

Official Newsletter
SouthEastern Michigan
Computer Organization, Inc.



DATA BUS

**BALLOT AND
MEMBERSHIP
DIRECTORY
ENCLOSED**
(Member Copies Only)

Volume 32

January 2007

Number 1

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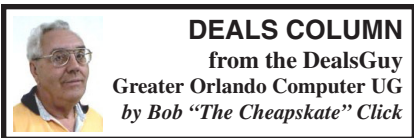
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DEALS COLUMN

from the DealsGuy
Greater Orlando Computer UG
by Bob "The Cheapskate" Click

My wife and I decided to treat ourselves to another cruise, and this time we were not disappointed. We chose Holland America's MS Volendam for a ten day southern Caribbean cruise, and, unlike our experience on HA's Zaandam, we were happy with the way the Volendam did things. Actually, we chose it mostly for the price, but also because it was Holland America, since Carnival had some slightly lower prices for that date. Our only complaint might have been poor table service at our dinner seating, although it improved toward the end of the cruise. While we've had better food on cruise ships, the food on the Volendam was not bad.

I liked the ice cream bar that was open at certain times each day offering four different flavors of hard ice cream, one sherbet, and one soft ice cream daily with all the trimmings, and plenty of other deserts. All over the ship were stands holding sterilization cream for your hands. Most of them were used voluntarily, but when you entered the dining room, an attendant squirted it into your hand as you entered. I was impressed with their efforts to prevent sickness, and I washed my hands quite frequently.

The entertainment was top notch each evening, always something to look forward to. There was only one evening without entertainment, but that was the big barbecue party by the pool, complete with the ice sculpturing, and the food was great. Even our cabin was a nice size and had a king sized bed, a nice sofa, and a chair. That ship had the

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTION

The annual meeting of the members of the SouthEastern Michigan Computer Organization, Inc. will be held Sunday, January 14, 2007 at 1:30 pm at ArvinMeritor, 2135 West Maple Rd., Troy, Michigan. The election of Officers and Members-at-Large of the Board of Directors of the Corporation will take place at the annual meeting.

largest library I have seen, although it was not a really large ship. The captain said the Volendam had been refurbished nine months ago.

I signed up for time at the Internet Café, but working with their machines was a challenge, considering the mouse usually didn't work well, and the small cursor was hard to follow on any computer I tried. They occasionally had discounts on the service. I bought 100 minutes for \$55. I asked if the Internet service would be a freebie when I took enough cruises, using Princess Lines as a comparison. I was told no, and that the free Internet service would soon be ending on Princess Lines, since this ISP was taking over as their service provider. Some folks found free Internet service at a couple of ports, but I only found out about it on the ship that night.

Something of interest was that Sprint (our Cell phone provider) had told us we would be able to use our cell phone in the Bahamas and the US Virgin Islands if we set it to roam, but we were surprised when our phones found the Sprint Network when we turned them on in St. Thomas (a US Virgin Island). We didn't have to worry about any roaming charges and had a full signal. A friend had asked us to bring him back some duty-free liquor. Since we knew nothing about prices for it, we were able to call our friend while inside the store in St. Thomas to confirm the best prices. Carrying the heavy bottles around while shopping was another story though.

Deal Reminder

The Medistick deal should still be good this month so don't wait any longer. Click on <<http://www.medistick.ch/en/contact>> and mention the DealsGuy column in the 'comments' area.

Dave Whittle's discount on the Lenova Laptops may still be good. Simply call Lenovo's user group inside sales rep, Isaac Williams, directly for help in configuring your system, or to get answers to your questions. Call 1-877-338-4465, Option 1, Extension 6322.

I read an interesting article in Information Week magazine about a sophisticated attack on E-Trade and TD Ameritrade that resulted from identity theft. You might find it interesting. <<http://www.informationweek.com/showArticle.jhtml;jsessionid=QHSZ4AFSOS4R4QSNDLPCKHSCJUNN2JVN?articleID=193402954&queryText=Larry+Greenemeier>>

I haven't tried the items below and descriptions are in their own words, so do your homework if anything interests you.

Another Tool For Restoring Your MS Office Files

Smart PC Solutions Inc. announces the release of Smart Data Recovery, the newest freeware utility to restore MS Office documents, photos, music, and many other types of files. You just type a path, and Smart Data Recovery will search for deleted files and folders automatically. Once Smart Data Recovery finds erased files, it shows their name, date, time, and attributes.

Smart Data Recovery works with different data storage devices, such as hard disk drives (IDE, ATA, SATA and SCSI), flash cards, multimedia cards, USB drives, PC cards, memory sticks, secure digital cards, and floppy disks. It handles zip files and files on your digital camera. It also restores all files and folders on a disk drive that, according to the Windows notifications, can't be accessed. The utility supports FAT, FAT16, FAT32, and NTFS, and is compatible with Microsoft Windows NT/2000/XP/2003. The program can also remove the data related to deleted files by just clicking the "Wipe" button. Therefore, nobody will be able to recover your personal information and use it in their own interests. The program has a multilingual interface that supports English, German, Spanish, French, and Italian.

Smart Data Recovery is free at <http://www.smartpctools.com/data_recovery>, but here is a special offer! Smart PC Solutions, Inc. offers user group members a 50% discount on their other software products. It says FACUG there, but all UG members can order. Check out the other utilities by Smart PC Solutions, Inc. at the company's Web site.

<<http://www.smartpctools.com/products>>

<<http://www.smartpctools.com>>

50% discount URL: <<http://www.smartpctools.com/FACUG.html>>.

Mailing Address: Smart PC Solutions, Inc., 901 N. Pitt St., Suite 325, Alexandria, VA 22314, USA

Help For Your PIM

Copy2calendar minimizes the time and effort to create a calendar entry in a personal information manager such as Microsoft Outlook, Lotus Notes, or Palm Desktop. When you receive an e-mail with the date and time of an upcoming event, you just highlight the text, press Ctrl+C twice, and that's it! A new calendar entry is created. Copy2calendar recognizes all the myriad of formats of date and time that a human reader understands. It accommodates European (day/month/year) and American (month/day/year) conventions. Copy2calendar is able to find date and time specifications in 13 languages including English, German, French, Italian, Spanish, Dutch, and Swedish.

You can easily extract date and time from a wide variety of sources: mail software, web browser, office applications, and with Copy2calendar, you will never forget or confuse time of an event. Copy2calendar runs under Windows 2000/Windows XP. It is free for noncommercial use, but Registration on LoquiSoft is required. Licenses for commercial use are available at \$24.95 (USD). A fully functional 30-day free evaluation version of Copy2calendar is available from <http://LoquiSoft.com/copy2calendar_setup.exe> (1.6Mb).

Product page link: <<http://loquisoft.com/copy2calendar>>.

E-mail: <werner.noska@loquisoft.com>.

Company website: <<http://loquisoft.com/index.php?lang=en&page=&sec>>.

How About A FREE Plugin For PhotoShop!

SibCode has released the newest version of Icon Plugin for Photoshop. This plug-in enhances Adobe Photoshop with an ability to export and import Windows icons (.ico). The use of the plug-in eliminates the need for intermediate files and additional icon editors. In addition to Adobe Photoshop, the plug-in can work with Elements (? Maybe Photoshop Elements), AfterEffects, Premiere, PhotoDeluxe, Corel PhotoPaint, PaintShop Pro, and Painter.

Icon Plugin for Photoshop supports multi-format icons, transparency, and semi-transparency, and allows making icons that are compatible with Microsoft Windows XP and Vista. The plug-in also supports non-standard icons of different sizes and color resolutions, including monochrome, 16 colors, 256 colors, 24-bit True Color, and 32-bit True Color with semi-transparency.

Icon Plugin for Photoshop is compatible with all versions of Microsoft Windows and all versions of Adobe Photoshop, including 3.0–7.0, CS, and CS2. The product is absolutely free.

Product page link: <<http://sibcode.com/icon-plugin/index.htm>>.

Screenshot: <<http://sibcode.com/icon-plugin/scrff.png>>.

Download link: <<http://www.sibcode.com/downloads/icon-plugin.zip>>.

E-mail: <pr@sibcode.com>.

Web: <<http://www.sibcode.com>>.

That's it for this month. Meet me here again next month if your editor permits. This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers or freebies I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of any products, no matter how enthused I might sound. Bob (The Cheapskate) Click <bobclick@mindspring.com>. Visit my Web site at <<http://www.dealsguy.com>>.

**Windows Vista on the Cusp
A Perspective on Vista
By Jan Fagerholm**

I have a confession to make. Though I am a confirmed Linux geek, I have been running Windows Vista. While I tell myself that I am preparing myself for what my clients will be running soon, a lot of the time I spend in Vista is because I like learning new stuff. I've been through the progression of Betas and have arrived at RC2, two weeks before Microsoft freezes the code and sends it to the DVD burners.

This is not a "review" of Vista as such—computer publications have been running articles on Vista for months—but rather a collection of likes and dislikes that I have gathered while using it for the last year. Don't expect objectivity here—I'm simply going to point to improvements that have stood out or "improvements" that have bit me. These are some of the things you might want to know before plunking down your hard earned plastic for Vista.

On the whole, Vista will swallow the mainstream applications that you are running now. There are exceptions, but these are usually utilities and

anti-malware programs that work (as the phrase goes) close to the metal. Corel Graphics Suite X3, WordPerfect X3, and Adobe Creative Suite 2 all run well on Vista (as does the ever reliable OpenOffice). Roxio Easy Media Creator 9 and Nero Burning ROM 7 fail with installer errors. Present versions of Norton SystemWorks and Executive Software Diskeeper refuse to install. McAfee ViruScan installed, but made Vista unbootable, even in Safe Mode. I had to completely reinstall Vista from scratch. [*Check the vendors' Web sites for updates and further information.* —Ed.]

