

SPAUG



Print Screen

Post Office Box 20161, Stanford, CA 94309-0161
Vol. XXV No. 11 - Newsletter of the Stanford/Palo Alto Users Group for PC
A Non-Profit / Educational Organization - <http://www.pa-spaug.org>

*In Commemoration of the
25th Anniversary
of the founding of the
Stanford Palo Alto Users Group for PC, (SPAUG)
You are invited to participate in a
Catered No Host Dinner,
on Wednesday, November 14th, 2007, at 5:30 pm,
followed by the General Meeting,
both events at the
American Legion Hall
347 First Street, Los Altos (across from Draeger's)*

Dinner reservations are required, are \$15 each, must be accompanied by a check payable to SPAUG, and must be received by Jim Dinkey, 3380 Cork Oak Way, Palo Alto, CA 94303, by Friday, November 9.
Questions? Contact Jim at jimdinkey@jimdinkey.com or 650-493-9307

**General Meeting @ American Legion Post—Wed. November 14 @ 7:15 PM
347 First Street, Los Altos (directions on page 3)**

**Tonight Only—Catered Dinner, 5:30 PM (Advance Reservation Required)
Contact Jim Dinkey**

Notes from the Prez
by Jim Dinkey

25th Anniversary

With this 25th Anniversary Reunion Dinner, we acknowledge that the prior leadership had not only the foresight to recognize that there was a need for a formalized structure but also that they had the management skills to bring about the original SPAUG organization.

While I have been President for about 8 years, I have merely continued with the general format of my predecessors. They figured out a formula that worked and applied it consistently.

They are to be congratulated for their foresight and perseverance. We honor them with the November dinner and meeting.

But the fundamental problems with computers have not changed. Here we are a quarter of a century later and we are still having to contend with many of the same old problems: the requirement for lots of training to operate the computer, the cleaning up of the computer itself and because of the Internet, a new problem of protecting the computer from the problems induced by the creation and use of the Internet – a win/lose proposition.

Clinic

That having been said, the Clinic has been in existence since the beginning of SPAUG but it was not until recently there was a fixed place for sick computers to be made well.

And, yes, the complexity hasn't been getting better—the complexity and knowledge set required to fix the computers of this world is now totally daunting for the new or inexperienced user.

In order to extend the time before you have to bring your computer to a professional, here is a procedure that will help you delay that event:

PREPARE FOR DOING a backup:

- Go to MY COMPUTER and right-click the disk PROPERTIES and execute DISK CLEANUP.
- Move over to the TOOLS tab and check out the integrity of the hard drive. Only about 1 percent show a problem here, but if it does, nothing else will go right for the day.

(Continued on page 4) ►

**SPAUG 25th Anniversary Dinner Reservations--Clip and send to:
Jim Dinkey, 3380 Cork Oak Way, Palo Alto, CA 94303**

Reservations are required for the dinner, and must be received with payment by Friday November 9

Jim—Please make SPAUG 25th Anniversary reservations, @ \$15 each, for—

Myself: _____

Guest: _____

Guest: _____

My email address: _____

My check for \$ _____
is enclosed

My phone: _____

Meeting Day: Wednesday, November 14

General Meeting

**American Legion Post
347 First Street, Los Altos**

Meeting time is 7:15 pm

Larry Templeton

**Speaking about:
HDTV Info from the CE Show**

Jan Altman

Speaking about: Piano Wizard

The American Legion Post is in downtown Los Altos, on the North (bay) side of First Street, between San Antonio and Main Street. It's directly across First Street from Draeger's Market.

The AL Post does not have its own parking lot. All off-street parking close to the hall is private, and only for use by customers or tenants of the respective properties. The closest public parking is on the street and in the public lot West of the hall, behind the Main Street businesses. Consider carrying a flashlight, it's dark in downtown LA after our meeting.

Our meeting place is the back room of the AL Post, directly accessible via a door on the West side of the building.

