

## Next Meeting:

### Online Holiday Fun

by **Louis Vitale**,  
Club President

Macon Community  
Facilities Building  
December 8th, 7 PM

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## Skype: 1964 Has Finally Arrived

by **Bruce Preston**, President, West Mountain Systems, Inc.,  
long-time board member of DACS,  
conducted DACS' Random Access sessions,  
and chaired the Microsoft Access SIG, [www.dacs.org](http://www.dacs.org)

One of the “Gee-Whiz” attractions at the 1964 New York World’s Fair was the AT&T Picturephone (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Videophone#AT.26T\_Picturephone), which people eagerly awaited for availability. And waited. And waited.

For a while, I have been using Microsoft’s Live Messenger instant messaging service, and while it supports video, I have never been really happy with it—audio/video quality were marginal. In addition, Windows Live Messenger (and its predecessors, Windows Messenger/MSN Messenger) doesn’t support Mac, and our son Scott, who is away at college, prefers a Mac. He suggested that I try Skype instead ([www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com)). I installed it about a month ago, and have found it to be easy to use and have much better video and audio quality. The icing on the cake is that for Skype-to-Skype calls, it is 100% free as well.



What you need: To start with, you need a broadband connection—cable or DSL, both work fine. To support voice calling, you need a microphone and speakers. If you want video capability, you also need a webcam. For smooth video, a USB 2 webcam is recommended. We recently outfitted my wife’s notebook and her sister’s desktop with webcams

from MicroCenter.com—WinBook WB-7144 HD Webcam 2-pack—two USB 2 webcams with integral microphone. As of this writing the two-pack is \$39.99 + S/H ([tinyurl.com/yjaj4hm](http://tinyurl.com/yjaj4hm)).

It works fine over WiFi (802.11g) at both ends. Windows XP and Windows Vista both recognized the hardware and did not require an installation CD, although the product comes with a pair of identical CDs with ArcSoft photo editing/cataloging software and drivers for earlier versions of Windows. The base of the camera has three spring-loaded fingers that grasp the top of a flat screen monitor or notebook.

The Skype software is a straightforward download and install. About the only decision you have to make is whether to install the Google Toolbar (which is installed by default.) I declined—I dislike add-on browser  
(see *Skype on page 2*)



## Online Holiday Fun

**Election & Party  
7 PM, December 8th**

## Macon Users Group Franklin, NC

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MUG meets the second Tuesday of every month at 7 P.M. in the Macon County Community Facilities Building on Georgia Road (US 441 South).

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## Treasurer's Report Phyllis Minnich

Balance forward.....	798.20
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*(Skype—continued from page 1)*

toolbars. You need to create and register a Skype name (not your email address) and pick a password (at least 6 characters having at least one digit.) You need to provide a valid email address for use in recovering a forgotten password.

For Windows, Skype installs yet another little icon in the system tray down by the clock—but I have found it to be low-impact upon my machine, so I have left it active. The image of the icon changes depending upon your computer's status—available for incoming calls, offline, do-not-disturb, etc. The same icons appear next to entries in your contact list showing their availability.

To populate your contact list, you need to provide either the Skype name or email address of the other party. That's about it. Click on an entry in your contact list, select CALL (for a voice only call) or VIDEO CALL (for voice + video), and within about 5 seconds the other end will ring and your correspondent can elect what type of call to accept.

During a video call, you have a large image of your correspondent. On a 1024×768 screen, I am going to guess that it is near 800×600. A smaller picture-in-picture image at the lower left displays what your correspondent sees. There is also a small window within which you may type text, a la instant messaging.

Recently I was having problems with establishing an account on a service. I couldn't make out the CAPTCHA distorted letters. (As some of you know, I am legally blind.) I called Scott, planning on asking him to create the account for me. He pointed out that there was a "share my screen" capability in Skype. I did so, he read the characters for me, and I was able to continue. Nice!

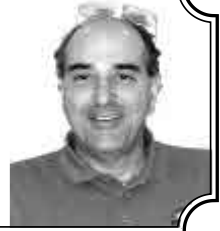
As mentioned earlier, Skype-to-Skype calls are free. There is a charge for Skype to other types of telephone service, i.e. landline, cell, etc. I haven't needed that. Lastly, some years ago eBay purchased controlling interest in Skype thinking that buyers and sellers would use it during the auction process—questions about items prior to the sale, shipping instructions after, etc. It never took off. Recently, eBay sold most of their interest to an investors group led by Mark Andreessen (originator of Netscape) but the founding partners of Skype sued eBay claiming that eBay had violated the contract. That's up in the air, but it is highly improbable that the service will "go away." It will be interesting to watch the case work its way through the courts.