Here's some of the stuff I've learned to love and hate in Vista, up close, personal, and arbitrary. Nits and Picks:

Picks:

- System Services and system monitors have been folded into Task Manager. Services are included along with processes, finally putting the running system stuff in one place. Expanded monitoring features give graphical information on these items similar to other operating systems, including who's using which process.
- Removal of some sophomoric terminology, i.e. "My Documents" is replaced with, simply, "Documents," "My Computer" is replaced with "Computer," etc.
- The Address line in most windows displays the path, the way Macintosh OSX has done for years. Similarly, progress bars show up as a transparent overlay in the Address line, like OSX. The path display is interactive, allowing you to go to any point in the path directly as an alternative to "Browse," again like OSX.
- The Aero theme. It's pretty, and handles transparency intelligently.

By effectively fading the window title bar and frame, it makes the windows contents the focus of what you see. This is one of those small things that have a large psychological effect on concentration. But see Nits.

- Thumbnail previews of programs in the Task Bar when you move the cursor over them. This is particularly useful if you have several instances of a single program running. You can quickly see which one has the content you want.
- Mixed feelings about the changes to Security Center. While various security features are better integrated into Security Center (such as Internet Options), and they have more granularity, User Account Control is pure pain. Vista security (like Windows XP security) is both superficial and intrusive compared to Macintosh OSX or Linux.

Nits:

- They rearranged almost everything. Too little is logical consolidation, and too much of it seems serendipitous. After the Start menu (which is also changed), almost everything has been relocated and re-nested. This new organization is supposed to make things easier for the new user, but I don't see how going through more dialogs to get the same thing done is supposed to make things "easier." If you are an experienced user, you can throw away most of what you know about where things are.
- The Aero theme. While esthetically pleasing, it turns itself off when you run certain applications. It doesn't always come back when you exit the application.
- The "Flip 3D" window switcher. It's pretty, but it works just the same

as Alt-Tab. You must cycle through every window to get to the one you want. This is in contrast to the XGL/Compiz window switcher in Linux, which beats Flip 3D hands down for usability. Macintosh OSX's Finder is also much more direct. Worse, when Aero breaks, so does Flip 3D.

- Most of the interface windows have replaced menus with simplified toolbars. They are not customizable. Many of the functions I use regularly are invisible. You can get the menus back if you fish around. (Hint—go to Control Panel/Folder Options/View tab and check "Always Show Menus").
- By default, Vista enables User Account Control in the Security Center. Even if you are the only user on the computer (and thus administrator by default), User Account Control will pop up a dialog every time you (or any software you run) tries to access system areas. This results in several warning dialogs getting in your face while performing many normal actions. Worse, it blocked activation of several programs I installed, stopping the program from running or crippling it into non-activation mode. (Here's your Top Tip of the Day—you can stop this behavior by going to Control Panel/User Accounts, selecting your user account, then clicking the "Turn User Account Control on or off" link (and clicking the "Continue" button on the warning dialog, this feature pops up), un-checking the "User Account Control (UAC)..." item, then clicking "OK." A reboot is required. This will make Vista work like old-fashioned Windows XP.) *[It also disables one of the big security features in Vista. —Ed.]*

- We are in for a sea change of hardware and software upgrades that we haven't seen since Windows XP came out. Count on upgrading most, if not all, of your anti-virus / anti-malware software, a lot of your PCI cards, and a lot of your peripherals, especially scanners. Many hardware and software manufacturers are using the impending release of Vista to drop support of a lot of their older products.

Vista is almost upon us. While not a compelling upgrade from Windows XP, it is inevitable, because it will be on the next computer you buy. It has some useful and some annoying updates. The revamped interface is clearly aimed at the new user, but it makes the experienced Windows user suffer, because it requires a relearning of things you already know. Vista security is somewhat improved compared to Windows XP, but the fundamental problem remains that security is tacked on to the surface of the operating system, compared to OSX or Linux, where security is architecturally built in. If you are considering upgrading to Vista for security reasons, save your money; spend less and get equivalent protection from security software for the proven and reliable Windows XP you are using now.

Should you upgrade your present computer to Vista? That depends on your hardware and your definition of value. If your computer is more than three years old, you will not enjoy many of the glitzy new features that Vista offers. It wants a lot of CPU and graphical horsepower to run the cool visual stuff. On older hardware, you will get what Microsoft calls an "XP-like experience." Read: you will need to increase your installed RAM and upgrade your video

card. While Vista will install in 512 MB of RAM, Microsoft recommends 1 GB minimum for "the best experience." You will want to invest in an upgraded video card to get the best out of Vista, though. Video RAM is important; Vista capable video cards with 128 MB of video RAM and moderate performance are available for around \$50, and well worth the cost if you are moving to Vista. You will definitely want this if you are moving to Vista to freshen your desktop experience. You need it to get all the new toys working.

I am not as enthusiastic about Vista as many reviewers are. I have had the benefit of experiencing most of Vista's "new" features, debugged and often better implemented on OSX and Linux. Microsoft rightly imitated these; many of them are useful and compelling. But they are not new.

If you are a casual computer user, you will wind up with Vista on your computer sooner or later just because it will come on a new PC that you will eventually buy. If you are a computer enthusiast, you will have to decide whether it is worth both the cost of hardware upgrades and the purchase price of Vista to move into the latest and greatest that Microsoft can offer. For the short term, this will not be a painless experience; you will have to make many adjustments to the way you work and suffer several incompatibilities in both hardware and software to get into Vista. If you are a casual computer user and not certain if overcoming these problems is worth the effort, I'll offer my standard advice for new Microsoft operating systems: wait until SP1 before you take the plunge. For the adventurous, I say, "Follow me, and dodge the slings and arrows! The pain is slight, and I can

endure it!" The challenge of making it work is part of the fun. And on the other end, you may find that you can eventually get some work done on the computer...

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**U3 Drives
By Diane George**

This month's column is half tips and half product review. I recently got interested in U3 drives, partly as a result of some software I saw at the Southwest PC User Group conference in San Diego in July.

What is U3, and why do I want to know? It's not the successor to the rock band U2. U3 is an open-standard platform that allows you to take applications and store and launch them on a flash drive. Several flash drives are offered with U3 with pre-loaded U3 applications on them. Verbatim, Memorex, Ativa and SanDisk all offer U3 smart drives. Go to <<http://www.u3.com/smartdrives/default.aspx>> for a list of U3 drives and more information.

The drives come with software preloaded, such as an application that will allow you to take Office documents created on your desktop computer, and

work on them on another computer (also with Office installed), without a trace of the files being left on the second computer. This means that you can take your work with you without a laptop, use a computer elsewhere, like in an Internet cafe, without having to copy the files, including your e-mail, to the new computer.

Other applications that come preloaded include antivirus software for the flash drive, password storage and management, SKYPE, Zinio Reader for digital magazines, ACDSee for photo management, and Migo (more about that later). In addition, there are other free and commercial applications available at the U3 Central site that are accessed from the drive, including games.

How does this work? The flash drive has a small partition that pretends to be a CD-ROM, so that your computer will autorun a launch pad that makes the rest of the drive storage accessible—did I mention that it is password protected and can be encrypted? When you start up, a launchpad for the drive is opened. You can password protect the flash drive itself, so the first thing you see is a login screen. The launch pad is part of the U3 system and is the same on different brands of drives. The launchpad gives you access to the applications on the drive and is required to remove the drive—you must use the launchpad to eject the disk, or you risk damaging the drive.

When you plug in the drive, your system recognizes it as a USB drive, and you can see it in My Computer, as a very small 3.78 MB CD-ROM drive, that will autoplay. It also appears as a 2 GB removable drive that you can copy files on like any other flash drive. In


general, the device works, but I have a couple of quibbles. I have had difficulty with installation on one of my two computers, and I have not yet been able to determine what the problem is. The first time I put the drive in, it caused my computer to slow to a crawl, and it never did recognize the drive. Only when I had the drive inserted at startup did it allow me to use it. I have tried it on two other systems, and it worked fine.

One of the software applications allows you to save selected files, Outlook e-mail, contacts, tasks, and calendar information, and creates a desktop that represents the desktop on a particular computer. You can create two of these desktops. When you take the device to another computer and launch the software, you have the choice of using either desktop. A tab is added to the top of your screen, and when you click on it, you see thumbnails. Each picture is the desktop of the other computers. When you click on one of the names or images, your desktop changes—the My Documents folder contains only the items that you brought from the other computer, and your e-mail client will show the contents of your inbox, and the other shortcuts are different.

I haven't figured out yet why some of the icons are from the desktop of the computer I am on and some are from the computer on the flash drive. I need more time with the applications and will write a follow-up. In the meantime, these drives present some interesting possibilities and should be fun to explore.

Diane George is Webmaster for PC Community, California and can be reached at <<http://www.pcc.org>> or <[digeorge\(at\)sbcglobal.net](mailto:digeorge(at)sbcglobal.net)>.

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	Coming to a Computer Near You— Internet Explorer 7 By Ira Wilsker
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Possibly by the time that you read this, you may have the release version of Internet Explorer 7 (IE7) on your computer. You may have to do little to get it, but you should be aware that if you have Windows XP, with Service Pack 2 (SP2) installed, the finished release of IE7 will automatically be included in the periodic updates pushed by Microsoft to most XP computers. According to Microsoft, the user will have a choice to install the new IE7, or retain the current version, most likely IE6, on the computer. [*IE 7 is available now through Windows update, or for those who do not want to use Windows update, you can download now directly from Microsoft at <<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/ie/downloads/default.aspx>>.* —Ed.]

The previous version of IE, version 6, has been out for several years, and while there have been numerous security and feature updates, it has lost a small portion of its market share to the more feature rich and secure upstarts such as Mozilla's very popular Firefox. IE7 is clearly meant to battle head to head with Firefox in order to maintain its dominance in the browser field by incorporating many features already

available in Firefox, such as tabbed browsing, as well as greatly enhanced security. It should be noted that IE7 will be integrated in the upcoming release of Microsoft's new version of Windows, Vista.

