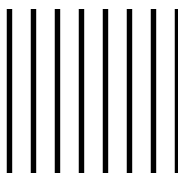


Official Newsletter
SouthEastern Michigan
Computer Organization, Inc.

DATA BUS



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NOTICES, ARTICLES and Other Neat Things

PartitionMagic 6.0

by: Arthur L. Laramie

This is a very nice product. In the box is an important notice. This notice tells you to back up your hard drive before you do anything else. To back up your hard drive the notice suggests using Drive Image or Drive Image Pro, which are two other programs that PowerQuest makes.

In using this product, you can divide large hard drives, like the 15 Gig that I have, into smaller partitions. Why would you do this you ask? First, you might do it to protect the vital operating system that you have in your computer. Second, you would like to have your most important files safe.

The best way to partition your hard drive is to put the operating system that you know is stable on the first partition of your first hard drive along with the critical files that you know are required to make your computer operate properly.

Then in the second partition on the first hard drive, put your programs that you use every day. These would be programs like your word processors, your I.P. program, and your database programs. Because these programs are so vital to the operation of your computer, put a copy of them on the last partition on your second hard drive.

On the second hard drive, you can put a few partitions to divide your hard drive. Why would you do this? First, to keep information that you might have a problem with away from the information that you need to keep the computer operating properly.

If you are like a lot of people into computing in today's marketplace you may want to try out the newer operating systems as they come on the market. Where is a better place to try out that new system than on a separate partition on the second hard drive? If you do this, then you can see if the new operating system is friendly with all of the programs in your computer.

If your second hard drive is large enough, and it should be large, today you can buy a 15 or 20 Gig hard drive for less than \$100.00. At that price, you couldn't buy or store that many 3.5 floppy disks safely.

On the second hard drive, you would divide the hard drive into several partitions to isolate your game programs from your accounting or check programs and from your graphics programs and so on.

In the PartitionMagic manual are chapters that deal with Getting Started,

SEMCO MEETINGS **Sunday,** **JULY 8, 2001**

Board Meeting	12:00pm
General Meeting	1:30pm
SIG-IBM Meeting	1:45pm
SIG-MAC Meeting	1:45pm
Social Period	3:15pm
IBM Novice Group	3:45pm
SIG-IBM Intermediate	3:45pm

using PartitionMagic, and how to use partitions to your best advantage, how to convert your partitions from FAT to FAT32, how to use PartitionMagic's DriveMapper and PQBoot Utilities, which are on this CD.

In the manual is a lot of information that would be of great help to you if you just sit down, read it, and try it on your computer. One of the chapters that I liked very much is Managing Partitions. If you are like me and several partitions that you setup are the wrong size, then what do you do? The chapter on Managing Partitions tells you how you can check the integrity of a partition and then resize it. Maybe you want to change the name of a partition—the book tells you how.

The section on Resizing and Moving Partitions, tells you how to change the size of a partition, even move it to a different place on the hard drive. All you have to do is move the mouse pointer to the partition and drag it to the new location.

You can convert partitions from FAT to FAT32, FAT to HPFS, FAT to NTFS, FAT32 to FAT, FAT32 to NTFS (Windows 2000 only), NTFS to FAT or FAT32, or convert a partition to Logical or Primary. The one that most of us will use will probably be FAT to FAT32. This is done to save on wasted disk space. Don't forget that to convert to FAT32 partitions, you must have Windows 95 OEM Service Release #2, Windows 98, Windows ME, or Windows 2000 to access files on a FAT32 partition. If you are running an operating system other than these, FAT32 partition will be inaccessible when the other operating system is running.

The PartitionMagic has five Wizards to help you do the things that you

want to do. The Wizards are Create New Partition, Resize Partitions, Redistribute Free Space, Merge Partitions, and Copy Partition.

By using the PartitionMagic Utilities, you can change the drive letter using the utility called DriveMapper or change the Bootable Partition using PQBoot. To use DriveMapper, go to Tools, then DriveMapper. When you create, merge, delete, hide, or unhide partitions, your drive letters can change and your application will not be able to run because the registry has the wrong drive letter destination on it. DriveMapper can update the drive letter references in the registry to reflect the new drive letter assignments.

PQBoot is an easy way to switch between bootable primary partitions.

They have quite a good Troubleshooting Guide should you have problems. If the Troubleshooting Guide is not able to help you out, then there is help for you by calling their offices.

System Requirements:

54MB of hard disk space

CD Rom drive (any speed)

3.5" floppy drive (1.44)

Windows 95/98 – 32 MB RAM and 486 or better

Windows ME – 32 MB RAM and 150 MHz Pentium or better

Windows NT4.0 – 32 MB RAM and 486/33 or better

Windows 2000 – 64 MB RAM and 133 MHz Pentium or better

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DEALS COLUMN
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Greater Orlando Computer UG
by Bob "The Cheapskate" Click

E-mail Address Change

I'm changing my email address from <dealsguy@mindspring.com> to <dealsguy@dealsguy.com>. The old address will work for a while, but with spam increasing each day, and now some of it porn, I want to change it. I'll shut down the old address when the traffic slows to just spam. Also, if I want to change to another ISP, it's much easier. Thanks for your help.

What Kind-A-Deal Is This?

I assume most of you are aware that when you purchase software, you don't own it, but instead you own a perpetual license to use it. Years from now, if you're still using it, its OK. Well, things are a-changin'.

Probably because of sagging sales, Microsoft will try to discourage the sale of perpetual licensing to customers with 250 PCs beginning October 1, 2001. Instead, businesses may purchase a subscription license for three years, and are "encouraged" to do it before. A MS rep I talked to thought it would only be on business versions and would not trickle down to personal copies for some time, but you should start asking when you purchase software after Oct. 1, 2001 anyway. If I already had a subscription license, I'd no longer be able to write this column in my present software unless I upgraded because I still use MS Office 97 and it would have shut down.

Another possible scenario: What if it was the third year for a business using subscription software during an economic downturn. A business might

be hard pressed financially to upgrade their license. Nevertheless, either upgrade or their software shuts down, and they agreed to it when they read the EULA during installation (you do read the EULA when you install, don't you—do pigs fly?) Talk about being between a rock and a hard place—that could be the straw that broke that camel's back. According to one article, some managers say subscriptions are OK, but more don't want it. I personally want no part of that plan if it comes to personal packages, even though software is somewhat outdated in three years. There are some columns on ZD net about all this.

