

# DATA LINE



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Editor: Judy T aylour

**Meetings**  
**SCV Senior Center**  
**22900 Market Street**  
**Newhall CA 91321**  
**www.scvpcg.org**

June 14 - TBA

July 12 - Old Time Radio with  
Danean MacAndrew, "The Radio  
Lady"

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**Wednesday, May 10, 2006**

**6:00 pm Member2Member. Member Tips & Tricks**

**7:00 pm** - Bruce McFarland & Rob Malone will dazzle you with what you can accomplish with Photoshop. One of their topics will be demystifying layers. As you edit your photo, you create layers. At any time you can go back to a layer you like better. You can also create a layer to better print your photo - depending on if your printer uses more cyan ink, etc.

If you don't use Photoshop should you come to the meeting? Yes, the keystrokes might be different, but usually if you can do it in one program, there is a way to do it in another photo editing program. And if you don't have a photo editing program, Judy will be showing you how to remove redeye, erase blemishes and use the cloning tool with Roxio's very-easy-to-use program - it's only \$29.95!

## **Welcome to Our New & Renewing Members**

John Hodson, Roger Oleson, John Metcalf, Bill Wolf

April / May Membership Renewals due: Walt Black, Arnie Kazdoy, Rob Malone, Frank Marion, Melinda Rademacher, Ed & Helen Blancher, Frank & Veronica Pinckard, David Lutness

## The Beginner's Corner

### Why Do You Get So Much Spam?

by Vinny La Bash, Member of the Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, Inc.  
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www.spcug.org

The earliest recorded instance of what may be described as spam occurred on May 3, 1978. A sales representative for Digital Equipment Corporation (DEC) named Gary Thuerk sent a message to everyone on the Arpanet data base (now known as the Internet) on the West coast of the United States. Thurek wanted to notify the recipients of an open house that his company was hosting a demonstration of new models of the DEC-20 computer.

In 1978 the Arpanet had a certified "acceptable use policy" which said it couldn't be used for anything except research and education. Thuerk's action was a very clear violation, and when DEC got a very strong response from the Arpanet community objecting to the misuse, the company promptly promised to stop. Spam would not appear again for many years.

Today, estimates of the amount of email that is defined as spam range from 66% to 94%. Whatever the actual figure is, the good news, if you want to call it that, is that spam appears to be leveling off.

Congress has passed anti-spam legislation. Spam receivers are angry, Internet Service Providers try to filter out spam messages, and spammers are loathed by the general community of internet users. Why do spammers continue to operate in the face of all this general repugnance?

In an article for Wired Magazine, Brian McWilliams provides a very depressing answer. McWilliams discovered a security flaw on a website operated by a group selling pills



guaranteed to enlarge the male sexual organ. The reporter found that over 6,000 orders for the product had been placed in a time span of about a month. Business and medical professionals, athletes, and even women bought the pills. Many buyers made multiple purchases at

\$50 per bottle, despite an obvious lack of credit card security on the site. The web site provided no way to contact the company except by placing an order.

Being a good reporter, McWilliams was not deterred by the company's efforts to hide behind fake registration data, disconnected phone numbers, and phony email addresses. Eventually he revealed that the company was owned by a 19 year old high school dropout, and a neo-Nazi adherent.



The business appears to be highly profitable, net costs being about \$15 per bottle of pills, but according to the FDA, there is no credible evidence that the product works.

Now you know why you get so much spam. It's because people who should know better respond to it and buy products from these companies.

Selling products of dubious value is not the only kind of spam on the net. This week alone I have won three European lotteries, and there are at least a dozen people in Nigeria who each want to give me \$12 million dollars for helping them launder money. Notification came just yesterday that Bill Gates is going to give me \$500,000 because I forwarded a few emails for a good cause.

Perhaps the best way to reduce the number of people buying from spam is to educate people about the problem. Unfortunately that takes time, but if we don't take the time to tell people why they shouldn't buy from spam, they will continue doing it.

If you are responding to spam, please stop.  
Be part of the solution, not part of the problem.

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## TechNews

By Sue Crane, Editor  
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Cosmeo is bringing Discovery's online encyclopedia into homes via its Web site. The site resembles the screen of a handheld game device and features video clips and interactive games. Content providers, including Scholastic Corp. and the Public Broadcasting Service, are customized to meet the curriculum standards of different states. The service is available for \$9.95/month.

