

COMPUTER NEWS



Volume 24, No. 5

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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, online 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 635 computers and 138 printers. Additional equipment has been given to charitable non-profit organizations and to disadvantaged individuals.

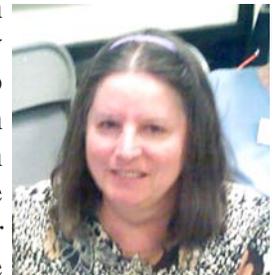
At May 16 Meeting, Movie Maker Demonstrated

The Napa Valley Personal Computer Users Group will meet Wednesday, May 16, 7:00-9:00 P.M., at the Napa Senior Activity Center, 1500 Jefferson Street, Napa, California

The meeting begins with Random Access, an open-floor question-and-answer period during which attendees can ask questions about computers and computer-related problems and receive helpful information from other meeting attendees. Questions may be submitted before the meeting by emailing them to Random Access moderator **Jerry Brown** at Questions@nvpcug.org.

During the Computer Tutor session which will follow, **Jeff Solomon** will ask the SIG Leaders, **Jerry Brown, Susy Ball, and Jim Gillespie**, to tell attendees a little about each of our present SIGs (Special Interest Group). If you are interested in forming an additional SIG, now would be a perfect time to ask someone how **YOU** can volunteer.

Our main presentation will be an introduction to Microsoft's *Windows Movie Maker* by **Susy Ball**. If you have ever wanted to do quality video editing without paying the additional high price of a video editing program, this presentation is for you. Susy will demonstrate many of the video effects featured in *Windows Movie Maker* and point out some of the excellent on-line tutorials that are available to help you learn how to edit videos and become your very own movie editor and producer.



Many people already have *Windows Movie Maker* installed on their home computers. If you have installed *Windows XP* with Service Pack 2 (SP2) or *Windows Vista* you already have the program.

If you do not have the program, you can find out where it is available for download at the general meeting.

Could you use some practical information that would help you make better use of your computer? Come to this meeting! Guests are always welcome. Admission is free.

NVPCUG Special Interest Groups

In SIG meetings you can learn about a subject in greater detail than is feasible at NVPCUG general meetings. SIG meetings are open to everyone. Meeting times and locations occasionally change, so for current meeting information, see our Web site, www.nvpcug.org, or contact the SIG leaders.

Investors SIG

Meets: Monthly, second Monday
5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Jerry Brown's home,
23 Skipping Rock Way, Napa

Leader: Jerry Brown
(707) 254-9607
bqandjbb@sbcglobal.net

Digital Photography SIG

Meets: Monthly, second Wednesday
7:00 to 8:30 p.m.
Piner's Nursing Home,
Conference Room
1800 Pueblo Ave., Napa

Leader: Susy Ball
(707) 337-3998
susyball@aol.com

Macintosh SIG

Meets: Monthly, second Thursday
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Napa Senior Activity Center
1500 Jefferson St., Napa

Leader: Jim Gillespie
(707) 252-1665
napanerd@pacbell.net

President's Message

By Ron Dack, president, President@nvpcug.org,
<http://www.nvpcug.org/>



For all of us members that have been around for a couple years June is the month for the Napa City & County Computer and Electronics Recycle event. This year the event will be coordinated by **Ken Manfree** as the **Recycle Coordinator** and **Orion E. Hill** as the **Computers to Schools Coordinator**. If you will be around on Friday June 8th and/or Saturday June 9th and can help handle traffic, hand out flyers, take surveys, and/or collect computer equipment for **CTS** contact either Ken at Recycler@nvpcug.org or Orion at CTS@nvpcug.org to sign up to help. Free T-shirts and lunch are provided.

If you have photos from the 2006 Napa City & County Computer and Electronics Recycle event a disk containing copies would be appreciated. They could wind up on the Web or on our CD. Please bring the disk to the May General meeting and I will get them from you. If you have photos of the CTS crew at work I can use them also. None that ID the secret refurbishing location will be used. If someone will take photos of the upcoming recycle events they would also be appreciated.

Do you have any ideas how we can recruit some new members? Maybe even some younger computer enthusiast would help in the continuity of the group over the next ten or so years. If you do, let me know at President@nvpcug.org.

If you have ideas for presentations you would like to see contact **Susy Ball** at Programs@nvpcug.org.

Want to get a free copy of a piece of software or hardware? If you are willing to write a comprehensive review of the product **Susy Ball** or **Marcia Waddell** may be able to get it for you. Contact Susy at Reviews@nvpcug.org or Marcia at Reviews2@nvpcug.org.

Don't forget:

Fun in the Sun & Computers, Too!
14th Annual Southwest User Group Conference
San Diego CA
July 13 - 15, 2007

www.swugconf.org (see page 4 for article)

Well that's it for this time and I hope to see you at the meeting on May 16th 7PM at the Senior Center.

Take care,
Ron

NVPCUG General Meetings
Held the third Wednesday of each month, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.
Napa Senior Activity Center, 1500 Jefferson Street, Napa

NVPCUG Calendar

| | | |
|------------|----------------------|---|
| Wednesdays | 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. | Computers-to-Schools work parties. To volunteer, contact Orion Hill, (707) 252-0637 |
| May 16 | 6:30-9:00 p.m. | NVPCUG General Meeting, Napa Senior Activity Center, 1500 Jefferson Street, Napa |
| June 6 | 7:00-9:00 p.m. | Board of Directors meeting, Piner's Nursing Home, 1800 Pueblo Ave., Napa |
| June 11 | 5:30-7:30 p.m. | Investors SIG meeting, Jerry Brown's home, 23 Skipping Rock Way, Napa |
| June 13 | 7:00-8:30 p.m. | Digital Photography SIG meeting, Piner's Nursing Home, 1800 Pueblo Ave., Napa |
| June 14 | 6:30-8:30 p.m. | Macintosh SIG meeting, Napa Senior Activity Center, 1500 Jefferson St., Napa |
| June 20 | 6:30-9:00 p.m. | NVPCUG General Meeting, Napa Senior Activity Center, 1500 Jefferson Street, Napa |

Napa Valley Personal Computer Users Group

Officers for 2007

The NVPCUG wants to improve our Mentor Program by keeping the list of available mentors up to date in the newsletter once a year. Below is the current list. If you would be available to answer questions and give advice on any software, please send your name, the Software in which your knowledge could help other members, your E-mail address and or phone number and days/times you are available to mentor@nvpcug.org so we can bring the list up to date. Please also make corrections in the current list.

