

Computer News

January 2005
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The Napa Valley Personal Computer Users Group has served novice and experienced computer users since 1983. Through its monthly meetings, newsletters, on-line forum, special interest groups, mentor program and community involvement, it has helped educate people of all ages. The NVPCUG provides opportunities for people to find friends who share common interests and experiences. Through its Computers-to-Schools program, members refurbish used computer equipment for donation to local schools. Since January 2003 the NVPCUG has donated more than 210 computers and 102 printers.

Mozilla Firefox Internet Browser to Be Reviewed at January 19 NVPCUG Meeting

The Napa Valley Personal Computer Users Group will meet Wednesday, January 19, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m., at the Napa Senior Activity Center, 1500 Jefferson Street, Napa, CA .

Our main presentation will feature **Calvin Ross** discussing *Firefox 1.0*, Mozilla's recently released and highly rated Internet browser, and comparing its features to those in Microsoft's *Internet Explorer*, the most widely used browser. *Firefox's* speed, pop-up blocking, security, superior search capabilities, simplified user interface, tab-browsing mode, free distribution, and other features have won it much praise. Releases are available for Windows, Linux, and Macintosh operating systems.

Calvin writes a popular weekly computer column for the *Napa Valley Register* and teaches computer technology classes in Napa Valley schools.



Calvin Ross

In the **Computer Tutor** session prior to the main presentation, **Michael Moore** will discuss the use of the Drawing Toolbar in *Microsoft Word*. This toolbar provides easy access to powerful tools that let you make, insert, and move shapes; control fill color; change the line color and style; add shadowing and 3D effects; and more. This capability can enhance your use of *Word* and the presentation of your documents. Mike is a Computer Studies instructor at Napa Valley College, where he teaches *Microsoft Word*, *Excel* and *Access* courses. He is also NVPCUG's Computer Tutor Coordinator.

The meeting will begin with **Back-to-Basics**, an informative session about basic computer concepts and skills, and with **Random Access**, an open-floor question-and-answer period during which you can ask questions about specific issues you have encountered in using a computer hardware and software and receive helpful information from other meeting attendees.

Need practical information that will enable you to make better use of your computer? Come to this meeting! Guests are always welcome.

President's Message — New Beginnings

by Orion E. Hill

Officers for 2005

The NVPCUG's "2004" board of directors, at its final meeting on December 1, elected the following people to serve as the NVPCUG's corporate directors for the "2005" term, which runs from December 2004 to December 2005: **Dianne Prior, James Stirling, John Simcoe, Julie Jerome, Orion E. Hill, and Roy Wagner.** At a special meeting convened immediately after the "2004" board adjourned, our new directors elected corporate officers and appointed subordinate officers for the new term. By now you have most likely learned that I was reelected President and that **Julie Jerome** and **Roy Wagner** were reelected Secretary and Treasurer, respectively. Our newly appointed officers are listed in the officer table on page 3 of this newsletter.

We are very fortunate that most of our officers for the past year are serving again this year. Their experience will help ensure that we have a strong leadership team. Two of our officers are new: **Dianne Prior**, who is serving as a corporate director and as Membership Director, and **Bob Simmerman**, who is serving as Greeter Coordinator. In addition, **Marcia Waddell** has agreed to serve as Librarian while continuing as Product Review Coordinator.

Volunteers Needed

Unfortunately, this year, like last year, we are starting with vacancies in several key positions: Vice President, Programs Director, and Special Projects Director. We need volunteers for these positions immediately. Our other officers don't have time to handle extra responsibilities. If you would like to fill one of these positions or serve as an NVPCUG director, please let me know.

Contributions and Support Recognized

In addition to electing directors for the following term, our "2004" board of directors recognized the outstanding contributions of **Bill Wheadon** by naming him Outstanding Member-of-the-Year. The board also recognized **Dey, LP's** continuing strong support by extending the company's honorary corporate membership for another year.

Since October 2000 Dey, a Napa-based developer and manufacturer of prescription drugs for the treatment of respiratory-related diseases and allergies, has been a strong supporter of our education program and a major donor of equipment and funds for our Computers-to-Schools program. In 2002 the company donated nearly 100 used com-



puters and funded a \$10,000 grant that helped launch the CTS program. As an honorary corporate member, Dey is entitled to designate two employees to be its representatives. **Charlotte Converse**, Dey's computer services manager, and **John Estes**, Dey's director of information technology operations, are the company's representatives.

Membership Renewal Drawing

The early membership renewal drawing announced last month by e-mail will be conducted at our January 19 general meeting. Everyone who paid or mailed his or her 2005 dues by December 31, 2004, is eligible for the drawing. The drawing winner will have his or her membership extended for an additional twelve months. Because dues have been paid on a calendar-year basis during the last two years, the memberships of most members were due to expire at the end of 2004. At the end of the previous year, only 35 percent of our active members had paid their 2004 dues, and 37 percent still had not paid a month later. Thanks in part to our drawing, more than 66 percent of our currently active members already have paid their dues.

If you have not yet renewed your membership, please mail your payment, along with a completed Membership Application/Renewal form immediately. You can use the form in the back of this newsletter.

Renewing Commitments

One year ago, in my first message as President, I spoke about my vision of the NVPCUG becoming "a much more valuable source of information and support for computer users." I said my goals were "to ensure that our educational offerings and services are driven by the needs of local users, and that every participant in one of our activities will be able to take home more practical information." During the past year we made some progress toward these goals, although without a Vice President and a Programs Director during the first three months the journey was very difficult.

Although we are starting this year with those positions vacant again, as well as that of Special Projects Director, I hope that we will be able to further improve our meeting programs and begin offering hands-on workshops and a greater variety of special interest groups.

Sound Off!

Got a suggestion for improving an NVPCUG activity? Send e-mail to OHill@napanet.net or call (707) 252-0637.

31 NVPCUG Members Enjoy Holidays Party

On a cool December 15 evening 31 NVPCUG members and guests gathered at the Christmas House of **Dick and Sandy Peterson's** tree farm to sample delicious potluck food dishes, talk, work on jigsaw puzzles, inspect items at a silent auction, compare recipes for baked goodies on the tables, draw warmth from a cozy fire, and even listen to our president.

President Orion Hill thanked retir-



ing officers for their work through the year and introduced the new officers. He also presented Bill Wheadon as Outstanding Member of the Year.

The silent auction attracted atten-



tion as many useful items were displayed. Treasurer **Roy Wagner** reported that it netted a total of \$101.

The NVPCUG thanks the Petersons for allowing our group to use their Christmas House for our annual holidays party for a fifth straight year.

