

User Friendly



**May
2003**

Next Meeting

Wednesday, May 14, 2003
Mike Wagner of Linksys Presents
Networking in the Home

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Palmia Computer Club



President: Barry Robbins
Vice-President: Doug Harley
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User Friendly

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

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Guidelines

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

I hope everyone enjoyed the presentation last month on ViaVoice. This is a fun piece of software that is easy to train and works well if you remember the commands. You can purchase different versions from about \$50 to \$150. Another software that is available and works similar to ViaVoice is Dragon Naturally Speaking. This program sells for about \$200, but is probably more sophisticated than ViaVoice.

I am sorry for the mix up in last month's issue of User Friendly in reference to our meeting date. We notified those members for whom we had email addresses of the correct meeting date. If you are not sure whether or not we have your email address, please send it to Jerry Moore at <palma@palma.org>. Also, if you have recently changed ISPs, please send us your updated email address. We intend to use this for much of our

communication to the membership. Don't worry, we are not going to sell your address to anyone.

Our June meeting will be a social & dinner. Details will follow. We are dark in July and August. You will hear more in our next issue about our meetings through the rest of the year.

Remember that we meet on the second Wednesday of each month and start promptly at 7:30 PM. Meetings are normally over by 9:00 PM. From 6:30 PM to 7:15 PM we have a Q&A session. Bring your questions and we will try to answer them. Our next meeting will be on May 14th. The speaker will be Mike Wagner from Linksys. He will be speaking on Networking in the home.

See y'all on the 14th.

Secretary's Message

By Ali Tabikh



The general meeting was called to order by President Barry Robbins at 7:30 P.M.

Barry asked members to submit their e-mail addresses. He explained that the Board of Directors is considering doing away with printing the User Friendly newsletter, which costs the club about ten dollars a year per member. Instead the club would e-mail the newsletter to its members. Besides the savings, members will view the newsletter in color and will be able to print a hard copy of the entire issue or just what they would like to save.

Barry reminded us that there are still club T-shirts available for sale.

He also reminded the audience that computer classes will be starting soon. Anyone interested in

signing up should leave their name in the club folder and they will be contacted. Class fees are twenty five dollars for members and thirty dollars for nonmembers.

Our treasurer, Ralph Lazar, gave his financial report for March. The beginning balance was \$2,076 and the ending balance as of 3/31 was \$2,658.

The evening program on Via Voice was presented by President Barry. He used the large screen to show how this voice recognition program works.

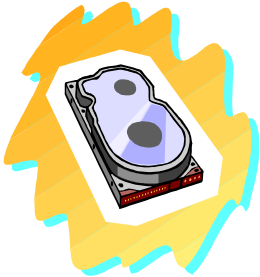
The next meeting program will be presented by a LinkSys representative.

The 50/50 drawing before the end of the meeting was \$16, won by Robert Knaggs.

The meeting adjourned at about 8:45 P.M..

Keep Your Hard Drive Driving

By Chris Doyle, Ontrack



Here's a quick quiz: What takes a licking yet keeps on ticking? Right—your hard drive. The truth is that hard disks manufactured in the last few years last longer than that old clunker you're using as a doorstep.

Here's the surprise. You can squeeze a longer life—maybe even keep a faulty drive trucking—with a few easy tips.

The silent killer of hard drives is heat—especially high-speed SCSI drives. My recommendation? Use a hard drive cooling fan with all hard drives. You can buy them direct at www.1coolpc.com/ or at FRY's. I have cooling fans for both my IDE and SCSI drives. In the lab, we have cooling fans on the drives at all times.

Optimize your hard drive on a daily basis. As much as a pain this may be for some, optimizing your drive has several benefits. Besides optimizing the files, this process also catches many minor problems that may manifest themselves into a major problem later.

Examples? Cross linked or orphan files. Another good reason is that if you do have a problem accessing data on your drive when a utility is run such as Norton, nuts and bolts, tiramisu, the chances of recovery are much higher if the drive has been optimized recently. (By the way—Mijenix (www.mijenix.com) makes a great utility to perform this function.)

Without question, you must run SpinRite on all of your drives once a quarter—at number five, the highest. This is a personal recommendation. Steve Gibson's utility is excellent and will find many if not all surface defects before they manifest themselves further. Trouble in Paradise, also known as TIP, is an excellent tool for Zip disks.