There is also a movement to have users lease their software by the hour, using it via software provided by an Application Service Provider (ASP) (it's not even on your machine). That is "supposed" to prevent software pirating and provide cheaper applications. Not my bag either. However, with consumer cooperation these new plans will become prevalent. Without consumer cooperation, they will not fly—right?

On the other hand, I hear a copy of the new MS Office XP can be installed on your desktop and one portable. I doubt that screwing a handle on top of another desktop will qualify it as portable. They better not be networked either.

Distribution Update

My thanks to Mike Alcom, editor for Connecticut Personal Computer Users Group, and Michael Hayes, editor for Columbus Baltimore User Group, who said they sometimes use my column and asked to be listed on my distribution page. Also to Bonnie Rorabough, editor for NOVACOM

User Group in Fairfax, Va., and Steve Bass, editor for Pasadena IBM Users Group, who asked to start getting the column. Most editors are familiar with Steve Bass since he works with the APCUG Editorial Committee and writes many good articles. Welcome to all the new readers.

It's been a rough month for the DealsGuy. Several vendors (leads from Comdex) did not return either my e-mail or phone calls, and two are in financial trouble.

Still Good

The Mouse Bungee deal is still good this month (I love mine), order at <<http://www.mousebungee.com>>. Also the Quick Drive by H45 Technologies. Call 1-800-373-8181. Now, let's see what we have:

Magazine Update From Herb Goodman

Herb notified editors who regularly print his discount magazine subscription service that Windows Magazine, Windows Sources and Home Office Computing have all ceased publication. However, the rest of his magazine discount subscription list still has the same prices:

- Computer Gaming World - \$14.95,
- Computer Shopper - \$17.97,
- Dr. Dobbs Journal - \$15.95,
- Family PC - \$8.95,
- Mac Home Journal - \$15.97,
- Mac World - \$12.95,
- Maximum PC - \$8.97,
- Microsoft System Journal - \$21.95,
- Mobile Computing - \$9.95,
- PC Magazine - \$25.97,
- PC World - \$14.95, Publish - \$17.95,
- Smart Business (PC Computing) - \$11.50,
- Wired - \$13.97 and
- Yahoo! Internet Life - \$13.95.

Prices are for new one-year subscriptions and renewals. (E-mail him for longer-term prices.) Check, cash or Money Order must accompany all orders. Make payable to Herb Goodman, and mail to:

Herb Goodman
8295 Sunlake Drive
Boca Raton, FL 33496
E-mail: <hgoodman@prodigy.net>,
Telephone: 561-488-4465

Please allow 10 to 12 weeks for your magazines to start. For renewals you must supply an address label from your present subscription to insure the correct start of your renewal. As an extra service, Herb will mail a renewal notice about four months prior to their expiration date.

Expensive Software That's "Almost" Free

Clark Bird of Alamo PC Organization alerted me to a special for their group that led to this deal. If you check <<http://www.G7PS.com>> and go to the upper left, then click on "View Cart," you will be guided to an array of software packages just for the cost of S&H. Is that a deal, or is that a deal? Some of these packages sold for well over a hundred bucks. You will see nothing in your cart, but you should scroll to the bottom for specials. Read the instructions, and be sure to click where it says, "Click Here." The free ones that I saw are: Express Forms 2000, Fortune Relationship Manager, DataScan Business Card Scanning Software, VersaClips and TransForm Suite Personal. I didn't see the descriptions so I'll leave that up to you.

This company also offers products for printing your own checks, even if you have a laser printer, but that's not part of this deal. Perhaps in the future.

However, if you need something like that now, check further with them. The above closeouts are in limited supply so act fast.

This Just In

I believe Bill Lindsay, Southeastern Regional Sales Manager, Wacom Technology sent this to all user groups, but I will repeat the message for my readers. It follows:

“In an effort to recognize select user groups and professional associations, Wacom would like to extend some special pricing considerations to your organization. For a very limited time, you can obtain one of the following graphic tablets for as much as 50% off the suggested retail price! The Intelligent Graphics Tablet System:

“Intuos 6x8 (USB) Special Price: \$199.67 (SRP – \$383.99)
Intuos 9x12 (USB or Serial) Special Price: \$299.62 (SRP – \$509.99)
Intuos 12x12(USB or Serial) Special Price: \$299.62 (SRP – \$509.99)
Intuos 12x18(USB or Serial) Special Price: \$399.37 (SRP – \$819.99)
For product information, check out <http://www.wacom.com/productinfo/intuos.cfm>.”

“This is an exclusive offer that Wacom is making to select associations, organizations and user groups. To maintain this exclusivity, if your association would like Wacom to maintain a list of your members, we will reference it when someone calls in to make a purchase. If not, we will simply request that the caller give us their name, organization and Source Code (JUNEMEMBER1) to ensure that the offer has in fact been extended to your group. Call 1-800-922-6613 to order.”

(Note) Briefly, I think this is a pressure sensitive tablet for graphic artists

or Web graphic developers. It can have multiple pens and offers 2450 dpi. Can also be used for 3D graphics. This offer expires June 30, 2001, but try anyway if it's within a few days.

That's it for this month. Meet me here again next month if your editor permits. This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of products, no matter how enthused I might sound. Bob (The Cheap skate) Click dealsguy@dealsguy.com. Visit my Web site at <http://www.dealsguy.com> for past columns. Also, I keep adding interesting articles (taken from user group newsletters) to my “Articles of Interest” page for viewing or downloading. ✓

You Did What? Why? Read This!! It's a Hoax!!

by Rod Ream

Pasadena IBM Users Group

That was the start of a conversation with a client who'd just deleted a file from the \windows\command folder. That's because they'd received an urgent e-mail message from a friend, warning them of an unknown virus.

The message they received was quite clever and, as of this writing, is still being forwarded by darned near everyone without a second thought. The e-mail indicated that the file to be deleted contains a virus that will launch within a week and needs to be zapped without delay. The reader is warned in—what else?—LARGE SIZED TYPE with lots of exclamation points that if they do not act quickly they face

destruction of all their files and folders. The message concludes by stating that none of the virus scanning programs can detect this viral threat.

My client had one machine with Internet access and 2 stand-alone systems without Internet access. They followed the instructions in the message and found that all 3 of their systems contained the supposedly dangerous file. They deleted it as instructed and then, wondering if they'd done the right thing, gave me a call.