Welcome New Member!

by Dianne Prior, NVPCUG Membership Director

The Napa Valley Personal Computer Users Group is delighted to welcome **Claudia Lofing**, who joined in December. She is the wife of NVPCUG member **Dave Lofing**. The Lofings are the longtime owners and managers of the House of Lights, a well known lighting fixture store in downtown Napa.

As of the end of December 2004, the NVPCUG had 116 active members. A year ago our group had 118 active members.

Napa Valley Personal Computer Users Group Officers for 2005

Board of Directors

President	Orion E. Hill	(707) 252-0637	President@nvpcug.org
Vice President	(Volunteer Needed)		VicePresident@nvpcug.org
Secretary	Julie Jerome	224-6620	Secretary@nvpcug.org
Treasurer	Roy Wagner	253-2721	Treasurer@nvpcug.org

Other Directors: Dianne Prior, John Simcoe, James Stirling

Appointed Officers

Computer Recycling Coordinator	Bill Wheadon	224-3901	Recycler@nvpcug.org
Computer Tutor Coordinator	Mike Moore	255-1615	Tutor@nvpcug.org
Computers-to-Schools Program Coordinator	Orion E. Hill	252-0637	CTS@nvpcug.org
Facility Arrangements Coordinator	Steve Siegrist		Facility@nvpcug.org
Greeter Coordinator	Bob Simmerman	259-6113	Greeter@nvpcug.org
Librarian	Marcia Waddell	252-2060	Librarian@nvpcug.org
Membership Director	Dianne Prior	252-1506	Membership@nvpcug.org
Mentor Program Coordinator	Hilton Des Roches	224-6170	Mentors@nvpcug.org
Newsletter Circulator	Jim Hearn	224-2540	
Newsletter Editor	James Stirling	944-1177	Editor@nvpcug.org
Product Review Coordinator	Marcia Waddell	252-2060	Reviews@nvpcug.org
Programs Director	(Volunteer Needed)		Programs@nvpcug.org
Publicity Director	John Simcoe	258-8233	Publicity@nvpcug.org
Random Access Moderator	Jerry Brown	254-9607	Questions@nvpcug.org
Special Projects Director	(Volunteer Needed)		Projects@nvpcug.org
Webmaster	Ron Dack		Webmaster@nvpcug.org

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Editorial—

Cautions for the Unwary

By James Stirling, Editor

As we start the brave new year with hopefully new and improved gadgets to make life easier and more productive, we find the world of computing increasingly more scary. Some of the articles in this issue, taken largely from the PUSH service provided by the Association of Personal Computer Users, are not happy ones. Lee Schwab details the merits of a new version of antivirus security. Dennis Schulman exhorts us to run a "housekeeping" routine every day to get rid of viruses, cookies and spyware. Fortunately, he tells us in detail, step by step, how to do so. Then Ira Wilsker weighs in with a set of New Year's resolutions to make sure again that we brace ourselves for the onslaught of viruses, worms, Trojans, spam mail, hoaxes, hijackers, and spyware. Herbert Goldstein introduces us to Google's Gmail, something wonderful that was new to me, then points out the incipient danger in our having a gigabyte of e-mail messages or Web searches that will be at the disposal of marketers, government agencies, and anyone else who can persuade Google to furnish them. (Incidentally, since Goldstein wrote his article Google has increased its storage of personal data to 2 gigabytes, and other ISPs like Yahoo have followed suit.) And Sue Crane reports on studies suggesting that nearsighted people who spend all day before a computer monitor may increase their risk of getting glaucoma.

On the other hand, there is some good news. Sherry Zorzi paints a joyous picture of home life filled

with entertainment at every turn, as well as access to the Web, all through local home wireless networking. In yet another article Ira Wilsker summarizes preliminary steps to preparing and using a new PC. Through his detailed instructions he makes it sound easy. In two articles Gabe Goldberg takes up techniques that do what many of us have wished for: one, for practical screen capturing for the printer, and another on finding misplaced files. And Sue Crane also tells us that wearable technology is coming to market, including a 1.9-pound computer with an 8.4-inch touchable screen, and MP3 players built into sunglasses.

So, is the computing world getting better or worse? Whichever, we are becoming more and more dependent on the gadgets. But let's still be wary.

We were pleased to get a letter from a reader pointing out a needed correction to an article in last month's newsletter. We hope other readers will make use of this forum to tell us what they think of this issue of *Computer News* and what they would like to see in future issues. E-mail your comments to *Editor@nvpcug.org*.

For more information about the NVPCUG visit our Web site at:
<http://www.nvpcug.org>

Letters to the Editor

Setting Your PC Clock

First of all I'd like to say how much I enjoy the *NVPCUG Computer News*. Your selection of articles has been timely as well as varied and I find something of interest in every issue.

I'd like to comment on the article "What Time Is It? Set Your PC Clock" in the November issue on page 8. I am a strong believer in having your computer(s) running at the correct time for all the reasons mentioned in the article and have been using *AboutTime* for a number of years with great success. Near the end of the article Mr. Wilsker recommends using the time server *tick.usno.navy.mil*. I have found that there are primary and secondary time servers as well as open, closed and restricted servers. Ordinary folks like us should be using secondary servers (which get set from the primary servers) to reduce traffic/load on the primary servers. In addition some time servers would like you to request permission to use them, and others don't seem to mind anyone using the service. Some are restricted by the organization operating the server to a particular group of folks (the government). The time server listed in the article is a primary, closed, restricted server, so on all three counts we should not be using this server. I have been using *clock.sjc.he.net* (216.218.254.202) and *clock.developer.com* (216.52.237.151) and found them reliable and accurate. More information about time servers can be found at <http://ntp.isc.org>.

Tom Dowd, NVPCUG member

NVPCUG January Calendar

January 5	7:00 p.m.	Board of Directors meeting, Piner's Nursing Home, Napa
January 10	5:30-7:30 p.m.	Investment SIG, 23 Skipping Rock Way, Napa
January 12	7:00 p.m.	Digital Photo SIG, Piner's Nursing Home, 1800 Pueblo Ave., Napa
January 19	7:00-9:00 p.m.	General Meeting, Napa Senior Activity Center, 1500 Jefferson St., Napa

Product Review—

Symantec's Norton Internet Security 2005

By Lee Schwab

Though Symantec's *Norton Internet Security 2003* was working fine on my PC and protecting it from viruses, I was concerned about spyware. When I read somewhere that its 2005 upgraded version includes anti-spyware software I had all the impetus that I needed to get the new version.

