

MOTHERBOARD

A Publication of the Computer Users Group Of Redding, CA

Volume 2009, Number 03

<http://cugr.apcug.org/>

March 2009

YOUR C.U.G.R. PRESENTS

4th Tuesday, March 24, 2009

Program One



Jane Quinn

is going to present her lesson plans for photo editing that she has created for her SIG students and any club members who are interested.

Program Two



Bill Ball

will give a presentation on the importance of backing up your computer and the Acronis backup program he uses.



Door Prizes

A Cirago 2.0 USB 60 Gig External Hard Drive
With a value of \$56

Plus

GSP Family Tree Global Software Package

Plus

A 2Gb USB Jump Drive

One free ticket to each member at the door!

Great Ticket Changes

See Page 4

Club Business & Presentation begins at 6 PM
Drinks are available in the Library Cafe
Sign in at the Greeting Table and pick up your name tag and please leave it in the Tag Box when the meeting is over. Also please stay and help reset the tables to the Library's original arrangement.
Thank you.

Future Presentation For April
Basic Hardware Installation Demonstration



CUGR Calendar

CUGR Board Meeting

1 PM Monday, March 30
at Jack-In-The-Box, Dana Drive

LINUX & MORE

10 AM, Saturday, April 11

MULTI-MEDIA

10 AM, Saturday, March 28

WINDOWS & MORE

11:30 AM, Wednesdays
March 25, April 1, 8, 22

DTP SIG

2 PM, Wednesdays
March 25, April 1, 8, 22

See back page
for more SIG information

**GENERAL MEETINGS ARE
at the Redding Library
100 Parkview Ave,
off Cypress.**

**OFFICIAL WEBSITE Is
<http://cugr.apcug.org/>**

For more information
call any Board member
listed on Page 2.

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Club Information

Club Website: <http://cugr.apcug.org/>

Members volunteering to help members!

Club Mentors

New Users	Bob Rice 357-2143, Anytime ricerl@snowcrest.net	MS Windows 98, ME, XP Hardware, Software	Bill Ball bcard9@charter.net 275-4632
MS Windows Photo Delux	Darold Wright 222-1781 daroldwright@yahoo.com	DTP; Graphic Prgs Photo Editing	Judi Ball 275-4632 jebed@charter.net
New Users PaintShop Pro	Dorothy Kirk 246-9661, Anytime oscartaffy@yahoo.com	MS Word, PowerPoint, Movie Maker 2, DVD Prgs. Digital Image Pro	Jane Quinn 365-0825 jqquinn@charter.net

Board of Officers and Directors

Belva Sullivent belvas@charter.net	President, Greeter, Name Tag Manager 241-9926	Eugenia Goodman euggoodman@snowcrest.net	Director, Membership Chairman 221-7723
Bruce Roth baroth@prodigy.net	Vice Pres, Director 247-7306	Anna Lee Horton alhorton@sbcglobal.net	Director 222-5521
Darold L. Wright daroldwright@yahoo.com	Past President 222-1781	Bill Ball bcard9@charter.net	Director, SIG Leader 275-4632
Mario Quinn gaucho7427@msn.com	Treasurer 365-0825	Judi Ball jebed@charter.net	Editor, Director, SIG Leader 275-4632
Margaret Martinovich mjmartin56@sbcglobal.net	Secretary, Director, Membership 241-6378	Lyle VanNorman kb6dow@arrl.net	Director 242-0925
Jane Quinn jqquinn7427@gmail.com	Dir, Vendor Contact, SIG Leader 365-0825	Colly Lord johnclord@charter.net	Website 224-1633

Motherboard Newsletter Staff

Judith E. Ball jebed@charter.net	Editor 275-4632	Mary Montague montaguemc@sbcglobal.net	Proofreader 365-6414
Rush Blodget rmaxtwo@charter.net	Bits And Pieces 241-4754	Anna Lee Horton alhorton@sbcglobal.net	Proofreader 222-5521

Motherboard Newsletter Policies and Deadlines

The *Motherboard* newsletter is published monthly by the Computer Users Group of Redding, PO Box 494778, Redding, CA 96049-4778. The CUG is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. Subscriptions are included in the \$25 annual membership fee. The purpose of the newsletter is to inform members of upcoming events and provide information about the use of IBM compatible computers.

Disclaimer: Neither the CUG, its Officers, the Editor, nor the newsletter contributors assume any liability for damages incurred due to the use of information provided in this publication.

Reprints: Articles from this newsletter may be reprinted by other user groups if credit is given to both the author, CUG and the *Motherboard*. Mail a copy

of the newsletter where the article is reprinted to the Editor at the address in the first paragraph of this text.

Personal Ads For Members:

Requirements are:

1. Advertiser must be a member.
2. The item must be computer-related.
3. The ad must be received by editor J. Ball by the *monthly date of the board meeting*. Sorry, no exceptions.

Other terms must be approved by the club's Board of Officers and Directors.

Article Submissions: All articles and reviews must be submitted to J. Ball by the *Monday of the monthly Board meeting (see Page 1 for date.)* Sorry, no exceptions.

Motherboard Editor reserves the right to make corrections and deletions in all articles in the interest of grammar, style, and space.

Editor's Corner

It's your club. Your input is of value to us...