Board of Directors

| | | | |
|-------------------------|---|----------|--------------------------|
| President | Ron Dack | | President@nvpcug.org |
| Vice President | Jerry Brown | 254-9607 | VicePresident@nvpcug.org |
| Secretary | Marcia Waddell | 252-2060 | Secretary@nvpcug.org |
| Treasurer | Roy Wagner | 253-2721 | Treasurer@nvpcug.org |
| Other Directors: | Susy Ball, Jim Gillespie, Bernhard Krevet, Ken Manfree, Dick Peterson, Dianne Prior, Bob Simmerman, Kathy Slavens, Jeff Solomon, Dean Unruh | | |

Appointed Officers

| | | | |
|---|----------------|----------|------------------------|
| Computer Recycling Coordinator | Ken Manfree | 224-3722 | Recycler@nvpcug.org |
| Computer Tutor Coordinator | Jeff Solomon | | Tutor@nvpcug.org |
| Computers-to-Schools Program Coordinator | Orion E. Hill | 252-0637 | CTS@nvpcug.org |
| Facility Arrangements Coordinator | Dianne Prior | 252-1506 | Facility@nvpcug.org |
| Greeter Coordinator | Bob Simmerman | 259-6113 | Greeter@nvpcug.org |
| Librarian | Dean Unruh | 226-9164 | Librarian@nvpcug.org |
| Membership Director | Dianne Prior | 252-1506 | Membership@nvpcug.org |
| Mentor Program Coordinator | Dick Peterson | 259-1712 | Mentors@nvpcug.org |
| Newsletter Circulator | Jim Hearn | 224-2540 | Circulation@nvpcug.org |
| Newsletter Editor | Susy Ball | 337-3998 | Editor@nvpcug.org |
| Product Review CoCoordinator | Susy Ball | 337-3998 | Reviews@nvpcug.org |
| Product Review CoCoordinator | Marcia Waddell | 252-2060 | Reviews2@nvpcug.org |
| Programs Director | Susy Ball | 337-3998 | Programs@nvpcug.org |
| Publicity Director | Ron Dack | | Publicity@nvpcug.org |
| Random Access Moderator | Jerry Brown | 254-9607 | Questions@nvpcug.org |
| Special Projects Director | Jeff Solomon | | Projects@nvpcug.org |
| Webmaster | Ron Dack | | Webmaster@nvpcug.org |

• All telephone numbers are in Area Code 707.

NVPCUG Computer News

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Guilty!

By Berry F. Phillips, a Member of the Computer Club of Oklahoma City and a monthly contributor to the e-Monitor, www.ccokc.org, bfpdata@laccess.net

Obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

Guilty, the strange judge shouted as he banged the gavel. The defendant will rise and receive his sentence. You have been found guilty of dirty deeds done to your computer and are sentenced to electrocution!" I thought to myself, with my knees shaking, there must be some kind of an appeal process since the judge and jury all had heads that looked like monitors and bodies like upright computers and could easily be biased and not in my human favor!

I did find the testimony at my trial to be informative. A clean environment does not require computer cleaning usually more than once a year. Many computer users like to do the cleaning when they are doing their annual spring house cleaning. The dirtier the environment the greater frequency of cleaning needed. A clean computer cuts down on downtime, repair bills, and minimizes health risks. **DO NOT EAT, DRINK, SMOKE, OR USE MAGNETS NEAR YOUR COMPUTER AFTER ALL IT IS NOT A FAST FOOD JOINT!**

Here are some tips: (1) shut your computer down properly, (2) run scan disk and defragmenter at least monthly, (3) Delete files and programs you no longer need, (4) use antivirus, anti spyware programs and a good hard drive cleaner like the freeware CCleaner and a registry cleaner like the freeware RegClean to keep your hard drive healthy, (5) **BACK UP YOUR DATA IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY!**

When cleaning your computer case, use a damp lint free cloth. **NEVER SPRAY WATER ON A COMPUTER OR OTHER ELECTRICAL DEVICES.** Place liquid on the cloth not directly on the system and normally 100% alcohol which has no water content. Use a pencil eraser on hard to remove marks. The monitor can be cleaned with a commercial glass cleaner using a damp clean lint free cloth. Using an anti static wipe or a dry cloth with anti-static fabric softener will reduce the dust attracted by static discharge. The keyboard can be cleaned by turning the keyboard upside down and shaking the gunk out of it while singing, "There is a whole lot of shaking going on." Clean the keyboard surface with a damp lint free cloth with 100% alcohol. **DO NOT TAKE THE KEYBOARD APART OR YOU MIGHT NOT GET IT BACK TOGETHER AGAIN!** Clean the mouse by taking it apart using a damp lint free cloth and clean the rollers inside of the mouse (be sure to rotate them) with a clean cotton swab with 100% alcohol solution. After the mouse has dried put it back together reversing the steps you did when taking it apart. The inside of your computer is a dust magnet. An annual cleaning in a normal computer environment is a good idea. **YOU MUST BE VERY CAREFUL IF YOU DECIDE TO CLEAN THE INSIDE OF YOUR COMPUTER OR YOU COULD DO DAMAGE TO YOUR SYSTEM!** Whenever, you go into the case of your computer it is a good idea to wear a grounding strap to reduce the risk of a static discharge. Blow out dust with compressed air or a vacuum cleaner. Avoid touching

chips or electronic components on your system. Electronic components run hotter when covered with dust blankets, and it shortens their normal life span which is why your computer needs to be cleaned internally periodically.

I have to go now to get a human attorney to appeal my case so I can avoid electrical execution so there will be another article in the Computer Hysteria Column for next month. However, I do have one final question for you, "Are you guilty?" ■

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Southwest User Group Conference

We're on our way to the 14th annual Southwest User Group Conference in San Diego and you are invited to join us.

When: July 13, 14 & 15, 2007

Where: Town and Country Resort & Convention Center (www.towncountry.com)

What: A great chance to see the latest and greatest that vendors have to offer computer users, to meet with vendors and book presentations, as well as to network with user group officers and members and to brainstorm solutions to the problems we all have with our groups. Plus you will have the opportunity to enrich your personal computer experience with the informative workshops provided by vendors.

How: Go to www.swugconf.org, fill in the registration form and mail it with a check for \$50 (early bird special price) by June 22 to the address noted on the form.

We are also having our 2nd Digital Photo Contest and all attendees are invited to participate. Groups who have digital photo contests are eligible to submit their winners to the SW contest if they have members attending the conference. You will find the contest guidelines on the conference website.

Attendees staying at the hotel are eligible for one free night at the hotel.

Included in the registration fee for the Southwest Conference are: the welcome Bag, T-shirt, all meals, vendor faire, hospitality suite, and an Internet Cafe. So join us for Fun in the Sun and Computers, too.

We hope to see you there,

Judy Tylour & Patricia Hill, Co-chairs

swugconf@socal.rr.com / swugconf@aol.com

<http://www.swugconf.org> /

<http://swugc.blogspot.com>.

Marcia Waddell and Susy Ball are going from the NVPCUG, anyone else going to join us?

File Extensions

By Fran Damratowski, Refurbishing SIG Chair, Chesapeake PC Users Group, MD,

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Obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

Have you ever wondered what the three alphanumeric extension at the end of a file name mean? (MS-DOS required filename to limited to eight characters for the base or root name and three characters for the extension. Windows 95 and above no longer have that limitation.) The three letters or numbers are a way for the computer user, software, and operating system to differentiate between and identify the program used to create a file (document, spreadsheet, database, etc.). We are all familiar with .exe for an executable file, .txt for a text document, and .pdf for a PDF file. There are many other file extensions. The same file extension may be used for more than one program. There is no standard or organization for creating file extensions. This month we will begin to list some of the extensions.

