



mbug-pc newsletter

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**Just when you thought
they were DEAD ...**



**Supercomputers
Resurrected by Jim Hinwood
on page 11**

**Kristen
Knutson**

MBUG-PC
Program Chair
[mcle@msn.com/](mailto:mcle@msn.com)
www.mbug.org



Interactive MBUG

This month's First Friday General Meeting will consist of a panel of speakers: **Jim Hinwood, Jack Lewtschuk, Nick Mertes, Clive Sanders and Bob Stephan**, all seasoned computer users and mostly long-time MBUG-PC veterans.

In the late '80s and early '90s, those of us who were computing were anxious to make sure that we had the latest hardware and software. As time progressed, changes in equipment continued speeding along. However, some of us may have become less ready to keep up with technology, as long as our computers and software programs permitted us to do what we had liked to do.

Periodically, we have to decide a myriad of key questions relating to our respective computer worlds: Do we need the latest operating system? Is a flat screen really necessary? Is our CPU (central processing unit) powerful enough to do the job? Is there something we can do to upgrade our computer to tackle editing videos, playing complicated games or manipulating intricate graphics? If we decide to invest in a new machine, what should its components be? What should I do with my old computer? Keep it? Sell it? Donate it? If I keep it, how should I use it? If I sell it, how much should I ask for it? If I donate my computer, to whom should I give it and where are they located? Our panel will discuss these and other matters, drawing upon the active participation of fellow MBUG-PC members and computer users, all with varied experiences, expertise and opinions. We hope you will not only attend, but actively ask questions and, yes, contribute to the answers when you have them.

You can suggest topics to any of our panelists ahead of time at: ehinwood@msn.com (Jim Hinwood), blacklion@royal.net (Jack Lewtschuk), nick@mbay.net (Nick Mertes), simbacli@pacbell.net (Clive Sanders) and bstephan@redshift.com (Bob Stephan). See you Friday! ♦

General Meeting:

Friday, June 6, 2003 at 7pm

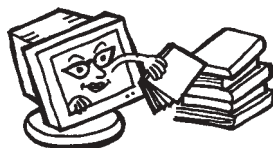
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Allow 10 to 12 weeks for magazines to start. Renewals: you must supply an address label from your present subscription to insure the correct start. As an extra service I will mail a renewal notice about 4 months prior to the expiration date.

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3 good reasons to join MBUG-PC?
Free computer help, a GREAT Newsletter and a 15 - 20% Discount on all Computer Books at Borders Bookstores!
Show your MBUG-PC Membership card at time of purchase. For a card, see Don Slaiter at any MBUG-PC General Meeting.

DRIVING THE FRONTSIDE BUS

**Jim
Hinwood**
MBUG-PC
Columnist &
Features
Editor



photo: R. Binsacca, MBUG-PC

SCRUB THAT COMPUTER CLEAN

I am always looking for a simple elegant solution to PC problems, a utility that works beautifully and makes my life easier. A few months ago we had a gentleman do a Friday presentation on how to clean up your computer to keep it running smoothly and I thought at the time it was complicated, and that a simple alternative was available. I've used a program called *Window Washer* for three years and it does with one click what it took an hour to explain at that meeting. One click will remove:

- Document History
- Windows Find and Search History
- Windows Run History
- Temporary Files Directory
- Scandisk Temp Files
- Recycle Bin
- MS Office Tracks (Access, Excel, Photo Editor, PowerPoint, Outlook, Word)
- Windows Media Player
- Internet Explorer (cache history, cookies, downloaded program files directory)
- AOL/CompuServe drop down list and cache, IE auto-complete form data)
- Netscape

This program will also overwrite everything deleted up to ten times for

Privacy if desired. There are 150 plugins available for third party software so that you can clean these applications also. For example the latest are for Real Player, Opera, and the Google tool bar history. *Window Washer* can be set to automatically "run a wash" when you open or close Windows. You need to clean these things regularly to prevent your computer from grinding to a halt. It's a lot of work to manually do all this and it's so easy to just click once on *Window Washer*. The program is free for 30 days to try and then \$29.95 to buy it. It has to be one of the best programs I've ever purchased. You can find it at <http://www.webroot.com/wb/index.php>.



YOUR COMPUTER CAN TALK

If your eyes are tired at the end of the day and you want to kick back on the couch, be decadent and have your e-mail read to you by your British butler, there are two programs that will do the job. *Read Please 2003* provides two versions, one is a free program that will read any text cut and pasted into the window of the program. You are supplied with four different voices for free and though slightly mechanical, they are not bad and you get used to them quickly. *Read Please Plus* is the upgraded version (\$49.95). *Text Aloud MP3* doesn't have a free version, just a trial period, but it is quite a bit cheaper at \$24.95 and more versatile than *Read Please Plus* if you buy the upgraded version. You can convert text to a wave or MP3 file,

PRESIDENT'S CORNER



**Ann
Mack
is on
Vacation
in Russia!
She'll be
back in
the July
issue!**

photo: B. Hoyer, MBUG-PC

download it to your MP3 player and take it with you for a walk, a feature not available in *Read Please*. Many will find that the free version of *Read Please* is enough for occasional use. You can have it read your e-mail to you, or use it to listen to downloadable books. *Project Gutenberg* has over 6,000 e-books you can download for free and I was able to get a few chapters at a time pasted into the free program (you are limited to 16,000 bytes).