Internet Explorer 7 has a new look and feel with a more modernistic and streamlined frame with less clutter, and more space for Web pages to be displayed. Many users like to print Web pages, and one common problem in the past was that many Web pages were formatted wider than the paper it was being printed on, either truncating (cutting off) data at the margin, or printing the edge on subsequent pages. IE7 offers an automated scaling to fit the Webpage to the paper, as well as an option to only print selected text. Another feature that has been included in Firefox is an integral search box, where search terms can be directly entered. Microsoft has included an integral search box in IE7 that defaults to Microsoft's own MSN search engine, but offers a wide selection of non-Microsoft search utilities. Other search utilities can be added, and the default search engine can be changed from MSN to an alternative search engine or resource with a single mouse click. In addition to the traditional search engines such as Google, Yahoo, and AllTheWeb, other searches can be performed from the search box. These other searches can include news sites (such as USA Today, CNN, or Cnet), shopping sites (such as EBay or Amazon), or other information providers.

Bookmarks, also referred to as "favorites," have been reorganized, allowing quick access to the bookmarks, as well as the browsing history. News and information feeds using the RSS

(Really Simple Syndication) format can also be included in the favorites. When a Website is accessed that contains an RSS feed, an icon appears on the toolbar allowing for the RSS feed to be previewed or added to the favorites with a single click. If an RSS feed is selected, the user will be automatically notified of any new content on that feed, with the information displayed in a browser window. Another feature that has been popular with the competitive browser is tabbed browsing, where multiple Websites can be opened simultaneously, with each site being shown as a labeled tab on the top of the browser window. In IE6 and previous IE versions, each new Webpage appeared in a new window if multiple pages were opened. In IE7, a single window is opened (unless otherwise selected), multiple Web pages are loaded into that single window, with each page selected by clicking on the respective tab on the top of the page. Tabs can be formed into groups with multiple pages (home pages or startup pages) selectable for automatic loading when IE7 is loaded. Another feature that might be useful to some users is the zoom feature that allows parts of Web pages to be zoomed in or out in order to make them more readable.

Security has been an issue, with IE6 being a popular target for miscreants and malware. IE7 is hardened to contemporary security risks, and offers better protection from Web born attacks than its predecessors. Included in the security offerings is a phishing filter to help protect the user from identity theft by warning of potential spoofed Websites. The address bar will show the true address of Websites, not the spoofed but realistic looking addresses commonly used by phishers to steal

identities or other personal and financial information, a definite security boost. Microsoft offers a voluntary opt-in feature that frequently updates the browser with protection from the latest Web based security threats. Many malware writers write their software to take advantage of the Active-X engine integral with IE. In version 7 Active-X is better controlled than in earlier versions, making it more difficult for illicit code to be executed in the browser, offering enhanced protection.

To help protect the privacy of the user, opening a single window will allow the user to clear the cache of stored Websites, and delete passwords, cookies, and form data from the hard drive.

Once Vista is released, IE7 will offer additional features to Vista users. One worthwhile feature is what is called “protected mode,” which prevents malicious code from accessing any part of the hard drive other than the temporary Internet files, thus making it difficult for malware to adversely affect the computer. IE7 integrated with Vista will also offer an integral “parental control” feature that will allow parents to control what their children access on the World Wide Web (WWW). Vista and IE7 can also store the child’s browsing history, allowing the parent to review what the child has accessed; this history cannot be easily deleted by the child without the parent’s permission. The parent can also select a safety level that can control the Internet and other computer activities of a child.

Internet Explorer requires Windows XP with Service Pack 2 (SP2) installed, or the higher Windows XP Professional x64 edition. Microsoft will run its controversial WGA utility to verify

that the XP version is properly licensed before allowing IE7 to be downloaded. Since IE7 is already available for free download from Microsoft, and offers enhanced security along with many other desirable features, I recommend that all eligible users download it as soon as possible, and not wait for it to be included in an upcoming security update.

WEBSITE:

[<http://www.microsoft.com/ie>](http://www.microsoft.com/ie)

Ira Wilsker is an APCUG Director; Columnist, The Examiner, Beaumont TX; Program Director of Management Development at the Lamar Institute of Technology, Beaumont TX; and a radio & TV show host. Contact him at <iwilsker@apcug.net>.

**Windows XP: Remote Assistance
By Dick Maybach**

“With Remote Assistance a tutor can see a student’s Windows desktop and operate his or her computer over the Internet.”

Because of BCUG members’ interest and experience with PCs, many of us are asked for help by friends and family. Often, those seeking help live across town or across the country, and it is inconvenient to visit them. Fortunately, Windows XP (both the Home and Pro version) provides a solution. Using its Remote Assistance feature, a tutor can see a student’s Windows desktop and operate his or her computer over the Internet. This allows you to assist someone almost anywhere in the world. Remote Assistance supports an audio link and live file transfers. During the session, you can speak with the person you are helping, and exchange files

between the two PCs as easily as you can move them between directories.

To use Remote Assistance, both parties must be using Windows XP, either Home or Pro. The operation will be smoother if both have high-speed Internet access, but this is not required. Also, both parties should have microphones or combination microphone-earphone headsets, which are available inexpensively from many computer hardware dealers. Without this, you will have to juggle a telephone during the whole session or use text chat, both of which are inconvenient. Finally, Universal Plug-and Play (UPnP) must be enabled on your hardware router, if you have one. This appears to be the default for those used in homes, but if you are behind your company's, college's, or some other organization's firewall, you may not be able to use Remote Assistance. UPnP does entail a small security risk, which many organizations won't tolerate.

It will also be helpful to use MSN Messenger to set up the session. Without this, you will have to use e-mail, which will slow down the dialog immensely. (As a bonus, Messenger will allow you to make free audio or video calls anywhere in the world.) Both the Messenger software and service are free. You can download the software from Microsoft. (The fastest way to find the correct download page is to do a Google search for "MSN Messenger." During the installation process, you will be led through the process of obtaining a Messenger account.)

XP enables Remote Assistance requests by default; however, check to be sure that this is so. The error message, if it isn't, is not helpful. (Right-click on My Computer, select

Properties, select Remote, check Allow Remote Assistance invitations to be sent..., select Advanced, check Allow this computer to be controlled... While you are here, reduce the time that requests are active to something like four hours (the 30-day default is far too long.) Allowing Remote Assistance requests does add a small security risk; I recommend that you disable it when you aren't using it.

Use the following procedure to start a session. (It assumes you use MSN Messenger.)

- Both parties start MSN Messenger and sign in.
- The student requests assistance (Start » Help and Support » Invite a friend to connect to your computer with Remote Assistance » Invite someone to help you » select the friend from the Messenger list » select Invite)
- The tutor accepts the request.

Both can now see the student's desktop, but only the student can control it; that is, the tutor's mouse and keyboard do not affect the student's desktop. For many problems, this is all that is needed.

Once the session has begun, you can control the interaction.

- If you are using a high-speed connection, tell the program so. (Click Settings and check High Quality Connection.)
- To start a voice conversation, click Start Talking. Again, one party requests, and the other accepts the link. This, of course, requires a microphone or a headset at each PC. You can use instant messaging for conversations, but this is much slower than talking and can be confusing.
- The tutor can request control by clicking Take Control. If the student

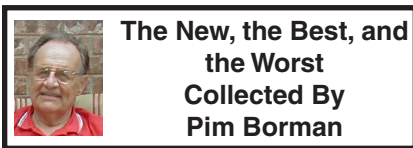
accepts, both now control the student's desktop. This allows the tutor, for example, to demonstrate the correct procedures and to make changes in the student's configuration.

- Either party can send a file, by clicking Send a File.
- Hitting Esc allows either party to revoke control, kill the voice link, or stop the session.

Remote Assistance provides a very valuable tool that allows PC users to help each other without leaving their homes, but it hasn't received the recognition it deserves.

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Spintronics

No one, fifty years ago, could have foreseen or even imagined how the advent of ever more powerful computers would revolutionize science, technology, commerce, and communications. Vastly improved algorithms and architectural structures have been important, but the crucial factor has been the ability to cram ever smaller and more complex circuits on a semiconductor chip. That ability is now approaching a limit

posed by atomic size and increasing influence of quantum effects. We may have to learn how to do more with what we already have if we want to further improve computers so that they'll be able to predict the weather or model the Big Bang, to mention just a few challenges.

From an electro-mechanical standpoint every digital computer, no matter how primitive or advanced, consists of on-off electrical switches connected in a circuit. In semiconductor-based systems the binary 0's and 1's are represented by electrons that carry a negative charge, and missing electrons, called "holes," with positive charge. That is simple and straightforward enough. But wait, there is more...

There can be no electricity without magnetism. They are like heads and tails, yin and yang, up and down. Electrons, the elemental carriers of electricity, also are elementary magnets. You can, very much simplified, think of them as spinning spheres of electricity, tiny electromagnets in other words. Depending on the direction of spin, the magnetism points up or down. Technology making use of the magnetic properties of electrons is often referred to as "spintronics." So far, computers ignore the magnetic state of the electrons, but what if we learned to use it for additional information storage?

About 50 years ago scientists learned how to manipulate and record the magnetic properties of electrons and certain atomic nuclei to examine the composition of substances, using a technique called Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR). Eventually that technique was extended to examine the characteristics of human tissue. The name was changed to Magnetic

Resonance Imaging (MRI) to avoid the term “nuclear” with its negative connotations, although it has nothing to do with damaging radiation or nuclear energy in this case.

More recently, in the late 90’s, scientists at IBM learned how to use spintronics to make very small, highly sensitive read-heads for use with computer hard drives. The sensors consist of a microscopic sliver of semiconductor sandwiched between two thin magnetic layers. The top layer is a permanent, “hard” magnet, but the bottom layer is a soft magnet that changes magnetic orientation easily as it passes over the magnetic regions on the disk. If both magnets in the head are oriented in the same direction, electrons align magnetically in the same direction and move easily through the semiconductor. If the magnetic layers point in opposite directions, the electron spin is reversed as it moves through the semiconductor, affecting its mobility and therefore the amount of current. Clever, isn’t it? Practically all newer hard drives use that technology now.