Symantec's *Norton Internet Security 2005* is an integrated security package that protects your computer from the most common Internet threats. If you like statistics, you would really like all the data that it recorded for me about its success.. Below is a brief description of this comprehensive security software and some examples of what it did for my machine.

Outbreak Alert informs you of rapidly spreading threats and ensures that your computer is protected against them. It saved me from *W32.Beagle.AV@mm* and *W32.Sober.I@mm*

Personal Firewall protects your computer from unauthorized access. Mine was last attacked on: 12/14/04, 10.01.29AM.

Intrusion Detection can automatically detect and block Internet attacks. Recent intrusion attempts on my ma-

chine numbered 2, and the most frequent attacker was: 219.159.80.10.

Norton AntiVirus protects your computer from viruses (Trojan Horse), worms (i.e., Blaster, Sasser), and spyware. Norton AntiVirus can be set for automatic updating when you are connected to the Internet. It scans e-mails and eliminates the risk of sending viruses to others. A full system scan is recommended at least once a week to ensure that your computer stays safe. If you forget, it will remind you and tell you when you last did such a scan.

Norton AntiSpam helps eliminate unwanted and annoying e-mails, ads, spam, pop-ups, etc., before you see them. It can use your outgoing e-mail to improve spam filtering. On my machine, it blocked 0 cookies and permitted 203. It also blocked 240 Web ads.

Privacy Control helps protect your personal information. It cannot be accessed on your computer without your knowledge. Thus far it hasn't been invoked on my machine.

Parental Control helps block inappropriate information. You can customize Internet access for everyone who uses your PC (i.e., child or supervisor).

Unfortunately, unscrupulous people are continually creating and spreading viruses or trying to hack into your computer. Many viruses are spread from Web sites using ActiveX and Javascript, so think twice before downloading anything from a Web site. Even though you may keep this newest version updated, new viruses can infect your computer. The best protection is to update this software almost every day, do a complete system scan once a week, back up your important files often, and have a recovery disk.

For more details on Symantec's *Norton Internet Security 2005*, surf to *symantec.com*. Minimum operating system requirements are Windows XP, 2000 Pro, Me, or 98. For the complete program 200MB of available hard disk space is needed. It also needs *Microsoft Internet Explorer 5.5* or later, and a DVD or CD drive.

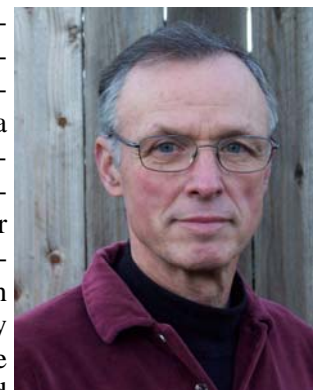
Lee Schwab was an active NVPCUG member from 1988 through 2003. During that time, she served as Newsletter Editor (1989-1997), President (1991), Vice President (1992), Program Chair (1995), and Public Relations Director (1997). We look forward to Lee and her husband James renewing their memberships.

Bill Wheadon Named Outstanding Member of the Year

Bill Wheadon was recognized as Outstanding Member-of-the-Year at the NVPCUG holidays party on December 15. President Orion Hill presented to Bill a gift certificate for dinners at the nationally known Mustards Grill in Yountville. The selection of Bill was made by the 2004 NVPCUG board of directors at its final meeting December 1.

The naming of a member-of-the-year followed the board's adoption of Orion's proposal for such a recognition award. Bill, who has been a NVPCUG member since 1991, was selected for his outstanding contributions not only during 2004 but also during previous years. Since 2002 he has devoted hundreds of hours to our Computer-to-Schools program, for which he serves as assistant coor-

dinator, provided free workshop space for the CTS program, coordinated our participation in the 2004 Napa County Computer and Electronics Recycling Event, assisted with our used computer equipment sales, served as corporate director, and been quick to volunteer for many small projects, even before being asked. Bill is a retired United Airlines pilot. He and his wife **Janice** reside in Napa.



Bill Wheadon

Hard Drive Housekeeping Is Vital

By Dennis Schulman, Tampa Bay Computer Society, FL

For those of you who surf the net on a regular basis - and that includes those who use dialup access as well as cable or DSL - it is absolutely crucial that you take your hard drive housekeeping more seriously than you ever thought necessary. Many users think that by having a suite of utilities, such as Norton or McAfee, that you are protected. You might be, but I seriously doubt it for so many reasons I won't go into it now except for three:

You use auto update and auto scan. This requires that your computer be online at the time to run the auto update. In the case of cable or DSL, that is possible, but the computer has to be on at the time also. In the case of dialup, the computer won't go online unless your password is saved and used automatically. That, of course, defeats keeping friends and annoying children from messing up the computer without your knowledge. So, you might want to run your antivirus update manually, just to make certain it worked and there were no errors.

The second reason is based on the fact that if you did not clean house before scanning, you risk the possibility of the antivirus finding a virus it could not delete or quarantine and you did not know it. You also risk the possibility of not knowing if the auto update was not run successfully for one of many reasons (and time and space won't permit that discussion at this time) and consequently your subsequent full system auto scan may not be able to recognize the latest nasties you have managed to acquire.

There is a third, more obtuse, reason. If you don't really know if your system is truly clean and clear of all the bad stuff, how will you know what to do when you get a message that says something to the effect: "It has been determined that your computer has been sending messages infected with the _____ trojan horse virus to what appears to be the email

listing of your address book. If you do not take appropriate action immediately, your email service will be discontinued. If your anti virus program has failed to protect you, please download the following trojan horse removal tool and run it immediately."

So, here is a housekeeping procedure I use - which is manual - because then I am more certain that I know the status of my files than most of the "suite" programs. And it doesn't use much - if any - of my system resources except when I use it. Just in case you think you have all the utilities you need, let me comment that I am not an expert on your system, but I spend more time now than ever before on systems that have too many over-burdensome utilities that are truly unnecessary and in some cases more dangerous than what they claimed to be designed to do. What I am proposing is basically using 3 little free utilities that only work when invoked, along with utilities that already come with your computer.

Run Disk Cleanup (under System Tools under Accessories on the Programs menu) and process all options (don't worry about compressed files, but do them at a later time when you have nothing else to do, since it could take quite a while if you haven't done it the first time).

Clear your browser cache. (In *Internet Explorer* go to Tools, Internet Options. Delete cookies and delete all offline files. In *Netscape Communicator* go to Edit, Preferences, Advanced, Clear Memory Cache and Clear Disk Cache)

Open Windows Explorer (right-click on My Computer, select Explore), Select the Folders/View option and select Show all files except system files (You can leave it this way.) Find any folders called tmp, temp, or cookies. Unless you have a good working knowledge of which cookies you need or do not need, you proba-

bly don't need the contents of any of the temp, cookies, or temporary internet folders except the *index.dat* file. (You might want to save the contents of the History folder).