AT&T's *Natural Voices* can be purchased to use with both *Read Please Plus* and *Text Aloud MP3* (\$25 with *Read Please* and \$15 with *Text Aloud*). The "natural" voices are really excellent and a big improvement over the standard voices supplied. Both of its versions can read to you in seven different languages and it automatically places the text into the program window from the clipboard and starts reading. Also, *Text Aloud* is not limited in size so you can put a whole book into the program all at once. You may find that the free version of *Read Please* is enough for you but if you decide to upgrade, *Text Aloud* is cheaper and has more features. You can find both at: <http://readplease.com/> <http://www.nextup.com/> ♦

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MEETING REVIEW

**Regina
Doyle**
Publishing
Editor



photo: B. Hylet, MBUG-PC

At May's General Meeting, we had great luck to have **Dean Karengin** of **Phydeaux Multimedia**.

Dean's company provides complete custom computer business systems, website development, and network design and support, specialising in Unix and Windows integration. Dean's passion however is computer sight and sound and is a self-admitted computer geek. He downloads music, games and movies for what he calls "fun" but it looks like quite a serious undertaking to us but we were happily swept away with his obsession. Dean's computer looked and sounded GREAT, but says the sound and video cards he uses are not much different from what we can get for our little home computers and by investing in good speakers (starting at \$30), we too could get hooked. He spent a lot of time coaxing us to see our PC's as powerful but vastly under-utilised tools which ought to be used, not just for work, but for serious play.



Free stuff

It was music to our ears to hear that a lot of audio/visual software is available off the Internet for free. Dean ran through different types of movie and sound media but we spaced out at these technical details, only waking up when he asked, "do you want to know how to get music files?" He said the best way is through Usenet (also called

"online anarchy"), worldwide discussion systems that allow peer-to-peer (P2P) contact. Usenet allows computers to be connected directly to each other to share music, games, videos and other electronic files. The most famous, or infamous, of these is **Napster**.

The dangers with some P2P systems are that they allow spyware, adware and malware to enter your computer (see a detailed warning on this in the May 2003 *MBUG-PC Newsletter*, page 12) so that someone can watch and record what you do and when you do it every time you connect to the Internet. Also, there are legal issues involved in downloading music and video "for free". Dean explained "The Law and File Downloads", and also advised that paid subscription P2P services are safer and entirely legal.

Music software

Dean recommends *Kazaa* and *KazaaaLite* as good choices in free music download software. He says they install like any other software over the Internet but are designed for "people who have no experience ... and don't want any." Music files are set up for you by category and it includes a video player.

Dean also praised *Winamp* software. It creates "playlists" (lists of song titles) which you can use "as is" or customise using an editor that allows you to play songs in a specific order or let the computer randomly "shuffle" the order in which titles are played. Dean also really, really likes the fact that *Winamp* comes with different "skins" (the visual design of the popup screen which mimics a CD player machine).

Music Match 7.5 is another freebie that Dean says can be used to turn CDs into MP3 files (and create and edit playlists). He recommends the free over the costs-money version, as the "bells and whistles" it comes with are unnecessary.

Video downloading

We got a rapid overview of video downloading: although it's now possible to get entire feature films off the Internet, this is illegal (downloading clips and trailers are OK, but not entire movies). To legally see films on your computer, buy or rent CDs or "stream" them. This is where movies are run in and out of your computer in a continuous electronic stream from the Internet. You watch and hear them, but you don't download and store them in your machine (and yes, it's possible to "capture" streamed video using available software, but it's illegal)! And you don't need DSL to stream because, since you're not uploading and storing, the images and sound can travel easily through ordinary Internet lines. Some streaming media websites mentioned by Dean were **Real Player**, **Windows Media Player** and **QuickTime**.

Of course I'm skipping all the technical stuff, but if you're intrigued by the thought of hearing and seeing more on your home computer, maybe we'll get Dean back by popular demand?

High praise to Dean but also many thanks go to Features Editor Jim Hinwood for making this excellent presentation possible. Jim modestly declares that he was "just helping" Kristen Knutson (who is *still* looking for a replacement due to other work pressures). It was worth all Jim's calls, scheduling and sweating! ♦

ReginaDoyle@aol.com

THINGS, THINGLETS & THINGASSOS

S. Jack Lewtschuk
MBUG-PC
Columnist
& Immediate
Past President



photo: R. Binsacca, MBUG-PC

GOOD (?) NEWS ABOUT VIRUSES

U.K.-based **Sophos Plc**, the fourth-largest anti-virus technology firm, said it has been seeing more viruses and their cousin, the self-propagating worm, infecting computers in 2003, but their occurrence was not expected to accelerate significantly.

Sophos reports that they expect only about 600-800 new viruses per month in 2003, same as in 2002, down from 2001 when the rate was 700-900 per month. Aren't we lucky?! There are now approximately 800,000 viruses in existence.

"Virus writers are most interested in creating the next super Windows worm, spread by e-mail or instant messaging, as these mass-mailing viruses carry the greatest impact," **Graham Cluley**, senior technology consultant at Sophos, told a news conference. *"We expect more executable e-mail-aware worms this year, while more viruses are written which use instant messaging services."* Sophos also expects to see a rise in the number of so-called "Backdoor Trojans," which open up holes in operating systems enabling hackers to implant Remote Access Tools (RATs) that can operate an infected computer by remote control.

NEW MATH

International Data Corporation predicts that the volume of Internet traffic generated by end users worldwide will nearly double annually over the next five years, increasing from 180 Petabits per day in 2002 to 5,175 Petabits per day by the end of 2007. To put these figures into perspective, the entire printed collection of the Library of Congress amounts to only 10 terabytes of information. By 2007, IDC expects Internet users will access, download, and share the

information equivalent of the entire Library of Congress more than 64,000 times over, every day.

Terabyte = One trillion bits
(1,000,000,000,000)

Petabit = 1,000 terabytes

On the other hand, in **2002, 15 billion wooden pencils were sold.** What happened to the "paperless society"? I'll bet you've bought more paper since the day you bought your first computer.

STUCK E-MAIL MESSAGE(S)- SBC

Although this applies to SBC subscribers, similar instructions are available for others via their ISP (Internet Service Provider).

