Peace On Earth . . .

Season's Greetings

Dayton Microcomputer Association, Inc.

No December DMA® Mtg. / Jan. 27 Meeting - TBA

The DataBus - Jan. 2004 - Volume 28 - Issue 8

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DMA®

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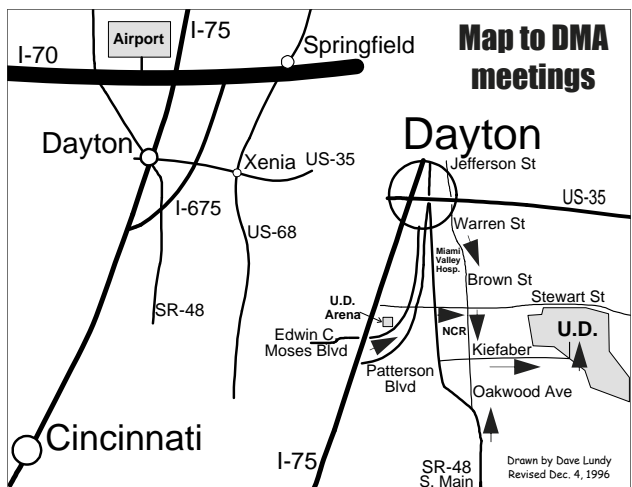P.O. Box 2336   email info: computerfest*computerfest.com
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Map to DMA meetings

Drawn by Dave Lundy
Revised Dec. 4, 1996

DMA®'s main meeting is held in Miriam Hall, O'Leary Auditorium, on UD's campus (add'l map p.25). **The
meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. Park in lot 'C' on campus (follow the map's arrows) to avoid parking tickets.**

Editor's Box: There will be no DMA® General Meeting this month. Happy Holidays to you and your family from
the Dayton Microcomputer Association and the Editorial Staff of The DataBus!!

——————————————————————————————————————

As featured in last month's issue, DMA®'s exclusive "Holiday Helper" flyer, designed to make shopping for a new or
upgraded computer system a bit easier for you or someone you know, is still available (thru 12/31/03) for download at:
http://www.dma.org/holidayhelper.pdf. (.PDF format, 274 KB)

The DataBus

The DataBus is published monthly by the Dayton Microcomputer Association, Inc. (DMA®). Technical articles, product
announcements, news items and other items relating to computers, computing and/or computer users are strongly encouraged.

The deadline for submitting material is the first day of the month of publication. Please submit files to the editors
(**Editor@dma.org**) by "attaching" them to email in one of the following formats: (in order of preference) MS Word,
Wordperfect, or .TXT (with line breaks) — or simply by handing a disk to the Editors at a General Meeting or mailing it to
them. The editors reserve the right to edit for clarity, length & style, and to hold or reject any portions of submitted copy. It
may be better suited to a later issue. _If you have a specific topic in mind but are not sure how useful it might be to fellow
DMA® members, just call or email an Editor and discuss it._

Advertisements and want ads are accepted for publication. Non-commercial (for instance, to sell your used printer) credit-
card size ads are free to DMA® members. For members, commercial ads of that size are $20.00 per issue. Our present
circulation, targeted specifically to computer users, technicians, & IT Managers, is 1,000 copies. For more information on
advertising rates, or to obtain a Rate Card, contact an Editor. The mailing address is: _Editor - The DataBus, P.O. Box 4005,
Dayton, OH 45401-4005_

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Newsletter composed using Microsoft Publisher XP for Windows®, with additional help from everyone who was ever voted
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**Winner:
Best User Group Coverage
- Large Newsletters,
'98 & '99 InterGalactic
Conferences in New York**

The opinions expressed in any article or column are those of the individual author(s) and do not
represent an official position of, or endorsement by, The Dayton Microcomputer Assn., Inc.

DMA® MEETINGS

Email: happenings@dma.org for updates

Meetings - Guests are always welcome.

- All general DMA® membership meetings are held at 7:30 p.m., University of Dayton, the last Tuesday of each month, except December. See our Web page (www.dma.org), dmapub, or email to: happenings@dma.org for more info.

Our monthly general meeting

consists of a brief opening, SIG reports, announcements, and a 60-90 minute program by a guest speaker, followed by door prizes for members.

Board Meeting -

The regular DMA® Board of Trustees meeting will be held on the first Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at DMA®'s home at 119 Valley St. Dayton, Ohio

Board meetings are open to all. Members are always welcome to attend.

OTAP RECYCLES COMPUTERS -

The Ohio Technology Access Project is a 501c(3) non-profit organization. This all volunteer group of devoted people generously give of their special talents & skills.

OTAP puts donated computers into the hands of people with handicaps, limitations, challenges and special needs--and provides computers to institutions which serve the needs of these individuals.

DMA® volunteers gather computers and then teach other volunteers machine inspection, testing, diagnostics, as well as adjustment and repair techniques.

After these donated computers are put into working order, they are then provided "as is" to qualified individuals and institutions which request them. Very basic, free, computer instruction follows some computer distribution.

If you would like to learn more about OTAP, please set your browser to http://www.otap.org Computer donations are tax-deductible and to date, more than 2000 computers have been distributed by OTAP.

If you or your organization wish to donate or receive used equipment, or if you would like to volunteer, please call the Project Manager, Al Russell, at (937) 222-2755 or email: russella@dma.org.

Located at 119 Valley St., Dayton, OH.

DMA®'s Special Interest Group (SIG) Meetings

Do You Have a Specific Computer-Related Interest ? —

and need an organization to support that interest? Are there others you know who would join you? DMA® can help sponsor groups of approx. 6 or more who have common software or hardware interests by providing meeting venues, AV equipment, etc. Contact vice-president*dma.org for more information.

Apple-Dayton SIG -

for those who want to get the most out of their Apple computer & learn about the Apple/ Mac platform. Group meets the 3rd Monday at 7 p.m. at 119 Valley Street now, but watch our website. Contact Keith Ciriegio (meeting coordinator) at 937-773-0676, email: keithc*gemair.com

Certification SIG

- Purpose: to assist you in passing various Certification exams. Meets 2nd Tues. and 4th Wed. of each month. Contact George Ewing, ewingg*dma.org or Larry Ford, lford*woh.rr.com or call 937-361-8917. **Networking SIG** meetings have been combined with this group which now covers both areas.

Classic Computer SIG -

the keeper of the Dayton Computer Museum. Classes in older computer hardware and software are taught by the Curator, Gary Ganger; 1st & 3rd Sat. of ea. mo. 3 to 5 p.m. at the Sugar Grove Church, Email gangerg*dma.org or call Gary at (937) 849-1483 for directions.

Digital Photography SIG

meets 1st Thursday of each month. Interested? Email millard*millard.net or call (937) 879-5419. Covering all aspects of digital photography in a friendly small group atmosphere.

Digital Textiles SIG

- The place to indulge your interest in computerized machine embroidery, cross stitch, knitting, quilting and sewing. The Dec. & Jan. meetings will start at 7 p.m. the third Thursday of the month at Down Home Dreams, 433 Troy St., Dayton. Explore what's new in the world of textiles and share your projects and experiences with others who share your passions. Contact Lou Childs for details at 888-276-3578.

Gaming SIG

- Now meeting online. Please contact SIG leader Bill Myers at gamingsig*technomutt.com or call him at (937) 275-3583 for further details, & see http://www.dma.org/sigs.shtml for the latest time/date/program information.

Northern SIG

- one of DMA® 's newest SIGs, is for those interested in open source software who live near or north of I-70. For more details, see http:// www.dma.org/northernsig/ or contact Robert Ruby III– aprinciple*hotmail.com

Software Development SIG -

The former Greater Dayton Delphi Group meets 2nd Thurs. each month at 6:30 p.m. at 119 Valley St.. Focusing on all aspects of software development including design, implementation and testing, we are language and platform independent. For info, call Dale Childs at 937-276-3786, email: dalechilds*earthlink.net.

UNIX/LINUX SIG

- Meets the 3rd Thurs. of each month at 7:00 p.m. in Wright State's Russ Engineering Center. Call Tony Snyder at 275-7913 for info. www.dma.org/linuxsig/

Venture Scouts -

No fixed meeting time currently. Any new members are welcomed. For more information, please contact Ron Schwartz at: (937) 434-2144 or email to: schwartr*gemair.com

Pizza SIG

The unofficial snack/meal of the computer enthusiast is enjoyed following each DMA® General Mtg., **now at a new location: CiCi's Pizza, 3050 S. Dixie Dr., in the old Hills & Dales shopping center complex**. Open to everyone, it is still the "Pizza SIG". Come join us!

Club Purpose and Membership

The Dayton Microcomputer Assn., Inc. (DMA®) is an Ohio non-profit organization dedicated to the education of, and providing information to, microcomputer users and also the general public. DMA® members use and own a wide variety of computers and possess various levels of computer experience.

Annual dues are $25 for regular members, which includes a subscription to *The DataBus* newsletter, and $12.50 for associate members living at the same address. Associate memberships must run concurrently with a regular membership.

For other user groups not affiliated with DMA®, see page 27.

- President's Message -

by Gary Mullins, DMA® President   *president*dma.org*

As of the writing of this letter, I find myself trying to recover from the recent APCUG/COMDEX trip, as well as the hustle and bustle associated with the Thanksgiving holiday activities. Looking back at the past month, a lot has happened but boy did it go fast! With all the meetings, travel, and activities that have transpired in the past two weeks, I can begin to understand the feeling of a need to stop and take a breath.

For this edition of the President's letter, I will share some observations and thoughts with you concerning what I saw and experienced at COMDEX this year. Throughout December and January, I will work on some articles that will take an in-depth look at the APCUG conference and discussions. Those will be forthcoming in future issues of The DataBus as space allows.

I arrived in Las Vegas on Thursday evening, Nov. 13th, so I could get settled in and get all my registration materials on Friday before some of the activities for APCUG started Friday evening. After the roundtable discussions on Saturday and Sunday, the time had arrived to go hear the Sunday evening COMDEX keynote presentation. This year, Bill Gates was again the presenter for this event. The hour was filled with discussion, guest speakers on specialized segments, as well as a filmed parody based on the movie "The Matrix". All in all, it was an entertaining hour or so. One primary thought that was presented also was prevalent throughout the exhibits at COMDEX the following week. That concept was the concept of seamless connectivity. Access to your own data, Internet information, business contact information, all accessible whether you are at your office, at home, using your PDA on the run, or at a hot spot at a local cyber café…seamless access and connectivity to any data you need wherever you are at the time. That principle seemed to be a common thread running throughout many of the exhibits I saw.

When I got to the convention center on Monday, I made several observations. First, the layout had changed significantly. The area being used for COMDEX this year was approximately 60% of the size of the previous year. While roaming the exhibit floor I noticed that the exhibits were decidedly oriented toward the "Enterprise" type customer. The event seemed to be geared strictly to the business-to-business environment, and in that environment, heavily weighted toward the large corporations, or "mega-business". As I continued to look around the exhibit hall, I observed that the crowd was also down noticeably. Was it a sign of the times and the economy or a result of the narrowed "niche" market towards which the organizers had directed the show? I suppose we will have to wait and see on that one. While cruising thru the event, I listened closely to exhibitors and attendees and what they had to say. I stopped and talked to many of the exhibitors as well. I found all the exhibitors I talked to were unhappy with the show and some went as far as to say they wouldn't return. Most attendees I talked with were disappointed as well. COMDEX made an effort this year to change the nature of the event in the face of changing times. The next year or so will indicate whether or not the move and the direction taken was the right one. Time will tell.

Next month, look for more on COMDEX and details about APCUG. In the meantime, have a happy and safe holiday season!

- Computerfest®: COMDEX of the Midwest -

by John D. Daniel, Computerfest® General Chair, Spring 2004   *CfestJack*themowerworks.com*

As I write this letter, I am still trying to digest all the sights and sounds of the ground a few thousand feet below (and a few hundred miles back). Yes, I am talking about COMDEX, the Mecca of technology shows on this small island we call the North American continent.