Empty the Recycle Bin

Update and run the latest core version of *Ad-aware SE Personal Edition* (currently version 1.05). Once the scan is complete, click on an object found, right-click a lined item and select all, click next and remove all.

Update and run the latest version of *Spybot* (currently version 1.3.) Before running the scan, run immunize. Then run Look for Problems. Once problems are found, select them all and click on Fix Problems.

Note: Some spyware may be associated with programs you want to use, so read the help section for a further understanding of the features and options on both of these programs. These spyware objects detector utilities can be downloaded from download.com or majorgeeks.com.

There is a third utility, called a hijack remover. There are many available, but I like *CWShredder.exe* (current version 2.00) (use www.google.com to find the program) Just make certain you are not online and that your browser is not open when you run it. You may be surprised and pleased if it finds something and fixes it (generally really bad stuff).at its best.

Now you should be able to update and run your antivirus more successfully than ever before. The only catch is that it takes time. Once you figure out about how much time each step takes, you can determine whether you can walk away and come back later when it is done.

I recommend running House-Keeping at the end of every day you go online - if you can manage it. Otherwise, run it every 3 days for certain. Now, if you know your computer is

The Digital Home

by Sherry Zorzi, Cajun Clickers Computer Club, Louisiana

clean and pure, then this is the only condition to justify running the defragmentation utility (once a week or twice a month). Defrag does not "fix" anything. It enhances the performance of a healthy environment. If you attempt to defrag a "sick" system, you could make it worse to the extent that the computer will fail to boot or run. If you have Windows 2000 or Windows XP, you can run defrag directly. If you have Windows Me, 98, or 95, run it in Safe Mode. I prefer running Defrag in Safe Mode as I have a UPS and the computer can complete the defrag, even if the lights go out in the house.

Now that you have successfully learned the housekeeping routine and understand its importance without the need for complex and sometimes dangerous free software utilities that can cause conflicts, you can set up the program scheduler to run your housekeeping routine for you and just check up on it from time to time to see that it is accomplishing your wishes.

Feel free to e-mail me for further details and other fine, free utilities available for keeping your hard drive and system performing at their best.

Dennis Schulman, known as the PC Miracle Man, has been a practicing field consultant in Largo, Florida for over 22 years. He has been a member of the Tampa Bay Computer Society for over 15 years and was the editor of its sometimes 40-page newsletter for 5 years. He can be contacted at dschulman@myrapidsys.com.

The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups, an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you.

Will 2005 be the year your home entertainment goes digital? For many families, it will be. Welcome to the Digital Home!

In the digital home, you can listen to your PC's digital music on your stereo or home theater system, on your portable music player, or on your wireless notebook computer. In the digital home, you can view the photos stored on your PC on your TV or home theater, on your wireless PDA or wireless notebook computer, or on a digital picture frame.

In the digital home, you can access your broadband Internet connection from any PC in your home, or on your TV or home theater. In the digital home, you can access the videos or home movies from your PC or its DVD drive and watch them on your TV or home theater, or on your wireless PDA or notebook. In the digital home, you can view a video feed from a home webcam on your PC, a wireless PDA or notebook, or any Internet connection.

In the digital home, you can record live TV on your PC. You can program the PC to record every episode of a particular show or every show that features your favorite actor. You can pause and playback live TV. In the digital home, you can play multiplayer online games wirelessly on your gaming console, PC, and notebook computer.

Does this sound like a futuristic dream? Well, the future is now, and it's surprisingly affordable! Here's what you'll need to make your home a Digital Home.

Start with a PC with an Intel P4 processor with HTT (hyper-threading technology.) This will give you the power needed to drive all that multimedia. The hyper-threading technology allows for parallel processing, making it speedy as well as robust. Use Windows XP Media Center Edition 2005 as your PC operating sys-

tem. This gives you a simple, built-in interface for all your digital media experience and can be controlled by wireless remote.

Make that PC the hub of your home network. It's powerful enough to handle the digital entertainment, the network, and still be used for running regular computer programs – email, Internet browsers, word-processors, and the like. You can have other PCs and notebooks connected to it with a wireless network router, or you can use a wired connection to other PCs. You'll need a broadband Internet connection for accessing online TV guides, digital music and video download sites, and online radio. Add a TV tuner card for connecting to your TV or home theater system.

You'll want a DVD burner if you'd like to burn recorded TV to DVD so you can take it with you for viewing on a notebook computer. A Digital Media Adaptor will allow you to stream your music, photos and video to any room in your house. You can use your current TV and stereo system so long as they are not antique!

To top it all off, throw in a portable MP3 player and PDA so that you can take all that media with you as you travel.

The beauty of the Digital Home is the seamless connection of the personal computer, Internet, TV, stereo (or home theater system), laptops and portable music and PDA devices. You can access any media over any device in any room at any time. Now that's entertainment!

The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups brings this article to you.

New Year's Resolutions for Computer Users

By Ira Wilsker, APCUG Board of Directors

This is the season when we are often asked about our New Year's resolutions. We should also resolve to be better cybercitizens and practice "Safe HEX". Here are some suggested resolutions:

1. Update antivirus software at least daily – new viruses, worms, and Trojans are appearing at a rapid pace, so antivirus software that has not been updated at least daily may be worse than no antivirus software at all. We may have a false sense of security using non-updated software, so we click on any interesting e-mail attachments, and insert that questionable floppy in our computers, a dangerous practice. Considering that there are a variety of free antivirus products available, and commercial antivirus software is reasonably priced, there is absolutely no reason why not to have current antivirus software that is updated at least daily.

2. Spam mail – Delete them without opening them, period. As 2004 came to a close, estimates are that up to 80% of all e-mail is spam. Never purchase anything that is advertised by spam e-mail. Never click on a link in spam e-mail, as many links may load Trojans on your computer, or result in identity theft. Never disclose any personal information such as account numbers, passwords, social security numbers, PIN numbers, etc. in response to an e-mail. This illicit and criminal practice is a method of identity theft called "phishing." Many who market via spam mail are scammers and thieves who make unverifiable claims about their products, sell pirated software, or who will take your hard-earned money and send nothing useful back in return.

3. Never click on a popup ad. While many are legitimate sellers, many are also scams. As long as we click on them, and sometimes make purchases, the popup purveyors will

continue to plague us with their material.