Dilemma: Your computer starts downloading an e-mail message, but cannot complete this function.

Possible cause: The message is too large or corrupted.

Cure: Use your SBC "E-Mail Management Tool":

1. Visit the link <http://tools1c.rcsntx.sbis.net/cgi-bin/pop-check.cgi?service=pacbell>
2. Enter your user ID and password
3. Click on "Check mail"
4. Click on "Advanced"
5. Place a checkmark before an e-mail, which you want to delete
6. Click on "Delete selected messages"

I also suggest that you send test e-mail to the SBC auto responder at test@sbcmailtest.com to verify whether you are able to send and receive e-mail. Sending a message to your self might be a good idea also. If you are not a SBC subscriber, check with your ISP for the appropriate addresses and URLs. ♦

blacklion@royal.net



LOOKING BACK AT MBUG-PC

Pete Petit

MBUG-PC Columnist



20 YEARS AGO

Let's review some of the software that was popular at the beginning of the PC era...

In the early 1980s a new computer loaded only with DOS needed a lot of help to get useful work accomplished. The closest thing to a word processor in DOS was **EDLIN**, a line-at-a-time editor. There was no Solitaire game or any game of any kind included. Chances are the user was too busy dealing with the quandaries of DOS or perhaps debugging a short utility program written in assembly language. But, there were useful programs out there if you had the money for the big expensive applications and/or the patience to type in the code for free utilities, which were regularly, published in the PC enthusiast magazines. Lets look at some of the big names:

■ **VisiCalc:** Written in 1979 by first-year Harvard Business School student **Dan Bricklin** and **Bob Frankston** of MIT, VisiCalc was a blessing to Wall Street users who had bought the first microcomputers two years earlier. Running initially on the Apple II and nearly single-handedly creating the demand for the machine, VisiCalc established the spreadsheet as a staple application. It set the stage for **SuperCalc**, **MultiPlan**, and, most important, **Lotus 1-2-3** on the IBM PC in 1983. [Note: The original VisiCalc program that ran on the IBM PC in 1981 still runs on today's PCs. You can download it to your PC and run it under Windows or DOS. I just ran it on my WindowsXP system. It is only 27,520 bytes long (smaller than many GIFs and JPGs on the web). To download, go to www.bricklin.com/history/vcexecutable.htm and follow the instructions (remember to save/rename your download as "VC.COM").]

■ **WordStar:** While writing programs on the **Altair**, **Michael Shraye** hit upon the idea of writing the manuals on the same machine. **Electric Pencil** was born, the first microcomputer word processor. But the first program to exploit the market potential was **Seymour Rubinstein's** 1979 masterpiece, WordStar. Many other programs took

up WordStar-compatible keyboard commands such as the many Ctrl-K "block" conventions.

■ **dBase II:** **Wayne Ratliff's** creation **dBase**, written to manage a company football pool, was the first serious database management system for CP/M. **Ashton-Tate's** dBase II, which shipped November 1981 in its DOS incarnation, was a massive success. Ashton-Tate, which had acquired dBase from Ratliff, began to lose the lead when it released the bug-ridden dBase IV in 1988. A Windows version (under the ownership of **Borland**) didn't appear until 1994, much too late. The dBase language survives in the form of **Xbase**, supported by vendors such as Microsoft and Computer Associates.

■ **AutoCAD:** **AutoDesk's** AutoCAD also started life as a CP/M application that was later moved to DOS and eventually made the transition to Windows. It brought CAD from minis and mainframes down to the desktop, one of the first programs to make that now-common migration. AutoCAD quickly became—and remains—an industry standard.

■ **Lotus 1-2-3:** **VisiCalc** may have sold Wall Street on the idea of electronic spreadsheets, but 1-2-3 that first shipped in January 1983 was the spreadsheet that Main Street wanted. When the IBM PC and XT took over the world, Lotus's simple but elegant grid was without question the top spreadsheet to run on them, adding graphics and data-retrieval functions to the paradigm established by VisiCalc. By the early 1990s Lotus would brag that 1-2-3 was the top-selling application of all time.

■ **The Norton Utilities:** Before **Peter Norton** rolled up his sleeves the bit twiddlers were on their own when it came to recovering lost clusters and managing other disk catastrophes. Twenty years later many of us still reach for Norton Utilities when something goes wrong with a disk.

■ **Flight Simulator:** To work its magic, Microsoft's simulation of an airplane's cockpit employed low-level graphics routines. It became a mainstay of software suites used to test compatibility with the IBM PC standard. It was also one of the best-selling games of all time.

■ **SideKick 1.0:** Besides being the first PIM (personal information manager), its pop-up notepad, calendar, and calculator made **Borland International's** SideKick the model for TSR (terminate and stay resident) programs—an application type that was relatively rare in 1984. Pop-up mini-apps became commonplace in the DOS era, but Windows' task switching killed the TSR market in the 1990s.

■ **PageMaker:** This program, released for the Apple Macintosh in July 1985 and for the PC in December 1986,

launched a million newsletters. PageMaker's paste-up metaphor also made sense to people who had worked in traditional design and production departments.

■ **DESQview 1.0:** Shipped by **Quarterdeck Office Systems** in July of 1985, this was a text based DESQview multitasking system. One could have several applications running ... each in its own DOS window on your display. No dragging and dropping from window to window, but still very handy in those days.

■ **QEMM (Quarterdeck's Extended Memory Manager):** was a highly popular program used to make extended memory (RAM) available to programs back when conventional, addressable memory was limited to 640K, much of that taken up by operating system overhead and TSRs.

