

SPAUG



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

Notes from the Prez

by Jim Dinkey

With the announcement of Windows 7, Microsoft has declared that Vista is dead.

Look at the record:

1. Microsoft has announced the replacement of Vista in Windows 7.
2. The announcement of Windows 7 means that no corporation is going to buy Vista when the corporations will merely wait two years for Windows 7.
3. The same corporations didn't like and didn't shift to Vista so they are wide open to consider going to Windows 7.
4. Only 8% of corporations went to Vista after a year of pressure from Microsoft.
5. You can bet your bottom dollar that Windows 7 user interface, will be similar to the series Windows 95 on through XP.
6. I am led to believe that Microsoft contracted to a company in India to design with no reference to the millions of people that had a store of knowledge of the human interface that prior versions used. No matter how Microsoft came up with the Vista interface, it is so far a departure from what millions of people

are accustomed to, that the uproar will not stop until an operating system with some sort of human interface continuity is made available.

7. I contend that Windows 7 desktop will be an evolutionary product and thus will be easy to learn as it will be an extension of the series beginning with Windows 95.

SP3 for XP is ready to go. It is time to install it on your computer with a caveat: Make a backup first.

The program takes about 20 minutes to load and will plug some holes that viruses like, but you will not see much difference.

Errors in the SP3 load have pretty much been patched by Microsoft in the intervening two months and thus after the install of SP3, one should then run an update for patches and install them.

SP3 turns on ALL of the programs in MSCONFIG so they ALL start at boot time so be sure you bring some sense back into the boot process.

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**General Meeting @ American Legion Post—Wed. August 13 @ 7:15 PM
347 First Street, Los Altos (directions on page 3)**

**Optional Dinner at Aldo Los Altos, 388 Main Street Los Altos
One block west from American Legion Hall, 5:45 pm (see page 3)**

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One of the problems with most computers is that it runs for months while obsolete software is present. This means that the security patching is missing because it is a pain to update a computer—so nothing happens for months.

The effect is that the **security patching** is non-existent and the computer is vulnerable. Yes it is true that once in a while an error is introduced by the patches, but frankly that is quite rare and that even includes Microsoft.

So how can you make the updating process painless?

Go to **SECUNIA** and run their update tracker to find out what patches are missing. Use the facility provided to get right to the vendors' exact download location.

There may be others, but so far they all have had their hand out so **FREE** is still better than the usual \$50 for the service needed.

Only one **firewall** is permitted. I'm working on a computer now that has both Symantec's Norton and also Zone Alarm and it is a mess to set up new programs as the two firewalls fight. There seems to be an assumption that "more is better" but not in this case as all the various programs do is fight for control of the computer thereby causing glitches and crashes.

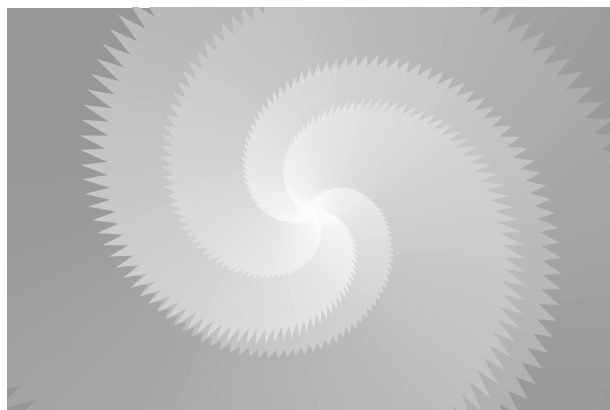
The moral is: **Chose one of each of firewall and anti-virus programs. One!**

Beware the sneaky program! It is not unusual to install a program that is needed for an occasional task and that is beneficial to you, but it decides that it needs to enter itself into the **MSCONFIG** string so that the program is started up each and every time.

Secunia is like that. It is a great program to run once a month, but does not need to be ever-present in the menu bar at the bottom and to be consuming resources. So go to **RUN** once a week and type in **MSCONFIG** and then look at the **STARTUP** tab and decide how many the programs found there do not need to be started at **BOOT** time. Each program unchecked will release resources and decrease the boot time. The computer will run faster on a daily basis if only what is needed is started.