Please heed these warnings about the Anti-virus 2009 Trojan:

Do not Google or otherwise **search** for info about the Anti-virus 2009 because the search **will bring it to you**. Instead go to Kim Kommando's site and search for info there. www.kommando.com

Do not allow it to scan your machine.

Do not click on any link by *Antivirus 2009*. Once you do, the link will redirect you to the virus' website (*anti-virus2009.com*) to download and purchase *Anti-virus 2009's* rogue anti-spyware program for about \$36. **It does not uninstall it.** It self-replicates and keeps going in your PC!

Do check out the many various legitimate spy wares at Kommando's site to get rid of it. Not particularly sponsored or sold by her, but safe coming from her site.

Because there is so much going on with spam, viruses, and trojans, there are more articles than usual about protection in this issue.

Judi Ball

New Tools For Identity Theft Protection

(NAPSA)—You can protect yourself from modern computer crime.

Less than a decade ago, the most probable security risk computer users faced came from sharing an infected floppy disk. As Internet use increased, a few more threats arose as simple viruses slowly made their way across the Web. Then came worms and Trojan horses, each one a little more destructive and fast-moving than the last.

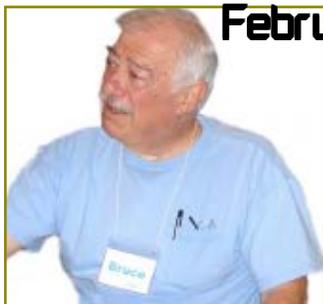
Computer users must now deal with far more serious threats of identity theft, phishing attacks, online fraud, extortion and other cybercrime. Hackers are no longer in it for a pat on the back from the cyber-underground. Today's cybercriminals are in it for the money.

Worse yet, anyone with confidential information is at risk—and a single bad cybermove by just one rogue or unwitting user is sometimes all it takes to put sensitive data into the wrong hands.

For example, a government employee in Oregon recently put more than 1,300 taxpayers at risk of identity theft when he used an office computer to surf porn sites and, in the process, unknowingly

Continued on Page 9

February Meeting



Darold Wright and Bruce Roth led the helpful Q&A session for the meeting. One of the most discussed subjects was the Anti-virus 2009

*Trojan that causes constant popups and other irritating problems. It's not destructive, just irritating, time consuming, and **very hard** to get rid of! Which can be destructive if you're busy and these things begin to happen to your PC! SpyBot is the product Bruce used to get rid of the rogue on a machine he came across, but not before it really tried his patience.*

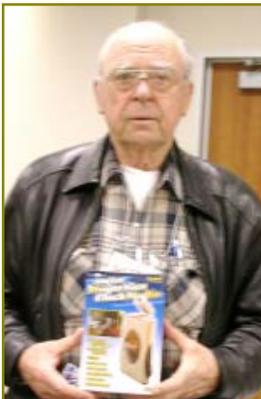
Please see the Editor's Corner on Page 2 for more warnings on this infamous Trojan and where to get the information to prevent it and to get rid of it if it does invade your life.



Congratulations To Our Winners!



Bob Rice won the USB Keyboard and Mouse!
~~~~~



*Phil Graham won the USB 4-Port Hub!*  
~~~~~