■ **BASIC (Beginner's All-purpose Symbolic Instruction Code):** The **Apple II** introduced in April 1977 had built-in BASIC, Microsoft BASIC 8086 was announced at the National Computer Conference in June 1979. In 1982 Microsoft released GW-BASIC with advanced graphics capabilities. Back then most everyone first learned to program in BASIC and most computers came equipped with a basic interpreter. Hundreds of games and utilities were written in BASIC and modified by the next user who would likely peruse the source code to add a bell or change a whistle. [Almost as important: in November 1983 **Borland International** released **Turbo Pascal** for CP/M and 8086-based (PC) computers.]

[Note: the discussion above relies on several online sources including BYTE.com, DigitalCentury.com and [PCBiography at fortunecity.com/marina/reach/435/](http://PCBiography.atfortunecity.com/marina/reach/435/)]

10 Years Ago

MBUG's June '93 General Meeting featured a shootout at the MBUG Corral between **Bob Shanteau** demonstrating **Word Perfect 5.2 for Windows** and **Hugh Bayless** touting **AmiPro 3.0**. Each prepared the exact same document for printing. There were no serious wounds or injuries and after all the dust settled, all agreed that their favorite word processor was the one with which they were most familiar.

MBUG President Mike Hagerty devoted his column to discussing flight simulator programs, very much the rage back then, and the type of machines required to successfully and enjoyably run them. Mike suggested that when you had that sufficiently fast processor and video card and the 21 inch monitor that you might want to "*set up a fan to blow wind in your face.*"

Hugh Bayless discussed protecting your AUTOEXEC.BAT file from "unwanted" additions which may be inserted by newly installed programs. He suggested using an AUTOHIDE.BAT that would be called, with the CALL command, from the top of the AUTOEXEC file. AUTOHIDE.BAT would contain all of the "wanted" stuff.

Elsewhere in the June Newsletter Hugh reviewed **Central Point's PC Tool for Windows**, Borland's Quattro Pro 1.0 (spreadsheet) for Windows, **Broderbund's PC USA** (a U.S. atlas), and several diagnostic tools which were then available from **Landmark Research International Corp.** (**PC Certify**, **PC Probe** and **DiskBase**) Remember when the Landmark Speed Rating was included in every computer advertisement? In case you are counting, Hugh also reviewed a program called **Disk Technician Gold**.

A further discussion of disk caches and printer caches took up most of **Bob Stephan's "Frugal Hacker"** column. Bob also found time to review and recommend a book titled **Obfuscated C and Other Mysteries**.

In "**Cricket Clatter**", Sysop **Jim Robeson** wanted to be sure folks were aware that OS/2 Version 2.1 was available and suggested more MBUG members consider OS/2. Jim thought is a better choice than DOS or Windows.

And, speaking of sysops, **Karl Van Lear** in June of '83 was busy running his **Nitelog BBS**. He wrote a column for the June newsletter which lead with, "*I'm not sure when it happened, but seemingly overnight Internet became the network. Among the sea of email networks Internet has risen to reign supreme.*" Karl then went on to introduce Internet e-mail and Internet newsgroups to the reader. Times were a changin', but it would still be some time before Karl abandoned Nitelog to become developer and owner of **Redshift Internet Services**, one of our first local ISPs (Internet service providers).

Other contributions by members to the Newsletter included an **Ed West** review of **Peter Norton's PC Problem Solver, 2nd Edition**, then a favorite desktop reference book for DOS and Windows; and a **Mark Stotzer** review of Microsoft's new **Encarta Multimedia Encyclopedia** on CDROM, then \$395 list/\$250 street. ♦

ppetit@redshift.com



COMPUTER THOUGHTS

James Anway
MBUG-PC
Columnist,
F1 for Help,
Workshop
Leader



photo: R. Binsacca, MBUG-PC

OUTLOOK UPDATE

In **Outlook Express**, have you wondered why you can open some e-mail attachments and not others? It has something to do with the *default virus protection* in Outlook Express version 6.

While you are in Outlook Express, look on the menu bar and select “Tools”, “Options”, then under the “Security” tab, see if the default has been changed to check mark the “Virus Protection” option box. This specifies that you do not want Outlook Express to open or save attachments if they could potentially contain a virus.

Also on the menu bar, select “Tools” and “Options” then under the “General” tab, specify that you want the contents of the Inbox displayed when you first open Outlook Express. That is what I do.

Another option you can look at while you are there is setting your “spell checker” (if you have Microsoft Word or Excel installed). Note also, that in Outlook Express, when a message has a file attached to it, a paper clip icon is displayed next to it in the message list.

TO READ YOUR MESSAGES

After Outlook Express downloads your messages, or after you click the “Send/

Recv” button on the toolbar, you can read messages either in a separate window or in the preview pane. First click the “Inbox” icon on either the Outlook bar or the Folders list:

- To view the message in the preview pane, click the message in the message list
- To view the message in a separate window, double-click the message in the message list

TO CHANGE THE DISPLAY OF THE PREVIEW PANE

The preview pane lets you view message contents without opening the message in another window. To preview a message, click its title once. To open it in its own window, double-click the title. You can position the preview pane either below the message list or beside it; you can choose to display or hide the message header; or you can hide the preview pane entirely.

- On the “View” menu, click “Layout”
- In the preview pane area, select the options you want and then click “OK”

You can resize the preview pane and the message list by pointing to the divider between them until you see a double arrow, and then drag the divider up or down.

For security reasons, I recommend turning off the preview pane. This stops the auto opening of the last e-mail in the list in preview mode - it might be a piece of junk mail that contains a virus!

VIEWING ATTACHMENTS

Next you might be wondering how you now view those attachments. To view a file attachment:

- In the preview pane, click the paper clip icon in the message

header, then click the file name and then select “OPEN IT”.

■ When you open the message (not in the preview pane), at the top of the message window, double-click the file attachment icon in the message header.

■ So now the next step might be to save the attachment.

■ To save a file attachment in an open message, on the File menu, point to “Save Attachments” and then click the file name.

