

a publication of the san luis obispo pcug

vol. 18 · no. 9 · september 2002

What's New By Bill Avery

Opening the August main meeting was President Ray Miklas, with his announcements of the HTML and Linux SIGs on Monday and



Thursday of the coming week at Ralph Sutters' home in Arroyo Grande, and at Ray's house in SLO, respectively.

He added that the Microsoft Big Day was scheduled for August 8, at Maddona Inn, and well worth attending. We want to thank Nancy Vrooman for her coffee, and tea breaks with special sweet treats for social refreshment.

Our speaker was Jim Snyder of Paso Robles' Complete Connections Computer Services, 1413 Riverside, Suite C. In business since 1985, they sell and service business-computing systems. Jim noted that he was born in San Bernadino, and attended Cuesta College, the first year that it was open. He started delivering office furniture in Palo Alto, which took him into a whole new line of work, namely selling computers, because his boss noticed that he liked to talk! As he explained it, he planned to be an electronic engineer, and later moved to Paso to work with Moore Office Products.

After some humor, he asked if anyone was familiar with the Internet? Of course we are, but Jim wanted to

Highlights of last month's board meeting.

The newsletter will be published quarterly, after the last issue by Bob Ward, the end of October. If someone would like to take on the job, the board would be more than happy to have the newsletter continue on a monthly basis. Ray will send out emails to those who have given us their address as to what will be happening at the coming meeting. If you have an email address but have not been receiving Rays meeting notices, give it to him or Marvin Baxendale at the back table.

Alan will be the new SLO Bytes webmaster at www.slobytes.org starting October 1st. We will continue to have our domain name, slobytes.org for the time being, but this could change.

CLUB CALENDAR

September 1st

1:00 pm **Early SIG**.

Dining Room, Bill Avery Main hall, Alan Raul

2:30 pm

Steve Melancon owner of Premiere Printer Repair will speak on the care and maintenance of printers

in this issue...

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Stop the Madness (Spam) by Judy Shulman

PC Users' Group, Jacksonville, FL Taken from NWA-PCUG Newsletter, July 2002

Among the most common complaints I get from people is how to control the amount of e-mail they get, and how to stop the spam madness. Believe it or not, both have many of the same remedies. So let's take a look at the various items that really get your ire up when it comes to the amount and type of e-mail.

It's Too Much — Isn't it amazing how much e-mail you now receive on a daily basis. I know people who get 250 e-mails a day and are proud of it. It's like a badge of courage; people actually think that the amount of e- mails they get a day translates into importance. Well, in my world, 250 e- mails a day would translate into total and utter insanity, and what I call e-mail paralysis. I'm truly fortunate that I see no more than twenty emails a day pop into my main inbox. This I can manage.

I Have No Friends — I know what you are thinking. She has no friends and that's why she doesn't get any e-mail. Take a look at your stack of e-mail and tell me how many of those are from friends and family and how many are spam? Of those from your friends, how many do you actually read? So how do I do it?

First, I make sure that all my friends do not propagate spam. I let them know as politely as possible that I would prefer that they not send me any non-verified threats At their first forward of a hoax, I will send them an e-mail explaining what hoaxes are all about, how to detect them and several Web sites they can use to verify that they are not sending a hoax. On their second infraction, I will repeat the message. On their third, I send Guido. - Just kidding.

I also make known (as I have to this group) that unless the e-mail they are forwarding makes them laugh uncontrollably, sob with abandon, or change their life completely, don't forward it to me. With these rules, I really get some powerful insight into how my friends' and family's minds work!

Rose-Colored Glasses — I see the e-mail world through rose-colored glasses because I use a great feature called Filters. And they work just like a camera filter; they make my e-mail box look really good!

When I start getting e-mails from unsavory e-mail addresses or have rather rude subject lines, I set them up in MS Outlook to be deleted upon receipt. I never actually see them. I would actually love to give you instructions on how to set up filters. Unfortunately, there are too many versions out there and they keep changing how to do it. Your best bet is to look up, in Help, the words filter, spam or junk mail. And that should give you your step by step directions.

AOL is a little different from using something like Outlook Express or Eudora. AOL, because it is a content provider, has a feature called Parental Control and a Junk Mail feature. Additionally, in AOL you can forward any nefarious e-mails to TossSpam, and you will see most of your junk e-mail dwindle very quickly. Be consistent about forwarding and give it about two weeks to kick in.

One thing you must never do is reply to any of these, and for heaven's sake, don't buy anything from these spammers!

There is a great site called http://spam.abuse.net/ that tells you everything you want to know about spam. The section that is most helpful is Tips and help for regular users. For those of you who are over-whelmed with the amount of spam you get, this is a must-see site.

