

# PrintScreen

November 2000

Vol. XVIII No. 11

Newsletter of the Stanford / Palo Alto Users Group for PC (SPAUG),  
a Non-Profit / Educational Organization

PO Box 20138, STANFORD CA 94309-0138 <http://www.pa-spaug.org>

Last  
issue of the  
millennium!

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## President's Message ...

### Notes From the Prez

by Jim Dinkey

### Upcoming meetings

#### November 2000

Hank Skawinski, President of Datawise is going to be our November speaker on All Things Computers.

Hank and his team of about 8 people maintain over 1000 computers in the Valley. He is a veritable treasure chest of how to fix computers, comments of what software works and what doesn't, sets of hardware that DO work together and sets that DON'T. For instance, he has given up on Windows Me because the installation of Windows Me too often causes a working machine to become non-working, which means additional costs and time for him. This is one meeting that is always well attended.

#### December 2000

We are having the SPAUG Christmas Party at the Palo Alto Elks Lodge on Tuesday, December 12 at 6:00 p.m. and we will have a gift exchange. Dinner will be about 6:30 and will be ordered from the menu. The entertainment, authorized by the Board, will be a Celtic Band playing old melodies. They will also be our guests for dinner. We had a good time last year and expect that if you put the date onto your calendar, we will do so again.

(Continued on page 2)

## Next General Meeting ...

**Wednesday, November 29**

5:45 pm (Optional) Dinner at Su Hong

**7:15 pm, Palo Alto Elks Lodge**

Topic: Product reviews, maybe including a discussion of Linux. Review realities of the marketplace and whether Microsoft products are a step forward for the home user.

Speaker: **Hank Skawinski**,  
Owner/Manager, **Datawise**  
<http://www.datawise-pc.com/>

*For more info, see next page*

## SPECIAL DECEMBER MEETING ...

**Tuesday, December 12**

**6 pm, Palo Alto Elks Lodge**  
(Note the time)

Topic: Party! Dinner! Gift Exchange\*

\* suggested: \$5 or less

Entertainment:

Celtic Band composed of a number  
of violins, flutes, chorders, etc

For details:

Visit SPAUG's website, or  
Contact Jim Dinkey,  
at our November meeting, or  
at [jimdinkey@jimdinkey.com](mailto:jimdinkey@jimdinkey.com), or  
at (650) 493-9307



## President's Message (Continued) ...

(Continued from page 1)

### SPAUG Officers

Walt Varner, our Treasurer for three years, has resigned. His recent move to South San Jose has made it difficult for him to attend meetings that occur at night. He did the job without problems and we wish him well.

Nat Landes has agreed to take over the treasurer's responsibilities. Many thanks, Nat.

Bev Altman is due a nice bunch of words. Bev was the Treasurer before Walt, has had the Planning Meeting at her house for years, and takes care of membership. She is always there and I fear we have taken her for granted. She is a great asset that keeps the wheels running smoothly for the Club. Now if she were to run for President ...

Pat Corrigan has accepted the position of Program Chair. What she needs is feedback from you about what you want to hear about and also where to contact the potential speaker. She can take it from there.

WHICH BRINGS UP ELECTIONS! The Slate:

- **President:** Jim Dinkey
- **Vice-President:** open—steps in for President, helps out wherever.
- **Secretary:** Stan Hutchings—Minutes of Planning Committee sessions.
- **Treasurer:** Nat Landes
- **Program Chairperson:** Pat Corrigan
- **Crosstalk Secretary:** Maurice Green
- **Program Secretary:** open—summarizes speaker for newsletter.
- **Publicity:** Marvin Kraft
- **Newsletter Editor:** John Buck
- **Newsletter Co-Editor:** Mildred Kohn
- **Newsletter Publisher:** Robert Mitchell
- **Webmaster:** Stan Hutchings
- **Webmaster Emeritus:** Kendric Smith
- **Webmaster Apprentice:** John Sleeman

### SPAUG's Christmas 2000 CD-ROM Project

This is a project to put all of the programs that

(Continued on page 3)

