

— The DataBus —
Monthly Newsletter of
The Dayton Microcomputer Association
Volume XIII (New Series) Nº 4 (April 2023)



Gary COY:
Modern Technology for Better Living

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SAVE A TREE (or at least a branch)! If you prefer to print your **DATABUS** rather than read it directly from a monitor, don't print page 14 unless you wish to become a member or renew your membership.


DMA

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ESTABLISHED IN 1976, DMA is a group of Dayton-area professionals and enthusiasts in the field of computing and digital information technology. General Membership Meetings are usually held on the last Tuesday of each month. DMA has a number of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) in areas ranging from digital investing and genealogy to the Linux operating system. Each SIG meets according to its own schedule. DMA is a member of the Association of Personal Computer Users' Groups (APCUG) and the Affiliated Societies' Council (ASC). Click on any of the logos—including our own (top left)—to go to that organization's Web site.



An International
Association of Technology
& Computer User Groups



Submissions ...

THE DATABUS welcomes compliments, complaints, suggestions, and especially articles. We can accept articles in ASCII, or as attachments in plain text, Microsoft Word, Open or Libre Office Writer, or, yes, even in WordStar (a word-processing program that goes back to about 1980!). Send articles to:

Editor@DMA1.org

All articles are subject to editing for spelling, grammar, usage, and space. Retain a copy of your work, as THE DATABUS cannot be responsible for loss. When articles are of roughly equal quality and importance, those by paid-up DMA members receive preference.

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THE DATABUS is written and published by volunteers. We do not give professional advice on hardware, software, or network installation, repair, security, or troubleshooting. If you need expert assistance or repair for your digital device or network, please seek the advice or services of a qualified professional.

**April Meeting: 7:00 P.M., Tuesday, the 25TH
No Driving—No Charge***

* This is a “hybrid” meeting: via ZOOM, but also in person. Come at 6 P.M. if you wish to join us in person for dinner at T. J. Chump’s Restaurant in suburban Huber Heights, next door to the Meijer’s Supermarket. Click [here](#) for a map. The restaurant has free parking. It is also accessible via RTA bus routes 18 and 19, but there is a short walk from the bus stop in the Meijer’s department store parking lot to the restaurant.

Modern Technology for Better Living

WHEN WE HEAR ABOUT MODERN TECHNOLOGY, we generally think of our PCs, Office applications, e-mail, Web surfing, or maybe robotics, and (of course!) gaming. Surely it’s too soon to give much thought to assisted living or medical devices. *Hold onto your seats!* This month, we’re going there.

Advances in technology and the latest electronic devices have provided amazing gadgets for easier living and better medical care. Gary Coy wants to walk us through a list of options of which we should all be aware.

GARY COY is the DMA President, a Trustee, and also a frequent presenter. He is an IT professional by day and offers computer technical support via his company, “Gary’s Computers.” (See advertisement, page 6.)

Our meeting starts at 7 P.M. DMA members will receive an invitation by e-mail for Zoom. Others may request an invitation using <http://www.dma1.org/contact-us/> Or ... join us at TJ CHUMPS, 7050 Executive Blvd, in suburban Huber Heights, Ohio. If you wish to order dinner, please arrive by 6:15. Click [here](#) for a map.



Minutes of the Trustees' meetings are normally published almost two months late, because the Minutes for, say, the February Board meeting must be approved by the Trustees at the *following month's* meeting. They would then appear in the March issue — this one — of THE DATABUS, published toward the end of the month.

Trustees' meetings are usually on the *first Monday* of each month, except when that day is a legal holiday, for example: Labor Day in September.

During the epidemic, Trustees began meeting via ZOOM. This was so successful that they decided to continue the practice indefinitely. Meetings begin at 7 P.M. and are open to all DMA members. Request ZOOM credentials (that's a fancy way of saying "an invitation") from Secretary GLADY CAMPION at Tuesday's General Membership meeting.

NOTE: Corrected Minutes for the March Trustees' meeting were not available at press time. We'll have them, as well as April Minutes, in the May DATABUS.

Computer Spring Cleaning Basics: Hardware and Software Cleaning for Brand-New and Used Systems

By Gary Coy
GCoy (at) woh.rr.com

**Use these suggestions at your own risk
If in doubt, DON'T DO IT!**



Why clean your computers and electronics?