Here is the A list of some of the extensions and the file types they represent

- **.a:** An ADA program, Unix archive file, Macintosh assembly source code, Free Pascal Archive file for Linux or DOS
- **.a2b:** A2B Player Playlist
- **.abx:** Word Perfect Address Book file
- **.aby:** AOL file
- **.adr:** Address Book, Address Plus Database, After Dark Random Screen Saver Module, Opera , Smart Address addressbook, Web Browser Bookmark File
- **.albm:** webAlbum Photo Album, Photosmart Photo Printing Album
- **.alz:** ALZip compressed file, game file
- **.aps:** MS Visual C++ file, Flash (Italian), ArcPar Ver. 5 Symbology, Advanced Patching Systems with Error Checking
- **.arl:** AOL Organizer file
- **.arj:** Compression archive
- **.ars:** Adobe After Effects Render, Artifax Report Editor
- **.asl:** Adobe Photoshop Layer file, Quest Adventure game, AppSight Console Log
- **.asm:** non-unix assembler source file, Pro/Engineer Assembly file, LICOM AlphaCAM Stone Parameter Macro, Solid Edge document
- **.asmx:** Microsoft .NET Web Service file

- **.asp:** active server page
- **.atn:** Adobe Photoshop Action file
- **.au:** Audio file, Audacity Audio block
- **.aud:** Audio file
- **.avb:** Inoculan Anti-Virus virus infected file, Microsoft Chat character file, Avid Bin File
- **.avd:** Avery Label Pro Data file, DOS7 file
- **.avi:** Audio Video Interleaved animated file (Windows Video, Quicktime, RealPlayer)
- **.awb:** Lavasoft Ad-aware backup file, ActiveWords WordBase, Adaptive Multi-Rate Wideband ACELP codec
- **.awd:** AWD MS Fax, Award BIOS file, AWK Language Source Code file, Artweaver Painting, FaxView document
- **.awe:** Adobe Acrobat Bookmark XML file
- **.awm:** Animated Works Movie, AllWebMenus, RenderWare Language Pack

When you look at a list of files you may notice that the file extensions are hidden. To find out if they are hidden right click "Start" then left click "Explore", then click on a file fold on the left side of your screen. If you do not see file extensions they are hidden you can make them visible them by following the actions below.

Windows 98

Select "View" then "Folder Options". Select the "View" tab. Scroll down to "Hide file extensions for known file types" and uncheck this box.

Windows XP

Select "Tools" then "Folder Options". Select the "View" tab and scroll down to "Hide file extensions for known file types" and uncheck this box. Click "Apply to All Folders"

Vista

Click on the "organize" button. Select "Folder and Search Options". Select the "View" tab and scroll down to "Hide file extensions for known file types" and uncheck this box. Click "Apply to All Folders" ■

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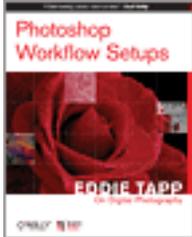
ab cd e f gh i j k l mn o p q r st u v wx yz

Photoshop Workflow Setups

A Review by John Donan, a Member of the North Orange County Computer Club, CA,

www.noccc.org, editor@noccc.org

Obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.



I knew I had seen that girl before when I found her on the frontispiece facing Chapter 1. There are also eleven other excellent full page images, some used in examples, five are facing the other chapters. I had seen the frontispiece on the Creativepro Website, under "Photoshop How-To: Tame the Beast,"

(<http://www.creativepro.com/story/howto/24366.html>) which turns out to be Chapter 1 of the book which I also found at <http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/photoworkflow/>. I found these in my early research for the book. When I start a review, I browse for a cursory knowledge of a book's content then I research the author. I also find comments of other reviewers in case there is something I might overlook. Eddie Tapp, this author, is an award-winning photographer, lecturer, consultant, and author on digital imaging issues with over 20 years of experience in computer technology with a very impressive resume. From what Scott Kelby states on the cover, "If Eddie's teaching a session, I want to be there!" it implies that teaching is one of his strong points.



A statement preceding Chapter 1 says, "Adobe Photoshop has so many different work areas and tools that it can become confusing or even intimidating for digital photographers to use in a production environment. The fact is, there are only three particular zones or areas that you really need to become familiar with: tools, menus, and palettes."

Upon examining my version of PS CS2, I find 58 tools and 198 menu items which include the choices for the 19 palettes. Sixty of the menu items have further choices, as high as 20 or more in fly out menus as do all the palettes as well. Each of the tools has settings, relative to its function, which are made in its option bar. To place an order of magnitude on all this I assumed the number of secondary choices to be ten, it can easily be justified that there are over one thousand choices possible. You can add to this, keyboard shortcuts. There are 521 of them, I have counted. What can be done in Photoshop seems unlimited when multiple processes are involved. I created an effect using an adjustment and a

filter; when I reversed their order the result was entirely different. Combine more than two such executions and the possible combinations and permutations grow tremendously. This is why the author says, "What is important is learning this information one step at a time, finding the option or settings that are important to your workflow and then building from there." This book intends to make this humongous set of choices manageable.

In 207 pages, the material covered had to be limited. Instead of picking apart a mass of nitty details the book provides guidance in overall effective usage. The book starts with efficient organization of the workspace. Anyone using Photoshop knows how quickly palettes hog the visible area (Tools and Options are palettes by the way). I cleaned up my work space by his example most of which is ignored in teachings elsewhere. This first chapter covered using a second window (see figure 1 which is typical of the illustrations of the book) and also tiling images, neither of which I had done previously nor had I ever considered the 9 settings possible for the status bar, via its black triangle. The rest of the first chapter concerns the Bridge.

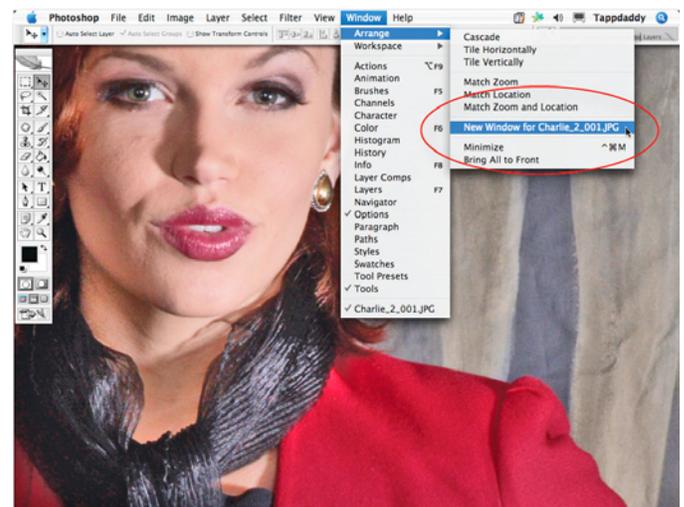


Figure 1, Photoshop opens a second window of your active image when you select Window > Arrange > New Window. It's perfect when you want to do detail work and see the entire image at the same time.

