



# MUG Monitor **Extra!**

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## Using a Restore Point

by **Larry Bothe**, an honorary member of the Fox Valley PC Association, IL  
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Recently, while I was in a big hurry to get a lot of work done before leaving on vacation, my computer started up with a blank screen. No mouse, no images, no text, no error message, no nothing. I had no choice but to just shut it down using the on/off switch. I then tried to start it again, this time watching very carefully to see what happened (I was getting coffee the first time). It went through the BIOS start (black & white screens with text) OK; then gave a brief color flash of the Windows XP logo, then nothing. The hard drive activity light was flashing so I knew the machine was trying. I was encouraged by the Windows startup sounds, but never got an image.

I recalled that the evening before I had received a warning from my computer security software that some program was trying to make a change to something it thought was a danger. I was in a hurry and I OK'd it without reading it thoroughly. Thinking back I decided that perhaps I had OK'd a bad thing that resulted in changing some setting in the operating system (Windows XP Home). I then crossed my fingers and tried starting the machine in Safe Mode. You do that by turning on the machine and then repeatedly pushing the F8 key until you get the black & white screen that lets you select the startup mode. Using the arrow keys I selected Safe Mode and pressed Enter. I lucked out and it started in Safe Mode.

Once in Safe Mode I decided to restore the system settings to an earlier

point in time, when everything worked correctly. In Windows XP, every time you shut down your computer it takes a snapshot of your operating system settings and saves them into what is called a restore point. If you later install a program or get attacked by a virus that alters your system settings such that the machine no longer runs right, you can, in theory, go back to some prior point in time when the machine ran correctly, and restore the settings to what they were then. That's called a restore point. Note that you have to uninstall the offending program or get rid of the virus before you attempt a restore. Otherwise the program or virus will just alter your settings once again. Also note that going back to some prior restore point will not delete any files you created and saved after the restore point you select. You won't lose any data. However, I had never tried this before so didn't quite know what to expect.

In order to get into the routine you do Start, Programs, Accessories, System Tools, System Restore. After clicking System Restore you select Restore my computer to an earlier time, and then follow the prompts. The routine lets you choose a date you want to restore to. I had to think about that. It ran well the previous day, but that was the day the settings were changed. I chose to go back 2 days to be sure I was well before the bad thing occurred. I finished the restore procedure and the machine restarted perfectly. It turned out to be a

really good use of the restore point feature in XP.

I mentioned above that you must first get rid of whatever changed your settings in the first place before you do the restore. If you don't, then you risk that it will simply alter your settings once again and you'll be right back where you were with a sick machine. In my haste to fix my computer, I didn't take that corrective action, so when it restarted, the malware once again tried to alter my settings. And once again, my security software caught it and presented a warning. Being a bit smarter this time, I clicked on *Deny* instead of *Allow* (OK). After the machine came up running properly, I used my security software (Zone Alarm Security Suite) to do a full system scan for any malicious software. It did indeed find one bad thing (in addition to several spyware items), which I told it to remove. I guess that was it, because I have had no more trouble. No, I can't tell you exactly what the offending malicious software was because I didn't write it down, and I have slept since then.

I learned several lessons from this little episode. A good suite of computer security programs is worth every penny you pay for it. Even cautious computer users like me can get caught up in a virus problem. When your security software presents a warning you need to pay attention; I won't be so quick to click on Allow in the future. Finally, the System Restore feature in Win-

(see *Restore Point* on page 2)

# How to use Google Street Views to see... streets, places, routes and faces!

by Linda Gonse, Editor & Webmaster, Orange County IBM PC Users' Group, CA, [www.orcopug.org](http://www.orcopug.org)

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Beyond the curiosity of the new panoramic on-the-road reality shots, Google's detailed Street Views give you a feel for really being where you want to go. Although only a handful of large cities are represented in these views, it's still likely you will want to look for destinations in them occasionally.

If you aren't familiar with Street Views, go to Google.com and click on *Maps*, a link at the top of the screen. Type in the location: a street or a city. If one of the boxes at the top of the map shown says "Street View," click on it. A map looking like a plate of blue spaghetti shows where panoramic shots were taken (Figure 1).

Zoom in to see streets outlined in blue (Figure 2). A "person" icon

(that's you) is facing in the direction you are heading. You can move the icon to wherever you wish to go, or simply double-click on one of the blue-lined streets.