4. Practice good email etiquette, also called "netiquette." If forwarding e-mails to others, do not simply hit "forward" and enter names from your address book. Having a lot of headers, those lines of others' e-mail addresses and routing information, as well as a lot of ">" (greater-than) symbols makes e-mail difficult to read. Strip off any useless header by highlighting and deleting them, and delete the ">".

Another beneficial piece of netiquette is to be sure that attachments are reasonable in size. Since many newer digital cameras can take poster-sized images; users should reduce the size of e-mailed images to a reasonable size, such that they can be easily viewed. It would also be a good idea to save the image in the universal JPG or GIF formats, rather than the sometimes-default BMP format, as the JPG and GIF formats greatly compress the file, making it a much smaller download. I sometimes resent receiving a digital photo taken at 2560x1720 or larger, when trying to view it. Recently, someone proudly sent me a 4 megapixel photo of his new grandchild to view on my 800x600 monitor. When I first loaded the image, all I saw was a huge eye, and with red-eye at that. Not just was the file size huge and slow to download, but the image was several times the size of my screen, requiring me to scroll to see the image.

5. Do not forward hoaxes and urban legends. These may be cute, or we may feel that we are really warning others about some perceived threat, but please check out any e-mail which says "forward this to everyone you know" as it will most likely be a hoax or urban legend. Sites such as www.snopes.com are excellent resources to debunk hoaxes and urban

legends. Be aware that you can not get rich or get gift certificates by forwarding e-mails, and that the poor dying kid in Georgia wanting postcards has long since recovered. Save yourself some potential embarrassment and e-mail bandwidth, and refuse to forward these messages without first verifying their authenticity. Smart people can be duped too, so do not automatically trust the sender.

6. Kill Spyware. According to many cyber security experts, spyware, software that can gather and send information of the users' activities, may be a greater threat than computer viruses. Spyware is used to steal passwords, account numbers, and other personal information, as well as generate obscene popup ads, redirect purchases and searches, and several other undesirable acts. Also referred to as "malware," spyware is dangerous.

While there are several decent commercial anti-spyware products on the market, there are also some excellent free ones, such as *Spybot Search and Destroy* (www.safer-networking.org) and *Ad-Aware SE* (www.lavasoftusa.com). Never respond to the scam popup ads that tell you that your computer is infested, and "click here." Many of those supposed anti-spyware products are scams themselves. Install legitimate anti-spyware software, update it and run it at least weekly.

7. Participate in National Cyber Security Awareness Month - October 2005. Put it on your calendar and go to <http://www.staysafeonline.info/> to find out how you and your User Group can participate in this important event.

All of the resolutions above are necessary, and easier to keep than losing weight.

The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups brings this article to you.

Gmail

by Dr. Herbert A. Goldstein, Editor, Sarasota PC Monitor
Sarasota FL PC Users Group (www.spcug.org - pcug@comcast.net)

Gmail is a new, free, Web-based e-mail service from Google, the people who brought us that remarkable search engine. Gmail, as offered today, is an experiment in a new kind of e-mail. Similar to Hotmail, it has some important differences. Its foundation is the concept that e-mails need never be deleted, and you should always be able to find any message at any time by searching for it.

There are several major reasons why Google's concept of how e-mail should work is suspect. You get one gigabyte of storage space for your Gmails. No other Internet Service Provider offers even one-tenth of this amount. With so much space available, deleting mail seems less urgent.

In Outlook, when you delete an e-mail message, it really isn't deleted. You're simply transferring it to another folder. Deleting it permanently from that folder requires confirmation on your part. Outlook doesn't make you go to the Recycle Bin to finish the job, but some Internet Service Providers aren't so considerate.

With Gmail it seems much easier to let the messages accumulate, and use the search feature to find what you want when you need it. Even if you decide to delete the message, it may not be gone. Google says that deleted messages will remain on the system for as long as it cares to keep them.

Because of a new law in California, Google was forced to admit that the company will be pooling any information you give them from any of their services. They will not only keep this information as long as they wish, but they reserve the right to give it to whomever they wish. Don't worry, however. Google probably has confidence that its intentions are good. Its corporate motto is "Don't be evil." It says so in their corporate IPO filing to the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Upon close examination, Google's privacy policies aren't any different from Amazon, Microsoft, and others. Their good-guy image derives from their unconventional corporate culture and their successful search engine.

Most people have no idea what's in the Electronic Communications Privacy Act, and why not? Most people aren't legal scholars. One of the Act's provisions says that after 180 days, e-mails are no longer protected. Their status reverts to just another record in a database. Any level of government can force Google to release your records armed with only a subpoena.

Google has never issued any statements about its relationships with other countries, and this should give you cause for concern. Check out the language in the agreement you have to make with Google when you sign up for Gmail. You are giving permission for Google to release your Gmail records to any official from any government, U.S. or otherwise, who requests it for any reason. Would you even want to send an e-mail to someone who has a Gmail account, knowing that your e-mail may be examined by a foreign government?

Google has also stated that your e-mail will be scanned so that you can receive advertising and links to relevant Web sites. This applies to both incoming and outgoing e-mail. Nothing in any of Google's policies or public statements applies to those of us who don't have Gmail accounts. There is nothing in Google's privacy policy that would prevent them from storing a list of keywords scanned from incoming e-mail, and associating these keywords with the incoming e-mail address in their database. Google has promised their advertisers won't receive any information that would allow personal identification, but what's to stop Google from keeping this information for some other

future use? No one except Google knows if the company has deleted any of the data they've collected. The cookie they dropped on your hard drive doesn't expire until 2038, and it's kept track of every search term you've used. How's that for scary?

We don't know for certain if Google will build a colossal database derived from keywords associated with e-mail addresses. If that does turn out to be the case however, there is incredible potential for abuse. The RIAA has sent out thousands of "John Doe" and "Jane Doe" subpoenas to Universities and Internet Service Providers to identify people who download MP3 files illegally. If the RIAA can force AOL to comply, they can do it with Google.

Would an intelligence agency make anything sinister of keywords like "Send us the secret Martha, it's only a recipe, not a nuclear launch code"? Much more ominous would be combinations like jihad coupled with assassination. All kinds of patterns can be generated from keyword combinations. We're beginning to sound like paranoid conspiracy theorists, but the potential for abuse is real and should not be ignored. What makes Gmail appear so suspicious, sinister, and frightening is the enormous storage capacity that Google offers, combined with its super-efficient search engine. There is also the problem of inappropriate ad matching. Stories abound about on-line merchants who send themselves e-mail for testing, and discover that something in their e-mails generates ads for their competitors. The "Backspace" section of the October 5, 2004 issue of *PC Magazine* shows a juxtaposition of an advertisement for an all-inclusive vacation in the Caribbean along with an ad that says "Just say no to all-inclusive."