Patty Carlisle won the USB 1-Gig Jump Drive
~~~~~

**EDITOR'S NOTE:**  
*I would like to thank Bernice Bennett for taking care of the door prizes and tickets during this meeting while I was off to Arizona and Nevada.*

## Great Door Prize Ticket Changes!



8 Tickets for \$2!

After our discussion at the CUGR Board Meeting in March 2009 the Board decided to keep the rule of "Members only receive tickets," and keep the Free Ticket and the usual 3 tickets for \$1.

However, we went a step further and made two new fun options: **8 tickets for \$2!** And **20 tickets for \$5!** Talk about more chances!

Hope this adds more fun to the door prizes for all beginning with our March 24 meeting.

## Welcome Renewals

*Patricia Bland*

*Jan Brockett*

*Dee Butler*

*David Cox*

*Ken & Marian George*

*Mary Hoisington*

*Anna Lee Horton*

*Margot Letendre*

*Robert Mackenstadt*

*Jane & Mario Quinn*

*Robert Rice*

*Mary A. Todd*

*Richard Yoder*

### CUGR MEMBER WEBSITES

#### KITTYSTONE PERSIANS

Lynn Johanson  
[kittystone.com](http://kittystone.com)

#### MEXICAN-TOURS

[www.mexican-tours.com](http://www.mexican-tours.com)  
Lyle VanNorman  
[lyle@mexican-tours.com](mailto:lyle@mexican-tours.com)

#### Publicize Your WebSite

**Here for FREE!**

*(Members Only Please)*

## Five Tips For Avoiding Phishing Scams

(NAPSA)—Every year, tax time brings new challenges for consumers. Not only do they have the regular hassle of filing returns by the April 15th deadline, they also have to worry about new tax scams, including phishing. For example, last year the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration found 12 separate Web sites hosting such phishing schemes.

Phishing scams attempt to trick users into disclosing personal data, such as credit card numbers, online banking credentials and other sensitive information. Phishers have historically used timely subjects to draw in victims, such as the Hurricane Katrina scam, but because it is a money-making scheme, they also hover around financial topics. In fact, Symantec found that during the tax season last year, financial services was the most heavily phished sector, accounting for 84 percent of all phishing activity. Tax time this year is no exception.

Between January and June 2006, Symantec detected 157,477 unique phishing messages, an 81% increase over the 86,906 unique phishing messages detected during the last half of 2005. Comparing last year's tax season to tax time in 2005 also shows a significant increase. With 97,592 unique phishing messages detected during the first half of 2005, 2006 showed a 61% increase in these messages.

Solving the phishing epidemic seems simple. If users didn't give out their personal information to these scams, they would dissolve rapidly. However, phishing continues to be a problem because fraudsters constantly find ways to lure victims into giving away their personal information.

However, the following five tips will help consumers avoid the hook behind phishing attacks.

1. Be extremely wary of e-mails asking for confidential information—especially of a financial nature. Promises of a tax rebate or other incentives are more likely ploys to steal personal information. If people receive this kind of request, they need to call to confirm the sender's identity and the validity of the request.
2. Don't feel pressured into providing sensitive information. Phishers like to use scare tactics, employing urgent language to pressure victims. They may

threaten with fines, account suspension or service delays until the person updates certain information.

3. Be aware that e-mails from legitimate government entities, banks or ISPs should directly address the individual. It is best to contact the organization that sent the e-mail for authenticity.
4. Never submit confidential information via forms embedded within e-mail messages. Rather, users should communicate that information over the phone or through a secure Web site.
5. Don't click on a suspicious e-mail containing a URL. Instead, navigate to the Web site by typing the URL directly into your browser's address bar. Just because the site's address begins with https doesn't necessarily mean the site is secure. Phishers may use URL masking techniques to mimic the secure address of an authentic company. Before submitting information, individuals should confirm the URL's authenticity by clicking on their browser's "locked" symbol. Consumers can also use transaction security products such as Norton Confidential to notify them when they encounter fraudulent Web sites.

In the event that individuals inadvertently give a phisher their financial information, they should monitor their online accounts, making sure all transactions are valid. If they are not, victims need to contact their bank or credit card company immediately.

Users don't need to be computer experts to protect themselves. Cultivating caution and common sense is the best defense against these attacks. If any questions remain, it's best to contact the organization directly to confirm the legitimacy of an issue.

To learn more, visit:

[www.symantec.com](http://www.symantec.com)

### Advice On How To Get Your Life Back

1. Let go of the mouse.
  2. Turn off your computer.
- And if you are really serious-*
3. Play a game of solitaire with a real deck of cards.

# Windows 7 Is Coming Soon

by Sandy Berger, CompuKISS,  
[www.compuKISS.com](http://www.compuKISS.com),  
[sandy@compuKISS.com](mailto:sandy@compuKISS.com)



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If you ask 100 people their impressions of the Microsoft Vista operating system, 95 of them will tell you that Vista is no good, even if they have never seen or used it.

It is obvious that public opinion of Vista is in the mud. Microsoft made some major blunders when they introduced Vista. There were not enough drivers ready, so many printers, scanners, and other peripherals were incompatible. There was no noticeable speed increase over Windows XP. Vista requires much additional memory and more hardware, so it was often impossible to upgrade current Windows XP computers. Also, Microsoft did not woo the press as they did when they introduced Windows XP, so Vista got a lot of awful publicity. Vista is not a bad operating system, but Vista has gotten a bad name. Microsoft has lost the battle and they know it. So they are working on a new Windows operating system.

Microsoft hopes to make a clean break with previous Windows operating systems with this new version of Windows. They are especially distancing the new operating system from the "wicked" Vista operating system. This is obvious in the name they have chosen for the new OS. They are not using year names like Windows 2000. They are not using what they refer to as inspirational names, like XP or Vista. Instead, they will go back to their original numerical naming convention. There was a Windows 1, Windows 2, and Windows 3. Now there is to be a new operating system called "Windows 7."

