selected, to further simplify the user interface.

Part 2: Creating a photographic work of art

After 12 years at Apple, Atkinson began taking photographs of stones, minerals, and gems. He developed innovative techniques for capturing these photos to maximize the beauty of the objects, ensure color fidelity, and print them faithfully. He started out by collecting his own rocks, pieces of petrified wood, gems, and minerals. He acquired a diamond saw to cut slices, polishing equipment, and a sophisticated photography setup in which to take pictures. He used a BetterLight Super 6K-2 large-format digital scanning camera of high resolution, special lighting to preserve all wavelengths of the color in the samples, and special fixturing to maintain the samples level with respect to the camera. His particular digital camera has about twice the resolution of standard 4x5 inch film cameras! Photographs of his personal workshop were truly impressive.

In order to find more varied gems and stones, he started attending the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show,

showing exhibitors some of his photographs, and ended up borrowing exotic samples of rocks and minerals on display at the conference. He would then take them back to his motel, to which he had carted all his photographic equipment, and take photographs. After about four years at the conference and showing lots of photos to exhibitors, he was so well-known that exhibitors were begging him to take photos of their samples. One of them loaned him a \$50,000 gem to carry back to his motel room to photograph.

Deciding to make a book of some of his pictures, Atkinson selected 72 of the best of his thousands of photographs, and printed draft books on his own Epson Stylus Pro 9600 printing system and an HP Color LaserJet 9500 hdn printer. He made 70 drafts, 20 of them consisting of 50 copies each. When satisfied with the quality of his output he looked for a printer, and found no one in the US who appeared to be interested. Existing four-color press procedures were not adequate, for one thing.

Turning to Japan, he found the Vanfu, Inc. printer to be interested. He made five trips to Japan, the printer made 35 press runs, and eventually he and the printer's experts agreed on a system of color management, ICC profiles, inks, and halftoning that achieved the astounding, accurate colors in the finished publication. Special concentrated, high density inks were specified and procured for the final runs. Vanfu made a production run of 20,000 copies, taking three and one-half days of a continuous press run on their Heidelberg four-color offset press, using Kodak thermo-plate masters. The page masters were prepared in Photoshop and given to Vanfu as *.pdf files using the CIE-LAB color mode. Text was delivered in English, translated to Japanese in Japan, translated back to English, and delivered back to Atkinson for a closed-loop test of the translation accuracy for the Japanese edition of the book.

The systems he helped the printers create resulted in a problem-free run requiring few if any manual adjustments, contrary to the usual print-run procedure. In fact the printer indicated that they would save a million dollars a month in printing costs using the new system.

Book Within the Stone, by Bill Atkinson; Browntrout Publishers (2004); ISBN 0-7631- 8189-7; a bargain at \$39.95.

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GPS Units

by Joe Schmitt

Tampa Bay Computer Society

This is the second of a three article series on the Global Positioning System. The first discussed what the system is and how it works. The second and third articles will delve into receivers and uses to civilians.

In my last article I discussed how the Global Positioning System (GPS) works and how it has changed

navigation. GPS utilizes a set of 24 or more orbiting satellites broadcasting a coded signal that is used by a ground receiver to pinpoint location, speed, and distance while moving. I would like to delve into the numerous receivers available on the market to the civilian user. Essentially there are four types of receivers available.

The first is the military model. This operates on entirely different frequency than their civilian counterparts. The very accurate military units are on what is known as the P-code and Y-code and should be accurate within a foot or so. They include mapping features similar to consumer models.

The second type is surveying/Geographic Information System (GIS) models. Quite a bit larger than consumer models, they can easily be the size of a small briefcase. They are accurate to within one centimeter. This accuracy is obtained after being in the field through post-processing. The data gathered is stored and analyzed in a lab to compensate for atmospheric errors from the satellites.

The third type, for commercial transportation, is used to navigate ships at sea and aircraft. Often these units are tied into an autopilot system used to maneuver the vehicle. The units are quite large and permanently installed in the control panels of the vehicle.

The fourth type, consumer models, will be the focus of this discussion. The consumer model GPS unit can be permanently installed in a car or be handheld. There are units designed for joggers and bikers, those specifically for boating, and hiking models as well.

There are literally hundreds of different models available for you to choose from. The very basic models start at approximately \$100 and go up from there. Some characteristics are common to almost all GPS receivers. They are able to store a waypoint, which is a location defined by its latitude and longitude marked in the unit's memory. All have a display screen that may contain a digital map and a backlight. They also are able to tell you the time, location in coordinates, speed, and distance from waypoints. Some are able to connect to a computer to transfer data, and some display altitude.

