

# The NCTCUG Journal

[www.nctcug.org](http://www.nctcug.org)

February 2006

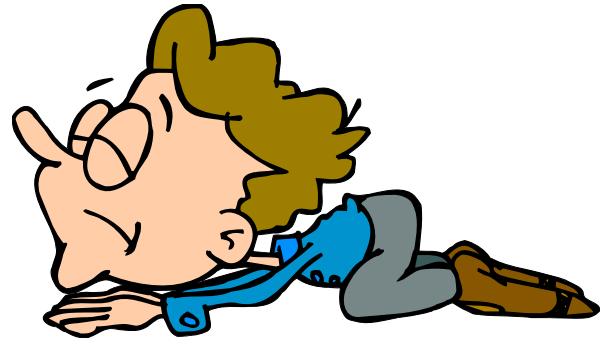
Volume 29 Issue 1b

## Keeping Up

By Paul Howard, NCTCUG

Linda and I took a mini-vacation in Colonial Williamsburg after Thanksgiving. One of the benefits of staying at the Woodlands Hotel on the property is free high speed internet — plug in the laptop, and experience the joy of a fast connection. Don't forget to bring a network cable — better yet, bring two. While vacationing in Ocean City in the spring, my cable died, and I thought it was the hotel's connection — suspect the least expensive part of the hookup first. While I've been blessed with a good dial up connection (48K or better) at home, I'm eagerly awaiting Verizon's FIOS service for internet and TV.

I experienced a strange glitch in Williamsburg while surfing the net. I couldn't open Adobe Acrobat documents with any of the three browsers I have loaded on the laptop. I could read Acrobat files with Acrobat Reader, but no luck via browser plug-ins. I downloaded a Reader update, still no joy. Finally, I uninstalled the Reader program, and downloaded the complete latest version. This fixed the glitch — Reader popped up with all browsers. Thank heavens

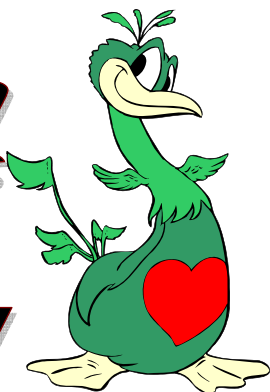


for the high speed connection though — what once was a three or four megabyte download has ballooned to twenty megs!

Ever notice how there's always more to learn with computers? I was trying to get a banner ad image for our web site from an O'Reilly Publishing web page, as part of one of their user group offers. Tried multiple browsers, couldn't see the banners on the page. I sent email to Marsee Henon, the user group rep, thinking there might be a problem with the link, but she replied it worked fine for her. I emailed the link to Bill Walsh, and he sent me back one of the banners as proof that the page worked. I finally delved into Norton's Internet Security Program, which provides firewall and other services, notably "ad blocking." I unchecked the

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# The Insiders' Guide To Craigslist

By Richard O. Johnson, TUGNET, CA [rj@theskillspool.org](mailto:rj@theskillspool.org)

If you're not using Craigslist, it's time you joined the crowd. This phenomenally successful community bulletin board serves over ten million online users in a single month, and, except for modest fees in three cities for help-wanted ads, all its services are without charge.

If you're one of the uninitiated few, you use Craigslist by posting your needs or interests in any of various categories, like jobs, for sale, services, housing, personal, etc., or by reading and acting on posts submitted by others. The Craigslist for this area is at <http://losangeles.craigslist.org>.

[NCTCUG Ed. Note: the DC list is at <http://washingtondc.craigslist.org/> <http://www.craigslist.org/> takes you to the San Francisco page. ]

Beyond its imperfect documentation, Craigslist support is in practical terms non-existent (understandably so, in view of its enormous popularity and its staff of just eighteen). That's one of the reasons for writing this Guide.

## Posting

Posting is straightforward. You just find the prominent "post to classifieds" link (it's at the upper-left corner of the main page), drill down to the appropriate category, and fill out the simple form.

The first page to which posters are directed will invite them to create an account. You don't really need an account, but it'll take only a minute or so to set up, and can make things a lot easier. So do get that account.

Should the need for which you posted be met right away, that's the end of it. In most cases, however, you'll want to re-post. Without re-posting, your post will stay up (in Los Angeles) for between 10 and 30 days, depending on the category, but you don't want to wait nearly that long. Posts appear in chronological order (last submitted on top), and readers will typically stop perusing after about two days' worth of posts.

(You can always edit your post, but editing won't move it up as will re-posting.)

Another way to improve your response rate is to post in more than one category. But don't do that before reading about Craigslist's...

## Restrictions

Craigslist is replete with rules and regulations. Trouble is, they're not particularly easy to find, they're not all in one place, and, worst of all, some of the most crucial ones are not published at all (until you're found to be in violation, and by then you may be "blocked")!

If you want to see what rules are written down, find the Craigslist Terms of Use, Frequently Asked Questions, and General Posting Guidelines. But bear in mind that other unstated rules may bear equally on your submissions. Here are the most important Craigslist rules:

You may not post "essentially the same item" before deleting the old item. This applies even when posting in a different city or category. So if your post lends itself to more than one category, you need to alternate the categories. (You may possibly be able to get around this restriction by using different email addresses.)

Craigslist confuses this issue by appearing at one point to sanction posting "in multiple categories." This suggests that in some circumstances such multiple posts may be accepted. So if you want to try it, go ahead. The worst that can happen is that your second post will be refused.

You may not post the same item more than once in 48 hours. This rule is not strictly enforced. That is, if you delete and re-post your Thursday noon post at 8 am Saturday, chances are there will be no problem. But it's unwise (and really unnecessary) to post as often as daily.

Your post may not contain a link “to a commercial website or auction.” This is an example of a rule I haven’t been able to find anywhere, until I was blocked for violating it! Note that craigslist does not define what makes a website “commercial.” My listing on the web of free summer shows, that contained a small link to my organization, was deemed to be “commercial.” You’ll be safe if you don’t link to any website, but instead invite the reader to email you for more information (very easily done—see below). Linking to a webpage without any links on it is also safe.