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*Lou's Views!*

# Singularity

by **Louis Vitale (aka 44RAILGUY)**



What a great word. In Science Fiction it has a long history. Both Star Wars and Star Trek use the term. In numerous SciFi stories the concept is central to the theme. In Astronomy it is a key to understanding the universe. Most know the concept as a "Black Hole," something so powerful that the standard laws of Physics don't apply. It is a point in space so dense and energetic that it consumes everything near it, including light.

Now Singularity has a new meaning. Ray Kurzweil, the well known futurist, described the concept in his new book, *The Singularity is Near*, this way: "Within a quarter-century, non-biological intelligence will match the range and subtlety of human intelligence. It will then soar past it."

A friend sent me a link to a website describing a new kind of contact lens being developed at The University of Washington. This lens is an active vision enhancement device. It essentially puts a computer screen on your eyeball that could increase magnifying power of your eye or give you night vision. Augmented reality is also possible, meaning that a GPS device could be overlaid on your vision to continually update you on your location and the things around you. Think the "terminator" movie where the android sees the world as a constantly updated computer screen.

Scientists in Israel and the US are working on tiny robots that crawl through blood vessels attacking cancer cells. Soon these nanobots

will be small and smart enough to clear clogged arteries and perhaps repair organs. Scientist in Japan are already producing rudimentary nanobot "brains" that could allow all these tiny robots to communicate and cooperate inside our body. Once that threshold is crossed, armies of these intelligent nanobots could remake our body from the inside and enhance our senses and memory.



We have all seen the tremendous strides made in artificial limbs; legs that flex and move with a human gait, arms that duplicate the many degrees of motion of the real thing, and artificial hands that can pick up a grape without crushing it. All these devices depend on very powerful computers that are attached to the body or are implanted in it.

But what technology can do for the human body is just the beginning. Computers are becoming increasingly small and more powerful by the day. This fact, together with the potential for nanobots to actually construct any object at the molecular level, will soon produce a very smart and self-replicating robot.

Some estimate that at the current rate of technological growth, this will occur within 20 to 40 years.

That is when humanity will have a real problem, because the Singularity will be at hand. Will we control it, or will we become literally slaves to the machine? This is no SciFi fantasy. NASA, Google, and other major players have started something called the "Singularity University" to study ways to avoid these obvious problems and still get the benefits of new technology.

Go to [singularityu.org](http://singularityu.org) and check out the application for the class of 2010.

Even if humanity manages to avoid a real "Matrix" type of future, there are still serious issues to deal with. What about all those nanobots in our system?

Could they be used to control us? Could someone or some "Agency" decide to make us all eat broccoli because it is good for us, or vote a straight party ticket (probably Republican, just kidding). And computer virus takes on a whole new meaning when the computer is us.

I liked the SciFi "singularity" when all that humanity had to worry about was rogue black holes.

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## Directory Updates

See the printed edition.

# The Deals Guy

by Bob Click,  
Greater Orlando Computer Users Group



## ***Just the Ticket For Dark Restaurants***

If you haven't seen (or heard) them, you'd be impressed with "Talking Menus." I saw them at a food show some time ago, but haven't been to a restaurant that uses them. I've been to a few restaurants with a dark ambience and tried everything to see what was on the menu. These talking menus would be the answer, and according to the brochure, they can also tell you the nutritional facts if you are interested. Look them over at [www.talkingmenus.com](http://www.talkingmenus.com).

I could have asked them for a discount, but I doubt your budget would have tolerated a \$399 menu for your dinner table at home (from the prices in the booklet they gave me), and I doubt the cook offers multiple selections to choose from. Ask your favorite restaurant if they'll be getting them soon. We don't frequent the dark places much and our favorites, the fast-food places, don't need them. However, my wife has to read the menus behind the counter to me because the print is too small. Have you noticed that on their dollar menus?

## ***Tool For Repairing Access Files***

I ran this product back in March, but if you missed it at that time, Data-Numen is now offering a 20% discount by using the coupon code DATA-E2OI-TWEN when ordering at [tinyurl.com/yj89a94](http://tinyurl.com/yj89a94). This is a better deal than the discount last March which was only 10%. The discount code may also work for ordering their products for repairing Excel and Word; and for the Outlook and Outlook Express files. Check their website for descriptions of the products. The version for Access is 2.1, updated from the one in March.

## ***How's Your Battery Doing?***

Hewie Poplock of Central Florida Computer Society ([www.cfps.org](http://www.cfps.org)) mentioned this product to the members of his SIG (Special Interest Group) and it sounded to me like something that my readers might be interested in, considering the proliferation of laptop use these days. According to their product page, "BatteryCare is a free utility that gives you much more information about your battery than how much charge you have left for the current session: The app changes power profiles for you when you connect your laptop to a power source, lets you know how many recharge cycles your battery has left, and more, all for free." I know my laptop is not accurate about its remaining time, but I have not used it very much while depending entirely on its battery.