If you have been following the versions of Windows as they have been

## Bits And Pieces

by Rush Blodgett; IMB/PCUG of Redding, [rmaxtwo@charter.net](mailto:rmaxtwo@charter.net)

### POLLUTANT EMISSIONS FROM INDOOR OFFICE EQUIPMENT

A recent seminar conducted by the Air Resources Board of California on January 7, 2009 discussed the relative output of ultra fine particulate matter, ozone, and toxic volatile organic compounds (VOC) from the various commonly used items of office equipment, i.e. ink jet and laser printers, fax machines, LCD monitors, and photocopiers in closed indoor areas.

It was found that more VOCs were emitted when the units were first removed from the box—that there was a reduction in these emissions with aging of computers, but not of printers. Laptops produced considerably less toxic emissions.

The emission of ultra fine particles from a laser printer is greater during start up and tracks power consumption; they also emit a greater overall amount of VOC and ultra fine particles than computers during a print sequence. Emissions from laser printers vary with the percent of toner coverage of the pages.

Ink jet printers have lower VOC emissions and significantly lower particle emissions.

introduced, you will find it difficult to comprehend that this next version is actually the seventh version of Windows, but Microsoft says that it is, so that is that. It's Windows 7.

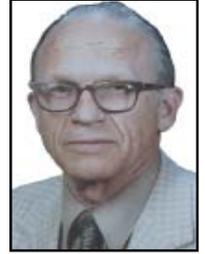
More important than the name, however, is the fact that Microsoft cannot afford another misstep. They must make this operating system faster and better than Vista. Microsoft has already showed off Windows 7 at some developer's conferences and has made some announcements and promises.

Windows 7 will be built on the Vista base, so peripherals that work with Vista, which now includes most printers, scanners, and other devices, will also work with Windows 7.

Windows 7 will have a smaller storage footprint and will use less memory. This will allow it to run on the new small Netbooks that are now running Windows XP or Unix because Windows Vista cannot run on their small solid state drives.

Windows 7 will boot up and shut down faster. It will have improved battery life

It would seem that the bottom line is that one should not over a long period of time be in a close relationship with laser printers in a workroom with an in-adequate number of air changes per hour, and that laptop computers and inkjet printers are less likely to be a long term health hazard.



The original of the above article may be found on the home page of the Air Research Board at <http://www.arb.ca.gov/research/seminars/mckone/mckone.pdf>.

This topic was originally included in Bits and Pieces in February 2008. The source for this earlier article rated the laser printers by name as to the amount of particle emission. This list can be reviewed in the PC World for August 2007.

### IDENTIFY THEFT FOLLOW UP

The credit card company still has the comment "under investigation" on the latest statement.

on laptops. It is also promised to have an easier-to-use interface and to be easier to network in a home environment.

Although Microsoft is officially targeting January 2010 for the launch of Windows 7, logic indicates that they will have Windows 7 ready for next year's holiday selling season.

This holiday season you'll find some great prices on computers running Microsoft Vista. If all goes well, when the holiday season rolls around in 2009, the stores will be filled with computers running the next version of Windows, Windows 7. Microsoft has made mistakes before, but I think they will do everything they possibly can to make Windows 7 a winner. So if you are looking to buy a new PC, this year will be a good time to buy, but, if you can wait, next year may be even better.

*Editor's Note: Again I included this article because of the good information, even though it was written over the Christmas season of 2008. Judi*

# Consumer Electronics Show 2009

by Joe Nuvolini, President, Pikes Peak Computer Application Society, CO, <http://ppcompas.apcug.org>, [Nuvo@nuvolini.com](mailto:Nuvo@nuvolini.com)

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The trip to Las Vegas was uneventful. The line to get a cab was about 20–25 minutes long as many were arriving for the show. The Somerset House Motel was surprisingly pleasant. The room had two beds, lots of closet space, a nice bathroom, and a kitchenette with a fridge, sink, and stove. The walk from the motel to the press room in South Hall was about 15 minutes.

Wednesday evening, I attended the Sony press conference at the LVCC. The presentation lasted about 30 minutes and was about all the “new toys” they would be showing at CES. One was the Sony Vaio P series. It is an Ultra Mobile PC (UMPC) weighing 1.4 lbs with wireless WAN/LAN, an 8” hi res screen and built in GPS. It runs about \$900. They showed some of their Bravia LDC HDTV's in the 26” to 56” range. Other Sony items were their 10–12 Mp digital cameras and digital picture frames. It was a nice affair with wine, beer, cheese and crackers, and fruit.

The press room featured sweet rolls and Starbucks coffee for breakfast. Chatted with member Frank Fraser on my ASUS using Skype. It worked fine. While checking out Skype, I found my daughter, Marie, in Portland online so I got to see her and my granddaughter, Sara.

The South Hall opened early the first day so I hit the floor at the opening gun. Stopped at the SDCA (that's an FLA for SD Card Association). They reported that the next generation of SD cards (SDXC) will hold up to two terabytes of data and will have read/write speeds of 104 Mb per second with a road map to 300 Mb per second. Hopefully we will see them later this year. At that rate you could buy a camera for a newborn with one of these cards and take photos his/her whole life and never erase any. Imagine, one's whole life on an SD card. UMPCs were everywhere at this show. I had no idea how popular they had become. I spent some time in the morning of the first day in the South Hall, Central Hall, and North Hall

(automotive area). I was working my way over to Piero's for Lunch@Piero's sponsored by Pat Meier Johnson. I missed this event last year and wanted to make sure to get there first thing this year. Pat was as lovely and gracious as ever. They did not serve lunch this year, but I had planned to have lunch at the Press Room.

I attended the Sandisk press briefing. They announced several new items. The first was their line of SSDs (Solid State Drives). They now have them in sizes up to 240 GB. Prices range from \$149 for a 60 GB to \$499 for a 240 GB; still a bit pricey. Next was Slot Music. These are devices that play pre-loaded micro SD cards. We all were given a slot player. It will have to wait until I get home to report on it. They also have a slot radio that plays the micro SDs and is also an FM radio. It will sell for about \$99.99. Slot radio cards will run about \$39.99 but will be loaded with music. A couple of other items of news: iTunes will change their pricing structure with songs going from \$.69 to \$1.39, depending on the popularity of the song. They will also no longer be protected.