### Posting Tips

Craigslist makes it easy as pie for its users to respond to your posts. If you want phone calls, simply include your phone number in the writeup. If you want emails, craigslist will “anonymize” your email address, never to be seen by responders. These folks will click on a link to respond, and that response will go to craigslist, and then to you.

Each anonymized email response will refer to the unique number for that particular post. So if you’re running several similar posts, you can easily track your responses to see which ones are most effective.

The body of your post can be either in plain text or HTML. If you choose plain text, craigslist will automatically convert any Web addresses starting with <http://> to links (but exercise care before including a Web address—see above). You can’t otherwise mix plain text and HTML (don’t add a few HTML tags to a plain-text submission).

You can add photos or other graphics to your post, in one of two ways:

If your post is under the heading of “for sale/wanted,” you’ll be invited to add a picture from your hard disk. Otherwise (providing you’re submitting in HTML), you can add graphics with the `<img>` tag. See craigslist’s FAQ for more details.

### How Best To Post

The following assumes you’re using Windows, and have postings suitable

for several categories. (You can adapt these guidelines to other circumstances.) Performing these steps will reduce the re-posting process to about a minute a day, while giving you maximum exposure.

**Compose your posts.** If possible, create an entirely different post for each category. If sufficiently different, posts promoting the same transaction may display simultaneously without a problem.

**Create your account,** by using the link on the “post to classifieds” page.

**Create three bookmarks** for your browser. One will be your account page, another will be the craigslist post page, and the third will be the browse page (the craigslist main page for your locality), for reviewing others’ posts.

**Submit your posts.**

**Wait two or three days.**

**Open your account page.** Decide which post you’ll want to re-run. Click on that post.

You’ll be given two choices, Edit and Delete. If you want to re-run the post in exactly the same category, choose Delete. Then go back to your account page, click on the deleted post, and you’ll be able easily to re-run it.

If you want to re-run the post in a different category, click on the Edit button, to bring up your “raw” post. Then using Ctrl-A and Ctrl-C, copy that raw post to the Windows clipboard. Go back to your account page and delete the post. Finally, open the post page that you’ve bookmarked [step 3 above], and post in the appropriate new category.

**Wait a day,** and repeat steps 6 through 9.

If you’re promoting the same transaction in several different

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# The New, The Best, And The Worst

Collected by Pim Borman, SW Indiana PC Users Group, Inc. [swipcug@sigecom.net](mailto:swipcug@sigecom.net)

## Hard Drive Too Small?

If you think a 500 GB is still not big enough, help is on the way, in what seems to be an obvious way. If you think of a room filled with people all stretched out on the floor, you can cram in a lot more folks if you have everybody stand up, right? As it turns out, the magnetic elements on current hard drives are lying down on the job, but now several manufacturers, including Hitachi and Seagate, have figured out a way to make the lazy critters stand up on the disk and squeeze them closer together. It must be easier said than done, considering how long it took to implement this technology, but now Seagate is announcing a new 2.5" minidisk, named Momentus, that will hold 160 GB, 20% more than the highest-capacity 2.5" drives currently available. It sounds like magic, and the name, Momentus, suggests that Harry Potter had something to do with it. The new disks will be shipped early next year. Seagate anticipates that regular hard drive capacity will jump to 2500 GB (2.5 TB) in 3-5 years. (PC Magazine, 8/9/05)

## How Much Is That Program In The Windows?

In the good old days, when you purchased the latest version of MS-DOS you were free to install it on as many computers as you owned, and many a copy was shared with friends and neighbors as well. That has changed, as we all know, and many expensive programs can now only be installed on a single computer, whether we like it or not.

Large commercial programs used in the business world have usually been licensed per seat, based on the number of computers the program was installed on. Some small engineering companies that obtained a single copy of expensive Autodesk and used it on multiple computers were fined and lost their use of the program when they got caught.

As CPUs have been getting faster, computer productivity has gone up, to the benefit of the users. Although most providers have increased their

license fees to some extent as the programs improved, fees have mostly continued to be charged per seat or per CPU.

Now the trend to faster computers is to increase the number of CPUs on a single chip instead of making single ones faster, and some software companies want to charge their fees on a per CPU basis. They are mainly concerned about the many back-room computers used as servers dishing out data over computer networks to employees. Oracle and IBM have been in the forefront of the pricing battles, but seem to be compromising on an individual basis. Microsoft has unexpectedly taken the side of the users and licenses its software at the same cost for single-core or multiple-core processors. That may have something to do with the threat of Linux and its Open Source programming model that is looking more and more attractive to many businesses as the cost of Windows-based software keeps increasing. (The Economist, 7/16/05, thanks to Louis Ritz)

## Too Much Security?

Recently I had occasion to help someone straighten out the connections between their computers and the router. The router had been set up by an expert, using all its available security features. Unfortunately, he left behind a jumble of notes about procedures and passwords that seemed to be incomplete or wrong. In the end all we could do was reset the router and start over again. That made me think about how much security we really need.

Most of us live in homes with maybe two locks on the front and back doors, possibly with an added bolt for extra security at night. That will keep most amateur burglars out, but a determined crook will find a way to get in anyhow. So be it, unless you live in a big city apartment where it is smart to live behind a steel door with multiple locks set in a reinforced frame.

The same goes for routers. To keep occasional snoopers out of your network takes only a few simple changes to be made on the router's access page.

- ☆ Replace the default password needed to access the set up screen with a secure one that is easy to remember (an old street address is good, as it contains letters and numbers). Also change the default user name, if your router lets you.
- ☆ On the wireless access page change the SSID name to a secure one.
- ☆ On the same page uncheck the option to broadcast the SSID name.

Forget about all the other security options, including WEP or WPA encryption, unless someone could have good reason to spend lots of time and talent guessing your setup information and ruin you in doing so. Just because it can be done doesn't mean anyone will actually go to the trouble! Just make sure to write down the user name, password and the SSID. And if you forget anyway, it only takes a few minutes to reset the router all over again.

