Book Excerpt:

Five Home Networking Annoyances

In just five minutes you'll be able to fix five of the most annoying home networking annoyances
by Kathy Ivens
author of *Home Networking Annoyances* (O'Reilly Press)

When you reach that magical moment when your home network stops working, or everyone on the network complains that your *My Documents* folder is missing, you've probably reached your annoyance threshold. Don't fret — I have the fixes you need. Read on...

Uh Oh, Where's my Network?

The Annoyance: I added a new computer to my network, but it didn't appear in My Network Places or in Network Neighborhood on any of the other computers. I know the cabling and the network settings are correct. I had to reboot all the computers on the network in order to see the new computer, which is really annoying.

The Fix: You don't have to reboot all the computers to see a newly added computer on your network. Just wait twelve minutes. Honest. Could I make that up? Go have a cup of coffee, empty the dishwasher, or change all the burned out light bulbs in the house. Then open the network folder again, or press F5 to refresh the display if you didn't close the folder. You should now see the new computer.

Why does this happen? The icons in the network windows are controlled by a Windows service called the Computer Browser Service. This service browses the network, peering down the pipes (including the virtual pipes of wireless connections), checking to see who's on board. The service runs every twelve minutes.

Mapping Mayhem

The Annoyance: On two of the computers on our network, I created mapped drives for folders on the third computer. Those folders contain files that everyone uses. However, when anyone but me logs on to those two computers, the mapped drives aren't there. What happened?

The Fix: Mapped drives, along with many other configuration settings, are user settings, not computer settings. This is why the reconnection option is worded Reconnect at Logon, instead of Reconnect at Startup. Each user has to create his or her own mapped drives.

The Disappearing My Documents Folder

The Annoyance: I usually work on a particular Windows XP computer, but sometimes one of my kids is at that computer, and I have to do my work from another computer. I can't figure out how to get to my documents on the Windows XP computer. I know the My Documents folder isn't marked "private" because other users of that computer can access it. Why can't I get to that folder from another computer?

The Fix: The fact that you didn't configure your My Documents folder as private only means its contents are accessible to other users of the computer on which the folder resides. To access the folder over the network, you must specifically enable the option to share the folder on the network. Tell your kid to log off, then log yourself on, right-click the folder icon, and choose Sharing and Security. Then select the option labeled Share this folder on the network, and provide a name for the shared folder.

Overly Networked Networks

The Annoyance: We built a home network to share our Internet connection, period, end of it. The wizards we used asked about shared folders, private folders, and all sorts of complicated stuff I don't even understand. We don't want to share files or printers or anything else; we just want to share our DSL connection through our router. It seems to me I have this overly networked group of computers, and I don't know how to undo that.

Why isn't there a wizard named Undo the Settings Except for Using the Router?

The Fix: It's hard to believe that Microsoft missed an opportunity to do something with a wizard, but there isn't a wizard that will do what you want. However, you can accomplish your goal quite easily. Go into Control Panel and right-click the icon for your Local Area Connection (labeled Network in earlier versions of Windows). Choose Properties from the shortcut menu, and in the Properties dialog box uninstall or deselect (depending on the version of Windows) File and Printer Sharing. Bingo!

Wireless in the Distance

The Annoyance: Our wireless network works fine until one of the computers moves more than forty or fifty feet away from the router. What's the distance maximum for wireless?

The Fix: The "rated" maximum distance for wireless network adapters is usually about 1,500 feet outdoors and 300 feet indoors. The word "rated" means "under perfect circumstances," and that's something to think about carefully. For outdoor distance maximums, "perfect circumstances" means your entire network is outdoors, including the router, any access points, and all the computers on the network. I'll bet big bucks this doesn't match your setup.

The indoor distance maximum is very susceptible to suspicion, because it depends on structural elements in the house. I've never seen a building that passes a "perfect circumstances" test. Almost anything in the walls except for air can block or degrade the wireless signal. Since no walls will stay up with air as their only component, you lose some of the signal as soon as you ask the signal to pass through a wall. The nails in the studs, metal in plaster lath, air conditioning ducts, cast iron pipes, and even lead paint can further interfere with the signal.

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Don't Fall for
"Human Engineering"
by Ira Wilsker

APCUG Director; columnist, *The Examiner*, Beaumont, Texas' Radio Show Host; Police Officer

You receive the following urgent email from someone you will likely know with the subject line "Finally Captured! You open this intriguing email and see the message: "Turn on your TV. Osama Bin Laden has been captured. While CNN has no pictures at this point of time, the military channel (PPV) released some pictures. I managed to capture a couple of these pictures off my TV. Ive (sic) attached a slideshow containing all the pictures I managed to capture." Attached to the email is a file "Pictures.zip."

Eager to see the proof that the number one most wanted person in the world has been captured finally, you click on the attachment. No photos appear, so maybe you click on it again. It is now too late, because that first click on the attachment rather than opening a zip file and displaying the photos, planted a nasty backdoor Trojan on your computer, Nibu.D. Through a process known in the industry as "Human Engineering," an innocent victim was tricked into installing unwanted software onto his computer. In this particular case, the Nibu.D backdoor just installed a "keylogger" intended to capture usernames, passwords, account numbers, and other sensitive information.

Nibu.D is also listed by Norton as a "bank info scarfer," a type of malware that explicitly looks for banking information when entered, and sends that information to parties unknown. If you were one of the countless victims of this trick, and have since opened the attachment and unknowingly installed Nibu.D, you have done online banking, checked your credit card accounts, logged onto eBay or other shopping sites, your personal information may have been compromised, and you may become a victim of identity theft.

Every day for the past several weeks I have received some apparently urgent emails seemingly from my internet service provider (ISP). They come addressed from "administrator," "support," "customer service," or some similar official sounding individual at the ISP. They carry dire warnings in the subject line that my email account will be or has been suspended for a variety of infractions, ranging from failure to follow an unspecified rule, sending excessive spam, or some other major infraction. The poorly worded message is "Once you have completed the form in the attached file, your account records will not be interrupted and will continue as normal" and has a 65k attachment "document.zip." Another slight variation refers to following directions in a file ranging from 43k to 65k in size with the file name "instructions.zip." I depend on my email, reading and sending dozens per day. Email is important to me, and since it is from my ISP, I go ahead and click on the attachment. Bad choice; one or more of the dozens of variants of the Mytob worm is now infesting my computer, possibly killing or deactivating my antivirus and firewall software, preventing access to antivirus and other helpful websites, and creating a multitude of new threats to my cyber safety. Once the computer is infected, Mytob searches the hard drive for address books, and sends infecting emails to addresses found, geometrically increasing its distribution and degree of damage.

Recently, variations of Mytob in ag-gregate have made it to the top of the threat lists compiled by antivirus companies. In one recent day, antivirus company Sophos reported that over half of all new virus infestations detected were variants of Mytob. Mytob is a product of a group of miscreants going by the name "HellBot," who have allegedly stated that they are trying to develop some type of "SuperBug," according to a recent article in Computerworld. On some days, several versions of Mytob have appeared; in recent months, slight variations have appeared so rapidly, that Mytob has spread more quickly than antivirus companies' ability to protect against it, leaving even recently updated antivirus software vulnerable to attack.

