

User Friendly



**October
2003**

Next Meeting
Wednesday, October 8, 2003
Rich Blumenthal
Demonstrates The New Dragon
NaturallySpeaking Software

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Palmia Computer Club



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User Friendly

a publication for members of the Palmia Computer Club & the Palmia Community.

Published monthly, January through June, September and October. Combined issues are published July/August and November/December.

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Articles (1) must be submitted to the Managing Editor no later than the 10th day prior to the month of publication; (2) should be no longer than 1,000 to 1,500 words (approximately three columns), although longer articles may be published; (3) may be edited by staff for clarity, spelling and grammar, and should be relevant to its readers. The choice of articles to be included in any issue is solely the prerogative of the Editorial Staff.

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Computer Club Special Interest Groups

SIGs meet from 3:30 to 5:00 P.M. on the specified Fridays unless noted otherwise:

1st Friday - Computer Hardware Richard Jenkins
(Notice: New SIG Leader)

2nd Friday - Email and the Internet Jerry Moore

3rd Friday - MS Office (Word, Excel) Barry Robbins
(Notice: Special Time 4 to 5:30 P.M.)

4th Friday - Photo Editing & Scanning Don Yenche

There is also a "HELP" SIG! This SIG is intended for beginners to answer your basic questions relating to computers (This is not a class). It meets on the first, third and fourth Mondays of each month at 10:00 A.M. The SIG leader is Joe Lebovitz.

Contacting Board Members and Officers

All Board members and officers are available for help or information via their email addresses as follows:

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Please Help

Your User Friendly newsletter needs a back-up, or co-editor, to Ali Tabikh who is not in good health. This fine publication must continue to serve everyone. So many members rely on it to stay up-to-date on computer developments. This is a learning opportunity for someone willing to help as well as a fine way to help the Club. **Please call Ali at 699-1962 or Herbert Sax at 455-1315.**

The Palmia Computer Club meets in the Palmia Ballroom the second Wednesday of each month, except July and August, at 7:30 p.m. The doors open at 6:30 p.m. for Q&A and socializing. For visitors from outside our Palmia community the address is: 21455 Monterey, Mission Viejo, CA 92692. The parking lot is just past the gate on the left side of Monterey. Telephone: 949-472-5075

From the President's Desk

By Barry Robbins

I can't believe it is time to write another article for the User Friendly, but here I am again in front of my word processor typing away.

Those of us who attended the last meeting were treated with a presentation by Kevin Murray. Kevin's presentation showed us how to evaluate whether or not we should upgrade our present computer or just buy a new one. In addition Kevin gave us an outline to help us determine how our computer should be configured, how much memory we should have and how large a hard drive should be installed in our computer. A very useful handout was distributed at the meeting.

In my last article I expressed my concern as to whether or not the Palmia Computer Club was going to continue. I requested comments from the membership about what you felt we could and should do to continue the club. Much to my surprise, only two members made an effort to communicate with me. One member sent me a long letter expressing his views and observations. The other member sent me a short email that basically stated that we needed to go back to basics with our presentations; that most of the members were computer beginners and just wanted to learn basic things about using their computer. The PCC board discussed the continuance of the club. The consensus of the board was that we discontinue the club as it is now, and that we try to continue the weekly SIGS. The board also felt that we would try to continue some sort of written communication to the members. We also felt we should try to maintain the computer lab so that we can continue to provide broadband internet service to the Palmia community.

After thinking about all of this, I feel we need to make an effort to continue the Club, maybe doing quarterly meetings instead of monthly meetings. In addition we need to try to continue publishing User Friendly. This publication is a very important information tool for the membership. The October PCC board meeting will take place after this newsletter goes to bed. The main topic of discussion will be how we can continue to pro-

vide services and training to the community. I will make a full report at the October general meeting.

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, October 8th. Mr. Rich Blumenthal from Dragon NaturallySpeaking will be our guest. He will give us a demonstration on how this voice-activated software can assist us in word processing, email and even surfing the internet. Dragon NaturallySpeaking is software similar to IBM's ViaVoice, which I demonstrated a few months ago. My observation in working with members of the community is that a large number of computer users do not know how to type very well. This software can prove to be a great asset and improve your productivity and enjoyment in using your computer.

Our November meeting will feature a return engagement from Ken Rockwell. Ken will again enlighten us on digital photography and the computer. If you attended his last presentation, you know that Ken doesn't speak computerese, but speaks in plain English and is easy to understand.

