

User Friendly



**February
2003**

Next Meeting
February 12, 7:30 p.m.
Ken Rockwell
Digital Photography and Computers

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Palmia Computer Club



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User Friendly

a publication for members of the Palmia Computer Club & the Palmia Community.

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Articles (1) must be submitted to the Managing Editor no later than the 10th day prior to the month of publication; (2) should be no longer than 1,000 to 1,500 words (approximately three columns), although longer articles may be published; (3) may be edited by staff for clarity, spelling and grammar, and should be relevant to its readers. The choice of articles to be included in any issue is solely the prerogative of the Editorial Staff.

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Computer Club Special Interest Groups

SIGs meet from 3:30 to 5:00 P.M. on the specified Fridays unless noted otherwise:

- 1st Friday** - Computer HardwareRichard Jenkins
(*Notice: New SIG Leader*)
- 2nd Friday** - Email and the InternetJerry Moore
- 3rd Friday** - MS Office (Word, Excel)Barry Robbins
(*Notice: Special Time 4 to 5:30 P.M.*)
- 4th Friday** - Photo Editing & Scanning Don Yenche

There is also a "HELP" SIG! This SIG is intended for beginners to answer your basic questions relating to computers (This is not a class). It meets on the first, third and fourth Mondays of each month at 10:00 A.M. The SIG leader is Joe Lebovitz.

Contacting Board Members and Officers

All Board members and officers are available for help or information via their email addresses as follows:

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Please Help

Your User Friendly newsletter needs a back-up, or co-editor, to Ali Tabikh who is not in good health. This fine publication must continue to serve everyone. So many members rely on it to stay up-to-date on computer developments. This is a learning opportunity for someone willing to help as well as a fine way to help the Club. **Please call Ali at 699-1962 or Herbert Sax at 455-1315.**

The Palmia Computer Club meets in the Palmia Ballroom the second Wednesday of each month, except July and August, at 7:30 p.m. The doors open at 6:30 p.m. for Q&A and socializing. For visitors from outside our Palmia community the address is: 21455 Monterey, Mission Viejo, CA 92692. The parking lot is just past the gate on the left side of Monterey. Telephone: 949-472-5075

From the President's Desk

By Barry Robbins

Our January meeting was enjoyed by all in attendance. Mr. Patrick Crispen talked to us about a variety of very interesting web sites. You can get some of the information discussed at Patrick's web site at <www.squirrelnet.com>. In addition Patrick has another website where you can sign up for his FREE newsletter. The web address is <www.tourbus.com>.

Our February 12 meeting will feature Mr. Ken Rockwell, an award winning photographer whose subject will be How to Get Your Pictures in Your Computer and Look Better Coming Out. You can see some of Mr. Rockwell's work at <www.kenrockwell.com>.

Mark your calendar for March 12. Herbert Sax will once again present TurboTax, the award-winning tax preparation program from Intuit. If you ever thought about preparing your own tax return, or would like to see how the professionals do it, be sure to attend this meeting.

It seems that the more email I get, the more potential computer viruses I am exposed to. I receive at least two infected pieces of email per week. If you are on the internet and do not have an antivirus program you are living dangerously. And if you have an antivirus program and are not updating your virus definitions at least two or three times per week, then you really do not have an antivirus program. I have been a supporter of Symantec's Norton Antivirus program for a long

time. This week, I received updates on January 8, 9 and 10. I am using the 2003 version and the program automatically searches for updates every time I start my computer. If I were to leave it running 24 hours per day, the program would seek out an update every day, so it updates daily whether or not I am restarting my computer.

Another piece of software that one should have is a firewall. There are many good firewall software programs, but one of the best is FREE. That is right: Free! Zone alarm can be downloaded at <www.zonelabs.com>. This program is free to individual non-business users. The purpose of the firewall is to prevent unwanted access to your computer while you are on the internet. Zone Alarm will not allow a program to access the internet without your knowledge. It can be a pain sometimes to have the program running, but it does protect your privacy. If you are on the Cox cable internet, you are on the internet anytime your computer is on. It is even more important that you have a firewall program.

Just a reminder that prior to the meeting, we have a Q&A period running from 6:30 PM until 7:15 PM. Someone will be on hand to answer any questions that you may have about software or hardware.

I look forward to seeing all of you at our February meeting which will start promptly at 7:30 PM.