## General Meeting ...

### Locations ...

#### Su Hong Eatery, (for Optional dinner) El Camino Way at West Meadow Palo Alto


- **If you're on El Camino Real (ECR):** Starting at Charleston, head north on ECR (toward Stanford U) in the far right lane. At the traffic signal a few car lengths north of Charleston, turn right onto El Camino Way, a narrow two-way street. Su Hong is immediately to your right at the stop sign for the W. Meadow intersection, across from the Goodwill store.
- **If you're on West Meadow:** Drive toward the peninsula hills. West Meadow ends at El Camino Way. Su Hong will be on your left. Parking may be tight in Su Hong's lot; you may have to park on the street.

#### Elks Lodge, 4249 El Camino Real, Palo Alto, CA 94306-4496


The Elks Lodge is on the bay side of the street, between Charleston and San Antonio Road, but very close to Charleston. It is next to Ricky's Hyatt House, which is on the corner.

Use the lodge's front lot and main entrance. The entrance has a card-operated lock. If no one is there to let you in, use the wireless SPAUG doorbell we place (usually to the right of the entrance) and wait for someone to come for you.

We meet in the Lodge Room, which is straight ahead and to the left.

We thank the Elks Lodge for the continuing use of their Lodge room. 

### Usual Agenda ...

- 7:15 "Boot up"
- 7:30 Announcements.
- 7:35 Guests introduction.
- 7:40 Random Access (Crosstalk)
- 7:50 Break
- 8:00 SPEAKER
- 9:15 SIG Reports
- 9:20 Raffle
- 9:30 Adjourn 



## President's Message (Continued) ...

(Continued from page 2)

you could possibly want onto a CD so you have a neat Christmas present or gift for other occasions. We are currently rushing to get it completed for the November meeting. It is composed of a section from PC Magazine's top 40 selections, general selections from a member, and appropriate carry-forwards (updated) from the last CD. As of this writing it is about 375 MB. My machine has bellied up (but I'm backed up) and so I'm in the process of cleaning up the mess.

### Technical stuff

BACKUP, BACKUP, BACKUP. I sound like a broken record, but when you foul something up, what are you going to do to get your data back? At a minimum, you ought to be putting all of your data in a single place with sub-directories for each application program and copying it to floppies. Tape drives, where you don't have to do anything but change tapes, are now running about \$189. Cheap insurance. For example, I have six levels of backup, and about every three months a tape is taken away from the house, three miles, where it is kept safe from a home fire. You need to do the same with your critical data.

[NOTE: At this point, Jim's message provided additional info about his PC problem. It also provided some consumer info about CD purchases, ISP Channel, Fry's Electronics, and a shopping bot on Cnet. That information has been removed from here because of space considerations, but should be available on SPAUG's website. —jb]

Regards, Jim



## Thanksgiving ...

### Some things to be thankful for

by John Buck

1. You have a PC.
2. Your PC is backed up.
3. Your backup is current.
4. Your backup is stored in a safe place.
5. You haven't needed your backup.

—or—

Your backup was available when you needed it.



## Member comment ...

### Software Renting vs. Buying Packaged Software.

by Robert Mitchell

Lately there have been talks from a variety of companies that renting software will be the future of software. No more going to your local store or mail-order outfit to buy your packaged software and having to store the packed boxes in your drawers or closets. These companies include Microsoft, Oracle and others. It will be like the old Mainframe days of yesterday.

In my opinion, renting software is a return to the bureaucracy of yesterday. The companies pushing this idea this want to have all the money to themselves and would kill the software sales business, possibly putting stores that sell software out of business. This is another one of those ideas that will fail or end up as a niche-market product like many of the other ideas that many of these same companies have pushed in the past. Remember Oracle's Network Computer, "which didn't really take off as they'd like", or DIVX DVD disks that you can buy for \$5 and try out once then pay the fee if you like it? I think I would rather continue buying software as I do now and have the boxes in my cabinet. Renting software might be OK for a program we might use once in a while, but not for software that we use daily. I think it would be much too expensive for many of us, especially home and small business users.