If you think your anti-virus program is doing a great job for you and you have an unstable computer, then go to **VIRUS.GR** (click on English at the top left) and print out the listing of the effectiveness of over 50 anti-virus programs. Hank passed out the sheet at the last meeting and it is an eye opener to see just how poorly your favorite installed program is performing. They all have the money-collection process set up very well, but the delivery of good product is extremely poor. This service of rating the various anti-virus products is way overdue.

With Trend Micro stopping 86% of the viruses and Norton 84%, the high-cost anti-virus programs aren't stacking up very well against Kaspersky at 99%. Possibly it is time to revisit your money. Even **AVG-free** is interdicting almost 95%.



Meeting Day: Wednesday, August 13

General Meeting

American Legion Post
347 First Street, Los Altos

Meeting time is 7:15 pm

Maurice Green, PhD
Speaking about:
Open Source Software—
Is There Really a Free Lunch?

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 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

Optional pre-meeting no-host dinner

Join us for dinner before our General Meeting at —

Aldo Los Altos

388 Main Street, Los Altos; (650) 949-2300

directions: One block west from American Legion Post

map: <http://tinyurl.com/6hm3ga>

menu (via waiter.com): <http://tinyurl.com/57hhgc>

reviews: <http://tinyurl.com/5laoug>

Dinner time is 5:45 pm

**Note the
location
for
this month's
dinner.**

Some PC “Events” of note by John Sleeman, July 1, 2008

I have had a couple of (related) events which I thought you might want to include in the newsletter (suitably edited for content and space), because I can't imagine others will not have similar problems. I have only just got back on line after them.

The first event was a few weeks ago, when **one of my PCs shut down suddenly, and there was a faint smell of burning from the back.** I thought it had died, and took it to Jim's clinic. To our surprise, it worked fine, and so we did other things, like installing a hard drive and cleaning up the system.

However, over the next week, the system quit again three or four times. By now, I knew to leave it off for a few minutes and turn it back on—worked every time. But something was definitely amiss, and (this PC having been purchased from Micro Center in 2000) I took it to Micro Center for diagnosis. They told me it was very dusty inside, but otherwise OK—that, after blowing out the dust, it had run OK for three days, and I picked it up this Sunday [June 29, 2008].

(Digression—**Micro Center advises blowing out the dust periodically. Use one of the canned products for the purpose, and do it outside in open air. Open the case and blow dust off the circuitry and power supply.**)

Today [Tue July 1], I was running the PC as usual when there was a flash and a bang from the power supply, and it shut down. I took it to Micro Center again. They said they might not have a suitable power supply, and that it was probably not worth bothering with an eight-year-old machine. So I brought it home and consulted Hank. He said getting a power

supply was no problem . Of course, it is an old machine, and I need to move stuff elsewhere soon, but it is not necessarily an instant basket case. So, the end of this story is that I will be taking Jim up on his spare power supply offer.

The second related episode is that **the flash-bang apparently reset my router, and I could not get on line.** I consulted Linksys, and was quickly walked through the process for restoring the connection. The basic problem seems to be that the default IP address is the same for the router and the DSL modem, 192.168.1.1. This causes a conflict.

The service tech walked me through how to change the router's IP address to 192.168.2.1, which resolved the conflict and let me get back on line. I went through something very similar before when I had internet problems, so here, based on notes I took at the time, are the steps. (I think they will be the same for setting up a router for the first time.)

1. Unplug the DSL modem.
2. Fire up IE and go to 192.168.1.1.
3. In the dialog box, leave user name blank and put password "admin".
4. Select MAC address clone.
5. Select enable.
6. Click Clone your PC's MAC.
7. Enter new IP address 192.168.2.1.
8. Shut down PC.
9. Unplug router.
10. Plug in DSL modem and wait several seconds.
11. Plug in router and wait several seconds.
12. Turn on PC.
13. Try to get on line.