Many Mailboxes — I also have a number of e-mail addresses. I have set up the usual (personal and business) and then I have set up a few more. I have one for newsletters, one for travel, one for using when I get on a site and they ask for an e-mail address and I don't want to give out my real one. How can you get multiple mailboxes? Well, there are lots of free e-mail services out there like Yahoo, Excite, Hotmail and iVillage. Or in AOL, you have up to seven screen names that you can use.

Fold-in What's Left — The final tip that I have for you is to create multiple Inbox folders. You can do this in all the

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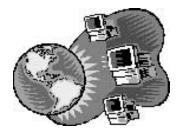
* * * people helping people * * *

NAME	PROGRAM(S)	PHONE NO.	HOURS TO CALL
Bill Roch	Ami Pro	466-8440	anytime
Marvin Baxendale	MS Access	481-8392	evenings
Jim Kiraly	Win 98, Office 97, Quicken, Map Programs	556-0301(pismo)) anytime
Bob Ward	Win 98, DOS, Internet, Eudora	528-0121	evenings
Ray Miklas	Any PC hardware or software questions	541-5633	anytime
We could use more volunteers here. If interested, contact Bob Ward!			

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The Surf Board

by Dorothy Kirk ibm/pcug, redding, ca. kirk@snowcrest.net



Well! In researching the subject of legal rights and advice I found more information on the Web than I thought was possible on every aspect of law. Do you want to know about landlord/tenant rights, or laws about food stamps, or lemon laws? You will find some information on these and many more subjects on the Internet. Of course, you have no way of knowing that the information is accurate or applies to your state or situation. In many cases you really need a lawyer. Even if you enlist the services of a lawyer you are ultimately responsible for any decisions that are made. It is probably best to use the information about law available on the Web as a place to do homework before you see a lawyer.

LAW STREET http://www.lawstreet.com/ - This is a huge source of law. It contains law facts by state covering many categories of law: Family; Medical Malpractice; Wills, Trusts, and Estates; Bankruptcy; Lemon; Personal Property; Criminal; Copyright, Patent, and Trademark; Landlord Tenant; Worker's Compensation; Product Liability; Traffic; Real Estate; Civil Rights; and Consumer. **FREE ADVICE** http://www.freeadvice.com/ - This site offers free advice in plain, understandable language.

JURISDICTIONARY http://www.jurisdictionary.com/ - Look up almost any legal terminology. Easy to use alphabetical listing.

LEGAL ADVICE GROUP http://www.legaladvicegroup.net/ - Find common law terms in the law category in which you are interested.

LEGAL INFORMATION INSTITUTE http://www.law.cornell.edu/topics/topic2.html - From Cornell University comes the comprehensive list of general legal areas categorized into smaller subjects. Such diverse subjects as Food Stamps and Judicial Ethics are covered.

FREE LEGAL FORMS http://www.findforms.com/ - Search two databases: one of free legal forms and documents in many categories, and another of statespecific

"premium forms."

DOG BITE LAW http://www.dogbitelaw.com/ - The most extensive resource for dog bite victims, dog owners, parents, journalists and others needing to learn about the legal rights of victims, how to protect children, and other aspects of the dog bite epidemic. Also, information about legal rights and specific cases. **CALIFORNIA SMALL CLAIMS COURT** http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp/smallclaims/ - All the background information you need for litigating in a small claims court in California.

GRANDPARENTS VISITATION RIGHTS http://www.nolo.com/lawcenter/ency/article.cfm/objectID/1019223D-59A2-4A25-9B6DA99AD0406AOF - Read this lengthy article about a recent supreme court case and its ramifications for your state. Actually grandparents rights concerning their relationships with their grandchildren are an individual case matter. There is apprantly no law that fits all. **LEGAL RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES** http://caag.state.ca.us/consumers/general/disabled.htm - An in-depth "book" in many categories of the rights of disabled persons in California.

CALIFORNIA DIVORCE HANDBOOK - PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

http://www.california-divorce.com/parental/parentalrts9.html - This site outlines the rights and responsibilities concerning children in divorce.

Upgrading Your BIOS?

by Thornton JacobsNWA-PCUG Newsletter, June 2002

Have you ever felt the need or gotten the urge to upgrade your motherboard's BIOS? There are several good reasons to do this. An upgrade may only fix some small housekeeping problems, or it might correct something that really can cause problems or increase it's capabilities.