Although, folks, I have to be really honest. Even though this is the first COMDEX I have attended, I found more similarities than differences in our two little shows. Both are able to boast of having lasted over twenty years. In fact, I found that Computerfest® is actually older than COMDEX by a couple of years! Even if COM-DEX, an exposition that has grown (for profit) to global proportions, is a little younger (and supposedly a little more wily), it still embodies much of the same spirit that Computerfest® was founded on. We both strive to be innovative in bringing technology to our attendees from all walks of life… In fact, the name "Computerfest®" really is becoming a misnomer for the kind of exposition that we put on twice yearly. (Keep in mind that it is not such a bad thing!)

Even though Computerfest® is a fund-raiser and we do cater to everyone from Joe Q. Consumer to businesses, whereas COMDEX is strictly B2B, both expos try to bring out new and innovative ideas for folks to see and hear. (Although the highest end mate-rial costs substantially at COMDEX and we give rather freely --- This too is not necessarily a bad thing!)

Sure, many think that COMDEX is much better known than Computer-fest®, but riding the buses in, and walking the streets of, Las Vegas burst a bubble in my line of thought. All these years I had known about COM-DEX, it seemed that everyone knew about COMDEX. It was simple. In

- Fine Freeware -

By Jerry Wonderly, regular contributor to *The DataBus*. A native Daytonian, Jerry has been involved with computers since the mid-80's. "I cut my teeth on CP/M Plus." He says that 'computering' can be very expensive but doesn't have to be. "Ask questions. Think cheap. Shop around. And don't assume your computer needs to be traded in. I'd rather put my money in my 401(k) than spend it on a complete new system and software."

Sometimes, we don't have to spend a bundle to get good software. This month, I've looked around some of my favorite freeware sites and found several free programs that I like and, hopefully, you will too. So without further ado, let's take a look at them:

The first useful program I'd like to mention is the Belarc Advisor. Belarc Advisor builds a detailed profile of your installed software and hardware, including Microsoft Hotfixes, and displays the results in your Web browser. The profile is comprehensive and even lists serial numbers of your installed software. A printout of the results would come in very handy when reinstalling software or when you need to know exactly what hardware and software you're running, versions, etc. You can find the Belarc Advisor here: http://snipurl.com/13mw. [*For additional information about the Belarc Advisor, see the article, "DMA®'s 'Holiday Helper' Shopping Guide," on page 14 of last month's issue. – GMG, Ed.*]

Next, I found a free Zip/Unzip program that is very popular. CoffeeCup Free Zip Wizard makes it easy to Zip and Unzip files. It has built-in Email and FTP functions, so you can Zip and send your files in one easy step. Free Zip Wizard can also run any program or setup file inside Zip files. It can also create self-extracting .exe files, and find all the Zip files on your system too. This program even allows you to email the zipped file without leaving the program. And, it has a built-in FTP feature so that you can send zipped files to someone else over the Internet that are too large for emailing. Download your free copy here: www.coffeecup.com/zip-wizard/ .

For extracting songs from CDs onto your computer, CDex is an excellent choice. Again, it's freeware and is a very good program. A straightforward audio player is included. It has tons of configuration options so new users may feel intimidated. However, the help menus are thorough and novices soon get the feel of the program. Hard to believe that CDex is free. Get your copy here: http://snipurl.com/402l.

Many of us have more than one program that can open our audio, video and word processing files, to name a few. However, Windows assigns just one program as the default program to open each file type. Well, there's a nifty free program that allows you to right-click on the file you wish to open and *choose* which of your programs to open it with. OpenExpert adds a right-click option called "Open With" to your files. It is fully configurable so that you can specify exactly which programs to include in the list. To learn more about OpenExpert, go to: http://snipurl.com/402r .

I don't know about you but I'm a lousy Poker player. But I recently heard of a free Poker game called Poker Mania that teaches you how to play and even has a Las Vegas feel to it, complete with sound effects. For your free copy, go to: http://snipurl.com/402o.

That's about it for this month. I hope you like these programs. As always, your comments and suggestions are always welcome.

Computerfest® (cont.)

November of each year, folks everywhere turned toward Las Vegas and had a moment of silence, wishing they could have gone too. Meanwhile, people barely knew of Computerfest® at all. Well, I found that not to be so! Just like Computerfest®, there are those who even work in an industry that proliferates technology and they saw my badge and asked, "Is that what this is all about?" and, "Oh, that was this week?" Also, just as we have our vendors and exhibitors that are worried about our prices and public standing, a number of the exhibitors at COMDEX relayed to me that not only would they have think about Computerfest®, but they were uncertain about COMDEX next year. It seems that while we have been concerned about our fundraiser, we all have common issues.

Also, just as we "give away" a lot of information through our lectures and forums we have at Computerfest®,

COMDEX has a few "freebies" that I slipped into. (A guy's got to give the legs a rest sometime!) As interesting as the topics sounded, I didn't find information that would instantly change the world. Instead, I found good, sound advice from those who have "been there," group thoughts that stimulated my thinking, and advertising for various forms of software and services --- the very same things that we offer at the Computerfest®!

Sure, there are things that we can improve upon (although they may cost more). Sure, there are things that we could do in a more flashy style (although that may cost more too). Sure, we can find more prestigious speakers (although that also would cost us more of an investment). However, we here at the Dayton Microcomputer Association have built something to be very proud of over the past three decades.

Keep Up the Good Work!

- Thank The Spammers -

by William R. James, posted via the Internet   wrjames.remove*spamreaper.org

Preface

Spammers have screwed up so much of what was once usable. Yet most users of the Internet are entirely unaware of it. They see spam only as part of being online. They think it's like other advertising, and some even think it's their ISP doing it.
William R. James
March 10, 2003

Thank the Spammers

Oddly enough, I remember a time when closing a relay was considered extremely rude. In the early days of the Internet, everyone who connected to it took some responsibility in helping to ensure that all the Internet's traffic was routed to its destination. Some places had better connections than others and some connections were unavailable at times for various reasons. So part of connecting your machine to the network was sharing the load and donating little bits of bandwidth here and there so the Internet ran smoothly for everyone. Relays were important because sometimes a user's home server was unavailable.

Then came the spammers. Because they abused the relays, like they abuse everything else, the relays had to be turned off. They found that they could abuse the relays and cost others hundreds or even thousands of dollars, but it prevented them from losing the $10 dialup account or free NetZero account. It's like a thief who steals a $1000 wedding ring with priceless sentimental value just to sell it for a $20 cocaine fix. Old software which ran perfectly well had to be replaced just to close the hole which was so important to leave open before. Yeah, thank the spammers for that.

But that's not the only thing the spammers have ruined. Free ISPs were growing. These services weren't perfect, they came with ads which were intentionally in the way, but that paid for the service, so it was OK. Over all, NetZero's service was actually pretty good even if it did have that open window in the way. But spammers learned that they could abuse those too, and their mind-set is "abuse it quickly before it goes away" knowing that the abuse is what will make it go away. But each spammer wants to be the one to milk it dry before the next spammer does, and all of them combined make it useless. Thanks, spammers, thanks a lot.

Try querying any database which has email addresses anywhere in it. They have to either make it pay only, or make you type in something associated with an image before you can retrieve data. Why? Because spammers found out there were valid email addresses in them and started hammering the servers with automated software, grabbing the entire database, using up all the bandwidth 1000 times over, just to harvest a handful of addresses from it to abuse as well. So to defend themselves and keep their servers from crashing, database owners had to make it impossible to query automatically. Thank the spammers.

And let's not forget Usenet. Munging addresses was once considered blatant abuse. Now very few people post with a valid address. If you want to discuss something off-line or off-topic with a poster, you either can't do it via email or you have to manually "decode" and type in their address. Thank spammers for that too.

The spammers claim to be running legitimate businesses, but legitimate businesses who ask for email addresses when you download their product get 99.9% garbage addresses now. Sign up for anything online and you have to use an email address which you don't expect to keep. The trust is rightfully gone. Again, that's something else for which you can thank spammers.

If you happen to run an authentic, legitimate business, you can't even post your own email address on your web site anymore. If you do, any addresses you publish for use by customers are instead harvested and added to thousands of spammers' lists. They become no longer usable in a very short time. So even though it may mean fewer orders, and the customer has to type more and may lose trust in your business because you can't give them an email address, you have to use contact forms and hide your address. Thanks, spammers. And what about those contact forms? They are also targets for abuse by spammers. Spammers go to a lot of trouble to find web forms with security holes they can exploit so they can send their spam through your server. You pay for the bandwidth. You get blocked. You maybe even lose your web hosting. But the spammer got a million spams through before it was knocked down, so never mind the cost. It was "free" just like the spamming ads say. Thank the spammers for that too.

How about dialup pools? Many ISPs use them. You might be using BellSouth, Earthlink, NetZero, Tekplex or any one of the others and dialing into the same pool of mo-

UH - OH !

These Memberships have expired, or are about to expire soon!

Remember to send your check & the completed application form (in the center of this newsletter) marked "DMA® Dues" to P.O. Box 340402, Beavercreek, OH 45434-0402. Or if you give them to Carol Ewing at the next General Meeting, please have the form filled out in advance and bring correct change or a check.   <u>We do not have change at the meeting.</u>

- DMA® Board Fills Two Open Trustee Positions -

The DMA® Board of Trustees filled the two open Trustee positions at their December 1st meeting. The positions are each for the one year remaining on separate three-year terms ending September 2004. These vacancies were created by the resignations earlier this year of former Trustees Don Corbet and Carolann Lemen.

The candidates from the September 2003 elections were all notified of the openings. Bob Ruby, Terry Drill and Jim Rowe acknowledged they would accept a nomination. Darlene Sye declined the offer.

Members who accepted nominations were:
Terry Drill, John Hargreaves, Susan Kendall, Jim Rowe, and Bob Ruby.

The newest members of the DMA® Board of Trustees, as selected by the existing Board members, are John Hargreaves and Susan Kendall.

Thank you to everyone who accepted a Trustee nomination for their dedication to DMA®. Congratulations to John and Susan.

Carol Ewing
DMA® Secretary

- Game Review - Victory At Hebron -

*by Dan Woodard, DMA® member, DataBus Software Reviewer*
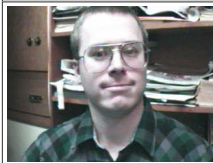
Dan Woodard: *At the tender age of 9, Dan got his start enjoying computer games on his TI-99/4a home computer, and he's been at it ever since. He graduated in 1996 with a B.S. in Environmental Studies. Dan has been a DMA® member since 1993 and enjoys playing Othello, other strategy and role playing games, backpacking, fishing and gardening. He also dabbles in computer repair and upgrades. Dan is a regular software reviewer in the pages of The DataBus. He can be reached by emailing him at dgw*dmapub.dma.org .*

Let's face it: computer games with a Christian theme are few and far between. Of those that do exist, many are best compared to shareware games, and often they simply don't offer a superior gaming experience. Thankfully, Cactus Game Design and Brethren Entertainment have released "Victory at Hebron", a Redemption adventure, just in time for Christmas wish lists. Parents, or anyone who has looked for an alternative to the violence, New Age philosophies and magical incantations prevalent in most retail games, should take note.

Victory at Hebron is based on the collectible card game called Redemption. More specifically, it is based on a board game adaptation called Redemption: City of Bondage, where Biblical heroes are challenged to rescue Lost Souls being held by Evil Hordes. All of these characters are represented by beautifully painted cards in the game. The background story has the game set in the 13th century B.C., near the fortified city of Hebron, in the Canaanite wilderness. The Israelite army is encamped outside the city walls, but there is a problem. Israeli spies which were sent to discover enemy strengths and weaknesses have not returned. Players take on the role of a warrior, and undertake a solo mission to free the imprisoned spies and defeat the Sons of Anak, so that Caleb, Joshua and the rest of the Israelites can prevail.