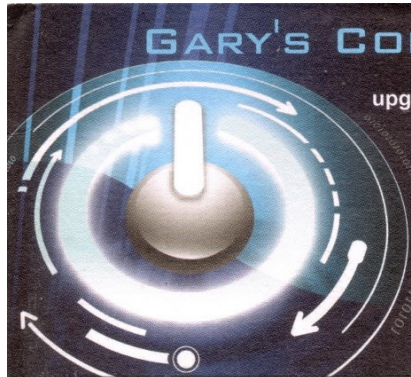
This is the fundamental question — *why do it at all?* Well, an annual cleaning prevents damage both from overheating and débris that makes its way into the case. Cleaning also can help detect (and slow) wear and tear from use and helps keep things running smoothly and efficiently. It keeps your machine(s) more secure and can help them run longer and healthier. Finally — and this should not be underestimated — it keeps things looking nice.

Hardware Cleaning Tools

- ✓ Static safe brushes
- ✓ Screen cleaning wipes or ammonia free spray cleaner
- ✓ Microfiber or soft cleaning cloths
- ✓ Compressed air or air blower
- ✓ Vacuum cleaner
- ✓ Screwdrivers (A set of electronics screwdrivers, sometimes called "jewelers' screwdrivers," can be purchased quite cheaply on line.)
- ✓ Needle nose pliers
- ✓ Electronics cleaner, or cleaner that does not leave film.

(Continued on page 6)

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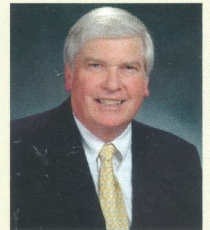
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(SPRING CLEANING—Continued from page 4)

- ✓ Silicon lubrication spray (very limited use)
- ✓ Connector cleaning kits.

Screen and Monitor Cleaning

- ✓ Use wipes if possible.
- ✓ Never spray cleaner *directly* on screen unless you have something to catch the drips. The liquid can run down into the base and damage the electronics.
- ✓ Use microfiber cloth when no cleaner is used, soft or microfiber if cleaner is used. Be careful with paper towels. They can leave fine scratches on the screen.
- ✓ Use air to blow out and unblock vents, use brushes for badly clogged holes. Vents may require disassembly if the blockage is exceptionally bad.
- ✓ Check cables and connectors for damage and corrosion.

Keyboard Cleaning

- ✓ May require some disassembly to get into the worst areas.
- ✓ Use canned or compressed air to blow out dust and débris between the keys.
- ✓ Use wipes to clean the keys if possible.
- ✓ Use cleaner if wipes are not available, but again do not spray *directly* on the keyboard.
- ✓ Wipe gently because you can clean off the ink on the keys.
- ✓ If air fails, use brushes to get into the hard-to-reach areas.
- ✓ Check the cable and connector for damage and corrosion.
- ✓ Check keys for sticking. You may have to remove and clean individual keys.

Case Cleaning

- ✓ Unplug your PC, or, if it's a laptop, remove the battery if possible before cleaning!
- ✓ Use wipes to clean the case if available. When using a cleaner, remember my earlier warning: *avoid spraying in areas where it can run into the case*. I recommend soft cloth for clear areas because paper towels can leave microscopic scratches.
- ✓ Use air to blow out blocked vents.
- ✓ Disassembly will most likely be needed to get inside and do a good cleaning.
- ✓ Vacuum or blow out dust and dust bunnies, or as in my case, all the critter hair. This is very necessary if your machine sits low to the ground or on the floor. Removing fans if possible is the best way to clean them, but sometimes this is not possible. Hit them with air, and clean with a brush or cloth if the fan is sturdy enough to handle a brush/cloth. If possible, use cleaning wipes, or cleaner. Again, avoid spraying directly on it. If the fan is making noise, you may be able to use the lubricant on it. If you lube it, the best way is removal of the fan from the case. Let it dry. Use as little lube as possible, the excess can get all over the place and cause problems. If the fan is noisy and cannot be repaired, replace it!
- ✓ When cleaning motherboards and other electronic boards, be cautious. Use air and a vacuum first. Be gentle because you can damage components. If a board must be wiped with a cleaner, use electronic-safe chemicals such as alcohol, or mass air flow sensor cleaner, which will not leave a conductive film. Use an anti-static brush or cloth to clean gently.
- ✓ Check the wiring and connectors for damage and corrosion.
- ✓ If a component shows damage, is so dirty you can't clean it, or is showing signs of failure, such as swollen (leaky) capacitor, replace if possible. Replacing a 75¢ capacitor is cheaper than a \$200 motherboard! (This may require soldering skills.)
- ✓ Some switches can be cleaned and lubed. Remove, if possible, to get the best results. If