While at CES, I watched the BCS football championship; first half at the Riviera and the second half in my room. Was glad to see Florida win and also to see that Utah was rated #2! At lunch on Thursday, I sat next to a gentleman from Rome whose family had relatives in Civita di Bagnoregio, one of my favorite spots in Italy. I saw him again at the Victorinox press conference. More on that later.

The Central Hall was loaded with big screen LCD panels from an assortment of vendors with spectacular high definition displays. I spent some time wandering around there. As mentioned earlier, Victorinox, makers of Swiss Army knives, held an affair for the press at the end of the third day. Their big news item was the announcement of Presentation Pro. Many of you have seen their knives. Well, Presentation Pro lets you load a presentation on their flash drive which is part of a Swiss Army knife. The presentation data is encrypted when loaded on the drive using an algorithm based on your finger print so it is totally secure. The unit also has an LED pointer for use during the presentation. The button to advance



the slides is also on the unit, using bluetooth technology. Victorinox has been in the business of making Swiss Army knives for close to 125 years and has always tried to stay on the cutting edge of technology. It was quite an impressive presentation which, by the way, was made using their new device. The attendees received a device which looks like a pocket knife but, in fact, contains a flash drive, pen and flashlight. The flash drive contained their press kit.

On Saturday I went over to the Sands/Venetian area to see what all was in that venue. It was home for many gadget devices as well as the home for the Asian vendors' displays. One really neat device I saw was by Pogoplug. This unit is about the size of the electrical conversion transformer I take to Italy with me each year. It plugs into an AC wall outlet. There are two jacks on the other side. Into one you plug your external USB hard drive. Into the second, you plug an RG45 CAT5 cable from your router. You log into the vendor's Web site and register the unit's registration number, your e-mail address, and password. Once registered, you can access the drive from anywhere in the world. It then appears as a local drive on the computer you are using until you log off. Pretty neat. It runs about \$79.

Speaking of remote access, I have been writing daily reports from my home desktop computer using logmein.com, which I wrote about a few months ago. It works great. I even downloaded Windows 7 beta onto my home desktop when it was released that weekend. It was about 2.5 GB so it took a while. However, the ISO file was sitting there for me when I

*Continued on Page 7*

# Multitasking Mania —PC Users Do Double Duty

by Ralph Bond, Consumer Education Manager, Intel Corp. Via NAPSA

Doing one thing at a time is a thing of the past.

Today's PC users are into multitasking mania—playing realistic 3D games while mixing custom music, surfing the Web while scanning for viruses, or editing home movies while chatting online.

According to a recent survey by Intel Corporation, Americans use their PCs to do multiple things simultaneously because it helps them save time and have fun.

Did you know that:

- 76 percent of computer users say they multitask;
- Playing a game while burning a CD is the most popular PC multitasking combination; and
- Nearly 60 percent of computer users feel bored when a computer function makes them wait, so they do something else on the computer at the same time. The survey also revealed that many Americans are becoming more advanced in their computing desires, outpacing the capabilities of the PCs they own.
- 90 percent of computer users say they have experienced problems while multitasking;
- Nearly 50 percent of people owning a PC that is three years or older do not trust their computers to handle more than one high-powered task at the same time.

With multitasking on the rise, an innovation called Hyper-Threading Tech-

nology allows software to “see” two computer processors or brains—instead of one so that the PC can do multiple demanding computing applications at the same time. This new innovation, available on the Intel® Pentium® 4 processor at 3.06 GHz, comes at a time when consumers increasingly use their PCs as an all-in-one digital jukebox, home movie editing studio, photo darkroom and electronic game arcade.

More information on Hyper-Threading Technology and multitasking mania is available at [www.intel.com/info/hyperthreading](http://www.intel.com/info/hyperthreading).



## Tech News Tidbits

by Terry Robert, Program Chair, ICON (Interactive Computer Owner's Network), MO, [www.icon.org](http://www.icon.org)  
[terry@iconusersgroup.org](mailto:terry@iconusersgroup.org)

*This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).*

My intention in writing this article each month is to help us understand technology's emerging trends that affect our everyday lives. While researching material for this month's submission, I felt compelled to share these alarming trends with the rest of you.

Sophos, a leading U.K.-based IT security and control firm, just published their “Security Threat Report 2009,” which examined the “threat landscape” over the last 12 months, and predicted the emerging cybercrime trends for 2009. Two major points in the report are very alarming:

- American computers are making a disturbingly large contribution to the problems of viruses and spam affecting all of us today.”
- American websites host more malware and relay more spam than any other country.

Graham Cluley, senior technology consultant for Sophos, said “Too many American computers have been compromised and are under the control of hackers, and nationally, the U.S. is carrying the most malicious Web pages. When an American Internet company, accused of collaborating with spammers and hackers, was disconnected from the net in November, the amount of spam was immediately reduced by 75%.

Sophos's research reveals that in 2008, organized criminal gangs tripled their attacks against innocent websites, injecting malicious code to infect visiting home users and businesses. They also documented an average of five new scareware websites (hackers posing as legitimate anti-virus vendors) each day, with the intention of scaring users into believing that their computers have been compromised.