Power Surge Protectors

Over 60% of all electronics casualties are caused by power surge incidents. A power surge occurs when the power line voltage increases over nominal values for more than 10 milliseconds. 60% of all power surges are caused from within the home – generally when a device with a motor (such as a hair dryer, refrigerator or water pump) shuts off and the power it was using is diverted elsewhere as excess voltage. The remaining 40% of power surges are generated by events such as lightning, utility grid switching, line slapping, poor wiring, and so on. While most average electricity-using

devices are not affected by power-surges, devices relying on computer chips and high-speed microprocessors are susceptible to serious damage. For your computer, power anomalies can result in keyboard lockup, complete data loss, hardware degradation, damaged motherboards, and more. Failure to protect yourself from the inevitable can result in a loss of both time and money.

The most common defense against power surges is a surge protector or suppressor, a device that works by absorbing some of the excess energy and diverting the rest of it to the ground. These

Continued on page 11

Review of Quicken 2003

By Hal Zechmann



Quicken 2003 is an upgrade of the current Quicken financial programs. While much of the modifications are cosmetic, many minor improvements make it even easier to use than before.

No two users are alike but Quicken offers enough varied tools to satisfy the particular needs of almost everyone. I've used it for years and my areas of interest are checkbook administration, portfolio management and budgeting. Quicken also offers financial and retirement planning, home inventory, on line financial reports and check printing. I track the financial well-being of four separate households: my own and those of my three kids and their families. This is easily done, and switching among them is a snap.

Quicken's default Home Page is loaded with easy references to most of its tools. Most everything is at one's fingertips, but the page has become very busy. However, you can almost revert back to the previous Quicken appearance by checking or unchecking various options found in the Edit menu. Even the Alerts can be hidden by right-clicking on them and making the appropriate selection. Of course an On/Off button would be quicker, but one can only hope that the next version will include that.

Quicken's reports are outstanding. They include net worth, cash flow, portfolio analysis, expense analysis, etc. This year they have added most useful Tax Statements which are great in predicting one's year end tax picture. However, keep in mind that any report is as good as the quality of information the user inputs.

Quick Tabs has been replaced by the Account Bar. Both features let you quickly access often-used registers, but the Account Bar now gives you running totals of all open accounts, and your net worth is never more than a glance at the bottom of the window. As with most programs there are some limits; in this case you can't open every single one of your accounts. Because I like *everything* at my fingertips *all the time*, I sometimes get an error message when I exceed Quicken's limit. Since Quicken

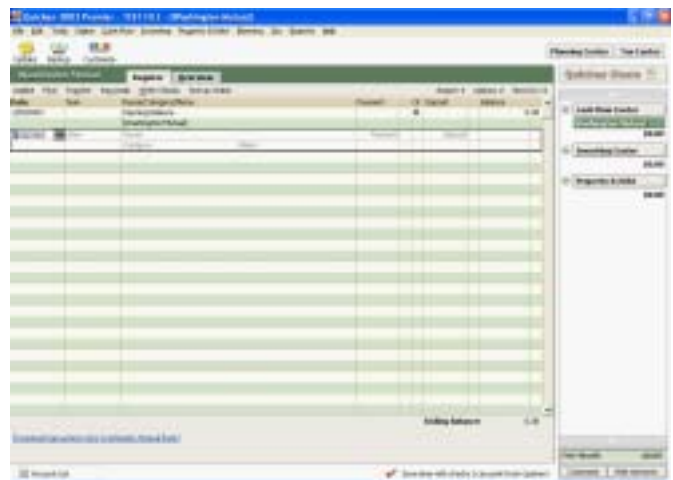
doesn't tell me what that limit is, I never know when I'm approaching it.

I've had a problem recently when I reconcile my portfolio to the Brokerage House statement. Certain securities are not shown while in the "Price Update" screen. I have to switch to the "Holdings" screen to show a complete picture. I haven't yet figured out why.

I've never gotten excited about printing checks in Quicken. You either have to switch paper stock or have a second printer. However, if you write lots of checks you may find this function very beneficial. I know that our Recreation Department has switched to check-printing, and it has saved staff a great deal of time.

Updating Financial Statements is a breeze in that the live update feature instantly updates data for whatever report you care to call up. You are able to schedule updates at any time automatically. One could write a book on the advantages of Quicken 2003 and its soft spots but starting to use it will make you a better manager of your finances.