Beyond these basic functions is where choosing a receiver can be a mind-boggling mess. The activity you want a GPS for will determine which features to look for. There are three major manufacturers of GPS receivers: Garmin (www.garmin.com), Magellan (www.magellangps.com), and Lowrance (www.lowrance.com). All three of these companies make good products. Garmin has the largest market share with Magellan in second place. Often the brand loyalty of the owners is akin to the



IBM and Macintosh debate. But regardless of the differences, all the units operate in much the same manner and it comes down to personal preference more than anything else. The manufacturers have similar products to each other and are reliable and rugged. Most of these models that are designed for outdoor use are, as a result of their intended use, built very well. Most handheld models are waterproof and shock proof.

My receiver is made by Garmin. The model is GPSMAP 60c (www.garmin.com/products/gpsmap60c/). It is a bit larger than a cell phone and has a color display. This model runs on 2 AA batteries—you'll find that most handheld models run on 2 or 4 AA batteries. With normal usage, I can get about 30 hours of use with my rechargeable batteries. The unit has an external power cord that can be plugged into a cigarette lighter socket to save on those batteries. This model is a mapping unit, so I can upload maps to it and display my location on that map. Additionally, this unit supports auto-routing, which is a feature that allows the unit to give you turn-by-turn directions on the road.

With most units there are some basic features that you should be aware of. First the display screen has several different modes for display. The most common is a satellite page. This displays the satellites in graphical format. As you can see, the satellites are numbered and the ones brightly colored are those the unit is currently receiving a signal from. The bars below show signal strength and status. The higher the bar is the better the signal. The bars that are solidly colored indicate that the unit has locked onto the satellite. The outlined bars indicate the unit is receiving the signal but has not locked onto it yet. This screen in particular displays the latitude and longitude coordinates. Just to left of those coordinates, the accuracy of the unit is displayed. The gray sphere with a red center shows the direction the unit is currently moving.

The next screen shown is also in most models. It is the waypoint management screen. Waypoints are a location in the real world stored in the unit as latitude and longitude, thus allowing you to locate a place to go or show distance from. This image shows the names of some way points I have stored in my unit. They can be listed either alphabetically or by proximity. As you can see by the highlighted point, the unit also displays its direction and distance to the selected point.



After selecting the name and hitting enter, the details of the way point are displayed. It shows its coordinates and elevation. The highlighted "CAR" point is located in Grand Canyon National park just as I was beginning a hike. Click on this link to see a map. This



screen displays the symbol I have selected as well as the direction and distance from the current location. I have options to delete the point, display it on the map, and navigate to it.

If I were to navigate to it, I would get this screen. The giant arrow points to the destination and of course the distance is displayed. The new item we see here is the speed. If I was moving when this picture was taken, you would also see the time it would take to reach the waypoint.

Across the top are several icons. These items are from left to right, the battery strength, 3D navigation status, USB connection status, and backlight status. The 3D navigation is particular to this model. It indicates that the receiver is getting a strong enough signal to find altitude as well as latitude and longitude. The arrow and compass move as the unit moves. As it is now, you would have to change your direction to the left a bit to head directly to the CAR waypoint. If you were to be moving away from the waypoint, the arrow would point down and the 12 would be at the top showing your heading as 120°.

The next screen displayed is the map screen. This is showing the current location of the unit with a white arrow. The pink line going in the NW direction is the direction to the waypoint, and the line to the waypoint is a little to the left of where the arrow is pointing. The red line is a track or trail. The track displays where the unit has moved. In this case it came down the street to my home. As you can see, it looks like I was driving in my neighbors' yards. The black lines are the streets and in this case the black blotches are ponds. The accuracy of unit displayed me off the street when in actuality I never left the road until I pulled in my driveway. In the lower left is the scale of the map. Above



the map is data that was shown on the previous screen. The data above the map can be hidden as to provide a bigger map area on the display.

The GPS is also able to keep a travel log. As you look at the next screen, you can really get an idea of what kind of data the unit gathers. It has a trip meter and odometer. Also it keeps track of moving data. The max speed the unit has read is displayed. The moving time is blank as this data was gathered on a long trip and eventually it surpassed the field's ability to display. The moving average and overall average speed are great features. Before I had the GPS I would often occupy my mind while driving trying to figure out these very same averages. I doubt I ever got this precise. Elevation is also displayed.

Another useful feature of most GPS receivers is routing. Routing is the ability to string together waypoints to form a path. For example look at the next screen shot. In this route are several points within a preplanned trip. From here in Tampa Bay we are going to St. Louis, Missouri. Each point defines a leg of the trip. When you navigate this route, the first point that the GPS directs you to is Atlanta. When you get to Atlanta, it changes the destination to Chattanooga. This continues until you have arrived at your destination. This is a great feature for driving as it allows you to keep updating the GPS with the correct directions but frees you from having to manipulate the GPS while driving. Most receivers show you destinations in a straight line, "as the crow flies." A few of the more expensive units, such as this one, can auto-route. Auto-routing is a feature that navigates along roads loaded into the map as opposed to an as-the-crow-flies path. It displays turn-by-turn directions to your destination so that all you have to do is input the final destination. The unit then tells you which highways to get on and where to get off.