It sounds like a handy product, and how could you go wrong if it's free. However, the developer does appreciate

any donations to help keep his work going. Makes sense to me. [tinyurl.com/pbvn5g](http://tinyurl.com/pbvn5g).

## ***Having problems reading the screen?***

A while back, I read a review of DesktopZoom written by Bonnie Snyder in Bits of Bytes, newsletter of the Pikes Peak Computer Application Society of Colorado Springs, [tinyurl.com/yj3jrjup](http://tinyurl.com/yj3jrjup). This product does a good job of giving you options for enlarging parts of your screen for easier reading, or to study something you can't see very well on a page. It does have a few shortcomings, but all in all, she speaks highly of it, and the price is "nada." If you would like to find out more, read her article in the above link, or go to [tinyurl.com/nmjwfx](http://tinyurl.com/nmjwfx). There may be improvements since her review was written.

## ***Magnifier You May Already Have!***

Let's say that you sometimes need simple magnification for something.

(see *Deals Guy* on page 10)

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# Stealth Spyware: The New Spyware Threat

by Kristofer Simon, a member of the Fox Valley PC Association, Illinois.  
Fox Tales, Volume 22, Issue 6, June 2009, [www.fvpca.org](http://www.fvpca.org)

For most of us, the word spyware is not an unfamiliar term anymore. It can mean cookies that track your movements on web pages, or other little programs that put garbage applications on your machine. While spyware intentions have not changed much over the past few years, their infection practices appear to be doing so. The newest kind of spyware, which I personally came in contact with a few months ago, should be referred to as “stealth” spyware. What I mean by that is that this spyware installs on your machine without you even knowing about it. You do not become aware of the spyware infection on your machine generally until the next time you reboot and the spyware program activates. In this short article, I will describe my experience with a piece of this spyware and what I had to do to get rid of it so that, hopefully, none of you have the same experience that I did.

The piece of spyware that infected my machine was called “XP Police Antivirus.” I became infected, I believe, after visiting a third party website that provided updated information and screen shots for Nintendo Wii games that were about to hit the market and that were in development. As I said earlier, this program was a piece of “stealth” spyware and installed on my machine without my knowledge. It did not slow down the performance of my machine at all (at least not that I was able to notice), nor did any installation screens pop up during the install. The next time I booted up my machine, an icon appeared on the lower right hand part of my screen that looked like the XP Security Center shield. When I put my cursor over it to see what it was, it said “XP Police Antivirus.” For just a split second, I wondered if maybe

Microsoft had tried to install a new version of an antivirus program they created on my machine, but I quickly realized that this was a piece of spyware that had infected my machine without my knowledge.

The program tried to fool me into thinking that anonymous users from the Internet (it would put public IP addresses in the warning dialog boxes) were attempting to access my computer maliciously and it recommended that I install the full program to prevent these attacks. I wasn’t going to do this because I had the full and up-to-date version of McAfee Security Center, so I knew this was bogus. When I tried to remove the program through the Add/Remove Programs option in the Control Panel, I was able to wipe out the program temporarily, but the next time I rebooted my machine, the application icon was in my system tray again and I was getting the same bogus dialog boxes about people trying to access my computer. This spyware also put another program on my machine called Security Center 2009 that also was made to look as realistic as possible.

Finally, I went on my Motorola Q Smart Phone and searched on the XP Police Antivirus program. Immediately, I got a link to a page that told me that this was a piece of stealth spyware and told me how to get rid of it. I actually had to go into the computer’s registry (kind of like the computer’s brain) and delete the entry that the spyware had made there, as well as delete a number of files the program had put on my machine. Once I did that, the spyware programs (both XP Police Antivirus and Security Center 2009) were finally gone, but I still had one more hurdle to overcome from this program.

The spyware also installed a software program known as a *browser hijacker*.

For those of you who don’t know what this is, let me explain. Let’s say you launch a web browser and you want to go to [www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com) to see the latest news. You type [www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com) into the address bar of your browser and either hit “go” or hit return. The browser initially begins to go to that page, but suddenly the browser gets “redirected” to another page. This happens every time you try to access a web page. These programs are *extremely* hard to get rid of, but I was able to get rid of the one on my machine using a third party program that found the program and removed it.