In this case the filename was SULFNBK.EXE, but it could have been any file. If the hoax authors get away with this once, you can bet your bippy they'll be back with something else. (In case you are wondering, SULFNBK.EXE is used to backup long file names when you upgrade from one version of Windows to another. If you don't like the new version and want to go back, this file preserves those long file names for you.)

To put things in perspective, my client had deleted a file they knew nothing about, based on the advice of someone they didn't know well. The author of the hoax had accomplished the task of zapping a file on someone else's system as easily as if he'd written and launched a real virus.

Of course, by coming up with this scam, he'd caused the system owner to become his willing and unwitting agent. There are laws against damaging a computer system, if this ploy isn't included, perhaps it should be, as it could be just as destructive.

I thought it was time to take the client back to school, so I proceeded to explain how to avoid being taken in, the next time the hoaxters look for

a sucker. Here are some things you can look for before you let panic set in:

- Does the message indicate one of your messages contained a virus when it was received at the other end? When I receive an infected message I always alert the sender by e-mail as well as by phone and I tell then specifically the name of the detected infection.
- Is the sender someone that would be a knowledgeable person about virus detection? (Is your brother-in-law *really* a knowledgeable source? Really?)
- Big clue! The message said that the major anti-virus companies couldn't detect this thing. Hogwash! The hoaxter compounded the issue by confusing virus detection with virus activation—the date that the time bomb is supposed to trigger. If no one can detect it, then what makes anyone but a psychic know that it's going to go B-A-N-G!! on a certain date?
- Did the message look like it's been forwarded over and over? If you've ever received chain letters from an AOL subscriber, then this shouldn't need an explanation.
- Is this something that's currently being reported by the major news outlets? Sorry folks, but Entertainment Tonight and the Springer Show don't qualify.
- What does your own anti-virus software show when you scan your system? How long has it been since you updated your scanner's virus definitions? You do have up-to-date antivirus software don't you?

Producers of virus detection software (there are a couple hundred companies doing this) compete with one another to be the first to not only detect a new threat, but to be able to neutralize it as well. Within a day or two of the

initial discovery, the major companies will have an update available—that's how they make their money.

You see, viruses can be very difficult to detect if they are polymorphic (self masking), but there always has been something that's detectable. Any claim that these highly regarded companies can't detect something, but Uncle Bob can detect it, should be disregarded on its face.

With that in mind, your first line of defense is up-to-date virus detection software. If you can't recall the last time you downloaded a new set of detection definitions, then it's probably not. If you don't have anti-virus software on the system, there are several on-line detection sites with the best (in my opinion) being <<http://www.housecall.antivirus.com>> which is a free service of Trend Micro, publishers of PC-cillin and other AV products. Your second line of defense is obviously common sense. Use it, it's free!

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Want Your Own Domain? It's Easy to Do by Matt Lake Syndicated Columnist

Some people study for years to get letters after their name. They sink thousands of hours (and dollars) in the quest for a B.A., M.S., or PhD to balance the initials they have in front of their surname. But these bright, overeducated people are missing one point. You can

get .COM after your name and on the Web in a few days—for less than forty bucks. And getting your own Internet domain requires a lot less study.

The process of getting a .com, .net, and .org domain is pretty straightforward: You register a domain name, you get it hosted, and you renew it every year or so.

The trouble is that these three basic steps are buried in a mound of jargon. Do you know—or even care—about the difference between a registry and a registrar, or what URL forwarding and free parking mean? Well...you will, so you'd better read on.

Register a Domain

Until 1999, if you wanted a .com, .net, or .org domain, you had to go through Network Solutions, a.k.a. InterNIC. Even now, it's the sole registry of .com domains (under its new brand name, Verisign). But it's not the only place—or even the best place—for you to register domains. More than 40 registrars have been accredited to sell domains—and most of them undercut Network Solutions' prices substantially.

Confused yet? Don't be. All you need do is visit a registrar's site (I'll mention a few later), and enter the name you want to register. If the name's available, you can buy it there and then by entering your contact information (including phone number and e-mail address) and a credit card number. It generally takes two or three days, sometimes a bit longer, for the domain name to go live (or "resolve" in domain registrar-speak).

Your domain, Your Web Site

But before you pony up your registration fee, remember that registering a domain doesn't give you

a Web presence. Maybe the domain registrar will park your domain—but that just puts up a generic “under construction” Web page. To do anything substantial with your domain, you need to make arrangements for domain hosting. The good news is that many registrars can help you out there, sometimes free of charge.

If you don’t have a Web site yet, consider a domain registrar that provides Web hosting ([Catalog.com](#) and [DirectNIC](#) throw in Web hosting free when you register a new domain). Or find a dedicated Web host service by clicking on the Web Hosting link at [Builder.com](#). Once you’ve secured hosting, you’ll need to log on at your domain registrar and change the name server settings (grim-looking Web addresses such as ns3.freeservers.com or worse, IP numbers such as 209.210.67.153).

If you already have a Web site, look into URL forwarding options. Several registrars provide this service at little or no cost—after you’ve signed up, URL forwarding sends anyone who enters your domain name in their browser to an existing Web site. It’s easy to set this up—once you’ve registered your domain, you log in at the registrar’s site and type in the forwarding address. Just be aware that many registrars that provide URL forwarding also put their own frame on the resulting page, so your visitors will see their brand name. If you don’t like this, you’ll often have to pay extra to remove it. ([Register.com](#) and [Dotster](#) are two companies that put their own frame over forwarded URLs; [DomainDirect](#) doesn’t.)

Your Domain, Your E-mail

Having a domain and a Web site is good, but it doesn’t mean you have any

e-mail addresses at that domain. If you’re paying for domain hosting, you’ll probably have five or more e-mail addresses at your domain—complete with POP e-mail boxes that you can access through your e-mail program. But that option carries a monthly fee.

A cheaper way to go is to make sure the domain registrar provides some e-mail services. Some will throw in one e-mail box at your new domain, gratis. This is usually a Web-mail box like the ones you get at HotMail, and the domain registrar gets to rack up a little advertising revenue to pay for the service. Some other registrars will give you POP access so that you can download messages to read in your regular e-mail software.

A more common e-mail freebie that domain registrars offer is e-mail forwarding. You have to be careful of the terminology here. Consider a registrar that offers “unlimited forwarding addresses.” Sound good? Well, it isn’t when all the mail gets delivered to the one e-mail address of the person who registered the domain—and that’s often what happens. Another registrar may provide five e-mail addresses at your domain that can go to five different e-mail boxes. In a lot of cases, that’s a better option.