Typical Meeting 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

**Tonight only, November 14, 5:30 pm,
a special catered no-host pre-meeting dinner,
in our American Legion Post meeting room, commemorating the
25th Anniversary of the founding of SPAUG**

Dinner reservations are required, are \$15 each, must be accompanied by a check payable to SPAUG, and must be received by Jim Dinkey, 3380 Cork Oak Way, Palo Alto, CA 94303, by Friday, November 9. Questions? Contact Jim at jimdinkey@jimdinkey.com or 650-493-9307

◀ (Continued from page 2)

- If anything appears improper, bite the bullet and do a disk check again with both boxes checked. This will require a reboot and then the Microsoft diagnostics will be able to fix bad spots, missing chains, and orphaned information.. Plan on an hour for this task. Review the diagnostic progress frequently to establish what type of errors are presented and determine if the disk is salvageable.
- Then do the DEFRAG in a lower panel. Plan that 35,000 fragments will take 4 hours and proportionally less for 'normal' fragmentation.
- Now that the data is known good, by whatever means you have at your disposal, protect yourself and your client by doing a backup. Install backup software if necessary and use USB external drives if necessary although an internal second drive install is the preferred method. If this step is requested to be skipped, hand him back the computer—you are too vulnerable.
- Bring all patches current including Office installations.

The next step is to get rid of the chaff to lessen the level of loading of the tables on the computer.

- Run CCLEANER to get rid of the years-old log files and other junk. Leave cookies alone for now.
- Run a registry cleaner to assure that removed programs are not lingering.
- Run SPACEMONGER to just look at the data on the disk and to look for anomalies that don't need to be there. Seeing where and how big all of the files are, quite often

will allow you to delete many gigabytes of junk.

- If you can get Internet connection, run HijackThis to identify if there are infections on the computer. The SPAUG CD discusses the rather complex procedure in fine additional detail to assist you with this step.
- If any anomalies show up, start running anti-virus diagnostics provided by the malware companies such as Trend Micro's Housecall and equivalent programs by Kaspersky, Symantec, AVG, Avast!, Microsoft, Panda and McAfee. Run lots as the mix that each one gets is often not the same and one will work in a given situation where others will not. The pattern is never the same. Allow hours.
- Now that the computer is clean, check that the hardware is being reported as clean in the CONTROL PANEL, SYSTEM, HARDWARE, and DEVICE MANAGER panel. Fix any anomalies.

Up until now, the interaction with the owner is not very critical because the basic integrity of the computer is being restored and checked as getting control of the computer is paramount. You can't go forward to new stuff until the computer works with what it already has.

Now it is time to address the customer complaint which is often: "It is slow!"

Slowness is often a proliferation of spyware and adware. There are many ways to handle a slowness problem but to merely make a first pass without shelling out money for a single pass, the venerable Spybot and AdAware are good enough but in the long run, a better set

Continued on page 5) ►

◀ (Continued from page 4)

of paid programs needs to be installed to stop the junk from getting onto the computer in the first place.

Crashing is entirely another problem and much more disruptive. Possibly the most effective remedy here is to reinstall SP2 as it will, with its patches, restore a non-functioning computer's structure to factory integrity. Plan that the maneuver will again require some after-market software to be reinstalled. Do an incremental backup after the SP2 reinstall just to capture the status of your work. Some personalizations will be lost. Clients will become impatient with the fact that you are not working on "their" problem while assuring that the underlying computer is ready to go. If SP2 doesn't fix the problems, then you have your backup and so you are in position to do a reload.

Install and demonstrate the use of ERUNT which will capture the registry and can be used to back out a virus when encountered.

Make sure the firewall is set up properly by visiting the Gibson site to set up the firewall and then dynamically test it using some of Gibson's tools.

And finally, listening to the customer about what he/she would like to have the computer do for him/her, the computer can be customized for the user needs. Adding Print-Key2000 (on the SPAUG CD) is a very popular addition as then the user can not only keep screen shots of problems but also he/she can then do a lot of printing without the usual hassle of setting up every little part of the process.

Other than that we don't do much in the Clinic other than return the computer working. Trivial.

10 October 2007 General Meeting Notes by Stan Hutchings edited for publication here

The complete business part of the meeting is available online as an MP3 file ("podcast")

Administrivia

- Some **NOD32 CDs** are still available, but this is a trial offer - if you like it, you'll have to buy it after 90 days. Red Calub provided them.
- **Caboodle Cartridge** <<http://www.caboodle.com/index.cgi>> is no longer in Palo Alto on El Camino Real, or at Cuesta and Miramonte in Mtn View. There is still one at 5126 Stevens Creek Blvd. San Jose (408) 246-8005, and 2310 Homestead Rd. Los Altos 94024 (408) 481-0580. Here's a store locator for more locations <http://www.caboodle.com/store_locator2.cgi>.
- **There is a wireless signal provided by the American Legion Post meeting place**, so the club computer and guests can connect to the Internet.
- **No coffee is available currently at our General Meetings**—a volunteer could provide it, if someone steps up. We don't have kitchen privileges, that would be an extra \$15/month, and we probably don't need it. There are cookies available, thanks to Joan Wheelwright. Draeger's Market (across the street) will sell you a cup of coffee, if you want to bring it to the meeting. Nat Landes volunteered to procure and transport two coffee urns to make coffee on site.
- **SPAUG will have to put away the meeting-room chairs**; CompuSIR will (usually) set them up in the afternoon. **We**

(Continued on page 6) ►

◀ (Continued from page 5)

have to leave the place neat and clean, so please clean up any mess you make.