While this may sound like a dire situation, the most important thing you can do as an end user in these situations is to remain calm and scrutinize every program that you see on your machine, that you haven’t specifically downloaded (ex. a game, a patch from Microsoft, etc.). If you do get infected by stealth spyware and can’t seem to get rid of it, go to a non-infected PC or web enabled cell phone and do a search on the program’s name. You will almost always get a link telling you how to get rid of the program. Also, never send personal information over the Internet to any site that you cannot confirm is a legitimate site that you use (ex. Amazon.com, Paypal, etc.). Using these steps you can help eliminate most of the problems caused by spyware, but you should always remain vigilant. You can get infected with a stealth spyware program from just about any website, so be careful out there!

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# Genealogy Online—Using the Internet's Tools to “Dig Up” Your Family Tree

by Terri Neary, a member of the ICON PCUG, Inc., New York,  
The ICON Graphic Newsletter, August 2009, [www.iconpcug.org](http://www.iconpcug.org)

Everyone has their own ideas about how computers and the internet can help them the most. For me, it is my genealogy project. I am trying to find out who my family were, what they did, where they lived, and even how they lived. I would like to confirm or disprove several family stories and be able to give the generations after me a sense of where they came from. Trying to do this without a computer and the internet would be the equivalent of using a horse and buggy in the 21st century. But searching for your family history can be an expensive project. There are many ways to cut down the cost.

Now one of the easiest websites to search is [www.Ancestry.com](http://www.Ancestry.com). However, this can be a pricy option unless you know of a library with a subscription to it. Personally I travel to the Bethpage Library to use theirs. The databases available on this site range from the basic Social Security Death Index, which gives you the option of writing to the appropriate department to get a photocopy of the original application, to the Federal Censuses, to Passenger Lists coming from multiple locations to multiple ports in the United States and over a thousand different databases in the United States alone. Each of these databases can give you information regarding your immediate line of family members as well as their siblings. Every little tidbit can help you to find more out and help to confirm or deny family stories. By searching their World War I Draft Registration Cards, I discovered that my grandfather, who died before I got to know him, was born in

Hungary on the 24th of January in 1896. In addition, I learned that he was considered ineligible for the draft, not because he was an alien residing in NJ, but because he was missing the first joint of his third finger on his right hand. This small piece of information appears to help back up the stories I have heard of him losing this finger while a butcher at his brother's shop, though it does not confirm it.

Another site that can be expensive to use is [www.heritagequestonline.com](http://www.heritagequestonline.com). However many libraries are paying for access to this site so it can be easily employed if you can locate which library near you that has access. Farmingdale allows you to log on from your home computer so it makes it even easier to use. Through this site you can search through the censuses, the Periodical Source Index for genealogical publications and

many thousands of books for information on your missing relatives.

One of my favorite sites is one that actually connects you to multiple sites, some free and others not. It is run by Stephen P. Morse in San Francisco. His site, [www.stevemorse.org](http://www.stevemorse.org), is designed for ease of use. The home page lists multiple databases including records from Ellis Island, Castle Garden in NY, Passenger records from New Orleans, Philadelphia, and San Francisco, as well as census records from the US, Canada, and Britain, in addition to vital records and other assorted information that make it easier to locate that elusive relative. Steve Morse has designed his own search engines for each of the sites he lists that are easier to use than then the search engines on the actual sites.

(see *Genealogy* on page 7)



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*(Genealogy—continued from page 6)*

Using his Ellis Island search engine, I was able to find an aunt that came to the US in November of 1922. I had been unable to find my grandfather coming into the country, even though I was sure he was born in Europe, but with the information from the passenger lists, I determined that his first name must have been altered. When using most of the Morse site's search engines, you can limit the information you give them to search; for example you can put an "E" in for all spellings of what we spell as Elizabeth. My aunt's name was listed as Erszebet and it indicated she was going to live with her brother Malzas – a bad spelling of Mathias. With this information I will be able to track down additional information on his entry into the country.

Another site that is very good for searching vital records is run by the Church of Latter Day Saints, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org). They are updating their site to include records from Ohio court records to Florida state enumerations. I actually find that I have the most luck using the computers available at a Family History Center, such as the one in Plainview. Using their records, you can obtain copies of actual birth certificates for relatives without having to pay the high fees that the actual source would charge you. They will charge you for copies, but it is usually much less than you than you would pay otherwise. In addition, there are members who will actually help you to determine where the records are held. The one thing I will mention is that the members will not try to convert you to their religion. They are only there to help you with your research.

A site that is maintained locally with many records is [www.italiengen.org](http://www.italiengen.org). They include databases for naturalizations and vital records for New York City as well as Nassau and

Suffolk counties. These records are constantly being updated and are not limited to only those of Italian descent. They include on their site a form for obtaining actual copies of the records from the NYC Archives. I have found a great grandparent's death certificate number on this site and by using the Family History center obtained a copy of the actual certificate. It lists the cause of death as influenza on June 2, 1918 which appears to confirm another story that he had died in the flu epidemic of 1917 (which actually lasted several years).