The player's character explores the city, entering doorways, and doing battle with the evil characters in the city. After each successful battle, players are rewarded with additional cards that they can add to their reserve deck, and later onto their playing deck. They are also rewarded with vitality and stamina points. Vitality is the equiva-

lent of hit points, and stamina points are used to deploy the various hero cards and enhancements in the game, each of which has a stamina cost. During battle, players try to knock the evil character's vitality down to zero by spending stamina to put cards into the field of battle. If a player loses an encounter, he awakens to find that he was left in the streets for dead, but was nursed back to health by the shopkeeper, Jalen (who, mysteriously, has a Russian accent). If a player wins, his stats go up and he is also often rewarded with food items and gems. The gems are used to buy powerful cards at Jalen's shop, while the food items are used during battle to replenish vitality. After an encounter or two, vitality points will be low and players will need to drink from a spring outside of Jalen's shop to be refreshed.
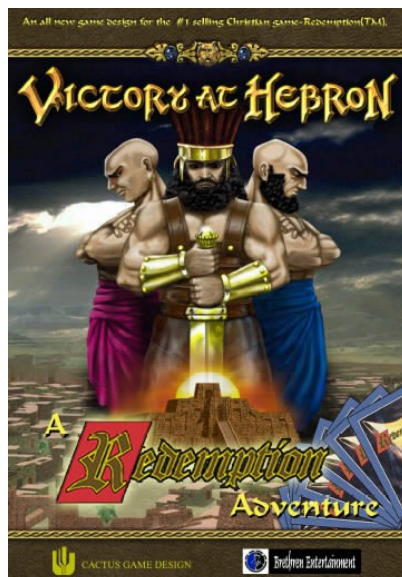
The city is divided into six different sections, in each of which you need to find five of the captured spies before you will be able to advance to the next section. This is done by challenging the level "boss". Each of these is per-

haps two to three times as powerful as any other adversary in the section, so it provides quite a challenge.

The game does have a few minor issues that could be improved. For example, it would have been greatly appreciated if the overview map showed which houses had already been visited through some sort of color change. The voice acting in the game seems rather wooden at times and should have been done better. There were also several times when I was trying to adjust my deck and was told that I had tried to violate the deck building rules. However, these rules were not included with the game or on the CD, making it very difficult to second-guess these changes. Overall, these are minor issues and did not detract from gameplay to any great degree.

Summary: Victory at Hebron is a fun game with lush graphics. It is easy to get started playing and it offers more than 60 hours of gameplay. Using a combination of adventure/exploration, strategic card battles and puzzle solving, this game offers a unique experience that would make a great Christmas gift for many computer gamers on your holiday list.

Rating: 9 out of 10

Requirements: 233 MHz CPU, 64 MB RAM, DirectX 9, 350 MB HDD, CD

Reviewed: P4 1.4GHz, 128 MB RAM, 32MB Video, 50x CD, Win ME, DirectX 9

Best Price: $22.50 at http://www.sporaticgames.com/

Demo & game hints: http://www.brethren-et.com/

- Technology.talk — Hello, I Must Be Going -

*By Patrick J. Suarez—Regular Contributor to **The DataBus** -* pjsuarez*gemair.com

Patrick J. Suarez is a nationally recognized Internet writer, trainer, speaker and consultant. He has appeared on numerous radio and TV programs across the United States. He is the Internet speaker at the annual Computerfest® trade show in Dayton, OH each spring. Mr. Suarez published a tutorial software program called "The Beginner's Guide to the Internet" in 1993, and a book by the same title followed in 1995. In addition, Mr. Suarez has been published by Que. Mr. Suarez operates a Web site supporting people who have just learned that they have a tumor. Pat is an independent writer and trainer and shares his computing time between Linux and Windows.

Last month's column about Web-based weather information drew a welcome response from weather fan Paul Gunton who pointed out several other weather Web resources.

They are:
- WKRC-TV, Channel 12, Cincinnati www.wkrc.com/weather/ An outstanding example of what local weather technology can be. Channel 12's radar is, indeed, live and the selection of weather links on the left side of the page is impressive. WHIO and WDTN, take heed: WKRC's radar sweep adequately covers the Miami Valley. And, yes, it is Doppler.
- The WeatherBug www.weatherbug.com Although I use this on my own PC, I didn't mention it because, for me, the jury is still out about this offering. The better version requires money, although not a lot. Its handiest feature is the live temperature readout in the taskbar, near the Window clock. WeatherBug also has graphical forecast icons, but its radar scans are hard to use and not as detailed as its competition.
- WeatherTAP www.weathertap.com This service appears to be comprehensive to an unprecedented degree. But it costs $6.95 per month and, for 99% of us, there's too much other information on the Web that costs nothing. I was mildly annoyed that WeatherTAP did not offer "try before you buy" functionality. They won't get my money if I can't see what my money will bring.
- Free Alerts www.freealerts.com This site sends free alerts to PDAs and cell phones. But there are two problems with this service. It has an unintuitive interface (I don't have time to try to hunt and peck to discover how to use something) and receiving text alerts on cell phones is not free with most cell packages.
- Weather Amateur Radio Network (WARN, at www.warn.org) WARN is a network of spotters, people like you and I. If you have a radio scanner, 146.64 MHz carries emergency information. Since it broadcast nothing when I tried it, I assume that it only carries content during severe weather events.

Changing the subject, my interest in radio began in 1962, when I dropped by a local AM station to meet the DJ with whom I had struck up a telephone dialogue. Throughout high school, I dabbled in broadcasting, frequently visiting WPGC in Washington, DC. I majored in speech and radio broadcasting at the University of Maryland. Since the 1970s, I have hosted shows at WCDR (classical music there), WYSO, WVUD (remember them?) and WDPR, which I helped found. During the 1990's, I appeared every once in a while on WING, when Brad Proctor's 5:00PM show was still aimed at the casual computer user, before it became almost completely politicized. In the past year, I was a co-host, with Don Corbet, Kathi Black and Jamey Zell, on WHIO-AM's "On Technology".

The four of us had a lot of fun doing that show, but WHIO management decided that four was a crowd, so Jamey and I left the show. When we departed, we took with us a certain level of synergy and wild sense of humor. But not the desire to stay in radio, have fun, inform and entertain. Jamey and I left an audience of several thousand for a slightly bigger one: the world.

By the time you read this, TechWorld Radio www.techworldradio.com should be available as a free radio stream on the Web, through the good offices of Rod Sharp's www.streaminggiant.com. If your system can't stream, the show will be available via a CD subscription. We will try to reach as many people as we can, given the best technology avenue to them.

TechWorldRadio will feature a monthly, subscription newsletter that will be loaded with interesting articles about the whole world of technology, from computers to DVDs, from autos to quilting, from kitchens to medicine, and much more. We will interview experts in their fields and have them on the show. Our regular writers are not only experts in their fields, but also engaging authors who pen blue-ribbon articles.

We will involve our listeners and readers in the full color newsletter, delivered each month as a PDF file. We are talking with various organizations about their participation. Organization members, such as DMA's, will get a tidy discount on the subscription price. Subscribers will get goodies such as CDs laden with the finest in freeware. And that's just for starters.

Mostly, Jamey and I plan to just plain have a great time with you, the listener and, we hope, subscriber. Serious topics, yes. Plain English, yes. Fun, you bet. Humor, count on it. Irreverence, as required. Listener and reader involvement, yep. Reading your feedback and e-mail on the air, but of course. Soliciting suggestions for

Technology.talk (cont.)

content from our listeners and readers, absolutely. Radio station program directors...none. Well, in a way, you, the listener and reader, are a sort of PD. We must please you, although sometimes we might turn up your temperature.

We plan to take a small ad in each issue of The DataBus as an invitation to TechWorldRadio. It will be your show, our show, everyone's show. Lots of information, fascination, wonder and fun. Jamey and I sincerely hope you drop by for a visit. And stay.

Beyond TechWorldRadio, in 2004, is the Sanctuary of Hope www.sohradio.com, something I promised to do after surviving a near free-fall from a tumor. I will partner with Dr. Russ Clark, a minister and all around fantastic personality (and wait until you hear his bass-baritone radio voice), on that streaming Web radio show.

Now for the lump in the throat. I've been at this column for almost a decade. You readers and the incredible people of DMA® have been an important part of my life during that time. You are why I did this column.

But running a weekly radio show and a monthly publication will place demands on my time that will mean leaving other projects, including this column.

I hope, however, that you and I don't part; I hope that we meet up at TechWorldRadio. It will be as close as your Web browser, sound card and speakers...and your e-mail and Acrobat Reader programs. Jamey and I are looking forward to it.

Thank you, thank you for your support of this column. It's been a blast.

Now, let's fire up that Web browser, and off we go to our new adventure together!

- Corporate Security Breaches Widespread -

News off the Internet wires...

In November, PricewaterhouseCoopers published the results of a recent study on the main information security breaches suffered by companies and found that most were caused by malicious code.

This report was the result of interviews carried out over the last five years with 402 CEOs of the fastest growing, privately held product and service companies in the United States. The report covered security breaches identified during the preceding 12-24 months:

- 46 percent of surveyed companies acknowledge having suffered security breaches, 90 percent of them being infected by viruses and worms. Other incidents include unauthorized entry, in 17 percent of cases; denial of service attacks, 13 percent of cases; manipulated systems programs, noted by 5 percent of companies; manipulated software applications by 5 percent and wireless application intrusion by 2 percent.

- Attacks caused 24 percent of companies to suffer network downtime, whereas in 12 percent of cases, busi-ness applications were affected. Other effects included: financial losses (10 percent), deleted internal records (7 percent), lost customer records (4 percent), intellectual property theft (2 percent), identity theft (2 percent) and fraud (1 percent).

- 83 percent of affected companies acknowledge having suffered economic losses due to attacks. 5 percent describe these losses as "high", whereas another 5 percent consider them "moderate", and 73 percent define them as "low".

The PricewaterhouseCoopers report points out that many surveyed companies could have their security compromised if they do not increase security investments. Although most CEOs interviewed admit the importance of computer security for their businesses, only 15 percent have plans to increase their security budget, whereas 2 percent of them intend to reduce it.

Further information about the PricewaterhouseCoopers study is available at http://snurl.com/3bw6.

- Reduce Eyestrain At The Computer -

Staring at a computer monitor for hours can tire and strain your eyes—but setting your display properties to the optimal level can make the time you spend at your screen much more comfortable.

A good place to begin is with the Windows Display Properties dialog box. Right click on the Windows Desktop and choose Properties to call up the Display Properties dialog box. Click on the Settings tab to see details about your computer's display settings. When you've finished making your selections, click either the OK or the Apply button to save the changes.

Screen resolution
Despite the common belief that higher is better, high resolution may create tiny text that strains your eyes. If you're uncomfortable, try a lower resolution.

Refresh rate
A higher setting minimizes flicker and creates a stable image that's easier on the eyes. Set your refresh rate—the number of images your monitor produces per second—to 75Hz or higher. These settings can usually be found on your monitor as buttons or dials. Consult your user's manual if you can't find them.

Contrast and brightness levels
Start with setting these at their halfway points, then experiment from there.

(Continued from page 7)
dems. One spammer might abuse that so much that others have to deny emails from the pool just to protect their systems. But the spammer got his unsolicited and unwanted garbage sent out while it lasted, so he's happy even if everyone else is now having problems in his wake. Thank the spammers for that one as well.

If you email from a server with a dialup connection, much of the world will not accept your email even if neither your server nor any other server in your network block has ever been used for spamming. But it's impossible to know in advance that it won't be, so ISPs almost never allow mail servers on dialups. So no matter how legitimate, you can't operate a mail server without a permanent connection. Thanks, spammers.