Should I mention backing up your data on a regular basis? Do it often, early, and often and early.

Examining your power supply is critical. It's

not too difficult to tax a power supply in some systems if they are fully loaded. If possible, I recommend you make sure that the systems have a decent power supply—at least 250 watts or more. (PC Power and Cooling makes the best.) Also make sure that your hard drives have their own independent power connection, not shared by other devices. An uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) is another good idea (and don't sweat; these things are much more reasonably priced than in the past).

Many people ask whether it's best to keep your computer running all the time—or better to turn it off and on. My recommendation is turn your computer on in the morning and off at night. I also think that disabling all power saving devices is best for hard drives. Forcing a hard drive on a desktop PC to spin down every 15 min of inactivity—and then waiting a minute or two to spin up—is worse than turning the computer off and on.

Never, ever move the computer while it is up and running. (Try telling that to laptop users!) Any blow to the computer—it tips over, is dropped an inch or more—and that bump gets transmitted directly to the hard drive. Most of the time it will cause a minor head crash. Worst case? It will cause bad things to happen. No, don't ask. But you'll be calling Ontrack to get an estimate.

Don't forget about static when handling drives. The newest and highest performing drives come with (hushed tones, please) Giant MR Heads. They're *extremely* sensitive to static. Ontrack has redone all of our static procedures to handle this technology, and I can tell you from first hand experience that static will kill drives dead.

Drives that make clicking, thumping, or grinding noise are experiencing a mechanical problem of some sort. No surprise, huh? But each time the drive is powered up, the more that damage is occurring on the drive. If data recovery is needed in this case, please please, please—the less you do to the drive, (powering up or using utilities) the more data we can recover. And the faster we can recover it.

If you think you have a problem with a drive, try going to the manufacturer's Web site. Download the specific utility they make to check the drive. Since the utility comes from the manufacturer, they know how to check specific issues with their drives.

Here's a tip for tinkerers, users who do a lot of

Continued on page 5

Microsoft's New Office

Controlling User Access

By David Stevens

Currently, Microsoft is working on a new version of its Office software. The major purpose of this thrust appears to be the control of users' access at the receiving end of many Office transmissions.

A principle justification for this is referred to as Digital Rights Management (DRM), a term suggesting that Microsoft would be the authorized controller of downloading music, opening some documents, or e-mail, sent with the new software.

A point of controversy would be the clash between user security from Microsoft and Microsoft compensation.

There are two other points in this discussion. One is Microsoft's right to receive payment for copyrighted music downloaded with its technology. The second point is the proverbial camel nose under the tent - Microsoft is in a position to make its DRM the standard for the PC Window industry. The cost to the rest of the industry would be substantial to follow that standard.

It appears that there will be some form of Microsoft action to initiate industry action fairly soon.

To read full details on this subject go to <http://aroundcny.com/technofile/texts/tec032303.html>



Hard Drives Continued from page 4

testing of drives. In many cases, it's very difficult to get rid of a hard drive after installing a particular operating system or file system type. That's especially true when using programs such as System Commander.

Try booting up with Ontrack's Disk Manager. The utility has a feature that will write zeros to every sector of the drive. This puts the drive back into the shape it was when it came from the factory. After the process is done, it's easy to partition and format the drive. Don't forget, though, that this will destroy all information on the drive.

Here's one for all of you SCSI users lurking out there (including me). Keep your drivers current. Driver and BIOS updates for your SCSI card can make a world of difference in how your drive performs. Don't forget to make sure you follow the specifications for cabling and termination.

Okay, now that you have some new tools for preserving your hard drive, I have some bad news. I saw a 40GB drive advertised at FRYs for \$29.99 (after rebate).

OnTrack's Chris Doyle loves to hear hard drives happily humming. You can reach him at CDoyle@ontrack.com.

This article is brought to you by the Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international Organization.

Web Surfer

By Jerry Moore

Do you feel proud to be an American? Surf on by to the web site at http://www.mamarocks.com/why_i_love_her.htm for some very pleasing words and images.

Have you thought about discarding or donating an old computer, but worried about personal information that might still be stored on the hard disk? It's a valid concern since even if you delete all the files and reformat the disk, an unethical person with the proper tools can still retrieve sensitive information. Visit www.killdisk.com for a free download that will protect your sensitive data from prying eyes.