### Windows Tips And Tricks

The June 28, 2005 edition of PC Magazine carried a large number of Tips and Tricks for Windows, mostly contributed by PCM's lead analyst Neal Rubenking whose articles and advice I have been following almost as long as I have been using computers. Try to get hold of a copy to see for yourself. Here are some that caught my eye.

If an error message indicates that a system file is missing or corrupted you may be able to recover it from the Windows disk. You DID get one when you bought your computer, didn't you? Else ask the manufacturer for one - you paid for it! Insert the Windows system disk and select Search from the Start menu. Use the name of the file you are looking for, but replace the last character of the extension with an underscore, e.g. Notepad.ex\_ instead of Notepad.exe. Make a note of where you found it and then use some good, old-fashioned DOS command to expand that file and install it on your hard drive where it belongs. Use Start...Run and in the window that pops up type (for this example, assuming your CD ROM is labeled D :) expand  
 D:\Setup\Notepad.ex\_ C:\Windows\Notepad.exe  
 and that should do it. In some cases the missing file is stored in a compressed CAB file. You can find out by repeating the search with the full file name. If

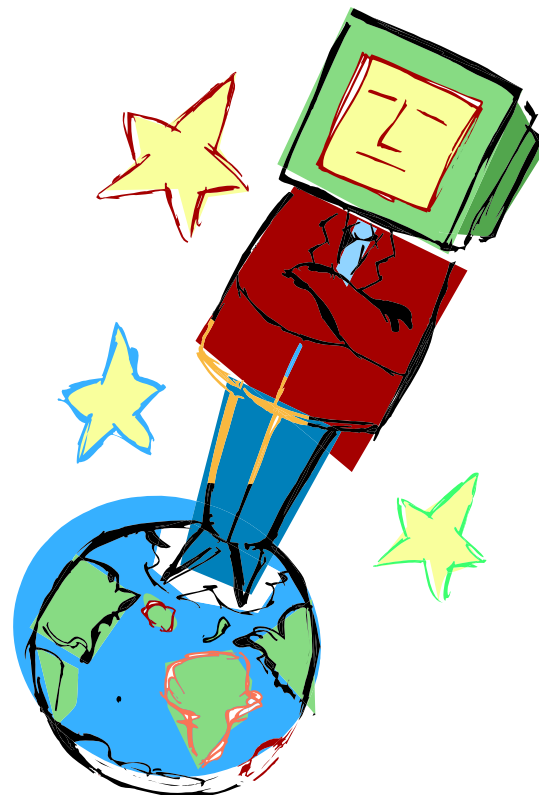
found, open the CAB file in Windows Explorer and simply drag the missing file to its location on your hard drive.

Another handy tip concerns access to Windows in its Safe mode, such as might be required to remove a virus infection. The manual tells you to hit F8 or DEL (depending on the make of your computer) during start up, right after the initial boot sequence completes, but before Windows starts loading. In practice, there is only a fraction of a second during which you must do this, and it may take many repeats before you finally get it right. With a USB keyboard it is impossible to do at all, since the keyboard won't be active yet at the required moment. If you miss and the system boots up in the full-fledged Windows mode, press Start...Run and type msconfig followed by the Enter key. Choose the BOOT.INI tab and check the /SAFEBOOT box. Now XP will reboot in Safe mode until you repeat the procedure and uncheck the box.

### Recovered Printer Cartridge

The other night I set out to print a first birthday picture of our black-and-white Cocker Spaniel, Bonnie. As the picture emerged from the printer, an older HP-812C,

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## New Year's Resolutions For Computer Users

By Ira Wilsker, APCUG Director;

Columnist, The Examiner, Beaumont, TX; radio & TV show host

This is the season when we are often asked about our New Year's resolutions. We may want to lose weight, be a better worker, better family member, or other virtuous improvements, but we should also resolve to be better cybercitizens and practice "Safe HEX".

Here are some suggested resolutions:

- 1) Update antivirus software at least daily – new viruses, worms, and Trojans are appearing at a rapid pace, with an estimated 12,000 new ones appearing in 2004 alone. New viruses can spread around the world literally in minutes, so anti-virus software that has not been updated at least daily may be worse than no antivirus software at all. We may have a false sense of security using non-updated software, believing that we are protected from the current crop of viruses, so we click on any interesting email attachments, and insert that questionable floppy in our computers, a dangerous practice. Considering that there are a variety of free antivirus products available, and commercial antivirus software is reasonably priced (especially after rebates), there is absolutely no reason why not to have current anti-virus software that is updated at least daily.
- 2) Spam mail – Delete them without opening them, period. As 2004 came to a close, estimates are that up to 80% of all email is spam. Never purchase anything that is advertised by spam email. Never click on a link in spam email, as many links may load Trojans on your computer, or result in identity theft. Never disclose any personal information such as account numbers, passwords, social security numbers, PIN numbers, etc. in response to an email, even if it says that your account will be threatened if you do not click on the link. This illicit and criminal practice is a method of identity theft called "phishing". Many who market via spam mail are scammers and thieves who make unverifiable claims about their products, sell pirated software, or who will take your hard earned money and send nothing useful back in return.
- 3) Never click on a popup ad. While many are legitimate sellers, many are also scams. As long as we click on them, and sometimes make purchases, the popup purveyors will continue to plague us with their material.
- 4) Practice good email etiquette, also called "netiquette" – If forwarding emails to others, do not simply hit "forward" and enter names from your address book. Having a lot of headers, those lines of others' email addresses and routing information, as well as a lot of ">" (greater-than) symbols makes email difficult to read. Strip off any useless header by highlighting and deleting them, and delete the ">".  
  