■ To save the attachment from the preview pane, click the paper clip icon, and then select “Save Attachments”. With most virus scan programs (at least in McAfee VirusScan7) when you try to save an attachment it first checks it for viruses and warns you if it finds one.

More Columns Can Be Seen

If you right-click on a column header (i.e. “from” or “subject”), a sub-menu box pops up and shows a list of columns that you can display in the main window. If a column is checked, it will be displayed in the main window. You can even change the order in which they are shown. ♦

janway@redshift.com

MBUG-PC VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Program Chair

■ Schedule guest speakers for
■ First Friday General Meetings

Meeting Reviewer

■ Attend First Friday General Meetings once a month and write up a one-page review
■ Interested? e-mail or call President **Ann Mack** at ahmack@sbcglobal.net

☎ 622-7669 ♦

WIRELESS INTERNET UPDATE

photo: R. Binsacca, MBUG-PC



John Rowe
MBUG-PC
Columnist

Wi-Fi Hotspot Service Providers Compared

Our buddies at **Network Magazine** just completed a sneaky comparison of the top ten Wi-Fi Hotspot service providers, and **Boingo Wireless** got the *Editor's Choice Award*. The hotspot service providers they compared were **AT&T Wireless, Boingo Wireless, Deep Blue Wireless, Gric Communications, Hotspotzz, iPass, Surf and Sip, T-Mobile, Toshiba** and **Wayport**. They gave Boingo the Editor's Choice Award because they liked the good coverage options, flexible pricing and innovative client software. Just a quick note, Boingo Wireless subscribers are welcome at **Bill Hyler's** The Wharf General Store's Wi-Fi hotspot! To see the complete comparison go to: <http://www.nwc.com/1409/1409f12.html>

Pay Phones with Wireless Links

Verizon is planning on equipping pay telephones with Wi-Fi access points by putting the gear around pay phones. This would allow laptop and handheld computer users to connect to the Internet via wireless technology. This may breathe new life into the lagging pay telephone business, and I think is a very cool idea overall. To see an article on this go to: <http://reuters.com/newsArticle.jhtml?type=internetNews&storyID=2715208>.

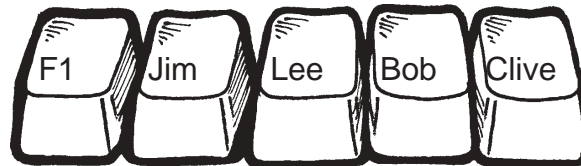
Wireless Coffee?

Bill Buckhout, owner of **The Bookworks** in Pacific Grove is offering wireless internet access to his customers in the coffee bar area. You can't beat the price as it's going to be offered free. I'm sure Bill is hoping to sell you a cup of coffee or a book at some time, but we like to support local business when we can anyway. Drop in with your laptop at 667 Lighthouse Avenue, Pacific Grove and check out the newest Wi-Fi connection! ♦

johnr@aaawifi.com

Computer Help is Just a Click or Call Away with F1

You know you push the "F1" button on your computer when you need help. But do you also know that you can call or e-mail **MBUG-PC "F1 for Help"** with your computer questions?



Our expert team of helpful volunteers

is willing and able to share experience on software and hardware. And if they don't know the answer, they'll direct you to someone who does.

To get computer help:

- (1) Contact any of the people listed below; or
- (2) Ask questions during any MBUG-PC meeting break or Q&A session; or
- (3) Leave a message at MBUG-PC's Answering Service (373-6245); or
- (4) Broadcast a message to all members through the MBUG-PC Listserv (mbug@listserv.redshift.com)
in plain text only (NO html, please)!

Services are free of charge (with the understanding that MBUG-PC, its Board of Directors, and the F1 Volunteers themselves are in no way responsible or liable for the accuracy or the outcome of any advice or suggestions).

■ Jim Anway

STRICTLY Wednesdays & Fridays
from 2pm to 5pm at 625-5618

■ Lee Keely

Prefers e-mail at leekeely@attbi.com
or call 626-8033

■ Bob Stephan

E-mail to bstephan@redshift.com
or call only between 9am-5pm
646-1899

■ Clive Sanders

E-mail to simbacli@pacbell.net
or call only between 1pm to 9pm
cellphone (831) 375-5376 ♦



MBUG-PC SUPPORTERS

James W. Anway

Retired IBMer
Computer Consultant

Phone: 831 625-5618
Fax: Call first

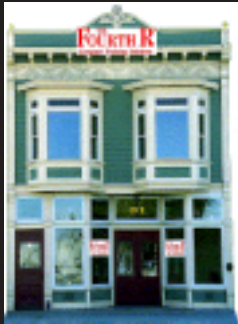


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Clive R. Sanders
Sanders and Associates

Computer Consultants

636 Spazier Avenue
Pacific Grove
California, 93950

Telephone: 831-375-5376
Fax: 831-375-1446
E-mail: simbacli@pacbell.net

Review: “Supercomputing Resurrected”

by Jim Hinwood, *MBUG-PC Newsletter Features Editor*

I recently ran across a magazine called *Technology Review*, Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s magazine of innovation (February 2003). The name of the article that caught my interest was called “*Supercomputing Resurrected*” by **Claire Tristram**. It talked about the shocking loss of dominance in supercomputers with the introduction of Japan’s **Earth Simulator**. The Earth Simulator built by **NEC** is the world’s fastest computer and it took four years and over 350 million dollars to build. Its resulting global-climate modelling created simulations that were far beyond the abilities of any other computer. Some people characterized this achievement as a “*publicity stunt*” using “*old technology*”. They downplayed the achievement saying, “*With 400 million to spend on a single computer, we could build something just as fast*”. But **Gordon Bell**, currently a senior researcher at **Microsoft**, believes that “*Japan’s achievement has exposed a gaping hole in the development of supercomputer systems in the United States.*”