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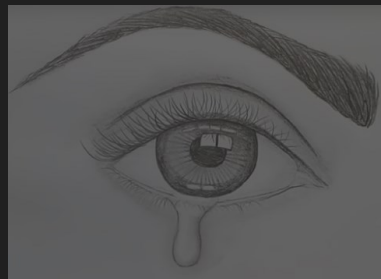
The DMA COMPUTER MUSEUM is seeking the following volunteers:

- Videographer/Video Editor.
- Still Photographer.
- A Web team to maintain the anticipated DMA Computer Museum site.
- Database Designer/Editor.
- Data Entry.
- People who are interested in exhibit preparation and construction.
- Museum Docents.

If you are interested in helping the DMA to serve the community better, please complete the form at <https://www.dma1.org/museum/> and tell us how you would like to help the DMA Computer Museum. (Also see our ad on page 13 [inside rear cover].)

Amazon has discontinued “Smile” at the end of February. This popular program permitted Amazon customers to have a small percentage of their purchases contributed to any nonprofit organization (including DMA). Accordingly, THE DATABUS discontinued our hyperlink to Smile in the January issue. However, many *local* businesses, especially supermarkets such as Kroger or Dorothy Lane Markets, have similar programs, and we encourage DMA members to use these.

Final



notice!

(SPRING CLEANING—Continued from page 6)

they are bad and cannot be repaired, replace. (Soldering skill may also be needed here.)

- ✓ USB ports, power ports, and card readers can be hard to clean. You can buy kits that will help. You can try blowing them out, carefully using a dental pick or a brush to clean it. If you use a cleaner again use it carefully because it can get into the case.

Cleaning Up Software and Hard (or Solid-State) Drive

- ✓ The programs mentioned at the end of this article are ones that I prefer to use. Please feel free to add to my suggestions.
- ✓ Things needed for software cleaning:
 - Internet connection to download needed updates and software
 - USB drive for machines that do not have internet connection
 - Information on correct use of software and updates.
 - System information to download correct software and information.

Updating Software and Hardware Software

No PC or laptop cleanup is complete without software updates and removal of unwanted or obsolete software (sometimes called “bloatware”).

- ✓ In order to do some of these updates you will need to know the manufacturer and model number of your PC or laptop, motherboard, or hard drive.
- ✓ Go to the manufacturer’s Web site and download the updated BIOS/firmware version if applicable. Make sure also to download any software needed to update as well. Updating the BIOS/firmware can solve problems or add capabilities to the machine or hardware.
- ✓ Operating system (OS) updates, can be automatic or self-installed. The updates sometimes will include driver updates as well. Pay attention to the driver version, sometimes it is older or newer than the one you will find on the manufacturer’s site. If it is older, you may consider the next steps.
- ✓ Manufacturer device drivers can fix problems or add capabilities. These can either come from the PC manufacturer, or the device manufacturer. Some PC’s will only allow a driver from their manufacturer to function. Example: HP and Dell will only allow their device drivers to install. You may use a non-modified driver, but you may be obliged to install it manually.
- ✓ Update any third-party software such as those for mice, video and sound cards, control software etc. These can fix glitches and maybe add capabilities or more precise control.
- ✓ Update any software you have installed on your system. This includes video players, Adobe products, office suites, antivirus etc. This will again fix any bugs and may add features and capabilities to the software.