AOL Scam Alert

By Steve Bass, Pasadena IBM Users Group

We all know someone—friends and relatives—who use AOL, and I suggest you consider forwarding this message to them. As you'll see, it's not a hoax but a real-life scam.

It started when my mother recently received a beautifully done AOL message. It's the kind of thing you read about but rarely get to see firsthand.

The message she received was from the AOL Billing Services Team. She forwarded it to the accounting department—moi—because I pay for her account (she has me to blame, I know). Read the message here: <www.pibmug.com/files/aolletter.jpg>.

It took a minute to figure out something wasn't right.

Telltale Clues

For one thing, the e-mail header showed that the AOL Billing Services Team was blind copying her using version AOL 5.0. <www.pibmug.com/files/aolheader.jpg> You'd think they could use a more current version, right? There's more: The return address was <remindingyou@aol.com> and the subject line had a misspelling.

I followed the Billing link in the message. At first glance I saw an AOL Welcome box <www.pibmug.com/files/aolwelcomescreen.jpg>. Take a careful look and you'll know why I was suspicious. Yep, lots of misspellings.

I went along with the game plan and clicked OK. Now I was staring into what looked like a remarkably authentic credit card payment form. Even if you didn't click the other links, you HAVE to see this one. It's worse than a loan application <www.pibmug.com/files/aolcreditcard.jpg>.

Is it Really You?

To make sure it's really you, they also want your Social Security Number, date of birth, driver's license number, and mother's maiden name. With that, the scammers can get to "identity theft" heaven before you shut down your PC for the night.

But they're not finished. How about throwing in your AOL screen name and password, something even novices know AOL wouldn't do. To add

a level of legitimacy, they warn you that, "For your safety, please do not download any files from strangers. AOL will never ask you to download anything."

Who Is?

I went to <www.samspade.org>, my favorite Web examination site, and backtraced the Billing link. (The site was closed by Hypermart so it now leads to an error page.) It's an obfuscated URL: <www.aol.com-billing:july-2002@072002.hypermart.net> that leads to <<http://072002.hypermart.net>>. It works because any characters before the @ sign are ignored. And all it took was a quick web search with Google.com to find locations loaded with AOL scamming files. You can view one site here: <www.pibmug.com/files/aolhypermart.jpg>.

I contacted one of AOL's security people I met years ago because of a story I did about AOL. Unfortunately, I never heard back from him. I also sent a message to <abuse@hypermart.net> and they responded in four days.

AOL Protection Strategy

Forward this to a buddy using AOL. They need to know that the best AOL protection strategy is to be alert to constant scams. You know, if it looks like a duck, smells like one, and occasionally quacks, there's a good chance it is one.

If you're unsure about a billing question, it's best to call AOL's billing services directly at (800) 827-6364, or their Screen Name/Password line at (888) 265-8004.

Steve Bass is a Contributing Editor with PC World and runs the Pasadena IBM Users Group. He's also a founding member of APCUG.

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.

Pass this on to all your AOL friends

To see what is right and not to do it is cowardice.

Confucius, Chinese philosopher (551-479)

Microsoft Excel

Multiple Versions Make It Easy To Save & Upgrade Files By Linda Bird, Smart Computing

When you upgrade from one version of Microsoft Excel to another, you might feel like you are going where no one has ever gone before. That is a natural feeling. The process of upgrading brings a twinge of nervousness at best, especially if you already created a slew of files and want to make sure they will still work with the new version. Fortunately, Microsoft provides several ways to work with files in multiple versions of Excel. Depending on your needs, you can almost seamlessly upgrade your workbooks to the new format, save the data using multiple file formats, or keep the original format. Using Excel 2000 and Excel 2002 as a starting point, let's look at how to update your existing workbooks and keep the compatibility mill churning along.

A Simple Update. If you have existing worksheet files in Excel 5.0, 95, 97, or 2000, bringing the same files to life in Excel 2002 is a snap. Open the workbook in Excel 2002, click Save, and Excel 2002 automatically updates the file so it uses the most recent file format. You can also save a more recently created workbook using a previous version's file format. For example, you can save an Excel 2000 workbook using the Excel 5.0 file format. Just remember that earlier versions don't support some features found in newer versions. To use a specific file format, open the File menu and click Save As. In the Save As dialog box, choose a file format type from the Save As Type drop-down list, and click Save. Excel alerts you of possible incompatibilities between versions.