About 20% of the book concerns the Bridge, Photoshop's file browser. I had read where another Photoshop author refuses to use the Bridge because he feels it is yet too early in its state of development. This appears to be the case with my software for it will not open either Photoshop or JPEG images in Photoshop a feature of its main usefulness. To correct this will be expensive. Adobe technical support has told me that they require an advance payment of \$39 to address either of these problems (\$78). For those who are able to properly use the Bridge, or willing to pay to make

it work, it is covered in Chapter 5 of the book.

All palettes are covered and should one want to get a quick handle on a palette you don't use, such as Layer Comps, the information is there. Although the information for this palette is held to one page, it is adequate enough for me to have now mastered its use. The key palettes are stated to be these: Layers, Channels, Actions, History, Histogram, Color, Styles, Paths and the Info window. To unclutter his workspace, Tapp places his most active palettes in the Docking Well, cycling them as he needs them. By saving this configuration, it is always available as a starting workspace at some future time. One of his notes in this part of the book introduced me to the Scrubby Slider. It has been in existence since CS. When the mouse cursor is in the vicinity of a slider label, it changes allowing the slider value to be changed without having to grab the slider exactly.

Preferences allow you to tailor your work to your needs. Of course some are more important than others. Chapter three considers those the author has found to be most important. As with other Adobe programs, the Preferences dialog box can be accessed via Ctrl-K. Nine dialogs are selectable. A point came up regarding image interpolation and the General Preferences dialog which is not widely known. For Image Interpolation: Bicubic Smoother is designed for up-sampling images, while the Bicubic Sharper is designed for down sampling images. Compared to some of my 600 page books, there is twice as much information on preferences in this little guy.

The chapter "Customizing Keyboard Shortcuts and Menus" is brief (12 pages) but handy, should one want to specialize either of these for personal use. An adjustment,

which I regularly use, is Shadow/Highlight. It is also frequently used by the author. He has assigned for it the shortcut Shift+Ctrl+M which I have now also done, thanks to this chapter. Should I lapse into my old ways and traverse Edit>Adjustments>Shadow/Highlight the selection is handily highlighted in red (my choice.)

In the preface for the last chapter (Tapping into the Tools), the author states: "What is your favorite tool in Photoshop? Most people will say without reservation, the Clone Stamp tool. Yes, it's a very powerful tool indeed, but the Clone Stamp tool can also be the most dangerous if it's not used properly." What he is referring to is repetitive patterns which aren't seen until after the image is printed. In slightly less than a page the use of this tool is completely covered. In fact this concise coverage brought home to me two features I had overlooked using.

I will continue using this book as a handy reference as can others whose PS skills may vary anywhere from beginner on. The book details are:

Title: Photoshop Workflow Setups
Subtitle: Eddie Tapp on Digital Photography
First Edition: August 2006
ISBN: 0-596-10168-6
Pages: 207
MSRP=\$30.

The book is available from O'Reilly at a discount of 35% to user group members.

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Why You Need A Firewall

By Brian K. Lewis, Ph.D., Member of the Sarasota PCUG, Florida, www.spcug.org,
bwsail@yahoo.com

Obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.



When you connect your computer to the Internet, you have opened a door which invites any other computer in the world to come in. Actually, you have more than 65,000 doors into your computer, any one of which may be open. That is, unless you

"192.168.2.1"

The address for a
Belkin Router

have taken steps to keep these doors closed. That is the purpose of a firewall. The firewall filters the information packets that show up at your "door" or computer port as we usually refer to it, and can either prevent them from entering or pass them through.

When your computer connects to the Internet, it is assigned a numeric address or IP (internet protocol) address.

These addresses are a 32 bit number. They usually written out in four groups with periods between each group as follows: 111.11.11.111. Traveling over the Internet are many programs that simply look for unprotected IP addresses. The IP address of any unprotected computer is sent back to the originator who can then upload a trojan or spyware package to that address. The originator can then take control of the computer or the application will record keystrokes and send all recorded information back to the program originator.

Although your computer has one IP address there are many different ports on your address. There are different ports for different purposes on your computer. Your connection to the Internet is usually through port 80. This is referred to as the HTTP (hypertext transfer protocol)

Firewall cont. on page 8

Firewall cont. from page 7

port. It is used when you connect to a web page. The web page data is downloaded to your computer through this port. Another commonly used port is 25. This is used for the SMTP (standard mail transfer protocol) or e-mail transfer. Another port is used for incoming mail or POP3 transfer is port 110. These are all part of the port series



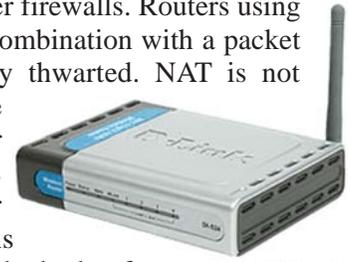
from 0 to 1024 that are the most common ports. Many applications use ports in this region including PC Anywhere, Internet telephones, MSN messenger, Net Meeting, and all AOL operations. Ports 1024 to 49451 are referred to as registered ports. There are many Internet games that use ports in this region. There are also other

specific functions assigned to these ports and some may duplicate functions in the common port region. The final group of ports are dynamic and have no specific functions registered. However, the point is that all of these ports can be accessed by remote computers somewhere out on the Internet and use them to connect to your computer if you have not protected them.

Automated port scanning software is available free on the Internet from many "hacker sites". Its use is very common on the Internet. There are various types of scans. Some scanners will look for any of the 65,535 possible ports. Another type looks for open UDP (user data protocol) ports or may use an FTP (file transfer protocol) bounce to hide the origin of the scan. If an open port is located, software can be downloaded that will open a "backdoor" on your computer. This allows remote input and output. Such access can be used to record and transmit out information from your computer. It can also be used to attack other computers to produce a "zombie" network. Such networks have been used to attack large computer servers in attempts to bring them down or to produce a "denial of service" attack.

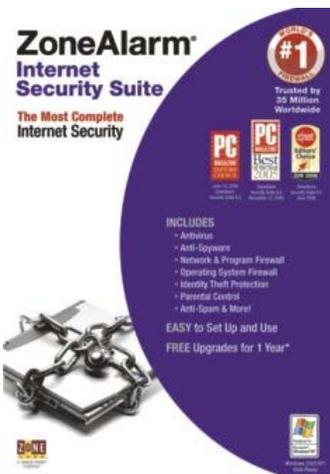
Many users believe that a router with a firewall is adequate protection. Most routers use either network address translation (NAT) or a packet filter. Information on the Internet is transmitted in packets which contain the IP address of the sender and the address of the receiver in addition to the data. The routers firewall uses filters that look at the sending and receiving addresses of incoming packets on port 80 (HTTP). Only those packets that are a response to an outgoing request are allowed through. If your router uses a packet filter it can be penetrated by a fragmented scan. This type of scan breaks up packets into fragments which can easily get through the simple packet

filter found in most router firewalls. Routers using NAT either alone or in combination with a packet filter can also be easily thwarted. NAT is not successful when the packet is an FTP packet or is sent by Microsoft's Netmeeting or similar audio/video applications that bury the address in the body of the packet. Only when the address is in the header of the packet can the router use address substitution. So packet filtering and NAT, although useful, do not provide complete firewall protection for all Internet connections.