Another beneficial piece of netiquette is to be sure that attachments are reasonable in size. Since many newer digital cameras can take poster-sized images; users should reduce the size of emailed images to a reasonable size, such that they can be easily viewed. It would also be a good idea to save the image in the universal JPG or GIF formats, rather than the sometimes-default BMP format, as the JPG and GIF formats greatly compress the file, making it a much smaller download. I sometimes resent receiving a digital photo taken at 2560x1720 or larger, when trying to view it. Recently, someone proudly sent me a 4 megapixel photo of his new grandchild to view on my 800x600 monitor. When I first loaded the image, all I saw was a huge eye, and with red-eye at that. Not just was the file size huge, and slow to download, but the image was several times the size of my screen, requiring me to scroll to see the image.
- 5) Do not forward Hoaxes and Urban Legends – These may be cute, or we may feel that we are really warning others about some perceived threat, but please check out any email which says "forward this to everyone you know" as it will most likely be a hoax or urban legend. Sites such as [www.snopes.com](http://www.snopes.com) are excellent re-

sources to debunk hoaxes and urban legends. Be aware that you can not get rich, or get gift certificates by forwarding emails, and that the poor dying kid in Georgia wanting postcards has long since recovered. Save yourself some potential embarrassment and email bandwidth, and refuse to forward these messages without first verifying their authenticity. Smart people can be duped too, so do not automatically trust the sender.

- 6) Kill Spyware – According to many cyber security experts, spyware, software that can gather and send information of the users' activities, may be a greater threat than computer viruses. Spyware is used to steal passwords, account numbers, and other personal information, as well as generate obscene popup ads, redirect purchases and searches, and several other undesirable acts. Also referred to as "malware" spyware is dangerous.

Microsoft, never first on the bandwagon, is now in the process of attempting to purchase one of the anti-spyware software companies. While there are several decent commercial anti-spyware products on the market, there are also some excellent free ones, such as Spybot Search and Destroy ([www.safer-networking.org](http://www.safer-networking.org)) and Ad-Aware SE ([www.lavasoftusa.com](http://www.lavasoftusa.com)). Never respond to the scam popup ads that tell you that your computer is infested, and click here ... many of those supposed anti-spyware products are scams themselves.

Install legitimate anti spyware software, update it and run it at least weekly.

- 7) Participate in National Cyber Security Awareness Month - October 2005. Put it on your calendar and go to <http://www.staysafeonline.info/> to find out how you and your User Group can participate in this important event.

All of the resolutions above are necessary, and easier to keep than losing weight.

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categories, it may be to your advantage to stagger the posts. To this end you'll want to keep one or more initial posts for a longer interval than the others.

### Browsing Tips

Here are two tips for using craigslist to take advantage of others' posts.

A little known source of great bargains consists of offers on craigslist to sell unwanted gift cards. This situation stems from the fact that many holders of gift cards either paid nothing for them, or paid well below the face value. For example, DiscoverCard distributes merchant gift cards at half price through its "Cashback" program.

To secure such a bargain, visit your bookmarked "Browse" page, and execute the "for sale" link. Then in the keyword search box, enter "gift card" (with the quotation marks), and pick out the offers that appeal to you. Don't hesitate to bargain with the seller for a lower price. (Aim at no more than 50% of face value.)

Once you've made a deal, be sure you meet the seller at the store, to verify the amount of credit remaining on the card.

Craigslist has joined forces with Google Maps at [www.housingmaps.com](http://www.housingmaps.com), to help you better locate available housing throughout the country. You'll be able to specify your price range, and you'll see at a glance whether there's a picture or pictures of the property. Once you make your preliminary selection, you'll be taken to the original craigslist post.

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## Digital Camera Scene Modes — What Are All Those Symbols For?

By Larry Horn, Editor & Review Coordinator [pcugsj@comcast.net](mailto:pcugsj@comcast.net)  
PC Users Group of New Jersey [www.pcugsj.org](http://www.pcugsj.org)

You went out and purchased a digital camera for Christmas and now you have to learn how to use it. The instruction book mentions “Scene Modes” and you see a lot of funny icons on one of the dial of your camera so what are they and what do they do? The picture on the right is from an Olympus D8060 digital camera, so yours will probably look somewhat different but they are generally similar.

The first thing to remember is this a still a camera and you get a picture by having the right amount of light hit the film or light sensor in a digital camera. You do this by adjusting the size of the lens opening (Aperture), or the length of time the shutter is open (Shutter Speed ). How you adjust the two of these in tandem will create a different picture. Without going into a long photography course, I will briefly explain what each of these does.

The Aperture controls how much light is hitting the sensor at any instant and the depth of focus. If I want everything in the picture to be in focus, both near and far objects, I will choose a small aperture. If I want selective focus, for example taking a portrait with a blurred background, you adjust the camera the other way.

The Shutter Speed controls how long the shutter is open so the light can get to the sensor. For a sporting event where you want to stop the action, you would use a short shutter speed but if you want to blur the movement to imply motion, you would use a longer shutter speed. You would also use a very long shutter speed for night shots with motion you want to capture like fireworks.

How does this relate to Scene modes? In its Default setting, the camera guesses at the best exposure, adjusting the Aperture and Shutter Speed without really knowing what you are taking a picture of. It goes for an average setting. By selecting a “scene” on your camera, you are telling the camera what you are taking a picture of so it can make a better choice of how to set the camera. It generally gives more accurate and pleasing results than the default Auto mode.

What are some of the more common Scene Modes? I have listed them below and apologize for not drawing the actual icons but my art work is not that good.

**P Program or Auto:** This is the default where the camera makes all of the settings based upon an average.

**A Aperture Preference:** Here you set the aperture according to the effect you want and the camera sets the appropriate shutter speed.

**S Shutter Preference:** You set the shutter speed - fast for sports or slow for a motion- blur effect and the camera sets the appropriate aperture.

**M Manual:** With this setting you select everything with no help from the camera. Reserve this for experienced users who want to get creative.

**My Mode:** This is an Olympus term which lets you set everything manually and then save those settings. This is useful if you are frequently taking pictures in a set location and lighting setup. An example would be if you frequently sell items on eBay and want to include pictures so you set up “stage” where you take your pictures and want to easily remember the correct settings.

**Movie:** Many digital still cameras can now take short movies limited in length by the size of the memory card. They are low resolution and generally limited to only 1 or 2 minutes or less.

**Night:** This sets a slow shutter speed to capture the available light and may also allow for the use of flash for a subject close to the camera.