So how do you know what unit to buy? There are literally hundreds of different models to choose from. The unit that is right for you depends entirely on what you're going to use it for. If you primarily want it to navigate a boat, airplane, or car there are large screen models that run off the vehicle's electrical system and permanently mount to the console. If you want it to go hiking there are handheld models that can load topo-graphic maps. The models range from very simple receivers that just



stream data to large display models that can talk and direct you to the next exit verbally. Additionally there are other features like removable memory cards that map information can be loaded on. For a good place to find models available take a look to Joe Mehaffey, Jack Yeazel, and Dale Depriest's www.gpsinformation.net site.

If you would like to try a GPS without purchasing a unit, go to Lowrance's www.lowrance.com/software/pcsoftware/demos.asp site for a GPS simulator. They are listed by model and will install software on your machine. Although this will not actually lock onto satellites, it offers a great way to get a feel for their features and how they work.

So now you're interested, right? But what would need one these things for? Just to give you an idea of the many uses:

- Find your exact location on a map
- Find where you left the car
- Use to find your way back after getting lost in the woods
- Tie it to the dog and see where he goes at night
- Mark that great fishing spot
- Find out where the cruise ship or airplane you're on is
- Calibrate your speedometer
- Tell exactly how long to you get there
- Use it a trip meter
- Use it as a compass (when moving)
- It's fun to use

As you see there are tons of ways to amuse yourself. One of my favorite pastimes with the GPS is Geocaching (www.geocaching.com). This is a scavenger hunt with a GPS. A box is hidden in an interesting location like a city park. Inside a weather-proof box is a logbook and some trinkets. The coordinates of the "cache" are posted on the website providing details on the type of box, terrain, and notes from prior hunters. Because the GPS is only accurate within 10 feet or so, the cache can be quite difficult to locate.

Once found, you sign the logbook and exchange an item inside for one that you brought. The item is often of little monetary value. I often bring matchbox cars or maybe spare batteries for the GPS. Click on the link for the site and enter you're zip code and check out how many are near you!

In addition to the using the receivers as stand-alone units almost all of them can tie into your computer to expand its capabilities. Next month I will show you all the programs that are available to you and some great resources on the web for maps and way-points.

From the October, 2004 issue of the I/O Port Newsletter. There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this article as long as it is kept in context with proper credit given the author.

Do You Know How Safe Your Credit Card Number Is?

by S. Jack Lewtschuk
Monterey Bay Users Group—PC, California
Columnist and Immediate Past President

How many times have you typed your credit card number or password into your computer? Any idea what happens to it?

When you type in a password, it is stored in random access memory (RAM), where it is held temporarily until other data overwrites it or the computer is turned off. But every so often, the computer copies the contents of its RAM onto hard disk, where it is easy prey for a hacker, who can read it directly or design a worm to e-mail it back. The longer sensitive data is in RAM, the more likely it is to be copied onto the disk, where it stays until it is overwritten—which might not happen for years.

On the other hand, do you know what happens to your credit card number after you hand your card to a clerk in a store or server in a restaurant? He/she has your number *and* your signature.

Are you paranoid yet?

Securing Your Credit Card Before You Lose it

Keep a record of your credit cards and other contents of your wallet. Place the contents of your wallet on a photocopy machine or scanner; copy both sides of each license, credit card, etc. You will know what you had in your wallet and all of the account numbers and phone numbers to call to report the theft and cancel the cards. Keep the photocopy in a safe place. [The card number, as well as the phone number you need for reporting the theft to the credit card company, can also be found printed on your paid bill.—ed]

If you do lose your wallet, don't forget to call these numbers to report it:

Equifax	800.525.6285
Experian (formerly TRW)	888.397.3742
Trans Union	800.680.7289
Social Administration Fraud Line	800.269.0271

Your local police department to file a theft report.

Myths VIII - to Sign or Not to Sign the Back of Your Credit Card

By the way, have you heard the idea that it is best *not* to sign the back of your credit cards? That instead of signing, you can print the Words: "See ID" or "Ask for Photo ID?"

Here is what major credit card fraud departments had to say:

MasterCard – To not sign your card is an urban legend that sounds sensible, but is not a good idea.

American Express – We have warned merchants not to accept your credit cards if they aren't signed.

VISA – They agree with the other credit card companies and said that merchants are instructed not to finish the transaction until you sign the back of your card.

So, the idea of not signing the back of your credit card is an example of a very popular urban legend that is false. Sign your credit cards immediately when you receive them.