### More comment, from your Editor\*

by John Buck

Thank you, Robert for bringing this subject to our attention. I have some concerns about it too. You mentioned one of them—cost. Two you didn't mention are privacy or security and compatibility.

When we rent software, where will our data live—in your own machine or on some mainframe somewhere? Will the mainframe software be monitoring your data, or will the software be just something you download with a time-limited expiration data (like trial software? Will you be able to control who has access to your data and under what circumstances?

(Continued on page 4)

\* But not strictly an editorial comment.



## Member Comment (Continued)...

If we rent software, what guarantees will there be that the software we need or want to use will be available, and that its various versions will perform consistently and compatibly with our data? Also, watch out for all the gotchas in UCITA that only a few people are warning us about today, but which may haunt us like a Halloween politician mask in the future.

UCITA is the Uniform Computer Information Transactions Act, and was developed by the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws (NCCUSL). There's a lot of UCITA information available on the web; I suggest you read some of it.

[NOTE: Robert Mitchell's comments and mine have been edited to save space in *Print Screen*. The full text of our comments should be available on SPAUG's website. —jb]

## Technical Tips...

### Get Rid of Deleted File references in Add/Remove Program list

by Kendric Smith and Jim Dinkey

I [Kendric] deleted some programs by trashing their folder rather than using the Control Panel's Add/Remove Programs application. Now when I click on the name of that program in the Add/Remove Programs window, I get some message like "Unable to find DSISL1.ISU". Jim Dinkey found directions on the web by searching with Google (which is a fantastic source of information). It worked for me.

[For Jim Dinkey's solution, visit SPAUG's website.]

### Ricochet Wireless Web Connection

by Bill Goldmacker

Here is some of the info I gathered about Ricochet: [www.wwc.com](http://www.wwc.com), phone: 800-811-7426

Ricochet GS 128kbps Modem—\$99.00. Available locally at 1238 South Bascom Ave, San Jose CA

[continued at bottom of next column]

## Internet ...

### Shopping Bots

by John Buck

You're probably using the Internet more and more to find items you want to buy—to check for price, availability, specifications, recommendations, etc. Are you using shopping bots to help you? "Bot," in this case is short for "robot."

#### What is a shopping bot?

You can think of a shopping bot as a specialized search engine. You tell the bot what you're looking for, and it returns a list of places where you can buy it, and their prices. Some shopping bots are specialized, limiting themselves to books, audio CDs, etc. Others are more wide-ranging, allowing you to search for those and more, such as health supplies, cars, and clothing

#### How do I find a shopping bot?

The easiest way to find a shopping bot is simply to ask your browser or searcher for "shopping bot" (quotes optional). Then you get to wade through the info returned to find one or more that suit you. Bookmark your favorite bots, and keep checking for new bots from time to time.

#### How do I use a shopping bot?

I've generally found the shopping bots to be self-explanatory. Some are easier to use than others. There are enough bots that you should be able to find one or more to suit your taste. For example, I generally try to avoid those that want more information than I want to give, such as a "profile."

[continued from left column]

95128-3513 (phone: 408-279-8932). (WWC is located inside the JDR Microdevices store on Bascom).

In addition, there is a \$30.00 activation fee, and \$74.95 per month charge, or if paid in advance \$99+\$825 (11 months service, including activation). They also have a 30-day money-back guarantee.



## SPAUG Club Business ...

### General meeting notes ...

#### October 25 General Meeting Notes

by Stan Hutchings

#### General Announcements

Nat Landes has volunteered to run for Treasurer, Pat Corrigan for Program Chair, Maurice Green for CrossTalk recorder. A Vice President and Recording Secretary are still needed.

#### CrossTalk

Computer Recycling Inc at 2971 Mead St (turn right off Bowers) in Santa Clara is open 9-5 weekdays and Saturday. They welcome computers, printers, electrical, computer-related, etc. They will recycle it. They also sell recycled goods cheap. Check them out.