**Landscape:** This setting is self-explanatory.

**Action/Sports:** This is really a shutter priority mode setting a high shutter speed to freeze the action.

**Portrait:** Used for taking pictures of people with the background blurred.



**Play:** This is usually a triangle similar to the play button on a CD player. It is used to view the pictures you have taken on the LCD screen.

**Macro:** You would use this setting to take close-up pictures.

Some cameras, like my Nikon CoolPic 4100, do not have all of these icons on the main dial but rather have a setting that says SCENE which brings up a menu on the LCD screen where you can set them. The Nikon even has scene modes for Party/Indoor, Beach/Snow, Sunset, Museum, Fireworks and others. The Nikon also has an additional feature they call Assist Modes. These modes actually place lines over the image in the LCD screen to assist you in positioning the subject in a more pleasing way and/or line things up for panoramas or architecture. You might even find a Burst or Multi-Shot mode for firing off a set number of pictures in rapid succession. I used this to get some great action shots at a bull riding competition last year.

I suggest that you pick up a good book on basic photography when you get your camera. Even with the camera's help, good pictures require the picture taker to understand the basic principals of photography and graphic composition. We have reviewed several in the Cache. Digital or Film, it is still photography. Additional suggestions:

Check camera and printer manufacturers' web sites. They frequently have lessons and tips.

Kodak is an example. Go to: <http://www.kodak.com> then click on the Taking Great Pictures box on the top of the page.

Olympus also has lessons which are more geared toward their cameras for examples but they are still informative. [http://olympusdigitalschool.com/photo\\_lessons/index.html](http://olympusdigitalschool.com/photo_lessons/index.html)

I like a monthly magazine called PC Photo ( <http://www.pcphotomag.com> )

PC World Magazine ( <http://pcworld.com> ) has newsletters that are very informative.

( <http://www.pcworld.com/resource/newsletters> )  
One of the newsletters by Dave Johnson was the inspiration for this article.

I hope I have given you some enlightenment as to what Scene Modes are and what they do. I encourage everyone to read their camera's manual to see what is available. Then use the Scene Modes because by telling the camera what you are doing, the camera will use that information and do it for you. You don't have to know the details of how to adjust the settings. The end result is more successful pictures that you will be proud of.

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## Tech News, November 2005

By Sue Crane, Editor, Big Bear Computer Club, [www.bigbearcc.org](http://www.bigbearcc.org) [sue.crane@charter.net](mailto:sue.crane@charter.net)

### SP3 for Win XP

Microsoft has confirmed that there will be a 3<sup>rd</sup> service pack for Windows XP. They declined to release further details, but said that Windows XP SP 3 will be available after Windows Vista ships, scheduled for the end of 2006. Microsoft released the most recent Windows XP service pack, SP2, in August 2004. The service pack was one of the most significant updates to the Windows OS that Microsoft ever produced, and it included features to make Windows more secure.

### Microsoft Employee Warns Against Downloading From Unofficial Site

A Microsoft employee has warned against downloading an unauthorized version of Windows XP Service Pack 3 (SP3) that has surfaced on Hotfix.net, a popular Web site that provides software patches. The employee told users that downloading an unofficial version of Windows XP SP3 provided on The Hotfix.net would likely harm their computer and put them “out of support” from Microsoft because it is not an official Microsoft package. Each of these hotfixes can be obtained for free from Microsoft by calling their support lines, the employee said. SP3 will be released after Windows Vista ships next year.

### Robotic Cars Make History

The Stanford Racing Team’s robotic car, “Stanley,” drove autonomously across 131.6 miles in the Mojave Desert in six hours and 53 minutes, finishing about 11 minutes faster than Carnegie Mellon’s “Sandstorm.” All of the teams made history during the weekend. They were the first autonomous vehicles to travel far within a specific time frame, as well as the first to finish the 2-year-old race (last year no one finished at all). A DARPA spokesman said this likely means the end of the Grand Challenge. DARPA is now hoping to see the technology take-off.

### Real ID Act

The Real ID Act lays out minimum national standards for licenses, which will have to include a digital photo, anti-counterfeiting features and machine-readable technology. States will have to verify all documents presented to support license applications, such as birth certificates, Social Security cards and utility bills, with the issuing agency, and will be required to link their license databases so they can all be accessed as a single network. States will also be required to verify that a person applying for a license is in the country legally. Another Real ID Act requirement is that a person’s license and Social Security card must bear the same name—not a nickname or shortened version.

### HP Recalls Laptop Batteries

HP has recalled around 135,000 lithium ion rechargeable battery packs worldwide after several melted or charred the plastic cases of laptops. The battery is used with the HP Pavilion, Compaq Presario, HP Compaq and Compaq Evo laptops, company spokesperson, Mike Hockey, said. The company received 16 reports of batteries overheating, with four cases of damage to the laptops. No injuries have been reported. Consumers can verify if they have the faulty battery pack by going to [www.hp.com/support/batteryreplacement](http://www.hp.com/support/batteryreplacement).

### New Intel Technology Could Shorten PC Boot-Up Time

With Robson, a PC pulls data and applications off an add-in flash memory card and Intel software, rather than the PC’s hard drive. Potentially, notebook users could experience a longer battery life because the hard drive wouldn’t have to work as hard. Intel did not provide exact boot-up time comparisons, but a representative said Robson will cut the amount of time it takes from when you hit the “on” button to when the PC can operate, the time it takes to go from a sleep state to an active state, and the time it takes to launch an application.

