



The DataBus

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Association of PC User Groups (APCUG) Member

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March 25th General Meeting Topic Microsoft Windows Live OneCare Presented by Dr. Martin Arbagi Huber Heights Athletic Foundation Center

This month we present Microsoft Windows Live OneCare. This particular presentation is one of the "Presentation in a Box" that we have received through the Microsoft Mindshare program. Our own Martin Arbagi has been working with this product in order to present it to us along with his review of just how well it works and how easy it is to use.

The Microsoft Website states that "OneCare helps keep your PC safe and secure while making your life easier. From virus scanning, file backups, to automatic printing sharing of all the PCs in your household, OneCare helps manage it all for you. And it's delivered to you in a smooth, hassle-free package."

New to OneCare is:

- Multi-PC and home network management
- Printer sharing support
- Start time optimizer
- Proactive fixes and recommendations
- WiFi Security
- Centralized backup
- Online photo backup

This is in addition to antivirus, firewall, anti-spyware, anti-phishing, PC performance tune-ups, and file backup and restore functionality.

Dr. Martin Arbagi is an Associate Professor Emeritus at Wright State University in the History Department. Dr. Arbagi received his PhD. in history from Rutgers University in 1969. His area of expertise is History of Eastern Europe and the Near (or "Middle") East in the Middle Ages, and Ancient and Medieval History. Dr. Arbagi was recently asked to speak for the Washington-Centerville Public Library following the receipt of a high quality copy of the Book of Kells.

Dr. Arbagi is also active in the Miami Valley Republican Party. He ran for the Ohio House of Representatives for District 40 in the last election.

Dr. Arbagi has been a member of the DMA board for the past 4 years. He is the current treasurer after having spent 3 years as the board secretary. Dr. Arbagi was also involved with Computerfest spearheading signage efforts to make sure we all found the show in addition to finding its various aspects.

Next month we will be presenting on new devices for Video Phone over your Internet connection. Stay tuned for more information.

Next Month: VOIP Video Phone, April 29th at 7:00 pm., Huber Heights Athletic Foundation.

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DMA® MEETINGS

GUESTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

Meetings start at 7:00 p.m. Visit us on the web at www.dma.org or email to info@dma.org for information or directions.

Our monthly General Meeting consists of a brief opening, SIG and committee reports, announcements, and a 60-90 minute program by a guest speaker, followed by door prizes for members. After the meeting, the group adjourns to a local eating establishment to socialize.

Our meetings are held at the Huber Heights Athletic Foundation (HHAf) Center. For last minute announcements always check www.dma.org

Directions: **From Downtown Dayton** take Route 4 to the Harshman Road Exit. Turn left (north) on Harshman to Brandt Pike (Rt. 201). Turn Right and follow Brandt Pike approximately 2 miles to Fishburg Road and turn left (west). The Huber Heights Athletic Foundation is located at 5367 Fishburg Road, about a quarter mile from the intersection of Fishburg and Brandt Pike

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A=Trustee 3 yrs from 9/06 B=Trustee 3 yrs from 9/05 C=Trustee 3 yrs from 9/07

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The deadline for submitting material is the first of the month of publication.

Submit files to the editor, editor@dma.org, preferably as an email attachment in MS Word, Wordperfect, or .TXT (with line breaks). The editor reserves the right to edit for clarity, length & style, and to hold or reject any portions of submitted copy.

Advertisements and want ads are accepted for publication. Non-commercial credit-card size ads are free to DMA® members. Commercial Credit-card size ads are \$15.00 per issue for members. Our circulation is targeted to computer users, technicians, & IT Managers, and is currently 300 copies. To receive more information about adver-

tising, please contact our Editor at: The DataBus, P.O. Box 4005, Dayton, OH 45401-4005 or email to: editor@dma.org.

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**Best User Group Coverage
Large Newsletters
'98 & '99
InterGalactic Conferences
New York, NY**



DMA® SIGs

DMA® sponsors numerous Special Interest Groups (SIGs) catering to the individual interests of its members. Want to start a new SIG? Contact a DMA® Officer or Trustee!

Amateur Radio SIG meets the 1st Tuesday of each month, 7:00 p.m. at 119 Valley Street. Contact Todd Collins: 937-545-7015 tddc@woh.rr.com or Shawna Collins: sjcollins@woh.rr.com
www.dma.org/k8dma

Apple-Dayton SIG meets the 3rd Monday of each month, 7:00 p.m. at the Huber Heights Athletic Foundation Center, 5367 Fishburg Road, Huber Heights. Contact Dan Forshaw: AppleDaytonSIG@dma.org
www.dma.org/appledaytonsigs

Classic Computer SIG meets as needed the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month, 3:00 p.m. at the Sugar Grove Church, 7875 Kessler Frederick Road, Tipp City, 45371. Contact Gary Ganger: 937-237-5021 gangerg@dma.org

Digital Photography SIG meets the 4th Thursday of each month, 7:00 p.m. at Wright State University, Room 160 Rike-Hall. Contact Nancy Christolear: 937-439-1735 njc@dma.org
www.dma.org/photosig

Dynamic Languages SIG meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month, 7:00 p.m. at 119 Valley Street. Contact Paul Ahlquist: pea@ahlquist.org
<http://dayton.pm.org>

Gaming SIG meets the last Saturday of each month at 4:00 p.m. for a 24-hour LAN-party at 119 Valley Street. Contact David Neely: nherzhul@hctmail.com
www.DaytonLANfest.com

Genealogy/Family History SIG meets the 1st Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at 119 Valley Street. Contact Jay Finley: jotaito@aol.com

Hands-On-SIG meets the 2nd Tuesday and 4th Wednesday of each month, 7:00 p.m. at 119 Valley Street. Contact Elliott Lake: 937-376-4581

Linux SIG meets the 3rd Thursday of each month, 7:00 p.m. in Wright State's Student Union. Contact Gary Turner: 937-313-2487, or Tony Snyder: 937-275-7913 or DLUG-contact@dma.org
www.dma.org/linuxsig

Oracle SIG meets the second Monday of the month at Mary Ann's Kitchen at 5:30 pm. Contact Catherine Devlin for more information www.freelists.org/webpage/dayton-oracle

Sys-Admin Group meets as needed on or about the second Sunday of the month at 2:00 pm at 119 Valley to maintain DMA's own web server DMAPUB. Contact Gary Turner, turnerg@gmail.com, for details.

Software Development SIG meets the second Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm at 119 Valley Street. Contact Gladys Campion at campiong@dma.org for more details.

Pizza SIG is held immediately after every General Membership meeting with plenty of casual conversation, friendly debates, and of course, Pizza! While we meet at the Huber Heights Athletic Foundation, the Pizza SIG will be at C's Pizza.

Come join us!

More SIG information is available online at
www.dma.org/sigs.shtml



Microsoft Live OneCare

Windows Live OneCare, previously known as **Windows OneCare Live** and formerly code-named **A1**, is a computer security service developed by Microsoft for some of its Windows operating systems. An annual subscription costs \$49.95, which can be used on up to three computers.

History

Microsoft designed OneCare as part of an idea set named Windows Live (see official ideas website). Windows Live OneCare itself entered a beta state in the summer of 2005. The managed beta program was launched before the public beta, and was located on BetaPlace, Microsoft's old beta delivery system. On May 31, 2006, Windows Live OneCare made its official debut in retail stores in the United States.

The beta version of Windows Live OneCare 1.5 was released in early October 2006 by Microsoft. Version 1.5 was released to manufacturing on January 3, 2007 and was made available to the public on January 30, 2007. On July 4, 2007, beta testing started for version 2.0, and the final version was released on November 16, 2007.

Features

Windows Live OneCare currently features an integrated anti-virus program, firewall, backup and restore utility, tune-up utility with the integrated functionality of Windows Defender for malware protection. The future addition of a registry cleaner was considered but not added because "there are not significant customer advantages to this functionality". Version 2 will have new features such as multi-PC and home network management, printer sharing support, start-time optimizer, proactive fixes and recommendations, monthly reports, centralized backup, and online photo backup.

Windows Live OneCare is built for ease-of-use and is designed for home users. OneCare also attempts a very minimal interface to lessen user confusion and resource

use. At the most basic, it adds an icon to the notification area that tells the user at a glance the status of the system's health by using three alert colors: green (good), yellow (fair), and red (at risk).

Compatibility

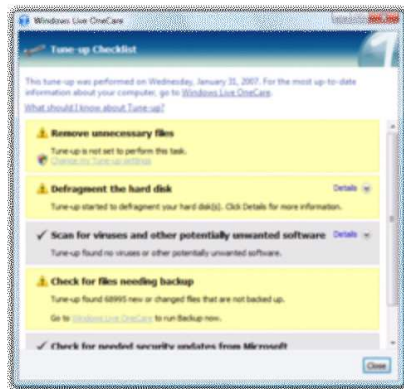
Version 1.5 of OneCare is only compatible with the 32 bit versions of Windows XP and Windows Vista. Version 2 of OneCare supports 64 bit compatibility to Vista.

