

SPAUG



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A Non-Profit / Educational Organization - <http://www.pa-spaug.org>

Notes from the Prez

by Jim Dinkey

For years I have been telling members **how to move to a new ISP** and I finally got to practice what I have been preaching and had to take my own medicine.

The outline below is correct, but there are some fine points that you might like to consider to have a no-hassle migration:

1. Choose a target ISP.

That I was going to go somewhere other than Earthlink was a forgone conclusion when I had to talk to 24 of their personnel in a 3.5-hour period just to find out a fine point regarding a static IP address. **Where to go was the real question** that was answered by a SPAUG member sending me to **SONIC.NET** after his review of **DSLREPORTS.COM**, was the place to go. Their ratings were straight-A then and now in the Customer Satisfaction department.

2. Research the items needed. Get commitments.

One of the greatest concerns I had was that my older DSL modem would not be current enough or acceptable for Sonic and the point of agreement was hammered out that they would accept my DSL adapter. As a matter of fact, my unit did not work very well but I had another unit that was somewhat younger and that unit worked out just fine. The second unit was in their list of how to modify the parameters in the DSL modem to meet the requirements of SONIC.NET.

3. Set up an account and get the credit card integrated.

Once you are a customer you have the right to ask detailed questions. Sonic never got past the 3rd ring before picking up. Impressive.

4. Obtain the parameters for the email.

The process of obtaining the information that I needed for my computer was very instructional. I signed up on line but then it was time to have some help. I made a phone call

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General Meeting @ American Legion Post—Wed. June 11@ 7:15 PM
347 First Street, Los Altos (directions on page 3)

Optional Dinner at Akane Japanese Restaurant, 250 Third St, Los Altos, 5:45 pm
(see page 3)

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which got answered by a real live carbon unit on the third ring and the carbon unit spoke flawless English! Problems of support solved! We received the key information and connection was verified in real-time by trading and tracing the progress of several emails. This also proved the connection. I happened to mention that my speed test was showing the old 1.5 KB/sec, not the 3.0 I was upgrading to. AT&T was called by the Sonic support carbon unit and the cap was raised on the spot per contract. At this time I offered to go for 6.0, but I was told that I was at 13,000 feet from the signal origin location and I would have to be less than 8,000 feet to get 6.0. The whole query took less than 2 minutes to research.

- 5. Initiate the move of the domain if you have one.** This is the perfect time to create one of your own choice.

It cannot be stressed enough that having a domain will eliminate some hassles if you get one even before you even think of moving to a new ISP. If you change suppliers, your email does NOT change. I have not had to tell ANYONE that I have a new ISP; my correspondents, for years past, have not had to be researched and informed of the change. A hassle by-passed.

- 6. Have your DSL modem on hand and knowledge about where a backup might be had.**

The possibility of using a modem that is NOT supplied by the current ISP is always a risk. The one I had been using for 8 years wasn't up to the task and was proprietary enough that we decided to try my

more modern DSL modem, which turned out to be better documented by SONIC.NET. As a result the parameters were entered into the DSL modem without difficulty and we were on our way. Time delay: 10 minutes to substitute the newer DSL modem.

- 7. Make a backup in case things don't go correctly.**

To protect against catastrophic failure, make a backup. If you need to go back to the original ISP in an emergency, you can return without difficulty.

- 8. Print out the ACCOUNTS section of your email.**

Before you begin the transition, have the parameters that you used to have and again the new parameters of the ACCOUNTS section as you may need them for WEBMAIL or just setting up other accounts.

- 9. Research your options of DSL capabilities and initiate the order.**

When completed, options were negotiated at the moment, having knowledge of what you can have versus what is technically impossible eliminates a lot of negotiations. I obtained from SONIC.NET a commitment that I could double my speed which is a great boon in the Clinic.

- 10. Tell your friends of your new email address** (not needed if you have an existing domain).

'Nuf said.