Reprinted from the November 2004 mbug-pc newsletter. There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this article as long as it is kept in context with proper credit given the author.

Computer Law

The Insecurity of Using E-mail for Confidential Communications

by Bill Wood
Alamo PC Organization



Thanks to a recent court ruling, you may have to reconsider the use of e-mail for sensitive communications. Usually it is only paranoid lawyers (the best kind to have on your side) who worry about things like privacy in communications. News stories about wire-taps and eavesdropping on electronic communications are not personally interesting because we are not involved in criminal activities or other transactions that would cause the authorities to snoop on us. And we didn't worry about anyone else intercepting our messages because we had all assumed that action would be illegal.

That sense of detachment was recently shaken. A federal appeals court in Boston ruled that it was not a violation of any federal law for an Internet service provider (commonly "ISP's") to intercept and read the e-mail before it was delivered to its client. This action occurred without consent or even notice to the customer that the messages had been intercepted.

The decision could deal a major blow to the use of e-mail by lawyers, doctors and other professionals that have moral and legal duties of protecting client and patient confidences.

The Court of Appeals for the First Circuit opinion in the case of Bradford Councilman dealt with a rather unique and somewhat far-fetched fact situation. Interloc was in the business of selling rare books. As an adjunct to that business it provided its customers with Internet e-mail service. ISP's, like the phone company or any other communications service, have limited rights to monitor service for technical reasons. What is very different about this case was that the company wanted to know how many of its customers were getting messages from Amazon.com. Apparently Interloc worried that Amazon would enter its portion of the book selling business. It directed its employees to devise a system to scan all of the incoming e-mail for its clients and to copy any messages that originated from Amazon.

Those copies were then read by company officials for business purposes. Eventually the company and one employee pleaded guilty to federal wiretap charges. However, Bradford Councilman, a Vice-president of the company with responsibility over the e-mail services,

challenged the charges on the grounds that no federal law actually prohibits the interception and reading of e-mail messages while they are in storage before they are delivered.

The defendant challenged a key belief about the definitions of the Wire Tap Act. He argued the law did not apply when the message was “stored” on computers along the transmission route. The court agreed. It held that under the law the messages are protected during the transmission phases of the journey from originator to addressee. However, at the stops along the way, they are in fact in storage. Consequently, the wiretap act doesn’t apply during those pauses.

The legal argument is somewhat difficult to follow. You are welcome to read the opinion. The Court sums up the problem when it quotes a prior case.

Congress’ use of the word ‘transfer’ in the definition of ‘electronic communication,’ and its omission in that definition of the phrase ‘any electronic storage of such communication’ (part of the definition of ‘wire communication’) reflects that Congress did not intend for ‘intercept’ to apply to ‘electronic communications’ when those communications are in ‘electronic storage.’

Since the “interception” of the message occurred while it was in electronic storage no crime occurred.

Lawyers may want to take particular note of this ruling. The American Bar Association along with many state bar groups had ruled that lawyers could use unencrypted e-mail to transmit messages that contained sensitive client information. In a Formal Opinion the ABA specifically found that there was a reasonable expectation of privacy. The association’s Standing Committee on Ethics and Professional Responsibility ruled

The risk of unauthorized interception and disclosure exists in every medium of communication, including e-mail. It is not, however, reasonable to require that a mode of communicating information must be avoided simply because interception is technologically possible, especially when unauthorized interception or dissemination of the information is a violation of law.

(Formal Opinion 99-413, March 10, 1999.)

The Committee specifically referenced the very act in question in the Councilman case.

Unless the Supreme Court overrules this opinion, is it safe for lawyers to continue using e-mail that contains confidential client information? That is a good question and it will take some time to sort through the situation. The American Bar Association’s opinions are not legally binding but are generally respected by the courts. The Committee also cited other arguments in favor of allowing the use of e-mails. So, even the committee may find that there is still the required “reasonable expectation of privacy” present even if the Wiretap act does not prohibit the interception of the messages while they are in storage. In the meantime, procedures should be reviewed and contracts with service provide should be examined to consider which changes might be warranted.

Even though articles in the *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* seem to downplay the importance of the decision, it certainly is disturbing. Congress should be encouraged to look at the law and revise the definition of interception to include unauthorized access while the message is in temporary storage.

From the August 2004 issue of PC Alamode. Bill Wood is an Assistant City Attorney, in the San Antonio City Attorney’s Office. He practices real estate and technology law for San Antonio.

Do It Now

by Elizabeth B. Wright
Computer Club of Oklahoma City

That is not new advice. In fact, it borders on being trite. However, I am talking about getting things down on paper (electronically) before it is too late.