A couple of motherboards ago, I needed to upgrade to a larger hard drive. The old one was 6.4 gigabytes and the new one was 30 GB. (Maybe I finally have one that I will never fill.) The only problem was that my motherboard would only support drives up to 8 GB. I checked the motherboard manufacturer's web site and, Behold, the latest BIOS upgrade would increase my board capability to support 32 MB drives. Over time I had heard of great disasters when someone attempted a BIOS upgrade but after conferring with other people who said that it was "a piece of cake" I decided to try. After making a backup, I downloaded the upgrade install program and the upgrade file. Then, meticulously following the instructions and wiping the sweat from my palms several times, I proceeded with the upgrade. VOILA! A message on the screen informed me "Operation successful". I rebooted the computer and everything worked perfectly. I proceeded to install my gigantic (for that time) drive and the system recognized all 30 MB. Life was wonderful.

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Welcome New Member

Ralph Brown

september 2002

HARDCOPY

What's New

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share some historical background. He related the early history of the Net, beginning with Sputnik, in 1957, which got the United States going on a path of constantly expanding scientific development. In 1962, the Advanced Research Project Agency [ARPA] was formed to protect the national missile defense system in a crisis, using a wide area network. One researcher, named Paul Baran, of the RAND Corporation, a government agency, defined a way to make a secure network, based on Packet Switching techniques. He wrote:

"Packet switching is the breaking down of data into datagrams or packets that are labeled to indicate the origin and the destination of the information, and the forwarding of these packets from one computer to another computer until the information arrives at its final destination computer. This was crucial to the realization of a computer network. If packets are lost at any given point, the message can be resent by the originator."

In 1968, BBN, [Bolt, Beranek, and Newman] designed the first ARPA-NET computer. "BBN had selected a Honeywell minicomputer as the base on which they would build the switch. The physical network was constructed in 1969, linking four nodes: University of California at Los Angeles, SRI (in Stanford), University of California at Santa Barbara, and University of Utah. The network was wired together via 50 Kbps circuits. "

These are quoted from Dave Kristula's website, "History of the Internet" at: http://www.davesite.com/webstation/net-history.shtml

Another interesting timeline is from BBN, at:

http://www.bbn.com/timeline/index.html

Vinton Cerf from Stanford, and Bob Kahn from DARPA, were developers of the original TCP/IP packet systems in 1973, which became the basis of our current Internet. It superseded the original NCP, or Network Control Protocol, used by the first ARPANET, by 1983. There were more than 23 computers, or "hosts" on the network by 1974, and it was adding radio and satellite links, to expand to 111+ nodes, by 1976. At this time, Robert M. Metcalf developed Ethernet, using coaxial cables to transmit high-speed digital data over Local Area Networks [LANs], which allowed many small networks to be connected together via the "Inter-net".

The IAB, Internet Activities Board, was formed in 1983 to manage the growth of the Internet. In 1981 there were 213 hosts, and over 562 nodes were active on the net. A parallel development occurred using a 56Kbps network, CSNET, for institutions unable to use ARPANET. Also at this time, the University of Wisconsin developed the Domain Name Server system, or DNS, to act as an automatic "directory assistance" name-to-number translator for locations on the network.

From 1985 through 1988, MCI (Sprint) was deploying T-1 high-speed lines, which boosted the speed of Internet connections from 50-56 Kbps to 1.544 Mbps, by a factor of almost 25 times! There were now 1961 hosts on the NSFNET, which replaced the original ARPANET, for research purposes. The count increased to 2308 sites in 1986, and a year later went to more than 10 times that number at 28,174 hosts. Tim Berners-Lee from CERN in Geneva, Switzerland, created Hyper Text Markup Language [HTML] in 1990, as the NSFNET expanded to over 313,000 users, connected through 45Mbps, T-3, backbones across the country, and around the world.

In 1992, CERN released the World Wide Web [WWW], and it was reported that 1,136,000 computers were on the net. By 1993 this had doubled to more than 2 million sites, and Marc Andreessen introduced ' Mosaic for X ", the first web browser. Pizza Hut sold their first commercial product over the web, and First Virtual, the first cyberbank, opened, in 1994. To accommodate the gigantic growth of the net, a new backbone was installed, called Asynchronous Transmission Mode [ATM], operating at 145Mbps. The first access fees of \$50 per connection were imposed in 1995, as the host count went to 6,642,000 sites.

According to Dave Kristula, "Currently the Internet Society, the group that controls the INTERNET, is trying to figure out new TCP/IP to be able to have billions of addresses, rather than the limited system of today. The problem that has arisen is that it is not known how both the old and the new addressing systems will be able to work at the same time during a transition period." The best estimates report that there are over 15 Million Internet sites currently.