AOL announced a few days ago that they finally hit the "one billion emails rejected" mark. In one day they dumped over a billion spams from their servers. And that doesn't include the spams which got through to their customers. AOL estimates that something like $5 per month of each user's fee goes to pay the costs of handling the bandwidth and other associated costs of handling all the spam. Gee thanks, spammers!

And what of freedom? It's becoming less and less acceptable to use anything online without constant monitoring by someone, be it an ISP, a government agency, or merely a librarian. If you want to use a computer online, you have to ID yourself. Your actions have to monitored to an increasing degree. Will the day come when government reads all your email and de-

cides your rights online? Perhaps. When that day comes, thank the spammers for it.

And you wonder why I fight the spammers? I wonder why you don't. Not necessarily you specifically, but the millions of users of the Internet. If only 2% fought them hard, if only 10% of the ISPs blocked ALL traffic to and from spam friendly hosts (not just email, but web pages too, for example), the spammers would have no one willing to connect them. So why isn't that happening? Have people become such sheep that they just accept abuse and the concept that ruination is the natural path? Or are too many people just too lazy to become involved? I'm not sure. Whatever the cause, there will always be spammers and similar thieves looking for a quick buck, and unscrupulous ISPs willing to cater to them while they abuse if they can get away with it. But when email is no longer usable, when people have to go back to long distance telephone bills or carrier pigeon, thank the spammers.

Then again, thank those who were willing to do business with the spammers, buy their products, sell them connectivity, and host their web pages. Also, thank those who looked the other way and continued doing business with the ISPs who harbored the spammers. Is that you? If so, thanks. Thanks a lot. I hope whatever you got from it was worth it.

William R. James
March 8, 2003

Epilogue
Thank the Spammers started as a letter to my daughter after she had discovered her email was bouncing due to an open [mail server] relay on

her ISP's network. After some explaining and discussion, I wrote it in attempt to explain the scope of the damage spammers and their supporters have done, and continue to do, to the Internet. She replied partly with the following, posted with her permission:

"When I was working in relay, I relayed a call from some poor little old deaf lady who didn't understand why she couldn't get into her AOL account anymore. The call was to AOL customer service, who (aside from the folks at Social Security) are the LEAST helpful, rudest people on the planet. Apparently somebody had hacked into her email account and sent 500 spam emails on three separate occasions in one day, so AOL shut down the account. She didn't understand what was going on, she kept insisting she hadn't been online in a week and she hadn't sent the emails, and AOL was basically telling her to stuff it. So now you've got some little old deaf lady who just wants to IM her grandkids so she doesn't have to talk to them through a relay operator, and she can't do it because some jerk decided sending 1500 unsolicited emails was more important. I'm starting to understand why this ticks you off so much."

In case you aren't familiar with "relay" in the context used, it is a system which is used by the hearing impaired--allowing them to use a telephone. The deaf person uses a terminal with the relay service. The person working the relay translates voice-to-text, and vice-versa, between the deaf caller and the party on the other end.

William R. James
March 11, 2003
§

Just in case you think you are technologically challenged....

1. Compaq is considering changing the command "Press Any Key" to "Press Return Key" because of the flood of calls asking where the "Any" key is.

2. AST technical support had a caller complaining that her mouse was hard to control with the dust cover on. The cover turned out to be the plastic bag the mouse was packaged in.

3. Another Compaq technician received a call from a man complaining that the system wouldn't read word processing files from his old diskettes. After troubleshooting for magnets and heat failed to diagnose the problem, it was found that the customer had labeled the diskettes, then rolled them into the typewriter to type the labels.

4. Another AST customer was asked to send a copy of her defective diskettes. A few days later a letter arrived from the customer along with photocopies of the floppies.

5. A Dell technician advised his customer to put his troubled floppy back in the drive and close the door. The customer asked the tech to hold on, and was heard putting the phone down, getting up and crossing the room to close the door to his room.

6. Another Dell customer called to say he couldn't get his computer to fax anything. After 40 minutes of troubleshooting, the technician discovered the man was trying to fax a piece of paper by holding it in front of the monitor screen and hitting the "Send" key.

7. Yet another Dell customer called to complain that his keyboard no longer worked. He had cleaned it by filling up his tub with soap and water and soaking the keyboard for a day, then removing all the keys and washing them individually.

8. A Dell technician received a call from a customer who was enraged because his computer had told him he was "bad and an invalid". The tech explained that the computer's "bad command" and "invalid" responses shouldn't be taken personally.

9. A confused caller to IBM was having troubles printing documents. He told the technician that the computer had said it "couldn't find printer". The user had also tried turning the computer screen to face the printer - but that his computer still couldn't "see" the printer.

10. An exasperated caller to Dell Computer tech support couldn't get her new Dell Computer to turn on. After ensuring the computer was plugged in, the technician asked her what happened when she pushed the power button. Her response, "I pushed and pushed on this foot pedal and nothing happens." The "foot pedal" turned out to be the computer's mouse.

11. Another customer called Compaq tech support to say her brand-new computer wouldn't work. She said she unpacked the unit, plugged it in and sat there for 20 minutes waiting for something to happen. When asked what happened when she pressed the power switch, she asked "What power switch?"

12. True story from a Novell NetWireSysOp:
Caller: "Hello, is this Tech Support?"

Tech: "Yes, it is. How may I help you?"
Caller: "The cup holder on my PC is broken and I am within my warranty period. How do I go about getting that fixed?"
Tech: "I'm sorry, but did you say a cup holder?"
Caller: "Yes, it's attached to the front of my computer."
Tech: "Please excuse me if I seem a bit stumped. It's because I am. Did you receive this as part of a promotion, perhaps at a trade show? How did you get this cup holder? Does it have any trademark on it?"
Caller: "It came with my computer. I don't know anything about a promotion. It just has '4X' on it."

At this point the Tech Rep had to mute the caller because he couldn't stand it. He was laughing too hard. The caller had been using the load drawer of the CD-ROM drive as a cup holder, and snapped it off the drive!

13. Another IBM customer had troubles installing software and rang for support. "I put in the first disk, and that was OK. It said to put in the second disk, and I had some problems with that disk. When it said to put in the third disk - I couldn't even fit it in..." The user hadn't realized that "Insert Disk 2" meant to remove Disk 1 first.

14. In a similar incident, a customer had followed the instructions for installing software. The instructions said to remove the disk from its cover and insert into the drive. The user had physically removed the casing of the disk and wondered why there were problems.

As Ripley would say, believe it or not!

§

- Feeling Annoyed with Your PC? Fight Back! -

by Steve Bass, Contributing Editor, PC World (and allegedly famous author)

My name is Steve Bass and I hunt down PC annoyances. What's funny is that it doesn't matter how many annoyances I fixed in *PC Annoyances: How to Fix the Most Annoying Things About Your Personal Computer.* More sit-in-the-corner dumb things keep cropping up.

Admittedly, most annoying things are easy to find—just boot up your system, spend a few minutes with Windows, and blammo, you're annoyed. The challenging part, and the reason I wrote the book, is the thrill of finding fixes for the annoyances. I dug around and found solid solutions that work instantly and don't require a degree in computer science to understand.

Oddly enough, as I wrote the book, I bumped into even more Windows, Office, Internet, email, and hardware irritations. I didn't have time to include all of them in the book, but rather than waste them, I thought I'd share them with you. (Caution: shameless plug to follow.) And if you like what you see, well gosh, maybe you'll be motivated to buy the book. Several copies of the book. Maybe a case of books (you know they're ideal for gift giving…). You can get a copy here: http://snurl.com/annoyances.

By the way, you don't know me so this may come as a surprise, but I'm inherently lazy and will always find something to do other than meet a deadline. My favorite deadline avoidance trick is nothing new—I browse the Web; I'll share a few time-wasting, funny, and occasionally weird sites I've discovered.

Six Irritating Annoyances—and Six Fixes

These are actual annoyances contributed by annoyed *PC World* readers.

▪ **System Restore on Your Desktop**

The Annoyance: I took the advice in your book about creating a Restore Point every time I install new software or fiddle with my PC's settings. The hassle is navigating through the Start menu to get to the buried System Restore dialog. There's gotta be a quicker way.

The Fix: It would be handy if Microsoft already had prefab desktop shortcuts for many of Windows' system functions. But it's pretty easy to do it yourself. Dig around and find the System Restore icon and drag it onto the desktop and when the dialog appears, choose "Create Shortcuts Here."

As you might imagine, you can do the same for other items. For instance, open Control Panel, right click on any icon, and choose "Create Shortcut." Then answer Yes to the following dialog.
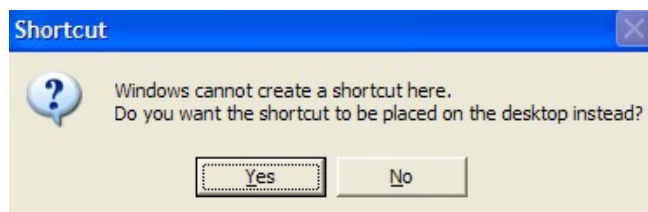
This dialog appears when you drag and drop the System Restore icon onto the Desktop. Answer Yes.

If you want to create a shortcut directly from the desktop, right-click any empty spot on the desktop and select New-->Shortcut. In the "Command Line" (98 and Me) or "location" (2000 and XP) field, type:

   %SystemRoot%\System32\restore\rstrui.exe

Click the Next button, give your shortcut a name—like Sys-Restore, and click the Finish button. Double-click the shortcut and up pops the System Restore dialog.

Kill Some Time: You thought duct tape was just for fixing leaky radiator hoses and covering wall holes under the kitchen sink? Wrong. It's good for decorative wall hangings. See http://snipurl.com/walltapings.

▪ **Remove Weird Lines in Word**

The Annoyance: Whenever I enter underlines by themselves in a Word 2002 document, they're automatically transformed into solid, thick horizontal lines. That's *not* what I want. I think it's a bug in Word and it's driving me nuts.

The Fix: So you're saying you don't like Word's overly ambitious AutoFormat feature that turns your lines into borders? Because that's exactly what's happening—every time you type more than three asterisks, hyphens, underscores, or equal signs, Word applies a character or paragraph border style. It's an easy--dare I say, gratifying--fix. From Word's toolbar, choose Tools-->AutoCorrect, click the AutoFormat As You Type tab, and uncheck the Border lines box. (In Word 2000, uncheck the Border box.)

> "May the fleas of a thousand camels infest the crotch of the RealPlayer developer who decided to stick icons in my system tray, Startup menu, and desktop, and may his arms be too short to scratch." - Snarfed from Internet, author unknown.

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PLEASE ALLOW UP TO THREE WEEKS FOR APPLICATION PROCESSING AND INTERNET SET-UP

1 Name: _____ Birth date:_____/_____/_____

                                                                            mo.   day   yr.

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____-_____

Phone: (Home) (_____)_____-_____ Phone: (Work) (_____)_____-_____x_____

I wish to have my name and address published in the club roster: YES [ ]   NO [ ]   E-mail address _____

Name of DMA® member who recruited me: _____ (only new regular memberships)

Current or recent DMA® Member: Yes [ ]   No [ ]   Change of Address Only [ ]   Today's date: _____/_____/__-____

Membership number (from your *DataBus* mailing label) _____

Type of Membership

Application is for: New Membership [ ]   Membership Renewal [ ]   Associate Membership* [ ]   Internet Service [ ]

If applying for free student membership, please give school name and student ID number: Available **only** for students under 22 years old.

School Name: _____ Student ID#: _____

* A family associate membership is for an additional membership for a member of your immediate family that
is living in the member's household. If this is a family associate membership, give name of regular member: _____

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2   **Dues/Fees** | Note: A $10.00 fee will be charged
                 (Dues and Fees are subject to change without prior notice) | for all returned checks.