By the end of 2008, Sophos was also tracking five times more malicious attacks arriving through e-mail attachments than at the start of the year, proving that hacking has become mainstream among organized crime.

As the Internet has matured into the foremost information resource on the planet, cyber criminals have refined their methods. Hackers are using automated systems to break into vulnerable websites and/or generate new variants of their malware throughout the world!

According to Sophos's findings, China was responsible for hosting more than 50 percent of all web-based malware in 2007, but this position was taken over by the U.S. in 2008. Their breakdown of the top malware hosting countries follows:

1. U.S. 37.0 percent
2. China (including Hong Kong) 27.7%
3. Russia 9.1%
4. the rest of the connected world 26.2%

Symantec also found the U.S. to host the most malware of all nations, but with lower percentages, and did not include Russia in their results.

We haven't devoted a lot of time to security issues recently, but if you've participated in some of the discussions we have had, you know there are numerous effective strategies for protecting yourself from attacks.

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## CONSUMER ELECTRONICS

*Continued from Page 6*

got home. I plan to borrow an unused computer from the office to run it on. I'm sure I will have to add a bit of RAM.

By Sunday, the last day, many of the attendees had departed so there was not a lot of activity. The effects of the recession were obvious at this year's show. There were fewer vendors. Attendance was down 23% from last year (110,000 versus 140,000). Hopefully, if the economy improves a bit this year, next year the show will return to its old robust size. That's it for CES 2009. I look forward to CES 2010!

# Oh, What A Tangled Web We Weave When We Download To Receive

by Evan Schuman, via NAPSA

Securing your PC is as important as locking your front door. To keep spyware from downloading onto your hard drive to track personal information and computing habits, there are some preventative steps you can take. You should also know some spyware may provide perks and service you want and enjoy.

Spyware—the software that gathers personal information from your computer, monitors your activity on the Internet and/or transmits information back to the spyware creator—can be placed on your computer without your knowledge. And like any application, it can slow a computer's performance and cause conflicts with legitimate applications and potential crashes.

Spyware can arrive as a hidden component of freeware, shareware or file-swapping programs, such as free music or games downloaded from the Internet. It can come through an e-mail message or attach itself during a Web site visit. Some types of spyware will ask for permission to be installed on your computer as part of a licensing agreement.

In the last few years, the spyware problem has accelerated. At Dell, for example, about four percent of consumer support calls in 2003 involved problems caused by spyware. In early 2004 that number almost quadrupled and at its peak accounted for 15 percent of all tech support calls.

The easiest single thing computer users can do to protect themselves from spyware is to carefully read any user license agreements. If in doubt, do not choose "OK" until you investigate the site further. It may be easier to download later when you know what you are choosing to put onto your computer than to remove spyware from your PC.

Another big contributor to the spyware problem is the surge in broadband availability and popularity. These connections are so fast that consumers rarely notice the additional download time associated with spyware programs, especially when the programs are piggybacking on an authorized file download, such as a game. Unexplained performance slowdowns, an increase in new pop-up ads, an unexpected default

## Symptoms of Spyware

1. Performance slowdown
2. New and unexpected home-page
3. Lots of new pop-up/pop-under ads
4. Download request screens that won't take no for an answer
5. New and unexpected search page

homepage or the inability to connect to the Internet are all good clues that you could have spyware.

Here are a few tips to help:

- Be wary of agreeing to download software. Read the fine print.
- Install anti-spyware software from a Dell-tested and recommended company—such as Sunbelt Software—to protect your computer.

Although Dell cannot endorse any specific freeware or shareware utilities designed to remove spyware applications, because they can't test them, some free anti-spyware programs are recommended by industry magazines. Remember, removing spyware could limit your access to some services and perks.

- Minimize connection time.

## How to Reduce the Risks

- Keep your operating system up-to-date
- Keep virus definitions current
- Use an anti-spyware software package
- Read license agreements carefully and to the end
- Disconnect from the Internet whenever an active connection is not needed
- Keep browser security settings high, lower only for a specific trusted site and return to high
- Download free software only from trusted sites
- Limit free music, movie downloads
- Minimize or avoid file-sharing sites and programs

The "always on" nature of broadband keeps people online longer than in the dial-up days. There's a lower spyware incidence with notebook users than desktop users. Much of that can be traced to the fewer hours that many notebook computers remain connected to the Internet.

- When evaluating the risks to which your computer has been exposed, consider the other people who have access to your PC.

With protective software and vigilant use of good computer behavior—including reading all licensing agreements—you should be able to fend off the spies. To learn more, visit [www.dell4me.com/security](http://www.dell4me.com/security).

A veteran technology journalist, Evan Schuman's byline has appeared in media ranging from *The New York Times*, *USA Today*, and *BusinessWeek* to *eWEEK.com*, *ABCnews.com*, *InformationWeek* and *B2B Magazine*.

He serves as president of The Content Firm and can be reached at: [eschuman@thecontentfirm.com](mailto:eschuman@thecontentfirm.com)

## TECH NEWS TIDBITS

*Continued from Page 7*

Avoid being connected to the Internet unless protected by:

- Dependable antivirus software (with current updates)
- Products include Avast, AVG, Norton, and McAfee
- Malware detection and removal software
- Products include Spybot Search and Destroy, Adaware, Spyware Blaster, and Advanced WindowsCare
- Software firewall
- Products include Windows Firewall (protects only against incoming threats in XP), Zone Alarm, and Kerio
- A healthy dose of common sense

If you receive a popup telling you that your computer has been compromised, advising you to: "Click here to correct the problem"...**DON'T TAKE THE BAIT!**