People having trouble with the ISP Channel cable modem connections should try their modems on the dial-up numbers: 329-0206, 843-1050 or 938-1062 (make sure it's a local number before spending too much time online).

#### Presentation

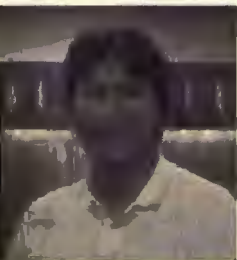



Photo by Mildred Kohn, *Print Screen* staff photographer

Steve Nguyen, Director of Corporate Marketing for Echelon Corporation, gave an overview of his company.

They are an infrastructure provider, so support other manufacturers as an OEM source. They make about 90 products, have more than 100 patents. Their emphasis is device networking—getting different hardware to talk to each

other, from the same or different manufacturers. Their devices use LonTalk (an industry standard they helped develop) and LonWorks, the standard that allows system integration. LON stands for Local Operating Network.

Print Screen staff photographer Mildred Kohn captured this image of Steve Nguyen, Corporate Marketing Manager of Echelon Corporation, during a break in our October 2000 meeting. 

### Planning meeting notes ...

#### Nov 1 Planning Meeting Notes

by Stan Hutchings

In attendance: Jim Dinkey, Kendric Smith, Stan Hutchings, Robert Mitchell, Bev Altman, John Sleeman, John Buck, Pat Corrigan, and Mildred Kohn.


Stan Hutchings was tapped as Recording Secretary. According to the club Bylaws, "The Recording Secretary shall be responsible for keeping full minutes of the meetings of the governing bodies; keeps and has charge of all nonfinancial records of the corporation, together with the seal and charter; and has the sole authority to affix the seal of this corporation."

The Club also needs a Vice President to meet the requirements of our Bylaws.

Several suggestions were made to Pat Corrigan for future meeting speakers: Archimedes Project at Stanford, Intuit/Quicken (maybe at tax time?), Eyeopeners net appliance for seniors, Excite@home, Symantec, Palm, Microsoft, and AltaVista. Anyone having contacts or suggestions should send them to Patricia Corrigan at [kintzer@pacbell.net](mailto:kintzer@pacbell.net). She will coordinate dates for speakers with Jim Dinkey. Please provide a "snail mail" address if available, so we can send the *Print Screen* to future speakers.

We will publish a CD similar to last year, with updates/upgrades of the usual "baseline" programs, and some new and useful utilities. Send any file recommendations to Jim Dinkey, with the file name, source URL from where it can be downloaded, and if possible a few words describing it.

We now have access to a phone line into the meeting room.

The members voted to spend about \$250 (\$200 for the music and about \$9 per person for the meal) for a Celtic music group to provide entertainment at the Holiday Party at the Elks Lodge. So mark your calendars for Tuesday 12 December. Jim will put the word out on the ListServ, too. 



## SPAUG Club Business (Continued) ...

### Editor's comment ...

#### Read between the lines

by John Buck

Much of the November 7 Webpage SIG meeting was devoted to making changes to material on the website that was derived from or intended for publication in this newsletter issue. This was after the newsletter had been sent out for proofreading. Because of the timing, number, and nature of most of the changes, I have chosen not to incorporate them here. **For the latest club news, and for material that was not included in this newsletter issue because of space, or just because it's a good thing to do from time to time, check the SPAUG website.**


More material was available for this newsletter than there was space available for it. Editing and formatting to put this material into a newsletter that might be useful and interesting required much more effort than usual, just because of its volume. At least one person expressed displeasure when told a contribution (the last material submitted) had been truncated.

Added to everything else, the first file I sent to my proofreaders was the wrong one!


### Planning Meetings ...

**NEXT PLANNING MEETING: See back-page calendar**

Planning meetings are held on the first Wednesday of most months, usually at the home of a member, at 7:15pm. All members are welcome, and encouraged, to attend.

Please phone Jim Dinkey ((650) 493-9307) or Bev Altman ((650) 329-8252) to confirm venue. 