Then as much as people think that going to cemeteries is for visiting immediate relatives graves, there is a great deal of information available if you can locate where your ancestors are buried. One of the easiest sites for this is [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com). You can search this list by surnames, birth and/or death dates as well as location of the cemetery. You can also browse cemeteries for people who might be relatives of yours.

If you find one relative, it can be advantageous to actually visit the grave. Headstones often list multiple people, some of whom you may not recognize, and frequently families purchase graves near to each other. You might find an aunt or uncle just by looking at the next headstone. It used to be the custom that you would take rubbings (with charcoal) in order to keep the record of what the headstone indicates, but with digital cameras you can get better images of the headstone of interest as well as those neighboring yours for much less work. If you don't find your family on Find a Grave, you should try [www.interment.net](http://www.interment.net). Even though this site has fewer records than the other, it has multiple special collections you can search covering flooded cemeteries, Cali-

fornia mission graveyards and Veteran's cemeteries.

Finally a site that most of us use on a daily basis, [www.google.com](http://www.google.com), is a haven for a large amount of information. I recently began using this site to search out information about my relatives. While I have not yet been successful, the NEWS section of Google links you to articles in multiple newspapers around the world. By entering a name, you can find articles from the very current to archives pre-dating 1910. The articles come from major newspapers as well as some smaller ones and can give you an idea of what was occurring at the time of your ancestor's life. Comparing what you find or know about your family with what was going on in the world at the time can give you a real sense of what their lives were like. Google News can help you to locate information about the "black sheep" of your family by possibly showing you the newspaper articles indicating what helped to make them the "black sheep."

By researching your family, you can find out your history. You may be able to solve some family mysteries and prove your family stories. You can locate information about the possible murderer or embezzler as well as the great aunts and uncles who died in World War I. Since life is changing so quickly in this era of computers, it helps us keep some things in perspective as you realize your great-grandfather came into the country with only \$10 in his pocket and no job waiting for him. Or that the census record indicates that the apartment your parents were born in had a rent of \$24 per month. Not all the information you want is available online, but the search for what is, makes it fun.

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# A Tale of Two Printers, a Scanner, & a CD Drive

by Bruce Preston, President, West Mountain Systems, Inc.,  
long-time board member of DACS, conducted DACS' Random Access sessions,  
and chaired the Microsoft Access SIG, [www.dacs.org](http://www.dacs.org)

**Printer #1:** About two months ago, my friend/dentist called to say that he had a problem with his Epson Stylus CX-3810 Multifunction printer. Usually when he printed, a pop-up window would appear showing the level of his ink cartridges. This had disappeared. In addition he could not get it to appear when he went to the printer's property page by way of Control Panel > Printers. He had wasted two hours on the phone with Epson's support "somewhere" - they had him uninstall the printer and reinstall it twice, and finally they used the generic "not my problem" cure - they told him to "reinstall Windows." Fortunately he didn't follow that instruction.

**Printer #2:** About a week ago, I had a problem with my HP OfficeJet 6310, a multifunction printer. It just ceased to respond to print requests, although the scan and copy functions worked just fine. I tried doing a "repair install." HP's large hourglass thing came up for a while, a screen flashed by too fast to read, and the setup utility concluded before asking me what to do. I went to the HP site and found that they had a 38MB download of basic drivers for "Corporate Use Only." Reading the description, it detailed that this was a lightweight install for distributing over a corporate network such that the printer's functions could be shared over a local area network (which I do) without the baggage (not their phrasing) of all the add-on software that the consumer installation puts on each machine. The consumer install puts "HP Director"—a dashboard application, various photo manipulation software, various photo sharing software, and the ubiquitous automatic check for

updates application. The one thing that it would lose would be the ability to send a scan to a desktop application at a selected machine by pushing buttons on the printer's control panel—"pushing" the scan to the computer rather than "pulling" it from the computer. This is a feature I don't need. The lightweight install was just what I wanted. In addition, it said that if it found the consumer drivers it would uninstall them. I downloaded it and cranked up the installation program from the command line as instructed. Again, I got the large hourglass, a too-fast-to-read pop-up, and then nothing.

**Scanner:** About a month ago there was a Q&A Posting on SmartComputing where a reader had a problem with an Epson Perfection 2580 scanner. Upon pushing the scan button he got a message on his computer's display that a DLL was unable to save the file. Previously it had worked fine. He too had not gotten a solution from Epson support.