## Some Camera Models Have Defective Sensors

Several major camera makers have announced plans to replace faulty CCD sensors in digital cameras and camcorders. CCD sensors capture images. As a result of the defect, images are distorted or nonexistent. The CCDs were manufactured between October 2002 and March 2004. Konica Minolta, Canon, Fujifilm and Nikon have sold models that are affected by the problem. More information can be found on their respective sites:

<http://www.fujifilm.com/JSP/fuji/epartners/ServiceSupportHome.jsp> ;

[http://www.nikonusa.com/email\\_images/nikonusa/service\\_advisory](http://www.nikonusa.com/email_images/nikonusa/service_advisory)

## Chip-Enabled Soccer Ball

Engineers working on a chip-enabled soccer ball are optimistic about the technology being used at the FIFA (Federation Internationale de Football Association) World Cup soccer tournament in Germany next year. FIFA has shown interest in the technology—largely to help referees make crucial goal-line calls—but has yet to make a final decision. The radio-based tracking system could also be used to determine whether a ball has gone out of bounds, to compile statistics about individual players, and more

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## Search The Windows WUGNET Shareware Hall Of Fame

By Bettie Cummings Cook, SW Indiana PC Users Group, Inc. [swipcug.apcug.org](http://swipcug.apcug.org)

<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/downloads/wugnet.msp>

is the web site of WUGNET. On this site are the Microsoft picks that demonstrate the highest standards available today in shareware for Windows XP. Just for the record, freeware is free and shareware is generally free to try but you are on your honor to send the compiler a fee or a contribution. Yes, you can use them as long as you please without sending a nickel for them but I encourage you to support the persons who unselfishly provide good shareware programs. A number of the programs will develop into large, well-known products or become incorporated into new system programs. To cite a few old examples that did so: PKZip, Brother's Keeper, Checkit, XTree, and TweakUI. I purchased these as shareware programs a number of years ago for five dollar each. To the credit of the shareware compilers, their programs have continued to operate from Windows 3.1 thru Windows XP. So, for the most part, they are good investments.

Twenty-five of the best picks for Win XP are featured with links to downloadable sites. Everything from utilities to games. I was intrigued by one called Ink-Saver. It adjusts the amount of ink flow from cartridge to printer and causes those expensive ink cartridges to last a little longer. Check it out for dependable sources that have MS approval.

Bettie Cummings Cook is Newsletter Editor of the SW Indiana PC Users Group, Inc. (SWIPCUG). The above article appeared in the January 2005 issue of the P-See Urgent, SWIPCUG newsletter. Permission is granted to other non-profit computer user groups to use this article in their publications with credit to the author and the SW Indiana PC Users Group.

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## Selections From The DealsGuy

**Bob Click, Greater Orlando Computer User Group**

### Need A New Web Site?

WebBuild Express sounds like a great tool for building your new Web site and Serre Murphy, president of Net Fulfillment Technologies Inc. was a vendor at the spring FACUG conference. I asked him for a deal for my readers. Below is information I have put together from their Web site. He is sending me a review copy so I should have some actual experience soon.

They say you don't have to know how to program or write HTML code to use WebBuild Express. Using it, you can easily organize your site and create menus and links to the other pages, and to other sites. Using the unique "Dashboard" feature, you can include special functions like hit counters and search windows in your pages. Other features enable you to create backup copies of your work and to export data to other WebBuild Express users. WebBuild Express is designed to be intuitive and easy to learn and if you've used a modern Word Processing program, you'll be capable of using this Web design software to start building your own sites immediately.

This product also has plenty of undo/redo options just in case you have a problem making up your mind about the design of your Web site. It has Paste Special capabilities, which can be valuable in the

design of your site. WebBuild Express organizes your pages by "Application." An application is the collection of pages, images, and other files for a Web site. You can build as many Applications using WebBuild Express as you want and there is no limit on the number of sites you can have, or the number of pages you can have on each site. A page in WebBuild Express corresponds to each page you will have on the published site. Each page can have a title, which will appear in the browser's tile bar, and other information that is useful for getting the page listed by search engines.

You can preview a page at any time by clicking the Preview Page tool button (or selecting "Page Preview" from the "File" menu). Page Preview will launch your browser and display the page you are working on as it will appear when published. You can also view an entire site by choosing "Site Preview" on the "File" menu. Site preview creates the html code for all pages in your application and is useful for testing links between your pages. You can use the "Send to Server (FTP)" choice on the File menu to send the files you have published (see paragraph above) to a Web server by supplying the Internet address of the server, your user name, and your password.

Check their Web site [<http://www.nfti.net>] for more information. They are offering us a 25% discount from the MSRP of \$29.95 (already a bargain), making the final price just \$22.45 until January of 2006, saving you \$7.50. To download it at [<http://store.esellerate.net/nfti/store>], use the coupon code CPN8348901136, when it calls for it, to receive your 25% discount. Ordering it on CD-ROM will add \$10.00. All these features and tech support too! On behalf of my readers, I thank Mr. Murphy for this special offer.  
[NCTCUG Ed. Note: there is a free 30-day trial available; it's a 19MB download!]

### SearchMyDisks 2.01.

I'm pleased to inform members of Users Groups that 10-Strike Software releases SearchMyDisks 2.01 (formerly 10-Strike Disk-Pile). Please, find the



### Washington Area Computer User Group (WAC) Meetings

WACUG Meeting will be held on February 11, 2006 (note: **2nd** Saturday), 12:30 PM to 3:30 PM. at the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, VA.

You do not need to be a member to attend. For more information on WAC meetings and events, call the WAC AnswerLine (voice) at (703) 370-7649. Also see WAC's Web Site at

<http://www.wacug.org/>

press release for SearchMyDiscs 2.01 below for your information. Please note, our summer discounts are still available and the cost of registering the program is 20 US Dollars. Exclusively for Users Group people we've arranged a RegNow 10% discount coupon: STRK-G4BI-GRP

Best regards,  
Dmitriy Stepanov

*10-Strike Software, September, 2005;  
For Immediate Release*

New disk cataloger and search engine helps PC owners find necessary CD or DVD in seconds.

SearchMyDiscs (formerly marketed as 10-Strike Disk-Pile) is a handy software application that helps folks with large CD and DVD collection quickly find the disk that has a needed file, photograph, music track or movie clip. This is how the program works:

First, a person inserts every CD or DVD that needs to be indexed into the PC. The program will automatically scan the disk, cataloging its contents. In addition to that, the program will store the file structure of the disk, thumbnail images and EXIF tags for photographs, MP3 ID3 tags for MP3 tracks, file properties (avi, exe, dll, jpg, gif, bmp, png, tiff, psd, tga, pcx, and other files). It's also possible and advisable to create short descriptions for certain contents of the disk. Plus, the program offers an option to create a file tree that contains files and folders stored on different disks.