Mytob, first discovered in February, and its many variants, are especially nasty based on what they do. One factor in common is the ability, as mentioned above, to deactivate or destroy the antivirus software and firewall installed on the infected computers. It also blocks access to security websites that may provide information and utilities to kill Mytob. This malware may also prevent the running of the free online antivirus scans, which could (if allowed to run), detect and remove Mytob, making it a self-protective piece of malware. Some versions also lower or remove other security settings on the com
puter, making it even more vulnerable to attack. Some versions also may install spyware, adware, zombies, or other undesirable software, as well as broadcast over the internet that the infected computer is vulnerable to further attacks. Trend Micro, the provider of the online free antivirus scan Housecall (housecall.antivirus .com), and PC-Cillin antivirus software, has stated that some variants of Mytob use the infected computers as a source of revenue for HellBot by placing adware and spyware on the infected computer.

Nibu and Mybot are just two of the thousands of currently circulating viruses, worms, and Trojans. Netsky, Bagel, Sober, and their many variations are a major threat to our computing security. As the virus writers continue to make more productive (for them) and destructive malware, it is now more imperative than ever that we all keep our antivirus software updated constantly. Be suspicious about emails even from known sources, and check out any suspicious email from possibly known sources by checking directly with that source prior to opening the email or any attachments.

As I have pleaded in the past, we must be responsible for our own cybersecurity.
Source: (NibuD) http://people.ists.dartmouth.edu/~gbakos/img/osamamail.jpg
Source: Personal Emails (Mytob variants)

The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you. <iwilsker@apcug.net>

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

It has come to my attention that a nasty popup has been emanating from my Web site intermittently. I would never put a popup /under there myself, yet there it is. I finally became suspicious after getting it twice when accessing my Web site just to check my browser connection, and that was the only place I had been. A friend checked it closer and finally discovered it in the html code he found, but didn't think it was in my Web site files. There is a script containing a URL [www.registrarads.com] and a reference to NamesDirect.com. I sincerely apologize for this, although it was without my knowledge or permission.

Since I use the free space on Earthlink and some additional donated space from a friend for my Web site, I have been using a URL redirect through NamesDirect.com for some time. Originally the redirect was through Yournamefree.com who I never had a problem with, but I discovered Yourname free.com is now part of MyDomain.com, which is also affiliated with NamesDirect.com. Network Solutions is the registrar and I see no need to change that because I can reach them anytime day or night with a free call and they are not the offenders. In the past I became very dissatisfied with MyDomain.com for my other domain names, and after much difficulty making the transfer, thought I was rid of them. A call to NamesDirect.com acknowledged the problem and that I would have to make them the registrar, or take their Web hosting to avoid the problem. I told them I don't reward bad business practices by giving them more business. They didn't care that I was going to write about this in my column, so profit from my bad experience with NamesDirect.com and MyDomain.com.

The popup offers to reset your computer clock, but clicking on it gets programs downloaded to your computer (don't know what). I hope no readers were stung by that obnoxious popup. Most user group members are too smart to fall for that one, but it is deceptive. The whois showed that my technical contact for the dealsguy.com had been changed to NamesDirect.com and I have changed it back to myself twice, but

could not make the change stick until I changed the password. A while back it had been changed to some guy in Australia and I changed it back to me when a friend called that problem to my attention. What a mess, but I hope I found a way to resolve it.

Reminder

The deal for the biometric fingerprint device to operate your locks that I featured last month is still good for August. Think about just laying your finger on a pad that will quickly unlock doors or open your garage door. Ain't technology great! For information see [http://www.ekeyusa.com] and to order, e-mail [Hassan .Hares@ekeyUSA.com] or call (941) 782-1227. To get the 30% discount, use the password "dealsguy05."

The other announcement deals I featured last month are also still good for August. I had a great product ready for this month, but they could not put a deal together in time, so look for home building and remodeling software next month. I may also finally have a deal on the Dazzle 990, a great product. I'm having fun looking at the products. In their place, I'll include more announcements with a discount or free for user group members.

Free Database

At this writing, InterSystems was still offering Cache, a post-relational database that uniquely combines advanced objects and high performance SQL, as a free download. They say that with Cache, no mapping is required between object and relational views of data, thus contributing savings in both development and processing time. Cache also incorporates a powerful Web application development environment that dramatically reduces the time to build and modify applications. To get your free download, the URL is [http://www.intersystems.com/free] and I hope it's still free. My description is from their ad and it appears that you do have to register for the download.

How About a Free Toolbar! (Edited)

(Received back in November. Read the privacy statement "carefully" before using the software.)

The ToolbarBrowser is a new project supported by Trellian and is now available for download: [http://www.toolbarbrowser .com] The ToolbarBrowser is a Toolbar management tool and a complete Toolbar authoring system.

- Imagine if you could take just the features you want from the many toolbars you may have installed, and combine them into a single super toolbar.
- Imagine if you could manage dozens of separate toolbars in a single tab control.
- Imagine if you could write your own toolbars as easily as you write HTML pages, and share these with your friends, clients and web site visitors.
- Imagine if you could add new toolbars at a click of a button without having to install new software, and uninstall them just as easily.
- Imagine if you could write your own toolbars in XML, HTML, Java, JavaScript or even Flash.

We very much look forward to receiving your feedback, suggestions and comments and invite you to participate in the ToolbarBrowser developer forum: [http://www.tool barbrowser.com/forum]

Adding Toolbars – Once you have installed the ToolbarBrowser, visit our Toolbar Library to add new toolbars at a click of a button. [http://www.toolbarbrowser.com /toolbar.htm]

Standard Features – In addition to being fully programmable and customizable, there are many standard toolbar features that include: Popup Blocking, Keyword Highlighting, Form AutoFill and more....

Advanced Authoring – If you are a webmaster, one of the most powerful features is the ability to generate individual toolbars, customized to each visitor's needs or preferences. For example, if you have a financial web site, you could display real time stock quotes that are individually tailored to each user. There is virtually no limit to what you will be able to do. Cost? The ToolbarBrowser is freeware.

Best regards from the Trellian Team

http://www.trellian.com

Pocket PC Safety! Edited Announcement.

Company: INFOTECS

ViPNet Safe Disk for Pocket PC: A bulletproof data security system for desktop computers is now available for your PDA. INFOTECS announces version 1.0 of ViPNet Safe Disk for Pocket PC. This application is designed for PDA owners who can now protect their personal information from prying eyes by encrypting and password-protecting their sensitive files. ViPNet Safe Disk for Pocket PC provides your PDA with a totally protected environment where data is stored encrypted and protected by a password even when your device is switched off, or in the "stand-by" mode. It allows you to create the so-called "containers." These

are secure folders for confidential files, which are created in the memory on a PDA and mounted by ViPNet Safe Disk software. You can easily open and edit any file from a secure folder in a word processor or database program, the file being automatically decrypted when opened and encrypted when saved. The program supports two 256-encryption algorithms.

AES and GOST. In case of emergency you can use the "panic" mode to demount all mounted "containers" and hide the main window of the program from view with one tap. Added to this is the ability to connect your PDA to a PC and exchange data, provided that ViPNet Safe Disk is installed on the desktop computer. Pricing and Availability

ViPNet Safe Disk for Pocket PC runs under Windows Mobile 2003 and costs $26.40 (USD) for a single-user license. A 20% discount is available to the buyers of ViPNet Safe Disk for Pocket PC and ViPNet Safe Disk for Windows. Registered customers are entitled to free updates and lifetime technical support. A 20-day fully functional demo version of the program is available as a free download at the company's Website [http:// www.infotecs.biz].