**CD Drive:** About two weeks ago a friend of mine in Michigan had a problem with a CD drive. It "just disappeared." When she had installed an upgrade to her antivirus software it had complained about an incompatibility with the CD burner software (the software came with the machine when new). She ran the uninstall program which crashed, and the drive disappeared from the device manager.

What do all of these have in common? It appears that all the problems were caused by corrupted registry entries. It is unknown what might have corrupted the registry entries, perhaps an update from

either the vendor or Microsoft—but I won't point fingers without evidence. Whatever the cause, the standard response of "uninstall/reinstall" or "repair reinstall" didn't fix the system.

The good news is that free RevoUninstaller from [www.RevoUninstaller.com](http://www.RevoUninstaller.com) resolved all four problems in minutes. After uninstalling the broken software, we were able to install components without a problem.

RevoUninstaller loads quickly and presents you with a very inclusive list of things that it offers to remove for you. I found it notable that it presented the list within a second whereas the standard Add/Remove Programs takes about a minute to populate on my machine. When you select something to uninstall, it gives you three options:

- 1 Safe—fast uninstall and a scan of the hard disk for leftover files.
- 2 Moderate—same as Safe, with an additional extended scan of the system registry for leftover entries.
- 3 Advanced—Same as Moderate, but with a deeper registry scan. Takes a bit more time, but finds and/or clears more.

I have always used the "Advanced" option. RevoUninstaller analyzes the application for a moment and then uses the application's native uninstall mechanism first. Upon completion, it then does its own digging. When done, it presents you with a tree-view of what it found in the registry with full path to the registry keys. The items it suggests for deletion are shown in bold, and

(see *Printers* on page 11)

## Verbatim PhotoSave BackUp DVD

Reviewed by Bill James, Editor, Computer Club of Oklahoma City, [www.ccokc.org](http://www.ccokc.org)

Every so often a new product hits the markets and literally blows your socks off. Such is the case with Verbatim's PhotoSave DVD, which the company is promoting as "the effortless way to preserve your memories." Digital cameras today afford you the opportunity to amass huge amount of pictures. You want to keep these precious memories in a safe a secure place. When was the last time you were looking at your favorite pictures on your hard drive and thought about backing them up, but wished you did not have to buy an additional HD and mess with complicated backup software?

Now there is a product that takes all the work out of making archival DVDs without using any additional software. Verbatim PhotoSave DVDs are recordable DVDs that makes

finding and saving photos absolutely effortless—even if you have never burned a disc before. Verbatim PhotoSave DVDs feature integrated software that launches automatically when the disc is inserted into a DVD-R drive. The process of searching for photos on your hard drive is automated so you only need to click on the record button to save your photos from a PC. The PhotoSave DVD also allows manual so you can search and burn photos from a digital camera or other devices that is connected to a PC.

I found the whole process effortless. It is a 1-2-3 step process. There is no software to install. Insert the DVD, the software searches for the photos and click the record button. I tried the manual mode to consolidate photos that I had saved on various flash and USB drives. It's just a matter of navigating the easy-to-use interface to the

appropriate drive, select the photos you want to save and press the record button. The Photo Save DVD supports multiple recording sessions, allowing you to add more photos later. The disk recognizes more than 80 different photo file formats, and you can store approximately 2,000 photos.

You know how vulnerable photos can be on a hard drive; with the PhotoSave DVD you can make multiple copies of your photos easily and affordably. The disks come in 3 and 5 packs at \$9.99 and \$14.99 respectively. Verbatim PhotoSave DVDs can be used with Windows 2000, XP and Vista systems. You will not be sorry about your investment.

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## How I Fixed My Corrupted Recycle Bin

by Sandee Gimblett of the Tacoma Open Group for Microcomputers,  
Tacoma, WA, [www.fapcug.org](http://www.fapcug.org)

After recovering from a severe system crash on my laptop running XP, I discovered that I had a corrupted recycle bin. When I opened the Recycle Bin, no files at all would appear, yet when I chose to empty the Recycle Bin, the message would ask if I wanted to delete 76 files. I said not to delete the 76 files. I then created a test file, deleted it, and, again, no files would show up when I opened the Recycle Bin. When I said to empty the recycle bin again, it now asked if I wanted to delete 77 files, which confirmed my suspicion that the deleted files were actually in the Recycle Bin, but I just couldn't get access to them.

I eventually discovered that the files were in the following directory,

accessed via the Command Prompt, in a folder named: C:\Documents and Settings\Sandee\Recent.