Jim reported some of the places in Paso Robles who use his services are the Wine Vault, Spring Street Deli, and Elliot's Maxcare Pharmacy, which uses a complex computer system to fill prescriptions automatically, and quickly.

He noted that high-speed Internet connections are becoming more important to access the advanced digital services being offered. Cable and DSL options both work well, although Jim's company does not offer any cable hookups. There are two types of DSL: [ADSL] asynchronous, which means that upload and download speeds are different, or [SDSL] synchronous, meaning they are at the same speed. The rates vary, but 384 Kbps, is typical for downloads, and 10 -30 kbps for uploads, in ADSL. Commercial SDSL will have a guaranteed rate in the 384 Kbps

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What's New

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range, for approximately \$90/month. Satellite connections are about \$60 - \$100/month. One-way and two-way connections are possible, which use a modem for the upload side of a one-way connection. Wireless connections are becoming popular, and Jim's service includes this type, also. There are antennas for most of San Luis Obispo, and Shell Beach, as well as North County.

See http://cccomputersystems.com/Wireless Internet/wireless map.jpg for a countywide map.

Complete Connections Computer Systems Website is:

http://cccomputersystems.com, and their signup page is:

http://cccomputersystems.com/Internet SignUp/internet signup.html# are contact points over the web to set up wireless service, and/or-\$16.95/month - 56Kdialup ISP or call: (805) 238-1111.

The question and answer session raised a few issues, with one member asking what wireless connection antennas looked like. Jim has a picture on his website at: http://cccomputersystems.com/Wireless Internet/Parabolic.ipg. It basically looks like a vertical section of a wire-frame dish, and needs to be within " line-of-sight " to the wireless node. Rain and fog interference is generally not a problem, although heavy hail could cause trouble.

Ralph Sutter wanted to know how to setup a website on his new wireless network, and Jim explained that he needs to post an HTML webpage on the new server, at the static IP address to which he has been assigned. Alan commented that Mandrake Linux uses "server", and Jim noted that you setup in Windows, an "I.I.S. server", an Internet Information Server. This leaves open a port, which can be protected using XP Firewall.

A question about wireless speeds, wondering if 500Kbps were part of the actual connection. The answer is yes, just as if you had a T-1 line at 1.544 Mbps, which is what comes off of the antenna. Ray wondered if high traffic demands cause degradation or delays, and Jim said that has not been his experience. They are a full service ISP, and deal with the "Complete Connection", as opposed to the Internet Reseller ISP, who do not provide a "full computer system" service, on location, at \$55/hour for Shop Calls [In-house], or \$75/hour Outside, [Onsite] Visitation Call.

Expansion plans for the wireless network are proceeding for the coastal regions and South County areas, and Santa Maria, also. Economic conditions determine the rate of growth, Jim said, and requests are being received at this time.

Jim Buenrostro wondered if their USB converter works well with a Linksys router. Jim Snyder responded that what is required is a PCMCIA adapter card, which holds the converter inside of a system, and outputs either USB or Ethernet port connection, and costs about \$300.

My question about higher frequency band plans at 5Ghz was answered with the speculation that it is coming, but he did not know when it would be realized. He envisions that the RF Internet access digital network will be like the cell-phone network, where you can go from location to location without dropping a connection. One example he noted is that a commercial radio station in Chicago has been converted to all digital, and serves the Internet to the whole area via wireless connections.

Local wireless connections are also used to extend a LAN where hardwired cable can not be used, such as between offices. The security considerations are the same as on the Internet, because the same types of packet encryption schemes are used to protect a connection in both cases. PGP, or Pretty Good Privacy, is widely available, Jim said. Philip Zimmermann authored this popular security program in 1991, and it is available at http://www.pgpi.org.

Ray closed the meeting with a Pic'n'Win raffle to select our lucky winners for a Emergency Lamp System, and a recycled Photo Suite program from last year's program. Approximately 50 Members were present at this month's meeting.

Our next meeting on Sunday, September 1, 2002 will feature Steve Melancon, the owner of Santa Maria's Premiere Printer Repair,

www.premiereprinterrepair.com. He will be demonstrating the care and maintenance of Laser Printers, Ink-jet Printers and Dot Matrix Printers. See you there!

No, I don't want to send a report to you Microsoft (Win XP)

Have you ever noticed how everytime Windows XP hiccups, here comes a popup asking you if you want to report it to Bill Gates (Microsoft). Well, I'm one to let Bill find out himself what isn't quite right with XP so there is a way to get on with life without having to report everytime Microsoft doesn't like something.