- 11. Enjoy.**

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Meeting Day: Wednesday, June 11

General Meeting

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

Meeting time is 7:15 pm

Red Calub

General Manager, Micro Center, Santa Clara

Speaking about:

Some Big Movers, Entertainment Equipment,
and Specialty Items available at
Micro Center's Santa Clara store

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 American Legion 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 American Legion 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

Optional pre-meeting no-host dinner

Join us for dinner before our General Meeting at —

Akane Japanese Restaurant

250 3rd St, Los Altos, CA, (650) 941-8150

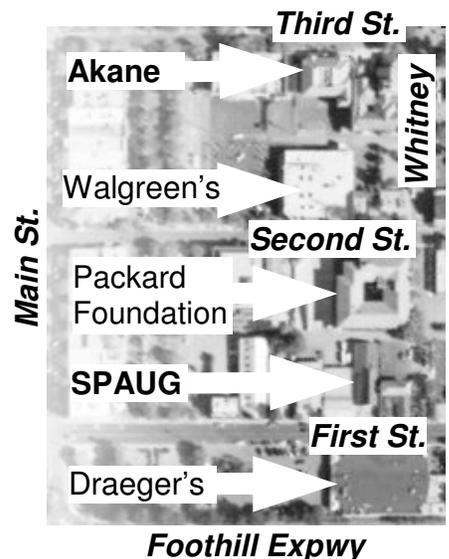
Two blocks north of our American Legion Post meeting place

Map & Menu (via Waiter.com): <http://tinyurl.com/4kpz3q>
(Akane seems not to have its own website)

Review (with pix): <http://tinyurl.com/3sylbx>

Yelp Reviews: <http://tinyurl.com/6ptzoq>

Dinner time is 5:45 pm



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In addition to the English-speaking support that is answered on the third ring, my monthly bill went from \$41 to \$27 – and that includes hosting my domain of **JIMDINKEY.COM** and the doubling of the transmission speed.

SPAUG Planning Meeting May 21, 2008

by Maurice Green, Recording Secretary

The SPAUG Planning Committee met at Bev Altman's house. Attendees: Bev Altman, John Buck, Jim Dinkey, Maurice Green, Robert Mitchell, John Sleeman

1. **Future Speakers**—Red Calub from MicroCenter will be the June 11 speaker. No speakers have been scheduled beyond June.
 - Jim Dinkey suggested that we need less emphasis on systems.
 - An evening at the Computer History Museum was suggested.
 - Other suggested speakers included Larry Magid and Seth Shostak.
 - Maury Green volunteered to do a presentation in July if no other speaker is found.
2. **Review of May meeting**—all agreed that Andy Marken provided an educational and entertaining presentation.
3. **Website transition**—Maury is continuing to develop the new SVUGA [Silicon Valley User Group Alliance] website.
 - Jim emphasized the need for a good index to the Prez Notes letters. Maury indicated that the Prez Notes will be fully searchable when they are trans-

ferred to the new site. Jim said that there is an index on the current SPAUG website and needs the index to be more prominently available.

- John Sleeman will update the SPAUG website and add a link to the Prez Notes index in the navigation bar.
- Maury reported that he had talked to Hank Skawinski and Hank would have a Blog, "The Computer Curmudgeon," on the new website.

4. **SPAUG CD**—To date, Robert Mitchell is the only one who has volunteered to work on a new edition of the club shareware CD. Several others were suggested as possible members of the team.

The first need is to review all of the software and identify new additions and programs to be deleted. Jim indicated that actual production of the CD is relatively easy. He noted that Nero software can actually utilize up to 4 CD drives simultaneously for burning the CD.

5. **Status of SIGs**—Maury reported that the new Multimedia SIG is still without an official leader and attendance has been very low.

WebSIG did not hold a meeting in April, and will not meet in May because of the Memorial Day holiday.

6. **Meeting recording**—Question was raised as to whether the new sound system has an output which could be connected to the recorder used by John Sleeman to improve the quality of the capture of the speaker's presentation. Jim and John Sleeman will investigate.

7. **Membership**—Bev reported that membership is "status quo" at about 123 members.

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Filler by John Buck—to keep this page from being blank

I maintain a list of topics to use as filler as space becomes available. If I repeat previous material, it may be by intention or by accident.

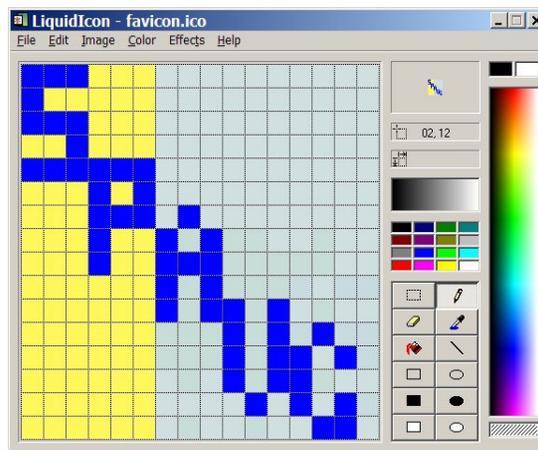
Two of the great recent expansions of the Internet are weblogs (**blogs**, for short) and **RSS** (“Real Simple Syndication”) feeds. Blog content can range from the thoughts of one person to a conversation among many people. RSS feeds allow those who maintain websites to provide a signal when new info is available. Some blogs I follow that may be of interest to you are:

- Snapfiles.com
- digg.com/news/technology
- lifehacker.com
- metafilter.com
- smashingmagazine.com/
- makeuseof.com

When an apparently knowledgeable blogger has commented that some program is something Microsoft should have included or provided, I give it some serious thought. One such program is **Folder Guide** < <http://tinyurl.com/5szs63> >, which makes it considerably easier to jump to various places in my extensive system of folders.

I long ago found Microsoft’s file managers insufficient for my needs. The significantly superior program I found is **2xExplorer** < <http://tinyurl.com/5n719n> >. I like it because it’s a two-pane explorer, has a very good search capability, and can synchronize folders. It’s no longer supported, but still available. When 2xExplorer’s searcher seems to be unable to deal with some of the very long path names I have; I switch to **Free-Commander** < <http://tinyurl.com/4lzabo> >.

I expect you already know what an **icon** is, but you may not know what a **favicon** is. You can think of a favicon as a website’s logo that replaces the default icon used for websites. I learned about favicons while attending the SPAUG WebSIG meetings at Stan Hutchings’ home, and as a result created the favicon used on our website; one program for doing this is **liquidicon** < <http://tinyurl.com/6sy45o> >.



The pic below shows our favicon in a tab, along with two other favicons and a default icon; it also shows how it appears in an address bar.



Our favicon’s address is < <http://www.pa-spaug.org/favicon.ico> >.

Earlier this year (2008), I learned, via an email from *SmartComputing* magazine, how to **replace the default icon for a folder** with one of my choice. I now use our favicon as the icon for my SPAUG folder. The *Smart-Computing* topic is “Transform Folder Icons”; read about it at: < <http://tinyurl.com/42398a> >.

SPAUG CALENDAR

Always subject to change; verify event with host or Jim Dinkey

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	2	3	4			7—Clinic, by appointment only
	9 <i>Fathers Day</i>	10	11 5:45 pm Dinner (Optional), Akane Japanese, 250 3rd, LA 7:30 pm General Meeting Amer. Legion Post, 347 First St, LA Spkr: RedCalub			14—Clinic, by appointment only
15	16 7-9 pm DISIG Micro Center	17	18 7:15 pm Planning Meeting, Bev Altman's			21—Clinic, by appointment only
	23 7-9 pm WebSIG Micro Center	24 7-9 pm Multi-Media SIG Micro Center	25			28—Clinic, by appointment only
	30	1	2		4	5—NO Clinic <i>Independence Day</i>

Saturday Clinic

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

SIGS

WebSIG Meets on the **4th Monday** of each month, 7-9 pm, at Micro Center in Santa Clara
MultiMedia SIG meets on the **4th Tuesday** each month, at Micro Center, Santa Clara
 These SIGs are coordinated by Maury Green, mauryg3 at comcast.net

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, **June 18, 2008 at 7:15 pm, at Bev Altman's home.**

SPAUG
PO Box 20161
STANFORD CA 94309-0161

June 2008

First Class Mail

General Meeting—Wed. June 11, 7:15 PM

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

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Listsriver

spaug-list at 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 at pa-spaug.org**

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

hosted by

www.svpal.org/



PC USER GROUP Meeting

WEDNESDAY

June 11

7:15 PM

American Legion Post, 347 First Street, Los Altos

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

Topic: **Some of the Big Movers,
Entertainment Equipment, and
Specialty Items
available at Micro Center's Santa Clara store**

Speaker: **Red Calub,**
General Manager, Micro Center, Santa Clara

Red has been a law enforcement officer wearing a bullet-proof vest, worked in a laptop facility, and been the GM of Micro Center for a number of years.

Red Calub has helped SPAUG and its members on many occasions. The helpful tone to customers at Micro Center is a result of his management philosophy.

You are invited to join us for an optional no-host dinner before our meeting, at **5:45 pm**, at **Akane Japanese Restaurant, 250 3rd St, Los Altos, (650) 941-8150** two blocks north of our American Legion Post meeting place.

Upcoming meetings: **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 at jimdinkey.com](mailto: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!