Microsoft announced that it has delayed the mainstream launch of Vista until next year. Steve Sinofsky, the head of the Office unit, has been tapped to lead Windows development. Following its push back of Windows Vista, Microsoft confirms the Office 2007 release will move to next year as well. It's been reported on a number of blog sites that Microsoft will release Windows Vista with 8 different versions, but no pricing information is available yet . . .

Microsoft is also building in a tool, Windows Performance Rating, that will rate a PC based on how well it is running and on how much it can take advantage of Vista's capabilities to help average consumers easily understand their Windows Vista PC's overall performance. As for systems slowing down over time, that's another issue that Microsoft is trying to tackle. Meanwhile, Vista is being designed to shut the

door on spyware. It will introduce important changes at the heart of the operating system, as well as to Internet Explorer, and include Windows Defender, an anti-spyware tool.

An error in McAfee's virus definition file released mid-March caused consumer and enterprise antivirus products to flag Microsoft Excel, AdobeUpdateManager and other applications on users PCs as a virus called W95/CTX". Files were deleted or quarantined, depending on the user's settings.

When Microsoft first talked about Windows Live in November, most of the "Live" products were MSN services that had been rebranded. Since then Microsoft has added more than a dozen new products under the Windows Live umbrella. MSN executive David Cole explains, "Microsoft's goal is to continuously update and launch products". Over the next 3-6 months, Microsoft expects to ship more Windows Live technology into the marketplace than during their entire 10-year OS history. Microsoft's new ad-serving engine, AdCenter, is at the heart of Windows Live. AdCenter draws on user demographic information to help drive more targeted marketing. Microsoft has even talked about using advertising as a way to pay for traditional desktop software. Meanwhile, the list of Windows Live services continues expanding to include all the basic portal services.

Take a look at the Ice Weasels, Space Cookies and Cheesy Poofs, high school teams competing for top merit in the 15th annual robotics contest sponsored by FIRST (For the Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology). With about \$10,000 worth of donated hardware and software, high school students are given 6 weeks to assemble a functioning robot that can move around a court and shoot Nerf basketballs for points. Part of the challenge is for teens to find and work with mentors who are experts in technology and science. Once registered, the teams are given 3 boxes of hardware and software and a programming language called Easy C that allows them to write a program for the robot's

onboard computer. Also included is Autodesk's 3D Max Studio animation software so they can create a 30-second animation. The game itself is roughly 2 minutes long, with robots that are 2 feet wide by 4 feet high. For the first 10 seconds, the robots must make as many baskets as possible; the robot with the most points from the first 10 seconds then gets to play offense. Winning bots will go on to compete at Atlanta's Georgia Dome at the international finals.

Neurofeedback, a form of conditioning that rewards people for producing specific brain waves, taps youths' fascination with animation and electronics to sweeten frightening medical treatments. While this form of treatment has been around for decades, incorporating video games marks a new frontier that taps young people's fascination with animation and electronics to sweeten often frightening, lengthy and tedious medical treatments. Video games are being used, for instance, to help sick children manage pain and anxiety during hospital stays. A young leukemia patient inspired "Ben's Game," which let him fight the cancer cells invading his body. A private island called Brigadoon in Linden Lab's "Second Life" virtual world is open only to people with Asperger's syndrome and autism. West Virginia's public schools are battling obesity by making "Dance Dance Revolution"--a step-to-the-beat video game--part of their curriculum, while Nintendo has made a splash with its new "Brain Age" mind-exercising game. CyberLearning's Smart BrainGames system targets symptoms arising from brain injuries, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and learning disabilities. Priced at \$584, the system is built on NASA technology that used video games and neurofeedback to train pilots. Traditional treatments, such as prescribing the stimulant Ritalin, behavioral therapy and education, are often covered by health insurance, while neurofeedback usually is not. Despite such hurdles, some medical practitioners are advocating the new approach.