Many of the over-50 group have begun to delve seriously into genealogy. And that is a good idea. However, we are in danger of doing a lot of hard work and then having it completely lost because our children are not yet interested in “roots” things. They give a little lip service to our efforts, but mostly they don’t seem to think any more about it than we did when we were younger. And they mostly do not have the programs we use on their own computers.

There is a good range of programs for genealogical research and most of them can be used by beginners rather easily. That is not to say that all of the available features will magically become useful to first-timers, but most of the essential information can be entered by just about any level of user competence.

That information, however, is going to stay right where it is, on the computer, until something happens to it. That something could even be a computer crash or virus which might wipe out all the hard work put into developing family history. There are options, usually, to save the files to an external disk, CD, or other backup-type media. This should be the very first step after inputting important data into a program.

Then comes the reason for this article. Nearly all of the current programs have choices to output the data into reports of various types. There are always the tree charts which have become so familiar to all of us. Usually there are other types of reports which sort the information in ways other than a typical family tree. Using reports, it is possible to download the essential data into hard printed copy to share with children, grandchildren and other interested relatives. Many programs have very good options for printing books. Most also have the ability to include photographs in the output. And photographs don’t always have to be of people. Most serious genealogists include photos of important documents, as well as maps, places, buildings, and objects of interest such as clothing, trophies, jewelry, grave markers, etc. Photographs can greatly enhance the value of the information as well as making it more enjoyable to read.

Our family members who are not yet interested in

genealogy have a tendency to treat our efforts with some humor, thinking perhaps it is a rather quaint way for “seniors” to spend time on an amusing hobby. Of course, the day usually comes when they wish they had the same information. And the efforts we make now can provide them with a great start. There really is practically no limit to how much research can be done on any family line.

But what if you don't want to get into deep family research? We have such a golden opportunity to use our computers to just put in print our own memories of family. As we age, and we all seem to, some of those memories begin to be hazy. We need to DO IT NOW, while we have the ability and the means to accomplish it. And when we finish writing a particular memory, we need to transfer it to the same external medium, and also print hard copies of it. With a little luck, younger family members will at least put it somewhere for future reference. Worst case scenario is going to the trouble to give someone your hard work only to have it be given a cursory glance and possibly be thrown away.

Using your word processor, simply typing out a story and by including any available photographs in the document, you can begin to build a family history starting with YOU.

My favorite example from my own case is typing the family “lore” of how my grandmother grew up. She was left motherless as a toddler, put in an orphanage and foster homes before finally being taken from her native Iowa to Kansas by her older (by just a couple of years) brother and possibly her father. The story was always murky, but consistent, told to me by both my mother and my aunt. When I finally began doing serious family research, I came across enough information to confirm the story, almost word for word the way the “lore” had passed it down to me. Both my mother and my aunt had been dead for many years before I began the search for my grandmother's family, and had I not finally written it down, it would have ended with me. No one else has ever been remotely interested in my grandmother except my mother, my aunt and me. Now I am hoping my son and my daughter and their children will keep the information and expand it someday, along with the other branches of their family tree.

From the October 2004 issue of the Computer Club of Oklahoma City eMonitor.

You Can Help

O'Reilly is pulling together a new book called “Word Annoyances” and, once again, we'd like your help! As you might guess, “Word Annoyances” ponders the problems, snarls, quirks, bugs, and just dumb things about Word that drive users nuts. The annoyances will encompass a range of topics: general misbehavior, creating and saving documents, text entry and editing, formatting and layout, printing, tables, macros, etc.

Word is the most ubiquitous—and probably the most annoying—word processor on the planet. If any of you

group have annoyances you'd like to see solved, email them to marsee@oreilly.com with “Word Annoyances” in the subject line. Note what versions of Word and Windows you're using.



From The DealsGuy

by Bob (The Cheapskate) Click
*Greater Orlando Computer
Users Group*

I'm enjoying my new weather station, but decided to buy a “Weather Picture” (a nice option) for mine so it would be highly visible across the room. [<http://www.peetbros.com>] I ended up mounting the rain gauge on my roof tripod temporarily until I find a lower spot. It's the clearest spot away from large neighboring trees.” If you haven't ordered your weather station yet, this is the last month you can get that special offer where they throw in two optional items. Call 1-866-446-1216 or 1-321-206-6214 or e-mail them at [peetbros@peetbros.com]. Even my wife enjoys the weather station. Ask them for a brochure, which has more information.

The same deadline is true with the digital badge 10% discount, so call 1-772-571-9944 or e-mail [info@bannerbadge.com] By the way, I said it had LCD letters but they are actually LED. Sorry. [<http://www.bannerbadge.com>] It has a magnetic type holder for attachment to your garment, (a magnet that separates with one part on the inside of the garment) but be careful about that magnet around magnetic strips such as a credit card. In my case, I corrupted the magnetic strip on a parking badge and had to get it fixed, so be careful about that magnet if you carry CCs in your pocket. A pin attachment is available, but most people want the magnet mount because they don't want holes in their garment from a pin.