You can enlarge a panoramic shot to full screen, so you don't have to squint to see into a little peek-a-boo window.

Other handy features allow you to zoom in and out, and to "drive" along a street or freeway by clicking on an arrow with your mouse. You can look in all four directions, of course, and the names of the streets and the routes are superimposed on the photos (Figure 3). You can even email the view to family or friends.

In the meantime, a different type of map searcher is ignoring the privacy

controversy caused by Google Street View's high-quality, crystal-clear, panoramic photos, and are magnifying certain side-of-the-road scenes they find and sharing them online!

What they've found falls into categories, which include: actual lawbreaking or crimes in progress; people doing ordinary things that seem extraordinary when you know that people worldwide will be seeing them; surreal sights caused by the panoramic camera being halted or later photo-stitching in an editing program; visual commentaries about places and people; street views divulging the homes of the famous; and landmark homes and places. Map searchers uploaded these mini-slices of life to [www.streetviewr.com](http://www.streetviewr.com).

Check out the maps and see what you can find. Maybe you'll even see yourself in one of the shots!

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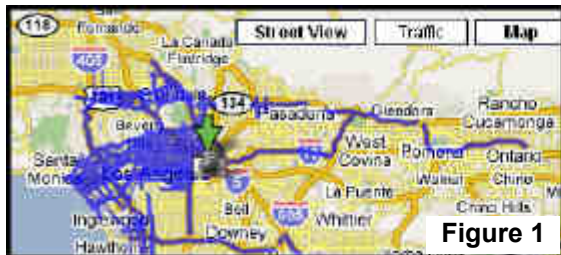


Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

*(Restore Point—continued from page 1)*

dows XP is worth its weight in owl feathers. It is easy to use and very effective under the right circumstances.

Larry Bothe is an associate member of CAEUG and an honorary member of FVP-CA. He was President of CAEUG for a time back in the 90's when he lived in the Chicago area. Larry presently resides in southern Indiana where he is retired from the plastics industry and currently teaches people to fly airplanes. He also performs pilot examinations for the FAA.

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# The New, the Best, and the Worst

collected by Pim Borman, Webmaster,

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## *Mobile Supercomputers*

Ever since Compaq designed a "portable" version of the old IBM PC, there has been a trend to make computers easier to carry around. Soon there were laptops, then notebooks, and by now some are cell phone add-ins. But what if you need more computer power than a desktop can provide?

Large enterprises depend on computerized data centers that support the various administrative aspects of the business and support a network of desktop computers. Those data centers are typical arranged in bulky stacks of servers and memory banks, located in air conditioned rooms to keep them from overheating. Such expensive data centers are typically custom-built, take months to construct, occupy expensive real estate in office buildings, and are as immobile as the Empire State Building.

Sun Microsystems has come up with a (more) mobile version of the typical data center by putting all the hardware in a standard 20-foot shipping container. It has up to 250 servers with seven terabytes of active memory (what we usually call RAM I guess) and up to 2 petabytes (2 million gigabytes) of storage. It can support 10,000 desktop users. The individual servers use Sun's proprietary 8-core Niagara chips that are not only fast, but also at 70 W per chip, use a lot less power than common server chips.

Because of the standard construction, such a center can be much more quickly built and delivered at a fraction of the cost of a custom data center. It can be parked in a parking lot or the basement of an

office building, or moved to a disaster zone, battlefield or third-world aid center. Rumors have it that Google is interested for their ever-expanding data storage needs.

Of course, there are still some minor problems. Air blown across the electronics boxes has to be cooled with heat exchangers requiring 60 gallons of water per minute that may have to be recycled through external coolers. It will take a sizable, dedicated fiber optics cable for data input and output, and a big wall outlet with a super extension cord to power it all. And don't forget the nerdy teenager to program it all.

The Stanford Linear Accelerator Center (SLAC) will be the first end-user to get a Project Blackbox portable data center from Sun Microsystems. The 20-foot shipping container (which will be painted white, not black) will sit on a concrete pad behind the computer building with hookups to power, a 10-gigabit network connection, and a chiller located on an adjacent pad. It will allow the SLAC to expand its computing capacity even though its existing data center has maxed out its power and cooling." (From Scientific American, with additional details from the Internet)

## *Super Jigsaws*

If you like jigsaw puzzles as well as computers, you may have tried some computer versions of jigsaw puzzles. In my limited experience, they were primitive and unsatisfactory, but I may not have looked long enough.