Kyle MacDonald is on the verge of successfully completing a project that sounds absurd:

Trading--with the help of a blog--a single red paper clip for a house. Since embarking on his house hunt last year, MacDonald has traded with people from across Canada and the United States and is now sitting on a year's free rent for an apartment in Phoenix. MacDonald is confident he's going to succeed, and hopes it can happen by the July 12 anniversary of the project's launch. And his goal is getting tantalizingly close. The project has allowed him to initiate a Net cult following that's hoping he'll succeed, too. Popular blogs such as boingboing have been tracking his progress.

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**For less than a computer how-to book, a yearly user group membership is the best accessory you can buy for your computer.**

## Traveling with a Video Camcorder

by Joseph Asling, Video Project Coordinator  
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Summer is coming and it's time to go somewhere interesting and photogenic. Many people carry cameras when they travel and not a few of us take camcorders. Here are a checklist and a few suggestions for coming back with better video.

### Pre-Departure

Equipment Checkup - Make sure your camcorder is in good shape. Run a few minutes of tape and see that it looks and sounds OK, otherwise take it in for cleaning. Allow at least two weeks for turnaround.

**Camcorder Size** - If you haven't bought your camcorder yet, consider the following: if you plan to do candid shots of people, buy a small, unobtrusive camcorder. Not only will it fit better in your carry-on luggage, but it will attract less attention. Also, some museums allow them in where they will reject larger camcorders because the big ones look professional.

**LCD Screen** - I usually shoot through the viewfinder, but an LCD screen is useful.

**Computer Connection** - Make sure your camcorder has an IEEE-1394 ("Firewire") or USB2 connector, whichever you need to capture to your computer.



**DVD vs Tape** - Some newer camcorders record to a DVD instead of tape; since it is more difficult to do computer editing with these, I recommend a camcorder which uses mini-DV tape.

**Filters** - ALWAYS keep a filter on your lens - a scratched filter is cheaper than a scratched lens. A transparent or UV filter is fine for most uses; tinted lenses are of less use because the auto-white balance of the camcorder tries to compensate for it. For sunny days I like a circular polarizer to suppress reflections on glass and water and to make the sky appear bluer. It also doubles as a neutral density filter. Pay the extra for good double-coated glass filters.

**Sunshade** - If your camcorder has a sunshade with an atypical connector, buy a sunshade which screws onto the front of the filter (I use a round rubber collapsible one).

**Camcorder Stand** - Tripods are big, heavy, and slow to set up. A monopod gives you much of the stability of a tripod, and if you buy one with a quick-release extension it takes only five seconds to set up. Plus, it doubles as a walking stick on difficult terrain. Spend an extra \$20 for a quick-release for the camcorder.

**Lights** - I don't recommend you travel with any lights. Unless you're on a professional shoot they aren't worth the trouble.

**Tape Supply** - Take plenty of tape - I take at least 10 hours' worth! Buy good quality brands such as Sony or Panasonic (people I trust have said bad things about TDK).

I buy Sony at [www.taperesources.com](http://www.taperesources.com) but there are other reliable websites which will sell packs of five for as little as \$3 per tape. (As an aside, NEVER record with the extended time setting on your camcorder - you may not be able to play it on any other camcorder.)

**Head Cleaner** - Carrying a head-cleaning tape is probably a good idea, although I've never had to use it in the field. Batteries - If you run out of power you are going to be distinctly unhappy. Buy at least one high-capacity extra battery. And don't forget to pack your recharger. If you are going abroad make sure you have two plug adapters (research what type of adapter you need for where you'll be), and that your recharger is multi-voltage.

**Headsets** - These are nice to have but not essential. If you have a microphone monitor output, take a compact headset (like Walkman earphones) for monitoring music. Make sure the plug is compatible.

**Weatherproofing** - Bring some paper adhesive tape - if you are going to be in a dirty or sandy environment seal the tape door with it so you don't get sand into the works. If you may be in the rain figure on bringing some kind of plastic cover (maybe large plastic zip lock bags).

### **When You're There**

Rule 1: tape is cheap! - If you might want a shot, shoot it! Every shot should be at least ten seconds long if possible and if you are going to zoom, shoot several seconds before and after the zoom. You'll thank yourself when you're

editing.

When you put a fresh tape in your camera, run about a minute of "throwaway" video. Most dropouts occur at the beginning and the end of a tape, and some capture programs can't handle the first few seconds of a tape.