If you have no strategy, do yourself (and the rest of us) a favor, learn to protect yourself. Maybe you should attend more ICON functions?!

# Freebies!

by Dave Bilcik, a member of the STPCC, 12/2008  
(Southern Tier Personal Computing Club), New York, [dlbilcik@yahoo.com](mailto:dlbilcik@yahoo.com)

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It's the Holiday Season! Home & hearth, good food and lots of presents, those banking and Wall Street executives should have a fine time this year (Santa Claus made a special \*\*\*bonus\*\*\* trip just for them... Ho-Ho-Ho!). Now, what are you going to do for the Holiday? Be creative and "Have Yourself A Freebie Little Christmas." People may thank you. Discover (again) why it is called Christmas and not "Santamas" (<http://www.esword.net/>). You might find that you really like the story.

You have technology at your fingertips so think about what is important to the special people in your life and give something meaningful to them. The best part; it doesn't have to cost much to be meaningful. CD-Rs cost less than a first-class stamp, the most expensive 8 1/2 x 11 photo-paper you can get is under \$1.00 per sheet while regular paper is under a penny. Put something on that paper or CD that interests the people you are interested in.

Pictures, sound, movies and even free software are all good candidates if it means something to your special person. Picasa (<http://picasa.google.com/>) will help you with your pictures and slide shows. Print up a nice 8x10 of that "creative" place where you hung the mistletoe for your significant other.

If you have a crafter on your list, print up a collection of cross-stitch or quilting patterns; one spot to try is <http://www.alita.designs.com/index.php> another is <http://www.freepatterns.com/>. Grandma might be happy to get your custom x-stitch collection but don't send her your mistletoe picture by mistake. However, be ready for some "cute" overload when prospecting for freebies on the crafting sites.

If music or video is your passion then cdburnerxp (<http://cdburnerxp.se/>) will help you with either one. It is a full featured burner that will let you make a custom CD or DVD any time you wish. Like classical music? A site that will

point you to lots of free music is <http://www.classiccat.net/index.htm>. Don't violate any copy-rights and fire up your CD/DVD drive. That custom-mix lute CD is right at your fingertips.

Don't forget your web-cam or digital camera with movie mode. Give a CD or DVD with a video message telling that special family member what they really mean to you. If you are lucky, they will avoid you completely at the next family reunion.

The fact that you are reading this shows you have exquisite taste and a level of computer literacy way above the average. Help those friends who are less fortunate by cleaning up their sluggish computers. Advanced WindowsCare Personal Edition (<http://www.iobit.com/advancedwindowscareper.html>) when installed and run on their machine, will give them back the performance that they have been missing.

The software is free, it helps a friend, costs only a little of your time, and proves your computer kung fu is much stronger than theirs. Everybody wins!

Now that you have saved so much cash on creative, meaningful gifts for your friends and family, you can now reward yourself for all your efforts. Try <http://www.thinkgeek.com/> for loads of intriguing stuff. Check out the Ion USB Turntable that will help your turn your vinyl music collection into digital goodness... the turntable outputs files in either mp3 or WAV format.

If the good will, optimism and hope of the season gets to be too much, try <http://despair.com/> for a big steaming cup of cynicism. It will help you to get back to work after the holidays.

My personal e-mail address is [dlbilcik@yahoo.com](mailto:dlbilcik@yahoo.com), if you want to send me comments, questions or cash. Please put "Freebies" somewhere on the subject line so I will have some idea about its contents. Tell me about your best free software experience or your best cookie (... ever!) and I will pass it on.

*Editor's Note: I included this article because of the good tips information, even though it was written over the Christmas season of 2008. Judi Ball*

## NEW TOOLS FOR IDENTITY

Continued from Page 2

downloaded a Trojan horse. The Trojan horse captured and relayed keystrokes—including names, addresses, and Social Security Numbers—for four months before being detected.

What's more, all this happened at an agency that was otherwise fortified with firewall, anti-virus, and intrusion detection software that was updated many times a day. And it's not just porn sites that are home to malicious code. Cybercriminals often set up phony sites that look like legitimate ones in order to lure consumers into divulging data.

That's why a new generation of protection tools is needed. Consumers must know when they're on a legitimate site versus a bogus or spoofed site. Many of today's tools determine the authenticity of a site simply by checking to see if it is on the "good" or the "bad" list of known sites. The problem is, the average phishing site stays up for only six hours, after which opportunistic cybercriminals dismantle and move on in order to evade detection by authorities.

Consequently, a variety of mechanisms must be used before a site is declared safe or unsafe, from verifying its security certificates to analyzing its behavior.

Consumers also need to be protected against keystroke loggers and the like at the moment they are most vulnerable to attack—that is, at the scene of the potential crime as a transaction takes place. Doing so requires more than the intrusion detection tools of yesterday that could identify known threats by their fingerprint.

With new threats being unleashed at a record pace, consumers need tools that can detect crimeware that is so new that its fingerprint is not yet known—but its conduct gives away its malicious nature.

Moreover, all this protection must not get in the way of the consumer's online experience.

Fortunately, a growing number of security providers, such as Symantec, are taking notice and now offer increasingly sophisticated technologies designed to protect online transactions and interactions.

And as more consumers embrace these new tools, the Internet will become a safer environment for everyone.

# How To Switch Internet Browsers

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

*This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).*

Microsoft's Internet Explorer is a software program that comes on all computers that use the Windows Operating System. Internet Explorer is called an Internet browser since it is the software that allows you to view Web pages and surf the Internet. In fact, at least 80 percent of you reading this Web page right now are using Internet Explorer. You don't, however, have to use Internet Explorer. There are several other Internet browsers available.