Our meeting will start promptly at 7:30 PM on October 8th. Doug Harley will be there from 6:30 PM to 7:15 PM to answer any questions that you may have about computing.

Error Messages

Actual error message seen on computer screens in Japan.

Chaos reigns within. Reflect, repent, and reboot. Order shall return.

Program aborting: Close all that you have worked on. You ask far too much.

Yesterday it worked. Today it is not working. Windows is like that.

Your file was so big. It might be very useful. But now it is gone.

Stay the patient course. Of little worth is your ire. The network is down.

Three things are certain: Death, taxes and lost data. Guess which has occurred?

Disaster Contingency Planning

by Sue Stevens

Ed. note: This is not a computer article; however, you can use your computer to record the information this author (and this editor) believe is vital.

I didn't really want to write this article. Some experts recommend that we need to keep emergency supplies of water, duct tape, and plastic sheeting. People are already scared, and I don't want to frighten them more.

But part of my job as a financial counselor is thinking through the worst-case scenario. As a business owner, it is my responsibility to have a plan in place in case of a disaster. My clients and employees depend on me to be prepared. And so I am.

And you should be too—because your family is depending on you. I hope we'll all emerge from the current conflict without needing to follow through on any of the steps outlined below. But having a backup plan in place should give you extra peace of mind—as well as better preparation if a disaster were to strike.

Securing Your Records

You may not have a lot of time to assemble your important papers once a disaster has struck. So get a head start by gathering that information now in a financial emergency kit. The Department of Homeland Security <<http://www.ready.gov/>> tells us we should be ready for two possibilities: 1) staying put in a “shelter-in-place” and 2) getting away. In either case, you'll need to be able to pack up your laptop and important papers in a matter of minutes.

Here are some ideas of what you should have at your fingertips, ready to go:

- * Important papers
- * Passports
- * Driver's license
- * Social Security card
- * Checkbooks
- * Bank accounts
- * Lines of credit
- * Account numbers and passwords
- * Insurance policy numbers
- * Brokerage accounts
- * Bank accounts
- * Estate documents

- * Key contacts
- * Cell phone numbers and e-mail addresses
- * Family
- * Professional contacts
- * Police, fire, ambulance
- * Red Cross
- * Local emergency response center
- * Employer human resources contact

You may want to consider sealing the important papers in a plastic bag to keep them together and to give them protection. Even if you store all of this information on your laptop, print out a copy in case you can't use your computer. Consider keeping the papers in a home safe (which is easier to access than trying to get into a bank safe deposit box). You may want to make copies and send them to a trusted friend or relative in another region of the country.

Accessing Your Resources

Depending on the type of disaster, it may be more difficult to access your financial resources. First, consider your cash needs. You should keep some cash at home for immediate emergencies. You can keep it in the same plastic bag as your important papers and key contacts (see above). Keep enough cash to stay afloat for a couple of weeks. You may also want to increase your cash cushion in your asset allocation in your brokerage accounts to allow for additional withdrawals should you need them.

You probably already keep your ATM card in your wallet. That may be able to give you access to cash in an emergency, although if we have a loss of power or a run on ATMs, that resource may not be of much help. If you have credit cards, you probably receive checks periodically that can be used to tap your line of credit. Consider adding these checks to your financial emergency kit.

You may be forced to do your financial transactions in a different way than you're used to. Be sure you have set up online access for all of your accounts and that you have your ID and password information with you.

Disaster, continued from page 4

Should something happen to you, leave written, accessible instructions about your financial emergency kit. Be sure to tell at least one other person about it.

Alternate Power Sources

Think through your alternate power sources in either a home shelter or away from home. If you are at home, you can have an emergency generator available not only for home electrical needs, but to run a computer too. If you are not at home, most cars have features that allow you to run electrical devices like a laptop computer. Make sure you have whatever adaptors are required to tap into this source of electricity. It wouldn't hurt to have your laptop batteries charged and ready to go too.

Many of you already have cell phones. Make sure you know what kind of calling radius your cell phone plan has. Keep your cell phone car adaptor in the car and keep the electrical recharging cord with your emergency financial kit.

If you're going to rely on your car as an alternate source of electricity, make sure you keep the gas tank more than halfway full. You may also want to keep a spare tank of gas to take with you if you are forced to leave your home.