After the first step is completed, the program is ready to be used. If the need arises to find that track or photograph, a person simply enters the name of the file or other search parameter, like the name of song, performer or album, and SearchMyDiscs will show exactly what CD or DVD contains the desired data. No more trying to discern scribbles on the back cover, inserting and ejecting disks or endless browsing. Reports, for instance "My MP3 Collection," (text or HTML) can be built on demand.

It's possible to organize CDs and DVDs into special groups (i.e. images, music, data) and one disk may belong to multiple groups. Second, SearchMyDiscs will store information on hundreds of disks without hogging all that disk space or system resources. A

few megabytes will do. Finally, there is the "Borrowed Disk" feature that makes it possible to distinguish between the disks that are loaned out and the ones currently on the shelves. Plus, the program can search through zip, rar, arj, cab, sfx archives to find a file.

SearchMyDiscs 2.01 is available at <http://www.10-strike.com/searchmydiscs/> for free download. The cost of registering the program is 20 US Dollars.

System Requirements:

A standard PC with Windows 95/98/ME/NT4/2000/XP

Download: <http://www.10-strike.com/searchmydiscs/searchmydiscs.zip>

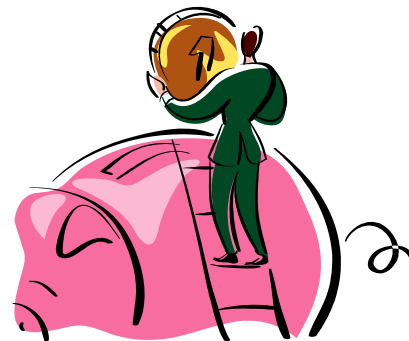
Buy: <http://www.10-strike.com/order.shtml>

### The Lost Can Often Be Found

Have you ever deleted a file and later found you should not have done that? No problem, just go to the Recycle Bin and get it back. Come to find out though, it has been dumped by the Recycle Bin. Now you have another problem; but not if you have PC Inspector, which can do unbelievable things when it comes to recovering deleted files from your hard drive. Your hard drive has to be working properly for it to work.

Best of all, PC Inspector is Freeware and it can be downloaded at [[http://www.pcinspector.de/file\\_recovery/uK/welcome.htm](http://www.pcinspector.de/file_recovery/uK/welcome.htm)]. If you have used Secure Clean or Wipe Drive, forget about it. I found this information in a UG newsletter, but have not tried it personally.

This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers or freebies I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of any products, no matter how enthused I might sound. Bob (The Cheapskate) Click [[bobclick@mindspring.com](mailto:bobclick@mindspring.com)]. Visit my Web site at [<http://www.dealsguy.com>].



*(Continued from page 1)*

“ad blocking” option, sent the browser to the page in question, and there appeared a web page full of banners of all sizes. Among other techniques, the blocking software looks at the path name for pages, images, etc. If “ads” happens to be in path, the image, page, etc. won’t make it through the blocking software!

When I upgraded from a 17" CRT monitor to a 19" LCD flat panel, I lost the convenience of a place to put coffee mugs full of pens and pencils, and other assorted desktop detritus. The top of the monitor had a six inch flat band on top that made for a convenient shelf. Cyberguys.com [<http://www.cyberguys.com/>] to the rescue, with their so-called LCD monitor shelf, \$23 plus shipping. Two clamp-on metal poles support an 11.5" deep by 20" wide shelf — much better than the top of the old monitor. I got rid of lots of desktop clutter. Ask for their catalog — lots of useful stuff for computer enthusiasts — and a few toys, too <grin>!

### **TiVo Schmeevo — My Kingdom for an S-Video Cable**

After lots of accolades from user group friends Geof Goodrum, Chuck Roberts, and Bill Walsh, I thought it time to give the TiVo digital video TV recorder a whirl. Yet another black and silver box to add to your tower of home theater gear. So much better than a VCR, because it records on a hard drive, and uses Linux for its operating system. The first generation boxes were hackable, at least to the extent of installing additional or larger drives. The device hooks to a phone line or internet connection to download TV program information, software upgrades, etc. Subscribing to the programming service is the revenue stream for TiVo, given that the boxes generally feature \$150 rebates.

To be truthful — one of the challenges was trying to figure out why my VCR was hooked up the way it was — that’s as baffling as any of the TiVo stuff <groan>. I spent most of an afternoon crawling on my belly like a reptile, trying to get TiVo hooked up — it’s like a plumbing project, always yet another trip to the store — for S-video cables I thought I had, turns out they were all coax. And extra audio cables, too. Insufficient inputs on the TV required purchase

of a \$39 switch, so I can share an input between the VCR and TiVo (and two spares, for later additions). I also discovered that S-video connectors are a flawed system — the slightest tug on a cable, and it pops out of the jack. I ultimately used some sleeving and cable ties to bundle the wires together and managed to eliminate the tendency of the S-video connectors from pulling out of the jacks.

I took twenty minutes trying to figure out which button on the remote to push to start the TiVo set up process — that would be the “select” button, and it told you that in the third paragraph of the on-screen directions — but not in the ----ing manual. (Believe it or not — I was trying to read the manual.) Oh, that cutesy TiVo logo on the top of the remote control? That’s a button too — the TiVo button, of course — that does wonderful blinking stuff as well.

At first, I thought the cable that TiVo gives you to hook up to the phone jack and splits to two jacks shorted the phone line so the phone was constantly off hook, thus preventing the TiVo from calling the mothership and downloading all the latest Dept. of Homeland Security software into the TiVo, checking on your subversive viewing habits — they know you watch PBS, and they’re going to make sure you’re not gonna march in the next anti-war rally. Oh, yeah, and you can’t use your phone, either !! Wouldn’t want you setting up none of them pinko meetings <grin>. I unplugged the phone connection after each of its first two programming calls, and was concerned that the TiVo box might have a defective modem that was not releasing the line after one of its calls. After calling up the mothership on the second morning, the box no longer held up the phone line, but released it at the conclusion of the programming call.