**Watch the Background** - Many a shot has been ruined by a telephone pole growing out of someone's head or a distracting item behind the subject. Often moving a few feet to one side will fix the problem. A corollary to this is to find a good angle: one with clear sight lines and no-one in the way. And don't get in the way yourself. Years ago, I was in Chichicastenango and a funeral procession happened by. The mourners stopped in front of the Church - and a German tourist with a big camcorder shouldered them out of the way and started videotaping the coffin and the deceased! I cheered when the locals drove him away with rocks.

**Tricks for Big Crowds** - If you are in a crowd which you can't see over, hoist the camcorder up on your monopod. If you open the LCD screen and tilt it down you can see what you're shooting (so, there is a use for that screen).

**Tricks for the Kids** - One more use for the LCD screen - see if you can reverse it so that the people you're shooting can watch themselves while you are recording. You'll get terrific reactions from kids.

**Candid Camera** - If you are trying to take candid shots, hold the camera at waist level and watch the subject through the LCD screen. Before you do that go into the menu and turn off the red recorder indicator light so your subject won't know you are recording. It doesn't always work - in Morocco, one sharp-eyed fellow noticed from 30 feet away what I was doing and came over with his hand out for money. I paid him, of course.

**In the Rain** - Check the lens frequently when shooting in the rain. Raindrops on your video are understandable but disconcerting.

**Narration** - If you are shooting something which needs describing, just dictate in a low voice while you shoot; your voice will be audible on the tape. Of course you'll have to cut out the audio when you edit, so you don't want to do this over anything you will want to hear as well as see.

Consider what you will say on the voiceover when you edit the video, and make sure you have names and events correctly. I write them down in a little journal every night.

**Music** - Think about the music you'll use with the video and record it if you hear local musicians. I have sometimes let a tape run most of an hour just to capture live music (another reason to have plenty of tape).

**Background "Chatter"** - When traveling with friends, I delicately remind them that anything they say will be picked up by the camcorder. It cuts down on extraneous conversation and four-letter words in your audio!

**Documentation** - Make sure you label each tape with the trip, location, and tape number. When you put it back in the plastic cover, slide the little switch to lock it so you can't accidentally record over it. I keep camcorder, tapes and critical accessories in my carryon baggage. The accessories I can't fit in the carryon go in the checked luggage.

**X-Ray at Security** - The X-ray machines at security checkpoints have never hurt my videotape, but I'm not sure about the more powerful X-rays of checked luggage.

Bon Voyage!

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## Swissbit - Victorinox Do Everything USB, MP3 Swiss Army Knife

By Ira Wilsker, APCUG Director; Columnist,  
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Radio & TV Show Host  
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### WEBSITES:

<http://www.swissbit.com>

<http://www.victorinox.com>

[http://support.swissbit.com/pdf/s.beat\\_Fact\\_Sheet.pdf](http://support.swissbit.com/pdf/s.beat_Fact_Sheet.pdf)

<http://www.victorinox.com/index.cfm?page=242&lang=E>

Hey dads! With Father's Day fast approaching, maybe you should get copies of this article, and leave the copies at strategic places around the house where key members of the family are likely to see them. Dads are often hard to buy gifts for, and all too often end up with that ubiquitous neck tie that typically works its way into the back of the closet, and eventually accidentally falls into the bag headed for the rummage sale. Maybe instead of the well intended, but often useless gift that we dads sometimes receive, perhaps a really fun high tech gift would be more appropriate.

The most intriguing item that I have seen, that would make a fantastic gift for dad on his special day, is a combination Victorinox Swiss Army Knife, USB flash drive, FM stereo radio, voice recorder, and remote control MP3 player, manufactured and distributed by Swissbit ([www.swissbit.com](http://www.swissbit.com)). Named the "S.Beat", this device is true to the multi-function traditions of the classical Swiss army knife, but with a modern twist. Externally, it looks like an aluminum scaled Swiss army knife, complete with the white cross logo, sharp knife blade, spring opening scissors, and nail file. Internally, it contains a removable USB 2.0 high speed flash drive (available in 1 GB, 2 GB, and 4 GB capacities) that also contains an MP3 player, FM stereo radio, voice recorder, and rechargeable lithium polymer battery. A



separate remote control also bears the trademarked Victorinox white cross logo, and contains an earphone jack, volume and track controls, and power on and off. The remote control can be worn around the neck with the included lanyard. For international travelers, the

built-in lithium polymer battery can be recharged using the included "USB World Charger", which can handle voltages from 110v to 220v, and is compatible with the outlets in over 150 countries. The battery, which may take up to 2.5 hours to fully charge, will power the player for about eight hours. The tiny FM radio can be preset to listen to up to 15 stations, and the MP3 player (which also supports WMA and OGG Vorbis formats) has a three line backlit high-contrast display.