Bertram Nicolay of the Fraunhofer Institute for Production Systems and Design Technology and his colleagues have greatly improved the

state of the art. When the Berlin Wall came down and East Germany was to be reunited with the West, the East's State Security Service was in a panic to destroy mounds of secret, incriminating documents in a hurry. Available shredding machines weren't up to the task, so they tore up some 45 million documents by hand. The resulting 600 million pieces of paper are stored in 16,250 bags. To piece the fragments back together would take 30 persons an estimated 600-800 years. Computers to the rescue!

First, all the pieces have to be scanned on both sides, a gigantic task, made possible by technology developed by a daughter company of Bertelsmann, AG. Then the pieces are presorted, based on color and texture of the paper and ink. The scientists have developed algorithms to speed up the matching of edges, and the original documents are reconstituted one piece at a time.

Subsequent work now makes it also possible to reconstitute documents that have been shredded by machine. That task is much more difficult, since all the edges are identical. But already, for Germany's Tax Authority, a bag full of shredded documents has been successfully reconstructed. (From The Economist, 9/8/07, with thanks to Louis Ritz. See also [www.ipk.fraunhofer.de/pr/pressekonferenz/](http://www.ipk.fraunhofer.de/pr/pressekonferenz/))

## *Amazon*

Recently I was called upon to edit this newsletter, a seemingly simple task since it only consists of 8 Xeroxed pages, mostly text in a 2-column format. Using OpenOffice Writer, but

(see *The New* on page 4)

# How To Find Podcasts

by Mike Lyons, President Orange County  
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Download the free 7.3 iTunes program from [www.apple.com/itunes/](http://www.apple.com/itunes/) and install. Now, all you need is an mp3 player, and you're all set to download podcasts and listen to them on the go.

When you first open iTunes, click on the "Podcast Directory" at the bottom next to "Report a Concern." That actually takes you to the Apple Store. In the upper left corner is a magnifying glass and a space to search for a word or phrase. Type in "computer." The Apple logo in the top center area changes to a candy cane-striped bar as it searches. The bar will turn solid and display the results: Name, Time, Artist, Album, Price, Popularity and Genre.

Next to the name is a grayed-out circle with an arrow in it. This leads to more information about the podcast. It includes a description, user reviews, a list of the last 20 podcasts and a list of 5 "Listeners also subscribed to."

Headings are sortable by clicking on them, so if you click on Price, all the free ones appear at the top.

Some of the stuff is pretty explicit, that's why they call it the "wild, wild web." Podcasts are labeled "clean," "explicit," or blank which means the rating hasn't been determined.

I look to see how often and consistently the podcast occurs (some really good ones haven't been updated since 2006), check customer comments, and the "Also subscribed to" list.

If you want to subscribe, simply click on the "subscribe" button. To

go back where you were, under the Apple logo on the left is a small button with a left pointing twirly. Click on this to get back.

After downloading podcasts, connect your mp3 player to a USB cable and right click on the file. Select "Send to" and click on the drive letter of the mp3 player to transfer podcasts to it from your computer.

Besides the iTunes Podcast Directory, you can find podcasts of Computer America shows at [www.businesstalkradio.net/weekday\\_host/Archives/cc.shtml](http://www.businesstalkradio.net/weekday_host/Archives/cc.shtml) and National Public Radio at [www.npr.org/rss/podcast/podcast\\_directory.php](http://www.npr.org/rss/podcast/podcast_directory.php).

There are even locally-produced user group podcasts. The Los Angeles Computer Society has podcasts of their main meetings at [www.lacspc.org/podcast/Archive.html](http://www.lacspc.org/podcast/Archive.html)

You don't have to have an mp3 player to listen to podcasts, though. If you left-click on the mp3 title, it plays right in your browser. Or, if you right-click on the title, select "Save Link As," and you can save it to a directory on your computer.

Besides playing podcasts in mp3 players and browsers, mp3 files on your hard drive can be burned to a CD. Then, you can play them in your car. Just burn them as a music CD instead of a data CD.

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(The New—continued from page 3)

with no experience in page layout, I found the task harder than expected. The formatting clearly had a mind of its own, the help files did not help, and it is a wonder that I finally cobbled something together that looked OK.