The minimum operating system is Microsoft Windows 98/ME/2k/XP, and Intel Pentium processor or its equivalent, and at least 32 MB RAM. Quicken 2003 comes in three flavors: Premier for Windows, Premier Home and Business, and Deluxe. The latter is the version I have. It can be purchased for \$49.95 directly from Intuit. Go to <www.quicken.com> and click on the Quicken Software tab at the top of the window. It is also widely available at office supply and computer retail outlets.



Google is Great

By John Lenihan

Pikes Peak Computer Application Society

Listen to any of the technology talk shows or read articles that discuss “search engines” and you’ll see that Google has been rated high for a long time. I find it accurately displays whatever I’m looking for, so much so, that it’s like having an encyclopedia of knowledge at my finger tips. Newer engines are coming out, but I still trust Google to find my answers. But have you dug deeper down into what’s available with this search engine? Well read on, because there’s a lot more to it.

Let’s start by using the basic search window found on www.google.com. When my computer runs into a problem and can give me enough of an understandable error message, I’ve found that typing the message into a Google search window usually gives me enough hits to help me narrow the problem. My son called me a few months ago and said he thought he had sent me a virus, and wanted me to delete the file called `sulfnbk.exe`. It sounded a little fishy, and since he was close to his computer, I asked him to type the file name into Google. He saw the words HOAX come up in big block letters. Google saved me the hassle of trying to resurrect that file later. If you want to narrow your searches to just Microsoft-related pages, you can click on “Advanced Search” and go to the bottom of the displayed page and click on “Microsoft.” Thus, if you have an operating system or Microsoft application question, this narrows the boundaries of the search. You can also get there directly by going to www.google.com/microsoft.html.

Notice from the “Advanced Search” page that other narrow searches can be done for Apple, BSD Unix, Linux, and Government-related sites.

Try doing a “vanity search” by typing your name in the search box. Or even try it with friends you’ve lost contact with. I’ve found some long-lost souls just by doing this. Enter a name, city, state, or zip code for a business or a person and see if you get a hit. You may be surprised at how easy it can be to find information about yourself. Enter a phone number and see if you get back a name. If Google recognizes what you entered as an address, you’ll get back a street map.

Google is so good at finding things that there was even a game called “googlewhacking” where people would try typing in a combination of words that just returned one search reply. It’s fairly hard to do unless you use some really obscure word variations.

Looking at the basic search screen on the opening Google page, you’ll notice four tabs on top. The default is the Web tab, which we were just using. The next one is the Images tab, taking you to <http://images.google.com>. This will allow you access to millions of images on the Web.

Suppose your child is doing a school report on oak trees. Type “oak trees” into the images search engine and you’ll find plenty of pictures for the report. Of course, I need to pass along the disclaimer that lots of stuff on the Web is copyrighted, so you need to be careful how you use what you find. But I doubt you’ll get into too much trouble using a picture in your school report. But I did hear that teachers could use Google to search for text phrases in reports to check for plagiarism.

There are thousands of newsgroups in cyberspace, covering thousands of topics, and only so much time in a day. The third tab over is the “Groups” tab and it will let you find out what is (or was) being discussed out there that you would be interested in. For example, if you’re thinking of buying a new digital camera, type the model number in the Groups search window.

You’ll see messages from people in various newsgroups who discussed that item. You can use this method to monitor almost any topic you have an interest in. The last tab over at the top is the “Directory” tab. Click here and you’ll see Web pages organized into directories by topic, much like you’d see at Yahoo. For example, click on “Computers” and you’ll see almost 50 computer topics arranged by categories, any one of which takes you to many other Websites. They advertise they have over 1.5 million pages indexed in this directory.

Want to keep up with current news stories? Go to <http://news.google.com> and enter in a news topic. Say you wanted to stay abreast of the Hayman

Printer Problems

Symptoms and Solutions

Most of us are prone to run into printer problems from time to time. Here are symptoms of some common troubles one may experience, and their solutions, courtesy of Smart Computing.

Symptom :

Printer Makes a Loud “Banging” Noise

Possible Cause: Incorrect or corrupted printer driver. A driver is a small utility that lets the computer speak to the printer, and if it gets corrupted or you’re using the wrong one, you’ll have to replace it. Windows often uses a universal printer driver without you knowing it, often with less than satisfactory results.