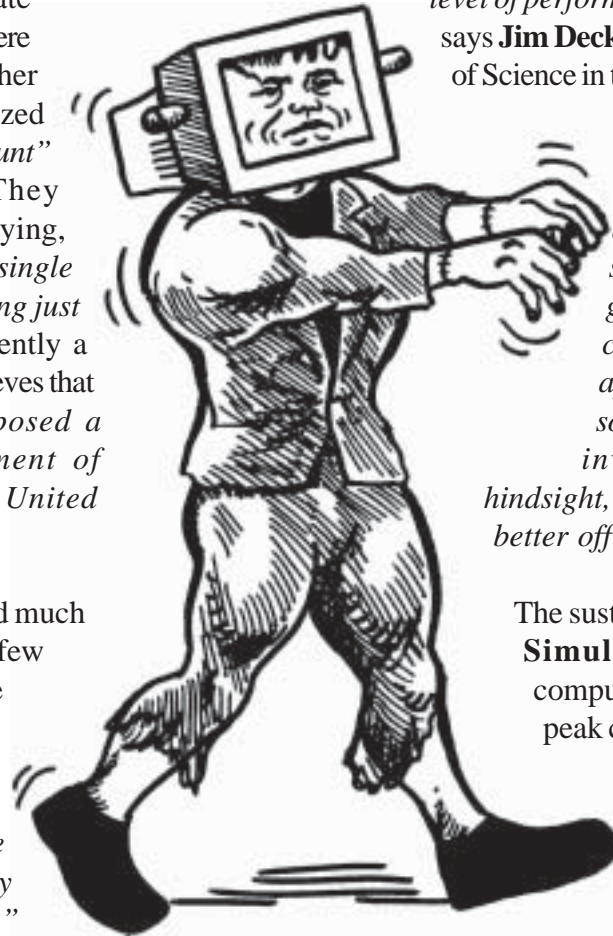
illustrations by R. Doyle, MBUG-PC

Many of us probably haven’t heard much talk of supercomputers in quite a few years. Not since the days of the gigantic **Cray Supercomputers** of the 70’s and 80’s have we heard much about them. **Tristram** says “*Our laptops, for instance, have the same capabilities as a Cray computer from the mid-1970’s.*” Since that time the US has taken a different approach, moving toward the notion of massively parallel systems made from off-the-shelf processors tying together huge networks of computers.

My son and I have played with an example of this when we set up the **SETI@home Screensaver**, which connects you up with four million volunteers to scan radio telescope data for patterns that might indicate alien intelligence. We had fun watching the radio-wave patterns from space play across

the screen and my son loved the idea that his computer might be the one to recognize alien transmissions through space. You send in your data every so often for centralized analysis and the power of connecting that many computers could carve decades off the time to process that much information.

Despite its usefulness in certain areas, the problem with this approach is that “*people have gotten enamored of the low cost for what sounds like a very high level of performance on commodity machines,*” says **Jim Decker**, Deputy Director of the Office of Science in the **Department of Energy**. “*But they aren’t really cheaper to build. We need to look at sustained performance, as well as the cost of developing software. Software costs are generally larger than hardware costs, so if there are hardware approaches that make it easy to solve the problem, we’re better off investing in hardware. In hindsight, I believe we would have been better off taking a different path.*”



The sustained performance of the **Earth Simulator**, which can crunch computations at up to 67 percent of its peak capacity over a sustained period, is so much greater than linking computers whose sustained performance is frequently below 5 percent. The cost of developing parallel software and the overwhelming cost of

the communications network to connect these seems to support Decker’s argument. Also these large machines can be built for specific applications with specialized architectures in a way that networks of machines cannot.

In the meantime, out of forty supercomputer developers in the 1980’s only Cray remains, and much of the expertise to build these computers has been lost. Recently Cray has developed a new vector computer, the **X1** that, loaded will



be 50 percent faster than the Earth Simulator, but customers are sceptical about depending on an architecture supported by one relatively small company and they have yet to sell a single machine of that power.

One of the reasons that the Japanese were able to develop the Earth Simulator was because of government funding, which hasn't been forthcoming in this country. Developers in this country have been left on their own till now. The need for more computational power to simulate nuclear explosions to take the place of underground testing will lead to more government spending soon. The Energy Department's **National Nuclear Security Administration** awarded **IBM** a three-year, 267 million dollar contract to build two supercomputers, **ASCI Purple** and **Blue Gene/L**, which are supposed to have more combined processing power than today's 500 fastest supercomputers put together. There are also a number of 3 million dollar government grants to supercomputer developers that may give new energy to the super computer industry. Cray's **Burton Smith** says, "*This really marks the end of a fairly long period where the government hasn't been involved in computer research and development.*"

So, why do we need such incredible speed and computational power, you might ask? The Energy Department's Jim Decker says, "*Science in the 21st century rests on three pillars. As always, there's theory and experiments. But simulation is going to be the third pillar for scientific discovery. Given the problems we're faced with, we clearly want to be at the cutting edge with our science.*" We will need supercomputers in order to do simulations that will test how greenhouse gases affect the global climate, weather models, and thunderstorms affecting global weather patterns, supersonic-airplane design, nanoscale physics, and nuclear fusion. One fusion experiment can take five to ten years, while these supercomputers could accelerate all these projects by decades, maybe finding the illusive fusion answer to our energy problems.

Science in many different areas stands to gain from the development of these computers and the sharing of information developed. These giant supercomputers (the Earth Simulator is the size of four tennis courts and is faster by a factor of 10 than the next fastest computer), could come back into favor and "*usher in a new golden age of science.*" ♦

ehinwood@msn.com

WINDOWS TIPS & TRICKS

compiled by
Clive Sanders
F1 for Help,
Columnist, Assistant
Membership Chair



As I take a break from leading our "Internet, E-mail & Beyond" workshop for a while, I recommend you keep up your Windows knowledge by occasionally visiting the **PC World** website (which I use to compile this column) at <http://www.pcworld.com/howto/>.