Share & Share Alike. Overall, Excel 2000 and Excel 2002 have good backward file compatibility. This means each can successfully use all the features and formatting contained in previous versions of Excel, with the exception of sound notes, which neither version supports. The Map tool and some templates are also not available in Excel 2002. Accessing your Excel 2000/2002 files using older versions doesn't work quite as well. In fact, you can lose numerous features and formatting. For example, even though Excel 2000 supports more

than 32,000 characters in a cell, Excel 5.0/95 only accommodates 255. Because of this, you might lose data if you save an Excel 2000 workbook with lengthy cell entries in Excel 5.0/95. Also, some formatting features found in Excel 2000, such as angled text and conditional formatting, aren't supported by earlier versions. Excel 97 users fare a little better than Excel 5.0/95 users when using Excel 2000/2002 files because they can use most features present in recent versions. Watch out when you use pivot tables, though, because those created in Excel 2000/2002 are not fully supported by Excel 97.

A Peaceful Coexistence. To ensure you can open workbooks in any version, try using the dual file format, which simultaneously saves the workbook using both the Excel 5.0/95 and the Excel 97/2000/2002 file formats within a single compound file. This format lets you share files if people in your organization have a mix of Excel versions or if you're gradually upgrading. To set the dual file format as the default, open the Tools menu, click Options, and click the Transition tab. Choose Microsoft Excel 97-2002 & 5.0/95 Workbook from the Save Excel Files As drop-down list. Click OK. The dual file format has its disadvantages, though. If an Excel 5.0/95 user opens a workbook saved using the dual file format and then resaves the workbook, the unique Excel 97-2002 formatting and features are permanently lost. Additionally, workbooks saved using this format take up more storage room on your PC. For more information on Excel file compatibility, see Excel's Help option or Microsoft's Web site <www.microsoft.com>.

Acknowledgement

The Editorial Committee wishes to thank all those who contibuted articles and /or other assistance to the production of this issue of the newsletter.

Please keep up the good work.

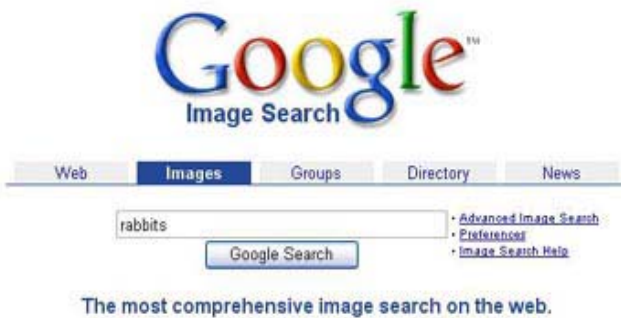
Web Surfer, continued from page 5

Have you ever had a “senior moment” where you can recall a few words from a song you once heard, but can’t for the life of you remember the name of the song or the artist? A great web site at <www.leoslyrics.com> may have the answer.



Just type in a few words and this web site will search a database of more than 59,000 songs.

Did you know that you can use the Google search engine for items like images and news articles and not just web sites. Give it a try. Go to <www.google.com>, place a term in the search box and click on images.



Would you like a quick and easy way to resize pictures that are too large to fit on your Windows XP screen? Go to <www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/pro/downloads/powertoys.asp> and download the free Image Resizer program. After you install this program, when you RIGHT click on any image stored on your hard drive, you will see a menu choice that will allow you change the size of the picture.

If you would like to send customized electronic

greeting cards to friends or family, visit <www.americangreetings.com>.

This site offers a wide variety of cards and services, has a 30 day free trial and the annual subscription cost is just \$13.95. Another nice feature of this web site is that you can identify two friends or family members who can also use this service at no additional annual cost.



Are you getting tired of those outrageously high prices for ink jet printer cartridges? A good source is <www.printpal.com>.

Not only is this site easy to navigate for locating the right cartridge for your printer, but for many cartridges you will find three different options you can choose from:

- Order a remanufactured cartridge
- Order a mailer to ship back your old cartridge
- Order a refill kit

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Answers To Questions

QUESTION #1

I don't understand CD drive specifications. I see numbers whose meanings are obscure. What exactly does a CD drive do?