In order to be prepared for the next time this might happen, I visited Amazon to look for a helpful book. Surprisingly, there was not a great deal to choose from, but one book stood out as the best-looking choice. The OpenOffice.org 2 Guidebook by Solveig Haugland received rave reviews from 9 reviewers. It was also pricey, at \$59.99, but at the bottom of the listing Amazon provided a link to "2 used & new available from \$36.00." Clicking on that link led to an offer of the book, in new condition, for \$36.00. The choice was easy and I ordered the "used" book.

Amazon sent me the usual confirmation, but the following morning I received another note, from the author, Solveig Haugland, thanking me for my order and she was shipping the book the same day. Because the book is self-published, the author is free to sell her books directly at lower cost than the advertised store price. Anyway, a great way to save \$24! More about the merits of the book in a forthcoming newsletter.

## ***Burj Dubai Babel Babble***

Reading about the tallest tower, at 2625 feet, now under construction—the Burj Dubai in the United Arab Emirates—makes me think of that earlier venture, the Tower of Babel, also in the Middle East, but a few thousand years ago. As you may remember, that project came to grief because the contractors spoke different languages. Now we have computers, of course, who keep in touch wirelessly. Let's hope they all use the same operating system, regularly updated and patched, with protection against viruses and rootkits!

(see *The New* on page 5)

(*The New—continued from page 4*)

### Google

Google generates personal profiles of its users, based on the many ways they use its services. It uses the profiles to target ads based on individual preferences and interests. The ads are unobtrusive so you may hardly notice them. But if you are reading a message in Google mail, it is interesting to pay attention to the ads shown on the side, clearly related to keywords in the message that Google is reading over your shoulder.

After Google-mailing the comment about the Dubai tower (above) to myself, including BCC to some correspondents, the message came back with the following “sponsored links” in the margin (hypertext links omitted):

Ocean Front Condos \$118k, 2 - bedrooms or 3-bedrooms Ocean Front, 55 mins fm Panama City

Charlotte NC new condos. The place to live in Charlotte...All the amenities. Reserve today.

San Jose Luxury Living. Downtown Residential Tower Dramatic Views. Historic City Park

Macintosh Computers \$199. Refurbished G4 G5 Macs from \$199 Powermacs iMacs eMacs at Low Prices Teksale.com

Trump Tower Chicago. View all available Trump Tower Chicago condos with full details.

Makes you wonder about privacy, doesn't it? I often use Google to find answers to crossword puzzle clues. I wonder what conclusions Google draws about me, based on those off-the-wall questions?

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## The QWERTY Keyboard & Office 2007

by **Bob Schneider**, Editor, **The PC Keyboard**,  
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Back in the mid 1800's when the first practical typewriter was built, inventor C.L. Sholes arranged the keys in the QWERTY layout for a practical reason. He had to separate the most common letters to prevent the hammers from jamming. So many people knew that layout that although it was no longer necessary, it was maintained with the advent of electric typewriters. A much better (in terms of ease-of-learning and speed-of-typing) is the Dvorak keyboard layout developed in the 1920's. It puts the most commonly used keys under your eight “home” fingers. Once millions of people started with computers using the old QWERTY layout, better alternatives were doomed. Changing to a new keyboard layout involves the most difficult of human learning tasks. The technical term from memory researchers is “proactive interference.” That means an old memory (such as an old cell phone number you used before) interferes with your ability to learn a new memory (your new cell number). In layman's terms the most difficult task is to unlearn something you know well in order to learn something new. That is why we standardize some procedures, such as operating a standard transmission in a car. You will never find a car with the brake on the left pedal and the clutch on the right pedal, and you already know the gear-shift sequence and location. Airplane pilots will always find the altimeter in the middle of their visual field.

I've been a fan of and using Microsoft Windows for some time, starting with Windows 2.0 in 1989. There are surely many people who have been using it longer than I have, although I have not yet met one. For most of those years, Microsoft advertised the strength and

beauty of following the Windows format. Using its standard Graphical User Interface (GUI), all programs would have the same look and feel. Learn one program and you could quickly learn to navigate around in any similar software. Microsoft required that look and feel, with common menu items, before it allowed a program to have the Windows logo. That was a giant advance from the haphazard layout and menu systems of early DOS programs. As a college professor and software teacher, the advantages for student learning and computer novices were quite obvious.