Victorinox and Swissbit have taken the flying traveler into mind with this device which has earned a "FlySmart" logo. Since the knife and scissors component would be banned on commercial airline flights, but many travelers would still like to listen to the MP3 player, the player itself can be separated from the knife, maintaining full functionality. The knife portion of the device can then be appropriately placed in the checked luggage, and can be reunited with the player at the destination.

This device is simply amazing, fitting all of the components in a standard sized Swiss army knife about three inches long, half an inch wide, and about, three-quarters of an inch thick, and weighs a scant three ounces. The box containing the S.Beat included the knife and MP3 player unit, remote control, high quality stereo headphones with neck strap, a protective cap (covers the USB plug when the player is removed from the knife), arm strap for outdoor sports activities, USB extension cable, USB world charger, instruction book, and CD containing the software utilities.

Since this device is just being introduced in this country, but has been available in Europe for a

while, it is something that dad will find both unique and exclusive. It should be available shortly at any retailer stocking a large assortment of Victorinox products, but is currently available from several online sources. The version with the 1 GB capacity has a retail price of \$189, with some domestic outlets offering this S.Beat at a small discount. The larger capacity 2 GB and 4 GB models were recently introduced in Europe, and should be available shortly in this country.



Being so new on the market, there have only been a few reviews published, but they have been universally positive. One such published review is quite representative of the several that I found. It says, "Fantastic product! Beautiful metal finish, sturdy and compact. The included headphones are top-notch - no need to spend another 50 bucks for a real pair like with all other players you buy nowadays. Sound quality will blow you away, menu user interface is comprehensive yet simple and intuitive to use/learn. Didn't even have to read the manual. And best of all; it works without some special drivers or software. Just use what you're used to for your audio and data files."

Come to think of it, maybe we should not wait until Father's Day; maybe we should not only consider this extremely useful gadget for dad, but mom, and our new graduates as well. In fact, this would make a great gift for anyone special, including yourself!

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# Happy Mother's Day

I sent Ira an e-mail and asked why he didn't write an article like the above for Mother's Day. He said he didn't find any really good tech gifts for mom - jewelry still works fine. I thought the display at Best Buy that featured digital gifts for mom was clever. I bought myself a nifty Olympus digital camera for Mother's Day.



## Online Librarians Never Say Shhh!

By Gabriel Goldberg, APCUG Advisor; Columnist, AARP Computer & Technology Website, [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org)



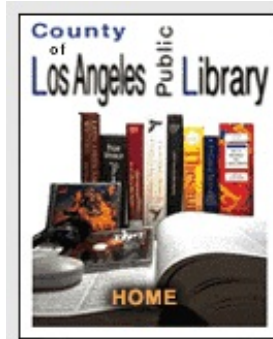
Libraries have improved since baby boomers attended grade school. Research assistance once only available in person or by telephone is blossoming into diverse online "ask a librarian" services, handling questions ranging from general curiosity and homework-related to business research.

### Friendly Online Librarians Never Say Shhh!

Growing up, I was lucky to live just a few blocks from a great neighborhood library. I fondly remember the children's librarian encouraging my love of reading and books. The library was rebuilt while I was in elementary school; I was recently shocked that the "new" library was undergoing renovation and improvement. Then I realized that what seems like yesterday was five decades ago!

The good news for us all -- near libraries or not -- is that libraries have greatly improved in that 50 years. Research assistance once only available in person or by telephone is blossoming into diverse online "ask a librarian" services. These handle all sorts of questions: general curiosity, homework-related, business research, etc. Just don't expect medical or legal advice.