Activation

Windows Live OneCare requires users to activate the product if they wish to continue using it after the free trial period (90 days). This can only be achieved by having a valid Windows Live ID so that an association can be made between the account and the subscription to OneCare which has been purchased. When the product is activated, the grey message bar at the top of the program disappears, and the subscription is fully activated for 1 year from the date of activation. Users can check the status of their subscription on the *Billing* page at <http://billing.microsoft.com/>

Windows Live OneCare does not currently require the operating system to be checked with Windows Genuine Advantage before, during or after installation. The program can simply be installed from a stub downloaded from the <http://oncare.live.com/> website or as CD media.

Protection



Windows Live OneCare Protection Plus is the security component in the OneCare

suite. It consists of three parts:

- A two-way firewall blocking both incoming and outgoing traffic, as opposed to that of Windows XP that blocks only incoming traffic. A two-way firewall protects against trojan or other viral infections running on the local computer.
- An anti-virus tool that uses regularly updated anti-virus definition files.
- An anti-spyware tool that uses the Windows Defender engine as a core. In version 1.0, this required the separate installation of Windows Defender and was not integrated into the OneCare interface (although it could be managed and launched from OneCare). Version 1.5 integrated the Windows Defender engine into OneCare and no longer requires separate installation.

Windows Live OneCare 1.5 also monitors Internet Explorer 7 security settings and ensures that the automatic website checking feature of the Phishing Filter is enabled.

Performance

Windows Live OneCare Performance Plus is the component that performs monthly PC tune-up related tasks, such as:

- Disk cleanup.
- Disk defragmentation.
- A full virus scan by using the anti-virus component in the suite.
- Check for Windows updates by using the Microsoft Update service.
- User notification if files are in need of backing up.

Backup

Windows Live OneCare Backup and Restore is the component that aids in backing up important files. Files can be backed up to various recordable media, such as external hard disks, CDs, and DVDs. When restoring files, the entirety or a subset of them can also be restored to a networked computer, as long as it's running OneCare as well. The Backup and Restore component supports expected modern backup software features such as incremental backups and scheduling.

Top 25 Hoaxes from Snopes

This page compiles the 25 urban legends currently circulating most widely, as determined by frequency of access, user searches, reader e-mail, and media coverage. Check out any e-mail you receive at <http://www.snopes.com> before sending it on.

Postcard / Greeting Card Virus

E-mailed computer virus masquerades as a postcard from a friend or family member.

Barack Obama

E-mails about Illinois senator Barack Obama.

Cell Phone Directory and Telemarketers

E-mail claims cell phone numbers are about to be given to telemarketers.

Glade PlugIns Fire Hazard

E-mail claims Glade PlugIns brand air fresheners are a major fire hazard.

A Course in Miracles

E-mail about Oprah Winfrey's sponsoring a "New Age Christ" course that contradicts the teachings of Christianity.

Aspartame

E-mail warns that the artificial sweetener Aspartame is responsible for an epidemic of diseases.

#77 or *677 Cell Phone Notification

E-mail describes woman who evades a rapist posing as a policeman by calling #77 (or *677) on her cell phone.

'Life Is Beautiful' Virus

Warning about the "Life Is Beautiful" PowerPoint-based computer virus.

#-9-0 Phone Scam

Warning about scammers' running up long-distance charges by asking victims to press #-9-0 on their telephones.

Social Security

E-mails about the Social Security system.

Bill Gates / Microsoft / AOL Giveaway

E-mail claims Bill Gates, Microsoft and AOL are giving away cash and merchandise to those who forward an e-mail message.

Windfall Profits Tax

E-mail claims Rep. Nancy Pelosi has proposed a windfall profits tax on retirement income.

ATM Reverse PIN Panic Code

E-mail claims that entering one's PIN in reverse at any ATM will summon the police.

809 Area Code Scam

E-mail warns about scammers' sending pages from the 809 area code.

New Dollar Coin and 'In God We Trust'

E-mail claims the design of new U.S. dollar coins omits the motto "In God We Trust."

Kathy Griffin

Comedienne Kathy Griffin's controversial remarks at the Emmy awards ceremony.

Dust Off

E-mail details child's death from huffing cans of compressed air.

Jay Leno

Essay attributed to comedian Jay Leno urges Americans to focus on the positive.

PPA Recall Alert

FDA health advisory regarding drugs containing PPA (phenylpropanolamine).

Slow Dance / Amy Bruce

Amy Bruce, a terminally ill young girl, writes "Slow Dance" poem.

MasterCard Wedding

Bride leaves groom standing at the altar after finding out he slept with the maid of honor.

Starbucks

E-mail claims Starbucks refused to send free coffee to G.I.s serving in Iraq.

Citgo Buycott / Boycott

E-mails urge Americans to buy/not buy gasoline from Citgo or Petro Express stations.

VIN Car Thieves

E-mail warns that auto thieves are stealing cars by using VINs to obtain duplicate keys.

Andy Rooney

E-mail offers transcript of <1>60 Minutes</1> commentator Andy Rooney's explanation of his political views.

Spotlight on SIGs—DAY-O Oracle SIG

Hi, Dayton Oracle users! The time has come at last... let's meet!

Meeting of Dayton-Oracle SIG (DAY-O)
<<http://www.freelists.org/webpage/dayton-oracle>> March 10, 2008, 5:30 pm A hands-on, cooperative, laboratory-style meeting. Bring a wireless-enabled laptop if you have one. This meeting's topic will be Flashback.

Mary-Ann's Kitchen
<<http://www.maryannskitchen.net/>>
33 N Ludlow St
Dayton OH 45402 USA
(937) 222-3663

We'll roll up our sleeves and work through various forms of using Oracle Flashback to roll back time. All those bugs, snags, and

gotchas that torment us if we try it on our own - they won't stand a chance if we help each other out. If you don't have a laptop, that's fine; 1 laptop : 2 attendees may be a perfect ratio, since we can do "pair programming"-style collaboration.

<http://www.freelists.org/webpage/dayton-oracle>

Unless and until further notice, we'll plan to use this as a consistent meeting time/date (2nd Monday, 5:30, Mary-Ann's). Bring your suggestions for future meeting topics as well.

There's no expense to the meeting, though you'll probably want to buy a soda and/or a meal. Since we are a Special Interest Group of the DMA (<http://www.dma.org/>),

DAY-O members are encouraged to consider DMA membership (\$25/yr).

I hope to see you there!



Club Purpose and Membership

The Dayton Micro computer Assn., Inc. (DMA®) is an Ohio non-profit organization dedicated to the education of, and providing information to, microcomputer users and 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. A membership application is located on page 23, or can also be downloaded from our web site at: <http://www.dma.org/dma-app.shtml>

OTAP Bridging the GAP

Ohio Technology Access Project is a rather long name for a very worthy cause. OTAP is part of DMA's effort to "bridge the digital divide". We are one of only a few Microsoft Authorized Refurbishers in Ohio. We operate under DMA's 501c(3) non-profit designation. This is a group of devoted volunteers who generously give of their time and talents to rework old hardware into usable PCs. The work is sometimes challenging but always rewarding.

Bridging – Our mission is to place computers and internet access into the hands of those with the most need and the least opportunity. We place computer systems with schools, churches, charities, individuals, and families. Most of our clients are disabled or financially disadvantaged. Each tells us how a computer system would improve their education, opportunities, even quality of life.

Refurbishing – Many of the computer systems we work with are donated by individuals, some are from organizations or companies. They come in all speeds, shapes, and sizes. The equipment is evaluated and tested for functionality. Repairs and modifications are made if necessary so that the system matches our standards.

Recycling – We are able to reclaim and reuse many of the computer parts. Hardware that is below speed or not repairable is disassembled and the pieces are sorted and recycled. We work hard to avoid adding any materials to local landfills.

Donating – For individual donors, OTAP offers a second life for that slightly outdated system that is taking up valuable space on your desk or dining room table. We handle each system with care and find it a good home. For corporations, we

ease the upgrade process, help avoid landfill costs, and provide a great opportunity to contribute to the community.

Training – The best kept secret of OTAP is the training. For those who are computer-phobic, we provide easy procedures and plenty of assistance while you learn to take apart and rebuild computers. Students working towards certification can get that valuable hands-on experience. Volunteering at OTAP is always an opportunity to stay current, upgrade your skills, or debate some obscure compatibility issue.

OTAP is open on Saturdays from 10:00 until 2:00. Take advantage of the special Tech Assist sessions the first Saturday of the month. Anyone is welcome to stop by and have a look at the process. You can reach us by phone at (937) 222-2755 or on the web at www.otap.org.

CLEARANCE! MAKE AN OFFER!

OTAP has surplus items in good working condition available to the members of DMA. For more information, visit OTAP, or call 222-2755.