- **Check our website for links to SVCS** (Silicon Valley Computer Society) and get a schedule of their meetings—
 - SVCS/SPAUG **Digital Imaging SIG** <<http://www.svcs.net/disig/>>,
 - SVCS/SPAUG **Web Design SIG** <<http://www.svcs.net/websig/index.html>>,
 - **SVCS 's Home Page** is <<http://www.svcs.net/>>.
- Jim Dinkey will get a good **audio system** that we can use for the next two years.
- **November is officer-election month.** The current officers were identified.
 - Jim Dinkey, **President**;
 - John Sleeman, **Vice-president**;
 - Nat Landes, **Treasurer**;
 - John Buck, **Newsletter Editor**;
 - Stan Hutchings, **webmaster** (will be replaced by John Sleeman);
 - Maury Green, **Recording Secretary & DISIG**;
 - Walter Heyman, **Publicity**;
 - Bev Altman, **Membership**;
 - Susan Mueller, **Newsletter Publisher**.

We could use a Program Director, and back-ups for all positions.

CrossTalk/Random Access

- **Problem: A computer boots randomly, and sometimes doesn't boot. It isn't a heat issue.**
Suggestions:
 - leave it on with diagnostics running, and hope the diagnostics catch the problem;
 - also, check log files;

- check power supply, memory, etc. any of which could be the problem.
- There is a diagnostic program available; \$70-\$80 will buy one (email Jim Dinkey for a name, if you need more help choosing one).
- Swap out memory, or run a memory checker—memcheck <http://www.soft32.com/download_7869.html> is a good one to run, and is on some previous club CDs.

- **Problem: After vacation, computer does not stay on. Eventually after many tries it booted, but icons were scrambled and disappeared.**

Answer: It may be a capacitor, or a power supply issue, or a fan problem (some newer hardware won't boot if fans aren't working). You may need a trip to Hank Skawinski, or perhaps the clinic.

- **Problem: Microsoft patches failed to install - all eight. None were installed.**
Answer: Recent patches are important; and should be installed. Keep trying to install them, after a few days. Microsoft provides **free** support for patches that go wrong—call them for help.
- dsreports.com <<http://www.dsreports.com/>> and mycooltools <<http://www.mycooltools.com/>> are **good sites to find out about ISPs and test your connection.**

- **Problem: my antivirus is expiring - what should I get?**

Answer: For expired antivirus, PC-Cillin 2006 is a good AV; \$20-25 through eBay. It comes with three licenses. Or NOD32 is good.

(Continued on page 7) ▶

◀ (Continued from page 6)

Presentation

The entire presentation is available online as an MP3 file ("podcast"). It can be opened in iTunes, Windows Media Player, Audacity, or other application to play audio MP3 files.

Gene Barlow of UGR gave a presentation on the "*Top 10 Ways to Protect your PC*". Least-important to-most important.

- **Stay current with technology.** Replace hardware every 4-5 years, and get new OS at the same time. Consider cost/benefit of upgrading applications, but don't feel obliged until it's a definite improvement.
- **Organize the hard drive.** Put data into a separate partition. This is safer, easier to back up, and accessible if you use dual boot into other Operating Systems. *Disk Director Suite 10* is current, and a good buy—it also runs in Vista. You want a separate partition for each OS, and inactive OS partitions should be hidden to prevent cross-corruption. A separate drive (internal or external) would be used for back up.
- **Run in a "Sandbox" for Risky Tasks.** This is especially advisable for browsing the Internet, testing new software, opening unfamiliar email, giving others access to your computer. *True Image 11* Try&Decide feature is a sandbox—you decide to keep all or delete all changes that were made (it may not operate in Vista).
- **Wipe hard drive before getting rid of old computer.** Deleting files and formatting are not sufficient, nor is defragmenting.
- **Encrypt private information.** *My Security Vault* does that for \$15.