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To summarize in a way that makes more sense:

1. Turn off the modem to avoid interfering with the router.
2. Change the IP address of the router.
3. Turn everything off and then back on in the right order.

Olympics Coverage Online

by Robert Mitchell

After several years of keeping Olympic coverage off the web, NBC will finally be putting it on the web, as well as on traditional TV Broadcasts—but they will limit the Live online broadcast to Windows Vista Home Premium and Ultimate versions only, and completely cut off XP users and MAC users. For Highlights, that will work on XP, Vista and Macs but not Live.

When I heard of NBC bringing the Beijing games to the web, I was excited, but disappointed about the Vista-Only thing. Most savvy users like us don't or won't use Vista, because of all the problems with it. Microsoft would like us to buy it, but I won't spend \$400 for it just for the Olympics. It is a total monopoly and the US government supports monopoly, as when the Government sued Microsoft, they ended up letting them go easy with a slap on the wrist while the Europeans still are going after them with big fines.

The BBC in England released a player to watch TV shows online, but limited it to just Windows users—no Mac or Linux users. Many Mac and Linux users complained to the government and they're going after the BBC to change that.

Filler from John Buck

One problem with **Windows' clipboard** is its limited memory—it can only hold one thing at a time. Many times I wished I could copy several things from one source to paste elsewhere, without having to keep going back to the source after each one. That problem was solved for me when I learned about programs that do that very thing. Snapfiles' name for the category is "**Clipboard Utilities**". The one I've been using for years, "Clipboard Recorder", was freeware when I got it, but now is shareware. What I liked about it, having tried several, was its floating list and its ease of understanding and use. Snapfiles' freeware and shareware Clipboard Utilities listings are at

- < <http://tinyurl.com/2jdg78> >, and
- < <http://tinyurl.com/6rszde> >, respectively

Ever since I was a much younger kid, I've enjoyed **listening to radio**, particularly talk radio, and radio from far-away places ("DX"-ing). Now, I often do it via my computer, since many broadcasters provide their material online. In addition to local on-air FM stations KQED (88.5) and KALW (91.7), I listen online to the old-time radio programs broadcast online by KTXK in Texarkana, TX, and WRVO in upstate NY. WRVO has a detailed monthly pdf schedule of its programs, so I can plan ahead to hear some old favorites.

Now that I'm fairly set in my online listening ways, I don't go searching for programs as I used to, but the most helpful resource I found during my searching was the very-customizable "PublicRadioFan.com" < PublicRadioFan.com > . More than just NPR, it lists sources from BBC to Vatican Radio

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Of course you're probably aware of **TV listings online**. KQED and KTEH have good listings. My preferred "general" listing is the very-customizable "ZAP2IT"
< <http://www.zap2it.com/tv/> > .

There are several **programs that can graphically show how space on a disc is being used**. My choice, since I found it years ago is spacemonger < <http://www.sixty-five.cc/sm/> > . The old (free) version is still available, at < <http://www.sixty-five.cc/sm/v1x.php> > . There's a Wikipedia article at < <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SpaceMonger> > . For some other programs that do the same thing, check Snapfiles < <http://tinyurl.com/yu42od> > .

Formatting and graphics programs, including MS Publisher, require more use of the **pointing device ("mouse" to most people)** than simply typing text does. I became aware of this very shortly after I started editing Print Screen. My wrist HURT!! I tried a track ball—My wrist HURT MORE, and sooner, too. So, I went back to what I'd learned while I was employed and began using a **touchpad** as my pointing device. WHAT A DIFFERENCE!! Oh, even using touchpad causes my wrist to get sore from time to time, but it takes a lot longer. For info about touchpads like mine, go to < www.cirque.com/ > .

My file-naming techniques: From time to time I've downloaded an update program that's been problematic. Sometimes the program has changed from freeware to shareware. At least once, the updated program has had a bug that prevented proper operation. In cases like these, it's nice to be able to reinstall the earlier version. To do that, the earlier source file is needed, but what if it was overwritten by the later version?