Interesting Shows

I worked the PASS (Professional Association of SQL Servers) show [<http://www.sqlpass.org>] and I was never more lost since I know little about SQL servers. The exhibit area was 10,000 square feet and they expected about 1,200 attendees. In their Internet Caf^o, the computers were on top of the table, rather than hidden. They had a clear plastic side and green fluorescent lighting inside that made them an eye-catcher. It was a busy spot and also had high-speed hookups for attendee's laptops. Sorry I'm not smart enough to give you more info. I can tell you though that the tasty cookies and refreshments served during the show were great.

I also worked a day for the setup of the Electronic Boutique Gaming show, but didn't work the actual show day. It was a one-day show open for eleven hours. All the big names in the game industry had booths and there were stacks of free expensive game cartridges and disks all over the place. I didn't capitalize on them since I am not a game person. Friends sure criticized me for that. It was 10,000 square feet of exhibit area and they expected about 1,200 managers and other VIPs. Microsoft's X Box

booth was the largest there with large boxes of goodies for their attendees. This show and the one above were held at the beautiful Gaylord Palms Resort in Kissimmee, FL. It's hard to get used to computer geeks sitting and laying all over the floor when chairs are handy.

We also worked the Surf Show, which has nothing to do with computers. Some booths had models wearing bikinis, or other clothing, that attracted lots of people. Two models worked in a booth right across the isle from my post all day long wearing a different bikini every hour. Security's sure a tough job, but someone has to do it. <G>

One item below is something I saw at the handicap show we worked, I expected that show to be boring, but instead, I found some amazing technology there. I'll talk more about that next month.

Explosive Information

This has nothing to do with gas stations, but in *EE* (Electronic Engineering) *Times* [<http://www.eet.com>] there was a story about exploding batteries in cell phones and laptop computers. I'll quote one of their statements: "Rising reports of incidents in which counterfeit batteries have overheated, caught fire or blown up are dogging a portable systems industry caught between the slow pace of battery technology and the quick step of new features at even lower costs." Companies are very worried about consumer confidence when such news reaches them and they say the problem batteries are counterfeit. Here are some URLs for more information in the event you might have a counterfeit battery.

[<http://www.cpsc.gov/CPSCPUB/PREREL/prhtml04/04559.html>] concerning recalls, [<http://www.cpsc.gov/CPSCPUB/PREREL/prhtml04/04068.html>] other recalls, and [<http://www.nokia.com/nokia/0,,49192,00.html>] on how to spot a counterfeit battery. It was an interesting article about the problem and possible technology and safeguards.

A Great Freebie When Traveling

The Handicap show had a booth by Microtel Inns & Suites who introduced great new freebies for their guests. They say Microtel offers economy/budget priced lodging that now includes several free services that computer people would love when traveling. Guests will have *free* local calls, as well as *free* long distance calls in the continental United States. Even *free* wireless high-speed Internet access will also be available in rooms.

Advance online check-in and check-out will be available as well as online preregistering that would shorten the check-in process. At this writing they already have about 100 hotels set up for all this and will have them completed nationwide by year's end. Beyond all that they also offer free continental breakfast and other things. You can check their Web site for more information at [<http://www.microtelinn.com>]. I have not stayed at one of their inns yet so I can't speak from experience, but the pictures looked nice.

Don't Lose Track Of Time

This item is an announcement I received and these people are offering UG members a 20% discount. Here is their statement edited. "Our company, Maximus Software Ltd, would like to announce the release of Time Meter for MS Outlook 2.4, a simple but very beneficial software application capable of tracking expenses and time spent working on certain project(s) for Microsoft Office 2000/XP/2003. The program can be used by individual consultants and freelancers for billing their clients, or by corporate managers to track expenses, performance and contributions of each employee. Most importantly, the program acts as a plug-in for MS Outlook, thus eliminating the need to spend time learning how to use a new application and getting familiar with interface.

The price of a single copy is \$74.95 US Dollars. Product Page—[<http://www.timemeter.com>] The discount coupon code is —'3481051341' and is redeemable at <http://www.timemeter.com/coupon.shtml>." Perhaps someone in your group has reviewed it.