ANSWER #1

A Compact Disk (CD) drive stores data that can be read by your computer, much like a floppy disk but with a far greater capacity. The data can be computer programs, music, video, pictures, spreadsheets, word documents or any combination thereof. A CD can store the equivalent of about 450 floppy disks or 300,000 pages of text.

Originally, the CD specification was established for the sole purpose of storing recorded music. To convert the digital codes of music recorded in stereo, the CD drive had to be capable of reading 150 thousand bits of data per second and drives that could read at this speed were designated as x1 speed drives. As the technology improved and drives were capable of reading data at higher speeds such as 300 and 600 thousand bits per second, these drives were designated as x2 or x4 drives.

CD drives that can only "read" data are referred to as CD-ROM drives which stands for Compact Disk – Read Only Memory. CD drives that can both read and write data are called CD-R drives and devices that can read, write and "rewrite" data are called CD-RW drives.

When you see a specification that reads like 12x2x24 (three numbers separated by the letter "x"), these numbers indicate the drive speeds of the CD drive. The "x" stands for the transfer of 150 KB of data per second, and each number represents a different action that the CD drive can take. A CD-R drive has two actions — recording onto and reading from compact discs. A CD-RW drive has three actions — recording, rewriting (erasing and recording over) and reading. When looking at the drive speeds, the first number ("12" in the above example) indicates the speed at which the CD drive will record data onto a CD-R compact disc. So, in the above example, the CD drive will record data at 12 times 150 KB/second. The second number ("2" in the above example) indi-

cates the speed at which the CD drive will rewrite data onto a CD-RW compact disc. So in the above example, the CD drive will rewrite data onto the compact disc at 2 times 150 KB/second. Typically, the second number, the rewrite speed, is lower than the first number, the write speed, because rewriting is a slower process than writing. The last number ("24" in the above example) indicates the speed at which the drive will read data from a compact disc. So in the above example, the CD drive will read data from a compact disc at 24 times 150 KB/second.

CD-R compact discs are discs that can be recorded on only once. Once the data has been burned, it is permanent and cannot be erased. CD-RW compact discs are discs that can be recorded, erased and re-recorded over. Most audio CD players, especially older models, can only read CD-R discs, so it is best to record music onto CD-R's. CD-RW's are typically used to store data or used as back up files.

QUESTION #2

What is an ISP and how do I go about choosing one?

ANSWER #2

ISP is an abbreviation for Internet Service Provider and these are the companies that provide access to the Internet from your home. There are large national companies like America On Line, MSN and Earthlink; regional ISP's like Cox Communications, and smaller local companies like West Coast Internet. There are several variables you must consider when choosing an ISP and these include connection speed, cost, reliability and customer service.

The fastest connection to the Internet available in our area is cable modem service provided by Cox Communications. Download speeds can reach as high as 3,000,000 bits per second and upload speeds approach 768,000 bits per second. The cost is \$39.95/month, you have an "always on" connection, your phone line is not tied up and reliability is generally quite high. This service can be ordered from <www.cox.com/highspeedinternet/>.

The next fastest available service is Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) that uses your existing telephone

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Tech Mart

Cell Phone Digital Camera Combos

At least five major cell phone manufacturers have recently released or announced phones with digital photo capabilities. The five—Sony/Ericsson, Nokia, Samsung, Sharp, and Handspring—take different approaches to the combination, but all add the same basic new function to cell phones: You can take relatively low resolution digital photographs (640 by 480 is the common best resolution) and send them to other phones or e-mail accounts, directly from the combo phone.

Two major U.S. wireless carriers, AT&T Wireless and Sprint PCS, have introduced service plans and offer phones that allow their customers to take and send digital photos. It's a sample of the enhanced services that are emerging as the carriers begin the move towards next-generation wireless coverage. Of course, if you're interested in snapping and sending by cell phone, you need to make sure your carrier supports the function.



The AT&T Wireless plan, called mMode Pix, makes use of the Sony/Ericsson T68i wireless phone (\$200) and matching MCA-20 CommuniCam (\$130) in conjunction with an AT&T Wireless GSM voice calling plan. Customers must be on the AT&T GSM/GPRS network in order to send photos. Right now, that network includes coverage in less than half of the top 100 U.S. markets. AT&T doesn't charge extra for sending photos; they're simply sent as data that counts as part of the total monthly data allowance of 2MB.