Product page link: [http://www .infotecs.biz/Soft/safe_ diskppc.htm]

Direct download link: [http://www .infotecs.biz/demo/download_safedisk_ppc .htm]

E-mail: [novikov@infotecs.biz]

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].

The diNovo Cordless Desktop by Logitech
By Ken Wood
North Orange County Computer Club

The diNovo Cordless Desktop,by Logitech (http://www.logitech.com /index.cfm/products/details/US/ EN,CR1D=2162,CONTENT1D=9575) is a keyboard and mouse set designed for desktop and laptop use. It has a very thin design, which makes it very easy to carry around and takes up very little desktop space. The main set consists of a separate keyboard/ keypad and a mouse along with a receiver for the wireless signals.

The keypad has several features such as media controls (volume, pause, play, etc.) as well as time, date, temperature, and an LCD screen so it can be used separately from a desktop or laptop. The Keyboard, though slightly heavier due to batteries, is very thin and takes up very little space. It also has the media controls as well as buttons for homepage, mail, and search. There is an f-key option on the keyboard for many more easy access tools. The mouse is very simple and has a standard left/ right mouse button as well a scroll wheel. It also has an on/off switch at the bottom making it very easy to conserve batteries. The receiver is very small, about the size of a USB flash drive, and it still takes up little space when on the desktop stand.

The box contains a keyboard, numeric pad, mouse, USB receiver, receiver stand, carrying cases, software, 6AA batteries, and a quick-start guide. The price from Logitech is $150 and the price on Pricegrabber.com ranged from $124-150. It is also available at the usual computer stores. There is a 5-year limited warranty on the product.

System requirements are a PC with an available USB port and a CD-ROM drive with a Windows 2000 or XP operating system.

The installation process is very simple and easy:

1) attach the receiver to the USB port

2) press connect on the receiver

3) press connect on the keyboard, mouse or numeric pad

4) repeat steps 2 and 3 for the other two pieces

The product came with a CD with MediaLife and software to change the product settings and use many of the features. I also found that there was very good product support. Their product support website (http:// logitech-en-amr.custhelp.com) has a search, FAQ, and categories with pictures.

Overall, I found that the Logitech diNovo Cordless Desktop is very useful in many situations and is suitable for laptops and desktops. I would recommend this product for anyone because of its versatility and ease of use.

Editors Note: Unfortunately, neither this review, nor the Logitech website, provide the reader with a good feel for the many virtues of this product that help justify the significant price. The Setpoint software that comes with the unit allows you to program various keys to enhance the ease with which you can use your computer. For instance; many of your commonly used programs can be launched by tapping one key. Instant sound muting and volume up/down control on the keyboard sure beats trying to find and use the controls on the screen. Not even mentioned is the standalone calculator built into the keypad. Which, when a calculation on the keypad is totaled, places the results on the clipboard, which can then be pasted into the application you arc currently using.

From the June 2005 issue of Orange Bytes*, newsletter of the North Orange County Computer Club.*

Snaglt 7.2.2
by Ted Liftman
North Orange County Computer Club

The last time that we reviewed TechSmith's Snaglt was in the November 2002 issue of *Orange Bytes*. Both Jim Sanders and Lloyd Mizer gave high marks to version 6.1 of this screen-capture utility that offered capabilities well beyond the basics needed to copy/print images and text from the computer screen (i.e., the built- in Windows Print Screen feature).

If you press the Print Screen (PrntScrn) key of your keyboard, the entire display on the monitor is

captured and saved in Windows' Clipboard. Likewise, if you press Alt + PrntScrn, only the active window part of your display is sent to the Clipboard. Then you can "paste" the Clipboard image into a graphics program or even a word processor. However, if you need to edit the image, in most cases it is much simpler to use a feature-rich utility like Snaglt instead of the Windows screenshot capability.

In an excellent review by Matthew Ellison for the WritersUA 2005 Conference, he compared Snaglt 7.2 with four other screen-capture programs: http://www .winwriters.com/articles/capturetools /index.htmland stated that Snaglt is "... probably the most full-featured of the capture tools reviewed ...." and "... it's also very easy to use thanks to a well-designed interface and workflow." Matthew included a nice introduction on the use of screen-capture utilities which I recommend to those of you who are unfamiliar with them.

The current version of Snaglt, 7.2, is significantly improved over version 6. It is even more user friendly and has a working screen that makes it much easier to choose from among the many options that the program offers as shown in Figure 1. But, if you are a previous user and like the classic interface, you can switch to it. A listing of all the new features can be viewed at: http://www .techsmith .com /products /snagit /whatsnew .asp.

Snaglt offers a huge number of capture options in terms of area to be captured, output of selection, and available filters (color, image resolution/size, edge effects, etc.) It also provides a text editor and a not-so-shabby image editor. In addition, there are "add-ins," (mini tool bars) for making screen capture available from within a number of popular programs. For example, Snaglt makes Web capturing a breeze by integrating into my Internet Explorer browser. Figure 2 was captured from the TechSmith web site. (Snaglt also will work from within Foxfire according to TechSmith.) In addition, it works seamlessly from within Windows Explorer, all of the programs of the Microsoft Office suite, and Adobe FrameMaker

System requirements for Snaglt include a Windows operating system (98, Me, 2000, NT 4, or XP), a 90-MHz processor (400 MHz is recommended), 16 MB RAM, 20 MB free hard disk space (30 MB is needed if you add the video tutorials), and Internet Explorer 5.5 or later. My system is a 3.2 GHz Pentium IV Dell Dimension with Windows XP and Internet Explorer 6.

Installation from the CD was a no-brainer and the opening video "Tour" nicely covered all of the program's features. Also, the built- in Help system is one of the better ones around and is nicely supplemented by white papers, tutorials, and other help aids at the TechSmith web site.

You can download SnagIt 7.2 from the vendor's web site for $40 or order it on a CD. It is available from a number of Internet vendors for less, but you may not get the most current version. TechSmith offers a 30-day trial if you prefer to "try-before- you-buy."

I highly recommend SnagIt 7.2 to all PC users, regardless of their capability level. It is easy to install, set up, learn, and run. And it can significantly improve your productivity for many computer tasks.

From the June 2005 issue of Orange Bytes*, newsletter of the North Orange County Computer Club.*

Book Excerpt:

Top Six Excel Annoyances
If you use Excel, you know how very annoying it can be, especially when you have a big project due
by Curt Frye
author of *Excel Annoyances* (O'Reilly Press)

T he river of Excel annoyances runs deep and treacherous, populated by numerous species of sharp-toothed predators ready to chew up your data. How deep and treacherous? When we queried user groups across this fair land, we got 150 emails in a single week! Here are some of my favorite Excel annoyances — and fixes.

Format Part of a Cell's Contents
This one is so easy you'll kick yourself when I tell you. To format part of a cell's contents, click the cell to display its contents in the Formula Bar just above the worksheet and below Excel's toolbar. Select the characters you want to format in the Formula Bar, and use the buttons on the Formatting toolbar to change the characters' appearance. This solution might seem basic, but you'd be surprised how many folks think it's impossible to edit part of a cell's contents. The program sure doesn't make it obvious.

Add a Carriage Return to a Cell's Contents
You can add a line break inside a cell by pressing Alt-Enter. Yep, that's all there is to it.