Now we have Office 2007. I suspect that if Corel (WordPerfect) had released that office suite, Microsoft would have denied them the right to use the Windows logo. The common Windows GUI was thrown out in Word and Excel. Traditional menu items were removed, unfamiliar icons and menus appeared, and familiar processes were moved to obscure places. The better you were at using earlier versions, the more you will have to first unlearn to use Office 2007. The brake pedal is on the left, first gear is on the right, and the altimeter is hidden behind the co-pilot. I am a power user of Microsoft Office. Actually, I used to be a power user. Now I must constantly go to the help menu (sorry, it is not a menu any more) to find the location of even the most basic procedures. I know how to do them; I just don't know where they are. It is time consuming and frustrating. There are some really nice features in Office 2007. One of them, unfortunately, is not “make it like the earlier versions.”

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# Google & Your Telephone Number

by Sandy Berger, CompuKISS.com, [www.compukiss.com](http://www.compukiss.com)

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If you know someone's telephone number, how hard would it be to find that person? Well, with Internet resources, it couldn't be easier. Type any telephone number into the Google search bar, and you will quickly be given the name and address that relates to that number. Even a bit scarier is the fact that right next to the name and address is the word "map." Just click on that word and the location in question is marked with a big green arrow on a detailed map. One more click and you can see the building with that address from a satellite view.

I say this is scary because it is. This information may be put to good use by friends and relatives, but in the hands of a stalker or a criminal, it can be highly dangerous. Imagine how easy it would be to find a woman who lives alone in a rural area. Or think about a child who might innocently give out their telephone number and have a pervert be able to find their exact location so easily.

If you think that you are exempt from this because you have an unlisted or unpublished number, think again. Google states, "Our phone and address listings are gathered by a third party provider, which collects telephone directories and other public records available elsewhere on the web." It is the "other

public records" that might get your telephone number into these listings. They use everything from public utility records, court records, and property records, to business records. I was able to easily find the names and addresses of several people who have unlisted telephone numbers.

Because of privacy complaints, Google has initiated a way to be removed from this reverse telephone lookup. Just search for your telephone number in Google and click on the link with your name. You will be taken to another page with an obvious removal link.

Yet, if you want to remove your name and address from the entire web, you should be prepared to settle in for a long, tedious task. Removing my telephone number from Google was easy. Unfortunately, I quickly found more than a dozen other places that had my telephone number listed, including Yahoo, InfoSpace, Intelius, AnyWho and addresses.com. Each one of these has a different method for removing your name and number, and often the process is quite convoluted. At Yahoo, there was an obvious "Remove my Listing" link. But the link went to the Yahoo help pages, which were not at all helpful. It took me about 30 minutes of searching to find the

correct removal link (<http://phone.people.yahoo.com/py/psPhoneSupp.py>).

Although most of the major search sites did not have listings for cell phones, I found that I could get the names and addresses for many cell phones number at Intelius for just \$14.95. Getting your name and address out of Intelius is even more complicated than removing it from some other websites. To opt out of Intelius, they require that you fax them a copy of your driver's license or a notarized form proving your identity.

Even if you take the time to eliminate your name and address from all the directories that you find today, you might appear in some new directory tomorrow. Yet, if you want to guard your privacy, it may be worth the effort to eliminate yourself from as many of the directories as possible. It may also be time to realize that a simple thing like a telephone number can now lead to more personal identification than you ever imagined. Perhaps we need to start guarding our telephone number as carefully as we do our social security number.

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# Fake Check Scams on the Internet Explode

by **Ira Wilsker, APCUG Director;**  
**Columnist, The Examiner, Beaumont, TX; Radio & TV Show Host**

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You may remember the recent case of a local woman who responded to a "work at home" opportunity where she would accept payments from the customers of a business, deposit the checks, deduct her generous commissions, and then wire the balance elsewhere.

Recently, in my High Tech Crime Consortium (HTCC) listserv, an investigator posted the following inquiry (redacted): "Is anyone working a case involving a fraudulent check from XXX Bank on the account of YYY Financial Trust Company, a supposed winner of a drawing scam. My victim received this letter and check, deposited it and XXX BANK told her it was good so they put the money in her account. Turns out it was not. She of course was told to wire "taxes" in the amount of \$4425.00 to a subject XXXXX in Houston, Texas, but the money gram was picked up in XXXXX."