Gmail was launched presumably as a response from Google users complaining about the poor quality of their current email services. Be careful what you wish for.

The APCUG brings this article to you.

Screen Capture Tools Put Windows Data at Your Beck and Call

By Gabe Goldberg <gabe@gabegold.com>

When you have a problem with your car, you bring it to the repair shop. When you're sick, you visit the doctor. But computer problems sometimes show up as nasty messages plopped in the middle of the screen. So it's hard to capture information needed to research and fix the problem. And someone trying to help you via email or phone may ask questions about system settings or application options which may be tedious to record and communicate. A previous article describes information that's useful for solving problems.

[<http://www.aarp.org/computers-howto/Articles/a2004-07-12-getanswers>]

But sometimes the best information is a picture of what happens or what's wrong.

The good news is that all Windows versions provide basic tools to capture the entire screen or just the active application window.

You may have tried to use the PrintScreen (or PrtScr on some keyboards) key and not seen anything happen. This is because that key doesn't really *print* anything, it simply copies the entire screen (or just the active window if you press Alt-then-PrintScreen keys) to the Windows clipboard (an invisible Windows area for storing temporary data). Here's a tip: if you're capturing the entire screen and you'd like to date-stamp the image, move the mouse cursor over the time shown at the right side of the Windows taskbar. That will pop up the date, which will be included in the captured image.

While you can't see the clipboard, you can paste the captured image from it into a word processing or graphics program from which you can print or save it. Open an application you like—*Microsoft Paint* or its equivalent (included with Windows), *Microsoft Word*, or any graphics program. Position the cursor where you want to place the image and press

Ctrl-V (Ctrl and V keys simultaneously). The image will appear. If you like, you can add descriptive information such as the date, the nature of your problem, your Windows version, applications which were running, etc.

You can now print the image from the application (click File and Print); you're also close to being able to save or e-mail the captured image! To save it, within the application click File and Save As. Specify a location (hard drive, floppy disk, USB key, etc.). Programs may offer different choices of file type for saving. Common choices are JPG (good for photographs, can be compressed), PNG (new/free standard format, good for non-photos), GIF (commonly used, produces relatively small files, limited to 256 colors), and BMP (produces large files, Windows-only format, usable if files won't be transmitted). Once the file is saved you can attach it to an e-mail.

But Windows' built-in screen capture is primitive and inflexible. That's led many people and companies to develop tools providing more functions. Searching Google for "screen capture" produced about 227,000 choices! Many of these are free, available for download. You can find good choices at Web sites such as Tucows Downloads [www.tucows.com]. Some are shareware—free to try, priced to continue using. A modestly priced choice that is powerful and easy to use is *CaptureWizPro* from PixelMetrics [www.pixelmetrics.com].

Costing \$30 and requiring a one-megabyte download, it provides a small toolbar that allows capturing any part of the screen, not just the full screen or the active window. The toolbar can be docked anywhere on the screen edge. It will hide until you mouse near it, then several selection tools (area, frame, scroll, etc.) allow precisely selecting what to copy.

Area selection allows simple selection of a rectangular section to copy.

Frame selection displays rulers that show the selected area's size in pixels and inches; the frame border opens fast, remembers its position, and lets you interactively prepare applications below it. Scrolling selection tools let you solve a nasty problem: how to capture an image that doesn't fit on the screen. You can select a scrollable area, energize Full AutoScroll, and the image will scroll before your eyes as *CaptureWizPro* collects it.

Once an image is captured, you can copy it to the clipboard for saving as described above, or you can do many more fun things with it: save it directly to a disk file, print it directly, make an on-screen PostIt-style note out of it (to keep visible something needed for reference), e-mail it directly, manipulate it with a built-in editor, etc.

CaptureWizPro installation offers a friendly list of tips for use. It also does something I wish more applications did: allows printing a one-page guide including capture basics, Q&A, and suggested uses. The tool is handy for recording configuration changes, comparing results of testing applications, sending information to people who don't have the same applications as you, creating paper checklists from screen lists, etc. A little imagination will suggest many more uses for the friendly fly-out capture tool bar.

No matter how you capture information—with Windows' built-in PrintScreen handling or any of the many add-in tools—you'll never have to describe what you saw on the screen; you'll be able to show it. You'll never laboriously transcribe option settings to report to a help desk; you'll send a picture. You'll wonder how you did without this powerful and simple tool.

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Necessities for That New Computer

By Ira Wilsker, APCUG Board of Directors

Recently, I noticed a lot of people were buying new computers for the holidays, either for themselves, or for gifts. In overhearing some conversations at a variety of local stores, I gathered that some computers were intended to replace older models, and others were for "first-time" users, both youngsters and senior citizens. If you as a new user, or even an experienced user, would follow some simple steps and obtain and use some necessary hardware and software, then you will likely have several years of happy computing. If you fail to heed safe computing guidelines, you will likely come to be dissatisfied with the new machine.

First, do not plug that new computer directly into the wall socket. It is imperative that the new computer be plugged into either a surge suppressor (the minimum protection) or a good uninterruptible power supply with automatic voltage regulation (UPS-AVR), of appropriate capacity, which would be ideal. Users need to be aware that the warranties of most new computers do not cover damage from power-related problems, and plenty of users have had their new computers "fried" by power surges or spikes. The resistance to power surges and spikes is measured in joules, and generally the more joules the better. A good UPS with AVR that has adequate capacity to power the computer for several minutes generally offers far superior protection to a surge suppressor. If a surge suppressor is selected, be sure that it has a UL1449 rating at a minimum. Some users think that a common inexpensive power strip is adequate, but other than maybe having a circuit breaker, a power strip offers

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no protection from power problems.

Once the computer is assembled, plugged into an appropriate protective device, and turned on, other threats and needs appear. First is antivirus protection: many new computers come with a short-term trial version of an antivirus program, installed with the hope that the user will pay the annual registration fee prior to expiration. I have had users tell me that they do not need antivirus software because they never go on-line with that computer, and that can be a dangerous misconception. Computer viruses can also be transmitted by infected floppies, CDs and DVDs, necessitating an updated antivirus product. Several antivirus products are available at retail and by download. Before purchasing antivirus software, consider the free antivirus software available from a variety of sources, including the free antivirus software that some of the Internet service providers give their subscribers. One decent free program is the *EHZ Trust Suite*, consisting of antivirus software, a firewall to restrict hacker access, and a popup blocker, can be downloaded at www.my-etrust.com/microsoft.