- **Beware of Spam.** Some are dangerous, with bad attachments, links, images, phishing, etc.
- **Install security patches.** You might want to wait a few days to see if any other early adopters had problems, but some patches are for "zero day" exploits, and you are at immediate risk. Don't wait too long.
- **Internet security:** firewall, antivirus, antispymware, antimalware. These may be individual applications, or part of a suite; but protection against all hazards is essential. A good root kit detector and remover is also a good idea.
- **Get professional help if needed.** Let someone else deal with the complexity of modern computers, so you get hassle-free computing. *Invisus iClean Service* will do this. It performs many functions, remotely over the Internet. It's \$29.99 for the service, and it's real people doing the servicing. They provide ongoing support for \$9.99/month after the initial month. *Invisus iSafe Service* is a step up, but includes a suite of security software. Checkup is \$49.99 and 14.99/month. Top of the line is *Invisus iCare Service*, \$99.99 initial, \$29.99/month.
- **Have a recent full backup.** Acronis *True Image 11 Home* <<http://www.ugr.com/TrueImage.html>> is the answer to this. Recommended by SPAUG, and good reviews everywhere.
Before installation, read Gene's tutorial titled the *Perfect Backup Approach*, which can be seen at <<http://www.ugr.com/tutorials.html>>. Once you have the application installed, read Gene's excellent tutorial <<http://www.ugr.com/nl0907b.html>> on how to use it to implement the Perfect Backup Approach.

17 October 2007
Planning Meeting Notes
by Stan Hutchings
edited for publication here

- The meeting was held at Bev Altman's house; attendees: Jim Dinkey, John Sleeman, Bev Altman, John Buck, Stan Hutchings, Nat Landes, Maurice Green. The attendees enjoyed the refreshments served.
- Review of **finances**—Nat—we're doing OK, outgo balanced by income, even with higher monthly rent for the Hall.
- **Membership**—Bev gave Nat the cash from the previous meeting.
- **Expenses, equipment, reimbursements, need for future funds**—Jim Bailey and Jim Dinkey mounted a **screen** support, and the screen at the American Legion Post, but it was too short - only 30 inches. Red Calub will get us a 72x72-inch screen. It will be wall-mounted.

It's time to get a good **PA system**—at least 3-mike input capability, 2 of them wireless. Need a built-in equalizer to kill feedback. Hopefully there will be an output for recording the meetings. One mike should be hands-free for the speaker; the wireless models for the audience. Speakers are easy, Jim Dinkey has some. But the other equipment will be \$500–\$900. AL Post 558 seems to be cooperative with our needs. We do need to make any installations look clean and professional. The Hall is paid through March; Jim Dinkey will check with the PA Elks Lodge and see if we're current or overpaid; Nat will let Jim know the status of our account with the Elks Lodge.

- **PrintScreen**—John Buck—we're currently filling the basic one ounce mailing rate with the current Print Screen newsletter.
- **General Meeting Setup/Cleanup support**—October meeting setup and take down were good.

For November, we'll have to set up as well as take down. Jim Dinkey will need help setting up, carrying in equipment from the car, since the CompuSIR group will not precede us.

Also, the November pre-meeting dinner will be catered by Armadillo Willy's. The group will convene at 5:30 pm, the SPAUG dinner will start at 6 pm, meeting at 7:30. Jim Dinkey has set the price at \$15, and make up the balance from the SPAUG treasury. Jim Dinkey must receive dinner reservations, with payment, by Friday 9 November. Past Presidents and spouse will be our guests. The newsletter will have a form for people to fill out and send in with their reservations.

We'll continue having a break during our General Meetings, even though there will be no coffee. Nat Landes volunteered to bring urns (to be purchased by SPAUG) and coffee. Discussion of brewing coffee (regular and decaf) vs. hot water with instant coffee/tea/hot water. Nat is authorized to get two urns, and regular and decaf coffee, for the January and subsequent meetings. Joan Wheelwright will be asked to bring sugar, cream, and cups.

*Oops!! Outta Space—
Read the rest at
www.pa-spaug.org*

SPAUG CALENDAR						
Always subject to change; verify event with host or Jim Dinkey						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><i>25th Anniv. Dinner</i> November 14 Reservation Required Your paid (\$15) reservation must be received by Jim Dinkey by Friday, November 9</p>			Nov 7 (NOTE: that this is the first Wednesday in November)		9	10—Clinic, by appointment only
			14 5:30 pm 25th Anniversary Dinner Paid Reservation required by Fri, 11/9 7:30 pm General Meeting Amer. Legion Post, 347 First St, LA Spkrs: Larry Templeton, Jan Altman			17—Clinic, by appointment only
			21 NO Planning Meeting. The planning meeting is moved to Wed Dec 5		22 <i>Thanks-giving</i>	24—Clinic, by appointment only
<p><i>NO General Meeting</i> in December. Next one is Jan 9, 2008</p>			27 7:30 pm MultiMedia SIG, Stan Hutchings'	28		Dec 1—Clinic, by appointment only
			4	Dec 5 7:30 pm Planning Meeting, Bev Altman's		

Saturday Clinic

Clinics usually are held when needed. Call Jim Dinkey to make a reservation. Contact Jim at jimdinkey@jimdinkey.com or 650-493-9307 for an appointment.