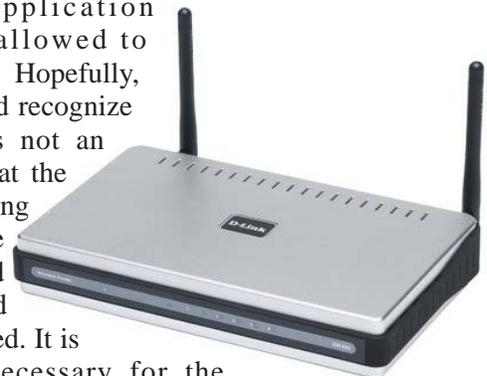
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Another method for preventing intrusions is "stateful" packet inspection. This is the method used by most software firewalls and is found in some of the newer routers. When your web browser opens a connection to the Internet, the firewall software records that connection and keeps a record of its status. Whenever a packet arrives at your computer, the data in the packet can be compared to the information in the firewall state table. The firewall software can also make decisions based on the data content of the packet, not just the sender's address. Because this examination does require some time there may be a slight slowdown of your system. However, in most cases, there will not be a long enough delay for most users to notice.



So inbound packets can be filtered and examined for dangerous content. However, when the user connects to a web server, the page requested is downloaded to the users computer. It is possible for that web page to contain a small program or a link to a dangerous site in a one pixel unit on the page. When this is downloaded the program is run or the link activated. This results in an outgoing packet to some Internet address through a non-standard port so the user is not aware of the activity. This type of activity

would not be stopped by a hardware firewall in a router. It can only be blocked by a software firewall which recognizes that this activity is coming from a new application that has not previously made an Internet connection. In this case the software will query the computer user to determine if this new application should be allowed to connect. Hopefully, the user would recognize that this was not an application that the user was running and the outbound packet would then be blocked. It is absolutely necessary for the



firewall to process both incoming and outgoing packets. Only a software firewall can establish the necessary tables for comparing the incoming/outgoing packets to allowed activity and request user interaction when necessary.

This leads us to the Windows firewall. This firewall, as used with Windows XP, does not have any control of outbound packets. Any application is allowed to connect to the Internet without any filtering or other checking of source or content. Windows Vista was supposed to come with both inbound and outbound filtering. However, as it is delivered it provides only inbound protection just as did XP. The outbound protection is turned off by default. So, if it is there, how do you turn on the outbound protection. To change this you have to use the Microsoft Management Console. Then you have to write a rule to block each “malware” application you anticipate might get on your computer. You can not create a general rule for all malware. Creating rules that would cover all possible malware applications is an impossible task. Microsoft has been quoted as saying “outbound filtering isn’t really needed, and the key is making sure that malware doesn’t infect the PC in the first place.” Also they have stated that large enterprises had requested that it be turned off by default.



Microsoft does say that “core Windows Services have specific behaviors which are monitored by the firewall”. Instead of using outbound filtering Microsoft recommends that you buy “Windows Live OneCare”, a product and subscription service. My recommendation is that you obtain a free two-way firewall like ZoneAlarm and ignore the Windows firewall completely.

Whatever you do, don’t connect your computer to the Internet without using a firewall and an antivirus application. I have come across too many computers recently that are attached to constant on Internet connections and had no protection. The cost of removing the malware from these systems was more than the cost of premium protection. So don’t get caught short!

Dr. Lewis is a former university & medical school professor. He has been working with personal computers for more than thirty years. He can be reached via e-mail: bwsail@yahoo.com.

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Live CD-ROMs

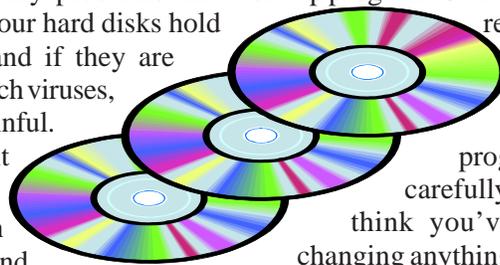
By Dick Maybach, a Member of the Brookdale Computer User Group, New Jersey,

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In the early days of PCs, we did much more experimenting than we do now. The only long-term storage was on diskettes, and when we removed the diskette holding the operating system, we also removed any problems that resulted from our experiments. Now, our hard disks hold large, complex operating systems, and if they are damaged by our errors or by malware such viruses, the recovery process can be long and painful. Those who still like to experiment should consider live CD-ROMs.

A live CD-ROM contains an operating system and applications and can be run without using the hard disk at all. When you remove the CD-ROM, your old operating system (probably Windows) takes over. In fact, since the hard disk was not accessed while the live CD-ROM was running, Windows is no more aware that the PC has been used than if you had



never switched on the power.

To use a live CD-ROM, you must set up your PC so that if a CD-ROM is present, it will try to boot from it, rather than the hard disk. Watch carefully as your PC boots, and you should see a message telling you how to start the BIOS set-up program. Often, the procedure is to press the F2 key repeatedly during booting. Don’t just hold it down, as the PC will think your keyboard has a stuck key and will refuse to start. Once the set-up program has started, read each screen carefully before changing anything. If you think you’ve made a mistake, exit without changing anything (often done by pressing the escape key) and start again. You are looking for the screen that lets you change the boot order, which is the order in which the PC checks devices for an operating system. It always includes the hard disk, diskette, and

Live CD-ROMs cont. on page 10

CD-ROM, and (on newer machines) USB devices. In our case we want the CD-ROM checked before the hard disk. Once you are satisfied that everything is ok, save your changes and exit the program, often done by pressing F10.

You can download live CD-ROM programs free from the Internet. However, you will now have what's called an ISO image; this is not a file, and if you write it to a CD-ROM as a file, it won't be bootable. Unfortunately, the free versions of CD-ROM burner programs included with many PCs won't burn ISO images. However, a suitable program, *ISO Recorder*, is available, free over the internet from <http://isorecorder.alexfeinman.com/isorecorder.htm>. Many live CD-ROMs are also available as pre-recorded CD-ROMs; see the referenced Web sites for information.

A good place to start is with the *Ultimate Boot CD*, available at <http://www.ultimatebootcd.com/>. This provides four versions of DOS and five of Linux, plus tools for motherboard, hard disk, and file system maintenance, in addition to four virus scanners.

If you long for the simpler days of DOS, see <http://www.freedos.org/> to obtain an open-source clone of DOS. This will allow you to get reacquainted with the command line, BAT files, BASIC programming, and run those old programs that no longer work under Windows. The full version contains some extras, FreeGEM (a clone of the old Digital Research graphical user interface), BWBasic (Bywater Basic), and several games.

If you would like to experiment with Linux, but aren't ready yet to install it on your hard disk, look at Ubuntu,

<http://www.ubuntu.com/>, which provides a Windows-like interface, or Knoppix, <http://www.knoppix.org/>, which is known for being very adaptable to different PC hardware. Several tutorial books are available for each; check your local Barnes & Noble or Borders.

For Linux, Windows, and, to a limited extent, Macintosh maintenance and recovery, my favorite is INSERT, available at http://www.inside-security.de/insert_en.html. This is worth a complete article, and I'll discuss it next month's column.