If computers could be designed to use both the electrical charge and the magnetic state of electrons, each unit of information could have four different quaternary values (0,1,2, and 3) instead of the two binary values (0 and 1) currently used, resulting in greatly increased performance. But the semiconductors must be magnetic to recognize the magnetic ‘up’ or ‘down’ state of electrons. Magnetic semiconductors are few and far between, and so far none remain magnetic at room temperature.

If the material problems can be solved, we may be looking at future computers that are not only more

powerful, but also easier to use. Because magnetic semiconductors retain their logic states without power, systems could be instant-on and use less power. Also, principal functions of a computer, such as logic operations, communication between circuits, and data storage, could be integrated in a single material, resulting in smaller and faster computers with high data-storage capacities and fast performance.

Making spintronic computers possible depends on chemists formulating magnetic semiconductors able to support the technology. Much progress is being made, but it will take a while longer. Not surprisingly, this article was based on an article in Chemical and Engineering News, August 28, 2006.

Cookies With Gas?

Would you believe Internet via the gas meter? A San Diego-area start-up company, Nethercomm, claims to have developed technology to send broadband and TV services through the underground natural gas pipes. A converter box attached to your gas meter receives the signals and sends them to your computer or TV set. The headline of the article in USA Today (9/11/06) says it all: “Gas-line broadband a pipe dream?” (Thanks, Duane Morrow).

A Linux Epiphany

I wasn’t going to mention Linux this month, but... James Derk, our local computer guru known for his syndicated weekly computer columns for Scripps-Howard News Service, has been pooh-poohing desktop Linux for years. Guess what? His column in the Evansville Press and Courier of September 18, 2006 is headed “It may be time to give Linux another try.” He specifically mentions the Ubuntu

Linux distribution which, he writes, is "...painfully easy to get up and running...without spending a dime." Derk keeps his columns at <<http://www.cyberdads.com/blog.html>>. You can also find them on the Scripps Howard Web site at <<http://www.shns.com/>> under "Columns...Business, Finance, and Technology...Compute."

Reap What You Sow!

I've been getting bored with being a one-man Linux SIG in the SW Indiana PC Users Group. I suggested to our new Region 6 Advisor of the Association of PC User Groups (APCUG), Jerry Gillette, that APCUG might be able to sponsor a way to exchange news and information between Linux aficionados scattered amongst its member Groups. He passed the word, and the suggestion was accepted with enthusiasm. APCUG now carries a new Conference (section) on its Web Board, APCUG.linux. Of course, the Conference requires a moderator, and who do you think got "volunteered?" Right, "c'est moi" said the fool. Oh well, one must reap what one sows. Access the APCUG Web Board at <<http://webboard.apcug.org:8080/~apcug>>.

SyncToy

The best things in life are free, and Microsoft's SyncToy is one of them. It is a simple and effective little utility to let you synchronize folders in different locations.

For several generations of MS Windows the "official" Microsoft way to synchronize folders has been to use a virtual Briefcase. I never figured out how to use the involved and cumbersome process. As easy as it is to synchronize and update a Web site on the computer with the online version, using an FTP program such as CuteFTP, it should be

just as easy to synchronize my photo folders with their backups on an external hard drive. SyncToy will do the job quickly and easily, using an intuitive interface. It is also handy to synchronize genealogy data with backups, as well as letter folders and other documents.

SyncToy is one of the Microsoft PowerToys, free utilities programmed by MS programmers, but not officially supported. They are available for free download at <<http://snipurl.com/7r9b>> (or do a Google search for "powertoy download") and include such utilities as **TweakUI** that gives access to system settings not exposed in the Windows XP default user interface, including mouse settings, Explorer settings, taskbar settings, and more. Also **Power Calculator** with which you can graph and evaluate functions as well as perform many different types of conversions; **Virtual Desktop Manager** to manage up to four desktops from the Windows taskbar; **Taskbar Magnifier** to magnify part of the screen from the taskbar; and several others.

Too Much Protection?

While I was writing the previous section, I tried to visit <snipurl.com>, a free site that lets you convert those endlessly long URLs to more manageable size. I've used it several times in the past, but today, using the Firefox browser, I just drew a blank screen. Using Firefox with Ubuntu-Linux on my laptop I had no problem accessing snipurl, and that way I obtained the shorter URL for the PowerToys download site. Eventually I found that it was ZoneAlarm that had blocked my access.

It is a dangerous world out there on the World Wide Web, and we are constantly reminded to install protective guardians to keep us safe. We need

a firewall, to start with, preferably a hardware version (a router) as well as a software sentinel. An anti-virus program is *de rigueur* and we need anti-spyware to keep bad guys from learning our secrets. Unsportsmanlike phishers must be prevented from stealing our savings under false pretenses, and if we want to enjoy our browsing experience we need to fight off annoying pop-up windows.

The trouble is that everyone is getting into the act of protecting us, constantly stepping on each others' toes. ZoneAlarm PRO includes, in addition to its operating system and network firewall, anti-spyware and identity theft protection, game mode, and more. AdAware and its AdWatch feature keep an eye on spyware and suspicious activities in the Windows Registry. The Firefox and Internet Explorer browsers compete with additional security features. I uninstalled the new Internet Explorer version 7.0 because it kept interfering with legitimate programs. Microsoft has made a major effort to improve security with a long list of new features in its forthcoming Windows Vista. I shudder to think what that will add to the protection confusion. In the end it gets difficult to know who is doing what to whom.

You can never have too much security, except when it starts to interfere with legitimate programs that are blocked because something seems suspicious. If all those guardians would only let us know each time they block something, and how to bypass it, life would be so much simpler. Too much to ask, it seems.

Dare I mention that none of this applies to Linux?

Broadband Speed Revisited

In the late 80's, before the Internet and fast connections, I did online patent literature searches on a tight budget in databases charging upwards of \$5 per minute online. Search strategies had to be carefully designed off line, with only the titles and authors of target records to be returned before quickly disconnecting again. The results were carefully scrutinized, and only those of interest were subsequently uploaded to retrieve abstracts of the articles. Those articles of special interest, based on the abstracts, were ordered as hard copies from various libraries. Using a 2400 baud modem, capable of transferring something less than 10 kilobits per second (kbps; a baud is not the same as a bit per second), the whole process was expensive and took a long time.

These days home desktop computers hooked up to various broadband systems can go online at speeds up to 6 Mbps, and we are still complaining that they are too slow. No matter how fast the connection, factors beyond our control interfere with fast downloads and uploads. Sharing a cable node with a neighboring game enthusiast may be the cause. Often, congestion on the Web at certain times of the day slows your connection to a crawl, in which case stopping and restarting the download may instantly bring results. A Web site providing a popular download may restrict the speed of individual connections to avoid overloading its server. And, as mentioned in my column last month, the Dynamic Name Servers of your service providers may be slow converting URLs to the numerical codes actually used by the Internet.

Kim Komando, in her weekly newsletter vol.10, no.46, states that

Windows XP PRO artificially reserves some of your bandwidth. She writes, in part: “By default, Windows reserves some of your connection’s bandwidth. But you can change that easily. Click Start >> Run. Type gpedit.msc and click OK. The Group Policy Box will open. You will see Local Computer Policy. Click the plus sign to expand the Administrative Templates section [under ‘Computer Configuration’—Pim]. Next, click the plus sign to expand the Network section. Highlight QoS Packet Scheduler. In the right side of the box, double-click Limit Reservable Bandwidth. Check Enabled. Change Bandwidth limit to 0 percent. Click Apply>>OK. When you restart your computer, the effect should be immediate. Enjoy your blazing broadband speeds!

I tried it and it didn’t seem to make any noticeable difference. So I went to the fount of wisdom—Microsoft itself. Who should know better, after all? For the details go to <<http://snipurl.com/MSQOS>>. Bottom line, the claims are bogus. The bandwidth limitation setting applies only to unusual circumstances when a program requests bandwidth priority. If left unchecked, it might take over all other running network connections. It is very unlikely to happen under normal usage conditions, and the 20% reserved bandwidth is otherwise always fully available to running applications.

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**Microsoft Windows
Vista
By Mike Moore**

In many respects, Microsoft’s dominance in the areas of Internet Browsers, Office Suites, and of course, Operating Systems is puzzling, at least in the past few years. Open Source software such as the free OpenOffice.org <<http://www.openoffice.org>> suite has come into its own, and the latest Apple Macintosh™ computers are brought to market with an operating system featuring iron-clad Unix underpinnings and a cheeky marketing campaign designed to turn PC users away from Windows.

And yet, due to the sheer number of PCs out there with Microsoft branding, Windows still commands a staggering market share, in spite of no major upgrades to either Internet Explorer or WindowsXP in 3 and 5 years, respectively.

Microsoft’s answer to the rapidly changing personal computing scene has been a complete rethinking of Windows from the ground up.

Vista, a new operating system due out around January of 2007, seeks to redesign the way we use computers, particularly Internet and media-enabled computers. Previously code-named “Longhorn,” this release is about as far removed from XP as XP was from the old text-based DOS operating systems.

Although Microsoft is still hard at work finalizing the features of this blockbuster operating system, you can

look forward to these new features, which will in most cases require a pretty beefy computer for support:

Aero

Aero is the name given to a new and visually stunning 3-D like graphical interface, which is currently known as the Desktop and Windows Explorer. In Vista, Microsoft introduces the Desktop Window Manager that will feature new technologies for application developers, transparent window effects, animations, and file previews that all told will knock your socks off. See some of the previews of this interface at <<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsvista/>>.

The full set of Aero features will be available on computers that support DirectX 9.0 and beefy video cards, so prepare to upgrade).

Security

Microsoft has completely turned Internet security on its head in the new Vista vision, choosing to default a normal windows user to a limited access, virus-armored profile, as opposed to the current default of a normal user having unlimited rights to the file system. Users that require more permissions on their accounts will have to make conscious and hopefully well-informed efforts to undo the protection Vista has built in to each account.