Bring It Back - Please

Here is another announcement with a discount. "Have you ever accidentally deleted a slew of pictures from a memory card before you transferred them to the PC? Or formatted a card in the camera, only to realize that your vacation pictures were still on board? That's the stuff that nightmares are made of. Fortunately, Flash File Recovery is on hand to save you from yourself. We offer 15% discount making the price \$42.08. Just use this direct order link to get a discount: [https://www.regnow.com/softsell/nph-softsell.cgi?item=3560-15&ss_coupon=AGPR-ORAO] Product Page: [<http://www.panterasoft.com/file-recovery/index.html>]

"Flash File Recovery is a nifty application that every photographer should be aware of. Essentially, it can recover any previously deleted image file. Plus, it is capable of salvaging pictures from damaged or corrupted flash drives (including camera's built-in memory) and memory sticks. The list of supported storage media includes but is not limited to SmartMedia, Compact Flash, Memory Stick, MicroDrive, xD Picture Card Flash Card, PC Card, Multimedia Card, Secure Digital Card, and many others. Flash File Recovery "resurrects" images from formatted, damaged, corrupted (unreadable), or defective storage media."

I know I published a similar item a few months ago, but I'm passing this on anyway. I have not reviewed Flash File Recovery, but maybe someone in your group has.

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 or freebies I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of any products, no matter how enthused I might sound. Bob (The Cheapskate) Click [bobclick@mindspring.com]. Visit my Web site at [<http://www>

.dealsguy.com]. I'm working on new pages for 2004 announcements I received, but slowly.

Super Safety with SpywareBlaster

by Steve Bass
PC World

I think SpywareBlaster is probably the most effective passive program for preventing spyware from getting on your PC.

It's "passive" because SpywareBlaster isn't a background program. Some antivirus and spyware programs, like PestPatrol or SpySubtract, load and sit in the background. But SpywareBlaster's different: You run the program; it makes a few changes to your PC; and then you close it. It just takes a second: Launch SpywareBlaster; click "Enable All Protection"; exit the program; and go on with your day.

SpywareBlaster does many things; but IMHO, there's one that's a biggie: It adds URLs of potentially dangerous sites to IE's Restricted Zone. Besides that, it blocks tracking cookies and guards your home page. You can explore the program and play around with its other features. Get a free copy from our Downloads library:
http://www.pcworld.com/downloads/file_description/0,fid,23106,tk,sbx,00.asp

SpywareBlaster works in Microsoft Internet Explorer, Mozilla, and Mozilla Firefox. Many of you know about SpywareBlaster, and some may be using it. But I'm guessing too many of you haven't paid attention to one critical factor: The author frequently adds new sites to the program's list, and like the other anti-spyware tools I've mentioned, you have to update it in order for it to keep protecting you.

There are two ways to update SpywareBlaster: easy and easier. You can run the program weekly and click the Update button. (I set a reminder in Microsoft Outlook because I'm forgetful.) If you don't want to do it manually, for \$10, you can get the automatic update feature so it's done for you. Just as important, when you plunk down your cash you're helping to support the author.

Society News

Helps Half Hour

Led by: Bill Statt

Recorded by Jan Rothfuss

Q: While attempting a 'live' update to his antivirus software, a member got some messages while downloading, including references to IWP files.

A: The latest Symetic files were looking for parental controls files. Since you are not using them, the references were just dumped aside. You may want to try running automatic updates rather than 'live updates'.

Q: Linux is asking for me to log in as 'root'. He is using Fedora. He is using a version passed to him by a friend on CD.

A: If you did not save the login/password during installation, you will need to reinstall and take better notes. When using the system command line, type in "SU" and, when prompted, enter the password. You may want to 'google' for other options than to reinstall. Look for 'Royal Bee' web site and check for other options. He could also check with LUDOR - local Linux user group.

Q: I built a computer recently and, during Windows start-up, it often kicks out and then restarts. What does this mean? How can I stop it? Has tried using multiple OS.

A: Sounds like a hardware problem. Perhaps there is a heat problem. Suggested that he try swapping out memory and also check the fans. Maybe there is a bad power supply. It might be related to the actual house power. Could add a UPS to monitor and keep the power steady. It was suggested that he try one item at a time.

Q: How easy is it to integrate into a wireless G with Red Hat?

A: SUSAs version 9.2 has a better offering.

Q: Microsoft Outlook software is having a problem. He has now lost three weeks of emails. Any ideas about where to look for hints? He has looked on his hard drive but not found.

A: You may need to invest in 'Restore It' software which will scan for previously deleted files and prompt you to restore them.

Q: How can you set up multiple mailboxes in Outlook/Outlook Express?

A: In Mozilla, go into Edit Preferences, Mail Newsgroups, Add Account. Be sure to go into your ISP and add the account first (usually up to five.) May find something in Options, too. Tools, email accounts (Wizard) to indicate where to send mail. That new account will set up a new Inbox(2), etc.

Q: When saving photographs, a member usually uses JPG. Can I set this up as a default? He is using his camera software with an XP system.

A: Camera should default to JPG format. Choices depend on the program you are using. It sounds like your program does not do so. Try to issue a simple 'save' and see if it defaults as you want.