Insert or Delete Single Cells
Have you ever typed in a data list, only to discover that you left a value out of the middle? Sure, you could just cut and paste the data below the item you missed and type it into the blank cell, but here's a quick way to add a new cell in the middle of list without cutting and pasting.
1. Select a cell where you want a new, blank cell inserted.
2. Choose Insert*Cells, which displays the Insert dialog box.
3. Depending on what you want to do, click the "Shift cells right" or "Shift cells down" radio button and click the OK button.

Delete a Formula and Keep the Result
To replace a formula with its result, click the cell with the formula, choose Edit*Copy and then Edit*Paste Special, and select the Values radio button to paste the value in the cell where the formula was. This procedure works for multiple cells, too.

Add Text to a Displayed Numerical Value
If you're a restaurant manager and check a workbook to see how much ketchup you have left, wouldn't it be helpful to know if the value 16 in the ketchup inventory level cell represents two-gallon cans or cases of bottles? You can add text to the value of a cell by following these steps:
1. Choose Format*Cells and select Custom in the Category list.
2. In the Type box, you'll see General, which is the default value. Immediately after it, type " cases" (including the quotes and the space after the first quote). The entry should read General" cases."
3. Click OK.

The format you just created will put the word cases behind any value you enter into the cell-but Excel still will treat the value you entered as a number, not text. Of course, you can substitute any word you want, such as bags, cans, or pounds.

You also can create a format that changes depending on the value typed into the cell. To create such a format, you add conditions enclosed in square brackets in front of each partial format, and separate the segments with a semicolon.

For example, the format *[<>1]General" units";[=1]General" unit"*

will cause Excel to follow the value 1 with the word unit and values other than 1 with the word units.

Display Partial Hours as Decimal Numbers

Consultants often bill their clients by the tenth of an hour, so it doesn't do much good to bill someone for 9:30 when you worked for nine and a half hours. To display a time as a decimal value, such as 9.5 hours, follow these steps:

1. Click the cell where the result is to appear and select Format*Cells, click the Number tab, and select Number from the Category pull-down list.
2. Type this formula in the cell: *=HOUR(value)+(MINUTE(value)/60)*

replacing value with the address of the cell that contains the time or the formula that generates the time you want to convert into a decimal value. If the time were in cell E4, you would use the formula *=HOUR(E4)+(MINUTE(E4)/60).*

Bass's Computing Factoids

There are unrelated things I pick up in e-mail that are terrific–but not long enough for an article. Here are a few of them.

by Steve Bass

Contributing Editor, PC World*, author of* PC Annoyances, 2nd Edition

Find a Human

Here's a list that's going to come in handy one day. You'll find out how to bypass and defeat voice mail hell with ways to, well, Find a Human. For instance, at Bank of America, hit zero twice, after the menu choices play.

At American Airlines, for example, press zero twice, then say "agent." <http://snipurl.com /find_em>

Pizza in 2010

It's a funny take on privacy – until you realize that it's not that unlikely... [Flash, need sound] <http://snipurl.com/pizza_order>

Spyware Stats

Are you curious to see what spyware has been detected by Counterspy? Check out this cool, real-time (refresh to see that new data is coming in) list of the top ten threats caught by Counterspy. For instance, out of 36K scans in the last week, iSearch.Desktop Search, a nasty bit of spyware, was detected in 34,000 scans. Check the site at <http:// snipurl.com /SunbeltSpyware>

And if you've been hit by spyware, and don't have AWS protection, you know how frustrating (and potentially costly) it is to remove it. I'm using counterspy and so far (knock wood), I'm free of the spyware. There's a 15-day trial at <http://snipurl.com/counterspy> and it's $20 if you buy it.

Alternatively, you might try Microsoft's free ASW program available at <http://snipurl.com/ms_beta> and you can also determine if you have the current definition library by checking here: <http://snipurl.com/MS_Beta_check>

Plan Ahead. Way Ahead...

If your train catches fire, do NOT stop on a flammable trestle. <http://snipurl.com /coaltrain>

Tag? No, Nextag

Say you're shopping for a digital camera and want to predict when the price will drop. You can make your best guess with the help of Nextag, a nifty shopping site that gives you a comprehensive pricing history. Check the examples below. (And as a buddy who told me about the site said: "Truly, this Internet thing is truly amazing sometimes.") <http://snipurl.com/NextagSony> <http://snipurl.com/NextagNikon>

Marry Me? No Way...

Marry Me is a legit, LOL commercial, with a great punch line. It's was shown in England and it's an ad that's sure to make some people uncomfortable (at least until the punch line) and will absolutely offend some of you. <http://snipurl.com/MarryMe>

Google's New Home Page

Some of you won't waste any time changing your home page from Yahoo or even <http://www.MyWay.com> to Google's new offering. <http://www.google.com/ig>

Here's a guided tour through the new site:
<http://blogs.pcworld.com/techlog/archives /000685 .html> and you can read about my experience with MyWay here: <http://snipurl.com/Home_MyWay>

Quick – Duck!

What do you do when someone yells "duck" and you're not a birder? You watch this very cool video of a young magician. (1.6MB WMV). <http://snipurl.com /slider>

Steve Bass is a Contributing Editor with PC World, *a 23 year veteran of PIBMUG, and a founding member of APCUG. He's also the author of the second edition of* PC Annoyances: How to Fix the Most Annoying Things about Your Personal Computer, *O'Reilly Press. Check out a sample chapter at <http://snurl.com/sample_annoyed2>. It's available on Amazon at <http://snurl.com /annoyed2>. Visit Annoyance Central at: <http://snipurl.com /AnnoyCentral>*

Media Notes
by Bill Petitt
Southeast Virginia Computer Group

Is it a Hoax?

A friend sent (or more likely, forwarded) you e-mail about some child who's dying and wants to receive e-mail messages, or about a national corporation that committed some grievous sin and should be boycotted. How do you find out whether or not the story is true? Luckily, there are several good Web sites that make it easy to check out the stories that are making the rounds on the 'Net.

http://www.snopes.com

http://urbanlegends.about.com

http://www.scambusters.org/legends.html

http://www.factcheck.org (political content)

http://www.breakthechain.org (chain let-ters)

Virtual Hospital

The Virtual Hospital is a service of the University of Iowa. It contains a wealth of health-related information. You can search for information by topic, symptom, body location or medical specialty. Then, link to articles to learn more about health conditions.

Most of the information is aimed at adults. But you'll also find articles that specifically address pediatric health. So parents will find this helpful. Most importantly, articles on prevention will help keep you and your loved ones healthy.

Doctors' understanding of medical conditions changes regularly. Fortunately, the Virtual Hospital features a news section. The monthly updates will keep you abreast of advances in the medical field.

To visit this site, go here: www.vh.org

From Old App to USB Printer

I have an old DOS-based database program that will print only to the LPT1 or LPT2 ports on my PC. My new printer is strictly USB. How do I print to it from my database application?

I'm becoming more and more convinced that you simply should not buy a printer that doesn't include a parallel port. USB printers have too many limitations. Fortunately, there's a workaround for this problemin Windows XP and 2000 that involves printer pooling, which is meant to allow one logical printer to print to two actual devices.