Security Tools Distribution (STD), <http://s-t-d.org/>, is a variant of Knoppix, customized for those in computer security. It includes tools for encryption and code-breaking, for finding evidence of computer break-ins, for working with firewalls, for building honey pots (traps for ensnaring hackers), for analyzing and breaking passwords, for analyzing network traffic, and for assessing computer vulnerability.

You can see a long list of available live CD-ROMs at <http://www.frozentech.com/content/livecd.php>. Most of these are versions of Linux, because its source code is available and free, and because it's modular. Windows, by comparison, is proprietary and monolithic; at one point, Microsoft claimed that you couldn't remove even its Internet browser without disabling the operating system. ■

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Recovering Files from a Hard Drive

By Vinny La Bash, a Member of the Sarasota PCUG, Florida, www.spacug.org,
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Have you deleted a file that you need and you don't know how to get it back? The first step is to make absolutely sure that it has been deleted. Open your Windows Recycle Bin and double-check. Is it in there? If so, simply right-click on the file and choose Restore.

If you have emptied the Recycle Bin the next step is to restore the file from your latest backup. You do back up your data regularly, don't you?

Unfortunately, there is no native "Undelete" command in Windows XP. This is a mystery because Microsoft had a nifty undelete feature in Windows 3.1 which somehow

disappeared in Windows 95 and subsequent versions of the operating system. This is abysmal for Windows users, but profitable for third party software developers.

It's important to understand that when a file is deleted it is not actually removed from your system. Windows deletes only the first letter of the file's name and replaces it with a marked for deletion character. This makes the file "invisible" to windows, and if Windows needs the space for something else, it has no qualms about overwriting your valuable data.

What this means is that if you accidentally delete a file, you have a limited amount of time to recover it before windows stores something else over the same space. It may not happen right away, but it will happen eventually.

Since there is no way within XP to recover a lost file, you have to turn to a third party solution. The good news is that

there are several excellent programs that will do the job easily. The even better news is that these programs are free. Isn't that nice?

Use Google or your favorite search engine to find FreeUndelet, PC Inspector File Recovery, or Undelete Plus. All of them work well though you may find one easier to use than another. That's a matter of personal preference.

You need to be cautious about this. If you download the utility directly to your hard drive, you run the risk of storing the undelete program over the very data you are trying to recover. If you have a second hard drive, you can download to that or better yet, download directly to a thumb drive. That avoids all danger of losing important data, and it has the additional advantage of immediate portability.

The programs all work similarly. Direct any of the programs to a specific disk and you will get a list of all deleted recoverable files on the drive. You may also get a description alerting you that the file(s) may be wholly or partially recoverable. That's good to know.

Direct any recovered files to an external hard drive if you have one. Don't save anything to your hard drive until you have recovered everything you need. Use Windows Explorer to manage the recovered files. Group them into categories to sort or group the files so you can easily determine if they are program files, data files or something else. Some files may have data missing if Windows overwrote some of the sectors where it was stored.

If after all this you haven't been successful, your best alternative is to consider a data recovery service. These can be a devastating drain on your wallet, so don't use these services to recover saved game files.

Do some comparison shopping as rates can vary considerably. Good luck and watch those sticky fingers when they hover near the delete key. ■

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Upgrading to an LCD Monitor

By Herb Goldstein, Software Evaluation Chairman and Reviews Editor, Sarasota

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Actually, I was happy with my high quality CRT (cathode ray tube) monitor. It was with considerable reluctance that I recently decided to get with the modern era and upgrade to an LCD. It has been quite a learning experience. Looking back, I realize that there are a number of very important practical considerations of which I was unaware in making the change and in making a choice. Perhaps I can pass along a summary of them along with some insight gained by hands-on experience to make the experience a little easier for you than it was for me. You need to do your homework both before and during your investigation. Here are some of the most important things you should know.

An LCD monitor offers considerable advantages in upgrading from a CRT. It is infinitely lighter and takes up much less desk space than a CRT. It uses the smallest fraction of electricity by comparison and is devoid of radiation concerns. When properly installed, its display may prove brighter, sharper and provide superb color.

SIZE: In any size range, an LCD will display more viewable screen than a similarly sized CRT. I decided on

a 19 incher, the size of my CRT that I was happy with. Seventeen may work for you if that's what pleased you on your CRT. Over 19 for average use is both too much screen and excessive cost for most people.



ORIENTATION: Most prefer a normal tall screen (portrait view) for average usage. Wide (landscape) screens are available at greater cost in the same size range and are not recommended unless you have special need for that display. Some makes offer a swivel screen that you can change from tall to wide and back again instantly. You will pay considerably more for this feature when it is available.

COST: Has been decreasing from a few thousand some short years ago to a few hundred today. A quality 17 inch LCD can be found today for under \$200, and a 19 incher for less than \$300. If you have a watchful eye, special sales are common and offer substantial saving.

BRAND: There is a very significant display quality to be gained in better models of better brands. The most common best quality brands usually topping the review lists in computer publications are LG, NEC, Viewsonic, Dell and Samsung. Different models in the same brand

[Upgrading an LCD Monitor cont. on page 12](#)

provide different features. Check them out carefully on their respective websites and “Google” for reviews. You need to do your homework both before and during your shopping experiences if you want the best for your buck.

WARRANTY: Better brands provide a 3 year replacement on defective monitors. Don’t settle for a one year warranty!

VIEWING ANGLE: Unlike a CRT, an LCD’s view falls off sharply at the sides when you are not positioned in front of your monitor. In practical usage, this should not be at all a problem. Your view will be just fine when you are normally seated at your screen, with more than sufficient leeway from the norm.

RESPONSE TIME: Usually indicated in the advertising of better models. A faster response time is better—it indicates how quickly the screen can refresh a video image. If an LCD’s response time is too slow, the display’s pixels won’t be able to keep up with the information sent from the computer’s graphics card, and you may see ghosting and digital noise as a result. 8ms or better response time is common on quality LCD’s and is preferred! The lower the response time, the less of a blurring effect is possible on the screen.

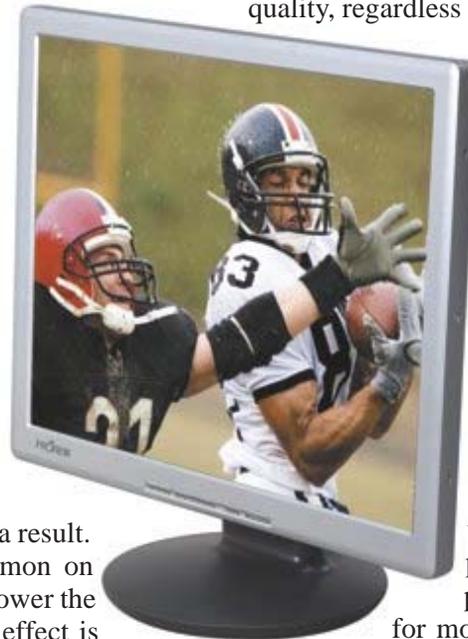
ANALOG VS. DIGITAL: Video cards can provide outlets for two different monitor display types, analog and digital. CRT monitors are cabled to your video card with an analog (15 pin) cable. LCD’s usually provide the same cable and connection but will provide a significantly better display when attached via a digital (VDI-D) to a digital port on your video card. Better LCD’s provide both digital and analog connections. So do better video cards. If your card doesn’t have a digital port, you can either replace the card with one that does, or you can add an additional card. Easy to do. Just plug it into a PCI slot and your computer will recognize it. You are really better off in many ways with a better card.