Quick Search

Windows 2000 and XP relied on indexed search techniques that were effective to a point, at a cost of much hard drive overhead and a key-word based search methodology. Vista takes this a quantum step farther and looks for both file content and something called meta-data, which will increase the relevancy of our searches for information on our machines, and will also help integrate

local hard drive searches with Internet searching.

For example, file name searches are often useless when looking in a directory of photographic image files where the digital camera has named them with non-descriptive serial-number like file names. Imagine describing a photograph to your computer and having it go out and look for, say, a photo with a white church steeple, or a recorded song file that sounds like a tune you hum into a microphone. With Vista and other search engine companies like Google, we are poised at the brink of an explosion in searchability—a good thing, considering all of the information that is out there!

WinFX

WinFX is an applications interface that supersedes the Win32 standard introduced in 1993. An Applications Programming Interface (API) is a set of standards and library routines that serve to control Windows—everything from the way applications are installed to all of the various standard ways in which a program can manipulate a window. The API is the way that many thousands of programs, hardware drivers and video games are able to communicate with Windows without Microsoft having to license the Windows operating secrets to each vendor. If you think of each way in which a particular Windows feature can be controlled as being a closed black box, the API standards are the knobs, buttons and dials on that box. WinFX means that developers with designs for software that is to run under Vista ought to be ready to study hard, because WinFX changes everything. The new API also means that we are bidding goodbye to our beloved DOS

command line pretty much for good, running Vista.

As different as WinFX is, it should be thought of as a superset of Win32, which means that we won't necessarily have to buy all new software, at least not right away.

WindowsXP is my favorite operating system to date, and I predict that Microsoft will have to float some pretty good deals, and computer vendors will need to price sharply to get mainstream users to up-grade. Computer experimenters, those individuals that get really steamed when their cousin gets a faster computer than they have, will likely upgrade immediately, and hopefully BGAMUG will be able to refurbish what equipment they cast off in the quest for Vista!

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**Great Games for the Holidays
Are Here: Changes in Industry
& Technology Overcome
By Timothy Everingham**

We are now in the time when most of the computer & console games get released, right before the holiday season. This year it even gets more complicated because of Windows Vista coming out in January, and we are in the early stages

of a transition to the next generation of game consoles. What makes it even worse is the collapse of the computer game industry's major trade show, E3. Game developers have had to revamp their marketing strategies for the future, yet at the same time prepare for this holiday season. This should add to consumer confusion on what to buy and when, and hopefully this article will reduce that confusion.

Increased Questions

Microsoft's new operating system, Windows Vista, increases questions for those users of 3D oriented applications, especially games. A great part of this is DirectX 10, which is a major rewrite of DirectX and has much higher capability than current and past versions. DirectX 10 will only be available for Windows Vista and can only be used if you have a video card that supports it. (Those cards that do not have DirectX 10 support will be running DirectX 9.0L under Windows Vista). DirectX 10 cards based on Nvidia chips will start to come out in November, and those based on ATI chips will start to come out in February. There will be few games with additional enhancements if you are running Vista with a DirectX 10 card when Vista launches, such as Microsoft Flight Simulator X and Crysis. It will probably be at least until mid-2007 when significant numbers of DirectX 10 enhanced or DirectX 10 only titles will arrive. So for giving gifts to 3D gamers who are going to be first adopters of Windows Vista you might want to consider giving gift certificates.

Microsoft's next generation console, the Xbox 360, has been out for about a year. It has been well accepted by the market-place and has a good number of quality game titles. Sony's Playstation 3

is more powerful and will be able to play high definition Blu-ray disk movies, but it has been delayed by technical problems until November 17 and even then will have limited supply in the US. The decision to allow Blu-ray Disk movies to display at the higher level 1080p High Definition TV instead of the former 720p only should help sales. It will also have some very good games available at launch. There will be 2 versions, the standard costing \$499 and the deluxe costing \$599. Nintendo's Wii next generation console will launch on November 19. It is not as powerful as its two rivals, especially in the graphics area (Maximum Video Resolution: Wii-480p, Xbox 360-720P, PS3-1080p). However, it has a very unique gyroscopic controller that is shaped like a TV remote control, which could make some very innovative gameplay (actions are evoked by your physical movement of the entire controller). The Wii's retail price will be \$249. The safe bet for buying a console now is the Xbox 360, but I would advise waiting on your decisions until the initial opinions on the PS3 and Wii consoles come out. (These will probably be found online on the video game review websites before the end of November). Remember, when buying a console it is like buying a computer. First you determine what games/applications you want to run, and then you see which console has the games/applications you want to run now or in the future.

For the Holiday Season

Here are some of my game picks for the holiday season:

If you are looking at simulation, Microsoft Flight Simulator X (Windows XP or Vista) is a great visual experience. It is greatly improved from the last

version, 2004, with great scenery and other graphics plus good missions. Be aware that to get good frame rates on this you will need a mid to high performance PC by current standards. This is the first game that can take advantage of Windows Vista only features, including DirectX 10 capabilities, if you have a Direct X 10 graphics card. Comes in both standard and deluxe versions.

Spyware

If you are looking for a first person shooter, Call of Duty 3 (Activision; PS3, PS2, Xbox 360, Xbox, Wii) is the third installment of the extremely successful World War 2 team-based first-person shooter series. This time it centers on the campaign from Normandy to Paris. Additionally the number of concurrent online/network players has been raised to 24. Battlefield 2142 (Electronic Arts, PC) is Battlefield 2 set in the future in the middle of a new ice age. Since Battlefield 2 is such a great multiplayer combat title, this is a good thing. Like the previous members of the Battlefield series, it is usually played team vs. team online or at a LAN Party. Be aware that this game has in-game advertisements, and spyware is installed when you install the game that analyses data on your PC to determine which ads to display in the game. So if you don't like such things on your computer you may want to pass on this game.

If you have dreamed of firefights using automatic weapons in the glamorous Las Vegas Casinos this is for you. Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six Vegas (Ubisoft; PC, PS3, PSP, Xbox 360) is another in the successful Rainbow Six series about the adventures of a US antiterrorist commando team. This time a large group of terrorists are attacking the Las Vegas Casinos and plan to burn

them to the ground and your object is to stop them. Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell: Double Agent (Ubisoft; PC, Xbox 360, Xbox, PS2, Gamecube) is another in the great Splinter Cell series where you work as a spy/mercenary for the National Security Agency. However, this time you act as a double agent within a terrorist cell, so things get more complicated. This also has a multiplayer mode. This series is great for those who like to sneak up on the bad guys, take them out and steal or blow up their stuff.

Adventure

As for adventure games, The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion (2K games; PC, Xbox 360) has extremely beautiful and high-level graphics. It is considered an outstanding title and one with which all other adventure games are compared, but you need a high performance PC to play it. Gothic 3 (JoWood, PC) is a single player adventure game in a land where humans have been enslaved by orcs. There is an evil mode where you side with the orcs, but most of the gameplay you are on the humans' side. The game is much more open ended than most games, so if you get lost in non-structured game play this title is not for you. For those who enjoyed the fantasy role playing game Neverwinter Nights, there is Never Winter Nights 2 (Atari, PC). Half-Life 2 (Electronic Arts) has moved to an episodic model, and so now has Sam & Max (Lucas Arts). Sam & Max Episode 1: Culture Shock is the first of seven episodes to come out on a monthly basis with an estimated 4-6 hours of game play each. Each episode will cost \$8.85, but you can subscribe to the entire set for \$34.95. This is an off the wall humor-ridden adventure game with a dog and rabbit team of freelance police as its heroes.

Sport Games

As for sport games, try Tiger Woods PGA Tour 07 (Electronic Arts; PC, PS3, PS, Xbox, Xbox 360, Wii). It is extremely similar to the previous two versions, but is still a great game. For those who love golf games this is probably your best bet. Need For Speed Carbon (Electronic Arts; PC, PS3, PS2, PSP, Xbox 360, Xbox, Wii, Gamecube, Gameboy, DS), is the next in the successful Need For Speed street racing series. Its graphics are excellent and smooth, and there is a lot of game play and various options/paths to explore in the way you play the game.

In the good, but not expensive category look at GTR 2 (10tacle Studios, PC). This is a GT car racing game that has gotten good reviews and has a lot to offer, and you can find it for less than \$20. It was released on Sept 26; it is a new game too. For sports games, Electronic Arts has most of the best ones. You should look there first.

If you are into building rather than destroying I would recommend Sid Meir's Railroads (2K Games, PC). In this empire-building game you have 15 historical and fictional scenarios to choose from. Up to four players can even compete online or over a network. The detailed graphic animation of the environment/world is impressive, but because of this it is recommended that you have a significantly better computer than listed in the minimum requirements.

Total War

If you are looking for a real-time strategy game, look at Company of Heroes (THQ, PC). The detail in both the game play and the graphics makes this World War II game, set in France in 1944, superior to other similar titles.

You play either as the allies or the axis and control small units on a battlefield to accomplish objectives. You can play against another player or players online. Because of the graphics, low-end PCs are insufficient for this game. Also you need to look at Medieval 2: Total War (Sega, PC), the fourth in the Total War historical combat real-time strategy series. The graphics and animation are so good that the game's engine is used to create animated visualizations of large-scale actual battles for documentaries shown on the History and Discovery channels. The graphics have been updated, making it even more real than in any of the previous versions, and even what you saw in the TV documentary visualizations. The game takes place in Medieval Europe, and you command one of the historical factions/countries that vie for power. Look at Warhammer: Mark of Chaos (Namco Bandai, PC) too; a real-time strategy game with fantasy creatures and units, part of the excellent Warhammer series.

Something Unusual

If you want something unusual you may want to look at Bully (Rockstar Games, PS2). This is a boarding school simulator where you work your way up in this kid-dom. Last year's best unusual was Destroy All Humans, a spoof on the 1950's alien invasion movies. Now Destroy All Humans 2: Make War Not Love (THQ; PS2, Xbox) has arrived and is set in the 1960's. It is not quite as good as the original; but with the original being so good, especially in the rolling on the floor laughing department, it still makes for a very good game. There are new consoles and a lot of new games for this holiday season, too much to cover here. For additional information go to <http://www.gamespot.com>

(part of CNET), <http://www.ign.com>, <http://www.gamepro.com>, <http://www.gamespy.com>, or <http://www.gamezone.com>.