Geez, I’m going to buy one of those two-headed, 500 watt xenon job lights that Sears sells, so I can see in back of the TV, VCR, and the TiVo. There’s a 15 digit number on the back of the bleeping TiVo unit that you need in order to sign up for the programming service, and it’s in about 4 point type. The tiny type makes it especially handy to read on your belly, trying to hold the flashlight, dial in the bifocals, and scream the numbers to the wife, as she graciously writes them down. My wife is a wonderful woman, or perhaps I just didn’t catch her muttering “Why didn’t you write these numbers down before you started hooking up all the wires?”

(Continued from page 5)

the top half looked OK but the bottom half was faded red. Clearly, one or two of the three colors in the color cartridge were depleted. Just because of such happenings, I always keep an extra cartridge on hand, in the refrigerator to keep it fresh. That may have been a bad idea.

I installed the spare cartridge, aligned it, and printed out the picture. The black snoot of the dog came out looking distinctly bluish. Back in the image editor I darkened the black parts of the image and printed it out again. Same result, distinctly bluish. Continuing the next evening, a test page indicated that the yellow color of the cyan-magenta-yellow cartridge was not printing. I used the printer's utilities to clean the cartridge and to prime the inks, without luck. I took the cartridge out and carefully cleaned the print head with 90% pure rubbing alcohol, still without success.

I was ready to give up on the cartridge and buy a new one when one more possibility occurred to me. I double-bagged the cartridge in two ZipLoc bags and

immersed it for 20 minutes in a pan of hot tap water. That did the trick, Bonnie printed out just fine. From now on no more storing of color cartridges in the refrigerator!

### AdSubtract, Good Bye!

For years I have used AdSubtract to block nuisance ads while browsing. These days ads are no longer just nuisances, as some are harmful and require stronger countermeasures. I still have AdSubtract on my older system, but its update button is no longer active. A Google search indicates that Intermute, AdSubtract's parent, has been acquired by Trend Micro. AdSubtract has been combined with TrendMicro's SpySubtract Pro to form Trend Micro Anti-Spyware 3.0, which is only compatible with Windows NT or 2000.

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## NCTCUG Information

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Club Information call: 301-577-7899

Web Site: [www.nctcug.org](http://www.nctcug.org)

### Officers and Directors

All officer terms expire 2006

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### Article Submissions

Articles, helpful hints, and other items of interest to readers of the NCTCUG Journal are always welcome and will be published as soon as possible after submission. Priority is given to members' contributions. Items may be submitted via modem to the BBS or on diskette. Submissions to the BBS should be uploaded to the Newsletter Conference and a message left for the Editor. Files should be straight ASCII, unformatted, with C/R only at end of paragraphs; no indents for paragraphs should be used. Preferred format for diskettes is MS-DOS 3½ 720k or 1.44Mb. Diskettes in other formats may be submitted but there will be a considerable delay in processing. If absolutely necessary, items may be submitted in hardcopy only but these will also meet with delay.

### Membership Policy

The National Capital Tandy Computer Users Group, Inc. is a non-profit [501(c)(3)] organization founded in 1978 to educate users of all Tandy computers and MS-DOS compatible computers. Membership dues are \$25.00 (U.S. Funds) per year, with a \$5 surcharge for international mail. Membership in NCTCUG includes membership in all SIGs, access to the BBS and software libraries, and subscription to the Journal published 8 times per year. Applications may be obtained at any club meeting, by downloading from the BBS, by calling one of the officers or board members, or by writing to the club. A sample newsletter, membership application and related information may be obtained by enclosing \$1 and mailing your request to Jim Rhodes, 201 S. Kensington Street, Arlington VA 22204.

### Advertisement Policy

Members' advertisements: Ads are accepted from members for non-commercial purposes at no charge. Copy should be sent to the Editor in the same format as article submissions. Commercial Advertisements: Ads are accepted from commercial advertisers at the rate of \$60 per full page, per appearance, with discounts for multiple insertions. Smaller ads are priced accordingly. Payment for ads must be made in advance of appearance. Advertisers must supply a permanent address and telephone number to the editor.

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### COMPUCENTER BBS

Is no longer in operation. It has been replaced by the 'compucenter' mailing list at <http://groups.yahoo.com/>

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/compucenter/>

### If you are moving

Please send your change of address to the club PO box as soon as possible to avoid missing issues.

*Thank You!*

## 29 Useful Bookmarks — Part 3

By Richard Johnson, TUGNET [www.tugnet.org](http://www.tugnet.org)

The Web is a marvelous resource, and most of us come nowhere near tapping its full potential. I've attempted here to list 29 websites that without any necessary downloading provide exceedingly useful free non-specialized services and tools, that require no particular knowledge except how to navigate the World Wide Web.

14. Restaurant health ratings (LA County) <http://lapublichealth.org/rating>

Avoid traveling to an appealing restaurant only to find that its health rating is below the level with which you're comfortable.

15. Translation Wizard [www.faganfinder.com/translate](http://www.faganfinder.com/translate)

The Translation Wizard uses other sites' services to ease the process of finding a translation—that otherwise might require visiting ten or more sites to find the language of interest! It also has a neat button to identify a mystery language.

Richard Johnson is a writer and editor, and founder/administrator of FREE FOR ALL The Skills Pool, a 29-year-old membership organization (<http://theskillspool.org>). He is a volunteer with TUGNET Help-Contact for assistance with Internet Explorer, Outlook Express, and Gmail. You may reach him at [rj@theskillspool.org](mailto:rj@theskillspool.org).

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Arlington VA 22216



### February 2006

1st Wed. (2/1)

**7 p.m.** General Meeting

4th Wed (2/22)

**7 p.m.** Internet SIG

3rd Monday (2/20)

**7 p.m.** Board of Directors



All meetings are at **Carlin Hall**, 5711 S. 4th St., Arlington VA: East off of Carlin Springs Rd, just south of Arlington Blvd/Route 50.



# First Class