Solution: Visit the manufacturer’s Web site and check for the latest printer driver or reinstall your printer software according to the instructions that came with it.

Possible Cause: Dirty print head position strip. Some printers have a narrow plastic strip right behind the rod on which the print head travels; the strip is used to determine head position. The strip is usually gray and is covered with very small lines that the print head reads to know where it is. When this strip gets dirty, the print head can no longer determine where it is on the page, which causes it to bang against the far side of the printer.

Solution: Clean the head-position strip with a lint-free cloth and some rubbing alcohol.

Symptom:

Printer Prints the Wrong Colors

Possible Cause: Clogged nozzle. The openings in an inkjet printer’s nozzles are smaller than a human hair, so it doesn’t take much to clog them.

Solution: Run the printer’s head cleaning utility. Generally, this can be initiated either from the printer’s menu panel or from the Windows Printer option in the control panel. Refer to your users manual for instructions on your specific printer. If the clog is severe, you may have to run the head cleaning utility multiple times to clear it.

Possible Cause: Out of ink. A color inkjet printer uses cartridges with three, four, or six colors of ink. The printer combines these to make all

the other colors on the page. When one or more of the color tanks are empty, you’ll need to replace the entire cartridge, even if the other colors are still full. (If this bothers you, consider getting a higher-end printer with the colors in separate cartridges. You’ll pay more initially, but you’ll save money over the long run by only replacing the color that is empty.)

Solution: Purchase a good quality ink cartridge (new or recycled) and follow your printer’s instructions to replace the old one. Be careful not to shake the old cartridge, as you’re likely to get ink all over the place. Be careful not to touch the actual print head.

Symptom:

The Paper Won’t Feed Correctly

Possible Cause: No paper. If you think this couldn’t happen to you, think again. All printers have a light that tells you to add paper, but these are often overlooked. If no paper comes out, check that you have some in the printer before proceeding to more drastic measures.

Solution: Add paper to printer. Smack yourself on forehead. Don’t tell your spouse.

Possible Cause: Incorrect paper. The wrong type or weight paper may cause a printer to grab multiple pieces of paper, or none at all. Today’s inkjets are much less sensitive to this issue, but this doesn’t mean you can feed it your Sunday newspaper and expect good results.

Solution: Check that you’re using the right paper for your printer. If you don’t know what that is, go to your printer manufacturer’s Web site or customer support line and they can tell you.

Possible Cause: Dirty roller. With use, the printer’s friction roller can become coated with a paper fiber residue, effectively reducing the friction of the surface and making it difficult for the roller to grab a single sheet of paper.

Solution: Clean roller with rubbing alcohol and a lint-free cloth to remove fiber residue and restore the friction surface. Make sure you unplug the printer first and be careful not to drip any alcohol into the printer.

Possible Cause: Jammed paper. If your printer won’t feed paper correctly, you may have a sheet (or partial sheet) jammed inside.

Solution: Open up the printer and remove the

Printer Problems, continued from page 6

offending piece of paper. Be very careful not to yank it out. You can use some force, but too much will strip plastic gears and other delicate items. Most printers will have a release mechanism to help you remove jammed paper. Before doing anything, however, it's a good idea to refer to your users manual (or the manufacturer's Web site) and follow the manufacturer's instructions. If you simply grab the paper and pull hard, you may end up purchasing another printer.

Possible Cause: Paper sticking together (especially on humid days). Inkjet printers rely on a certain degree of slippage between pages to avoid taking more than one page at a time. On humid days, there is less slippage.

Solution: Take out and fan the paper. If this doesn't help, consider using another brand or weight of paper that isn't as sensitive to humidity. There is usually no way to tell this beforehand, so trial and error is the only way to know.

Google, continued from page 5

Fire that burned close to us a few months back. Entering those words into the search window resulted in stories from newspapers all across the country. Google would even tell you how old the stories were, with many only hours old.

For the linguists out there who need help translating short pieces of text from one language to another, there's <www.google.com/language_tools>. Need help translating "yo quiero" from Spanish to English? Give it a try.

Want to see additional tools being worked on by the Google development team? Look at <<http://labs.google.com>>. Four tools are listed, the most interesting to me being the glossary. If you come across an unfamiliar word or phrase and go here, you'll get a link or pointer to pages that offer a definition. Another tool at this site is Google Sets, where you can type in a few related words, and it gives you a list of more related items. There's also a voice recognition tool to help you search Google by phone, and a keyboard shortcuts tool that lets you search Google without a mouse.