First, you'll need to open the Printers applet in Control Panel: In Windows XP, select Start, Control Panel, Printers and Other Hardware (if you are using XP's Categories view), Printers and Faxes. If you use Windows 2000, click Start, Settings, Printers. Now right-click your printer's icon, and select Properties, Ports. Check Enable printer pooling near the bottom of the dialog box; then select LPT1: at the top of the port list, and click OK

Windows 98 and Me have what appears to be a built-in remedy — an option named Capture Printer Port on the Details tab of each printer's Properties dialog box. Unfortunately, this function works only for printers on a network, not for those connected directly to your computer.

I want to be able to set up an ad-hoc Wi-Fi network between two computers to transfer files directly from one machine to the other. How do I do this?

Well, this is really two questions. You have to enable file sharing to be able to transfer files, whether you are wired or wireless. Then you also have to set up the Wi-Fi connection. We're going to assume you know how to share files, and have that part configured already.

To set up an ad-hoc Wi-Fi network (which is simply a peer-to-peer network that does not require a Wi-Fi router or access point), you must configure each computer with identical wireless settings. But first, you'll need to set manual IP addresses so that the two computers will be able to see each other on the network. They should each be something like 192.168.2.x, where x is a number from 1 to 255 and different for each computer (more than two computers can be in the ad-hoc group). The subnet mask for each should be 255.255.255.0. Next, switch the settings for each computer's Wi-Fi adapter from "infrastructure" mode (which uses a router) to "ad-hoc" mode. Then make sure they both have a common SSID (network name), and are configured to use the same Wi-Fi channel (from 1 to 11). They should also be in the same Wi-Fi mode, such as b, g or enhanced-g, as applicable — MIMO card in MIMO-only mode won't be able to talk to a plain-g card, for example. Finally, make sure they use the same encryption method. If it's just a one-time connection in a private spot, encryption is probably unnecessary. Otherwise, turn on encryption, but if you have a problem getting connected, troubleshoot without encryption first. WEP is usually the easiest mode to get working.

Geek Speak

A. "IP"

The term 'IP' stands for Internet Protocol – the rules for getting stuff from us to you in one piece over the Internet.

B. "Title Bar"

Look at your email program right now. Up there at the top of your screen, there's a colored strip with some words in it. The very top of all programs is what's called the Title Bar. This is where the title of the program you are using is shown. The Title Bar is a valuable provider of information.

C. "Target"

You know what a target is ... it's something you aim at. Or the object of some action. Well, on the Web, a target is a web page or file that your browser will open or download. When you right click a hyperlink, a context menu opens. You'll see "Save Target As..." listed there. The target is the page the link is referring to.
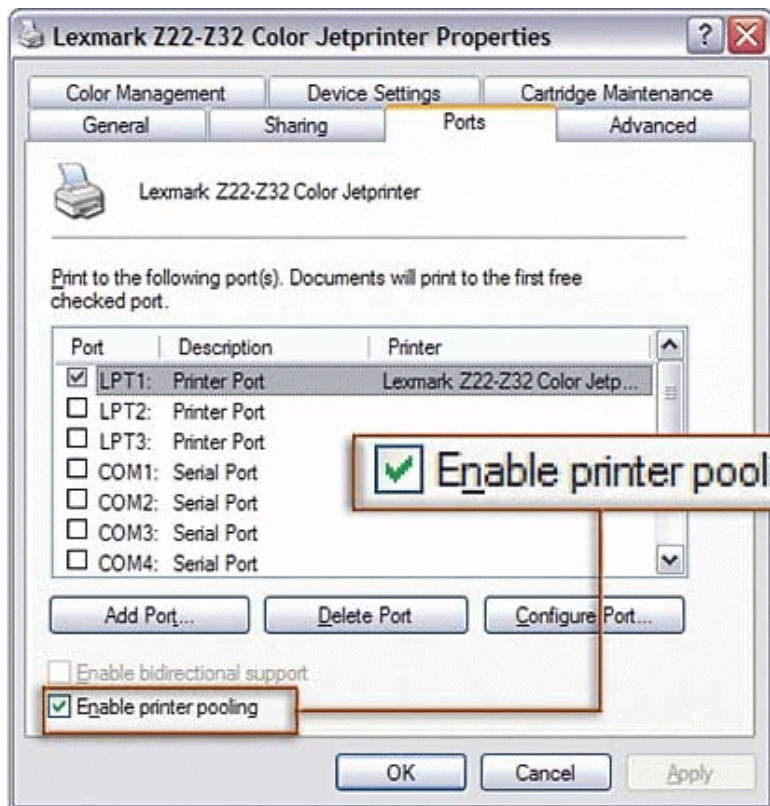
D. "POP account"

POP stands for Post Office Protocol. It's simply a set of rules that are followed on the Internet with respect to the arrival of your email in an inbox. You receive mail into a POP account if you use Outlook Express, Eudora, Pegasus, or some other email client to check your mail.

Ok, quiz time!!!!

What is the difference between EIDE and SATA hard drives? Are they compatible on the same computer? Thinking of buying a new machine? Most new computers are using SATA drives. So, can you add your old 250 GB EIDE drives? Or, are they junk

Sometimes. Computers are every bit as complicated as they seem. Just when you think you have them figured out, they throw you a curve! That's what has happened here. For years and years, hard drives were connected to motherboards via IDE (Intelligent or Integrated) Drive Electronics) ports. Then the E (for Enhanced) was added to the IDE. So far, so good.

Then, a few years ago, SATA (Serial Advanced Technology Attachment) drives came along. SATA offers the potential for bigger, faster hard drives. They use different ports on the motherboard. As you say, many new computers are sporting SATA drives.

If you're still awake, here's the good news: You probably can mix the two types on a new computer. Most motherboards have ports and controllers for each.

The BIOS probably will want to make the primary SATA drive the master. Windows should already be installed there. I would simply install the old EIDE hard drives, with ribbon cables. Use jumpers on the backs of the hard drives to designate the primary and secondary drives.

When you boot up, Windows should assign drive letters. But with four hard drives and one or two optical (CD and DVD) drives, it may not give them the letters you prefer.

If so, you can change the letter assignments. To do that, click Start>>Control Panel. Double-click Administrative Tools. Double-click Computer Management. Click Disk Management. In the right panel, right- click the drive letter you want to change. Click Change Drive Letter and Paths. Click Change. In the drop down box, select a letter. Click OK>>OK.

Upgrade your PowerPoint Backgrounds

You've been using PowerPoint for years now and are probably getting a little weary of the same old tired blue backgrounds and wimpy bullet points. Add some variety to your menu with some new templates from a free source: Brainy Betty. (http://www .brainybetty.com) These range from animated business designs to abstract; sports motifs to spring themes. Once you have selected a template you can tweak the text formatting. Also on the site, you can find lots of icons and useful advice for building your new presentation.

Share large files

Trying to transfer large files is a frustrating experience. Most e-mail accounts have limits on the size of attachments.

However, YouSendIt provides a simple solution. You can upload files up to 1 gigabyte in size. Wow! Then you send a notification to the recipient. Recipients will only see the files they're invited to view. They also can download the files. Just keep in mind that files are destroyed after one week. Further, the company says safeguards are in place to maintain the security of your files.

To visit this site, go here: www.yousendit .com

What follows is a question that pops up quite often as old equipment is replaced by newer hardware.

My old computer died, so I bought a new one. I took my old hard drive out of my old computer to use it as a second hard drive in my new computer and to access the data stored on my old drive. After installing the old hard drive on my new Windows XP Home edition computer, I find that the only task the Disk Management feature will let me do is format my drive. Can anyone help or tell me how I can access the information on my old hard drive? My old drive had Windows XP Home edition on it also. Could this be the culprit?