Relatively few users do not go on-line, and since almost all do, Internet access will be required. Almost all new computers come pre-installed with a variety of software from several national Internet service providers (ISPs). Microsoft tries to push users into using its MSN paid Internet access, and AOL, EarthLink, and others are commonly installed and featured on the desktop. The smart user desiring dial-up Internet access can probably save money and get superior service by using a local ISP for Internet access (such as Eonet, or EXP), rather than the big national carriers. If the user subscribes to a local ISP, then the directories containing the software for the national carriers can be safely deleted from the hard drive. If the user

will be using the Internet extensively, then high-speed "broadband" Internet access would be desirable. Choices of broadband providers include cable, DSL, and satellite broadband. They are generally price competitive with each other, but some offer better service than the others, and this varies locally. One warning: be sure that you understand any contracts that may be required, as some broadband providers have a hefty cancellation fee for terminating an account prematurely.

A printer will be necessary to print documents, photos, and other items. Almost all modern printers will do a decent job for household use, but be aware of what new inkjet or laser cartridges can cost. The user can save a lot of money by recycling and recharging his used inkjet and laser toner cartridges (such as from Laser Recon), or by purchasing refilled or generic cartridges. Be aware that inexpensive but good quality generic cartridges are generally available for some brands (Epson, Canon), but difficult to find for others (Lexmark, HP). A good deal and a high rebate on one brand of printer may turn out to be a false economy when the cost of replacement cartridges is factored in to the overall cost.

The user replacing his old computer with a new one may want to move files and programs to the new computer. Data files can be copied to CD, or moved via a direct network connection, but program files can generally not be simply copied from one computer to another. It would be best to reinstall desired programs from the original discs; but if they are not available, a utility sometimes included with new computers, or a utility such as "Aloha Bob," can move program files properly.

Enjoy that new computer, but be sure to practice "safe hex."

The Editorial Committee of APCUG brings this article to you.

Simple But Powerful Tools Find Misplaced PC Files

By Gabe Goldberg <gabe@gabegold.com>

As PCs have gotten more powerful in every dimension – faster processors, larger memories, and (especially) giant hard drives -- software developers have kept pace by bloating their applications. Where PCs once ran happily with 10 megabyte (not gigabyte!) disk drives, now most applications are many times that size, containing hundreds or thousands of files. As applications proliferate and users create their own blizzards of data files (documents, pictures, sound and video files, etc.) PC files become needles in a haystack.

Or, more annoyingly accurate, PCs are like gigantic haystacks hiding needles, since a PC's pile of files is always much more visible than the one file that's missing. Windows versions include a built-in tool for locating files. It's sometimes called Search and sometimes called Find; I guess that Finding sounds more optimistic than Searching. But they share problems: they don't search inside all filetypes (files' types are the second part of their names, what follows the dot, such as "doc" for *Microsoft Word* files), they don't always find all copies of files, they may completely skip files, and they run slowly.

Picking a file search tool is like choosing a Web browser or your favorite ice cream flavor: a matter of very personal taste. The search tool (or browser or ice cream) you favor matters less than your knowing about choices.

Sometimes it's hard to escape an already made choice, to try the unfamiliar -- though the pleasure of discovering a new favorite flavor helps the process along. This article describes two powerful utilities that can be your PC's lost-and-found. But remember that many other choices are available on software download sites such as www.tucows.com/.

Agent Ransack (a free download) and *FileLocator Pro* (\$25), near-twin-brother file-find utilities, greatly sur-

pass Windows' native tools: they're faster, friendlier, more flexible, and more accurate. Both programs are easy downloads (less than two megabytes) and install by simply executing the downloaded .exe file. They offer many tasty features. For example...

1) They display file lines containing your search string with their filenames: an overdue facility, and much more useful than displaying only filenames!

2) They can search multiple unrelated (non-nested) folders: what a concept, and so much better than having to repeat searches!

3) They can save and reuse search criteria. So if you ever repeat file searches—for example, to find all files containing your family name—you'll save time.

4) They allow saving and printing lists of files found: very helpful if a file search is the first step in a larger process which manipulates found files.

5) Both programs provide basic and expert interfaces. This choice allows using only simple search functions or enabling more detailed search criteria.

6) The programmer's tool "regular expressions" provide a more powerful wildcard notation than "*" for specifying matching search strings and filenames. Nearly everyone gets along just fine without using these, but people who like them *really* like them.

You'll be encouraged to register *Agent Ransack*. This is optional but a friendly gesture towards the developer who makes the program available.

Big brother *FileLocator Pro*—whose registration cost includes a year of updates—adds several features: it searches additional filetypes (PDF, ZIP, etc.); it displays found file lines as they appear in the file, with customizable numbers of lines above and below each one; it allows immediate inspection of found files with a built-in viewer or tailorable external

editor; it provides a detailed status line with found-file statistics; and it's programmable via scripting and plugins.

While it's perhaps a little unfashionable, I appreciate the 24-page *FileLocator Pro* manual. Full of screenshots illustrating basic and advanced facilities, it's a quick read revealing tips and nuggets that might otherwise be missed.

After paying for and downloading *FileLocator Pro*, you'll be given a registration key that enables using the program past the free evaluation period. You'll apply the key by executing a small registry update file or by copying a string from an e-mail into a dialogue box. Note that while you're safe executing the registry update file from a trusted vendor, caution is required with such files and they should *not* be accepted and executed from strangers.

A minor oddity is that invoking either product via right-clicking a folder in *Windows Explorer*—a handy facility—starts a new copy of the search tool rather than making an open copy the active window.

Until PCs can read our minds and do what we want without detailed instructions, tools like *Agent Ransack* and *FileLocator Pro* are great productivity enhancers. And don't neglect options available in Windows built-in search tools: they can tailor and refine searches to be more effective.

Specifications

Company: Mythic Software

Programs: *Agent Ransack*, *FileLocator Pro*

URL: www.mythicsoft.com

Price: Free (*Agent Ransack*); \$25 (*FileLocator Pro*)

OS: Windows 95 or newer.

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Tech News

by Sue Crane, Vice President / Editor, Big Bear Computer Club, CA

U.S. dictionary publisher Merriam-Webster says "blog" topped the list of most looked-up terms on its Web site during the last 12 months. The word will now appear in the 2005 print version of Merriam-Webster's dictionary, defined as "a Web site that contains an online personal journal with reflections, comments and often hyperlinks." However, Oxford University Press says "blog" is already included in some print versions of its Oxford English Dictionary and has entered mainstream usage. According to an Oxford U. Press spokesman. "Now we're getting words that derive from it such as 'blogosphere' and so on." According to the Pew Internet & American Life project, a blog is created every 5.8 seconds, and blog analysis firm Technorati estimates that the number of blogs in existence now exceeds 4.8 million.