I hope I've convinced you why Google is great, not only as a search engine for the Web, but also for its many other capabilities for specialized searches. Do you ever wonder how history would look if recorded by the types of searches being done on the Web? Then look at the year 2001 laid out at <www.google.com/press/timeline.html>. You can see what was on the minds of many people that year by the searches that were requested. So search wisely—historians may learn about us, while we learn about what interests us.

This article is brought to you by the Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an International organization to which this user group belongs.



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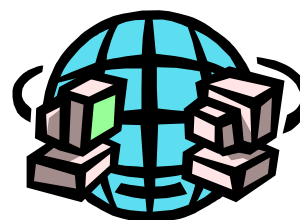
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GLOBALIZATION

Protecting Your Spreadsheet

By Herbert Sax

After you have spent time setting up a spreadsheet you don't want to inadvertently delete a critical column or row, change the descriptions you have laboriously typed into Column A, or overwrite formulas you struggled to create. Microsoft Excel gives you the tools to protect your worksheet, and even lets you password protect the worksheet so others cannot undo what you have done. Follow these steps and you can protect your own worksheets.

Open Excel and type in the following information. This should be enough to get you started.

My Protected Worksheet					
Description	Year	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr
Revenues					
Dividends	=SUM(C5:F5)	1000	1000	1000	1000
Interest	=SUM(C6:F6)	4000	4000	4000	4000
Capital Gains	=SUM(C7:F7)	1400	2500	-1700	0
Other Income	=SUM(C8:F8)	15000	15000	15000	15000
Total Income	=SUM(B5:B8)	=SUM(C5:C8)	=SUM(D5:D8)	=SUM(E5:E8)	=SUM(F5:F8)
Expenses					
Mortgage	=SUM(C12:F12)	1200	1200	1200	1200
Utilities	=SUM(C13:F13)	150	175	200	150
Entertainment	=SUM(C14:F14)	250	210	240	300
Other Expenses	=SUM(C15:F15)	16000	16000	16000	16000
Total Expenses	=SUM(B12:B15)	=SUM(C12:C15)	=SUM(D12:D15)	=SUM(E12:E15)	=SUM(F12:F15)
Addition or Subtraction from Net Worth	=B9-B16	=C9-C16	=D9-D16	=E9-E16	=F9-F16

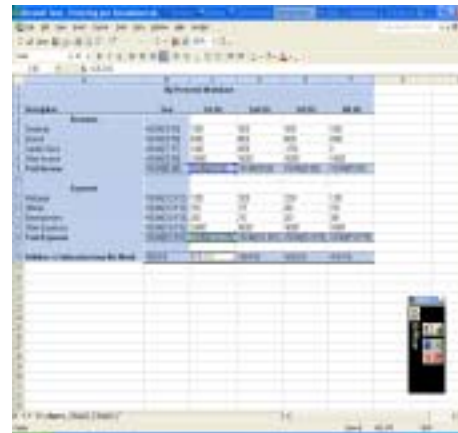
As you can see, a great deal of what you entered should never be changed: The column headings, the descriptions, all the formulas. You only want to enter the numbers. The best way to ensure that you don't override the "permanent" data is to protect the worksheet.

Click Format+Cells and then the Protection tab. Uncheck the Locked box and click OK. This will bring you back to your worksheet.



Now you must select the cells you want locked (the cells you don't want changed). Hold down the Control key, hold down the left mouse key on the cell containing the word "Description" and drag across to the last column heading "4th Qtr". DO NOT RELEASE THE CONTROL KEY. Now hold down the left mouse key on the first cell (A1) and drag down to row 18. LEAVE THAT CONTROL KEY ALONE! Follow the same procedure for all the formulas in the "Year" column, and again for the formulas

for the rows containing "Total Income", "Total Expenses" and "Addition or Subtraction from Net Worth". If you have done this correctly, you will have selected all the cells you want protected. YOU MAY LIFT YOUR FINGER OFF THE CONTROL KEY NOW.