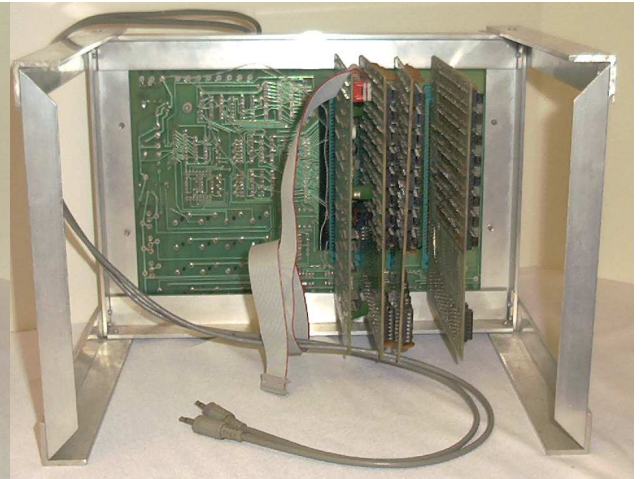
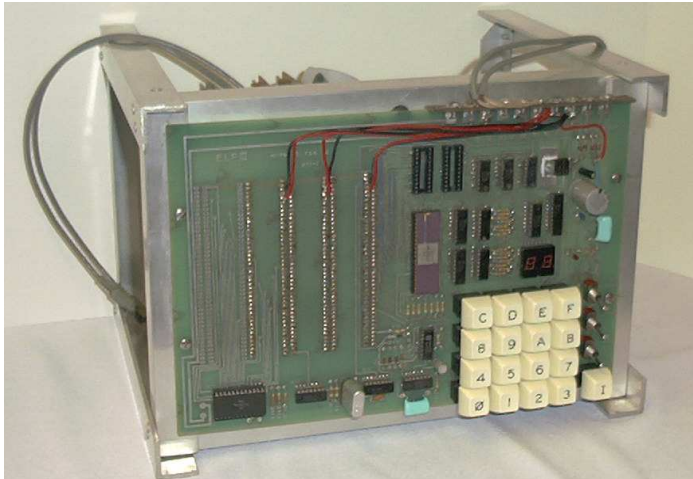
- Cables
- Monitors
- CD-ROM drives
- Keyboards & Mice
- Travan Tape Drives
- Zip Drives
- NIC's
- SCSI Cards and cables

- Scanners
- Printers
- Servers
- Systems

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Friday by appointment only
Saturday 9am-5pm
Closed Sunday & Monday

TechFest 2008



Misadventures in Cable Management

There are no words to describe the joy that will swell within the heart when anticipating the beginning of a cable management project. Did I forget to mention the project will be performed on an in place, production network without disrupting service? Yes, I am trying to make this sound worse than the real experience, yet attention to such details will be best left for the beginning of computer room installations. Planning this type of project prior to purchases and implementation makes might be called best practice.

I am sure at this point you suspect I will be sharing my misadventures installing cable management. You are right. Without further delay, I will spin the yarn of cable management installation; the misadventures of a techie geek.

The project began innocently enough. A production network grew at a rate faster than anticipated. A network that started out as one server and thirty systems had reached the point where multiple domain controllers, terminal servers, application servers, SAN, NAS and more were needed. The closet, for lack of a better term, which housed the original network was too small and the purchase of one rack proved to be one third of the required number. In the spirit of any ad hoc project, the new network was installed. That was about two years ago. Now we will return to present day.

A twelve foot by twenty four foot computer room houses the network and the techie geek. The network appears physically orderly, but like the horror movies, beware the unexpected. The scary side of the network lurks behind the racks. Have you seen any of the horror movies where the guts of a victim explode outward? The network should look that good. Between power cables, fiber and patch cables, the racks resemble the gutted horror movie victim. Time for the techie geek, with absolutely no experience in this arena, to act decisively.

Our hero, I mean techie geek, takes the time to try the intelligent approach and looks to those who have done the work before for advice. How many people get the answer of learn from experience in these types of situations? Yes, such a response occurs. Not to be disheartened,

the next source of information queried will be the rack manufacturer's web site.

How hard do you think selecting the right type of cable management equipment will be? An idea; examine the back of the racks of spaghetti, I mean wires, to determine the type, quantity and placement of horizontal and vertical cable organizers. The idea makes sense but we should remember, no good deed goes unpunished and no good idea exists without pitfalls.

The equipment finally arrives and the physical installation begins. The installation of a fourth power distribution unit proceeds without problems. The same can be said regarding implementing a second power conditioner / battery backup unit. The cable management hardware proves to be the problem child.

Four vertical, side mount cable organizers are ordered to assist with cables running in between the three racks bolted together. The organizers are mounted between two horizontal braces in the rack, one near the top and the other near the bottom. Near the bottom should echo on the page. The two outside racks have the lower fourteen spaces of the outside racks are occupied by power conditioners / battery backups. The middle eleven spaces are occupied by servers and tape library. Add to this mix a five foot tall organizer, a set of seven foot tall bolted racks and a techie geek who will do everything possible to keep from disrupting service. After about six different attempts to get the organizer between two of the bolted racks, the techie geek has success. Now that the organizer sits between the two racks, the task remaining will be to hold the organizer, line up the holes, push the screw through attach the nut to the screw and tighten. Oops! These actions are done with only two hands.

The above task does not pose much of a challenge on the top of the organizer. The bottom nut and screw are to be inserted between the power conditioner and servers. How many people have tried to put a nut on a screw, in a location hard to reach and with enough room for one hand? Have you ever dropped the nut or screw? I wasn't that lucky. After almost dropping the nut more times than I will confess, I got the nut to start to thread. I feel I'm pushing

By Elliot Lake
Hands-On SIG Leader and Cable Wrangler



my luck so I reach for the wrench to tighten the nut and screw. Do you remember the feeling you get when you hear a nut or screw you have worked to get into a hard to reach place fall? I could not have dropped the nut, the nut had to fall off when I reach for the wrench. Impersonating Yosemite Sam comes to mind.

Do you know that racks will periodically eat loose nuts and screws? No matter how far into the rack I lean, I can not find the nut, nor can I find it under the rack. By the way, according to a witness, the rack eats techie geeks too. This stated as I hang half out of the rack looking for the nut. Did I also mention cable management organizers do not come with spare parts?

The lack of spare parts will not stop me. I am techie geek! I am creative! I can problem solve! I can hope!

The thought comes to mind to use the nuts and screws supplied to mount equipment in the racks. The sad part about this thought will be the screw just does not reach the nut. A thought pops into the mind to try a longer screw. After locating one from a bag of nuts and screws for this type of work, I try the longer screw. The screw slides through the nut. Humm. Do these folks know about the concept of using a standard nut and screw?

I'm not dead in the water yet. I find the matched nut for the screw in the bag and swap the nuts. Did you know that when

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

someone becomes hot and tired simple tasks can become more difficult? A task like blindly lining up which square opening to place a nut? Yes, I missed by one!

I did line up the nut with the proper opening. Now you would possibly think since I have tackled one of the organizers the rest will be easier, right? You may have forgotten something. This whole project was a series of firsts.

The eventual learning curve included trying to find a way to insert another vertical cable organizer in between racks with less room than the first attempt. You might be surprised how well sheer determination

and a coworker who does not have the same appreciation for avoiding straining cables can be beneficial. The following event was to find the cable management for the fiber was a set of cylinders that required the tightening of a nut, inside the roughly five inch deep cylinder. My fingers were not that long. Luckily a ratchet set had enough length to reach the nut. The need for the ratchet was followed by the cable management arms on the bottom two servers blocked the vertical cable organizer which mounts in the back of the rack. I wound up with two spare rings for cable management to solve said problem.

After the above antics, I can not say the project has been finished. The antics cover the installation of the cable manage-

ment devices. The project requires the installation of cable management arms for the servers, placing the power, fiber and patch cables in the organizers and cable management arms. Do not forget, all without disrupting service. A piece of cake right?

After getting the project to this point, I believe I'm ready for the next phase. The phase where I dawn my superhero cape and find out that the techie geek is not faster than a speeding electron and unable to reroute patch cables in a single motion. With these realities in mind our hero will have one question needing to be answered to save the day (complete the project). "...will this be flex time or overtime?"

Do you SUDOKU?

1		2	8					
	4		1			5	6	8
					9			1
	6					2		
		8		9		7		
		5					3	
8			3					
6	3	1			7		5	
					1	3		7

Daily Sudoku: Mon 10-Mar-2008

very hard

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March's Solution

1	4	6	2	8	3	7	5	9
5	7	8	9	1	4	2	3	6
9	2	3	6	7	5	1	4	8
3	9	4	7	5	2	8	6	1
7	6	1	3	4	8	9	2	5
2	8	5	1	6	9	4	7	3
8	1	2	5	3	7	6	9	4
4	5	9	8	2	6	3	1	7
6	3	7	4	9	1	5	8	2

The Deals Guy

by Bob "The Cheapskate" Click
Greater Orlando Computer User



*Great Shows!

The International Builders Show came to town again this year and I worked in it several days. It's the largest show in the amount of freight (thirteen million pounds) of any show that has been held here, and close to the largest in area. The dock basin was piled high with crates of all kinds. There were five beautiful modular homes set up on blocks in the parking lot for people to tour. The modules arrived a week before the show opened, but all the homes were assembled with the finishing touches in time for show days. One was a three-story 2700 square foot model worth over a million dollars, which was actually sold during the show. One home featured technology of the future such as calling you or sending you an e-mail at work if something goes wrong. I'll write a separate article about that which will be available on my Web site soon. Kohler had their million-dollar computer controlled waterfall again this year, and it was fascinating to watch it making letters, words, ad phrases and other decorative things to fall, all completely out of water. Mr. Kohler himself flew in to look over the display.