CDW, a national technology solutions provider, recently announced its Tech Twister technology makeover contest. The company's teaming up with IBM, Intel and Linksys to offer small businesses a chance to win a complete technology makeover. Tech Twister is open to any small business with five to 100 employees. Go to CDW's Web site and fill out the online application to enter the contest http://www.cdw.com/Webcontent/land/page/techtwister_110804.asp. All entries must be completed and received by 5pm PST on February 15, 2005. The winners will be chosen during the months of December 2004, January 2005 and February 2005.

In a sign that wearable technology is gaining greater acceptance, the Gap on Thursday introduced a fleece jacket with a built-in radio for kids. The Hoodio has a control keypad located on the sleeve and a hood that conceals the speakers. Xybernaut sells a wearable, 1.9-pound computer with an 8.4-inch touch screen. And MP3 players are now in sunglasses. Oak-

ley's Thump line is available in seven combinations of lenses and colors. The shades have earphones and lenses that flip up and down. Meanwhile, NanoHorizons has developed socks containing silver and gold nanoparticles, which kill foot odor and bacteria.

NanoDynamics has come up with a golf ball that can correct its own flight path so it flies straighter than conventional balls. The design of the ball--and the materials it's made of--serve to better channel the energy received from the club head and thus correct a wobble or slight drift. The company believes the ball complies with the rules of the United States Golf Association. It will provide samples for testing and USGA approval in January or February. Earlier this year, Easton Sports announced it was developing a set of bike components made from carbon nanotubes that would be stronger and lighter than conventional parts. And other companies have developed nano tennis balls that don't lose air and golf shafts constructed with nanomaterials.

During the string of hurricanes that hit the U.S. last summer, satellite phones were often the only reliable means of communication, because they use orbiting satellites rather than landlines and cell towers to transmit signals. "They cover such a broad area, I can use it anywhere," says one Iridium customer. "The call may get unclear, but if you wait about five or six seconds, it gets better. A cell phone would just drop the call."

Microsoft's new small business software gives you financial info at a glance. Looking to offer small businesses an integrated approach to accounting, contact management and general productivity, Microsoft announced that a beta version of its newly announced small business management product is now available for testing

Kawada Industries in Japan has

been putting the final touches on a large biped robot that can do what no humanoid its size has done before: lie down, get up, and help a human carry light loads, like suitcases and briefcases.

Passwords will soon be a thing of the past according to Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates. Gates predicted that people will soon rely on other ways of verifying their identity. "A major problem for identity systems is the weakness of passwords," Gates said. "Moving to biometric and smart cards is a wave that is coming, and we see our leading customers doing this."

Japanese electronics giant TDK has developed a tough new coating named Blu-ray that makes DVDs scratch-proof. In a test conducted by CNET News.com, a DVD treated with TDK's coating survived a determined attack with a screwdriver and a Sharpie permanent marker, with no effect on playability.

Researchers at the Toho University School of Medicine in Tokyo have found that long hours spent in front of a computer screen may increase the risk of glaucoma in nearsighted people. The research is based on a study of 10,000 workers in Japan, with results correlated to data on how many hours were spent on the computer and pre-existing visual problems, such as myopia. Scientists said they believe the optic nerve in myopic people might be more vulnerable to computer-caused stress.

Watch for hefty increases in annual subscription rates for antivirus software as major Security companies encourage subscribers to upgrade to full Internet Security Suites which include firewall, anti-spam and anti-spyware as well as antivirus.

The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups, an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you.



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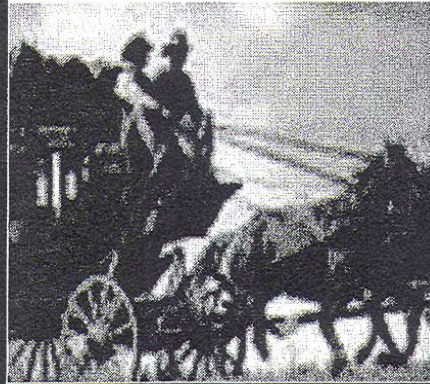
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Ergonomics for the Elderly

By Dr. Herbert A. Goldstein, Editor, Sarasota PC Monitor,
Sarasota FL PC Users Group (www.spcug.org - pcug@comcast.net)

As baby boomers reach retirement age, the ratio of employees to retirees will equalize over the next twenty years. When you consider that the foundation of Social Security benefits is generated from the workers, it is evident that benefits will be inadequate for future retirees. In order to endure, the elderly will be forced to keep working beyond the current retirement age.

As our increasing knowledge of the aging process brings about breakthroughs in life-extension technologies, the elderly will come to play a greater role in the productivity of our economy. Upcoming ergonomic developments will be critical in order to accommodate the elderly as viable and productive members of the workforce.

With the physical restrictions that naturally come with age we can expect that many elderly would be regarded as having disabilities, and the ones who are not technically disabled could be considered physically and mentally compromised to some degree. Therefore, any workplace modifications that serve to overcome limitations in strength, coordination, endurance, sight, hearing and shift adaptability will accommodate the elderly into the workplace.

Visual restrictions can be overcome with a greater dependence on verbal communication with regard to instructions and assistive technology such as audio recorders. Labels should be in large, clear print, with large, high-resolution computer monitors. Voice recognition software is also helpful. Other modifications include paper holders and bookstands that allow for optimal positioning of written materials, voice mail systems for messages and raised edges along the sides of work surfaces to prevent objects from falling off.

In personnel with hearing limitations any audible information should be supplemented with some form of visual presentation. Whole body vibration transmitted to chairs should be minimized by utilizing anti-vibration seating surface. Ambient noise should be minimized through workstation design, isolating noisy printers, sound dampening etc. Workers should have vibrating pagers, visual call indicators and sound amplifiers on telephones.

The elderly should have their work environment arranged in such a way as to avoid unnecessary reaching, lifting and carrying. Storage systems with pull-out shelves and workstation carousels help to keep frequently used materials within 18 inches of the body. Containers should be provided to break loads into manageable units and the employee should have the means to slide any materials over 2 pounds. Mechanical reaching devices should be available for accessing supplies beyond the reach of the worker.

With the preservation of their mental faculties and the advent of ergonomic innovations for staff, the elderly will find themselves continuing to play a dynamic and productive role in society into the later years.

The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups, an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you.



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