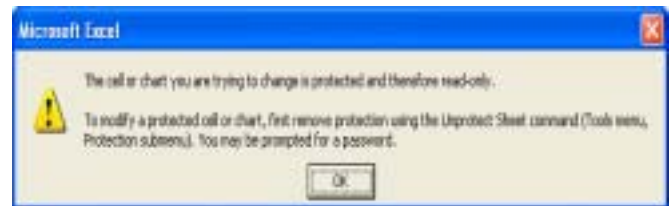


Click Format+Cells and check the Locked box, and click OK to return to the worksheet. Now for the final step.

Click Tools + Protection + Protect Worksheet. You

will be taken back to the worksheet. Click on any cell to deselect the protected cells.

Upon review you see that the \$1,000 you typed for Dividends in the 4th Qtr should have been \$2,000. Go to that cell and type 2000. The Year total for Dividends will change from \$4,000 to \$5,000. That's because you had a formula in cell B5. Now what would happen if you tried to type \$5,000 in cell B5? Try it. If you followed these instructions carefully you will get an error message like this:



You will be able to change the cells into which you have typed numbers, but you will be unable to change the contents of any cell that you protected.

When you were in the "Protect Sheet" dialog box you may have noticed there was a field into which you could have entered a password. If you insert a password at that point you would prevent any other user from changing the worksheet. Just be careful to make a note of the password, because if you forget it you may not be able to change the worksheet either. This is intended as a security measure. It isn't a very good one, though, which is why I don't bother to password-protect my worksheets. All you need to do to circumvent the password is to select and copy the worksheet into a blank worksheet, and all the protection you built into it will disappear.

Answers to Questions

Question:

I often want to copy text from a message in Outlook Express and paste it into a Microsoft Word document. Unfortunately, this process often comes loaded with symbols, marks, short lines, etc. What is the best way to clean up this document?

Answer:

The answer to this question appeared in the November 2002 issue of PC World magazine. Here is the response with some added information. To show what the paste process hath wrought, click the 'Show/Hide ¶' icon on the Standard toolbar. This will reveal the placement of paragraph markers and manual line breaks. The former is designated by the paragraph symbol, the latter by little bent arrows at the end of lines. A manual line break means "End this line here, but don't consider the next line a new paragraph."

First, let's get rid of the "<" marks. There may be one or more at the beginning of each line. To delete them manually can be time-consuming, but there is a shorter way. Bring up the Find and Replace dialog box by clicking Edit + Replace (or Ctrl + H). In the 'Find what' field type "<" (without the quotation marks); it can be found above the comma key on your keyboard. Leave the 'Replace what' field blank and click *Replace All*. This will delete all '<' symbols.

Next, let's remove the "manual line breaks". In the 'Find what' field enter the symbol ^l (that's a caret followed by a lowercase L. This is Word's Special code for manual line breaks. Special codes can be found by clicking the Special button at the bottom of the Find and Replace dialog box. Leave the "Replace with" field blank. Click *Replace All*.

You should have one space between words and at the end of each sentence. Go back to Find and Replace and with the insertion point in the "Find what" field tap the space bar twice; in the 'Replace with' field tap the space bar once. Click *Replace All*.

You may have to do a bit more cleaning up, but this should take care of the bulk of the unwanted symbols and line breaks. You will also find a number of other special symbols in the Find and Replace dialog box. Just click the Special button to see what they are.

Question:

I am told there are ways to speed up Windows opening as well as closing. Is it true? Please explain.

Answer:

There are a multitude of reasons why Windows may run slow while opening or closing.

The primary reasons for a slow startup are:

- A. Unnecessary programs in your startup group that load each time Windows is started.
- B. An excessive number of installed fonts.
- C. Old programs that were not uninstalled properly resulting in a bloated registry that must be read each time Windows starts.

Shutdown problems are generally related to problems with audio and video drivers.

Microsoft has developed a reasonably good troubleshooting guide for addressing these problems. For Windows 98, point your web browser to <http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=/support/windows/tshoot/startup98/default.asp> and follow the step-by-step instructions.

For Windows ME, click Start + Help and then type "troubeshooter".

For Windows XP click Start + Help, type "shutdown" and then select the Startup and shutdown Troubleshooter.

Tech Mart

Panasonic's Little Gem

Shattering all the capabilities-per-square-inch records, Panasonic's tiny eWear SV-AV10 is a digital camera, digital camcorder, voice recorder and MP3 player. No other combo device matches the SV-AV10's size (3.3 by 1.2 by 2.7 inches), weight (3.5 ounces) or features (2-inch color LCD, SD card storage). Its pictures and video are Web-quality, and its MP3 audio is as good as any other mini-mite out there. Price: \$450.