SPAUG's SIGS

Name	Description	Usual Date, Time	Location	Coordinator	e-mail
Multi-media SIG	Multimedia and Web Page work	Tuesday following planning meeting, 7:30 pm	Stan Hutchings' Home, near Page Mill and Alma, PA	Stan Hutchings	stan.hutchings@LMCO.com

Planning Meeting

Planning meetings are usually held on the **third Wednesday** of each month at Beverly Altman's home at 7:30 pm. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend. **Please phone Jim Dinkey or Bev Altman to confirm venue.**

Next meeting: Wednesday, **December 5, 2007** at 7:30 pm, at **Bev Altman's home.**

SPAUG
PO Box 20161
STANFORD CA 94309-0161

November 2007

First Class Mail

25th Anniv. Dinner

November 14
Reservation Required
Your paid (\$15) reservation must be received
by Jim Dinkey by
Friday, November 9

General Meeting—Wed. November 14, 7:15 PM

American Legion Hall, 347 First St., Downtown Los Altos, across from Draeger's (betw. San Antonio and Main)

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Listserver

spaug-list@svpal.org

Any 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 is intended for announcements of interest to all SPAUG members. Please avoid excessive or trivial announcements, since some members are paying for connect time. Additions or corrections can be sent to:
info@pa-spaug.org

**The SPAUG Web Page
is available at
<http://www.pa-spaug.org>**

hosted by

www.svpal.org/



Let someone else know about SPAUG—Please post or share this flyer

PC USER GROUP Meeting

WEDNESDAY

Nov 14

7:15 PM

American Legion Post, 347 First Street, Los Altos

Hosted by: SPAUG (Stanford Palo Alto Users Group for PC)

Topic #1: HDTV Info

Speaker: Larry Templeton, SPAUG Member

Larry will give a short talk about HDTV information that was presented at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas.

Topic #2: Piano Wizard, a music-teaching video game

Speaker: Jan Altman, SPAUG Member

Jan will demo Piano Wizard, which is a video game that can teach anyone how to play the piano and read music. She has a challenge for SPAUG members, "Bring me the most musically-illiterate person you can find, and I will have them reading music and playing a simple Beethoven melody in about 10 minutes. Age, profession, musical history, and even number of fingers are completely irrelevant. It can be anyone from 5 to 105. The only caveat is that they must be sighted. Would you like to take me on?"

Tonight only, you are invited to join us for a catered no-host pre-meeting dinner commemorating the 25th Anniversary of SPAUG's founding. Advance reservation, with payment, for dinner is required, and must be received by Friday, November 9. Contact Jim Dinkey (see below).

Upcoming meetings **in 2007: 11/14—25th Anniversary; NO December meeting.**
in 2008: 1/9, 2/13, 3/12, 4/9, 5/14, 6/11, 7/9, 8/13, 9/10, 10/8, 11/12, 12/10

SPAUG — Stanford Palo Alto Users Group for PC

PO Box 20161, STANFORD CA 94309-0161

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

Jim Dinkey, President, 650-493-9307 jimdinkey@jimdinkey.com

Dues: \$35 for 12 months

STANFORD PALO ALTO USER GROUP FOR PC (SPAUG)

MEMBERSHIP FORM

To become a member of SPAUG—

1. Provide the information requested on this form.
2. Send this form and a check for \$35.00, payable to **SPAUG**, to the address on the right:

SPAUG
PO BOX 20161
Stanford, CA 94309-0161

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Your Name _____
Last, First

Your mailing address: _____
Number and Street, PO Box, etc.

City, State, ZIP

e-mail: _____

Phone: _____ (Area Code) Number Fax: _____ (Area Code) Number

Areas of expertise you would be willing to share with SPAUG:

Areas of special interest:

What are you hoping to find in SPAUG?

How did you learn about SPAUG? _____

Your Occupation: _____

NOTE:

Bring a printout of our online Membership information page < <http://www.pa-spaug.org/main.htm#newmember> > to a meeting, and you can join SPAUG for \$30 for your first year of membership, a saving of \$5 off the regular membership rate!