Meeting

November 9, 2004

by Jim Murdock, Secretary

Arpad, with Steve, conducted the business meeting. Several RCSi members owe dues; some are several months in arrears. The financial health of the Society depends on member dues. All members are asked to pay their dues on time.

The December RCSi monthly meeting will be at the Brighton Library. Ron reported the program that evening will be on Quicken. Ron also reported that the SoundBytes team is tentatively scheduled for the April 2005 monthly RCSi meeting.

Steve said that there is a continuing need for funds. For example, he mentioned the projector might need to

be replaced. Fundraising ideas are needed. Any suggestions please send them along to Arpad or Steve.

Planning Meeting

November 16, 2004

by Jim Murdock, Secretary

Sally Springett hosted the Planning meeting that began at 1900. Arpad Kovacs, Bob Avery, Tony Dellelo, Ron Matteson, Dan Rothfuss, Sally Springett, Steve Staub, Bill Statt, Tom Thompson and Jim Murdock attended.

Arpad led the initial discussion concerning the mechanics of monthly meeting presentations. How the projector should be situated, where the presenter should stand, what lighting options are available, and whether RCSi should obtain a wireless mike so the presenter could be both better heard and more able to move about the platform during the presentation were all matters discussed. That a wireless mike be purchased was not decided.

Ron said that the December presentation would be by Jack Baly and his topic would be Quicken, a timely topic, since among other uses, Quicken is most helpful come tax time that is fast approaching. Ron will give the January presentation on the Centrino wireless technology. A presentation on the Global Positioning System (GPS) is tentatively set for the February meeting.

There followed an extensive and wide-ranging discussion, initiated by Bill Statt, and supported by a detailed paper he presented, regarding the Monitor. Several in attendance voiced their suggestions and opinions regarding Bill's presentation. It quickly became evident, at least in the minds of several board members, that more information such as both fixed and variable Monitor production costs, was needed for the issues to be further discussed. The Board agreed to continue the discussion next month.

Steve also reminded the Board that while membership remained steady several members owed back dues.

Arpad discussed the RCSi web site and mentioned <<http://www.cjb.cc>> as a possible additional host should one be needed for the RCSi site.

The meeting concluded at 2025

Treasurer's Report

by Steve Staub

Balance as of 10/19/2004	.....	\$884.06
Income		
Dues	.....	\$60.00
Donations	.....	<u>35.15</u>
Total Income	.....	\$95.15
Expenses		
Postmaster	.....	\$50.00
Paper	.....	47.98
St. Stephens	.....	75.00
APCUG	.....	<u>50.00</u>
Total Expenses	.....	\$222.98
Balance as of 11/16/2004	.....	\$756.23

The Monitor is available free each month at the following computer shops. Visit one of them for your computer needs.

Computer Renaissance

376 Jefferson Rd. Rochester
585-424-2050
www.RochesterCR.com

EDI Tech

231 Ridge Rd. W. Rochester
585-254-8580
service@edi-tech.com

Just Solutions

7300 Pittsford-Palmyra Rd. Fairport
585-425-3420
info@justinc.com

Maven Technologies, LLC (2 locations)

Long Ridge Mall and
1144 Lexington Ave. Rochester NY
585-458-2460
www.maventech.com

Microworx (2 locations)

793 S. Goodman St. Rochester
585-271-0050
www.microworx.com
3259 Winton Rd. S. Rochester
585-427-0880
www.microworx.com

Mom's Computers

Rolling Hills Country Mall Bethany Center Rd.
Bethany NY
585-237-5641
scoutdr@aol.com

Rochester Computer Recycling & Recovery (RCR&R)

395 Central Ave. Rochester
585-546-6620
www.rochestercomputer.com

Tab Systems

121 Park Ave. Rochester
585-244-5040
www.tabsystems.com

The Lighter Side

A woman called Dell's toll-free line to ask how to install the batteries in her laptop. When told that the directions were on the first page of the manual, says Steve Smith, Dell's director of technical support, the woman replied angrily, "I just paid \$2,000 for this damn thing, and I'm not going to read the book."

*

Tech Support: "I need you to click on the 'Start' button."
Customer: "Where is that?"

Tech Support: "It's on the bottom left-hand corner of your screen."
Customer: "..."

Tech Support: "Did you find it?"

Customer: "Ahhh.... No. I don't see it."

Tech Support: "Look closely at your screen. In the bottom...left...corner."

Customer: "I don't see it. I only see button that says 'Control'."

Tech Support: "No ma'am, that's on the keyboard. The 'Start' button is on the bottom left corner of your screen. You know, the monitor. The thing that looks like a TV."

Customer: "Aaahhhh, yes!!! Ok."

Tech Support: ..."

Customer: ..."

Tech Support: "Well, did you find it?"

Customer: "No. I still only see 'Control'."