E-mail assistance has been available for some time. Librarians sometimes like it because they can answer questions as they have time, and it avoids people waiting on line or holding on the phone. But it can be slow if a question must be clarified -- that's important, since people often don't ask what they really want answered! And online interaction lacks face-to-face intimacy, voice tone, body language, which all help communication.



In addition to accepting e-mail, libraries use Web forms for submitting queries, take questions via instant messaging, and offer interactive Web chats. Highly interactive instant messaging and Web chats allow quick conversations, often providing answers within a few minutes. Newer technologies such as VoIP (voice over IP, Internet telephony) and MS (cell phone text messaging) may soon increase research availability.

Library policies vary regarding answering non-resident questions; some specialized queries (local history, obituaries, newspaper clippings, etc.) must be handled by a library near the area of interest. That brings genealogy questions from far away as people research their ancestors.

Most queries are handled at no cost, though some searches incur charges. A library card usually isn't needed. Some libraries currently mail printed research results; e-mailing images will provide faster service and reduce costs.

Behind-the-scenes technology helps librarians manage queries, ensuring that all questions are answered and eliminating duplicate responses. Shortcuts fill in frequently used answers.

The same sorts of questions are asked online as are posed by phone or in person, with addition of sensitive areas such as sexual issues. Queries often deal with homework -- math, science fair challenges, etc. -- and country reports. Librarians enjoy the occasional obscure gem, such as being asked about "modeling the economic infrastructure of railroads in Great Britain".

The geek expression "24x7" means that something is available all day, every day. Since people expect this full-time access to e-mail, the Web, shopping, banking, and other online services, they're enthusiastic about being able to ask questions whenever they occur.

But it's hard for libraries to provide this never-anticipated level of service, especially when off-hours demand may be limited. So they support each other locally/nationally/internationally by sharing round-the-clock assistance chores. Questions are entered locally and routed to on-duty librarians -- who sometimes work from home in pajamas, answering off-hours long-distance queries.

Even librarians sometimes need help -- so their world-wide Stumpers mailing list lets them share baffling questions.

Librarians and the public are learning together to use electronic tools. New technologies facilitate supporting diverse clienteles by -- for example -- facilitating non-English services.

Here are a few tips regarding online queries: provide your name/e-mail/phone for answering and clarification; use plain text (not formatted) for easy reading; don't nag, allow time for an answer -- but follow up in a week or so. Finally, contact the correct library. A library in

Plymouth, Michigan has received queries about Plymouths in Massachusetts and England!

Using online library services is easy once you have an Internet connection. Some libraries favor PCs with Windows and the Internet Explorer Web browser, but Linux and Macintosh systems are increasingly supported. There's generally no software download or install. Browser pop-up blockers or firewalls sometimes get in the way but they're easily customized.

Start by finding your library's Web site For example, I locate my library by submitting

"fairfax county" library

to Google [[www.google.com](http://www.google.com)]. Or I could click from my county government Web site to the library pages. Or Googling library questions yields many library sites offering answers. Then look for links like Ask-A-Librarian! or "Homework Help!. Links and services will vary; when I click Ask-A-Librarian, I can choose between chatting, e-mailing, or (of course) actually visiting a library.

In researching this article I challenged my library with two questions. I was delighted that they quickly named the obscure British TV show whose name I couldn't remember (The Duchess of Duke Street) and found a science fiction book containing a short story I wanted to reread.

No matter how they evolve, whether as buildings or online, libraries' core mission is everlasting: providing timely information in a customer-friendly format.

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## Computer Humor

### High Tech Computer Sales Jargon



NEW - Different color from previous design

ALL NEW - Parts not interchangeable with previous design

EXCLUSIVE - Imported product

UNMATCHED - Almost as good as the competition

DESIGNED SIMPLICITY - Manufacturer's cost cut to the bone

FOOLPROOF OPERATION - No provision for adjustments

ADVANCED DESIGN - The advertising agency doesn't understand it

IT'S HERE AT LAST! - Rush job; Nobody knew it was coming

FIELD-TESTED - Manufacturer lacks test equipment

HIGH ACCURACY - Unit on which all parts fit

DIRECT SALES ONLY - Factory had big argument with distributor

YEARS OF DEVELOPMENT - We finally got one that works

REVOLUTIONARY - It's different from our competitors

BREAKTHROUGH - We finally figured out a way to sell it

FUTURISTIC - No other reason why it looks the way it does

DISTINCTIVE - A different shape and color than the others

MAINTENANCE-FREE - Impossible to fix

RE-DESIGNED - Previous faults corrected, we hope...