Another show we worked was the Orgill Show <<http://www.orgill.com>>. That is like a giant hardware store, but is a trade show (about 500,000 square feet of display area) with exhibitors showing their latest wares. Orgill is a large independent hardware distributor. Many exhibitors prefer not to take their booth's displayed products back home so some dealers come with large trailers and purchase as many products from vendor booths as they can carry, after the show closes. Some booths just leave their products, and volunteers from Habitat for Humanity collect as much as they can for that organization's projects. "Pallet pricing" and "coupon specials" are featured for dealers attending and the Orgill reps wear different colored blazers signifying their sales volume.

A coworker said an attendee was looking for me, saying he reads my column all the time, but my coworker unknowingly gave him incorrect location information and he never found me. I was very disappointed. It's not the first time someone

has looked for me at a show, but they are often large areas and unless you know who to ask, getting together is difficult because most of us don't know much about where others were assigned to work, and my wife and I don't work all of the shows here.

March will bring the Electronic House Expo <<http://www.ehxweb.com>>, one of my favorites. I won't be working it, but hope to look around. Central Florida Computer Society <<http://www.cfcs.org>> has already made arrangements for their membership to attend at no cost. I recommend that one if you are in the area.

*Are You Ready To Tax Your Brain?

AlbyMedia has released version 1.1 of PIQE: Chain of Puzzles. It contains different types of challenging puzzles, has three difficulty levels and allows comparing your results with other players. It's a set of engaging puzzles giving you a real challenge. The game has progress check and result comparison features to provide you with detailed information on your development. The game has three difficulties, offering more sophisticated puzzles after you beat the easier ones. Please visit <<http://piqe.albymedia.com>> for a free trial of the product.

PIQE: Chain of Puzzles runs under Microsoft Windows and costs \$14.95 (USD) for a single-user license. AlbyMedia offers user group members 15% discount on the PIQE: Chain of Puzzles. Use the coupon code ALBY-JMGJ at <<https://www.regnow.com/softsell/nph-softsell.cgi?item=15534-3>>. Licensed customers get free technical support and free upgrades.

Direct download link: <www.albymedia.com/downloads/piqe.setup.exe>
Company web-site: <<http://www.albymedia.com>>

Here's Another Freebie!

DVDVideoSoft, an Internet resource dedicated to free software, multimedia software guides and tutorials has just updated Free Video to Flash Converter. The new version features 30+ player skins and new easy-to-use web integration, just copy and paste html code to the site or

blog. Convert video files to flash (SWF and FLV). Convert the whole movie or just a portion. Free Video to Flash Converter is available at <<http://www.dvdvideosoft.com/products/dvd/Free-Video-to-Flash-Converter.htm>> for free download. The program contains no spyware or adware. No activation or registration is required. Just download and use it.

Video to Flash Converter is already the 15th free program developed by DVDVideoSoft and has developed a line of free tools: Free Video Dun, Free YouTube to iPod Converter, Free YouTube to MP3 Converter, Free YouTube to iPhone Converter, Free Video to iPod Converter, Free Video to iPhone Converter, Free Video to MP3 Converter, Free YouTube Uploader, Free Audio Dub, Free YouTube to MP3 Converter, Free 3GP Video Converter, Free Video Flip and Rotate, Free Video to JPG Converter and finally Free YouTube Download <<http://www.dvdvideosoft.com/products/dvd/Free-YouTube-Download.htm>>.

All titles are available at <<http://www.dvdvideosoft.com/free-dvd-video-software.htm>> for immediate download. Also here are lots of guides and tutorials related to different video tasks like burning and ripping DVDs, making DVD copies, converting between all video formats and more. All our programs run under Windows Vista/XP/2000. We respect our users' privacy and there's no spyware or adware.

*Comfort Should Be The Golden Rule!

Comfort Software Group announces Comfort Keys 3.0, a successor to the popular hotkey management tool. The new version supports non-standard keyboard types (Ergonomic and Dell Inspiron 6000); speaks two new languages (Hungarian and simplified Chinese); has adjustable sensitivity for fast input of capital letters, spaces and other characters; has the option of hiding in the system tray and features an enhanced hotkey management window with a full list of hotkeys and new groups.

(Continued on page 11)

The Deals Guy (cont.)

(Continued from page 10)

Comfort Keys is a multifunctional hotkey manager for Windows Vista, XP and 2000. The integrated clipboard manager extends the capabilities of the standard Windows clipboard allowing you to save an unlimited number of copied objects and reuse them as much as you want; and makes sure your clipboard data is saved in case of a power failure or hardware crash. It also features an advanced task switcher, sound control tools and a virtual keyboard that facilitates the choice and configuration of your hotkey combinations. You can quickly switch languages, convert the selected fragment of text into another language (or case), run keystroke macros, easily manage a window and even restart the computer using the keyboard.

Comfort Keys supports Windows Vista/2000/XP operating systems. A personal license costs only \$29.95. A multi-user license ranges from \$21.95 to \$6.95. The company offers a 30-day money back guarantee on all orders. More information on Comfort Keys, as well as its free trial version, is available at <http://www.comfort-software.com/hotkey-manager.html>

Products can be purchased from Plimus, the official reseller of Comfort Software Group products. Major credit cards (VISA, MasterCard, Amex and Discover) are accepted. User Group members get 30% discount at: <https://secure.plimus.com/jsp/buynow.jsp?contractId=1711308&couponCode=dealsguy>.

*Wow! What a Clock!

ALSEDI Group announces version 2.6 of PerfectClock. It delivers any number of realistic clocks onto the desktop or replaces your wallpaper with clock wallpaper. PerfectClock lets you know the time in the most convenient way by looking at stylish analog or digital clocks. Enjoy having as many clocks on the desktop as you need, each displaying the time for the defined time zone. You can use the wallpaper clock as a screensaver. PerfectClock supports scaling. You can set a label to a clock and customize fonts, color, position and other parameters. The Reminder feature is also customizable. On the official

website are dozens of clock and wallpaper clock skins. It allows you to adjust hue, saturation, brightness and contrast to reach optimal appearance of the clock.

You can manually create a unique skin without being a programmer. ALSEDI Group has prepared a special offer for all new customers. Everyone purchasing PerfectClock can order a Personal Family Photo Clock Skin at no cost. It only requires selecting a frame pattern, sending a photo or two, and the skin will be delivered to you in three days. This skin makes a great present for family events. Visit <http://www.perfect-clock.com> to get the trial version of the program.

PerfectClock runs under Windows Vista/XP/2000. The Standard Edition costs \$16.95 (USD) for a single-user license and the Professional Edition, supporting the Wallpaper Clock feature, costs \$23.95 (USD). Licensed customers are entitled to the fully functional version of the product, free technical support and free upgrades. Further information on PerfectClock, as well as a free trial copy is available from <http://www.perfect-clock.com>. Get a

20% discount on the registered Professional version by visiting: <https://www.plimus.com/jsp/buynow.jsp?contractId=1717144&couponCode=GROUP20PERCENT> and 20% discount on the Standard Edition at: <https://www.plimus.com/jsp/buynow.jsp?contractId=1695221&couponCode=GROUP20PERCENT>. Company web-site: <http://www.alsedi.com>

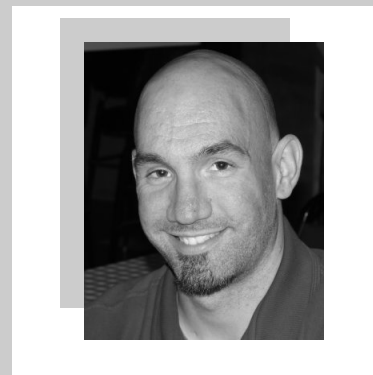
That's it for this month. I'll have more new product announcements on my Web site (most not offering a discount). Meet me here again next month if your editor permits. This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers or freebies I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of any products, no matter how enthused I might sound. Bob (The Cheap skate) Click [bobclick at bellsouth dot net](mailto:bobclick@bellsouth.net). Visit my Web site at <http://www.dealsguy.com>.

Clearw°re for DMA® Members

Jeremiah Ilges, one of our newest DMA members, has generously provided DMA with a free Clearwire account. What does that mean for us? Well, for meetings not located at 119 Valley Street, we can now take our internet with us. At least two SIG groups that meet at Wright State have had repeated problems with access to internet. Now that problem is solved.

How does it work? Jeremiah provided a Clearwire broadband modem. This modem is kept at 119 Valley Street and can be used by members there. For off-site SIG meetings, just unplug and take it with you. Same account and everything wherever you need it.

Want to try it out, just come down to 119 Valley Street and Mike Carr will get you on line. Mike has been testing the system and will have his comments available to us soon. We'll do our best to report them here.