If need be, you can run your LCD with the same analog connection as you used for your CRT previously, but a digital connection will give you better results.

NATIVE RESOLUTION: LCD monitors will provide their best display when run at their “native resolution” which varies with the size of the monitor. For a 19 inch, the native resolution is 1280x1024. The resolution of a display can be changed easily by right-clicking on an empty area of your desktop and selecting “properties,” and “settings.” The same can be accomplished through your Control Panel in your Start Menu. Normally the

correct choice will be made automatically by the installation software that accompanies your new monitor.

When you change your most common CRT setting of 1080x760 to 1280x1024, everything, including all your icons and fonts, will suddenly appear much smaller. Your LCD display however will become infinitely sharper. If you find it strange to your eyes, you can easily change your display properties to provide larger fonts. Additionally, many programs like word processors permit you to change your text to any size you wish while maintaining its quality, regardless of screen resolution.



Running at native resolution (your choice to do or not, but very highly recommended) will make your screen display smaller but you will be able to accommodate more viewed area on a page. It may be strange somewhat to your eyes at first, but the greatly increased sharpness and over-all quality of your LCD display will more than make up for it, especially if you are using digital rather than analog display.

AUTO-DISPLAY: Most quality LCD monitors will automatically install at their best display settings when you plug them in. However, they will also provide easy to adjust menu settings for most of their values that permit you to easily adjust the display to what is most pleasing to your eyes. They most common adjustment people make is for brightness. Most LCD monitors tend to be too bright unless adjusted. LCD screen illumination is entirely different and better than that from a CRT.

RUNNING MULTIPLE MONITORS: What’s to do with your CRT now that you have your new LCD? One of your choices may be to keep it and run two monitors side-by-side. If you are using Windows XP and you have two ports on your video card (or two video cards), it’s easy to do with a few simple settings in your display properties menu. You will then be able to run two different programs at the same time and easily drag items from one monitor screen to the other. Your cursor will readily mouse from one monitor to the other alongside. It can double your productivity and allow you to see and do things you did not know were possible.

Over all, upgrading to an LCD monitor will greatly enhance your computer experience and enjoyment. It’s way more than worth any effort or expense involved. ■

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McAfee SiteAdvisor

By Sandy Berger, CompuKISS, www.compukiss.com, Sandy@compukiss.com

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Anyone who has been on the Internet for a while realizes that even websites that look benign can generate viruses, adware, spyware, spam, and scams. Until now, it was difficult to determine which websites to avoid. Now, however, safe surfing just got easier. Now there is a wonderful free program that warns you about dangerous websites.

The McAfee SiteAdvisor is a small piece of software that works with your Internet Browser (either Internet Explorer or Firefox). It tells you in an easy graphical format which websites are safe and which harbor spyware, viruses, excessive pop-ups, or online scams.

McAfee has a system of automated spiders that patrol the Web constantly checking out websites. They assess the safety of each website including how much spam is generated from signing up for information at that site and how much spyware, adware, and other nasties might be attached to downloads from that site. The SiteAdvisor will also alert you to sites with excessive pop-ups and those that are possible phishing sites. Besides the automated testing, McAfee has a team of individuals who assess the sites. They use a detailed analysis as well as feedback from individual users.

To use the SiteAdvisor, you simply download the free program. The program is very small, so it downloads and installs quickly and it doesn't slow down your Web surfing.

After installation, a small SiteAdvisor rectangle will appear either on the top (Internet Explorer) or the bottom (Firefox) of the screen. When you visit a site that SiteAdvisor considers safe the rectangle turns green. Sites that have serious security problems will turn the rectangle red. A yellow rectangle means that the website may have

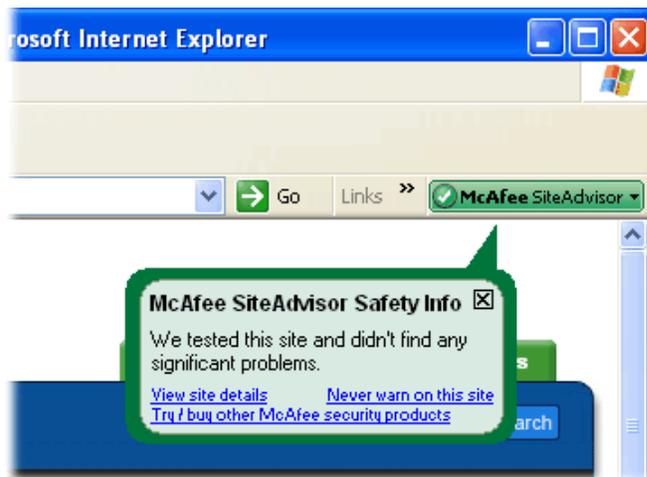


The screenshot shows a web browser window with several search results. A McAfee SiteAdvisor notification box is overlaid on the results for 'Seraline ScreenSavers'. The notification box is green and contains the following text:

- McAfee SiteAdvisor**
- Seraline ScreenSavers**
- seraline.com**
- We've tested this site and found no significant problems.**
- 25 green downloads
- Links to green sites
- 0 pop-ups
- [More info...](#)
- [Get fully protected](#)

The search results visible include:

- [Freesaver.com](http://www.freesaver.com) (red X icon): Offering free screen savers... Category: Screen Savers... www.freesaver.com - 11k
- [Coolscreens.com](http://www.coolscreens.com) (yellow exclamation mark icon): Collection of original screen savers... Category: Screen Savers... www.coolscreens.com - 11k
- [Seraline ScreenSavers](http://www.seraline.com) (green checkmark icon): Colorful 3D and fractal screen savers. Category: Shopping > Screen Savers... www.seraline.com - 6k - [Cached](#) - [More from this site](#)
- [ScreenSavers.com](http://www.screen savers.com) (red X icon): Featuring a selection of outdoor, wildlife, car, and other downloads.



some problems or issues. You can click on the SiteAdvisor symbol to get more information about the website that you are visiting and why it is considered safe or unsafe.

This information is invaluable when surfing the Web. With SiteAdvisor installed you don't have to be fearful that signing up for more information or a newsletter will set you up for spam. You don't have to worry that downloading software will install spyware. In fact, SiteAdvisor takes much of the fear out of investigating and trying new things on the Internet.

Another great feature of the SiteAdvisor program is that when you do a search on Google, Yahoo! or MSN, SiteAdvisor's safety ratings appear as a red, green, or yellow circle next to the search results. You can easily see if a website is safe before you visit!! What a pleasant and useful service. If you want more information before you click on the search engine listing, just hover your mouse over the SiteAdvisor icon and a window will pop-up giving your details on the site's ratings.