Which Registrar?

You need to figure out what you want for your domain to make the best choice of domain registrar. If you want low cost registration, visit Dotster <[www.dotster.com](#)> or DirectNIC <[www.directnic.com](#)>, which provide \$15 registrations with various bells and whistles. Some bargain hunters swear by European registrars Gandi <[www.gandi.net](#)> and Joker

<www.joker.com>, companies that charge in Euros, which can be a good deal when the dollar's exchange rate is strong. If you're after a one-stop shop with registration and advertising-free Web hosting, Catalog.com provides that for \$35 a year.

If you like to shop around, there are several places you can find lists of domain registrars. ICANN, the nonprofit organization that administers the dot-com domain space, lists links to all the registrars it has accredited at <www.icann.org/registrars/accredited-list.html>. The Domain Name Buyers' Guide <www.domainbuyersguide.com> provides a little more analysis and editorial comment about registrars—analyzing registrant rights and user agreements. And a site that I administer, RegSelect <www.regselect.com> provides more basic consumer information—mostly price and service comparison tables.

These are the basic steps for getting a domain name registered and established. Things may change a little as new domain extensions such as .info and .biz come online. But no matter what the letters that appear after your name, the benefits and pitfalls remain the same. You'll always need Web and e-mail hosting—or at least forwarding—and some registrars will always try to charge you for it.

The good news is that you don't need to pick your registrar as carefully as you picked your college—if you don't like their service, you can jump ship to another registrar after 60 days.

Copyright, 2001 Matt Lake. Matt is a writer and editor. He's a frequent contributor to PC World, Computer User, and other publications. Reach him at mattlake@usa.net ✓

Protecting Your Computer from Viruses, Worms, and Trojans *by Ira Wilsker, GTPCC*

If you have been following the news recently, you have undoubtedly heard of viruses; “worms,” programs that “eat” through your files; and “trojans,” programs that hide under the guise of other more innocent looking programs.

Regular listeners to my radio show (KLVI 560AM, 6–7 p.m. Tuesdays) have heard warnings about these threats to computers, and a multitude of callers who have been the victims of these software creatures. A virus, worm, or trojan is a piece of software that was written to be mischievous, and loaded discretely onto the victim's computer. According to some computer security publications, there are now over 60,000 identified viruses, worms, and trojans; new ones appear at a rate averaging 100–400 a week! It is imperative that all PC (and MAC) users have a modern antivirus installed, properly configured, and updated frequently, at least weekly. There is no good reason not to have an antivirus program installed, other than they slightly degrade performance as they scan incoming data for “signatures” of potential threats. They do this by comparing this data to a file of known threats. Most antivirus programs can also identify some new threats, because they are often minor variations of existing threats, or use otherwise known code. Cost should not be a problem; a review of the Sunday sale books in most weeks will reveal that the local electronics or office supply stores have the top selling antivirus software titles (NAI's McAfee VirusScan, or Symantec's Norton Antivirus) on sale, often for as little as

\$5–\$10 after rebates. There are several dozen other publishers of quality software as well. For those who like “free,” there is the excellent InoculateIT Personal Edition from Computer Associates Inc., one of the largest software publishers in the world. This can be downloaded from <<http://antivirus.cai.com>>. After a simple registration (free), a serial number is issued, and free updates and support become available. CAI posts frequent updates almost daily to the Net, and they can be downloaded and installed by opening the program, and clicking on TOOLS AUTO DOWNLOAD. In the past, most viruses were transmitted by the exchange of floppy disks, but now most are transmitted by e-mail, often as attachments. Some e-mail programs, especially the widely used Microsoft Outlook and Outlook Express, are very vulnerable to attack. This vulnerability is often the target of virus authors, who create viruses to utilize the fact that the Outlook products are directly connected to a browser (Internet Explorer), the Windows operating system, and utilities that can execute viruses written in the popular Visual Basic (the recent Anna virus was a simple Visual Basic program), machine code, Microsoft Office scripts, or the Java language.

While the old adage “don’t run an e-mail attachment from someone you don’t know” may still be a good idea, the majority of newer viruses will be e-mail attachments from people you do know, maybe even with a message title replying to one you sent. This is because many of the new viruses, worms, and trojans actually hijack the Outlook address book and replicate themselves to the e-mail addresses in

the address book. AOL mail is also another common target, simply due to the large number of AOL users. While still vulnerable, users of other popular e-mail programs such as Eudora and Pegasus are much less frequently the targets of the virus writers. Web based e-mail, such as Hotmail, Net Address, and Yahoo Mail are not immune, especially if attachments are run or downloaded. The modern rule of thumb is either do not open or download attachments, or be very suspicious. To get around the suspicion, many virus authors attempt to hide their evil within a nice or innocent looking name or extension. The recent Anna attacks were made to look like a common JPEG image, but with the otherwise unlikely file extension “.jpg.vbs.” This looked at first like a typical JPEG image file, but the VBS indicated to the observant user that it was a program written in visual basic script.

While the antivirus software can typically detect and remove most viruses, worms, and trojans, there are also other threats that are now becoming more common. Any time users are online, or connected to a network, their computers are vulnerable to a variety of additional threats. In reality, with a Windows PC, there are about 65,000 “ports” or places of entry for the exchange of information. While online in any fashion, a PC can be a target of either someone trying to electronically break in, or a previously undetected “backdoor” secretly installed on the user’s computer may attempt to send information from the computer to someone else. Trojans with the names of Back Orifice or Backdoor-G have become extremely common; there are hundreds of others as well.

These programs allow someone else almost unrestricted access to anything on the user's computer any time they are online. Ranging from a simple irritant to industrial espionage or sabotage, these trojans are just one type of threat to the online user. Another surprisingly common threat is someone trying to break into the user's computer while it is online. If successful, then everything from keystrokes typing usernames and passwords, to data theft and manipulation become possible.

In order to minimize the chance of an outsider gaining access to a user's computer while online, a program generically called a "firewall" is often a necessity. Originally only used by large institutions on their networks, firewalls have become a security essential on millions of home or small business computers on a network or online. A firewall functions by either closing vulnerable ports, or monitoring incoming and outgoing data, issuing an alarm when a suspicious data transfer is found. While a lesser (but still common) problem with dial-up Internet access, a firewall may be a necessity on a computer with DSL or cable modem access. Being "always online" makes a computer an easily identifiable target. While there are some very good commercial firewalls for PCs, such as BlackIce, Norton Internet Security, and McAfee Firewall, one of the most popular is the top-rated Zone Alarm from Zone Labs. Zone Alarm is free for personal use, and available for download at www.zonelabs.com. Just like the antivirus software, the firewall publishers often make updates available on the Internet. There are a variety of free websites that can identify online security breaches. One of the most

popular is the Shields Up test available free at <http://grc.com>. To paraphrase a popular unrelated warning, all computer users "need to practice safe HEX."