### Field Trips ...

SPAUG has run a number of popular field trips, and more are in prospect. We welcome suggestions for other trips; please pass on your idea to the Prez, Jim Dinkey (address below). 

**Let others know about SPAUG.  
Please post your flyer.**

### Contacts ...


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President	Jim Dinkey	jimdinkey@jimdinkey.com	(650) 493-9307
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## Tech Support, Questions and Answers


The members listed below are willing to offer help and advice on their areas of expertise. It's free, so there are no guarantees! However, it provides one-on-one help, and more time than the ten minutes of Random Access at our General meetings.

If you have questions on subjects not listed, try calling Jim Dinkey ((650) 493-9307). If he can't help, he may know who can.

Jim also maintains a laboratory in his home which is available to SPAUG members when intractable problems arise. Call Jim to make an appointment, which would normally be on a Saturday morning. This service is also available to non-members, but at the cost of a suitable donation to the Club's coffers. That alone should be an inducement to join—any appropriate contribution would be more than the annual membership, but less than you would pay a commercial outfit. Tell your friends. 


Topic	Expert	
DOS, Quick Books 6, Quicken 98	Jim Bailey Jimby@pobox.com	(650) 494-0631 9AM-9PM
Win NT/Win 98	Jim Dinkey jimdinkey@jimdinkey.com	(650) 493-9307 9AM-9PM
DOS	Bill Goldmacker gold@svpal.org	(650) 691-0911 <b>6PM-9PM</b>
MS Publisher 2000, Palm Pilot Setup, ZIP managers, Win 95/98	Robert Mitchell Rfmitch702@aol.com	(650) 941-5792 <b>4:30PM-9PM</b>
MS Publisher, UNIX, Fortran, Perl	John Sleeman sleemanj@earthlink.net	(650) 326-5603 <b>9AM-8PM</b>
All PC areas: Software and Hardware	Walt Varner walt2222@aol.com	(408) 739-3488 9AM-9PM

## Listserver (e-mails to SPAUG members) ...


Any registered member on the SPAUG-list can send messages to ALL other members on the list automatically by sending e-mail to this address. This list of addresses is intended for announcements of interest to ALL SPAUG members. Please avoid excessive or trivial announcements, since some members pay for their connect time. Send additions or corrections for the list to [info@pa-spaug.org](mailto:info@pa-spaug.org). 

## SPAUG = 501(c)(3) ...

Arlan Kertz, SPAUG Accountant

SPAUG is a non profit organization registered with the IRS under Internal Revenue Code 501(c)(3). In this regard, your dues (except for \$12 for the newsletter) are deductible. Also, any additional cash and or other non-business assets donated to SPAUG are also deductible. 

## Trademarks, Service marks, etc. ...

All trademarks, service marks, etc., used in this newsletter are the property of their owners. 



## About SPAUG ...

### Membership ...

SPAUG memberships last one year, beginning with the date you sign up, and are renewable annually

Annual membership dues are \$35, payable to SPAUG, at PO Box 20138, Stanford CA 94309-0138.

Please include your name and address, and optionally an e-mail address and any special interest group (SIG) you want more information about.

Questions? Call Beverly Altman ((650) 329-8252) or Jim Dinkey ((650) 493-9307).

### Attention, Correspondents ...

If our addresses in your records do not match those below, please update your records. Thanks.

<http://www.pa-spaug.org>

### SPAUG Calendar ...

MONTH	Plan Mtg	JB -> RM	RM -> PO	Genl Mtg
Dec	6			Party
<b>HOLIDAY PARTY! Dec 12 See Page 1</b>				
Jan	3	10	17	31
Feb	7	14	21	28
March	7	14	21	28
April	4	11	18	25
May	2	9	16	30
June	6	13	20	27
July	(4)??	11	18	25
August	1	8	15	29
Sept	5	12	19	26
October	3	10	17	24
Nov	7	14	21	28

#### Legend:

**JB -> RM** = John Buck to Robert Mitchell

**RM -> PO** = Robert Mitchell to Post Office

**SPAUG  
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STANFORD CA 94309-0138**