Membership (one year - New or Renewal)   1.) [ ] **$25**

Family Associate Membership (must live at same address as regular member)   2.) [ ] **$12.50**

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Please assign me a user ID for E-mail and Usenet news access   4.) [ ] **$10** one-time setup fee for new accounts.

Total - - - Lines (1 **or** 2) (+4 if checked)   =   5.) $_____

Please complete sections 1 & 2 of this form. Make your check payable to DMA®,- - Dayton Microcomputer Association, Inc.

then send the check and application to: - PO Box 340402

Beavercreek, OH 45434-0402

DMA® Use only: Membership # _____ Exp. Date: ____/____/____ Processed by: _____ REV: 02Jun2003

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3   ## Internet Service Application   Modems at 910-0006 settings 8-N-1

Optional

The **Internet Service Application**, along with terms and conditions of use, is now available online on DMA®'s web site.

Please read, print, sign and include the Internet Service Terms and Conditions agreement from the URL

http://www.dma.org/dmapub-user-agreement.html

with your membership application if you are also establishing an Internet service account through DMA®.

Helpline: Computer Resource People

DMA®'sHelpline listing below lists members who are willing to accept occasional telephone calls at home to give free assistance to **other DMA® members (only)** when they have a problem with a particular software or computing concept.

Will **you** please consider signing up, like those good people below, if only on a trial basis? Call George Gibbs (937-429-9072) or Edwin Davidson (937-294-8524), or email us at Editor*dma.org Everyone has a particular program or game, or ability with certain hardware they know pretty well. Maybe you use it all day at work, or all night at play, or recently installed a board or upgraded your PC, etc. This makes you more knowledgeable than someone who has not yet used that software or installed that hardware and you could possibly be a great help in solving a problem of another DMA® member. Or perhaps you write programs in certain languages, or are a developer, networker, webmaster, or use search tools skillfully, etc., and their questions would be easy for you. The field of possibilities is nearly unlimited.

You choose the time(s) and day(s) you can provide assistance, and the subject. We'll ask the caller to be ready to provide his/her membership number (on the back of each DataBus) to you; to respect your stated times; and to keep inquiries to a minimum.

Callers: Please be prepared to give the Helpline volunteer your membership number; DMA® membership has its privileges! Please do not ask for assistance outside of the stated times. If you reach a telephone answering machine, leave a message, as many people screen calls or otherwise prioritize their time. E-mail addresses are provided so that you can contact them if you have trouble getting in touch via telephone. (Remuneration may be appropriate when a member spends a longer than normal time providing help.)

Problem with this?	Call Member:	Times:	Phone No.	Days	Email addresses:
Apple Macintosh, FrontPage98	Your name here?	Can you help?			
QuickBooks	Your name here?	Can you help?			
MS Word	Carol Gudorf	7-9 p.m.	606-363-0690	M-F	gudorfc*dma.org.
MS Word/Excel/Access/Works	Doug Johnson	7-9 p.m.	252-7991	M-F	johnson*dma.org
Investment Clubs	Hank Pesa	7-9 p.m.	435-1146	M-F	pesa*erinet.com
MS Office,Word/Excel/PwrPt; MS Works, Internet Searching	Millie Tanner	7-9 p.m.	513-489-7273	M-W-F Sat. & Sun.	tannercm*fuse.net
Windows 98 + Internet	Your name here?	Can you help?			
Routers,Hubs,Switches (Cisco)	Ron Wagner	before 9 p.m.	W - 264-7244 H - 698-4854	M-F	wagner*dma.org
Oracle Database (sql / pl-sql), CADD (Microstation in particular) use and application development, C/Java/ C++ programming, Enterprise Inte-gration	Jerry Walter	—	Use email.	—	gwalter1*woh.rr.com
Serial/Parallel Ports	Verne Wiese	7-9 p.m.	429-2969	M-F	vwiese*dma.org
Linux	Don Corbet	9 am - 9 pm	604-8793	M-F	thelinuxguy*gemair.com
What is your specialty?	**Your Name Here**				

Last month in the distributed version of this column, I included a warning about people being burned by cell phones causing fires while they were refueling their vehicles. Ira Wilsker, who has a weekly radio show and is on the APCUG BODA, quickly informed me that it was a hoax so I immediately sent out a retraction, giving some editors the opportunity to pull that questionable item from the column before publication. While it may never have happened, I'm not so sure that it couldn't happen. It's true that mechanical relays and switches have long ago disappeared from such electronic devices, and even when it rings, it is done with electronic pulses, all completely sealed in the circuit.

On the other hand, antennas are often loose and I know a friend who had a battery explode (not near a gas pump). Not only that but how many of you have dropped your cell phones? That could crack a board, or a lead from a component, thereby causing a temporary contact that could possibly cause a spark. All this, not to mention static electricity from your body (from your seat or otherwise) when you touched any electronic device, the vehicle, or the pump. Check this URL sent to me by Joseph de Leon, editor for PC Alamode: http://www.esdjournal.com/index.htm. For that reason, I believe you should not have any active electronic devices in your possession when refueling your vehicle. They have even talked about the possibility of grounding straps when refueling on the news recently. The above simply illustrates that, however wild the scenario, an explosion is possible and you can't be too careful. Maybe the new hydrogen powered cars will be safer.

*Fight Fire With Fire

I was surprised at the amount of feedback I received from my item

about stopping the receipt of credit card solicitations. A lot of people already fight back in a variety of ways. Many just use the application and the envelope with return postage to write a nasty or informative message to the sender, such as please stop these &*%#& mailings, or "party deceased so don't send 'me' any more." Some get a bit sadistic such as wrapping a stone or brick and taping the postage paid envelope to it to send them. I liked those peoples' idea. However, I'll settle for simply calling 888-567-8688 to try stopping it since that is supposed to stop all the companies from sending them. You would have enjoyed the messages I received.

*They're The Losers

Two vendors who promised deals have not delivered yet so I have put together a few things that I have in reserve. You'd think those vendors would love the chance to get this much exposure (about 60,000 readers) at NO expense, but that's the way it often turns out, and one vendor had little response from their last offer.

*A Browser That Works Good

I've been meaning to write about Mozilla for a while but never got around to it. However, it is becoming more popular and I see more and more written about Mozilla; in fact, I even have a review for it on my Web page. It is not quite as full featured as the IE and Netscape but it does some things those do not. Best of all, it's free so what do you have to lose? It's also said to be faster since the code is lean and mean. It is skinable and it kills all those pop-ups.

A few Web pages may not view as good, but I'm told there is a lot to like about Mozilla. You can get it at: http://snipurl.com/406z where there is

also a review.

*Wow --- Calls All Over For FREE

I read that you can make telephone calls all over the world via this Web site. http://www.pulver.com/fwd/ Take a look and see if it will fit in with what you might be looking for. My thanks to Hewie Poplock of Central Florida Computer Society for writing about this one in "Hewie's Favorites." I don't know anybody who has tried this one so you are on your own. I was also advised that you should read the offer thoroughly since it is not for everybody.

*Affordable Legal Help

Last winter I wrote about the free tax help for AARP members at tax time and it's almost tax time again. I was since reminded that AARP members have other benefits as well. An important one is in the form of legal help. For example, should you decide to move to another state, it is good advice to have a new "last will and testament" drafted that conforms to the new state's laws. That might normally cost you anywhere from $200 to $400, but getting an attorney through the AARP Legal Services Network (LSN) can save you money. I have no idea what all the services are that they cover, but check it out at http://www.aarp.org/lsn or call 1-800-424-3410. Remember this is for AARP members only.

*What's In Your House?

Let's face it, if you had a serious fire and disastrous loss of personal items, can you sit down and list everything in your house for the insurance adjuster? I doubt you can. Many of us talk

The Deals Guy — (cont.)

about making up a personal inventory but just never get around to it. In case you do take the time to do it, here is a great software called "My Stuff 1.5" for doing the job. It is available at http://snipurl.com/408l and it's a freebie. The download is 4 MB. You can even see "page previews" there so you can get a good look at it. Even so, at no cost, just go ahead and download it and give it a try. No loss except your time if you don't like it. My thanks to Jerry Wonderly of the Dayton Microcomputer Association for finding this for

their members. My brother-in-law had a disastrous fire in his home many years ago and was thinking of items for months afterwards, but it was too late because he had already settled. Do yourself a favor and get this done, but don't store the record in your own house. Guess why!

That's it for this month. Meet me here again next month if your editor permits. This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers or freebies I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to

encourage, or discourage, the purchase of any products, no matter how enthused I might sound.

Bob (The Cheapskate) Click
Bobclick*mindspring.com.

Please visit my Web site at: [http://www.dealsguy.com] for past columns and many interesting articles I have taken from various users group newsletters.

§

- Feeling Annoyed With Your PC? (cont.) -
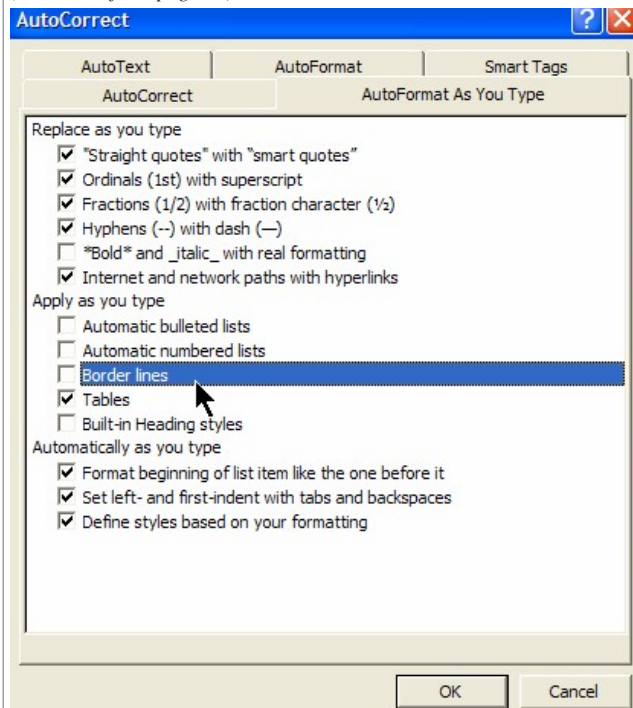
If you uncheck Border lines, you won't have to suffer with Word automatically turning your lines into borders.

▪ **Stop Annoying Crash Reports**

The Annoyance: I'm getting *really* tired of XP asking me if I want to send an error report to Microsoft every time a program crashes. I think the company should spend its time *reducing* crashes, don't you?

The Fix: I'll bet Microsoft's tired of taking all your reports, too, but that's another story. Stopping these report prompts takes five minutes. From the Start Menu, click the Control Panel, then double-click the System icon. If Windows XP is in the Category View, click Performance and Maintenance, then double-click the System icon.

In the System Properties box, click the Advanced tab, then the Error Reporting button. If you want absolutely no notification about errors, check "Disable error reporting" and make sure the "But notify me when critical errors occur" box is unchecked. (FYI: I leave notification checked so I can see details of the crash, something that helps me troubleshoot system problems.) Click OK then OK again.
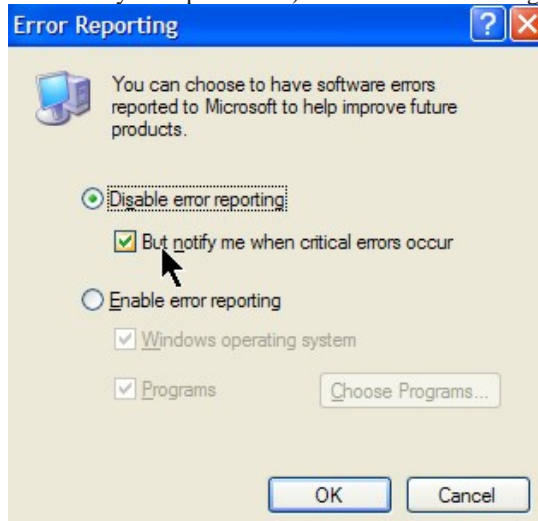
Eliminate annoying error reporting by marking "Disable error reporting."