May your games be happy and bright (we don't have to worry much about screen burn-in anymore).

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**Ram & Reason:
Enter the Dragon: Comodo
Free Desktop Security Tools
By Rob Rice**

Every once in a while a company manages to push my button. Symantec is the latest, after having bought my beloved Sygate Personal Firewall and then immediately yanked it from the market. Having paid for the Pro version, I can no longer install it; since it requires authorization, I am dead in the water.

Still, a nice thing about capitalism is that where there is a void, it will get filled. Enter the Comodo Group, with not only a worthy alternative to Sygate's Personal Firewall, but a whole suite of security products for free!

The Comodo Group gets its name from the Komodo dragon, a metaphor for the Internet, with a "C" instead of a "K" to acknowledge a commitment to commerce, communications, and

dot.com. Comodo is the “2nd largest Certification Authority for ensuring Identity Trust & Assurance” on the Internet. In other words, they are the folks that make that little yellow padlock on your web browser work. The Comodo Group is the real deal with headquarters in Jersey City, USA (Yes, they have a real mailing address unlike some so-called security products offered on the Web) with global offices in UK, Norway, and India.

So why is Comodo giving away product? While the company does more than just issue SSL (Secure Sockets Layer) certificates, apparently they feel the need to build brand identity. According to Melih Abdulhayoglu, the President and CEO of Comodo Group:

“If we are able to write good software and give such valuable software for free, our name will be known in the market place, we will build our Comodo brand, and this brand will be associated with security. And this will help us sell more Digital Certificates and other services we have, as we will have a big brand!”

Simple enough! So what are they offering? Again from the Comodo website:

- Comodo Firewall
- Comodo Verification Engine
- Comodo AntiVirus
- Comodo AntiSpam
- Comodo BackUp
- Comodo iVault

Comodo Personal Firewall 2.0

FREE lifetime license.

Sleek design gives an at-a-glance overview of your security status.

1. **Highlights**—Displays the latest Comodo news and information about updates.
2. **Traffic**—High visual overview of the last minute of traffic history in

terms of Applications and Network protocols.

3. **System info**—Information about your system in terms of the Hardware and details of all network Adapters in your computer.
4. **View Alerts**—Get in-depth details on the high severity risks that the firewall has detected.
5. **Update License**—One click activation of your free-for-a-lifetime Comodo license.
6. **Computer Security level**—Customize firewall security by using the slider to quickly move between preset security levels.
7. **Check the security of your firewall’s configuration** with Comodo’s online vulnerability scanner, HackerGuardian.
8. **Security Monitoring**—Get an immediate heads up on the status of the firewall’s major components.
9. **Protection strength**—Your overall security level determined by the settings you have chosen.

Comodo Firewall, rated by PC Magazine Online as an Editor’s Choice, constantly monitors and defends your PC from Internet attacks. It’s easy to install and use and passes the industry’s most stringent firewall “leak” tests. Unlike some other ‘free’ firewalls, this is not a stripped down version, but is the full, completely functional product. This free solution comes complete with continual updates that are free forever!

System Requirements:

Windows 2000 (ALL)

Windows XP (ALL)

Windows 2003 (ALL)

64 MB available RAM

32 MB of available free hard disk space

Comodo Verification Engine

FREE for life.

VerificationEngine anti-phishing and identity assurance tool for Microsoft Windows offers an extremely simple way to differentiate legitimate Web sites from fraudulent ones. Place your mouse cursor over a site logo. If it is authentic, a green border will appear around your browser. So if you really wish to be sure you are looking at the real <<http://www.paypal.com>> site rather than a clever imitation created to steal your identity, install VerificationEngine now!

Comodo AntiVirus

FREE lifetime license.

- On Access Scanning—Always on, real-time protection against threats, more...
- On Demand scanning—Take control by running instant scans on any file, folder or drive, more...
- Automatic Daily Updates—Up-to-the second protection against the latest threats, more...
- E-mail Scanning—Automatic checking and disinfection of incoming and outgoing mail, more...
- Process Monitoring—Continuously scans your PC's memory for viruses, more...
- Worm Blocker—Monitors and intercepts suspicious mass mailing attempts, more...
- In-depth Reporting—Comprehensive logs of all scans performed, more...
- Pro-active virus defense—Submit suspicious files for analysis by the Comodo AntiVirus team, more...
- Easy, User Friendly interface—Sleek design provides fingertip access to all major settings, more...
- Scan Scheduling—Timetable scans to run when you choose, more...

- Dedicated Quarantine Facility—Isolate suspected files where they can do no harm, more...
- Advanced Heuristic detection Engine—Protection against unknown viruses, more...
- Scan Removable Devices—CD's, DVD's, external drives, USB devices, digital cameras, more...
- Scans Network drives—Protection from any potential threats on your network, more...
- Scans Compressed Files—There's no hiding place for viruses, even in a .zip file, more...
- Does not hog system resources—Maximum Protection with no slow down of your PC, more...

System Requirements

Windows XP (SP2) / Windows 2000 (SP4 or later)

50 MB available space on your hard drive

128 MB RAM

Intel Pentium 300 MHz processor (or equivalent)

Note—Not compatible with Windows 9x systems.

Comodo AntiSpam

FREE license.

Install Comodo AntiSpam for free and reclaim your inbox. The powerful challenge-response technology authenticates the sender of every e-mail—a system that automated spam bots can't get around. This is the full product, not stripped down 'cripple ware,' and is free forever to the end user.

- Total Spam Elimination.
- No hassle set-up.
- Sender-based authentication.
- Thwart the Spam Bots.
- Works with your existing setup.
- Automatically authenticate your address book.

- Instantly migrate custom black and white lists.
- One click Bandwidth Optimization.
- Pro-active Spam defense.
- Maximum Protection—Minimum Drain.
- Independent Authentication Database.
- Independent Quarantine Database.
- Protects all your e-mail accounts.
- Stay spam free WHEREVER you access your mail from.
- Never miss a message.
- Failproof.
- E-Commerce friendly.
- You're protected—stay protected!!

System Requirements

Operating Systems: Windows 2000/XP
 Processor: Pentium 100 MHz or higher

System RAM: 32 MB RAM

Hard Drive: 21 MB of HDD free space

Internet Browser: IE 6.0 or above.

Comodo Backup

FREE lifetime license.

Comodo Backup is the straightforward and powerful utility that allows users to quickly and easily create backup copies of critical files. Free of charge, it includes complete file and folder-duplication to local network drives and FTP servers, intelligent incremental backups, e-mail reporting, extensive report logs, real time backups with “synchronization” mode, advanced rule-based filtering, flexible scheduling of backups, space-saving archiving capabilities, and more.

- Easily backup files or folders anywhere on your computer, network, CD-RW, or FTP server.
- Protect yourself against ever losing those critical files that took hours to create.

- Quickly recover your data in the event of data loss.
- Schedule backups to run automatically at a time that suits you.
- Synchronized backup feature—save a file, and it gets copied instantly.
- Send e-mail notifications to team members about the status of a backup job.
- Save Disk space by compressing your backups as ZIP files.
- Configure in minutes with our intuitive interface.

System Requirements

Windows XP (Service Pack 1 or later) or Windows 2K (Service Pack 3 or later)

Intel Pentium IV with 133 MHz processor

64 MB RAM

12 MB free hard drive space

Microsoft Internet Explorer 5.01 or above

Comodo iVault

FREE license

iVault saves time by providing instantaneous logins to any username/password secured web pages such as online banking and e-mail account sites. It also doubles up as a 256 bit secure storage for private and confidential information such as credit card details and social security numbers and protects against the very latest key-logging Trojan Horse viruses.

- Instantly login to your favorite Websites and applications.
- Speed up surfing—No more forgotten passwords.
- Single point of storage for all your confidential information.
- 256 bit encryption of credit card and bank account details.
- Secure Password Generator instantly creates complex passwords.

- Supports multiple users on a single machine.
- Anti Keylogging feature—Stop hackers monitoring your personal data.
- ‘Drag ‘n’ drop’ interface—Windows ease of use.

Comodo iVault can protect and manage:

- Website password details.
- Software access passwords
- Credit card numbers and PIN details.
- Bank Account Details.
- Telephone banking codes.
- E-Mail account passwords.
- Computer logon passwords.
- Personal Contact details.
- Cell Phone PIN codes.
- And much more...

Phew! That is a lot of stuff! And I must admit I have yet to test all of these free products. Not for a lack of desire, but because we are talking about six programs! I will say that I am about half way through my testing of the firewall product, and it does seem to perform as advertised. But don't wait around for me, grab these six freebies, and let me know what you think of them!

Thanks Comodo!

Comodo <<http://www.comodogroup.com/>>.

PC Magazine Article on Comodo Firewall <<http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,1895,1969485,00.asp>>.

Rob Rice is a member of the Computer Club of Oklahoma City and a computer specialist in Anchorage, Alaska <<http://www.ccokc.org>> <[articles\(at\)isp.com](mailto:articles(at)isp.com)>.

There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this article as long as it is kept in context with proper credit given the author. The Editorial Committee of the

Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you.



**Accessories for
that New Christmas
Computer
By Ira Wilsker**

This Christmas season Santa is delivering countless new desktop and notebook computers to good boys and good girls of all ages. Many will also receive gift cards as welcomed presents, which will allow the recipient to purchase whatever he wishes.

While almost all new computers will run out of the box, these same new computers are often the epitome of vulnerability, as they often lack appropriate protective security software. While many new computers come with some software and utilities, there are still several items which would make good last minute Christmas gifts, or an appropriate utilization of a gift card.