Ira Wilsker is an Instructor IV of Management Development at Lamar Institute of Technology. Ira has been working with computers since 1965 when he took his first computer class at the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago. Ira is a frequent guest on the local television news, and has lectured internationally on a variety of computer topics ranging from computer and Internet basics, to CyberCrime, and Community Oriented Policing. Ira is a member of the Golden Triangle PC Club and a member of APCUG's Board of Advisors. Please let him know if you publish his article. Email: ira@apcug.org

There is no restriction against any non-profit group using the article as long as it is kept in context, with proper credit given to the author. 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. ✓

Do You Really Want Your Refrigerator To Have A Conversation With You? A Different View On Digital Convergence

**by Timothy Everingham,
TUGNET**

teveringham@earthlink.net

There is a lot of talk about digital convergence lately. You will always be in contact via phone or the Internet. Information is at your fingertips whenever you want it. Your appliances will talk with you, each other, and the out-

side world; making your life simpler because you will get the information you need when you want it and your appliances will run themselves and arrange for their own repairs. Sometime this year there will be more cellular phones in the world than those physically plugged into the wall. In 2006 it is predicted that more people will be connected to the Internet via wireless than via wires. So many say this will be so great, but will it?

Give you an example: Your refrigerator is expected to become intelligent. It will have a computer in the door with a touch screen interface. Voice recognition and generation, plus some artificial intelligence may not be far behind (some people when lonely may talk to their refrigerator, but in the future it may talk back and they will have a conversation with it). Plus the refrigerator will be connected to your home network, which in turn is connected to the Internet. Your refrigerator will know of your food buying and eating habits. It may even know of your health problems, and warn you when you grab too much of a certain food. Of course with its artificial intelligence unit, along with its voice capabilities, you may wind up having an argument with your refrigerator at times over this. When that happens, your refrigerator may tell your doctor, which will then lead to an argument with him/her. Of course, you may also subscribe to grocery services, which may give you the specials via your refrigerator's computer, especially that visual display. Yes, you will get ads popping up on your refrigerator. Unscrupulous grocery services will have spyware on your refrigerator's computer. It will tell them of your every food move. This will in

turn be tied into a database of consumer profiles that link certain food behaviors to other buying behaviors, which will have you even more bombarded by advertisements. All of this we may learn to call refrigerator spam. Of course some employees of a grocery service or its partners may have some compatriots in the criminal community. This means this information may give better targeting information for burglaries.

Because of the power crisis in California, the state government is warning people to use their refrigerators more efficiently. They even go as far as telling people they should consider turning off their refrigerators while at work. Already, there are networked thermostats for the home that can tell a power company what its setting is and the power company can operate remotely. The manufacturer says it is so customers can take part in voluntary conservation programs, such as automatically changing the thermostat one degree when power reserves get to critical levels. You can override this with a button on the thermostat, but the power company will know. Now we get into a crisis situation like currently has been occurring in California. Government may make these programs mandatory. If they are going to do this with the temperature in your home, why not do it with your refrigerator? Of course, then some practical joking malicious hacker may hack into the system and turn refrigerators off spoiling large amounts of food and causing some cases of food poisoning. The Government may also warn you that your refrigerator is old and needs replacing for energy conservation via your refrigerator's computer/display.

Of course, your refrigerator does have an artificial intelligence unit and may block those messages out of self-preservation.

This brings up another item. If your refrigerator betrays you and your family to outside parties, can you declare it has committed treason and execute it? Remember it has an artificial intelligence unit and some people may think that this allows appliances to be declared intelligent life forms. Appliance rights groups may form and declare execution of refrigerators immoral and try to make it illegal. This could mean that in the future the appliance will not wind up in landfills, but in retirement homes. It is probably unlikely, but weirder things have happened.

Many expect us to be connected all the time, and even paged on our cell phone via Bluetooth short range wireless networking when we walk by a soft drink vending machine that has some special on. We may even be able to negotiate with that vending machine on the price. But will it just so complicate our lives that we will not want it or use it? There was so much hype about network appliances, but they have not gotten off the ground. Now the word is that Internet enabled cell phones are not living up to their promise either and people are not using those features on their phones even when available. People like convenience, but the general public does not like it if it complicates their lives too much. This is one reason why some products are readily accepted by early adopters, but they don't last because the general public does not buy them. So much of the population is suffering from information overload already, and being connected all the time may be of question-

able value to the general population even though it may be attractive to techies and certain professions. An example of this attitude of not wishing to be connected all the time is painted on the wall of a building alongside the Interstate 10 freeway in downtown Los Angeles. It is an ad with a large picture of a sport utility vehicle. In bold letters at the top it says "Outrun Your Voicemail." I believe that in general, human beings may not wish to become as connected as those who are pushing this convergent always connected world. This may only be attractive to a small portion of the population. There will be those trying to push it. Others will try to abuse the technology. What I see is people choosing technology that suits them, which will lead to us not fulfilling the current vision of the convergent and always connected world. For society's mental health, this is probably for the best.

Timothy Everingham is the Secretary of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups and Vice President of the Windows Media Users' Group of Los Angeles. He was President of the San Diego Computer Society for 3 years. He is also on the Management Information Systems Program Advisory Board of California State University, Fullerton, from which he also graduated with honors and with the double majors of Management Information Systems and Accounting. He is also the President of the Los Angeles Area Alumni Chapter of Beta Gamma Sigma, the business honor society (international). He works as a computer/business consultant and lives in Azusa, California. He is also a member of TUGNET. Further information can be found at <<http://home.earthlink.net/~teveringham>>.



Jack Vander Schrier
(SIG-IBM speaker) with a PDA at
the SIG-IBM Intermediate meeting.



Steve Cook
(SEMCO member) with a PDA at the
SIG-IBM Intermediate meeting.



Harold Balmer

When Should I Turn Off My Computer?