Tips and Tidbits

By Barry Robbins

Audio CD Recording

If all you do with your CD-ROM burner is make audio discs, then there's very little reason to purchase fancy burning programs. You can use the program that shipped with your CD-ROM burner for general purposes and get a copy of TuneSpark CD Maker. TuneSpark CD Maker will let you create audio discs from MP3 files as well as files in other audio formats. Download the program and try it. <www.papayatech.com/> If you like it, you can register for \$29.95.

Viewing Your Cookies

The NirSoft web site offers several freeware Windows utilities. The latest offering is IECookiesView. As you might expect, IECookiesView allows you a way to view the cookies stored by your trusty copy of Microsoft Internet Explorer.

IECookiesView doesn't just show you a list of cookies, it displays all the information possible about the cookies.

The URL is: <<http://nirsoft.multiservers.com/>>

mp3DirectCut

Do you work with MP3 files? If so, you could use a freeware tool that allows you to cut, split, and copy MP3 files without first decompressing them. This not only saves some disk space, but also prevents the inevitable loss of quality that occurs when you decompress and then recompress MP3 files. The URL is: <www.rz.uni-frankfurt.de/~pesch/>

Zone Alarm

If you have cable modem or DSL service, your ISP probably has a firewall, and it may do a good job of preventing intrusion into your system. A home firewall is still a good idea, though. A firewall is software that keeps viruses and intruders out of your PC, usually by blocking the data ports that are your PC's entry points. McAfee and Norton offer firewall programs, but there's also Zone Labs' Zone Alarm, which is freeware.

To get ZoneAlarm, enter the following in your browser: <www.zonelabs.com/store/content/home.jsp>

HP Learning Center

When one of the most important names in American business offers you the chance to learn something, it's an opportunity that shouldn't be missed — especially when it is free. The HP (Hewlett-Packard) Learning Center has excellent online classes in a variety of interesting and timely business subjects.

At the HP Learning Center, you can find courses on topics such as wireless mobile solutions, introduction to programming, advanced Adobe Photoshop, introduction to MS Excel and many more. The tutorials are free and easy to follow. An experienced instructor leads each course, and lessons are available 24/7 for your convenience. Classes change monthly, so you will always find something new.

Check it out for yourself. It's a visit you'll find worth your while. The URL is:

<www.hplearningcenter.com/?mcID=ez8>

Remote Thin, Flat, LCD Monitor

One of the most fascinating LCD monitors shown at the fall 2002 COMDEX in Las Vegas was a ViewSonic wireless docking monitor. Currently available in ten and fifteen inch diameters, this item serves both as a standard LCD desktop monitor when inserted into its docking station, or a wireless tablet containing an 802.11b wireless connection. While docked, the battery in the screen is recharged as it is used as a conventional monitor, but removed from the docking station, it becomes a Tablet PC, allowing for the user to move away from his PC, as long as he remains in range. While using the panel as a tablet, the user can view exactly the video output of the PC, hear the audio output, and touch or write directly on the screen, emulating a mouse and a keyboard. From your search engine type in "ViewSonic Wireless Docking Monitor" to learn more about this advancement.

Nokia Cell Phone Charger

One minute you're discussing last night's game and the next you are left with a useless hunk of plastic -- all because you let the battery run down. Check out this clever little gadget from Nokia. It can be attached to your mobile phone and will provide between 10-60 minutes of talk time by sapping the power from a 9volt battery (you should keep one of these in your car for easy access). Simply attach this little gadget to your keyring and forget about it, until your cell phone battery gives up the ghost. Then, simply clip the battery onto the charger and plug the charger into your mobile phone. You can get it from <www.gizmos-uk.com> for 2.99 pounds (that's English, you know).



Power Surge Protectors, Continued from page 3

are usually found in the form of a power strip -- one of those long devices that have six or so outlets and a single, grounded plug. Bear in mind, however, that not every power strip serves as a surge protector. When selecting your surge protector, you want to be sure it is listed as meeting the UL 1449 standard, which guarantees a certain minimum of protection.