- More Benefits of Being a DMA® Member -

Just look at the many money-saving member benefits listed below! If you manage or own a company or store, or know of one that would like to join in attracting DMA® customers, please contact Carol Ewing, ewingc@dma.org or 937-667-3259. As a Board Member, Carol is always listed on page 2 of The DataBus. Discounts are printed in The DataBus every month. They are also on the web site, www.dma.org

For more information on any of these discounts, call the store or email Carol Ewing - ewingc*dma.org..

Members MUST show their current membership card* to receive any discounts. Please check *The DataBus* each month for new and even more exciting discounts for our members. NOTE: Discounts are subject to change without prior notice.

- **Books & Co.**   350 E. Stroop Rd.
  937-298-6540   Kettering, OH 45429
  www.booksandco.com
  20% off computer books ONLY. This discount does not apply to any other books, any magazines, or any other items in the store.   Please take computer book purchases to the regular cash registers, not Special Orders Desk.

- **Borders Books Music & Cafe**
  2040 Miamisburg-Centerville Rd., Dayton, OH 45459
  937-434-3800
  Discount of **20%** on computer books (except NET books). Please remind them DMA® is on their "Corporate Listing"

- **Dayton's Original Pizza Factory**
  1101 Wayne Avenue, Dayton, OH
  937-224-4477
  Discount is **10% off** any pizza order, and
  Discount of **20% off** any pizza order over $50.00
  Not valid with any other discount coupon or offer.

- **Dorothy Lane Market**   www.dorothylane.com

Oakwood	Washington Square	Springboro
2710 Far Hills Ave.	6177 Far Hills Ave.	740 N. Main St.
Dayton, OH 45419	Dayton, OH 45459	Springboro, OH 45066
937-299-3561	937-434-1294	937-748-6800

  Go to the DMA® web site for information on how to sign up. You will be mailed a free Club DLM card to receive store discounts. Use your Club DLM card with EVERY purchase to receive special offers. The Club DLM card is also honored at other participating retailers. DMA® can get up to a 1% rebate on your purchases. DMA® Charity # 518.

- **Fairborn Camera & Video**
  14 E Main St   Fairborn, OH 45324
  937-878-4392   faircam*erinet.com
  10% off digital camera accessories when purchased with any digital camera or digital camcorder. Valid through 5-31-2004.

- **GEMAIR, Inc. (See ad on page 15.)**
  2555 S. Dixie Hwy, Suite 102, Kettering, OH 45419-1532
  937-913-0083 or 877-443-6247 (toll free)
  www.gemair.com **Special DMA® member rate** $149.95 annually (equivalent to $12.50 / month).

- **Microsoft Press Books**
  20% off, all DMA® members:
  a) Visit http://mspress.microsoft.com   b) Select a book.
  c) Call 1-800-MSPRESS   d) Give them the code MCPC
  (indicating you are a User Group member).

- **PC Club Ohio** - www.pcclub.com

291 N. Springboro Pike	2602 Colonel Glenn Highway
Miamisburg, OH 45342	Fairborn, OH 45324
937-434-3888	937-427-8808

  5% off any regular priced product. Expires 5-1-04.

- **CompUSA**   www.compusabusiness.com
  221 N. Springboro Pike, Dayton, OH 45449
  937-436-7239   Valid thru 9-30-04
  Call Marty White or stop at Corporate Desk, M-F 8-6.
  Order pickup other hours at the Customer Service Desk.
  Computers - Lower of: **10% over cost** or shelf price
  Software -   Lower of: **15% over cost** or shelf price
  Accessories - Lower of: **10% under retail** or shelf price
  Training - **$149.00** (reg. $199) course voucher

- **The Mac Depot**
  2025 E. Dorothy Lane, Kettering, OH 45420
  937-643-2667
  Save **25%** off Macintosh Computer Repair.
  Discount applies to labor charges only; excludes parts.
  Maximum discount is $25.00   Valid through 31 Dec. 2003

- **Ohio Custom Computer**
  1866 S. Maple Ave.   Fairborn, OH 45324
  937-879-9650   www.ohiocomputer.com
  5% off regular priced items - valid through 12-2003.

- **Sam's Club**

Sam's Club	Sam's Club
6955 Miller Lane	1111 Miamisburg-Centerville Rd.
Dayton, OH 45414	Dayton, OH 45459
937-454-6200	937-436-0299
www.samsclub.com	

  DMA® membership card qualifies you to receive an Advantage Membership for $35.00. This is for you & anyone in your household. *But they must live at the same address as the DMA® member.* Call Sam's Club, identifying yourself as a DMA® member, for information on their specials of the current month.

- **Nuclear Computers**
  6333 N. Dixie Dr.
  Dayton, OH 45414   nuclearcomputers*hotmail.com
  937-264-8260
  10% off labor bill over one (1) hour in Shop.

If you have a question or problem with a Benefit Discount Store, contact Carol Ewing.
DO NOT HASSLE THE STORE !   Be sure to mention you learned about these discounts in *The DataBus.*
For a membership card, send a SASE to: DMA® Membership, PO Box 4005, Dayton, OH 45401-4005

*It was just a matter of time before we had to start **Page 2***! *Check out these newest additions to your member benefits.*

If you manage or own a company or store, or know of one that would like to join in attracting DMA® customers, please contact Carol Ewing, ewingc@dma.org or 937-667-3259. As a Board Member, Carol is always listed on page 2 of The DataBus. Discounts are printed in The DataBus every month. They are also on the web site, www.dma.org.
For more information on any of these discounts, call the store or email Carol Ewing - ewingc*dma.org..

Members MUST show their current membership card to receive any discounts. Please check The DataBus each month for new and even more exciting discounts for our members. NOTE: Discounts are subject to change without prior notice.

- **Click Camera & Video**
  Nine area locations - see www.clickcamera.com
  10% off digital camera accessories with purchase of any digital camera or digital camcorder.
  10% off prints from digital cameras.
  Not valid with any other coupons or offers.
  Valid through 12-31-2003.

- **O'Reilly & Associates** - www.oreilly.com
  Members get 20%* off any O'Reilly book they purchase directly from O'Reilly. Just use code DSUG when ordering.
  *Group purchases with better discounts are available

- **Down Home Dreams** - www.dhd-emb.com
  433 Troy St. www.embroiderydreamers.com
  Dayton, OH 45404
  937-224-4586
  10% off all regular priced items to DMA® members.
  25% off all regular priced items to DMA® members who are also members of the Digital Textiles SIG.
  May not be combined with other offers.

- **Another great member discount will be coming to this space soon.**

  *** Watch for it! ***

Welcome to our newest DMA® members

May your association with DMA® bring you many new friends, be enjoyable, informative & entertaining. Introduce yourselves to those around you when you attend our meetings. Any questions?

Since the December 2003 issue of *The DataBus*

Last Name	First Name	City	Last Name	First Name	City
Doe	Lyle W.	Kettering	Rowe	Jody (a)	Centerville
McGee	Joseph M.	Dayton			

(Sometimes there are additional new members, none this month, who indicated they don't want their names published and are not listed here.)

If you would like to automatically receive occasional mailings describing the upcoming meeting topic and other timely DMA® news, simply place "subscribe dma-announce" (without the quotes) in an email message area and send that message to: majordomo@dma.org

Kill Some Time: Looking for something to do besides worrying about underlining in Word? Try the Snarg site. After the first few images flash on screen, click the tiny pound sign on the right, then click the "squeee" or "framina" link (To exit either, just close the window.) Hint: Move your mouse around and click here and there until patterns emerge, or until your significant other walks in and asks how that defrag is going. http://snipurl.com/snarg

▪ **Big Hard Drive Corruption**

The Annoyance: Ever since I upgraded my PC with a 160GB hard drive, hibernation has stopped working correctly. Every so often, my system annoyingly restarts rather than resuming from hibernation. I've run ScanDisk and defragged the drive, but the problem still occurs. What gives?

The Fix: Someone once said you can never have too much RAM or too big a hard drive. Unfortunately, without a fix from Microsoft, Windows XP will choke—and possibly corrupt data—on any drive that exceeds 137 GB. There's a quick and easy downloadable fix at http://snipurl.com/atapi1. And if you're interested in the background, check out Microsoft's Microsoft Knowledge Base Article: 331958 at http://snipurl.com/atapi2.

Kill Some Time: Almost everyone gripes about Windows. If you want to file a complaint, however, you'll have to take a number: http://snipurl.com/complaint.

▪ **Stop Quick Launch Pop-ups**

The Annoyance: Whenever my cursor hovers over the Quick Launch toolbar, enormous yellow pop-ups appear with tons of text. It blocks the other icons, and besides, I already know what program the icon represents.

The Fix: The biggest offenders are—surprise, surprise—Microsoft applications. Word's descriptive pop-ups are billboard size, and definitely annoying.
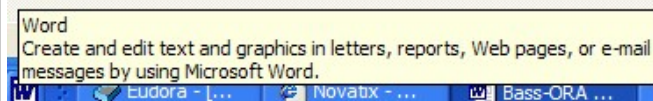
Hover your mouse over Word's Quick Launch icon and it insists on providing a lengthy explanation of what it does for a living.

Rather than eliminate the pop-up, shrink it down to size. Right-click the icon in the Quick Launch Toolbar, choose Properties, and change—or remove—the text in the Comment field. Easy, eh?
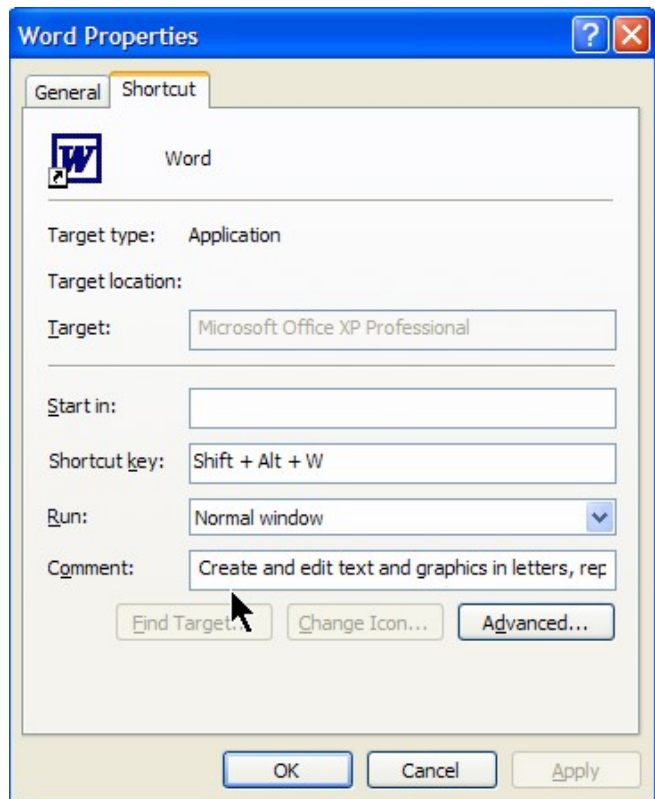
Remove the text in the Comment field and you'll no longer see Word's built in advertising.

▪ **Ban Annoying Boot Logos**

The Annoyance: I just bought a new PC. When the system boots, all I see is the manufacturer's irritating logo.

The Fix: IMHO, watching the logo screen is more than just annoying; it's depriving you of valuable troubleshooting and diagnostic information that's served up while the PC's booting. This annoyance is pretty easily dispensed with, provided your system's BIOS allows you to turn off the logo screen.

As you're booting up, tap the Delete or F1 key. (Pay attention during boot-up: The system usually displays the proper key on screen.) Browse through the various BIOS options until you find something similar to "disable the Logo Screen," and change the setting to not show the logo.