Enable Thumbnails

All Windows versions since Windows98 can show common graphics file types: .bmp, .gif, .jpg and in later versions of Windows, .tif, as thumbnails. Choose "View", "Thumbnails" from a folder's main menu bar or from its right-click menu. In Windows98 you won't see this menu option, but just press "backspace" to move up a folder level, right-click the folder that contains the images you want to see as thumbnails, and choose "Properties". In the "General" tab of the "Properties" dialog box, check "Enable thumbnail view" and click "OK." The next time you open this folder, you should see a "Thumbnails option" on your "View" menu.



Customize Thumbnail Size

Microsoft's free *Tweak UI* utility (part of the *PowerToys* collection) lets you change the size and quality of your thumbnails. If you don't already have this tool, download the version for WindowsXP. Double-click the downloaded file to start the installer. You don't have to install all the PowerToys however: use the custom set-up option to install *only Tweak UI*.

Follow the instructions in the set-up wizard until the process is complete; then choose "Start", "All Programs", "Powertoys for Windows XP", and "TweakUI for WindowsXP". In the left pane, double-click "Explorer" (or click the "+" next to it) and click "Thumbnails." Use the controls to adjust the size and quality of the thumbnail images to your liking. To save on disk space, use the lowest quality setting you find acceptable. ♦

simbacli@pacbell.net



“Sleeping With The Enemy”: MBUG-PC Gets Friendly with Club Mac

All those recent “make love not war” campaigns have finally gotten to us: MBUG-PC and CmoM (Club Macintosh of Monterey) have joined hands and are now offering mutual posting of each other’s linked logos on our respective websites. In a splendid display of cooperation and as a good first step in sharing mutual interests, **Ed West of MBUG-PC**, and **David Patterson of CMoM** have communicated, downloaded, massaged and posted the links. There are now fewer differences between PC’s and Macs than in the past since so much external hardware is connected by USB, and most major software titles run on both platforms. We look forward to this exciting new partnership and expect it will extend our mutual objectives to educate the public in computer understanding and use.

“Eating With The Enemy”: MBUG-PC to Picnic with Club Mac?

And we may soon even see the whites of their . . . teeth. If all goes according to plan, MBUG-PC are not only thinking of holding a **Second Annual Potluck Picnic at Pebble Beach on August 16th** (date and venue to be confirmed), but we are planning to make this a joint affair with Club Mac members joining in the festivities.

Comments? Queries?
Donations?
Volunteers?



Contact
Regina at ReginaDoyle@aol.com. ♦

Club Mac in Brief

Club Mac of Monterey was founded in 1984. **Robin Casady** (now of Casady and Greene, Inc.) was our first President, and the late **Richard Ware** was our first newsletter editor, with first printing of the *Club Mac of Monterey Journal* on an **ImageWriter**.

Early Club Mac meetings were held at Santa Catalina School, the Crossroads Community Room, MPC and, more recently, Pacific Grove High School. Now we hold General Meetings in the **Power Macintosh Lab of the Pacific Grove Adult School**. For the first time in our history we have true “hands on” applications on real computers available for everyone at every meeting. Fast T1 connection directly to the Internet is a special feature.

Like MBUG-PC, CMoM programs usually feature representatives from major software companies who provide demos, samples and products used for prizes and drawings. Our steady Apple Fellow is **Guy Kawasaki** whose humorous presentations of news and gossip in the computer industry and predictions of future developments make him one of our most popular speakers.

A variety of **special interest groups** (SIGS) have been held through the years. SIGS enable members with particular interests (such as beginners, users of specific applications or the Internet) to learn from each other so that all can improve their skills.

As a Macintosh user group, Club Mac of Monterey goes “way back”. It is the plan of Past Presidents **Cheryl Jencks, Michael Kohler** and **Marty Horton**, current President **Ron Brunet**, our **Executive Board** and **loyal membership**, that it go “way forward”. ♦

*Jean Stallings, Pat McCornack
& Bruce Belknop, CMoM*



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For each five paid subscriptions they receive with our group source code number 8181, *Smart Computing* will give MBUG-PC a free subscription. In turn we raffle this donation at our General Meetings and raise more money for computer-related community educational activities.

Get 36 issues for \$64, 24 issues for \$48 or 12 issues for \$29 by subscribing to: *Smart Computing*, PO Box 85380, Lincoln, NE 68501-9807 or call toll free 1-800-733-3809 or fax 1-402-479-2193. ♦

Every first Friday of the month we bring in a special guest speaker to introduce new services or products, give updates on existing programs, systems or security warnings.

General Meetings are always worth attending, and you could be the lucky winner of some great computer prizes too!

Just ask **Bernard Beerman** (MBUG-PC Member 1181) who was the lucky winner of the Maxtor USB 2.0 PCI Internal Adaptor card at the May raffle!

DONATE COMPUTER- RELATED PRIZES TO MBUG-PC

We rely on your generous donations to educate the general public in personal computer use.

If you have *new* software or *working* equipment that you can't use, MBUG-PC would be pleased to accept items for its fund-raising raffles.

Consult **Clive Sanders** regarding acceptable items and tax-deduction information

at simbacli@pacbell.net
or call (831) 375-5376 ♦

VIEWS FROM MY WINDOWS

Phil Shortell

Workshop Leader

Wednesday, June 11

7:00 to 9:00pm

Archer Park Center
Monterey



From menus to greeting cards to newsletters, I'll show you how **Microsoft Publisher 2000** can help you do it. We'll first explore the pre-defined layouts and graphics which come with the program. Then I'll show you some easy ways and neat tricks to import your own pictures and graphics for truly personal publications. You'll be designing like a professional design studio in no time.