While a surge suppressor will protect your system from minor fluctuations in the power supply, it won't help you if the power should black out completely. Even an outage of just a few seconds can result in the loss of valuable data, so you might find it worthwhile to invest in an uninterruptible power supply (UPS). Besides serving as surge suppressors, these devices automatically switch to battery power when a power outage occurs, giving you the opportunity to save data and shut down your system. Some high-end models will even allow you to keep working until power is restored. When purchasing a UPS, you will want to ensure that it has the same qualities that you would find in a surge suppressor, but also check out the battery life and included software. Considering the potential risk to your computing system, ensuring its safety from power disturbances is a worthwhile investment. A quality surge suppressor will cost you upwards of \$30, though it's not unreasonable

to spend as much as 10% of the value of your whole system for top-of-the-line protection. It's a small cost to pay for the peace of mind you'll gain knowing your computer is well protected.

Funky US Town Names

- Muck City, Alabama
- Chicken, Alaska
- Nothing, Arizona
- Hooker, Arkansas
- Frying Pan, California
- Weed, California
- Last Chance, Colorado
- Loveland (see below),.....Colorado**
- Two Eggs, Florida
- Between, Georgia
- Sandwich, Illinois
- Gnaw Bone, Indiana
- Buttermilk, Kansas
- Bad Axe, Michigan
- Sleepy Eye, Minnesota
- Hot Coffee, Minnesota
- Useful, Mississippi
- Two Dot, Montana
- Wahoo, Nebraska

As for Loveland, Colorado (bold typeface above), its mention comes:

Just inTime for Valentine's Day



Here's a town living up to its name. For the cost of postage, you can have your sweetie's valentine stamped with a special Loveland, Colo., postmark and poem. The city's re-mailing program began as a PR stunt in 1947 and today averages 300,000 cards each February. Send pre-stamped, pre-addressed valentines in a larger envelope to: Postmaster Attn: Valentines USPS Loveland, Colo. 80538. Cards must be received by February 9 for on-time delivery.

Secretary's Message

By Ali Tabikh



December Holiday Program

Our President, Don Yenche, brought the meeting of December 11, 2002 to order at 6:00 pm.

Having been planned as a holiday celebration party, very little business was conducted.

President Don introduced to the club members the newly elected Board of Directors for the coming year: Barry Robbins, President; Doug Harley, Vice President; Ali Tabikh, Secretary; and Ralph Lazar, Treasurer. Our outgoing President, Don Yenche, will continue as a Board member for another year.

After that holiday music and dancing filled the Ballroom as dinner was served. The dinner was a light fare consisting of a variety of Pizzas and Caesar salad, assortment of cookies, soft drinks and beer.

It was a festive atmosphere where everyone of the more than one hundred present enjoyed the conversation and the dancing.

In addition to all this, nine gifts were raffled during the evening. They consisted of software programs and other nice things.

At only two dollars per person the party was one no Club member should have missed. Guests who paid four dollars each got a good bargain.

I wish all our Club members had been able to attend and enjoy. This successful holiday event is the final great effort of outgoing President, Don Yenche, and his team of volunteers.

January Program

The meeting was called to order by President Barry Robbins at 7:30 p.m.

He made the following announcements:

1. Tee shirts (with Club logo) are available at \$10 each.

2. Dues for the year 2003 are now due at \$20 per member or \$30 per household.

3. There are now no classes going on but the Club will offer Windows XP and Office if there are enough sign-ups.

4. Dates and times for the various SIGs were announced (they are posted on page 2).

5. The February meeting will feature Ken Rockwell, a professional photographer, as speaker.

6. Tentative programs for the March, April and May meetings were announced.

7. A request was made for two volunteers who are needed to work on the Programming Committee.

8. Our User Friendly newsletter editor, Ali, needs a volunteer to help him as assistant editor.

Richard Jenkins introduced the speaker for the evening program, Patrick Crispen. Patrick gave information about his subscription internet newsletter, Tourbus, which tells about good sites on the Internet.

He told us about various directories and search engines. It was a very enlightening program. President Barry presented Patrick with a Club T-shirt.

Patrick can be reached at <www.netsquirrel.com>.

The winner of our 50/50 drawing was Bertha O'Gara who received \$15.

Be a User Friendly Pro-Active Friend

- ◆ Write articles to publish
- ◆ Send clippings of general interest
- ◆ Let us know what you like to read
- ◆ Leave material at the Clubhouse