Sprint's plan structure is the same, with photos again counting as part of the 2MB transmission allowed each month before additional charges are imposed. In the U.S., Sprint offers two telephones with photo capability: The Samsung N400 (\$200) and Samsung A500 (\$300); each accept a Samsung camera attachment sold separately for \$100. In all of these standard offerings, 640 by 480 is the maximum resolution, a quality that's fine for digital snapshots but far below the resolution offered by even mid-range dedicated digital cameras.

How many photos you could transmit within the 2MB allowance varies with the size of the picture. However, the carriers say that a compressed photo ranges from 10KB to 75KB, depending on resolution, so you could send, on average, something like 50 pictures before incurring additional charges.

Samsung markets other models in Japan. Also in use are other cell/camera combo devices that have not yet entered the U.S. market.

Multifunction Handhelds

Two other cell phone/camera combinations are available to U.S. customers. A high-end option is Nokia's 9290 Communicator, priced at \$599. This phone/PDA/Internet terminal hybrid accepts images from the Nokia EyeQ camera (an additional \$150). Unlike other cameras that attach to the cell phone by cable or accessory port, the 9290 and EyeQ communicates via an infrared link—a link the camera can also use to send 640 by 480 images directly to a PC or PDA.



Another combo device is available from Handspring, in the form of the Treo 270 and Treo 300. Both personal digital assistants have cell phone circuitry built in. Based on the Palm OS, the Treo units combine PDA tasks, cell phone functions, and the expansion capability of the Springboard port. That port can accept the EyeModule camera (about \$50) for taking low-resolution images that you can send to a PC during synchronization or shared via cell phone connection.

Slow But Steady

Will camera/cell phone combinations succeed in pushing cell phone users to spend more time on the air? Strategy Analytica predicts that 16 million camera phones will be sold worldwide in 2003.

"Camera phones will be an essential tool in driving handset replacement rates in the next five years," says Neil Mawston, a senior analyst with the Strategy Analytics Global Wireless Practice. The research organization expects initial growth to be in Asia.

The analysts expect the market to hit 147 million or 20 percent of the total cell phone market sold in 2007.

Tips and Tidbits.

By Barry Robbins

Finding Content in your Browser

Although you use a search engine to locate information on the Internet, you may often find that you're faced with many pages of text that you must read through to locate the information that you need. Instead of plodding through all that text, just press Ctrl + F and type in the word or phrase that you need to locate. Press Enter to start the page search.

This works in Microsoft Internet Explorer 6, Netscape 6/7, and Opera 6.

Backing up your Windows Drivers

When you need to redo your system, one of the most frustrating parts of the job is to locate and reload all those drivers. What you need is a program to back up the files for you. One such program is called WinDriversBackup Personal Edition. This is a freeware utility for personal, non-commercial use, from JerMar Software Corp.

This is a great program. We are currently using it and would not be without it again. You can get a copy of WinDriversBackup Personal Edition at: www.jer-mar.com/wdrvbk.htm.

Finding the Update Date in Microsoft Internet Explorer 6

When you visit a web page, you may not have any way of knowing how old the information really is. If this is important to the information's validity, you can at least find out when the page was last updated. Just click in the Address Bar and type `javascript:alert(document.lastModified)` and press Enter. A dialog box displays the last date and time that the page was modified.

Computerless E-mail

You don't necessarily need a computer to have e-mail. There are several products on the market that offer computer-free e-mail. So, if you have friends and family members who would like to have e-mail, but have no desire for a computer,

you can point them to one of the stand-alone e-mail devices.

A good place to get a feel for what is out there for e-mail is the Landel Telecom site. Point your browser to: www.mailbug.com.

Some Microsoft IE Favorites Shortcuts

There are a number of keyboard shortcuts that you can use to work with your Favorites in Microsoft Internet Explorer. For example, you can simply press Ctrl + D to add the current page to your Favorites. Ctrl + B will open the Organize Favorites dialog box.

You can move a selected item in the Organize Favorites dialog box up with Alt + Up Arrow, or down with Alt + Down Arrow.

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Answers, continued from page 9

lines, but still allows you to receive phone calls while connected to the Internet. Download speeds are 384,000 bits per second and upload speeds are 128,000 bits per second. Prices start at \$39.95 a month and availability is limited since you must be within a minimum distance from the nearest telephone switching station. This service can be ordered from <www.sbc.com>.

The third choice is telephone modem service where download and upload speeds average somewhat below 56,000 bits per second. The choices for this type of service are many, but there is a wide variety in prices, reliability and technical support.