Jeremiah is also offering DMA a fundraiser for Clearwire referrals. He is donating \$50 to DMA for each person who subscribes only through his business and mentions DMA. So if this is a solution for you, contact Jeremiah at The Ohio Technology Group, Jeremiah@TheOhioGroup.com.

News from the Amateur Radio SIG

March is here and that means another gathering of the Amateur Radio and Computers SIG.

Topics this week will include PSKMail and tips on running it on your PC. The program is based on Linux and if you have never run any virtualization on your computer you may find this interesting. I will also demo VMWare if the group wants to see it, and we can discuss some of the virtualization software available, including a new virtual machine offering from Sun and Microsoft's free version. Virtual machines are the latest buzz in the commercial server world and there are some interesting benefits to setting up virtual machines on your PC too!

I doubt we could make a connect if we wanted to from Valley St, but we can get

the PSKMail setup under our belts and try it out someday at B Road.

Shawna will have her computer news update and can demo some remote access capabilities as well as some virtual machine technology in use at University of Dayton.

I have a preview of Hamvention and it is time to discuss what if anything our SIG would like to do for Hamvention this year. I also have a few items of interest from the amateur radio community.

The DMA Amateur Radio and Computers SIG is a forum for people interested in communications to gather and as a group learn about digital modes, RF networking, and how computers can assist us in our

*Todd Collins, N2TUN
Ham SIG Leader*

hobby. We meet the first Monday of every month at 119 Valley Street, Dayton, Ohio 45404. Meeting time is 7:00 pm and all out welcome. You do not have to be a ham or a DMA member to participate, though we will help you achieve either of those goals!

We look forward to seeing you this Tuesday.

73

Todd and Shawna Collins
Amateur Radio and Computers SIG Leaders

Genealogy SIG

GENEALOGY SIG MEETING REMINDER

Mrs. Sandra Gustin, demonstration of some subscription websites.

Our February Meeting went over really well. I think everybody was surprised and pleased with Mrs. Lorrain Wagenmann's presentation on Digital Scrapbooking for Genealogy. I was pleased to see how much could be done on the computer. I think everyone was interested in seeing all the examples in the four books she passed around as well as just hearing the reasons for her work and a little of her own personal family history. She also demonstrated the process of creating new items from genealogical records (as seen in her books). Lastly, she left a list of reference websites where supplies and help may be found on the web. She also promised to recontact us once she is settled in her husband's new assignment. She point out that many sites have free packages that include the items you need to make items and most are color coordinated so that it is harder to turn out a truly bad product. Mostly, the works are all created within the imagination of the builder.

A copy of her slides are available and will soon be posted on our new website as soon as I can get it operational (which will

be soon).

I have been working on the DMA Genealogy SIG Website; but I am not a website developer, so it takes me longer to do everything. It is coming along and I might be able to post it for comments by this meeting date.

Members can be website helpful by thinking about how to intuitively lead a visitor through our site, to learn more about us or to learn more about genealogy and family history.

While we have not discussed it yet, my plan is to design the site to accomplish several goals:

- (1) to expose the DMA Genealogy SIG to the world,
- (2) to provide an administrative structure for SIG business,
- (3) to provide an educational base for new genealogists and members (our service to the local community), and
- (4) to develop a research reference structure.

*Jay Finley Chairman
DMA SIG - GENEALOGY*

We said earlier that we would like to take a trip together up to the Ft. Wayne library to see their new facility. If anyone has preferred dates to go or dates which will prevent you from joining us, please make a list for me and bring it to the meeting.

We need to start planning that trip now if there is any chance we will go in April or May. This would be a one-day trip, up and back the same day. I think it is feasible in that I recently made a one-day trip there. We left at 8 AM, arrived there about 2.5 hours later, spent close to 8 hours doing research, had supper together and returned home. I was back home by 10 PM. If we let it be known that we are going to visit the Ft. Wayne library, some others might want to ride with us (possibly from the OGS-MCC). We need to account for people and number of vehicles needed. Probably, identify who has the biggest vans.

Jay Finley
Chairman
DMA Genealogy SIG

BotNet—The Evil Network

This one might even be too much for Webman. There is a community of evil geeks who own a number of computers that are used exclusively for delivering viruses.

Usually backdoor Trojans, the virus is designed to infect the average computer users machine when launched periodically from the evil geeks' "Zombie" machines. The virus does not necessarily cause problems on the targeted computers but it uses these average users' machines to deliver spam. With this chain reaction method, huge quantities of spam can be spread with very little chance of tracing it to the source. ISP's have admitted they spend more of their resources on combating these "Botnets" than the old-fashioned crackers and hackers.

"If you suspect you are being used as a pigeon for a botnet operator, it is worthwhile downloading a good, tested anti-virus application that has a tracking firewall. The usual symptom that suggests there is a botnet present is a dramatic slowdown in performance."

Aside from cluttering up the internet with spam, the botnet can deliver "denial of service" attacks. This is a serious financial concern for companies trying to establish themselves on the internet as well as institutions that provide important community services.

The usual routine is, the spammer, who wants to get a message out to the world, pays the botnet operator, who then sends the file to his zombies which in turn launches the spam to the innocent distributors. Sometimes, banks of computers in offices and institutions are commandeered by the botnet operator for this criminal activity.

In preparing this article, I could not find proof as to how the original virus is delivered to the unsuspecting so I am assuming it is the usual method. Either the user clicks on a deceptive button while surfing the net and triggers a download, or an email attachment is opened unwittingly. The culprits often use a harvesting program that goes to the ISP server and gathers all their email addresses. Some mass mail programs actually send email to the

by Grant Fuller,
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www.bbc.org, newsletter@bbc.org

addresses on the server at the same time they are collecting the addresses for future use.

Botnet applications are cleverly designed so they often escape detection by anti-virus software. However, some firewalls such as ZoneAlarm will track incoming and outgoing calls so if the user is patient enough to investigate each of the unidentified communiqués going on between the hard drive and the internet, the botnet may be found.

If you suspect you are being used as a pigeon for a botnet operator, it is worthwhile downloading a good, tested anti-virus application that has a tracking firewall. The usual symptom that suggests there is a botnet present is a dramatic slow down in performance. As always, it is a good idea to search the internet for the latest information on topics like this because the war between good and evil is forever evolving.

E-Mail Responsibilities

E-mail is a very valuable method of almost instant communication. However, many people operate under an illusion that it is private. It is not. Once sent, it is effectively broadcast to the world. So one should NEVER send anything that they might regret. Once it is sent, it is now in other people's hands. The recipient may or may not care as much about controlling your e-mails distribution as you do.

Just suppose you send something clever about someone you know to a friend or acquaintance and they bring it up on the screen. Then, they take a break and go to coffee, leaving it on the screen. Another person passes by, snoops, and sees the e-mail. They also think it is clever, and make a copy of it and send it to someone they know, etc.

Or, the employer records all e-mail traffic passing within their company, which they have every right to do, since the equipment is theirs.

Worse yet, some people send messages that they believe are benign and strictly business, yet some self-anointed "god" thinks otherwise.

Yet even sneakier are viruses that can unknowingly, by you, forward your e-mails elsewhere; or, police and other snoops tapping your connection. There are innumerable ways by which your "private" traffic can go public.

So, the BOTTOM LINE is: compose your messages with care, check the addressees listed, and review the message before pressing the "SEND" key.

Oh, by the way: do not think that once sent and "deleted", that the file is gone from your computer. When you "delete" a file, this DOES NOT ERASE THE FILE. All this does is change the first letter of the file name in the directory. The file, in all its glory, remains untouched on the hard drive,

which is why it is so easy to recover it. Technology has provided a variety of means to recover and reconstitute "deleted" files.

To conclude, e-mail is a tremendously valuable means of almost instant communication. Just make sure that you use it carefully, thoughtfully and wisely.

Bob Schwartz is a HAL-PC member, retired EE, 14 patents, technical writer, active in civic affairs: President, Brays Bayou Association; Vice President, Marilyn Estates Civic Association; Correspondence Secretary with the Willow Waterhole Greenspace Conservancy.

By Bob Schwartz,
a member of HAL-PC, Texas,
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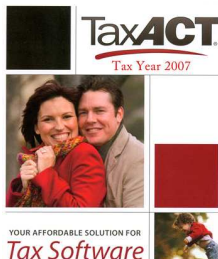
Year 2007 Tax Software

by Milton G. Gugenheim, Jr.,
www.hal-pc.org.



Personal Software

Most of us seem to put the dreaded tax chore off until the last moment and then find ourselves faced with incomprehensible IRS forms, shoeboxes of receipts, check registers, antacids and headache pills. The return must be filed by Tuesday, April 15, 2008 (you can file an extension to delay filing until August 15, 2008. But payment, without P&I, is due April 15, 2008 – the IRS is nice, but not that nice!)



Fortunately help is on the way in the form of a couple of good tax preparation programs from Intuit – TurboTax, H&R Block – TaxCUT and 2nd Story's TaxACT. This review covers the two most popular programs.

In addition to well-crafted interfaces and good online help, both TaxCUT and TurboTax include Microsoft's Internet Explorer Web browser for seamless integration with the World Wide Web for updating. An internet connection is required to obtain updates as the software is released in December, before the IRS has completed all the forms, etc.