HAND-CRAFTED - Assembly machines operated without gloves on

PERFORMANCE PROVEN - Will operate through the warranty period

MEETS ALL STANDARDS - Ours, not yours

ALL SOLID-STATE - Heavy as Hell!

BROADCAST QUALITY - Gives a picture and produces noise



## Tips & Tricks

### Burning Pictures On a CD

Dave Gerber, APCUG Advisor, Vice President, Sarasota PCUG, Florida

Do you have about a hundred gazillion pictures on your PC eating up hard disk space? If you have a CD-R, CD-RW, DVD-R, DVD+R, DVD-RW, or DVD+RW drive, burning those pictures onto a CD, where they'll last for decades, is very easy. A CD certainly lasts longer than your hard drive, providing you don't gum it up with one of those sticky CD labels.

Burning pictures couldn't be simpler:

Make sure that your CD-R, CD-RW, DVD-R, or DVD-RW drive is installed and working.

Start Windows Explorer. (Just choose, say, Start, My Pictures or Start, My Computer.)

Navigate to the pictures you want to burn. If you're in a picture or photo album folder, Copy to CD appears in the Picture Tasks list.

Select the picture(s) you want to burn; then click Copy to CD in the Picture Tasks list. If Copy to CD doesn't appear in the list, right-click one of the selected files (or folders) and choose Send To, CD Drive. A small CD icon appears in the notification area, next to the clock.

Keep moving around Windows, gathering pictures that you want to burn. In spite of what the Picture Task list and right-click menu say, Windows actually copies the files you select to a staging area -- a place on your hard drive that holds files temporarily, before you burn them to CD.

When you're done gathering files, choose Start, My Computer, your CD burner drive (whichever drive letter that is). Windows shows you the contents of the CD's staging area.

Put a recordable CD in your CD burner and click Write These Files to CD. The CD Writing Wizard appears.

Type the name you want to be burned on the CD; then click Next. If you've chosen too much data -- too many pictures -- the wizard alerts you.

If you have too many pictures selected, don't do anything with the wizard. Instead, go back to the staging area and start deleting files or folders (right-click and choose Delete) until you're under the size limit. Don't worry -- you aren't deleting the pictures. You're just removing them from the staging area.

Unfortunately, neither the wizard nor Windows offers a handy list of folder sizes or suggestions for what to trim. What you can do is right-click a folder, choose Properties, and see the folder's size.

When you think that you've deleted enough files or folders, go back to the wizard, click Retry Writing the Files to CD Now, and then click Next.

If you still have too many pictures selected, you get the warning again. Sooner or later, you have your picture collection trimmed down to the point where it can fit on the CD. At that point, the wizard starts writing files to the CD. Depending on the speed of your burner, it can take 20 minutes or more to burn a full CD.

When the wizard finishes, click Finish. The wizard removes all the files from the staging area.

Immediately try looking at the pictures on the CD.

Chances are very good that they're in excellent shape. Oh, and don't forget to label the CD with a marker made especially for CDs.

### Turning Off Your Computer

Choose the Turn Off option when nobody else will be using the computer until the next morning. Windows XP saves everything, and tells you when it's okay to turn off your computer. (Sometimes it turns it off for you.) When you choose Turn Off Computer, Windows clings like a sleepy cat, tossing up these three options:

**Standby:** Also called Hibernate on some laptops, this option quickly saves all your work and puts the computer in virtual sleep -- a delicate mode between on and off. Avoid it.

**Turn Off:** Choose this option when you're done for the day. Let you -- and your computer -- get some real sleep. When Windows XP leaves the screen, turn off the computer and the

monitor, if Windows XP doesn't do it automatically.

**Restart:** Only choose this option when Windows XP screwed something up: Several programs crashed, or Windows seems to be acting awfully weird. Windows XP turns off and reloads itself, hopefully feeling refreshed.