Recently in several meetings, the question has come up about when should I shut off my computer? If you are going for a cup of coffee, probably not, but if you leave the house, office, etc. then I would. In the past I would have said no, but with the rolling blackouts, power brownouts, etc., it would be best to do a proper shutdown or you could have a disk problem. It would be the same thing as pulling the plug on your computer and hoping for the best. It should be noted that both Windows and the Macintosh have shut down routines that should be followed.

But I have a UPS (uninterruptible power supply) on my computer. While they are nice, they are limited in battery capacity, so most are only useful for about 10 minutes. After that, it will be the same as pulling the plug. The

UPS is helpful for voltage sags (brown-outs) or complete power failures. They allow you to do a complete shut down and then turn everything off. You should only power your computer and monitor with the UPS unit. Maybe an external modem, but never a printer of any kind, and probably not a scanner. To calculate what size UPS you need, look at the monitor label for watts, then do the same for the computer. Add these two items together, multiply by 1.2 and then look for a UPS that is larger.

What about my Notebook computer? Here the question is how good is your battery? If you think it will survive, more power to you. Also the LCD screen on a notebook computer takes a lot less power than any type of desktop. Some of the newer batteries can operate a notebook computer for up to 5 hours, after that the computer is put to sleep or shut down completely. For one of the notebooks I had, I purchased a separate battery charger that would discharge a partially charged battery BEFORE it tried to recharge it, thus forcing the battery to accept a full

charge, eliminating the partial charge memory that some batteries get. [*Battery "memory" was primarily an issue with NiCad batteries and should not be a problem with NiMH or Lithium Ion batteries. Ed.*]

A quick story of the UPS—I was working in a print shop doing computer typesetting. Someone broke the power line down the street. The power went off, back on for a second and back off. We were in the dark for about an hour. When the power came back on, the floppy drive said there was a disk in it (no disk in the drive). Before we were done we had to replace the floppy drive and the motherboard. After I got the UPS system, they did something to the power lines again, but I was able to stop what I was doing, save the data, and do a proper shut down. The \$400 that we spent on the UPS was a real lifesaver. ✓

	BOARD MEETING 6/10/2001 Carol Sanzi
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Board Members Present: President Gary DeNise, Secretary Carol Sanzi, SIG-IBM Co-Chairman Tom Callow, SIG-MAC Chairman Harold Balmer, and Bob Clyne, representing SIG-Advanced. Arriving late was Vice-President Vic Charns. Also attending was SIG-IBM Co-Chairman Warner Mach. The meeting was called to order at 12:08pm.

OLD BUSINESS: Harold Balmer made contact with Terry White and arrangements are being made for Adobe to donate a copy of PageMaker for use by SEMCO's new editor, Jerry Comptois. It is believed that a tutorial is included with the program.

Harold Balmer reported that the audit has been completed.

Tom Callow reported that the 501(c)(3) application has been filed and is being processed by the IRS.

Bob Clyne moved to amend Section 11.01 of the Bylaws by inserting the following sentence after the first sentence of the last paragraph of the section. "Any Board member may authorize the giving of a free one-year SEMCO membership if it is likely to result in favorable publicity for the organization." Carol Sanzi seconded the motion. Tom Callow moved to amend the motion to read, "Any Board member may authorize the giving of one free one-year SEMCO membership..." Harold Balmer seconded the motion and both the amendment and the main motion carried.

The Microsoft eXtreme event went well with 11 members volunteering. Bob Clyne moved to award the volunteers with a SEMCO Volunteer Appreciation Voucher and a certificate of appreciation. Tom Callow seconded the motion and it was carried.

Bob Clyne read the membership report indicating that the membership is now at 123.

NEW BUSINESS: Bob Clyne was reimbursed \$80 for expenses incurred in creating the June DATA BUS. He offered to print the July DATA BUS if he received the final copy in a reasonable timeframe.

Tom Callow moved that SEMCO send a cookie bouquet costing up to \$50 to Roger Gay who is recovering from surgery. Bob Clyne seconded the motion and it was carried. Carol Sanzi will have one sent.

The meeting adjourned at 12:52pm.

✓

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGs)



SIG-MAC
Harold Balmer, Chrmn

Microsoft Office 2001: for the Mac

At our SIG-MAC meeting in June, thanks to Microsoft, we had a look at Microsoft Office 2001. We also gave out a demo CD of Microsoft Office. I can still remember my first Microsoft Office; it came with full manuals and about 30 high-density disks for installing. The total package was about 6 to 10 pounds. I got it by upgrading from Microsoft Word. The new program comes in a special plastic clamshell, with no manuals, except on CD.

If you have any individual product (Excel or Word or PowerPoint) you qualify to upgrade to Microsoft Office for the \$259.95 price, the same deal I got years ago. Otherwise the full package is \$429.95. So if you are a registered owner of Excel and would like to have Microsoft Word, by purchasing office you can get it a lot cheaper than paying full price for Microsoft Word of \$359.95. Further, if you own both Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel, the upgrade price is

139.95 each or \$279.90. Purchasing Microsoft Office would save you about \$20.00 and give you the other programs free. Prices quoted from MacWarehouse catalog.

Microsoft Office still includes Excel, Microsoft Word and PowerPoint, but now a startup program called Entourage comes with them. Entourage is an e-mail and personal information manager, along with the startup front end for each of the programs. It includes an Address book, Calendar and integrated Task List, which provides outstanding consolidation capabilities and can even sync with the Palm and Visor PDAs.

One of the things I did was to get out a PowerPoint presentation I did on Memory several years ago and import it into the current PowerPoint program. It worked perfectly.

July meeting: I asked for suggestions, volunteers to do a demo of whatever they want. MacWorld New York is being held after our meeting. So I guess the meeting is another of our famous Questions and Answers (stump the host, and it doesn't take much). ✓

The Online version of the DATA BUS sometimes contains material that could not be included in the print version because of space limitations. The February through May 2001 Online issues contained additional articles, including a very good article on buying a computer (PC) in the March issue. Check our Web site at <<http://www.semco.org>> for the online versions. ✓



SIG-IBM
Tom Callow
Warner Mach



? **SIG-IBM INTERMEDIATE**
Position open

July 8: Cleaning off your desk: SIG-IBM Co-Chairman Tom Callow will demonstrate document management programs such as “Presto! PageManager 98”, Paperport Deluxe 7.0 and Papermaster, which allow you to scan, store, manage and access your paper documents on the computer. ✓

July 8: Digital Cameras: Jack Vander Schrier will present a discussion of the different features and capabilities of digital cameras. Also: Digital Camera Show & Tell—Bring your digital camera to show off and tell what you like and dislike about it. ✓



SIG-ADVANCED
Franz Breidenich

NOVICE-IBM GROUP
Rotating Volunteer Hosts

July 2, Monday: Meetings held first Monday 6:45pm at Troy Public Library. TOPIC: Wide ranging discussion of computers & computing. ✓

July 8: Q&A, member directed discussion. ✓

JULY 2001 DATA BUS DEADLINE (10th day after meeting)

SEMCO & SIG DATA, & MEMBERS’ ADS - Deadline: Wed., July 18, 11:59pm

Members’ personal ads free. To mail, use Editor address on Page 2; e-mail address clayne@mich.com PLEASE send to arrive sooner than deadline if possible.