Even if you think that you need the skills of an experienced CPA in the preparation of your return, either of these programs will help you to become better organized and possibly keep accountant fees to a minimum.



I found the following software tax packages for the 2007 tax year: TurboTax Basic, TurboTax Deluxe, TurboTax Premier, TaxCUT, TaxCUT Deluxe, and TaxCUT Premier, for Windows 98, 2000, ME, XP, Vista and MacPowerPC processor. Most of the local office supply stores and other retail and software outlets stock the software.

There are free tax preparation programs on the web. Go to a search engine and enter "free federal income tax programs". TaxACT is a good free program. The program is easy to use and includes forms most taxpayers require. A paid version is also available for more complex returns.

Features

TurboTax Basic is the basic package needed to file all individual returns including professional or sole proprietor, and includes Internet Explorer on the CD. TurboTax Deluxe includes all the features of TurboTax Basic and one free e-file (after rebate). Plus extra help for deductions – the deduction finder (library resources, tax planner, on-screen references and IRS publications, video advice and a financial planner). TurboTax Premier includes all the feature of TurboTax Deluxe plus help for investments, complex taxes, Schedule C business and Rental Property.

TaxCUT Deluxe is almost identical to TurboTax including Internet Explorer 6 on the CD. TaxCUT Deluxe includes all the features of TurboTax Deluxe, tax tips, on-screen IRS instructions and publications. All the programs will import financial data from most popular financial programs, and include details on preparing a return, reviewing a return, electronic filing (e-file) via a second party, planning for next year, plus help locations.

Installation

All packages were easy to install following the given directions. TurboTax Basic requires 175 MB of disc space without the installation of Explorer. TaxCUT Deluxe requires 170 MB of disc space without the installation of Explorer.

Manual

Both TurboTax and TaxCUT include a on-screen user guide with typical screens of the described function. All the usual files, edit, forms, tools and help are in the toolbar. TaxACT has almost as much on-screen help.

General Overview

All of the packages have an easy step-by-step program to walk the taxpayer through the various steps required to do a return. The experienced taxpayer may prefer the forms method after completing a basic information page. The taxpayer selects the form and fills in the required information. Some have supplemental sheets for recording information, which is then transferred to the form. Help is available from any screen. All programs import from Quicken and Microsoft Money.

Details

The latest tax changes are incorporated in the packages (at the time of release). Each package allows the taxpayer to enter data on various forms after completing the basic information sheet. The return is then saved. Be sure to give the file a name if more than one return will be prepared using the same program. The programs may be used whether you are the organized type or the shoe box type. The shoebox type should organize the various types of entries first.

Printing

TurboTax and TaxCUT allow you to print an IRS return or select a form or schedule to be printed. The current computer printer setup does not have to be changed. Check to be sure you have the latest updates prior to printing the return for filing. Print a return for filing and a return for your records. The record return will contain detail sheets. I have no experience using these programs to e-file.

Summary

The Basic package of TurboTax or Deluxe of TaxCUT is more than adequate for most users. The upgrade packages are great for users who like the "bells and whistles" that include lots of helpful literature, suggestions, etc. The street price for the basic packages is around \$20, TurboTax Deluxe, and TaxCUT Premier is about \$40. Each company has an extensive business program for about \$70 +. A new program is required for the each tax year. TurboTax and TaxCUT sites, each sell the programs and it will cost more than the local stores.

Helpful Hints: I suggest the return be prepared in all caps since this is preferred by the IRS. All returns are mathematically corrected based on the input data. Most of programs have promotion tie-ins, such as a money program, anti-virus, etc. Read carefully the conditions before buying the program.

TurboTax, for more info goes to: www.turbotax.com/support. Block TaxCUT. For more info go to: www.taxcut.com and for TaxACT go to: www.taxact.com.

Dr. Milton G. Gugenheim is a member of HAL-PC, Texas, and an AARP Tax Aide Instructor and Local Coordinator for over 12 years. Contact him at mgug@hal-pc.org

Benefits of Using a Computer Sandbox

A computer Sandbox is newer technology that is not very well known, but, it can be quite useful in many situations. By using a Sandbox utility, you can place your computer in a protected state where you can try some rather risky things on your computer and not have your computer damaged in the trials. Once you place your computer into Sandbox mode, you can safely run anything on your computer, knowing that all changes to your hard drive will not be permanently made to your computer. While in Sandbox mode, your computer runs as if all changes to the hard drive were actually made to your system. But, at the end of using the Sandbox, you can throw away these changes, putting your computer back exactly the way it was before entering the Sandbox.

Let's take a look at some real life situations to better understand the benefits of using a Sandbox utility.

Installing New Software

Everyone knows that when you install a new software product on your computer, parts of the product are placed all over your computer's hard drive. Entries are made to the Windows Registry, special supporting files are placed in certain directories of the operating system, and other shortcut and setting files are scattered in various places on your hard drive. These are in addition to the main folder that is installed on your hard drive with the software programs. Most software will uninstall easily, but often pieces of the product are left behind on your hard drive. These leftover pieces of orphaned software can build up and slow down your computer. Some software products include hidden viruses or other bad programs as you install them. The end result is that installing new software on your computer can be a risky thing to do.

Using a Sandbox to install and test new software is a much better approach. With a Sandbox, you put your computer in Sandbox mode before you download and installed the new software. Since the Sandbox lets you use the newly installed software just as if it had been permanently installed on your computer, you can run the new software to try it out and see if you like it. You can also run virus utilities to see if the installation gave you a virus you were not expecting. If you find viruses on your computer or just decide you do not like the newly installed software, you can get out of the Sandbox and throw away all traces of that software product and any hidden virus that came with it.

Letting Others Use Your Computer

Another reason to use a Sandbox is to let others use your computer. Other users may change your computer to match the way they like to use computers. For example, many of us have grandkids that come to visit and want to play on our computer. They may download games they like, change your wallpaper and default font sizes. They may pick up viruses in the process of getting your computer changed to their needs.

When they leave, your computer no longer is the same as it was before they arrived. It may take you days to get it working again like you want it to. With a Sandbox, you can place the computer in Sandbox mode before they arrive and then let them play on your computer to their hearts content. When they leave, you simply exit the Sandbox and throw away all changes that they made to your computer. It is instantly back the way it was before they started to use it.

Computer Labs and Classrooms

User groups that have computer labs or classrooms have a similar situation. The classroom computers are setup carefully by the instructors before the class begins. Once the students have used the computer throughout the day, the computers are different and modified from what they were in the beginning of the day. This may cause problems for the students that follow them, so the instructors will often restore the computer's hard drives to put them back to normal. With a Sandbox, this long restore process is not needed. Instead, put the computers in Sandbox mode at the beginning of the day before the students arrive. Then at the end of the day, exit the Sandbox and throw away all hard drive changes made by the students. The computers are quickly returned to their normal state as you exit the Sandbox.

Browsing the Internet

Much of the Spyware that you pick up on your computer comes from simply browsing the internet. Some web sites are designed so that simply passing your cursor over a part of the screen is enough to activate a download of Spyware to your computer. Not only that, but your privacy is at risk when you browse the Internet. Windows automatically saves all of the places you browse to and all of the screens you see on the Internet. Browsing the Internet in a Sandbox is a much better approach. Place your computer in Sandbox mode before you start to browse the internet. Then browse all of the sites you want to. When you are done browsing the internet, exit out of the Sandbox and throw away all Spyware and traces of web sites you may have visited.

We offer three excellent Sandbox products that you may want to use on your computer. Let's look at each of these briefly to help you decide which one would best meet your needs.

StorageCraft Shadow Surfer

The smallest and least expensive Sandbox we offer is Shadow Surfer by StorageCraft Software. This product is the quickest product to install and the easiest product to use of all of our Sandbox products. With Shadow Surfer, all changes to your hard drive are always thrown away when you exit the Sandbox, which is what you want in most cases anyway. This excellent product runs on Win2000 and WinXP systems and is available from us at the discount price of just \$20. This is an excellent beginning Sandbox product for most home users.

*By Gene Barlow
User Group Relations
Copyrighted January 2008*

Acronis True Image 11 Home Try&Decide

The next step up in ability and price is a feature that Acronis has added to their new True Image 11 Home backup utility. This feature is called Try&Decide and it is a Sandbox feature built into this award winning backup utility. Try&Decide requires that you create and use the Acronis SecureZone on your hard drive to contain the temporary changes to your hard drive. When you exit the Sandbox with this product, you can choose to keep all changes to your hard drive or throw them all away. This excellent product runs on Win2000, WinXP, and WinVista operating systems and is available from us at the discount price of just \$29 for a download or \$33 on a CD. This is a very good Sandbox feature that comes with an outstanding backup utility.

StorageCraft Shadow User Pro

The most advanced Sandbox utility we offer is Shadow User Pro by StorageCraft Software. This is a professional-level Sandbox product that has many options and features to it. With this product, you can password protect the controls of the Sandbox, so that nobody can disable the Sandbox unless they know the password. Perhaps the biggest differences between this product and the other two Sandbox products is that you can pick and choose what files to throw away and what files to keep as you exit the Sandbox. This top of the line Sandbox product runs on Win2000 and WinXP operating systems and is available from us at the discount price of \$47. This is the product you should use if you are running a public computer workstation that needs tight controls.