Let's not jump the gun and blame the folks in Redmond so quickly! In all likelihood, you are dealing with a hardware issue.

Windows XP's Disk Management utility is designed to enable you to perform disk- related tasks such as initializing new disks, and creating and formatting new volumes. Having said that, you should have been able to open or explore the contents of the drive through it, just like you would through My Computer. If the only option you were given was to format the old drive, your operating system might be detecting the hardware but not recognizing it correctly. Unfortunately, it is impossible to tell from your description whether the drive is being detected at all. What you are experiencing might be Windows XP's way of letting you know about an incorrect hard disk installation or some other hardware problem. For now, I will assume that your old hard drive is functional — a risky assumption given the first four words in your question: "My old computer died."

The first thing you should do is visit the website of the manufacturer of your new computer, and look for a document discussing how to add a second hard drive to your system. You should find this information in the website's Support Section or Knowledge Base, or in your Owner's Manual under "Adding Parts" or "Upgrading Your Computer." In all likelihood, the document will feature illustrated, step-by-step instructions on how to add a drive. Just as important, it might alert you to potential issues you might encounter and suggest troubleshooting steps. Even if you consulted such a document while installing your drive, it wouldn't hurt to double check to make sure you did not skip any steps.

Hard drives are not exactly "plug-and- play" devices, and adding one requires a bit more work than merely plugging it in. Your computer might be failing to recognize the data present in your old drive if the drive

jumper settings are incorrect, you failed to configure the system's setup (BIOS) after installing the second drive, or the latter is incompatible with the IDE data cable in your new computer. Let's examine these possibilities.

Drive Jumper Settings: There are two protocols used to determine the order in which IDE devices (such as hard drives and optical drives) attached to a single data cable are detected by the motherboard. The first protocol is known as the Master/Slave relationship, in which the position of jumper blocks adjacent to the drives' IDE connectors designate one device as the Master or Primary Boot Drive, and the other as the secondary or Slave drive. When you start your computer, the operating system in the Master drive will be loaded by default.

The second protocol is known as Cable Select. It assigns Master or Primary status based not on jumper block position, but rather on the location of a hard drive along the IDE data cable. The device plugged at the end connector of the cable is the Master drive, whereas that on the middle connector is the Slave drive.

Chances are your new PC supports the Cable Select protocol. But your old, defunct computer might have not, in which case the jumper setting on your old hard drive might be the cause of your present problem. If this is the case, visit the website of your old drive's manufacturer to find out the appropriate jumper configuration, and reposition the jumper block. Often times, the different jumper settings will be labeled on the drive itself.

Just as incorrect jumper settings will prevent your motherboard from detecting your drive, so will incorrect cable connections. Make sure your old drive is compatible with the data cable being used in your new computer, that the cables are oriented properly, and that they are securely in place. Again, the drive's manufacturer should provide the necessary information in its website.

If you rule out both drive jumper settings and incorrect connections as culprits, check your computer's BIOS. Configuring your BIOS (Basic Input/Output Service) is often, though not always, a necessary step when adding a second hard drive, and one that can be easily overlooked. Consult your computer's documentation or manufacturer's website for information on how to enter setup and configure your BIOS. I know I am being repetitive, but there is a good reason for my not providing step-by-step instructions here: The BIOS is critical to your computer's performance, so you need to carefully follow the instructions for your specific computer and BIOS version. Generic advice in this area might leave you with another dead PC!

If everything else fails, consider the possibility that your old hard drive is defective — that the reason your old computer "died" was that your old hard drive kicked the bucket. You might be able to obtain diagnostic tools from its manufacturer's website to corroborate or rule out this conclusion. You might be able to salvage most (if not all) data, though you will require the services of a company that specializes in that sort of thing. It might be easier – and considerably cheaper – to restore your data from your back up discs. You have been backing up your data, right?

Hopefully your old drive is fine and you will be able to access it after tweaking the jumper blocks or performing another of the aforementioned troubleshooting steps. I would strongly suggest that you copy its contents to the newer drive, especially since it is likely to be larger and faster. Then use your old drive as a place for backups (though you should still consider removable media for this task), or as a dedicated drive for storing multimedia files or pictures.

Q. I'm going to be replacing my old Windows 98 notebook. It's not really worth much anymore. Are there any places that take computers, like places that take cell phones? It still works, so I'd feel pretty guilty throwing it away.

A. You'll face a couple of problems disposing of your old computer. First, you have to find someone to take it. And you need to protect your personal information.

Unfortunately, many machines are simply thrown away. That could be an ecological disaster. Computers contain toxic materials, including quantities of lead. The toxic material can seep into the ground.

It doesn't have to be that way. Somewhere, someone's bound to want your computer. And there are many charities that accept and redistribute old computers. Most are not interested in antiques. But a computer less than five or six years old is worthwhile.

You can start with the National Cristina Foundation. It has non-profit partners in all 50 states. They do list some minimum requirements for donated computers. But the requirements are very forgiving.

UsedComputer.com lists many other charities that need old computers. Among them are such well-known organizations as the Salvation Army and Goodwill.

If your computer is just too old, it may not find a home. Even so, don't throw it out. A recycling company can take it. Recycling companies can salvage usable parts and recycle the toxic materials.

Electronics Recycling keeps a directory of diverse electronics recycling companies. Some of them charge nothing to accept your equipment. But others do, or are picky about what they'll take. You can search for recyclers by ZIP code or by state.

Some computer manufacturers also handle recycling. Both Dell and Hewlett-Packard offer such programs. They charge small fees to take your computer.

Hewlett-Packard also offers a trade-in program. It contracts with a third party to buy your old computer. But you won't get rich from your trade-in. Few things depreciate faster than computers. The site offers an online estimate for your computer.

Be sure to protect yourself by removing personal information from your hard drive. You never know where the computer will eventually end up. And regular deleting isn't enough. Check out the tip on deleting files for good here: http://komando.com/tips_show.asp ?showID=8837

If you've got an old printer, you can recycle it, too. Check with the manufacturer's Web site. For example, Lexmark and Epson will recycle their printers. Lexma rk's service is free aside from shipping. Epson charges $10, which includes shipping.

Finally, don't forget about your neighborhood. You might find a neighbor, church, or school district that needs more equipment.

Browser hole affects Firefox 1.0.3 and 1.0.4

Secunia reports a frame-injection vulnerability in Firefox 1.0.3 and 1.0.4. Mozillazine has details, including a comment that you can close the hole (until 1.0.5 is released) by clicking Tools, Options, Advanced, Tabbed Browsing and changing "open links in a new window" to "open links in a new tab in the most recent window": http://www.mozillazine .org/talkback.html?article=6762

A Secunia bulletin also notes that a similar hole has existed in Internet Explorer 5.x and 6.x since June 2004 and has not yet been patched by Microsoft (but there is a workaround): http://secunia.com/advisories /11966/

XP Service Pack 2 causes "Page cannot be displayed" errors

Microsoft reported on June 7 that XP SP2 causes an unexpected error when you click the Back button in Internet Explorer to go to a page on which you previously submitted form data. A hotfix is available and there's also a workaround as an alternative: http:// support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid =kb;en-us;890178

Windows XP SP2 and 2003 SP1 cause errors browsing Web sites

Microsoft says installing XP Service Pack 2 or Windows Server 2003 Service Pack 1 causes error messages when browsing or editing local Web sites hosted on IIS 5.1 or 6. This also affects ASP.NET projects in MS Visual Studio 2003. There are two possible workarounds: http://support .microsoft .com /default.aspx ?scid =kb;en-us;896861

Enough for now, its time for me to start packing my bags.