New computers are generally very vulnerable to a variety of attacks from hackers, crackers, viruses, spyware, and other virtual threats. I would strongly suggest that the new computer be accompanied by any one of the many readily available security suites. Under the premise that something is better than nothing, any of the commonly available comprehensive software security suites will do a reasonable job of protecting the computer. Brands of security suites from such well-known companies as Trend Micro, Symantec (Norton), McAfee, Kaspersky, Panda, CA (Computer Associates), and Zone Alarm, will all do a satisfactory job protecting the computer from attack. All of these brands, as well as most of the

other recently released 2007 dated suites include the latest in features, including antivirus, firewall, anti-spyware, and other utilities.

Those who will be using the computer with broadband access may decide to forgo the gift card and utilize the free security software offered by the broadband companies. Alternatively, free protective software from such companies as Grisoft's AVG Free Antivirus software, <<http://free.grisoft.com>>, if used along with a free firewall such as the free version of Zone Alarm <<http://www.zonelabs.com>> (under the "Quick Links" heading at the bottom left of the page) will provide reasonably effective security. Since spyware of various types is now considered by many as a greater threat than viruses, anti-spyware software is a necessity. The above suites all include anti-spyware software, but those who want free anti-spyware can get the free and excellent Spybot Search and Destroy from <<http://www.safer-networking.org>>.

Regardless if a commercial or free product is selected, it must be immediately installed on that new computer, updated and configured (the default configurations are good enough for the common user), as computers are subject to immediate attack the instant they go online, and new computers lacking appropriate protective software are prime and juicy targets for miscreants and purveyors of malware.

Another very useful device that can be utilized with that new computer is one or more USB flash drives (also called thumb or pen drives). Since very few new computers come with floppy disc drives anymore, the user will need some easy and efficient way

to move data between computers. USB flash drives are ideal for this purpose. The prices of these small drives have plunged in recent months, and capacities have soared. For reasonable prices these drives can be purchased at any computer store, electronics store, discount store, or warehouse club.

Many of us do much more with our computers than surf the net. We will likely need some productivity software that has a word processor, spreadsheet, and other utilities. Microsoft's Office Suites (the MS Office 2007 Suite is just coming on the market) are arguably the most popular productivity suites on the market, but they are quite pricey, even if purchased as a student edition. Alternatively, there is an excellent suite published by Corel which continues the WordPerfect tradition with its Corel WordPerfect Office X3. Since many of us find that our finances may be a little tight following the holiday season, a free office suite may meet our needs. OpenOffice is an outstanding and comprehensive office suite consisting of a word processor, spreadsheet, presentation program, database, and other office utilities, and is available for free download from <<http://www.openoffice.org>>.

A new computer is often accompanied by a new monitor, printer, and other peripherals, most of which have demands for clean electrical power. A good surge suppressor type of power strip is a necessary but somewhat inexpensive adjunct to the new computer, in order to protect it from power surges and spikes that could "fry" sensitive electrical components. Surge suppressors should have a UL label showing that it meets the standards of UL1449. The ability to resist power spikes and surges is

measured in joules, and generally the more joules listed on the label the better. It should also be noted that most surge suppressors can and do wear out, so it would be a good practice to include a new one with that new computer, or as soon as practical after Christmas. If the budget or capacity of the gift card will allow it, a good “UPS” (Uninterruptible Power Supply) may be better than a surge suppressor. As a caution read the package label carefully to verify that the selected UPS has the battery capacity to power the computer and monitor (other

peripherals need not be connected to the battery side of the UPS) in the event of a power flicker or failure. If the power fails and an appropriate UPS has been installed, the user will have time to safely shut the computer down. If a UPS is selected, look for features like “AVR” (Automatic Voltage Regulation), which will provide clean power to the computer in the event of surges or brownouts.

There are a lot of other useful peripherals and software which should be considered, such as media (blank

[Continued on page 33](#)



A Letter From Former Editor Bill Agnew

Hi Everybody!

New Mexico Computer Society

The New Mexico Computer Society, founded in 1978, has 12 SIGs in the Albuquerque metropolitan area. Most of them meet in senior centers on different weeknights. Being in senior centers probably helps their membership numbers, but results in a membership with an average age, I would guess, of about 65. Some of these are fuddy-duddies; others appear to have no life other than their computers. Very few of us appear to be normal, rational human beings :-).

The SIGs are named: Bear Canyon, Meadowlark (senior centers), Access Data Base, Genealogy, Internet, Linux, Mac, Multimedia, OS/2, Visual Basic, Web Design, and Windows. Most have Yahoo groups associated with them. I have attended several SIGs on and off. Several of the speakers have been very good; they were young owners of computer businesses in the area (a good source that SEMCO might consider), one a computer service company that has since fixed several of my problems, another an electronics recycling outfit that took my burned out TV, and a third a computer learning center where I am signed up for a day of PowerPoint training. You see, the speakers have incentive.

Their monthly NMCS newsletter distributed by e-mail, is 24 pages long, and has mostly news of the club. A recent issue had 3 helpful APCUG articles, Tips by a member, and reviews of recent meetings. Less helpful than DATA BUS, but still OK.

They offer no refreshments at their regular meetings. Darn!

Bill



BOARD MEETING
12/08/2006
Carol Sanzi

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

President Gary DeNise, Vice President Richard Jackson, Treasurer Bette Gay, Secretary Carol Sanzi, SIG-Advanced Chairman Franz Breidenich, SIG-IBM Co-Chairmen Tom Callow and Warner Mach, and Member-at-Large Bob Clyne. Also present were Chuck Moery, Rene Jacques, and Internet Committee Chairman Mike Bader. The meeting was called to order at 12:08 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

Bette Gay reported that there is \$7,566.76 in the treasury. The membership stands at 85. It is time for Michael D. Bader, Chester Blechinger, Tom Burns, Roland Maki, William Margolin, Carl Massie, Jr., Robert & Dorothy Schultz, Lary Smith, and Robert A. Zukosky to renew their memberships.

Bette Gay reported that we could put some of SEMCO monies in a CD or Money Market account to earn interest, hopefully 4% to 5%. Tom Callow stated that this would not affect the 501(c)(3) status. Bob Clyne moved that the Treasurer be authorized to open an interest bearing bank or money market account in the name of the corporation, and that any officer or officers be authorized to execute such resolutions as the bank may reasonably require to establish such account, which resolutions are expressly incorporated by reference in these minutes. Tom Callow seconded the motion and it carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Mike Bader reported that the online SEMCO User Group's membership

stands at 26. He stated that the activity and interest is increasing.

Bob Clyne moved to grant Jerry Shanek an honorary SEMCO membership for the coming year. Tom Callow seconded the motion, and it was carried.

Bob Clyne moved that SEMCO pay the annual \$50 APCUG membership dues. Gary DeNise seconded the motion, and it was carried.

Bob Clyne moved to authorize the purchase of Adobe InDesign for less than or equal to \$750. It will be used in connection with the production of the DATA BUS. Tom Callow seconded the motion, and it was carried.

Beth Fordyce offered to host the volunteer party. It will be at her home on January 21, 2007.

Bob Clyne reviewed the list of complementary DATA BUS copies being provided by SEMCO. Tom Callow moved to drop the Chicago Computer Society, the Michigan Apple group, and the Alamo PC Organization. Bob Clyne seconded the motion, and it was carried.

Tom Callow moved to adjourn. Bob Clyne seconded the motion, and it was carried. The meeting adjourned at 12:38 p.m.



GENERAL MEETING
12/08/2006
Carol Sanzi

President Gary DeNise called the General Meeting to order at 1:34 p.m.

He requested a volunteer to step forward to become the refreshment chairman. Kay Johnson performed these duties expertly today. Our accolades go out to her.

[Continued on next page](#)

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGS)



SIG-IBM
Tom Callow
Warner Mach



SIG-IBM INTERMEDIATE
Carl Massie, Jr.

January 14: SKYPE: SIG-IBM Co-Chairman Tom Callow will demonstrate Skype, the Voice Over IP service that lets you make free Skype-to-Skype “telephone calls” to anyone with a computer on the Internet as well as call anyone with a telephone.

[Continued from previous page](#)

Gary DeNise requested nominations for officers and members-at-large of the Board of Directors.

Members-at-Large of the Board

Tom Callow nominated Bob Clyne and Gary DeNise nominated Chuck Moery.

Treasurer

Richard Jackson nominated Bette Gay.

Secretary

Tom Callow nominated Carol Sanzi.

Vice-President

Franz Breidenich nominated Richard Jackson.

President

Richard Jackson nominated Gary DeNise.

There were no further nominations, and nominations were closed and the meeting adjourned.

January 14: Google: How is the giant of search shaping the future? Google’s technologies and business model will be discussed.

NOVICE-IBM GROUP **Rotating Volunteer Hosts**

January 14: Help Q & A:

Discussion directed by the audience. No question is too simple!



SIG-ADVANCED
Franz Breidenich

February 6, 2007: 6:45 p.m. (NO JANUARY MEETING) (First Monday) at the Oak Park Library. The library is located at 14200 Oak Park Blvd., Oak Park, MI. Phone: (248) 691-7480.

Topic: Wide ranging discussion of computers and computing.

February 2007 DATA BUS DEADLINE (7th day after meeting)

SEMCO Input and Members’ Ads—Deadline: Sun., January 21, 11:59 p.m. Members’ personal ads are free. To mail, use [Editor address on Page 2](#); e-mail address: clyne@lodden.com. PLEASE send to arrive sooner than deadline.

Business Ads - Deadline: Second Friday monthly. Contact the [Editor \(address Page 2\)](#).

COMP (Computer Operators of Marysville & Port Huron)

February 7, 7 p.m., (1st Wednesday); St. Clair County RESA, 499 Range Rd., Marysville, Admin. Building. Jane Wheatly 810-982-1187 <<http://www.bwcomp.org>>.

DCOM Computer Club

January 12, 6:30–8:30 p.m., (2nd Friday); Henry Ford C.C., Patterson Tech Bldg, Ford Rd/Evergreen, Rm T143, Parking Lot C. Info: Doug Piazza 313-582-2602.