Escape Route

If you must leave your home, take the time now to plan several destinations in different directions. Know main traffic arteries as well as back routes. Keep maps in the car. If you don't have a compass built into the car, you may want to carry one of those too.

Testing and Revising Your Plan

You won't really know how well your plan works until you test it. Try two tests: one where you tell your family ahead of time and one where you don't. How quickly can you respond to a crisis? What adjustments do you need to make to your plan?

You can learn more about the types of crises we need to be ready for in the government's Be Ready Guide <<http://www.ready.gov/>>. Think about what you would do in the following scenarios:

- * Loss of electricity
- * Water contamination

- * Fire
- * Nuclear, biological, and/or chemical attack
- * Internet not accessible

I'll be the first to admit that it is hard to think about the unthinkable. And I want to emphasize again that these steps are meant to prepare investors for the worst possible case. You may never need to take advantage of them.

But the world changed forever on Sept. 11, 2001, and we need to adjust our reality to be able to deal with it and still live full, productive lives. Once your contingency plan is in place, you may find comfort in having faced your fears and taken action. Now you can get on with your life.



Sue Stevens, CPA, CFP, MBA, and CFA Charterholder, is Director of Financial Planning for Morningstar Associates, LLC. Sue reads every e-mail but cannot respond to them all. She can be reached at: <stevens.portfolios@morningstar.com>.

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Goodbye Floppies Hello Thumb Drives

by Ira Wilsker

A few years ago at COMDEX, Bill Gates announced that the floppy disk was obsolete. As of that date, with a very few exceptions, Microsoft would no longer distribute software on floppies. Holding up a CD, Gates proclaimed that "this" would be the future of software distribution.

Floppy disks have appeared in several physical sizes, the 5.25" single-sided 180 or 360-kilobyte disks being the most common on the early PCs. Now, the 5.25" floppies can rarely be found. The 5.25" disk was replaced first by the short-lived 720 kilobyte 3.5" disk, and then the current 1.44 megabyte 3.5" disk. Other sizes and capacities have come and gone, with only a few still currently available. One format that has had some success, and is still available, but with declining sales, being stymied by the high price of its media, is Iomega's Zip Drive. Commonly available in 100 megabyte and 250 megabyte discs, Zip disks are about the same size as a 3.5" floppy, but generally not interchangeable, and can store the equivalent of about 70 to 175 floppies. A few years ago Imation released its SuperDisk drives and discs. What was attractive about SuperDisks was their capacity of 120 megabytes, plus the drives could read and write to both the SuperDisks and the conventional 3.5" floppy disks. Other formats of drives and floppy disks have been produced, some with capacities of up to 2.2 gigabytes on a 3.5" disk, or roughly the equivalent of 1600 conventional floppy disks.

One problem with the large capacity Zip and SuperDisks was the price of the media. Even though they had a capacity greatly superior to that of a conventional floppy, and their cost per megabyte of capacity was competitive, the cost per disc and the cost of the drives was what made them unpopular. Also leading to the decline in popularity of these alternative drives has been the near universal availability of good quality and inexpensive CD-RW drives along with the CD-RW and CD-R media. Typically holding 660 to 700 megabytes of

data, and with discs sometimes being "free after rebates", many sellers have almost stopped selling traditional floppy disks, and their big brother Zip and SuperDisks.

A quick analysis of older computer magazines revealed that the DVD drives and media are now priced where CD drives and media were only about three to four years ago. DVD drives and media are becoming more commonplace in the market as well as commonly installed into many new computers. Just as CD players showed up in computers before CD-RW drives, DVD players are commonly appearing installed in new computers, with the DVD writers now becoming common. As the prices of DVD drives and media are expected to continue to drop, many pundits are expecting that in the next few years that DVDs will do to CD sales the same as the CD did to the floppy - render it functionally obsolete. With a 4.7 gigabyte capacity, equivalent to about seven CDs, sales of DVD drives and media are expected to soar. Double-sided DVD discs, called "DVD-RAM", and having a 9.4 gigabyte capacity, double that of the single-sided 4.7 gigabyte discs, are becoming popular, but can only be played on compatible

As the prices of DVD drives and media are expected to continue to drop, many pundits are expecting that in the next few years that DVDs will do to CD sales the same as the CD did to the floppy - render it functionally obsolete.

computer-based DVD drives. Unlike the near universally standardized format used on PC compatible floppies and CDs, there are competing standards for DVD drives. Strong camps have formed promoting the competing "DVD+" format and the "DVD -" format. Both formats are almost equally capable at storing data and playing movies in re-

cent players. Only a few models of drives are capable of utilizing both formats interchangeably, and even fewer can utilize the higher capacity DVD discs.