Hard/Solid-State Drive and OS Cleanup

- ✓ Use any of the suggested software and suggestions with caution and at your own risk.
- ✓ Uninstall any unused or trial software. If you don’t use it, and you have the means to reinstall later, get rid of it. You can free up drive space and if it is something that runs in the background, free up resources.
- ✓ Get rid of bloatware, there are programs that do this, if you know of any please suggest. If you like the challenge as I do, google all the programs you do not recognize in your app list, and uninstall, as necessary. If you do not know what it does, and cannot find any info when you Google it, *leave it alone*. It could be important.
- ✓ Use any of the suggested software and suggestions with caution and at your own risk.
- ✓ When you use any of these programs, please make sure to use a system restore point, and

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(SPRING CLEANING—Continued from page 8)

quarantine options. This is just in case the program removes a needed file or registry key.

- ✓ Run Windows or OS disk cleanup program. Running this along with a third-party disk cleanup program will hit different areas and may free up more space.

Software speed up — update, update, update!

- ✓ Run third program to clean out the registry
- ✓ Run a third party defragment/trim program [EDITOR'S NOTE: Most operating systems will write new material to any vacant spot on the hard drive. On older hard drives with a lot of preëxisting material, this may result in, for example, a document's being scattered in fragments throughout the disk. The user, however, "sees" this as a unified text. But the task of stitching the document together takes extra time and energy, slowing down the PC, and wearing out its hard drive. "Spinners," that is, old-fashioned drives with an actual physical disk, should be periodically defragmented. In other words, documents and programs ought to be in contiguous zones of the disk. Defragmentation is meaningless for solid-state drives (SSD's), which have no moving parts. "Trimming," a process analogous (similar but not identical) to defragmentation, is used for SSD's.]
- ✓ Use Task Manager (built in to Windows) or a third-party program to turn off or disable startup programs for a faster boot up.
- ✓ Use Task Manager, system services, or third-party programs to turn off unneeded background programs.
- ✓ Consider using a less resource-intensive version of a program such as antivirus. Do your research to find the right program for you.

Speeding Up Your System via Hardware

Most modern APU processors and embedded video cards are good for basic use. APU and embedded video cards use system memory which is slower than dedicated video RAM in most cases. Consider updating to a dedicated video card if possible.

- ✓ Maximize your RAM! You can look up the limit set by the manufacture for the system or motherboard. The other factor is how much you want to spend!
- ✓ Windows 10 will on 1gigabyte of RAM, 4g is ok, optimal is 8g or more.
- ✓ Windows 11 will run on 1g but it may not install without mods with 1g. 4g is the minimum it will install without mods, runs OK. 8g is better for just surfing and basic use. 16g+ is best for gaming or heavy-duty use. Keep in mind embedded video and APU use system memory, so by increasing the RAM, you free up more RAM for other programs to use as well as increasing video capabilities.

System speed up.

- ✓ Update your "spinner" to a SSD drive.
- ✓ Get a faster NVME drive or SSD. If your system is capable of a 4th generation NVME drive, and you are running a 3rd generation, consider an upgrade.




Some Additional Things to Consid

- ✓ If you are running an older OS such as Windows 8.1 or older, they are at end life and in most cases will not be able to be updated. Most programs like Google Chrome will not update on these systems. If you are using these, you may leave yourself at risk.
- ✓ Check to see you can update your OS for free, if you are running Windows 7 or 8, you can

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DMA Calendar of Events, 16 April through 20 May, 2023.

(Click anywhere on the calendar, then scroll down for a fully updated version at our Web site.)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Apr 16	Apr 17 <i>World Amateur Radio Day</i> 	Apr 18	Apr 19	Apr 20 INFOSEC Linux SIG 7:00pm 348 Russ Eng Wright State Univ. Colonel Glenn Hwy Beavercreek	Apr 21 INFOSEC Python Self-Study 2:00pm, Online PyFri Discord See http://d8ndl.org	Apr 22 <i>Earth Day</i> 
Apr 23	Apr 24 r	Apr 25 MAIN MEETING 7:00pm Online -AND- TJ Chumps 7050 Executive Blvd Huber Heights	Apr 26	Apr 27	Apr 28 Python Self-Study 2:00pm, Online PyFri Discord See http://d8ndl.org	Apr 29
Apr 30	May 1 DMA Trustees 7:00pm Online	May 2	May 3	May 4 Genealogy SIG 6:30pm Online gen-sig@dma1.org	May 5 STIR TREK Python Self-Study 2:00pm, Online PyFri Discord See http://d8ndl.org	May 6 Classic Computers 3:00pm By phone
May 7	May 8 Network SIG 6:00pm Conf Rm Wlmngtn-Stroop Lib 3980 Wilmington Pike Dayton	May 9 Investment SIG 7:00pm Online investment-sig@dma1.org	May 10 Dayton Dynamic Languages 7:00pm Innovation Hub / online http://d8ndl.org	May 11 NASAC 6:00pm Hustead Fire Dept. 6215 Springfield- Xenia Springfield	May 12 Python Self-Study 2:00pm, Online PyFri Discord See http://d8ndl.org	May 13 SBC SIG 2:00pm DARA Clubhouse 6619 Bellefontaine Huber Heights
May 14 	May 15	May 16	May 17	May 18 Linux SIG 7:00pm 348 Russ Eng Wright State Univ. Colonel Glenn Hwy Beavercreek	May 19 HAMVENTION Python Self-Study 2:00pm, Online PyFri Discord See http://d8ndl.org	May 20 HAMVENTION Classic Computers 3:00pm By phone