From the July 2005 issue of The Umbrella*, newsletter of the Hampton Roads Virginia Computing Community.*

Product Review:

Answer Bar
by Dave "Doc" Dockery
Tampa Bay Computer Society

I don't often recommend software utilities anymore. I did back in the DOS days, but Windows often has needed features built-in so that I don't need to search for something else to do the job. About the only tools that I will recommend are TweakUI (free from Microsoft) and the Google Toolbar (free from Google).

Well, I'm ready to add a third utility to my list: it's the "AnswerBar" from www.an swers.com (coincidentally enough, it's also free). This wonderful little tool will not be of interest to everyone. It's of interest to those of us who would like to have a reference source always at our fingertips. It's probably of little value to dial-up users – its real strength is when it's immediately ready to do your bidding because you're already online.

I like it because I'm a word freak. I love the English language. I love words, their nuances, their usage. I love being able to immediately look up almost anything and get an answer.

The coolest feature that the AnswerBar provides is this one: let's say you are reading a document (it could be a webpage, a Microsoft Word page, a PowerPoint slide show, a PageMaker document, etc.) and you run across a word you need defined. You simply hold down the "Alt" key and click the word with your mouse. I did this with the word "oligarchy" (see accompanying graphic).

The AnswerBar jumps into action and looks up the word for you. The included graphic only shows the very top of the information it finds. Depending upon the word chosen, it shows not only the dictionary definition, but also an encyclopedia entry, a variety of supplemental entries, and it includes translations into other languages.

Here's the pièce de résistance: notice that I highlighted a little speaker icon in yellow in my graphic. All you have to do is click the speaker and it pronounces the word for you (not now, silly, after you install it on *your* computer). What a great way to get the proper pronunciation!

Answers.com also pops up a "Today's Highlights" page each morning. I liked this feature. It includes a variety of topical and informative highlights and links: Today in History, Today's Birthdays, and In the News are examples. While I like this feature, it's bound to be very annoying to others. No Problemo. It's easy to turn off, and it goes away as commanded.

I'm always concerned that software functions intelligently. In my opinion, this one does. The AnswerBar is unobtrusive. It can stay hidden until you need it to swing into action. It seems to be very obedient, and it plays well

with my other software.

This little utility has proven itself very useful to me. While writing this review, I used it to look up "pièce de résistance" so that I could get the proper diacritical marks. It was easier to get them this way than it was to use Window's Character Map utility to hunt 'em down. I'm a big fan and will continue to use the AnswerBar.

Procrastination Has Rewards

by Beverly Rosenbaum
Houston Area League of Computer Users

I had put off giving away that old Hewlett Packard Scanjet 4C scanner for years.

After all, it was a very good model and still in working order. Except for the fact that I was never able to use it on any operating system after Windows 95, and now it's 10 years old. For those of you who don't

remember it, the 4C was a flatbed model that scanned pages up to legal size, weighed at least 20 pounds, and took up a very large amount of desk space. I kept checking the HP support web site periodically (in vain) to see if I might find any information or new drivers. Years went by, and nothing ever turned up.

Software for that scanner hasn't been updated since 11-02-1999, when Deskscan 2.9 and a Copy Utility were posted on HP's web site. The original Symbios Logic SCSI PC-ISA interface card (53C400) wasn't a plug and play card, and therefore was unsupported in newer versions of the Windows operating system. I also learned that the scanner itself did not support parity, so settings on a different SCSI card would have to be able to be modified.

Then I began searching the on-line forums, where I was surprised to find scads of postings from other people just like me. No one ever found an answer to this problem. Finally a response to a "SCSI Conundrum" posting in October 2003 at www.pcanswers.co.uk/tips offered a potential work-around. They suggested replacing the SCSI card with a model supported by Windows XP, such as the Adaptec 2904.

Then I found two other postings confirming that suggestion, that an alternate method of connecting the scanner could really work. The theory was that almost all SCSI peripherals would connect via any SCSI card, using the standard "TWAIN" interface and SCSI protocols (software to provide the so-called ASPI layer, which stands for Advanced SCSI Programming Interface). In other words, the original SCSI card could be discarded and the third-party SCSI card could be used instead.

Another discussion at www.abxzone.com /forums detailed exactly the same dilemma, with similar suggestions. So I gave it a try. I installed the Adaptec SCSI adapter and powered on the PC, letting Windows XP "discover" the card. Then I installed the old Deskscan 2.9 driver from HP, and chose "other" instead of the Symbios Logic card when prompted. Instantly the scanner was recognized and worked again!

Was it worth it? Sure, it was – both for the satisfaction of finally finding a solution and being able to put a good scanner back into service. But I never knew until now that I had that much patience.

Beverly Rosenbaum, a HAL-PC member, is a 1999 and 2000 Houston Press Club "Excellence in Journalism" award winner. She can be reached at trumors@hal-pc.org.

HandiApped Independence: Part 1
by Frank Petrie
Freelance writer, Macsimum News contributor, Curmudgeon

I am a Mac user. I am a reviewer for Macsimum News and numerous news-letters. I also suffer from multiple sclerosis.

Recently, I allowed my boneheaded pride to 'cometh before eight falls,' resulting in a four day stay at the Bland Food Hotel. When I returned, I viewed my environment with new eyes. I realized that I needed to pace myself in a more efficient manner. I was pushing to hard.

So, I started to monitor my daily activities and evaluate the layout of my house. First, I noticed that I used about 80% of my energy getting across the carpets. Wasted energy. I had set my drinking glasses out of reach, my food on pantry shelves that were too high. More wasted energy. And on and on. Clearly I had to completely rethink my procedures.

What did I do the most? Where did I create paths?

How can I create an environment to facilitate my independent lifestyle without unnecessarily wasting energy getting to things?

While thinking about this, something triggered a memory of a visit to the 1960's NYC World's Fair. At the GE Pavilion, they predicted that in the future (probably the late 80's) we would all have robotic servants to take care of our common household chores. Remember Rosie on The Jetsons (ask your Grandmother)? She looked somewhat human and wore a hat and apron. Aaaah - the future!

As fate would have it, this memory came flashing back as I was watching TV. The Honda commercial, where robotics arms were spot welding chassis on the line, came on. Wait a tick! At the GE Pavilion, function followed form. So our servants were anthropomorphic. But the commercial proved that the exact opposite was true - form had followed function! The welding robots didn't look like my uncle in overalls, after all. They were big, hulking steel arms, working 24/7!

Quick – switch gears. Enter my daughter. She is an avid fan of those shows where friends exchange houses for a weekend to renovate one or two rooms. Once I told her about what I had been doing since my return from the hospital, she was all aglow. Here was her big chance to do like the TV shows without the fear of someone destroying her room.

Well, obviously, I use my computer the most, so this would have to be the focal point of my renovation. What I hadn't counted on (although I wasn't really surprised) was that most of my life, work and play involved my computer. Then it hit me! My computer was my robot! It helped me shop, pay bills, keep photo albums, and talk to people face to face. It saved my failing legs a lot of mileage. My computer/robot is an important part of my independent lifestyle.