Another contender for portable data storage



Goodbye Floppies, continued from page 6

appeared over the past few months, and is now becoming very popular as its cost plunges.

Now that Dell no longer installs floppy drives on new computers unless the buyer explicitly orders one, Dell now includes one of these drives as standard on many models. The drive has many catchy brand names, but is generically called a USB "Thumb" drive. About two inches long, and about three-quarters of an inch wide, by about a quarter-inch thick, and weighing less than an ounce, these drives are becoming widely available. Not requiring a separate drive to read or write to them, they simply plug into the USB port of any computer with a functional USB socket, and are interchangeable between PCs and Macs.

Containing no moving parts, these drives will run on most operating systems. Windows NT does not typically support USB, even if the computer has USB sockets. Most Macs, and all computers with Windows ME, 2000, and XP generally do not require any drivers; the device simply plugs in and it appears as a hard drive. Windows 98 may require the installation of a driver.

Simply remove the device (some require that an icon be clicked to unplug the device) and plug it into another compatible computer and the data is instantly available. These drives are very fast, capable of speeds of 12 to 400 megabytes per second.

Currently, thumb drives are commonly available in 16, 32, 64, 128, 256, and 512 megabyte capacities, and are now becoming available in 1 and 2 gigabyte capacities. The 64 and 128 megabyte capacities are available for as little as \$29 and \$49, after rebates, which is about half of what they sold for a few months ago. Prices are expected to drop as availability increases.

Farewell to my old friend, the floppy disc. Hello to my new friends, DVD and "thumb" drives.

Ira Wilsker is a member of the APCUG Board of Advisors, hosts a radio show, writes a column for his local paper and is on the faculty at the Lamar institute.

This article is brought to you by the Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an International organization to which this user group belongs.

Coronary Calcium May Predict Death Risk

From Science News, September 13,2003

A computerized X-ray image of calcium deposits along a person's coronary arteries can signal whether that individual carries a hidden health risk, a study in the September *Radiology* suggests.

Researchers enrolled 10,377 people, average age 53, who were free of heart disease but had at least one risk factor for it. These included high cholesterol, a family history of early heart problems, high blood pressure, a smoking habit, and diabetes. All participants received a computerized tomography scan of their coronary arteries.

For each person, the researchers created what they called a coronary calcium score on the basis of the size and density of calcium deposits revealed by the scan. Most volunteers had a score of less than 10, but some exceeded 1,000, says study co-author Paolo Raggi of Tulane University in New Orleans.

After tracking the participants for an average of 5 years, the researchers found that people with calcium scores of 100 to 400 at the beginning of the study were nearly four times as likely to have died than those with scores under 10. The "3 percent" volunteers with scores over 1,000 were 12 times as likely to be dead after 5 years, compared with the low-calcium group.

Coronary calcium scores might prove valuable for identifying people who have no symptoms of heart disease but are at risk of it, Raggi says.

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EBAY Hints and Tips

By Cathy Margolin, President
North Orange County Computer Club, California

BUYING ON eBay

eBay is the largest global marketplace with very low entry cost. Tons of new and used and collectible items are bought and sold every day as there are millions of sellers putting up items that you may not be able to find anywhere else! Last year, eBay users exchanged some \$9.3 billion worth of goods. On an average day there may be over 1 million sales occurring.

First you should start watching some auctions to get a feel for the process. Once you get used to the process, get an eBay id (do not use your e-mail name as your user-id; the spammers will get it!). Then start bidding on small items to learn the process and develop positive feedback. It all runs on feedback. Also multiple user-ids are still ok. Some people use one for selling and another for buying, so as not to let people know their sources.

HOW TO FIND WHAT YOU WANT

You can search titles and descriptions such as: Haviland -johann -theo* (which means look for haviland with no johann and no theo* which is a wild card to ignore any theo—).

You can also look under categories to find an item, but remember not everyone puts their article for sale in the correct categories.