(SPRING CLEANING—Continued from page 9)

update to Windows 10 for free using the keys for those OS's.

- ✓ Windows 11 is a free update to 7, 8, and 10 as well. Although if you want to do an install with an unsupported system you must use a modified install to complete the task.

Some Suggested Programs for Cleanup ...

Belarc Advisor (free and pay versions are available — the link is to the free one) Belarc gives you the name and model number of your PC, names and serial numbers of all software, plus license numbers and installation codes (the series of letters and numbers you must type in before installing an item — sometimes the license and installation numbers are identical). It also checks for installed *and* uninstalled OS and software updates, including updates to Belarc itself. It tells you how much random-access memory (RAM) you have installed, the type of RAM, and if you have unused sockets for installing additional memory. Belarc also scans your local area network (LAN) if you have one.

CCleaner (free and pay versions are available — the link is to the free one) Even the free version has a number of useful utilities. There's a registry cleaner that checks for unused registry keys and references that refer to nothing (often left behind after uninstalling software). The registry cleaner will save the previous registry in case of errors. [EDITOR'S NOTE: I've been using CCleaner's registry cleaner for many years now without a single error. Nonetheless, I urge readers always to back up the old registry before cleaning it.] You can also see a list of programs that automatically start with your PC. Since "startup" programs continually run in the background, they often drain resources from other applications. You can keep such programs from running automatically without removing them, so they are available when needed. There's also a performance optimizer and a driver updater. (Drivers are small programs that connect your machine with "peripheral devices," for example, your keyboard, mouse, monitor, and printer.)

...TDB



ABOUT THE DAYTON MICROCOMPUTER ASSOCIATION, Inc. (DMA)

By Peter HESS, DMA President, 2018-2020

ALMOST FIFTY YEARS AGO, a small group of computer enthusiasts from the Dayton, Ohio area gathered around a kitchen table looking at, and playing with, an early personal computer called the Altair 680 that one of them had purchased. This computer had been featured earlier on the cover of the January 1975 issue of *Popular Electronics* magazine. Paul Allen had shown the selfsame article about the Altair to Bill Gates, and later, they wrote software together for that computer. Still later — and still together — Allen and Gates founded the Microsoft Corporation.



Shortly thereafter, those Dayton-area computer enthusiasts joined with many others to form THE DAYTON MICROCOMPUTER ASSOCIATION (DMA), now one of the oldest (if not *the* oldest) continuously operating computer user groups in the world. Typically, computer user groups, and the newer iteration, technology user groups, are volunteer-run operations. The DMA is an all-volunteer led, organized, and run 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Now, there are hundreds of computer (or technology) user groups in the world, all of which continue to foster improved communication between technological equipment and software publishers, and users of their products. User groups (both computer and technology) provide an environment where more experienced technology users introduce additional and advanced techniques to novices.

DMA offers both monthly General Membership Meetings, which cover new and innovative topics including a wide range of generic technological topics, and its Special Interest Groups (SIGs) which address concerns about specific technology interests. There are eight different SIGs sponsored by the DMA, covering such topics as the Linux operating system, various programming languages such as Python, the use of technology to investigate genealogy, and digital aids to investing. Neither SIG members nor attendees at DMA General Meetings need be members of the parent organization, though they are encouraged to join so DMA can continue providing its services to the public.