Well, to try to keep that from happening, I have the downloader give the file a new name, if the provider didn't already do so. Some providers may include a version number in their source file name (name123.ext), while others simply use the same name (name.ext) for each version. In the latter case, I tell the downloader to download the file as "name mmddyy.exe", replacing the letters with appropriate digits.

Similarly, when I'm working with a file whose original content may still be important after (or during) my work, **the first thing I do** (so I don't inadvertently overwrite the file I want to keep) is keep a copy of it with a new name, making the name change just before the dot (typically the new version of "name.ext" becomes "name mmddyy.ext" or "name jb.ext"). The advantage of this is that in most "name" sorts, the original and new files will appear together, with the new file first.

Additionally, when I edit a file I've received from someone else and return them a "name jb.ext" version, it's not likely to automatically overwrite any file they already have, and they can know by looking who edited it.

For years, on my successive PCs, I've set up a folder I call "**test, play, scratch**", which serves as a holding pen for files I probably won't want to keep forever. When I have a problem with a file, or want to try some new technique on it, I copy the original to my "tps" folder where I can work on it while preserving the original; when I'm satisfied with my work, I can copy the "tps" version back over the original version. If I'm not satisfied with my work, I can just delete the file from the "tps" folder.

August 2008 SPAUG News

SPAUG CALENDAR

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

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	28 7-9 pm WebSIG Micro Center	29	30		1	2—Clinic, by appointment only
	4	5	6			9—Clinic, by appointment only
	11 7-9 pm WinSIG Micro Center	12	13 5:45 pm Dinner (Optional), Aldo Los Altos, 388 Main, LA 7:30 pm General Meeting Amer. Legion Post, 347 First St, LA Spkr: Maurice Green, PhD			16—NO Clinic
	18 7-9 pm DISIG Micro Center	19	20 7:15 pm Planning Meeting, Bev Altman's			23—Clinic, by appointment only
	25 7-9 pm WebSIG Micro Center	26 7-9 pm Multi-Media SIG Micro Center	27			30—Clinic, by appointment only
1 <i>Labor Day</i>	2	3				6—Clinic, by appointment only

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

WinSIG—2nd Monday of the month, at Micro Center in Santa Clara

DISIG—3rd Monday of the month, at Micro Center in Santa Clara

WebSIG—4th Monday of each month, 7-9 pm, at Micro Center in Santa Clara

MultiMedia SIG—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, **August 20**, 2008 at **7:15 pm**, at **Bev Altman's home**.

SPAUG
PO Box 20161
STANFORD CA 94309-0161

August 2008

First Class Mail

General Meeting—Wed. August 13, 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/**



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

PC USER GROUP Meeting

WEDNESDAY

Aug 13

7:15 PM

American Legion Post, 347 First Street, Los Altos

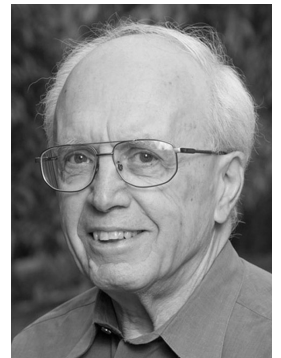
Hosted by: SPAUG (Stanford Palo Alto Users Group for PC)

***Topic: Open Source Software—
Is There Really a Free Lunch?***

Speaker: Maurice Green, PhD

From Linux, Open Office, Firefox and GIMP to a growing list of other applications Open Source has become a popular alternative to costly commercial software. Open source software is developed by a community of programmers with peer review and transparency of process. The promise of open source is better quality, higher reliability, more flexibility, lower cost, and an end to predatory vendor lock-in. Maury will discuss the open source process, its pros and cons and demonstrate a variety of applications which are freely available on the internet.

Maurice Green is the webmaster for SVUGA and group leader for the SVUGA digital imaging and web design SIGs. He teaches the web design course using open source software exclusively. He has been managing computer networks at Stanford since 1990.



You are invited to join us for an optional no-host dinner before our meeting,
at **5:45 pm**, at **Aldo Los Altos**, 388 Main Street Los Altos,
One block West from American Legion Post

Upcoming meetings: **8/13**, 9/10, 10/8, 11/12

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!