When the seller has tons of items and you want to “Only search” Palm Pilot, go to seller search, go to the bottom of the page, enter Palm Pilot, and under Multiple sellers, put the person’s eBay id (or several id’s).

BIDDING

Make sure you check the sellers feedback – too many negatives and neutrals is NOT good. Beware of a seller with no feedback and a large dollar item for sale. They may be good or bad or just not know the ropes yet, but you do not have enough information to trust them with your hard-earned money.

If you have a concern about the seller, ask them a question a few days before the auction’s end (such as cost of shipping, do they take Paypal, etc.)

to see how they respond.

Use odd numbered cents, such as .99 since the bids go up in increments of 50 cents, \$1 (depending on the value of the bid), you may win an item by just one cent.

Think of any auction you have been to – it is only the last price at the close of the hammer that counts! Always snipe — which is bidding at the last minute. In this auction format, it is only the highest bidder at the close of the auction that wins. If you bid during the week, you keep driving up the price, but bidding at the last second masks interest and usually results in a lower cost. You can use a service (<www.esnipe.com> which charges a fee, or <www.hammertap.com> which does not), or use a program on your own computer.

Bid the maximum amount you want to spend (proxy bidding — only goes up to this amount if someone places a bid against you). Be aware of the Terms of Sale (TOS) for each seller. They differ greatly.

- What form of payment do they take?
- What is the shipping cost, as this can be very high! The Post Office uses zip codes to price shipping, so it is now less complicated.
- Check out seller feedback and what type of items they usually sell.

A set of tips is at the Vendio site (which also has an online bulletin board about ebay auctions). <www.vendio.com/service/tipsandtactics/index2.html>

HOW TO PAY

To help protect yourself, use a credit card, if possible, Paypal, check or lastly a money order. If the transaction goes wrong, you can stop payment on your check and it is easier to get reimbursed (chargeback) if you use a credit card.

When the item has arrived, don’t forget to give feedback to the seller.

eBay is where the market is in online auctions – it is an ever-changing marketplace, where change is constant.

Happy eBay-ing!

This review is brought to you by the Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member.

Answers to Questions

By Jerry Moore

Question

I have been attempting to reduce my daily e-mail spam by selecting a given spam then clicking on “messages” from the menu; from the pull-down menu I click on “block sender”, and then click “ok”. I was told recently that when I select the spam the spammer is automatically informed that his message has been read by my computer. Is there a way to avoid this?

Answer

Judging from the method you have described for blocking senders, it appears that the e-mail program you are using is Microsoft Outlook Express. Here’s what the Outlook Express help files have to say on this subject:

“You can block messages from a particular sender or domain. The domain is the name following the @ symbol in an e-mail address. When you block a sender or domain, no e-mail or news message from that sender or domain will arrive in your Inbox or in the news messages you read. E-mail from blocked senders goes directly into your Delete folder. Newsgroup messages from blocked senders are not displayed.

1. From your e-mail Inbox or the list of messages in a newsgroup, select a message from a sender you want to block.

2. On the Message menu, click Block Sender.”

For the most part, spammers do not request a “read receipt” to determine if the message being sent to you was actually delivered or read by you. These people deal in such high volumes that they generally don’t care.

You can however configure Outlook Express to give you a notification whenever a read receipt is requested. Just click on Tools – Options, then the Receipts tab and under Returning Read Receipts click on the radio button that says “Notify me for each read receipt request”. Once you have done this, any message sent to you with a read receipt request will display the following warning message when you try to open the message:



Now comes the bad news. Spammers have become clever enough to devise ways where the sender’s e-mail address changes with each batch of new spam they send out. So blocking messages in this manner is not very effective.

Fortunately, Outlook Express does give you an easy means to automatically filter your incoming mail based upon specific words found in the subject line or message body. To activate these filters, click on Tools – Message Rules – Mail and you will be presented with a template where you can specify conditions to search for and actions to be taken.

As an example, you could tell Outlook Express to scan your Inbox for any message where the subject line contains “Viagra” and when found automatically delete the message. Another option is to configure Outlook Express to move all these messages into a newly created folder named “SPAM”. This way you can check this folder occasionally to make sure you haven’t been too aggressive with your word filtering rules and accidentally blocked a message you wanted to read.

One downside of Outlook Express is that you must set up separate rules for checking subject line and message body. The full version of Outlook allows you to screen both of these fields at the same time.