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by Carol Ewing DMA® Board Secretary

DMA® Board of Trustees Meeting Call to Order - Gary Mullins at 7 pm

Trustees and Officers present:
Millard Mier, Gary Turner, Dale Childs, Carol Ewing, Ron Williamitis, Lisa Singh and Gary Mullins. Treasurer Susan Kendall.

Visitors present: Randy Young, George Ewing, Jim Hendrix, Bob Kwater, John Hargreaves, Peter Hess, Rod Sharp, Jim Rowe, Terry Drill, John Friedenbach.

Recognition of Visitors.

George Ewing proposed a change for Pizza SIG from Marion's to Cici's with a pizza and salad buffet for $3.99, will stay open late for us. No sandwiches or alcohol. Millard Mier made a motion, Ron Williamitis 2nd, to try Cici's for the new pizza SIG for a month. Yes-5, No-0, Abstain-0. (Singh not here yet).
Newsletter has been advised and he will confirm board approval to Editor.

Officers Reports:
President - Gary Mullins. Board had a retreat Saturday. Board okayed for him to get business cards printed for APCUG and COMDEX. No motion needed.

Vice-President - Gary Turner. We had a good retreat, wished for better attendance.

Secretary - Carol Ewing. Please send in reports by deadline of Friday at noon.
Ron Williamitis made motion, Millard Mier 2nd, to approve 10-6-03 Board meeting minutes as read and emailed. Yes-6, No-0, Abstain-0. Motion passed.

Treasurer - Susan Kendall. Working with John Friedenbach. Server is down, no reports. Gary Mullins said Dave Smith has server up today.

Committee Reports:

Membership - Carol Ewing. October General Meeting attendance - 124 and 12 guests. Total 768 members. Attended Publication meeting, will schedule membership meeting in the next few weeks.

OTAP - Randy Young. Sent report that recommends OTAP be self-sufficient, need to increase level of donations to generate more revenues, refurbishing VS recycling. Minimum standard is Pentium 200 with 32 MB RAM and ½ GB hard drive. Lisa Singh asked for unit numbers in and out for 2003, Randy will send out. Cleaning up basement. Still selling scrap. OTAP meeting the 3rd Sat. every month, except Dec., may move Nov. meeting. Al Russell asked for APCUG Jerry Award grant money put in OTAP account. Randy said some of the money is needed for Grace Brethren nursing home project for grant.

Will take pictures for records and for APCUG. Lisa Singh said the grant money is for computers in nursing home, purchase transportation vehicle, location for OTAP. Grant money was set aside for OTAP use only. No action needed now.

Computerfest® - John Daniel. Carol Ewing read John's report. Nov. 2 meeting, no nominations for show chairman openings. John going to COMDEX with Gary Mullins.
Two new volunteers. LANfest must be a viable fundraiser, marketing materials within two weeks.

Budget - Susan Kendall. Server down, no reports. Tabled until December.

Hara-IT-TW - Bob Ruby. Sent report requesting a $300 budget. Ok to use wireless at Hara. Motion by Gary Turner, Millard Mier 2nd, to authorize IT Committee up to $300 to support

Internet connection at Hara Arena with a request they provide a budget for further expenditures. Yes-6, No-0 Abstain-0. Motion passed.

Old Business:

Fundraising - Lisa Singh. Sent report. Suggests fundraising committee, make fundraising a priority, don't depend on grants, must have adequate planning of need, goals, design, budget and evaluation. SIGS can have fundraisers.
Gary Mullins will talk to Lisa about several ideas.

Trademarks - Gary Mullins. Will get with Lisa Singh who has information. Tabled for now.

Audit/Review - Gary Turner. He has very reasonable bid, Gary Mullins wants get one competing bid. Gary T. and Gary M. will decide on bids. Money already in budget.

Streaming Giant (SG) - Gary Turner. Making good progress, some stumbling blocks. Deadline was Dec 7. Board is to review contract emailed and send questions to committee. Will send alias to board with and without Rod Sharp. Rod is present to answer any questions. Millard Mier made motion, Lisa Singh 2nd, to extend to March 15, 2004 without possibility of extensions. Yes-6, No-0, Abstain-0. Motion passed.

Break 8:25 p.m. to 8:35 p.m.

Streaming Giant (SG) (continued) - Discussion resumed. Due to length of time passed from original motion of Fall 2002 and for language clarification another motion was made. Ron Williamitis made motion, Millard Mier 2nd. The Board charges the current SG committee with fulfilling of its duties as previously charged, culminating in a signing of an agreement between DMA® and SG, Inc. on

- Minutes of November 3, 2003 (cont.) -

or before March 15, 2004.
The Board further advises that it will be reluctant to grant any further extensions. Yes-6, No-0, Abstain-0. Motion passed. The official company name is Streaming Giant, LLC.

Programs - Gary Mullins. Tabled until December.

Publications - Millard Mier. Sent report. Newsletter recommendations of mailing to general members, students on-line versions only, (associate members already are not mailed newsletter per By-laws), lower printing costs, structural overhaul, reduce to 24 pages without cutting content, produce a 4-page handout. John Hargreaves needs Computerfest® issues to have contact information page for DMA® booth membership recruitment. The board needs printing quotes before making decisions. SG asked for advertising space monthly per contract.

Yellow Pages - Gary Mullins. Cut advertising, saved almost $300 per month. Randy Young said he and Al Russell decided OTAP does not need fax number; Susan Kendall will cancel.

Insurance - Gary Mullins. Gary will add rental equipment coverage.

Volunteer of the Month - Gary Mullins. December is Volunteer of the Year awards for GEMAIR, Computerfest®, OTAP, SIG and Overall volunteers at Holiday Dinner. Send nominations by email.

Holiday Dinner - Monday, December 15 at University of Dayton, Kennedy Center. Start 6:00 p.m., dinner at 7:00 p.m. Tickets are $20. Bring items for prize giveaways.

New Business:
Trustee Vacancies - Gary Mullins. We have two openings with term expiration of Sept,
2004. Jim Rowe, John Hargreaves

and Terry Drill verbally agreed to fill positions if elected. They made a short statement; others will be asked to email the board a short statement. Gary will contact the other two people from the Sept. ballot. Trustees can email other names (with their acceptance). Trustee elections may be early on December agenda so new Trustees can participate.

Committee Chairman - Gary Mullins. New committee chairman. Tabled until December.

50/50 Prize Drawings - Gary Mullins. Position open, monthly meeting attendance required. Email names. Peter Hess will furnish contact information for companies to donate prizes as most user groups get donations.

Bob Kwater was re-elected to APCUG Board of Advisors; Peter Hess was re-elected to APCUG Board of Directors.

Executive Session - Gary Mullins. Ron Williamitis made motion, Millard Mier 2nd, to go into Executive session. Yes-6, No-0, Abstain-0. Motion passed.

Board enters executive session at 9:20 p.m.
Board out of executive session at 10:35 p.m.

Good of the Order:
Gary Turner - tough decisions made.
Carol Ewing - Gary Mullins and I will work to shorten agenda and shorten meeting.
Ron Williamitis - a lot done, must keep pushing.

Adjournment:
Motion to adjourn made by Ron Williamitis, Millard Mier 2nd. Yes-5, No-0, Abstain-0. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 10:40 p.m.

Carol Ewing
Secretary, DMA®

Computers and Cars

*[Note: The following (apocryphal) item was sent to us for publication consideration by a member who shall remain anonymous. For more information on this urban legend that's been circulating on the Internet for years, see www.snopes.com/humor/jokes/autos.htm .
--GMG, Editor]*

For all of us who feel only the deepest love and affection for the way computers have enhanced our lives, read on.

At a recent computer expo, COMDEX, Bill Gates reportedly compared the computer industry with the auto industry and stated, "If GM had kept up with technology like the computer industry has, we would all be driving $25.00 cars that got 1,000 miles to the gallon."

In response to Bill's comments, General Motors issued a press release (by Mr. Welch himself) stating:
"If GM had developed technology like Microsoft, we would all be driving cars with the following characteristics:
1. For no reason whatsoever, your car would crash twice a day.
2. Every time they repainted the lines in the road, you would have to buy a new car.
3. Occasionally your car would die on the freeway for no reason. You would have to pull over to the side of the road, close all of the windows, shut off the car, restart it, and reopen the windows before you could continue. For some reason you would simply accept this.
4. Occasionally, executing a maneuver such as a left turn would cause your car to shut down and refuse to restart, in which case you would have to reinstall the engine.
5. Macintosh would make a car that was powered by the sun, was reliable, five times as fast and twice as easy to drive - but would run on only five percent of the roads.
6. The oil, water temperature, and alternator warning lights would all be replaced by a single "This Car Has Performed An Illegal Operation" warning light.

Computers and Cars (cont.)	Reduce Eyestrain At The Computer (cont.)	NIST Tests DVD Disk And Drive Compatibility

7. The airbag system would ask, "Are you sure?" before deploying.

8. GM would require all car buyers to also purchase a deluxe set of road maps from Rand-McNally (a subsidiary of GM), even though they neither need them nor want them. Trying to delete this option would immediately cause the car's performance to diminish by 50 percent or more. Moreover, GM would become a target for investigation by the Justice Department.

9. Occasionally, for no reason whatsoever, your car would lock you out and refuse to let you in until you simultaneously lifted the door handle, turned the key and grabbed hold of the radio antenna.

10. Every time a new car was introduced car buyers would have to learn how to drive all over again because none of the controls would operate in the same manner as the old car.

11. You'd have to press the 'Start' button to turn the engine off."

Only you know what feels best for your eyes.

Here are a few more tips to reduce computer-induced eyestrain:

• Leave 20 to 24 inches between your eyes and the screen.
• Be sure the top of your screen is slightly below eye level.
• If necessary, use lubricating eye drops.
• Blink often.
• Adjust room lighting to keep glare to a minimum.
• If you wear glasses, use a pair with anti-glare coating.
• Use a glare-minimizing screen cover.
• Look away from the screen often and focus briefly on a point across the room.
• Take a short break every 15 minutes or half an hour.
• Go for periodic checkups with an eye specialist.

The next time you try to watch a home-made movie, or access your files from a recordable DVD on your computer's DVD drive, you might be in for an unpleasant surprise. It might not work.

Initial tests conducted by researchers at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), in collaboration with the DVD Association and the Optical Storage Technology Association, show that compatibility between recordable DVDs and DVD drives is only 85 percent. This means that if a recording is made on 10 different brands of DVDs, the odds are that at least one will not work. The problematic results range from DVDs that do not work at all, suddenly freeze, or have video or audio "drop out." Currently, no drive reads all discs, and no discs are compatible with all drives. However, newer drives perform significantly better than older drives.

The first phase of testing included 14 models of DVD-ROM drives, repre-

Map courtesy of Millard Mier III, DMA®

Our Monthly Meeting Location

We're still meeting at U.D.'s <u>Miriam Hall</u> in <u>O'Leary Auditorium</u>, ...and still on the last Tuesday of each month.

However, you should know that Gary Mullins and others continue to look into alternate locations (due to the fact that it appears we may outgrow O'Leary Auditorium).

Any changes to our meeting location will appear on the DMA® web site and also in *The DataBus*.

Add'l directions online at: http://www.dma.org/to-us.html

Digital Textiles SIG

by Lou Childs, SIG leader

Photo Memory quilts are a wonderful way to express pride in your family's history, commemorate a special occasion, or honor a special person. The process of transferring photos to fabric is much easier and more reliable today than ever before. There is no doubt that quilting is a creative activity, but transferring photos to fabric takes that creativity to a new and exciting level. The possibilities of this technique are limited only by the scope of our imaginations! During December and January, we will be exploring creating memory quilts and other photo fabric projects.