BUSINESS ADS - Deadline: Second Friday monthly. Mail **unfolded** camera-ready copy; payment in full made out to SEMCO, to the Editor (address Pg 2).

Ad Rates and Rules

Full pages are 5-1/2" wide x 8-1/2" tall; Make allowance for 1/2" margins; Halftones to be screened at 85 dpi; Offset press used; No agent pricing;
 Full-page/1-issue=\$30; Full-page/6-issue=\$150; Full-page/12-issue=\$240
 Half-page/1-issue=\$20; Half-page/6-issue=\$100; Half-page/12-issue=\$160
 Qtrr-page/1-issue=\$15; Qtrr-page/6-issue=\$75; Qtrr-page/12-issue=\$120

IN MEMORIAM

Two longtime SEMCO members have died recently.

Meine Wirtz

and

Cassy Garelis

will be remembered.

Bob Clyne

clyne@mich.com

(to post monthly computer group info)

CALENDAR-OF-EVENTS OTHER GROUPS

AAIICI (Amer. Ass'n. of Ind. Investors, Computerized Invstrs),

July - Saturday, 10am-Noon (Meet 4th Saturday) (not December): W. Bloomfield Huntington Bank, Orchard Lk Rd., S. of Maple Rd. Info: Jack Lockman at 313-341-8855 or thunder@tir.com
COMP (Computer Operators of Marysville/Port Huron)

August 1 - Wednesday, 7pm (No July meeting)(Meet 1st Wednesday): Rm 201, Clara E. McKenzie Library-Science bldg, 323 Erie St, Port Huron. Ron Walters, 810-679-4144. Web: <<http://dns.advnet.net/comp/>> **TOPIC: Boat trip on Huron Lady II, meet at 6:30pm at the dock on Huron Ave. at the Black River in Port Huron.**

DCOM Computer Club

July 13 - Friday 6:30 - 8:30 pm (Meet 2nd Friday): Henry Ford C.C., Patterson Tech Bldg, Ford Rd/Evergreen, Rm T143, Parking Lot C. Info: Doug Piazza 313/582-2602

Delta Computer Club

July 26 - Thursday, 7pm (Meet last Thursday) (not Nov/Dec): Bay de Noc C. C., Escanaba. Info: Gordon Nelson, Pres & Editor at gnelson@bresnanlink.net or 906/428-1014.

GDOUG (Greater Detroit OS/2 Users Grp)

August 9 - Thursday, 6:30pm (Meet 2nd Thursday) (not July): Stardock Systems, Farmington Rd, N. of 6-Mile, Livonia; Info: Carolyn Kolaz, Pres at 76460.3040@CompuServe.COM. Map on Web: <lookinc.com/gdoug>.

MacGroup Detroit

July 15 - Sunday, 3pm-5pm (Meet 3rd Sunday): Southfield Civic Center, 26000 Evergreen Rd., Room 221. Info: Terry White, terry@macgroup.org or 313-571-9817. Web: www.macgroup.org
TOPIC: Productivity Apps: FileMaker Pro, Microsoft Office, PIMs and Utilities.

MacTechnics. (MAC user Group), Coffee 9am, SIGs 9:30am, Main meeting 11am.

July 21 - Saturday, 9am-1pm (Meet 3rd Saturday): U of M, No. campus, EECS Bldg. & Dow Bldg. (see map on Web: <mactechnics.org>). Info: Cassie at cassiemic@yahoo.com or 313-971-8743.

MCUG (Michigan Computer Users Grp)

July 19 - Thursday, 7pm (Meet 3rd Thursday): 35271 Rockingham Dr, Sterling Hts., MI 48310-4917; Info: Jerry Zinger, Pres. kahunazing@netscape.net 810-792-3394.

Michigan Apple Computer User Grp

July 12 - Thu 7pm (Meet 2nd Thu) MAC: Troy Library, I-75 at Big Beaver; **July 18 - Wed 7pm** (Meet 3rd Wed) IIGS, Apple II/Apple-Works, Parent/Teachers Ed, PC, Internet: St Bede School, 12 & Southfield; **July 19 Thu 7:30pm** (Meet 3rd Thu) MAC Media Arts, Programmers: St. Bede. Info: Carl Pendracki 248/647-8871 or carlpen@aol.com. Web: <<http://www.michiganapple.com>>.

SHCC (Sterling Hts Computer Club)

Sept 4 - Tuesday, (Next: May 1) 7:30pm (Meet 1st Tuesday: not July/Aug): Carpathia Club, 38000 Utica Rd, Sterling Hts, Pres. Don VanSyckel at Don@VanSyckel.net, 810/731-9232 ; Web: <member.apcug.org/shcc>.

SVCA (Saginaw Valley Computer Assoc.)

July 12 - Thursday, 6:39-9om (Meet 2nd Thursday): Saginaw. Info: Kay Engelhart program chairperson at kengelhart@hotmail.com.

Wayne State U. Mac User Grp

July 14 - Saturday 10am-Noon (Meet 2nd Saturday): at Mich.com, 21042 Laurelwood, Farmington. Info: Lorn/JoAnn Olsen 248/478-4300 or Denny McLampy 248/477-0190, denny@mich.com **TOPIC: Questions, Shortcuts, Tips and The Internet.**

**TAX DEDUCTIBLE
DONATIONS
SEMCO Members
Helping the Community**

Beth Fordyce is accepting Macintosh computers, components, peripherals, manuals and software (working or broken) for Immaculate Heart of Mary School PreK–8th grade, 175-200 students for computer science classes.