If you really want to take steps to help cut down the amount of unsolicited commercial e-mail, another action you should consider is forwarding each spam message to <uce@ftc.gov> If we keep reminding our government representatives that this matter has really gotten out of hand, perhaps they will finally take the necessary steps to deal with this nuisance.

Don’t forget that in both versions of Outlook you can automate the process of forwarding spam to this e-mail address using the same Message Rule tools that can filter your inbox.



Web Surfer

By Jerry Moore

What is the difference between a virus and a worm?

Virus has become a generic term that includes all the malicious ways your computer can be attacked and compromised. Viruses are distributed within your computer and to other computers by making copies of themselves. They can be attached to a Word, Excel or program (.exe) file. Each time the file is run, the virus runs too. It attaches itself to other programs and continues to reproduce. An Email virus is a special type of virus sent as an attachment to an email message. It replicates by automatically mailing itself to everyone in the recipients email address book.

A **Worm** uses computer networks to replicate itself. It searches for servers with security holes and copies itself there. It then begins the search and replication process again.

A **Trojan Horse** is a computer program masquerading as a game or a "cute" program. However, when it runs it does something else - like damaging your hard drive or using your computer remotely to launch attacks on other computers.

How Do I Protect Myself?

There are four basic steps necessary to protect your computer.

1. Install a good anti-virus program such as Norton Anti-Virus by Symantec. Be sure to configure the program to apply updated virus definition files automatically. Since new virus are being developed daily, you **MUST** install these update files as soon as they become available to be assured of the highest level of protection.

2. If you have an "always on" DSL or cable Internet connection, install a firewall. The free version of ZoneAlarm from <www.zonelabs.com> affords a high degree of protection, but you must dig deep into the website, past all the ads for fee-based products to find the free version.

3. Install Windows critical updates as soon as they become available. If you don't have your computer configured for automatic notification, click on Start - All Programs - Windows Update and scan for new updates at least once a week.

4. Be cautious with e-mail attachments. Don't open an attachment that comes from someone you don't know. If it appears to come from someone you know, stop and think. Does it have a reasonable introduction in the email? If the email contains nothing but the attachment or only has a brief note like "I'd like your advice on this" or "Here's something cool" it is suspect. If the attachment is an executable file (ends in .exe or .com), it is also suspect. Don't open suspect attachments. So far, (with a few rare exceptions) pictures have not been carriers of virus code, so files ending in .jpg and .gif are safe.

What Are The Risks?

The other day I received a phone call from a friend who was having computer problems. All of the sudden, the computer started running real slow, was taking a long time to boot up and was rebooting by itself every 5-15 minutes.

I asked this person if they had made any changes to the computer just before the problem started. The answer was no. I asked if the computer had any anti-virus or firewall software installed. Again the answer was no. I asked if any of the Windows critical updates had been installed and was told this was too much of a bother.

A quick look at the running programs in the task list revealed that this computer was infected with the MSBlast worm and was being used as a robot to launch Denial Of Service attacks on other computers. In less than two days, this worm had spread to over 250,000 computers.

Fortunately, this worm was identified and eradicated before any serious harm was done to this person's computer. However, if more people had followed the four steps identified above, this worm would never have spread so far and created such a vast inconvenience.

Until next month, Happy and **SAFE** surfing!



Tips and Tidbits

By Barry Robbins

Upgrading to Windows XP

The computer press is calling Windows XP the most significant new version of Windows since Windows 95. What's all the hype about?

The HP Learning Center offers a course that answers the question. Learn what separates Windows XP from its predecessors, who can benefit most from an upgrade, what types of computers should not be upgraded, and what challenges you might encounter along the upgrade path.

The HP Learning Center is a great online resource. It provides free, instructor-led courses that are available 24/7 so you can study when you have the time.

Plus, if you enroll in a free online course in the month of February, you'll earn a chance to win one of 10 HP Photosmart 715 digital cameras.

For more information go to:

www.hplearningcenter.com/?mcID=ez16

How to Build a Website

If you're thinking about launching your own website, but don't know html from sos, HP Learning Center has a class for you. "How to Build Your First Website" gives you the answers. Remember when desktop publishing made everyone a newspaper editor? Or when Kodak gave everyone the capability to digitally enhance photos? Well, the Web has the tools to help you piece together a perfectly serviceable Web site — one with images, forms, tables, and even e-commerce. You just have to learn where to look for these tools — and in what order to combine the elements of your site.