This will hopefully be a series that goes beyond the ergonomic charts that we have all seen, and instead focus on hardware and software (including OS X's Universal Access) that can benefit the handicapped (and the baby boomers who will soon slide into retirement; they'll be having bits fall off or stop working soon, as well). We'll revisit our workspaces, look at special mice and keyboards, the benefits of Bluetooth and dictation software for those with arthritis or dexterity problems. In short, how to layout your office for maximum workflow and the least amount of physical discomfort.

So, here's your first assignment. For the next several weeks, keep a mental or physical diary of your habits and routines. Perhaps your computer and bills don't have to be in that spare bedroom way in the back of the house. Notice where you spend most of your time, where your paths intersect most and such.

Once we have our information at hand, we'll get to work. Good luck.

Oh and please post comments. Let's begin a dialogue and share ideas. Reach me at phranky@mac.com, Subject: HandiApped.

From the July, 2005 issue of I/O Port *newsletter of the Tulsa Computer Society.*

Society News

<div align="right">

Help's Half Hour
Led by: Ron Matteson
Recorded by Jan Rothfuss
Total present: 23

</div>

Q: A member reported that, when opening Outlook Express, she sees an item URL imbedded inside. However, simply pressing on the blue text does not open up the browser like it used to do.
A: You may have to copy and paste the URL into the address bar on the browser.
Q: Ron told of his 3 year old C82 Epson Printer that was having problems resulting in the output being broken up. When checking the website, he found the way to take the unit apart to clean out the inkjet tube. He was afraid to take it completely out. His decision was to buy a new printer. He called the support line but they could not help him other than to have him clean the heads and be sure to use Epson ink cartridges. He was then offered a $30 discount coupon.
A: If it had been under warranty, it might have been fixed or replaced for free.
Q: One member needs to transfer files from one PC to another - one is Win98 the other an XP. Is there a special cable?
A: You need to buy a Ethernet crossover cable that will allow you to move files from one to the other. You should be able to find them in varying lengths. With XP and Win2K, the process will be fairly straight forward. The Win98 configuration may take some work.
Q: I purchased an upgrade that specifies Win 98 but I have Win 95. What can I do?

A: He could try it but the group is not aware of a direct upgrade that is possible. He should consult the web site.

Q: There is a RealPlayer icon on his Win98 desktop that he would like to get rid of so that it is not in the startup menu.

A: RealPlayer does run in the startup. You may need to control-alt-delete to bring up the Task Manager and then end the task. He may also need to remove it from the list of services so that it will not come up with each fresh start.

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The power in Webster went off. The meeting was brief:
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Business and General Meeting
July 12, 2005
by Jim Murdock, Secretary

Arpad and Steve, with Ron, conducted the business meeting.

Several members are behind in their dues. Steve asked that members keep their dues current.

Please get in touch with Arpad or Steve if you are interested in conducting Helps Half Hour.

The New Users Group – John McMillan leader, and new RCSi secretary – is seeking a new meeting location. Please let Arpad, Steve or John know if you have any suggested locations.

Steve reminded everyone that during the break at each monthly meeting 50/50 tickets are on sale. Everyone is encouraged to participate.

Steve said that since fundraising is a continuing need any new ideas on how to raise funds for RCSi are always welcome.

The next RCSi meeting will be the annual picnic on Tuesday, August 9th at the cabin in the Perinton Town Park. The picnic will be from 1600 until 2100 with dinner beginning at 1730. Remember to bring a dish to pass as well as your flea market offerings,

While the business meeting was still going on, the electrical power in our meeting room and throughout the library failed. We later learned that the entire area was without power.

The evening's presentation was to be given by Ms. Jen Clausen, User Group Representative, of Sandhills Publishing. Sandhills publishes *Smart Computing*, *PC Today* and *Computer Power User*. It was Ms. Clausen's intent to review the current issue of *Smart Computing* in detail and then explore, online, with the audience, *Smartcomputing.com.* She also wanted to tell the audience about the free tech support available at *Smart computing .com.* Her intent, also, was to discuss *PC Today* and *Computer Power User.* The power failure made her plan untenable. When we learned that the power would not soon be restored and that in fact the librarian would soon have to close the library for safety reasons, Ms Clausen, using her laptop – on battery! – and a flashlight, managed to quickly review her intended presentation outline, and even managed to answer a few questions before we all had to leave.

But before we left Ron spoke for everyone when he thanked Ms. Clausen, her assistant, and Sandhills Publishing for the time, effort, and travel involved in making the presentation possible. He expressed, too, the sincere regret that the power failure abruptly shortened the time available for the presentation. It was evident to all that Ms. Clausen's entire presentation would be both enjoyable and worthwhile. Many asked if she could return. At the time, Ms. Clausen was uncertain if a return engagement would be possible, especially in the near future.

Once again Ron thanked Ms. Clausen and asked her, on behalf of all members of RCSi, to express his appreciation to Sandhills Publishing. He also encouraged the members present to carefully consider the merits of *Smart Computing* and *SmartComputing.com.*

Treasurer's Report
by Steve Staub

Balance as of 6/21/05 . . . . $1,062.58

Income

Dues and donations $211.00

Expenses

Staples (paper) $67.20
St. Stephens 60.00
Post Office bulk permit 150.00
Cartridge World (ink) . . . . <u>218.45</u>
$495.65
Balance as of 7/19/05 . . . . $777.93
New member: Sandra Schaeffer

The Lighter Side

Customer: "I need help with the Truman program?"
Tech Support: "Pardon, sir?"
Customer: "Truman, it came with your scanner."
Tech Support: "Um, no, sir, there is no 'Truman' program with the scanner."
Customer: "Yes there is. I got it right here."
Tech Support: "What kind of program is it? Is it a game or a reference program of some kind?"
Customer: "No, it came with the scanner."
Tech Support: "But, sir, we don't have a program called 'Truman' with the scanner. Maybe this came with something else, like your printer."
Customer: "No, it came with the scanner."
Tech Support: "Well, what's the problem you are having with it?"
Customer: "It won't read my text."
Tech Support: "Is this an OCR program?"
Customer: "Yeah, it came with your scanner. Truman OCR."
Tech Support: "You mean TextBridge OCR?"
Customer: "Yep, that's right, Truman."
I helped him with his problem, but I never figured out where he got "Truman" from.

<center>❊</center>

This is a something that happened to me while working for Lexmark.

Customer: "I don't understand why my inkjet printer keeps printing blank pages."
Me: "Ok, did you remember to install the printer cartridge?"
Customer: "Yes, I put it inside the printer on the carrier thing."
Me: "Did you remove the tape from the bottom of the cartridge?"
Customer: "The tape with the blue flap? Yeah."
Me: "Yes. Ok, tell me what exactly you are doing to print."
Customer: "Well, I press this purple button on the printer, and the page comes out blank."
Me: "Well, sir, this is not the way to print. Let me show how we can do this and print a document or a picture. Let's go to your PC."
Customer: "What's that?"
Me: "Your PC – your computer."
Customer: "What's that?"
Me: "The computer, the thing with the keyboard, the monitor, the PC."
Customer: "I don't have one of those."
Me: "???"
Customer: "..."
Me: "Excuse me, sir, you don't have a computer?"
Customer: "Nope."
Me: "Sir, why did you buy this printer?"
Customer: "Well, I went to Radio Shack, and I pressed this button, and it would print out pretty pictures."

Have you updated your virus definition files lately?