When you tell Windows XP that you want to quit, it searches through all your open windows to see whether you've saved all your work. If it finds any work you've forgotten to save, it tosses a box your way, letting you click the OK button to save it. Whew!

You don't have to shut down Windows XP every night. In fact, some people leave their computers turned on all the time, saying it's better for their health. Others say their computers are healthier if they're turned off each day. However, everybody says to turn off your monitor when you're done working. Monitors definitely enjoy cooling down when not being used.

### E-mail Scam Resources & Information

Huntsville PC User Group, Inc. News

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



Scamdex is a searchable, indexed archive of scams received by e-mail. They trawl the e-mail accounts of scammers and also name and shame the organizations that do not have clear, concise scam and phishing reporting instructions.

Elections for the Santa Clarita Valley PC Group officers will be held at the May 2006 meeting. Walt Black reports that he has not heard from anyone volunteering to run for an office nor has he heard from any current officer that they do not want to continue in their current position; nominations will be taken at the meeting.

2005/2006 SCVPCG OFFICERS

President	Judy Taylour scvpcg@thevine.net
Vice President	Hank Schorz hschorz@actlit.com
Secretary	Greg Ford / notchevy@ dslextreme.com
Treasurer	OPEN
Membership	Rob Turner rtturner@thevine.net
Member-at-Large	Dave Melton Dave@melton.com
Program Director	Bruce McFarland brucem@newsbyte.com
Information Line	252.8852
Snail Mail	18727 Nadal Street Santa Clarita, CA 91351
General Meeting	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday / month SCV Senior Center 22900 Market Street Newhall CA 91321

Membership Application  
(Please Print)

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Name

-----  
Address

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City/State/Zip

-----  
Home Phone

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E-mail

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Areas of Interest

Level of computer skills (please circle)

Novice                  Average                  Expert

Mail to: SCVPCG, 18727 Nadal Street  
Canyon Country, CA 91351

## Membership Benefits Around Town

Show your Santa Clarita Valley PC Group Membership Card to receive the below discounts.

Cartridge World - Santa Clarita  
27674 Newhall Ranch Road, #80  
295-5056

www.cartridgeworld.com (Key in zip 91355)  
cartridgeworldscv@comcast.net  
10% discount

Computer Simplistics - 10% on Service  
In-house Repairs ONLY  
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www.lacbbs.com

Grapevine Services Inc.  
21618 Golden Triangle Road, Suite 203  
staff@thevine.net  
Internet services - \$17.95/month

Precision Computers - 20% on Service  
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Canyon Country  
299.2228 (ph)  
www.precisionpc.com

Know a senior citizen who needs a computer?  
Refer them to Noel & they will receive a free one-year membership in the computer club.

PC Club - Various Discounts  
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Roger's Systems - 15%  
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www.rogerssystems.com

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The Santa Clarita Valley PC Group is dedicated to supporting the needs of its members and to the exchange of information about computers, peripherals, services, hardware and software through meetings, special interest groups, web page, and the distribution of this newsletter.

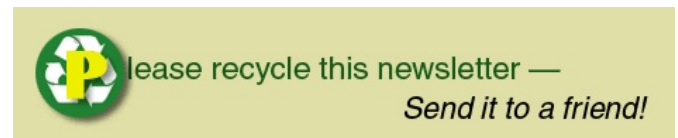
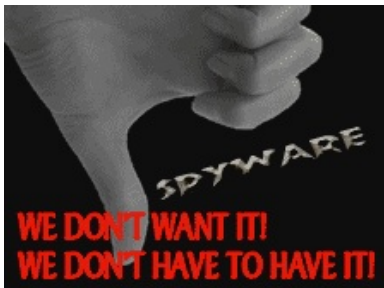
The SCV PC Group is a proud member of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups.



Annual Membership Dues	\$30.00	Please make check payable to: SCV PC Group 18727 Nadal Street Canyon Country, CA 91351
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Senior	\$27.00	
Senior Family (55)	\$48.00	
Student Membership	\$25.00	
New Member Fee	\$ 5.00	
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## DATALINE

18727 Nadal Street  
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### HELP STAMP OUT SPYWARE!

Find out who your legislators are and how to contact them. Write to them and demand they do something to stop the use of spyware. **Don't wait. Do it now!**

<http://www.congress.org/congressorg/home>

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