Making your Browser the Default

If you want to make sure that your favorite browser is the default browser for your system, here's what you do.

In **Microsoft Internet Explorer 6.0**, choose Tools | Internet Options. When the Internet Options dialog box opens, click the Programs tab. Select the check box labeled "Internet Explorer should check to see whether it is the default browser". Click OK and then restart Microsoft Internet Explorer.

In **Netscape 6/7**, choose Edit | Preferences. When the dialog box opens, click Navigator in the "Category" list. Click Set Default Browser and then click OK to dismiss the dialog box.

In **Opera 6**, choose File | Preferences. When the dialog opens, click Default Browser and then select the check box labeled "Check if Opera is default browser on startup". Click OK to close the dialog box.

Sending E-mail Quickly

If you use Microsoft Internet Explorer 6, you can quickly send e-mail without leaving the browser. Just press Ctrl + O. When the Open dialog box appears, type "mailto:the recipient's e-mail address" and then press Enter. If you want to send mail to more than one recipient, separate the e-mail addresses with commas. For example,

mailto:test@test.com, newtest@test.com, anytest@anytest.com

After you press Enter, your default mail client will open and you can enter your message as usual.

Working with Attachments (Outlook Express 6)

One way to protect yourself from damaging e-mail viruses is to use Outlook Express's Message Rules. To do this, you run Outlook Express and choose Tools | Message Rules | Mail.

Now, click New and then, under "Conditions" select "Where the message has an attachment". Under "Actions", select "Delete it".

This will delete any e-mail with an attachment. To accept e-mail from friends, create a new rule. This time, select "Where the From line contains people". Enter the acceptable addresses and then select "Stop processing more rules".

Click OK to save your mail rules. Close.

Acknowledgement

The Editorial Committee wishes to thank all those who contibuted articles and /or other assistance to the production of this issue of the newsletter.

Secretary's Message

By Bill Reinholtz for Ali Tabikh



Our President Barry Robbins called the September 10th meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Barry discussed his "Letter of Doom" which was published in User Friendly. Several helpful comments were made from the floor.

Barry also announced the following programs:

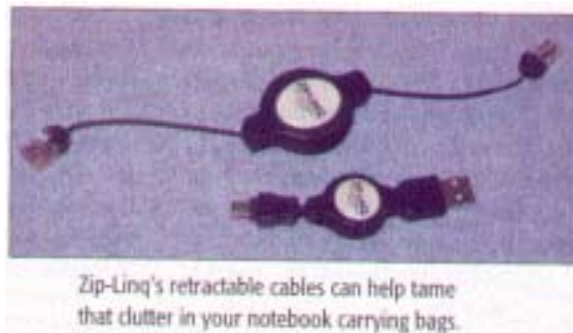
1. October: Dragon Naturally Speaking presented by Rich Blumenthal.
2. November: Ken Rockwell, or Ask the Experts
3. December: Social.

Our Treasurer Ralph Lazar gave a financial summary for July and August. The starting balance was \$1568.27 and was \$1299.20 on September 1.

Barry introduced Kevin Murray from "Surf City PC Doctor" (<www.surfcitypcdoctor.com>) who explained how your computer hardware requirements depend on your expected usage, and how to decide whether to upgrade your computer or buy a new one. He presented the "Three Strikes You're Out" method and handed out useful worksheets that easily allow you to determine the number of strikes your computer has. Everyone enjoyed the excellent presentation (even Jan) and felt it was useful.

After the presentation, Don Yenché won \$13 in the 50/50 drawing and Barry adjourned the meeting at about 8:30.

Tech Mart



Dealing with cable clutter, especially in notebook bags, is a perennial problem, but the folks at Keyspan and Cables Unlimited have a novel solution: retractable cables.

Zip-Linq (<www.ziplinq.com>) cables start as a compact spool that fits in the palm of your hand. Pull on the ends and the cable extends up to 36 inches. Give another yank and it zips together again. Many cable types are available, including USB configurations, RJ-45, FireWire, and synch/charge cables for PDAs and cell phones. There's even a mouse with a retractable cable. At \$12 to \$16 each, the cables are more expensive than regular cables but are perfect for tossing into a notebook bag or computer first aid kit. They'll be there when you need them but won't tangle up the works when you don't.