A Sandbox offers you a new way to protect your computer from damage from the software you install or access on the internet. It also keeps your hard drive safe from damage caused by others using your computer. The selection of Sandbox products we offer lets you pick and choose which one is right for your needs. To order your Sandbox product, go to www.ugr.com and find the Sandbox product you are interested in. Then click on the Buy Now button on that product page to place your order using our secure web shopping cart. As you complete your order indicate the order code of UGNL0108 to qualify for these excellent discount prices. If you have questions about this new technology or about any of these products send an email to gene@ugr.com and I will try to help you.

About to Expire Memberships

If you have recently paid your dues, thank you very much. Your name may still appear here because of the time it takes

Expired in February

Brouard, Andrew
Cupp Jr., Michael
Dervin, Owen
Forshaw, Dan
Fulk, Joseph K.
Hammond, Jeff
Phillippi, Conrad M.
Skidmore, Rhiannon
Sullivan, Patrick J.

Will expire in March

Chiang, Derek
Cunningham, Richard
Eggers, Robert O.
Ewing, Carol
Flynn, Pat
Froelich, Gary L.
Gelm, Charles E.
Hawes, Richard L.
Mullins, Gary L.
Nickels, Bradford G.
Parts, Leo
Parts, Mary Ann
Rollert, Wynn
Seibert, Benjamin A.
Shrewsbury, David
Sproat, Glenn L.
Stein, Steve
Taylor Jr., Edward M.
Tilford, Kenneth
Ullom, James H.
White, Michael J.
Whitson, Peter
Woods, Charles

Will expire in April

Ausra, Alexander M.
Berg, Eugene L.
Garber, Jim
Harlan, John B.
Hayden, Steve
Howes, Chester F.
Ilges, Jeremiah
Layman, Elmo
Lykins, Bruce
Mattix, Mark
Merkle, Margaret
Mitchell III, Joe
Weiland, Norman R. (Nom)
Yeley, Russell C.

Will expire in May

Carson, Howard V.
Dann, Ning
Dunlevey, Mahan, & Furry,
Richard L. Carr Jr.
Finley, Kyle P.
Haschke, Charles M.
Heil, Dick
Hill II, William
King, Ron
Lewis, Robert A. (Bob)
McBeth, Charles
McCoin, Kenneth H.
Rohrer, Stan
Schrader, Donna
Schricket P.E., Dean
Sparklin, Karl
Stiver, Charles A.
Thielen, George J.
Wick, Ronald M.
Williamitis, Ron

Welcome

NEW DMA MEMBERS

Sandra Gustin

All Things Tech



By Jeremiah Ilges
The Ohio Technology Group

Is Spyware Really a Threat? You decide.

Do you know what spyware is? A lot of people today love to use the term to strike fear into the average user, but let's look at what spyware really is. According to Wikipedia.com: "Spyware is computer software that is installed surreptitiously on a personal computer to intercept or take partial control over the user's interaction with the computer, without the user's informed consent."

Does that sound like something you want taking place on the pc that sits in your den or spare bedroom? I'm sure you did not sign up for that kind of hassle when you purchased your computer. But let me give you some type of relief when I say that most spyware is nothing more than a website designers poor programming skill at work. About 48% of all reported spyware is a malfunctioning cookie that was poorly developed by a website designer and is a false alarm. So don't let the giant software companies push you around by saying things like "unless you buy our software, you're at risk of losing everything on your pc, your social security number, your car, and possibly your identity". What they are really asking you to do is fork out \$50 bucks for their sub-par resource devouring program that does a less than average job at keeping you secure, and probably slows down your pc to a slow walking pace by the time it's all said and done.

So let's take a look at a free utility provided by Microsoft to combat spyware, it's called Windows Defender. You can download windows defender by going to this website: <http://www.microsoft.com/athome/security/spyware/software/default.msp>

After you download Windows Defender, you will be asked to RUN the setup program, once you do this and continue through the setup program, Windows Defender will automatically go online and check for the latest updates and will then run a full system scan to make sure that you were not infected with spyware prior to downloading Windows Defender. Once this initial check and scan have been completed, Windows Defender will keep your pc safe by monitoring changes to critical system files and by scanning content traveling onto your pc. This will keep you up and running longer with less downtime so you can enjoy the things you love to do most.

The FREE and easy way to a virus free PC.

Cold season yet again... sigh. Although you might have trouble keeping yourself healthy this cold & flu season, you can make sure that your PC doesn't fall ill from a malicious virus that attacks during the cold winter months. Let me introduce you to AVG Antivirus. AVG is one of the TOP RATED antivirus software suites available on the market today with one lovely exception. It is completely FREE for home users. Is that a smile I see on your face? Don't worry, there are no strings attached to this offer, no time period to expire and force you to buy it, no pop-up ads that annoy the user, and very little user interaction to keep it running. AVG updates itself every single day, and also runs a full system scan daily. You can of course change these settings to scan more or less frequently or at different times to help work around the time you use your PC. For the money, AVG is absolutely UNBEATABLE. Download your 100% free copy today from: GRISOFT.

Open Office Vs. Microsoft Office

Since the beginning of the Microsoft Empire in the 1980's, users of all types have been plagued by the fact that they not only had to purchase the software license for their operating system to make their PC function like a pc, but then they were also required to purchase additional software to be able to accomplish ANYTHING productive with their pc. In the wake of this prohibitive movement by the big software firms to increase license fees to help "add value" to their existing products, a small group of software developers sprung into action and launched a new type of license, the open license.

Now let me explain this so that you understand more clearly. Large companies like Microsoft and the like who write applications which are the programs that make your pc productive, hire hundreds (or a couple in some cases) software developers, engineers, marketing specialists, blah blah blah to make you believe that without their software your life will stop and you will not be able to be productive. Not the case with open license software. Enter Open Office, a project of Sun Microsystems. It is "a multiplatform and multilingual office suite and an open-source project. Compatible with all other major office suites, the product is free to download, use, and distribute." With open Office, you've got your Word Processor, spreadsheet, presentations, databases, customer management, vector based drawing tool and more! For

the one time low cost of \$FREE. How does that compare to the \$499 copy of Microsoft office professional you just bought? Click here for a pretty in-depth feature comparison: <http://www.techsoup.org/learningcenter/software/page4765.cfm>. But in the eyes of the everyday user.

OpenOffice is just as effective as Microsoft Office Professional! And sometimes more so with the added features!

So next time you get a new PC and think "well i guess I need to go shell out another couple hundred dollars for Office" think instead "OpenOffice is FREE!" and maybe you can take me to dinner for saving you so much dough!

Defragmentation for the Fragmented User.

If your computer has been running slower than usual or if it's just plain sluggish, it may be time for you to defrag your computer. The defragmentation feature is an important utility that comes along with Windows and it helps you to fine tune your Windows file system and it just ensures that everything is running properly. Defrag (short for disk defragmenter) organizes your file system to help Windows read files faster.

To start the defrag process, XP and 2000 users can go to Start, All Programs, Accessories, System Tools, Disk Defragmenter. Once you're ready, just click on the Defragment button and everything will start. Keep in mind that the defrag takes up quite a bit of time, so you might just want to start it and then go do something else. Definitely count on not being able to use your computer for awhile.

Now, when the defrag process is finished, you will receive a message telling you that it's complete and if you want to quit or not. (If you want to defrag another drive, you can press No). If you're ready to stop, click Yes. Every version of Windows will give you a message like this. Once you hit Yes, you're all set.

Your computer has now been defragmented and you should have some extra file space open up for availability. It will also help your computer to run smoother and quicker. Everyone's gotta love that! Now you know more than you ever wanted to know about defrag! :-)

IRS Again Offers Free Online Tax Preparation and “e-Filing”

Whether we like it or not, April 15 is fast approaching. It does not matter if we are due a refund, or owe Uncle Sam a bundle of money, we still must complete our income tax forms and file them appropriately with the IRS. This is a task that very few enjoy, and many more do not relish. While preparing our tax returns becomes more complex and time consuming, the IRS has once again contracted with a number of tax services to prepare our taxes online for free, if we are eligible. According to the IRS, the goal of the free file program is to enable 70% of taxpayers (97 million people, according to the IRS) to take advantage of the free online service; for calendar year 2007 (taxes due April 15, 2008), the calculated ceiling on eligibility for the free service is an adjusted gross income (AGI) of \$54,000. In addition to preparing federal tax returns for those eligible, the providers will also “e-file” (electronically file) the returns at no charge to the taxpayer. It should be noted that the IRS does not charge for receiving e-filed returns, but does not currently accept e-filed returns directly from individuals without first going through a third party service, for which a fee may be charged. There is no e-file fee for taxes prepared by the free preparers who participate in the IRS free file program.