Recently, (October 3), the Reuters news service ran a story "Spam-scam crackdown nets \$2 billion in fake checks." The story goes on to explain, "An international crackdown on Internet financial scams this year has yielded more than \$2.1 billion in seized fake checks and 77 arrests in the Netherlands, Nigeria and Canada, U.S. and other authorities said on Wednesday. The scammers, often West African organized crime groups, use ploys such as 'spam' email offering to pay recipients 'processing fees' for depositing checks, which later turn out to be phony, and sending the ostensible proceeds to the scammer, authorities said." Demonstrating how prevalent

this scam is, the Reuters article goes on to say, "Two-thirds of Americans said they received at least one potential scam contact per week, and 18 percent said they or a family member had fallen for one, in a survey conducted for an alliance of banks, consumer groups and the U.S. Postal Service. Grant said complaints to her group about fake checks have risen 60 percent this year, and the average victim loses about \$3,000 to \$4,000."

In a parallel news story at FoxNews.com (October 3), "Postal Service Declares War on Nigerian Scam," in discussing the same seizure writes, "So far this year, an average of more than 800 people a month have filed complaints about such scams. Hoping to stem the losses, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service announced an international crackdown Wednesday in which more than 540,000 fake checks with a face value of \$2.1 billion have been seized." The financial and emotional impact of being a victim can be disabling. "Retired people have lost their nest eggs and young families have been defrauded of their savings for a home."

If 800 people a month report losses to the Postal Inspector, one may wonder how many other victims are too ashamed or embarrassed to report the crime which victimized them.

You may have noticed some TV commercials warning about these scams, another indication of the degree of the threat. The commercials are promoting a consumer education website, fakechecks.org, a creation of the National Consumers

League, and sponsored by groups such as the American Bankers Association, American Express, Capital One, JP Morgan Chase, Visa, Western Union, and the United States Postal Inspection Service. The meat of the website is a curt warning that says, "There is no legitimate reason why anyone would give you a check or money order and ask you to wire money in return."

The major types of scams that use these methods are foreign business offers, rental schemes, love losses, sudden riches, overpayment, and work-at-home scams. The common thread in all of these is that in response to an email, phone call or letter, the victim received certified or cashiers' checks or money orders, and was directed to deposit them in their personal bank accounts. Immediately after depositing the instruments, the victim was directed to deduct his commission or fee, and then wire the proffered balance (often via Western Union) to the crook. The checks and money orders would bounce as they were typically counterfeit, forged, or otherwise phony, leaving the victim with the financial loss for the amounts wired to the crook. The proceeds of the wired funds are often picked up overseas, and not at the address stated in the original offer.

Many of us have received the ubiquitous Nigerian 419 scam from the relative of some oil minister who was killed in a plane crash, and the widow needs help in investing the money. In the original scam, still circulating by the millions, the victim is to wire money to Nigeria or some "barrister"

(see *Fake Checks* on page 8)

*(Fake Checks—continued from page 7)*  
in London in order to pay the taxes and fees to release the funds, for which the victim is to receive a generous commission. In a new iteration of the scheme, the victim receives an email or letter that alleges that the crook claims to have a check which can be used to pay the taxes and fees, and in exchange for depositing the check and wiring the net proceeds to a third party, the victim can withhold a generous commission. Of course, the check is worthless.

In another version, also distributed in the millions, the victim receives an email, letter, or fax claiming that they have won an international lottery. In the past, the victim had to come up with the taxes and fees on his own, and wire the money to the crook in order to collect the winnings. Now the scheme sends the victim an authentic looking check which is to be used to pay the

foreign taxes and fees on the prize winnings. The victim deposits the check, which may also include a small percentage of his winnings, and wires the taxes and fees to a third party. The check bounces, and the victim is out the proceeds, often in the \$3000 to \$4000 range.

I have actually had students who advertised their cars online, and received a call or email from a barrister in London representing a client who wanted to buy the car for the full asking price. They would then overnight a certified check to the seller for more than the selling price of the car, and ask the seller to wire the balance back to London, sometimes after deducting a generous fee or bonus. A bonded courier will be by to pick up the car. Of course there is no courier, and the check is no good, leaving the seller with his car plus a several thousand dollar loss.

Another student recently brought me an email where she could make hundreds of dollars a week by accepting checks and money orders from a seller that needed an American presence, asking her to deduct her 20% commission, and then wiring the proceeds to some distant place. The scam is obvious.

Greed and gullibility can affect all races and religions. The website [fakechecks.org](http://fakechecks.org) may provide a valuable warning to those who might fall victim. If the Postal Service can seize 540,000 fake checks worth \$2.1 billion, one may wonder how many were not seized, and made it to the victims. One can only wonder how much more was lost by the victims, often those who can least afford it.

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