MacGroup-Detroit

January 21, 3:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m., (3rd Sunday): Birmingham Temple, 28611 West 12 Mile Rd., Farmington Hills. Info: Terry White, <terry@macgroup.org> or 248-569-4933. <<http://www.macgroup.org>>. Topic: Mac OS X—Back to the Basics

MacTechnics, (MAC User Group)

January 20, 11:00 a.m., (3rd Saturday); (SIGs at 9:30); Ann Arbor Open School, 920 Miller Ave., Ann Arbor. <<http://www.mactechnics.org>>. Cassie at <cassiemac@yahoo.com> or 313-971-8743.

MDLUG (Metro Detroit Linux User Group)

January 13, 12:30–2:30 p.m., (2nd Saturday); MDLUG meetings will be at The Gaudior Academy located at 27100 Avondale Avenue in Inkster. Web: <<http://www.mdlug.org>>. Info: Raymond McLaughlin 248-960-1864.

Michigan Apple Computer User Group

January 11, 7:30 p.m., (2nd Thur.); General meeting; Fraternal Order of Eagles Hall in Clawson, 174 Bowers St. (one block North of 14-Mile and one block East of Main). Avi Drissman 248-232-7865. Web: <<http://www.themichiganapple.com>>.

Oak Park Computer Club

Every Fri., 10:15 a.m. at Oak Park Recreation Bldg, Oak Park Blvd. west of Coolidge.

SHCC (Sterling Heights Computer Club)

February 6, 7:30 p.m., (1st Tuesday); Macomb Community College South Campus, Bldg. K, 14500 E. 12 Mile Rd. Don VanSyckel <Don@VanSyckel.net>, 586-731-9232; Web: <<http://www.SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org>>. Topic: Your Photos on the Web with Picasa “Web Albums.”

Wayne State University Mac User Group

January 13, 10:00 a.m.–Noon, (2nd Saturday); at Mich.com, 21042 Laurelwood, Farmington. Information: Lorn/JoAnn Olsen 248/478-4300 or Denny MeLampy 248-477-0190.

Continued from page 29

CDs and DVDs), web cameras, digital cameras, backup software and hardware, and other helpful and necessary items.

Whatever you do with that new Christmas computer, be sure that it is always properly and adequately protected from a variety of threats.

WEBSITES

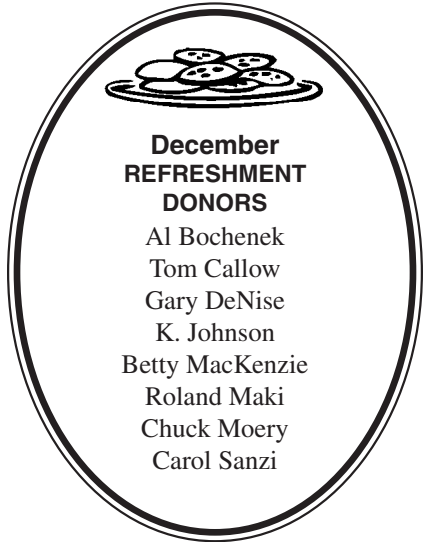
<<http://free.grisoft.com>>—AVG Free Antivirus Software.

<<http://www.zonelabs.com>>—Zone Alarm Free (and commercial) Firewall.

<<http://www.safer-networking.org>>—Spybot Search & Destroy.

<<http://www.openoffice.org>>—OpenOffice Free Office Suite.

Ira Wilsker is an APCUG Director; Columnist, The Examiner, Beaumont TX; Program Director of Management Development at the Lamar Institute of Technology, Beaumont TX; and a radio & TV show host. Contact him at <iwilsker@apcug.net>.



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 this some thought and volunteer at the next group meeting.

Almost Anything: Vander-Schrier

AutoCAD: Comptois

Genealogy: Cook

IBM PC Hardware Issues: Clyne, Yuhasz

Operating Systems: Callow, Clyne, Yuhasz

MAC Hardware and OS Issues: Yuhasz

Security: Bader

MS Office for Windows: Callow

MS Word: Clyne

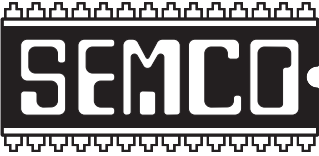
Networking: Callow

Novell Netware: Yuhasz

Quicken: Clyne

Geocaching: Cook

- Bader, Mike—586-573-7330, 9am–8pm..... mdbader@flash.net
- Callow, Tom—248-642-5770 9am–5pm tcallow@monaghanpc.com
- Clyne, Bob—810-387-3101, 9am–10pm clyne@lodden.com
- Comptois, Jerry—248-651-2504, anytime jerry@connectmich.com
- Cook, Stephen—313-272-7594, eves scook48227@ameritech.net
- Vander-Schrier, Jack—586-739-7720, 12–8pm jvanders@myself.com
- Yuhasz, Steve Help@yuhasz.org



SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN
COMPUTER ORGANIZATION, INC.

SEMCO CALENDAR—January/February

ArvinMeritor Building

2135 West Maple Road

Troy, Michigan

January 14—SUNDAY (Meet 2nd Sunday)

SEMCO Board Meeting at 12:00 noon. For Officers and SIG Chairpersons.
Other members are invited to attend.

SEMCO General Meeting at 1:30 p.m.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

SIG-IBM 1:45 p.m. **Program: SKYPE:** SIG-IBM Co-Chairman Tom Callow will demonstrate Skype, the Voice Over IP service that lets you make free Skype-to-Skype “telephone calls” to anyone with a computer on the Internet as well as call anyone with a telephone.

SOCIAL PERIOD 3:15 p.m. Refreshments! (Reminder: We must continue to maintain a neat environment.)

NOVICE-IBM GROUP 3:45 p.m. **Program: Help From An Expert With Discussion Directed By The Audience.**

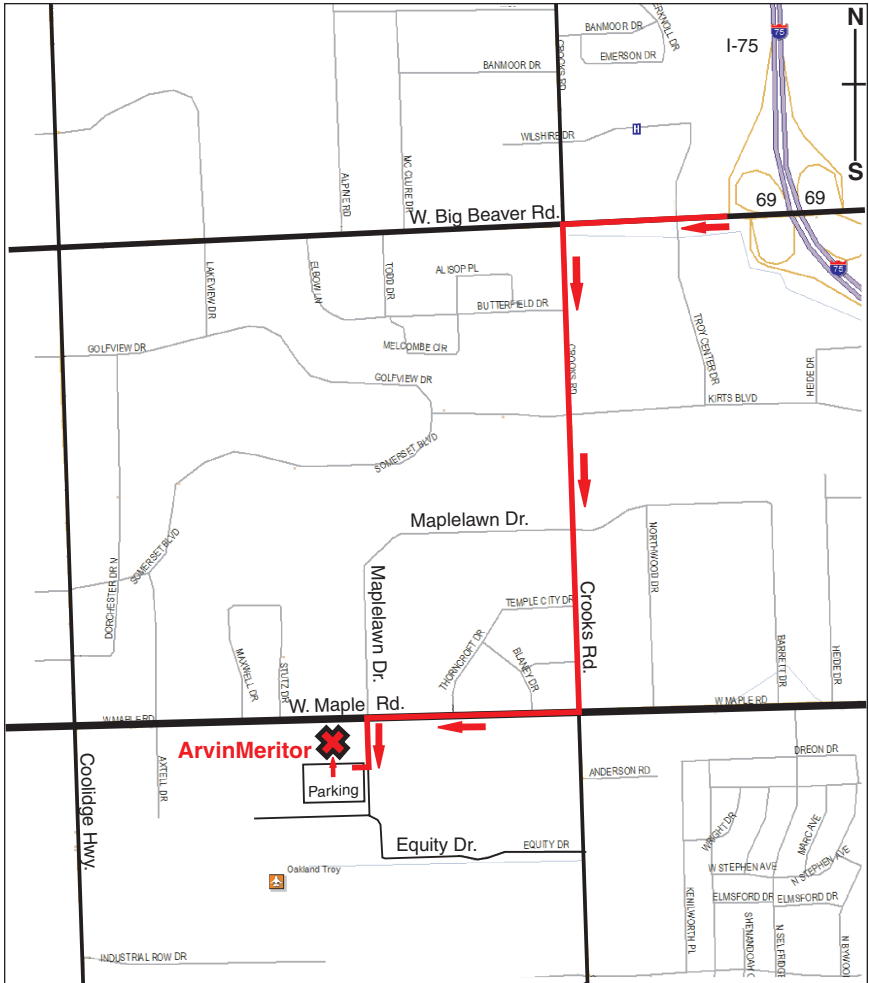
SIG-IBM Intermediate 3:45 p.m. **Program: Google: How is the giant of search shaping the future? Google’s technologies and business model will be discussed.**

SIG-ADVANCED, February 6, 2007—MONDAY, 6:45 p.m., (NO JANUARY MEETING) (First Monday), Oak Park Public Library, 14200 Oak Park Blvd., Oak Park, MI. Phone: (248) 691-7480. Directions: Oak Park Blvd. is 9 1/2 mile Road; library is west of Coolidge. Info: Franz Breidenich 248-398-3359. **TOPIC: Wide-Ranging Discussion Of Computers & Computing.**

February 12—SEMCO SUNDAY

<http://www.semco.org>

**SEMCO Meetings at [ArvinMeritor](#)
2135 West Maple Road, Troy, MI 48084**



DIRECTIONS

From I-75, take Exit 69 to westbound Big Beaver Rd. (16 Mile). Turn left (South) on Crooks Rd. Turn right (West) on Maple Rd. (15 Mile). Turn left (South) on Maplelawn Dr. Turn right into the parking lot at the rear of the ArvinMeritor building. The building is shaped like an X. Enter the building thru the South entrance at the center of the rear of the building. Follow the SEMCO signs.

SEMCO thanks the [ArvinMeritor](#) Corporation for their hospitality in providing their facility for our meetings.



**SouthEastern Michigan
Computer Organization, Inc.
P.O. Box 707
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48303-0707**

SEMCO (future meetings)

January 14

February 11

**FIRST CLASS MAIL
Dated Material**

**SEMCO: A Community Organization
Helping People for the 21st Century**