Questions in advance? Contact me at (831) 753-7777 or e-mail pjs@FourthR-Salinas.com. ♦ **Phil**

WINDOWS

XP

NEW
WORKSHOP

James Anway

Workshop Leader

Wednesday, June 25

7:00 to 9:00pm

Archer Park Center
Monterey



photo: R.Binsacca

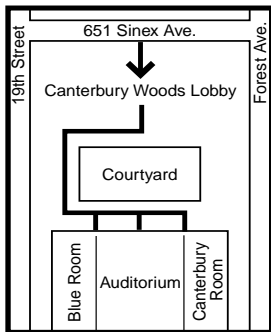
Come join me at our startup meeting of MBUG-PC's newest Windows XP Workshop. Whether you already have XP, or are thinking about upgrading, or are still skeptical about it, or are an open critic, come on in and let's talk about it. I'll start the ball rolling with some general thoughts, demonstrations and tips and we'll segue into whatever you want to know or what's hot at the moment. Beginner, intermediate and advanced users are welcome to join us and ask questions, trade answers and generally explore all things XP. Questions? Contact me at janway@redshift.com ♦

Jim

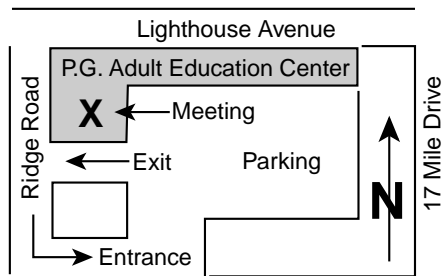
MBUG - PC Calendar of Events - June 2003

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|--------|---|--|----------|--|----------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 <i>DIRECTORS MEETING</i> Canterbury Woods PG Begins at 7pm <i>Everyone Welcome!</i> | 4 | 5 | 6 <i>General Meeting</i> Adult Ed Center PG 7:00 - 9:00pm <i>"MBUG-PC Panel: Buy, Upgrade or Recycle?"</i> | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 <i>"Views from My Windows"</i> Archer Park, Monterey 7:00 - 9:00pm <i>Phil Shortell</i> | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 <i>"WindowsXP"</i> Archer Park, Monterey 7:00 - 9:00pm <i>James Anway</i> | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | | | | | |

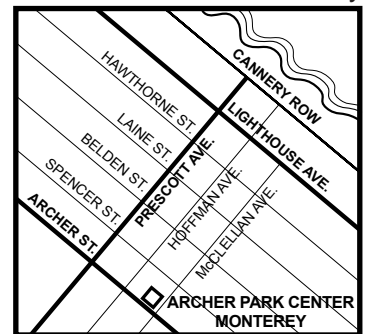
Canterbury Woods
651 Sinex Avenue
Pacific Grove



General Meeting Location
Adult Education Center, PG
1025 Lighthouse Avenue, Pacific Grove



Archer Park Center
542 Archer Street
Monterey



Tentative Calendar July 2003 *Please Check the July Newsletter for Final Dates & Times*

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|--------|---|--|----------|---|----------|
| | | 1 <i>DIRECTORS MEETING</i> Canterbury Woods PG Begins at 7pm <i>Everyone Welcome!</i> | 2 | 3 | 4 <i>Independence Day</i> | 5 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 <i>General Meeting</i> Adult Ed Center PG 7:00 - 9:00pm | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 <i>"Computer Hardware"</i> Archer Park, Monterey 7:00 - 9:00pm <i>Nick Mertes</i> | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | |



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Turn Empty Ink Cartridges into Donations

Carolyn Lake, Publicity Chair

The used ink cartridge saga continues. Thanks to your many contributions, we've collected more than 100 empty cartridges since February's General Meeting! Half have been shipped off as a trial package to an ink-refill manufacturer



who reuses the empty cartridges in trade shows and demos. We're just waiting for our reimbursement \$\$\$ to roll in!

We still want your **empty, original-equipment printer ink cartridges** (no compatible or remanufactured, please) to continue fundraising for MBUG-PC educational programs (and to delay dumping plastic in landfills). Put cartridges in a baggie and give them to me or any other Board Member at the General Meeting or any workshop. ♦

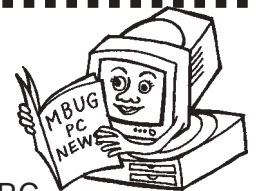
lakelyn@ix.netcom.com

Check your (upside down) label.

Does it say "Exp: June / 2003"?

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Check the expiration date of your MBUG-PC membership & newsletter subscription: Electronic \$20, US Mail \$25, both \$35. **Additional tax-deductible donations welcome!** Send name, address, telephone and e-mail address with your check to: Monterey Bay Users Group-PC, 177 Webster Street, #A-354, Monterey, CA 93940.



MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Don Slaiter

Vice President, Assistant Treasurer & Membership Chair

THANKS FOR RENEWING

| | |
|-------------------------|------|
| William Fisher | 450 |
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| Roy Hilts | 1049 |
| Richard J. McCann | 1172 |
| Helga Murphy | 1168 |
| Dan Presser | 887 |
| Rita A. Sopolsky | 1169 |
| George Szemes | 1052 |
| Jim Van Vorhis | 1094 |
| James Vorhes | 543 |
| Bill Bowles | 535 |
| Harry Wareham | 204 |
| Charles Mehlert | 1211 |



We have had many generous donations this year, all of which are much appreciated!

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| Roy Hilts | 1049 |
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| Rita A. Sopolsky | 1169 |
| James Vorhes | 543 |
| Harry Wareham | 204 |

Photo by Bill Hyster, MBUG-PC