After several attempts to repair the Recycle Bin without success, including running ReplBin.reg and other registry repair techniques, here is what finally worked:

- 1 My Computer
- 2 Local Disk (C:)
- 3 Tools
- 4 Folder Options
- 5 View
- 6 Clicked on SHOW HIDDEN FILES AND FOLDERS (I keep this option checked anyhow)
- 7 Un-clicked on HIDE PROTECTED OPERATING SYSTEM FILES (This should usually NEVER be unchecked,

- but I unchecked it so I could get access to the Recycle Bin operating system hidden folder)
- 8 Chose APPLY TO ALL FOLDERS, chose APPLY, and clicked OK.
- 9 Right-Clicked on RECYCLER file and renamed it to RECYCLER-BAD
- 10 Created a dummy file and deleted it.
- 11 Rechecked my Recycle Bin icon on my Desktop again, and...
- 12 VOILA! My newly deleted dummy file was there and all is well again!

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# Fixing the Little Things: Using Tabs to Line Up Columns in Word

by Nancy De Marte, SIG Chairperson, Sarasota PCUG, Florida, [www.spcug.org](http://www.spcug.org)

Sometimes it's the little things going wrong with your computing that drive you crazy. For example, an email which took you half an hour to compose might not send correctly. Or suddenly the size of the type in a Word document changes. Maddening, isn't it?

One small, but common problem when you are using Microsoft Word or Word Pad often crops up when you try to create a list of items. Maybe you belong to a club, and it's your job to keep a list of the members' names with email addresses and phone numbers. You've been asked to print the list and bring it to the next meeting. Diligently, you type the list, using the Tab key to line up the columns neatly. It looks great on the screen, but then you print it. The columns waver all over the page. How could this happen? How can you fix it?

Tabs in computing are a holdover from the old typewriter days. The idea is that you can set tab stops along a ruler at the top of your Word or WordPad window that will help you create vertically even columns. Then, when you type, you merely press the Tab key on the keyboard to move the insertion point to the next tab stop. The problem is that Microsoft set up half inch automatic (default) tab stops which many people use rather than setting their own. Since individual characters (letters or numbers) are not the same width, just using the default tab stops will not guarantee even columns. You must set tab stops on the ruler yourself to ensure the desired results.

It's best to set the tabs for a simple list before typing because they can always be changed after the text is present. To do this, first make sure the ruler is visi-

ble. In Word 2003, click View in the menu bar and put a check mark next to Ruler. The ruler should now appear at the top of the document window.

Now look carefully at the left end of the ruler for the tab stop type indicator. The standard left-justified tab stop looks like a capital L. (Sometime you might want to click this L and look through the other types of stops for future use. Don't do it now.) Now you are ready to set your tab stops.

To plan your tab stops for the club list mentioned above, you will probably type the members' names beginning at the left margin, so you don't need a tab stop for them. You'll need two stops on the ruler: one for email address and another for phone number. To add a tab stop, merely click on the ruler in a spot which you think will accommodate your text, in this case, the email address. An L will appear on the ruler. Repeat this process a bit further along the ruler to set a stop for the phone numbers. When you have finished, check your list against the stops to see whether you have allowed enough space for the columns.

Now it's time to add the text. Beginning at the left margin, type the first name, then press the Tab key on the keyboard, type the email address, press Tab again, then type the phone number. Press the return key (Enter) to move to the next line and repeat the process. If, after you have typed in the whole list, you find some text getting cut off, you may need to move the tab stops. First, and very important, highlight the entire group of text. Then click on one of the L's on the ruler, hold down the left mouse button, and drag it to a new location, which will move the text with it. Until you dese-

lect the text, you can adjust tab stops as much as you wish. Finally, save the document and, before printing, use the Print Preview command to see how it will look on the printed page.

If all went well, you should have perfectly even columns.

There are other ways, of course, to create lists like this. The Microsoft Office spreadsheet program Excel is a great alternative, especially if you want to sort the list. Word allows you to create Tables, which is another way to ensure even columns which can be sorted. But these are topics for another article.

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*(Deals Guy—continued from page 4)*

Like me, you may not have known about the screen magnifier in XP. It's nothing exciting, but simply click **All Programs | Accessories | Accessibility** and you'll find Magnifier. I tried it and it's pretty basic, but I'm told that more information about it is on the Microsoft website. The article I read said there's a link for that, but I didn't see it. On my screen, large text appeared at the top with a large cursor, and while there wasn't much magnified screen area, I was able to make use of it. Try it; it may be all you need. Clicking "exit" stops it. I was unaware of this gem until I read it in a newsletter.

That's it for this month. I'll have more new product announcements on my website (most not offering a discount). [www.dealsguy.com](http://www.dealsguy.com). Bob (The Cheapskate) Click, [bobclick@bellsouth.net](mailto:bobclick@bellsouth.net). Editor's note: This column has been edited for space and content considerations.