Contact Beth
248-626-5105 7pm–10pm or
beth_fordyce@macgroup.org

You may also contact the church directly: Maurice Roberts or Sister Mary Stephanie Holub
19940 Mansfield
(Greenfield/8-Mile area, Detroit)
313/835-0258

If you want to use your donation as a tax deduction, make an itemized list (with one copy for yourself) of items you donate, and attach it to your donation. Include on the list the full name or description of each item, and its fair market value. Also make sure your full name, address and phone number are on it. The donee will see that you receive a receipt. (Be advised that no one will make these lists for you.)

Your **SEMCO** membership card is good for a **\$1 discount** (not valid with any other offer) on admission to **Super Computer Sales** shows. See www.a1-supercomputersales.com or www.a1scs.com for show schedule.

**JUNE
REFRESHMENT
DONATIONS**

Warner Mach, Coordinator
Betty MacKenzie
Roland Maki
Carol Sanzi
Dawn Sanzi

COMPUTER RESOURCE PEOPLE

This is a list of members willing to be resources for other members to call when they have hardware or software questions. Are you willing to help members learn? Which software programs are you familiar enough with? It is not necessary to be an expert, but just have some familiarity with the program and be willing to help someone starting to learn it. Please give us this some thought and volunteer at the next group meeting.

AutoCAD: Comptois, Gay

Genealogy: Cook

IBM PC Hardware Issues: Clyne, Gay, Yuhasz

IBM Windows Operating Systems: Clyne, Yuhasz

Lotus 98: Diller

MAC Hardware and OS Issues: Yuhasz

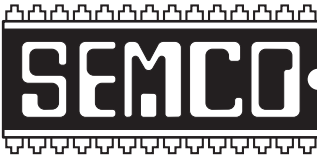
M.S. Powerpoint: Diller

M.S. Word: Clyne, Diller

Novell Netware: Yuhasz

Quicken: Clyne, Gay

Clyne, Bob—810/387-3101. 9a-10p
Comptois, Jerry—248/651-2504, anytime
Cook, Steven—313/272-7594 eves
Diller, John—248/540-4382, eves
Gay, Roger—248/641-7799, 9am-10pm
Yuhasz, Steve—734/953-3794 eves



**SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN
COMPUTER ORGANIZATION, INC.**

SEMCO CALENDAR—July 2001

SCIENCE BUILDING, OAKLAND UNIVERSITY in ROCHESTER

July 8 – SUNDAY (Meet 2nd Sunday)

SEMCO **Board** Meeting at 12:00 pm, **Room 172**. For Officers and SIG Chairpersons. Other members are invited to attend.

SEMCO **General** Meeting at 1:30 pm, **Room172**.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

SIG-IBM 1:45 pm, **Room 172**. **Pgm: Cleaning off your desk:** SIG-IBM Co-Chairman Tom Callow will demonstrate document management programs such as “Presto! PageManager 98”, Paperport Deluxe 7.0 and Papermaster, which allow you to scan, store, manage and access your paper documents on the computer.

SOCIAL PERIOD, 3:15 pm, **Room 164**. Refreshments! (Reminder: We must maintain a neat environment.)

NOVICE-IBM GROUP, 3:45 pm, **Room 164**. **Pgm: Q&A, member directed discussion.**

SIG-IBM INTERMEDIATE, 3:45 pm, **Room 172**. **Pgm: Digital Cameras:** Jack Vander Schrier will present a discussion of the different features and capabilities of digital cameras. Also: Digital Camera Show & Tell - Bring your digital camera to show off and tell what you like and dislike about it.

SIG-MAC (All Apple Macintosh products), 1:45 pm, **Room168**. **Pgm: Q & A.**

SIG-ADVANCED

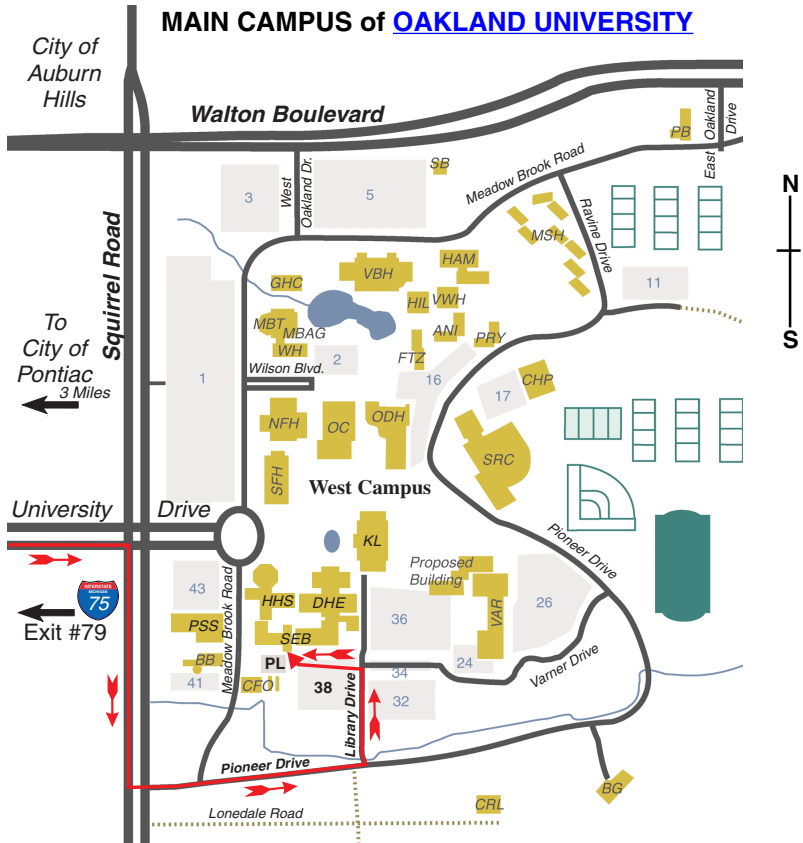
July 2 – Monday, (Next: August 6) 6:45 pm (Meet 1st Monday), Troy Public Library, 510 W. Big Beaver Rd in Troy, at I-75 exit. See the sign in the lobby for room assignment. Info: Franz Breidenich 248/398-3359. **TOPIC: Wide ranging discussion of computers & computing.**

SEMCO

August 12, 2001 - SUNDAY (Meet 2nd Sunday). **To be announced**

PUBLIC INVITED

(Please copy this and the next page to post on your bulletin board)



The meetings at [Oakland University](#) are sponsored by OU's Academic Computer Services (ACS), and the student chapter of the Association of Computer Machinery (ACM). SEMCO thanks OU, ACS & ACM for their assistance.