The free filing service was created in 2002, and renewed again in 2005, when the IRS created a public – private partnership called the “File Free Alliance, LLC” where the IRS contracted with several tax preparation companies to offer free online tax preparation and filing. The Free File Alliance evolved from a “President’s Management Agenda”, which created a series of 24 “e-government” initiatives designed to improve government to citizen electronic capabilities. Originally, the program was limited to 60% of taxpayers, but the 2005 contract expanded the eligibility to 70% of taxpayers. The current agreement between the IRS and the preparation companies expires in October, 2009. The income eligibility ceiling, currently at an AGI of \$54,000, is adjusted annually such that 70% of taxpayers will remain eligible. Members of the Free File Alliance must conform to strict

IRS established security and privacy requirements which insure the sanctity of the free filing service.

According to the IRS, there are several advantages and reasons for using the free tax services provided. The IRS claims that users can get their refunds in as little as 10 days, if they opt for direct deposit. Unlike commercial tax preparation offices, the online services are available 24/7, and taxes can be completed and filed at any time of the day prior to April 15. The IRS also claims that the service is environmentally friendly, in that it saves mountains of paper. Users of the free online services will benefit through the automatic checks for accuracy, and will receive a confirmation within 48 hours that the return was received by the IRS.

Users of the free filing service must start at the IRS website, IRS.gov, and initially access the free tax services through the IRS website. Many of the companies that are a part of the Free File Alliance also offer paid commercial tax preparation services, and the only way to get the service for free is to initialize the process through the IRS website. The list of participating companies, 19 of them, includes such well known companies as H&R Block, and software companies such as TurboTax. It is the responsibility of the user to verify his eligibility both for the program (up to \$54,000 AGI), and for the Free Alliance partner selected, as many of the partners have additional eligibility requirements for the free service. The user can either browse the list of individual companies (www.irs.gov/app/freeFile/jsp/index.jsp), or can use the button “Guide Me To A Company” to narrow down the choices of free tax preparers. Several of the companies, such as H&R Block’s “TaxCut Free File”, “TaxSimple Deluxe Version”, and “eSmart Tax by Liberty Tax Service” are available to anyone with an AGI of less than \$54,000, and who are also aged 50 or less. “TaxSlayer Free Returns” is available to anyone aged 25 to 68, or active military who meet the income requirements. “TurboTax Freedom Edition” is free to anyone with an AGI of less than \$30,000, or

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Columnist, The Examiner, Beaumont, TX;
radio and Talk Show Host
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active duty military with an AGI of up to \$54,000. “Complete Tax” will do anyone with an AGI of \$12,000 to \$54,000, while “Free TaxAct” will do anyone aged 19 to 54 who has an eligible AGI. Other free preparers have different eligibility requirements, including several that will prepare taxes for people for any age, but have geographic restrictions, in that they only prepare taxes for residents of specific states. Some of the preparers, such as “Online Tax Pros” specify that they also prepare taxes in Spanish. While not a requirement covered in the agreement with the IRS, many of the preparers listed will also prepare and file state income tax returns for residents of states that have a state income tax (Texas does not have a state income tax). While a few will prepare state income taxes for free, most have a nominal charge to prepare and e-file state taxes.

Once the taxes are prepared and completed online through one of the free providers, the returns are electronically checked for accuracy, and then e-filed directly with the IRS. The preparer will receive an electronic confirmation from the IRS that the return was received, and forward that confirmation to the taxpayer, typically within 48 hours of filing. If the taxpayer is due a federal refund, and selects direct deposit, the refund is deposited to the taxpayer’s specified account in as little as 10 days.

The IRS is to be commended for coordinating this service, available to nearly 100 million taxpayers. One improvement to the service that I would like to see is to allow those of us who prepare our taxes ourselves with commercial software, to be able to upload our returns directly to the IRS without having to go through a third party. That would be a great service to the millions of us who choose not to use, or who are not eligible for, the free filing programs, but would like the convenience of e-filing without sending our personal and private information to a third party.

For the eligible 70% of taxpayers who can utilize the free service, there are few good reasons not to use the service. The price can not be beat.

<http://www.irs.gov>

<http://www.irs.gov/efile/article/0,,id=118986,00.html> - Free File page

<http://www.irs.gov/efile/article/0,,id=118992,00.html> - Free File Instructions

<http://www.irs.gov/efile/article/0,,id=118993,00.html> - Information

<http://www.irs.gov/app/freeFile/jsp/index.jsp> - List of participating Companies

http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-efile/free_file_agreement.pdf - Free File Alliance Agreement

<http://www.irs.gov/espanol/article/0,,id=163297,00.html> - Free File in Spanish

PLEASE ALLOW UP to THREE WEEKS FOR APPLICATION PROCESSING and INTERNET SET-UP

Name: _____ Birth date: ____/____/____
mo. day yr.Associate 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) _____ Send Databus by e-mail [] Yes [] No _____ e-mail**Type of Membership**

Application is for: New Membership []

Membership Renewal [] Associate Membership* []

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 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: _____

Dues/Fees (Dues and Fees are subject to change without prior notice)

Membership (one year - New or Renewal)

1.) [] \$25

Family Associate Membership (must live at same address as regular member)

2.) [] \$12.50

Free* Student Membership

3.) [] **FREE** *for students under 22 yrs of age

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 and 2) (+4 if checked)

5.) \$ _____

[] Cash
[] Check
Check

Make your check payable to Dayton Microcomputer Association, Inc. DMA®, then send the check and application to: - - - - -> PO Box 340402 Beaver Creek, OH 45434-0402

DMA® Use only: Membership # _____ Exp. Date: ____/____/____ Processed by: _____ REV: 10 Jul 07

Friends of DMA

The "Friends of DMA" program is being established to facilitate direct contributions from both groups and individuals to help cover expenses and opportunities. DMA will gratefully accept any amount you or your business can afford.

All contributions made to "Friends of DMA" are tax deductible: 501(c)(3). DMA was founded on the principle of keeping membership fees as low as possible in order to allow all those wishing to join, participate, and share in the many benefits and rewards that membership provides.

In spite of decreasing sponsor donations, the expenses of DMA do continue and shortfalls must be realized from sources such as membership dues and direct contributions such as the Friends of DMA Program.

Become a Friend of DMA and contribute to the support of our organization. You may contribute any amount to the General Fund or designate your contribution to a specific target need. All contributions will be acknowledged with a signed receipt certificate.

Enclosed is my (our) contribution in the amount of:

() \$25 () \$50 () \$100 () \$250 () \$500

The desired target of this donation is:

() General Fund - Allocate to most needed area within DMA

() Hardware and On Line Services - Allocate to help the DMA infrastructure

() Administrative - Dues Assistance, Administrative, Publications and supplies

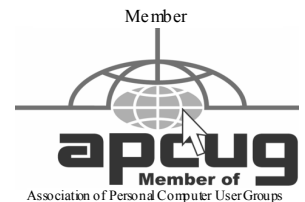
() Other:

DMA® Events for March 16 - April 19, 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<i>Mar 16</i>	<i>Mar 17</i> Apple SIG 7:00pm Huber Heights Athletic Ctr., 5367 Fishburg St. Patrick's	<i>Mar 18</i>	<i>Mar 19</i>	<i>Mar 20</i> Linux SIG 7:00pm WSU	<i>Mar 21</i>	<i>Mar 22</i> 9am-5pm OTAP
<i>Mar 23</i>	<i>Mar 24</i>	<i>Mar 25</i> Main Meeting 7:00pm 5367 Fishburg Rd., Huber Heights	<i>Mar 26</i> Hands-On SIG 6:30pm 119 Valley	<i>Mar 27</i> Digital Photo SIG 7:00pm 160 Rike Hall, WSU	<i>Mar 28</i>	<i>Mar 29</i> DLF mini-LAN 4pm - 4pm next day Valley St.
<i>Mar 30</i>	<i>Mar 31</i>	<i>Apr 1</i> Amateur Radio SIG 7:00pm 119 Valley April Fools Day	<i>Apr 2</i>	<i>Apr 3</i> Genealogy SIG 7:00pm 119 Valley	<i>Apr 4</i>	<i>Apr 5</i> 9am-5pm OTAP + Tech-Assist Classic Computers 3pm 7875 Kessler- Frederick, Tipp City
<i>Apr 6</i>	<i>Apr 7</i> Board of Trustees 7:00pm 119 Valley	<i>Apr 8</i> Hands-On SIG 7:00pm 119 Valley	<i>Apr 9</i> Dynamic Languages 7:00pm 119 Valley	<i>Apr 10</i> Software Develop- ment SIG 7:00pm 119 Valley	<i>Apr 11</i>	<i>Apr 12</i> 9am-5pm OTAP
<i>Apr 13</i>	<i>Apr 14</i> Dayton-Oracle SIG 5:30pm Mary-Ann's Kitchen, 33 N Ludlow	<i>Apr 15</i>	<i>Apr 16</i>	<i>Apr 17</i> Linux SIG 7:00pm WSU	<i>Apr 18</i>	<i>Apr 19</i> 9am-5pm OTAP Classic Computers 3pm 7875 Kessler- Frederick, Tipp City

Remember: • March 25 "TBA"

- Send membership applications & renewals to:
PO Box 340402, Beavercreek, OH 45434-0402



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