*(Printers—continued from page 4)*

have an adjacent check box. I have always used the SELECT ALL and the DELETE button. Having cleaned the registry of leftovers, it then displays a similar page with a list of leftover files, and gives you the same option of selecting files for deletion. Again, I have used SELECT ALL and DELETE to good effect.

Why it works—this is just an educated guess, but I suspect it to be accurate. When an application is installed, along with the core .EXE files, the vendors often include a multitude of dynamic link libraries—DLLs, which are either provided by the vendor or a third party. These DLLs provide common functionality across products. (For example, almost every application in Windows is likely to make use of COMDLG32.DLL from Microsoft—this Common Dialog module provides the ubiquitous FILE / OPEN, FILE / SAVE, FILE / PRINT dialog boxes. DLLs are activated from the .EXE by way of registry entries. If COMDLG32.DLL has

three functions (known as Entry Points) then it would have three registry entries, one for each function. Now suppose an update is installed—it may replace a DLL with a newer one, and may insert a new registry entry to point to the new DLL. But, if some other application also makes use of the DLL that has been replaced, it may break. For this reason when you uninstall something you may see a warning message that asks for permission to remove a component that might be shared.

I suspect that the first two printer problems weren't cured by the re-install SETUP because the SETUP found either the leftover files or left over registry entries and decided that it wasn't necessary to continue, and thus either skipped a critical step or just decided to bail out. By running RevoUninstaller, the machine was wiped clean in such a manner that the SETUP was forced to do all of its operations.

For what it's worth, the HP installer seems to be a homegrown custom module rather than an installer based upon the almost industry standard

InstallShield product. I don't know about the Epson installers or the one for the CD drive. There are several products used for creating installations—InstallShield, Wyse, Microsoft's MSI, etc. I won't go so far as to say that the problem is specific to any particular installer product—in fact, they may all be innocent and victims of a sloppy update.

Lastly, I'm not a fan of the various "registry cleaners" as I have found them to be either a scam (We've found 4,513 problems in your registry. We will remove 33 of them, and if you pay us \$29.95 and we'll remove the rest!) or to work only on the registry without delving into the innards of related applications. Revo Uninstaller seems to approach the registry from the application's side and work from the outside in, rather than from the registry side and work from the inside out. Again, that's just my educated guess. Be that as it may, I highly recommend RevoUninstaller.

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## Jim's Computer Tips

Compiled by Jim Paton, a member of the Perth PCUG, Australia  
June/July 2009 Issues, *Axess Magazine of the PPCUG*, [www.perthpcug.org.au](http://www.perthpcug.org.au)

### *New Word AutoText Without Retyping*

So, you're working on your Word document and you realize that you frequently use a certain word or phrase and you think that maybe it's time to create an AutoText entry. That entry combined with Word's ability to show AutoComplete suggestions of the AutoText could really save you some time.

What do you do? Well, one way would be to go to the Insert menu, AutoText submenu, AutoText choice and begin typing the word or phrase that you want to add. (While you're in the AutoText window, double-check that the "Show AutoComplete

suggestions" option is checked to take advantage of that feature!) This method works, but it seems to be a bit of a pain to navigate into the window just to retype the text anyway.

What if you could use the text you already have in the document to create the AutoText entry, without all the menus and submenus? Sounds like a plan to me, and you're not going to believe how quickly it can be done!

First, highlight the text for the AutoText entry. With the text still highlighted, hit the Alt + F3 keys.

The Create AutoText window will open with the highlighted text (or

part of it if it's a long string) already in place as a suggested name for your entry. You can choose to keep the entire suggested text string as the AutoText name or you can change it to something smaller at this step.

Click OK when you're satisfied with the name.

That's it! The AutoText entry is complete without retyping any text, or a menu in sight!

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## Election of 2010 MUG Officers & Directors



Louis Vitale,  
President

Rhonda  
Tomlinson, VP

Lee Alexander,  
Secretary

Phyllis Minnich,  
Treasurer

The election of 2010 MUG officers and directors will be held at our December 8th meeting. The candidates are:

President: Louis Vitale  
VP: Rhonda Tomlinson  
Secretary: Lee Alexander  
Treasurer: Phyllis Minnich  
Directors: Bill Messina,  
Bob McGovern  
and Jim Swanson

Director  
Candidates  
→



David Gardner

Nancy Cottrell

Tom Mackie

David Gardner, Nancy Cottrell and Tom Mackie will continue as directors, to complete the second year of their two-year terms.

Continuing  
Directors  
→



Bill Messina

Bob McGovern

Jim Swanson