Due to recent critical security glitches in Internet Explorer, other browsers are looking more attractive. Also, while Internet Explorer has stagnated over the past several years, several other Internet browsers have overtaken it with useful new features and advanced functionality. Features like a tabbed interface that lets you quickly move from page to page and voice-activated menu systems have put alternative browsers like Firefox and Opera ahead of Internet Explorer.

Using an alternative browser is easy. You simply download the browser from the Web site of the manufacturer and install it on your computer. Firefox, Opera, and Chrome are all alternative browsers that are free downloads. Just follow the Web site instructions to download and install the new browser. During installation the program will see Internet Explorer and will ask you if you want to transfer your Favorites and other information from Internet Explorer to the new program. Most alternative browsers will help you make the switch from Internet Explorer to their browser program. When you install Opera, Netscape, or Firefox you will be given the option importing your Internet information. Opera can import bookmarks and favorites. Firefox allows you to import options, bookmarks, history, passwords, cookies, and other data from Internet Explorer. This works for many different browsers. For example, if you switch from Internet Explorer to Netscape and decide that you would then like to switch to Opera, you can move your information

from Internet Explorer to Netscape and then to Opera by simply following the instructions given during installation.

To use a different Internet browser, you don't have to uninstall Internet Explorer. In fact, it is best to leave Internet Explorer on your hard drive. Not only is Internet Explorer difficult to uninstall: you may need to use it in the future. Internet Explorer is the only browser that you can use to access the Windows Update Web site. Also, since it is the most popular Web browser, many Web sites are optimized for Internet Explorer. If you use an alternative Web browser, in your surfing you may find an occasional Web site that does not work properly in the browser that you have chosen. If that is the case, you can simply switch to Internet Explorer to access that Web site and switch back to your alternative browser for your main surfing. You see, there is no problem with using several different browsers. In fact, you can actually use two or three different browsers at the same time with no interference.

When you start using your new browser you will be asked if you want to set the new software as your default Web browser. Whatever browser is set as your default browser will be the browser that will appear when you click on a link in an e-mail or other document. If you want to use your new browser all the time, you will want to set it as the default. If you say no to setting the new program as your default, the program will continue to ask you this question every time you start it. Look for a notice with a check box in front of it to tell the program that you don't want to see that question again. For instance in Opera you will click to put a checkmark into the box in front of "Do not show this dialog again." In Firefox click to remove the checkmark in the box that says "Always perform this check when starting Firefox." Then the program will not ask that question again.

If you decide that you don't want to continue to use the new browser, you can switch back to Internet Explorer at any time. Any new favorites or cookies that you have added to the new browser can be transferred back to Internet Explorer by using the export and import settings

in the two browsers. You simply export the information from the program you are using and import it into the program you want to use. Click on File, and choose Import/Export to use these functions. Most browsers have Wizards that will help you through the entire process. Some programs like Firefox make it easy to import information, but make it more difficult to export information. If a Wizard is not available you can use the programs Help menu for detailed instructions.

If you are used to using Internet Explorer, downloading and using a different Web browser is a big step. Although most alternative browsers are similar to Internet Explorer, you will need to invest some time into learning the new interface. Some features may not be obvious. For instance the tabbed browsing in Firefox is not instantly noticeable. So be sure to read the help files and information on the product's Web site to get the full gist of what features are available.

## Find Out More About Using The Review/Evaluations Program



Don't forget to check out the Evaluations Program offered by this organization! If there is an application you would like to have, put your request in to Jane Quinn and she will contact the company/vendor to see if the product is available for review. If it is, she will order it for you.

This could be a new program to you, or it could be the newest version of a program you already know.

When it comes in, Jane will let you know, and you will have at least three months to install the program, learn to use its most prominent features, then write a review that will be published in this newsletter and sent to the company to complete their requirements.

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## Multi-Media SIG



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**Weekly (Thursday) SIG 1 - 3 PM  
Anderson Senior Center**

(Only members will be able to  
use the club's laptop to burn  
their DVD movies.)

**Saturday — 10 AM, March 28  
At Jane Quinn's Home, con-  
tact following for information:**

Jane Quinn, 365-0825  
[qjquinn@charter.net](mailto:qjquinn@charter.net)

IBM/PC Users Group  
of Redding  
P.O. Box 494778  
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*Meetings are at  
The Redding Library*



*1100 Parkview Ave.,*

*off Cypress to the west of City Hall.*

*We will be in the Community Room, which is to the left  
of the main library door.*

*A variety of drinks is available at the Cafe just outside  
the meeting room on the left.*



## Linux & More SIG

*Linux, the Other Operating System*

**Saturday — 10 AM, April 11  
Redding Library, Computer  
Lab, upstairs**

Colly Lord, 530-224-1633  
[johnclord@charter.net](mailto:johnclord@charter.net)

Please include "SIG" in the subject line.

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## Windows & More SIG

**Wednesday — 11:30 AM  
March 25  
April 1, 8, 22**



Bill Ball, 275-4632  
[bcard9@charter.net](mailto:bcard9@charter.net)



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**Wednesday — 2 PM  
March 25, April 1, 8, 22**

See map to left for meeting site.

Judi Ball 275-4632  
[jebed@charter.net](mailto:jebed@charter.net)