Everything that I just described about the SiteAdvisor is available in the free version. McAfee also offers a Plus version that is available for \$19⁹⁹ per single user or as a 3-user family pack for \$39⁹⁹. The Plus version offers even more peace of mind by alerting you to dangerous links in email and instant messaging programs. The Plus version also has a password protected mode that can actively protect your computer against dangerous websites. This version is perfect for anyone who wants a little extra protection. It is also great for shared computers and computers that children or grandchildren use. Click here to download the SiteAdvisor.

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Revised 4-23-07



Fun wildlife site!

This site you can put in the zipcode for the area you are visiting and it gives pictures and good information on birds or other wildlife.

<http://www.enature.com/zipguides/> or simply go to <http://www.enature.com>

In addition to finding the nature of your community this site has useful field guides, screensavers links and much more.

Note from the editor: My zipcode (94558) showed 76 species of mammals, 291 species of birds, 85 species of butterflies, 44 species of reptiles and amphibians, 356 species of Trees and 914 species of Wildflowers.

In addition to the categories listed above, you can even do a search on seashells, seashore creatures, insects and spiders and fishes.

I'm just glad they don't all sleep at my house and grow in my backyard.

PowerPoint Tip

If you'd rather just end your show on the final slide instead of PowerPoint's default black slide, start PowerPoint and click Tools and Options. Select the View tab and deselect the End With Black Slide checkbox. Click OK to save your changes. Now the presentation will end on your final slide.

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Internet Connections

By Hilton Kaufman, a Member of the Chicago Computer Society, www.ccs.org,

hmkaufman@earthlink.net

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(This is part of a series of articles providing a brief explanation of the Internet. The previous article provided an overview and mentioned that there are separate issues of connections, addressing of messages, and available services.)

The method of connection into the Internet varies somewhat among users. At various points, telephone lines, coaxial cables, UHF relays, satellite shots, and a few other methods might be utilized to make the actual connections. It is even possible to bring a lap top computer into a coffee house and reach an internet connection

Internet Connections cont. on page 15

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starting with a radio link.

Typically a home or small office user will connect through a company known as an Internet Service Provider or ISP. These could be small local companies or giants, such as AOL, Earthlink, and AT&T-Yahoo. A large company establishes local routing centers known as Points of Presence or POPs to allow for local calls into the system. Small ISPs have local numbers but might also use POPs if covering an area of more than just a few miles. A large ISP might have over 2,000 POPs.

POPs have some equipment that receives the connection from the individual user and routes it to the server, a powerful dedicated computer, at the actual ISP location. The ISP then routes the message toward where it supposed to go, probably eventually through another ISP and POP. Trunk lines owned by a few major long distance telephone service providers are used to send messages across country in this process.

There are also sites known as redirection services. In some ways, they can be used to hide where a message is coming from and going to, but do have other purposes. For example, one can frequently change ISPs based on availability in local areas and price, but keep a constant address with a redirection service. These services might also provide things like a personal web site, useful software, and online storage.

I live in Chicago, Illinois and use a redirection service in California. My ISP also is in California. If I receive a message, it is somehow sent to the redirection service in California; it then goes through my ISP; then to a POP somewhere in Chicago; then through my telephone switch center about three or four miles from where I live; and eventually to my computer.

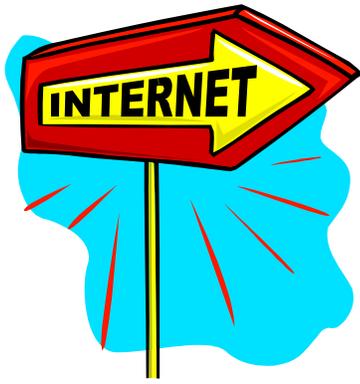
The person sending me the message might live nearby, but use a different ISP. While the telephone switching center might be the same, the POP and ISP locations would be different. Another major ISP is located in Minnesota. Different trunk line connections would be used to send the message there and then over to by redirection service in California.

A small ISP might go directly into the trunk lines or work through a larger wholesale ISP. Various capacity heavy duty lines go to the ISPs which break down the capacity for individual users. The smallest of these heavy lines is known as a T1 and could be sufficient for a small ISP. A larger ISP or a POP for a major ISP might use a T3 line. Single user service over a T3 line would make normal broadband service look extremely slow, but costs thousands of dollars per month.

All of these connections take place in seconds.

Government entities, schools, large businesses, and some others might connect in to the Internet in other ways.

Internet Connections cont. on page 16



A unit of government might have a connection to the Internet through a major ISP or might connect more directly into the trunk lines.

In Illinois, all Internet service for agencies under the governor is supposed to go through a Department of Central Management Services. A

worker in Chicago searching for something at another site in Chicago would have to go through Springfield. The central agency probably connects to the trunk lines. The central agency for a state that centralizes its computer operations, as does Illinois, might be a computer operations agency or the state library.

Even municipalities might go through a state service. For example, to get to the Brooklyn Museum site at one time, one had to go through a single site that served the entire State of New York. I tried this once from a Chicago Public Library public computer and received the message that the New York state computer was down; I then had to go the old fashioned encyclopedia that was on a shelf about 10 feet away to learn what I wanted.

Firewalls are used to protect data inside a network from outside tampering or prying. They can also be used to control what gets out. Firewalls can be set up at various levels to control access. In the other direction, if I send a message about something to one of my doctors, it will reach them among other messages on their hospital computers; but I cannot get in to see confidential information. One of the hospital systems, VA, can retrieve medical records across country, but no one else can get in. The other can exchange records among three hospitals and numerous scattered clinic sites.

Schools often act as small to moderate size ISPs. Faculty, staff, and students usually have internet privileges through the school. The schools might connect directly through the trunk, a large ISP, a state service, or another school. The main state university might serve as a central point for

other schools in the state and have a direct connection to the trunk. ■

(The articles to follow in this series are concerned with Internet addressing, or how the system knows where to send things, and the services, such as e-mail, that are available.)

Hilton Kaufman serves as the technical support person for the procedures writing unit of an Illinois state agency, where higher level technical support personnel are concerned with the details of Internet connections and services. As such, he uses the software provided to him to create forms, convert documents into PDFs, advise members of his unit as to how to use the available software, and similar tasks. For his home computer, he can go all out and get a powerful machine that allows him to do things like playing games and surf the web without getting in trouble. He has prepared a number of articles aimed at novice users on the basics of standard computer programs.

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Alphabetize Your IE Favorites Folders & Links

If you're running Windows 98SE/Me/2000/XP and Internet Explorer 5 or up, your solution is simple. Open the Favorites menu (in the top Menu bar) and right-click any item located underneath the Organize Favorites line. Then, choose Sort By Name. Keep in mind this will alphabetize the items you see in the Favorites menu, not items within folders in the Favorites menu. To alphabetize the contents of a folder in Favorites, open the folder, right-click an item, and choose Sort By Name from the pop-up menu. Common mistake: DO NOT try these right-click steps in the Favorites shortcut window at the left side of your browser. These steps will only work within the drop-down menu that appears when you click "Favorites" in the top menu bar. When you add an item to your Favorites menu, you'll need to select Sort By Name again to get that item in alphabetical order.

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