The most widely used service in this category is America On Line which is probably a good choice for beginners since installation is quite easy and disks can be found almost everywhere. The down side of AOL is that prices are high (\$23.90/month, but there is a discount for seniors) and many users complain of busy signals and spotty technical support. Running a close second to AOL is the Microsoft Internet Service (MSN) at \$21.95/month, which claims to have fewer busy signals and better filtering of junk email. This service can be ordered at <<http://join.msn.com/>>.

Many people in the Palmia community are using the services of a local company, West Coast Internet, and report high reliability, great technical support and reasonable prices. The basic monthly fee is \$18.95, but this company offers senior discounts and rates as low as \$6.95/month for people whose Internet usage is very limited. More information on rates and services can be found at <www.westcoastinternet.com/>.

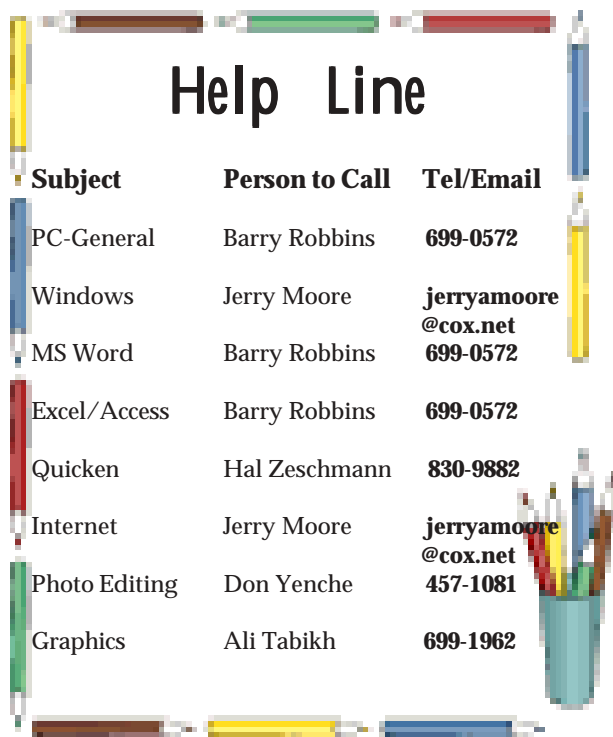
Another very popular service is DSL Extreme which in addition to DSL service offers monthly dial-up service for \$12.95 and drops this price to \$9.95 for customers paying one year in advance. This company offers a 30 day free trial, will provide 24/7 toll free technical support to help you set up an account or will mail you an installation CD. Visit <www.dslextreme.com> for more information.

In addition to the ISP's just mentioned, there are dozens if not hundreds of other choices ranging from small Mom & Pop operations to large nationwide corporations. You can find a complete listing at <<http://thelist.com/areacode/949/>>.

When selecting an ISP, one of the best information sources is talking to your friends and neighbors. Find out what they like and dislike and if these concerns are similar to yours. For example, if you can limit your access to 10 hours/month, don't mind a screen filled with ad banners and can live with busy signals, then free services like Juno and NetZero are still available. A rather complete listing of cheap/free ISP's in our area can be found at <www.all-free-isp.com/949-area-code.php>.

Please be aware that ISP's are a very volatile market in these troubled economic times and that buyers should be cautious. Don't pay for a year's service up front unless you know this is a company you can trust. If you are choosing a dial-up service, try testing a few of the provided local phone numbers to see if you get a busy signal and make sure these are local toll-free calls. Another good test is to verify that the company has a local or toll free technical support number and try calling to see how long it takes before you are connected with a live person.

With these few simple tips, you should now have the tools to select an ISP that meets your needs and hopefully saves you a few dollars in the process. If you need any further assistance, please feel free to contact me at <jerry.a.moore@cox.net> and I'll try to help.



Help Line

Subject	Person to Call	Tel/Email
PC-General	Barry Robbins	699-0572
Windows	Jerry Moore	jerryamoore@cox.net
MS Word	Barry Robbins	699-0572
Excel/Access	Barry Robbins	699-0572
Quicken	Hal Zeschmann	830-9882
Internet	Jerry Moore	jerryamoore@cox.net
Photo Editing	Don Yench	457-1081
Graphics	Ali Tabikh	699-1962