December 18, 2003 Meeting - Paint Shop Pro 8 is an excellent program to use in editing photographs for lots of uses. During the December meeting we will be cropping, removing background and other extra image features, as well as improving brightness, saturation, color casts and other image faults. We will also be learning the techniques necessary for sizing and preparing our photos for printing on photo fabric. Come join us at 7 p.m. on December 18, at 433 Troy Street as we learn more about the many features of Paint Shop Pro 8.

January 15, 2004 Meeting - During the January meeting we will be learning to make the quilt blocks needed to make a memory quilt wall hanging. Bring your sewing machine with sewing notions and accessories, 1 1/2 yd. each of three quilt fabrics (1 solid color plus 2 coordinating prints) to coordinate with your fabric photos, 8 or more fabric photos (about 4" x 6"). We will be making 2 blocks at the meeting, 1 snowball photo block and 1 9-patch block. Come join us at 7 p.m. on January 15, at 433 Troy Street as we explore how to create these wonderful family treasures.

Call Lou Childs at 224-4586 for more information.

Embroidered Christmas Ornaments

As a special Holiday gift to our readers, Lou Childs, leader of the Digital Textiles SIG and owner of Down Home Dreams, has provided us with instructions for making embroidered Christmas ornaments. Thank you, Lou!

Materials
· Sewing machine/embroidery machine
· Christmas Embroidery designs
· Two 7"x9" rectangles of white washable felt per ornament
· Two 7"x9" rectangles of tear-away stabilizer per ornament
· Polyester batting · 6" narrow gold braid, for hanger, per ornament
· 1 yard of decorative cording/braid per ornament
· Air-soluble marker
· Monofilament thread
· White bobbin thread
· Assorted embroidery threads
· Seam sealant
· Pinking shears or rotary cutter with pinking blade and cutting mat Instructions

Instructions
· Choose a 4' x 4" Christmas design for each ornament.
· Hoop a layer of felt and slide a layer of tear away under hoop.
· Stitch the chosen design in the center of one felt rectangle, then remove it from the hoop and clip the threads.
· Embroider "Christmas 2003" plus any personal message on the other felt rectangle (for the back of the ornament).
· Trim both felt rectangles so they are 1" larger than the stitched design. The shape can be an oval, diamond, circle, square or other shape to match the design.
· Cut a layer of batting the same size as the felt pieces. Cut several additional pieces of batting in graduated sizes, each slightly smaller than the previous.
· Stack the graduated batting layers between the front and back felt layers, right sides of the embroidered pieces facing out.
· Insert both ends of the 6" gold cord between the felt layers, forming a hanging loop.
· Mark a line 1/2" from the ornament edge, using the marker.
· Thread the sewing machine with monofilament thread in the needle and thread to match the felt in the bobbin. Couch decorative cord around all edges along marked line. Dab seam sealant on the cord ends to keep them from raveling.
· Pink the ornament edges 1/4" from the stitched cording.

©Down Home Dreams, 888-276-3578

Digital Photography SIG

by Millard Mier, SIG leader

The January meeting will be a show-and-tell session. Bring your new acquisitions from Santa and be prepared to talk about them! This will be a great meeting to meet and greet the SIG members. This will also be your opportunity to sign up to be on Millard's email list for photo journal updates while he is on safari in India. Please note that this meeting will be held one week later than normal on January 8th 2004 and may have a change of meeting place. As with all meetings, please check the DMA® website for details!

Digital Photography SIG meetings are normally held at 7:00 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month in room 072 of Rike Hall at Wright State University (however, note the date change above for January). Parking is available in the Visitors lot at WSU (just follow the signs on campus). Across from the parking lot you will see three buildings against the main road. Rike Hall will be the center building. For more information, you can email us at digiphot-contact*dma.org, visit the website at www.dma.org (and select special interest groups on the menu), or phone Millard Mier III at 937-879-5419.

DVD Compatibility (cont.)

senting about 60 percent of the installed base in America as of last year. Each drive was tested with more than 50 different brands and types of recordable DVD discs.

A second phase of testing will include new drives and media, including those drives that allow consumers to record their own DVDs. Computer scientists at NIST have developed specialized software and a comprehensive test plan, which was published in October as NIST Special Publication 500-254, *DVD-ROM Drive Compatibility Test*.

The results of the test will be made available to manufacturers to help them improve the compatibility of their products.
NIST Tech Beat: http://snipurl.com/3f1n

Additional Area User Groups

This list is provided as a service to anyone looking for a group supporting a particular computer, operating system, etc.

These user groups are not directly associated with DMA®. See page 4 for a list of DMA®'s Special Interest (SIG) Groups & their meeting times.

If you know of a user group which would like to have their meeting schedule listed here, send details or a current newsletter to:

EDITOR, DMA®'s *The DataBus*

DAYTON MICROCOMPUTER ASSOC.

119 Valley St.

Dayton, OH 45401-4005

ACM - Association for Computing Machinery holds monthly dinner meetings, dinner 6:30 PM, 7:30 p.m. speaker. Contact Marie Hreha (937) 435-7822

AITP - Association of Information Technology Professionals (formerly DPMA) meets the 2nd Thursday each month. Holds dinner meetings at the Antioch Shrine Temple at 107 E. First St, Dayton [1st & Jefferson]. Contact Jim Stryker (937) 865-6800x2599 for details.

AMITECH AMIGA USERS GROUP - (**AMIGA-DAYTON** has merged with this group.) Meets the third Saturday of the month at 1:30 PM at the Huber Heights Library. A Programming SIG will meet after the general meeting. Soft drinks/snacks will be provided. Contact Ron Schwartz, (937) 434-2144.

BDPA - The Black Data Processing Associates is made up of data processing entrepreneurs, managers, and employees. Their objective is to accumulate d.p. knowledge and business experience to strengthen the expertise and broaden the data processing knowledge of the minority data processing community as a whole. Contact Denia Byndon 937-455-0373.

CCCC - Cincinnati Commodore Computer Club meets the third Sunday of the month at 2:00 PM at the School of the Nativity, Norwood, OH. For more info call Ed Gase at (513) 829-0942.

CCS - Columbus Computer Society holds two meetings per month: the second Monday (at Chemical Abstracts) and the Wednesday nine days later (OCLC). 6:30 p.m. - New member orientation; 7pm General meeting. For further information, contact their Information line at (614) 447-0227.

CINTUG - Cincinnati TriState Users Group meets the 2nd Saturday at Messiah Lutheran Church. Go South from Forest Fair Mall on Winton Road and turn left on Lakeview Dr. (on the north side of Winton Lake) then left on Bossi Lane. Contact Terry Ferguson at (937) 825-2505 for more information.

CPCUG - Cincinnati Personal Computer Users Group meets the second Monday of the month at 7pm in the auditorium of the Cincinnati State College - Evendale Branch at 10100 Reading Road. For more information call (513)333-6777 or www.cincypcug.org on the web.

DACUG - Dayton Area Computer Users Group meets the second Saturday of each month at 3:00 P.M. at the Moraine Civic Center in Moraine. Contact Mona Spurgeon at (937)298-6743.

DAYTON.PM - A group for programmers of all levels who use Perl. Meetings: 2nd Wed. of each month. Website at ???????.pm.org   or contact: eric.smith@b2.wpafb.af.mil

DACW - Dayton Advocates for Computing Women, meets the 4th Mon. of ea. mo. Oct-May, (except Dec.) at the Stockyards Inn. Networking is at 5:30, 6 PM dinner, 7 PM speaker. Contact Chris Zurbuchen   227-9500x303(days),   767-1043(evenings) or dacwweb@yahoo.com

DECUS - the Digital Equipment Computer Users Society is the world's largest volunteer-run computer users organization focused on a single vendor. The Greater Dayton Local Users Group Chapter meets the last Tuesday of every month.
Contact: Jim Poltrone (937) 438-0140

IEEE - The Computer Society of IEEE meets third Thursday of each month from 11:30- 12:30 during lunch (can vary). Bring own lunch. Meetings are held at TASC, across from Wright State University.
Contact Bret Givens at (937) 255-8635.

NASAC (Xenia PC users group) – meets 7pm on 2nd Thursdays in at Library, 76 E. Market St., (1/2 block E. of Detroit St / RT.68), behind Police Dept, downtown. Visit our website at www.nasac.org for details.

TMG/ The MAC Group - is an Apple Corp. authorized Macintosh User Group. Meets: 2nd Saturday of each month at Kettering Arts Building 2900 Acosta St., Kettering. from 10:00 AM to 12:30 PM. More information? Call (937) 293-6980.
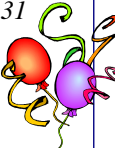
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If this issue was mailed to you, you will see your membership number (left) and your membership expiration date (right) are on the line above your name.
If it wasn't mailed to you, it only costs $25.00 per year to be kept up-to-date with DMA® news and with our next speaker/presentation.
To become a member, simply fill out the application at the center of this issue and mail it to the address on the back cover.

DMA® Events for December 21, 2003 - January 31, 2004

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Dec 21	Dec 22	Dec 23	Dec 24		Dec 26	**Dec 27** **10 AM Northern SIG** Edison College, Piqua 12 PM "On Technology"
Dec 28 *The DataBus* deadline is the 1st day of each month.	Dec 29	**Dec 30** **No meeting - enjoy the holidays!**	Dec 31	**Jan 1** New Year's Day	Jan 2 2 - 3:15 PM OTAP	**Jan 3** **8:30 - 11 AM OTAP** 12 PM "On Technology" **3:00 PM Classic Computers**
Jan 4	**Jan 5** 2 - 3:15 PM OTAP **Board of Directors** 7:00 PM 119 Valley	**Jan 6** **Amateur Radio** 7:00 PM 119 Valley	**Jan 7** 2 - 3:15 PM OTAP	**Jan 8** **Software Development** 6:30 PM 119 Valley **Digital Photography** 7:00 PM 097? Oelman Hall, WSU	**Jan 9** 2 - 3:15 PM OTAP	**Jan 10** **8:30 - 11 AM OTAP** **12 PM Linux Installfest** Russ Engr. Ctr. WSU 12 PM "On Technology"
Jan 11	**Jan 12** 2 - 3:15 PM OTAP	**Jan 13** **Network & Certification** 7:00 PM 119 Valley	**Jan 14** 2 - 3:15 PM OTAP **Perl Mongers** 7:00 PM 119 Valley	**Jan 15** **Digital Textiles** 7:00 PM 433 Troy St. **Linux / Unix** 7:00 PM Rm 150 Russ Engr Ctr, WSU	**Jan 16** 2 - 3:15 PM OTAP	**Jan 17** **8:30 - 11 AM OTAP** 12 PM "On Technology" 2:00 PM OTAP Board **3:00 PM Classic Computers**
Jan 18	**Jan 19** 2 - 3:15 PM OTAP **Apple SIG** 7:00 PM 119 Valley	**Jan 20** **Gaming SIG** 7:00 PM on-line	**Jan 21** 2 - 3:15 PM OTAP	Jan 22	**Jan 23** 2 - 3:15 PM OTAP	**Jan 24** 12 PM "On Technology"
Jan 25 *The DataBus* deadline is the 1st day of each month.	**Jan 26** 2 - 3:15 PM OTAP	**Jan 27** **Main Meeting** 7:30 PM O'Leary Auditorium, Miriam Hall	**Jan 28** **Certification** 7:00 PM 119 Valley	Jan 29	**Jan 30** 2 - 3:15 PM OTAP	**Jan 31** **10 AM Northern SIG** Edison College, Piqua 12 PM "On Technology"

Remember:

- **Next DMA® General Meeting is Jan. 27 in O'Leary Auditorium, Miriam Hall**
- **No General Meeting in December.**
- **Send membership applications & renewals to P.O. Box 340402, Beavercreek, OH**

Dayton Microcomputer Association, Inc.
PO Box 340402
Beavercreek OH 45434-0402

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