Open your system control pannel, or right click on "my computer" icon on your desktop and choose **properties**. Click on **advanced**, then on **error reporting** in the lower right corner. If you want to disable error reporting, then click on the appropriate button. I did leave it set to notify me though if there appears to be problem.

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Bios

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Fast forward to March 2002. I was having a problem and it was suggested that a BIOS upgrade might solve the problem. Again, I went to the motherboard manufacturer's web site and again downloaded the install program and upgrade file. After making a backup I proceeded with the process with great care. As before, wiping the sweat from my palms several times during the process. Again, the message "Operation successful" appeared on the screen. Oh great joy. I rebooted the computer. The boot started out just fine but the screen remained black and blank. There was that damnable Windows chime. All should have been well but all I could see on the screen was black. I rebooted with the same result. Everything was great except there was no video. I rebooted once more with the same result. Great panic had now set in. I searched the motherboard's manual for salvation but there was none. I call several people in the NWA-PCUG for a solution. Still no relief.

As a last resort I call former long time NWA-PCUG member John Hunt who had moved out of state. He had no solution but he did have a spare motherboard that he will send me on loan. This board was a twin of mine and was available because he had upgraded to a newer board. I asked what board he recommended since it was obvious that I was in the market for a new one. I hate changing motherboards. They are bad enough when they are planned. It is much worse when unplanned because you haven't a replacement board and the timing is usually terrible. John made a recommendation and said that he would look on the Internet for the best price. Since I was temporarily out of the computer business at home, I went to the Rogers Public Library to access the Internet from one of their computers. Fortunately, it was school day so there were several idle computers. I found a few places that

listed the board I was looking for. I copied their telephone numbers and came home. Every place that I called had my board on back order. John called with the same result. I then ordered the board from a company I had done business with before and was prepared to wait until their backorder was filled (May 15 - six weeks). This board would use my Pentium III processor. PIII boards are becoming harder to find.

I then called John and told him to go ahead and send the loaner board. Four days later his board arrived - just after UPS delivered my new one. So much for backorder delivery estimates. I spent the rest of the day installing the new board and with great trepidation booted up. Operation successful. Life was again beautiful.

I suppose that the moral to this story is that there is no moral to this story. If you must upgrade the BIOS, do it. However, be very careful about following the instructions and have a towel handy to wipe the sweat from your clammy hands. If there is no real reason to upgrade, don't bother because results can be capricious. It could cause much pain and suffering even if you do everything correctly there are some things that are beyond your control. I have e-mailed the old motherboard company several times asking for their help to repair the old board but haven't heard anything. I am not holding my breath.

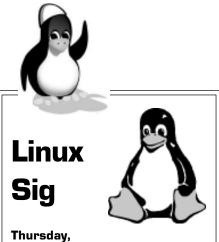


Linux World photo by Alan Raul

Spam

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standard e-mail packages. I use multiple folders along with filtering options to organize my e-mail before I even see it. For example: I have set up a folder called Newsletters. I then created a filter called - you guessed it - "Newsletters" that filters any e-mail that has the word newsletter in the subject line or from a specific e-mail address into that Newsletter folder. Voila — instant filing! This also helps me get organized. If I need to keep an e-mail that I have read, I can then move it to a different file folder so it does not clutter up my main inbox folder. So, I have a folder for each of my clients, I have a personal folder, and I have a PCUG folder. See, I'm very organized and almost spam-free.



September 26, 2002 6:30 PM

Topic: T.B.A

For further details: http://www.slonet.org/ ~araul/linux.htm

club information

HARD COPY is a monthly publication of SLO BYTES PC User's Group located in San Luis Obispo, California. Information in this Newsletter is derived from both our own membership and other PC User Group Newsletters. The purpose of this publication is to inform our members of meetings and provide information related to the use of IBM PC's and compatible computers.

Membership: Dues are \$25 per year. Full membership entitles you to our monthly newsletter, full use of the public domain software library software drawing at the end of the meetings.

Article Submission: Deadline for submission of articles is the 15th of each month. Articles should be provided in ASCII format without any type of formatting from your wordprocessor including tabs, indents, extra spaces, or highlighting. We prefer articles on disk but will accept hardcopies if necessary.

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meeting times

GENERAL MEETINGS are held the 1st Sunday of each month. Our meeting location is the San Luis Obispo I.O.O.F. Hall on Dana Street.

The general meeting starts promply at 2:30 p.m.

Special Interest Groups (SIGS) meet at 1:00 p.m.—2:15 p.m.

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August 13, 2002

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Next Meeting Sunday

September 1st

1:00pm

Early SIGS

2:30pm

Steve Melancon Premiere Printer Repair