Annual dues for DMA membership, which have not been raised for decades, are \$25 for Regular Members, and \$12.50 for Family/Associate Members (someone living at the same address as a Regular Member). Nonvoting Student Memberships are *free* to students through age 22. Door prizes at General Meetings, picnics, banquets, and other DMA events, and a variety of both product and service discounts are available to all DMA members.

... TDB

Spring Cleaning?

DO YOU have an “old friend,” a loved example of technological equipment needing a new home?

Would you like to tell us about how you benefited through the use of that product?

The DMA COMPUTER MUSEUM has already received many donations from some early DMA members, and we are looking for more. As well as needing your old friend, we want to know about how you used the equipment. We are not afraid of having several copies of the same brand and model number of legacy equipment. Our goal is to have quality



exhibit space filled with apparatus that works and can be part of many interactive displays.

We are also looking for software and computer product branded merchandise.

While the DMA Computer Museum is not yet ready to have an open house to display our many exhibits, we do have a dry, climate-controlled, secure workshop where we are storing recent donations. The present DMA Computer Museum outreach, which the DMA has offered for over forty years, will continue while we look for a building to house our museum exhibits, workshop, storage, and classroom space.

If you have something which you feel can help the DMA Computer Museum to serve the computing community better, please complete the form at <https://www.dma1.org/museum/> and tell us what you would like to donate to the DMA Computer Museum.

- ✓ Please tell friends or family members of the intended plans to help the DMA to serve the computing community better.
- ✓ Please add the DMA to your will or to other planned giving arrangement.

If the you wish, we would be happy to give you credit for your donation — at the very least on signage which accompanies the equipment exhibit. We want to know your computing story.

The DMA Computer Museum is specifically looking for this equipment, as well as much more:

- ◆ LexisNexis UBIQ
- ◆ IBM AT

One of our museum curators will contact you about your donation.

If you aren't already...become a part of computing history.

—Peter Hess,

on behalf of the DMA Computer Museum Committee

Dayton Microcomputer Association Membership Form

Today's date ____/____/____

NEW Please credit the DMA member who recruited me: _____
 RENEW Contact information below is new Y N

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP

REGULAR
 Name _____ Home / Work (____) ____ - ____
 Email _____ Mobile Phone (____) ____ - ____

ASSOCIATE Family Associate membership is for a family member living at the same address as a Regular member. Name of Regular member: _____
 Name _____ Home / Work (____) ____ - ____
 Email _____ Mobile Phone (____) ____ - ____

STUDENT Free Student membership is available to those under 22 years of age, enrolled full-time in a program of higher education. Name of School: _____
 Name _____ Home / Work (____) ____ - ____
 Email _____ Mobile Phone (____) ____ - ____

Home Address _____
 City _____ State ____ Zip _____

INTERCHANGE

Skills & interests you might share with DMA _____
 What you hope DMA will provide _____

SHELL ACCOUNT A shell account on the DMA web server provides file storage, hosting of a personal non-commercial website, @dma1.org email alias (forwarding address), all for a one-time fee of \$10. A username must be 8 alpha characters. The usual default is last name and first initial, no caps or punctuation. DMA reserves the right of final decision on all usernames: 1st choice _____ 2nd choice _____

DUES AND FEES

Regular membership	\$25.00 x <input type="checkbox"/> 1yr <input type="checkbox"/> 2yr <input type="checkbox"/> 3yr	\$ _____
Family Associate membership	\$12.50 x <input type="checkbox"/> 1yr <input type="checkbox"/> 2yr <input type="checkbox"/> 3yr	\$ _____
Student membership	FREE	\$ 0.00
One-time setup fee for Shell account	\$10.00	\$ _____
Total		\$ _____

**Note: \$10.00 fee will be charged for any returned checks*

Make your check payable to: **Dayton Microcomputer Association, Inc**
 Mail check and application to: **PO Box 4005**
Dayton OH 45401-4005
 Or use Paypal to send your payment to: **membership@dma1.org**

DMA use only

Member# _____ Exp ____/____ [] Cash [] Check# _____ [] Paypal Proc by _____
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