

SPAUG

Vol. XXVII No. 2

# PrintScreen



Newsletter of the Stanford/Palo Alto Users Group for PC  
A Non-Profit / Educational Organization • <http://www.pa-spaug.org>  
Post Office Box 20161, Stanford, CA 94309-0161

## Notes from the Prez

by Jim Dinkey

### How to UnScrew Windows XP— February, 2009

In the four years since this article was last published in *PrintScreen*, XP has change, the environment in which it exists has changed, the knowledge about how cleanups can be better with more specialized tools, and the software for anti-virus has changed greatly because the threats have changed and so the methods of combating them are also changed. So here are the recommendations:

#### What do you do if a computer is merely slowing down significantly and it just needs to be tweaked back into usefulness?

Here is a pattern that is used which embodies making sure that the computer is lean and mean after deleting the files and functions that are getting into the way.

There are a few overall rules that need to be observed:

**OVERHEAD is bad** and is caused by merely the presence of files and multiple unneeded pro-

grams – especially when the programs are allowed to start. **OVERHEAD** is really going to slow down a computer if several anti-virus programs are attempting to run at the same time. One anti-virus program is all you want to activate. All the others get removed.

**Programs that are not needed or wanted are just OVERHEAD and a fodder for the trash bin.**

Given these caveats, **let's start in on a working, but slow, computer:**

1. Start with the basics by checking the structure of the files on the hard drive to make sure they are properly linked. Run the Microsoft disk diagnostic (**chkdsk.exe**) at boot time by:
  - a. Selecting and right clicking on the C:-drive icon in “My Computer”.
  - b. In the **PROPERTIES/TOOLS/CHECK NOW** window, selecting both choices, then
  - c. Rebooting.

If you don't check (select) the boxes and then **START** (reboot), the program will still attempt to check everything out, but

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**General Meeting @ American Legion Post—Wed. February 11 @ 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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if the check fails you will have to do steps “a” and “b” above anyhow.

2. When chkdsk has finished, click **START/RUN...** command, and type **MSCONFIG** as the program to open.

Select the “**startup**” **tab**, inspect the entries listed, and uncheck each one that does NOT need to be started at boot time.

Usually there will be only about five programs that will need to remain. All of the balance are not necessary at boot time.

Unless you are going to use a program EACH time, you fire up the computer, then it is not necessary to be started at boot time.

One problem is that every manufacturer thinks their program is important enough that if you should happen to use the program just once, it will set itself to check off its own box and then have itself started each time the computer is re-booted. Periodically you need to go into the MSCONFIG routine and dump off all the egotistical programs.

3. Next, do a **DEFRAG** to clean up the mess. The computer will begin to run somewhat faster.

Pick a time of your convenience as the defragging can take lots of time and it slows the computer down considerably and you don’t want to reboot in the middle a a defrag. So pick your time for this operation. Remember that the time spent defragging is the time you will not have to spend while you are working on the computer in day-to-day mode.

4. Now, having checked that the underlying computer is OK, it is time to go to **CONTROL PANEL/ADD REMOVE** and **delete all programs that you don’t need**

**or want.** For example, if you haven’t used Google Earth for a year, dump it. Recover the **OVERHEAD** in both space and file count. Be ruthless – you can always download it again if you cut too deeply.

5. Now to go to Internet Explorer, and click on **TOOLS/WINDOWS UPDATE.**

- **Always click on CUSTOM**, and when presented with suggestions, generally bring everything current—with a few caveats: .

- **.NET** does not need to be more than 2.0 for XP, so suppress higher versions.

- **Silverlight** is not needed, nor is **IE8** for another year.

- **You should be at IE7 as patched.**

- **Get rid of the latest SEARCH.**

- **Make sure you set Microsoft Update to (only) tell (inform) you of changes** – don’t let Microsoft dump all of their updates onto your computer without your consent. Many of the updates are for Vista – your XP doesn’t need them. Remember **OVERHEAD.**

6. Now that you have a somewhat cleaned up computer, it is time to load **SECUNIA Individual Version** and have it tell you whether all of the programs on the computer are up to current revision. Just click on the offered update button and let everything become current. Note that most of the programs inspected are NOT Microsoft oriented and this is one of the few programs that looks at the big picture on your computer.

7. Now download and run **CCLEANER** from Download.com.

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## Meeting Day: Wednesday, February 11

### General Meeting

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

**Meeting time is 7:15 pm**

### Bill Young

Speaking about:  
**Building your own  
Computer**

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.**

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- Don't just run it as is, but uncheck everything in Internet Explorer except Temporary Internet Files.
- In Windows Explorer, check only OtherExplorersMRUs.
- In SYSTEM, check all except Start Menu Shortcuts, and Desktop Shortcuts.
- Under ADVANCED, check only Old Prefetch Data. Then click APPLICATIONS and then Firefox/Mozilla and check only Download History, Internet Cache, and Internet History Generally, leave the balance of the back page checked as presented by the program,

These are conservative settings throughout and preserve your cookies so you don't have your passwords wiped out. Run weekly.

Don't forget the CHECK FOR UPDATES in the very lower right corner. Automatic update notification is also handy.

*The following hints are with the courtesy of Hank Skawinski.*

8. One of the last things to do is to install the antivirus program **AVAST!** (free), as it has a rating of 93.78% vs. McAfee at 86.57% and Norton at 83.34%.

The use of Avast! is a no brainer. Only AVG rates somewhat higher but they are shifting into full pay mode.

By now your computer should be running somewhat better and faster, but we still need to get rid of some more OVERHEAD by doing the following steps.

9. **Clear the user TEMP files.**

Then go to CONTROL PANEL/SYSTEM PROPERTIES/ADVANCED and ENVI-

RONMENT VARIABLES and make the computer put all of its TEMP files into the base directory by inserting: TEMP....C:TEMP and TEMP....C:TMP. This makes the files quite accessible for later manual deletion. OVERHEAD!

10. **Go to C:/WINDOWS and delete all of the blue update removal files.**

In all of my years I have actually removed 1 patch. If I need those files, I can get them by downloading the offending patch again. You can leave the last month's if you so choose.

11. Install and run **ERUNT** to save your registry files. Since these cause about 30 MB to be saved, go to C:\WINDOWS\ERDNT and delete all files over two copies.

12. **Get rid of the DLL cache at:** C:\WINDOWS\SYSTEM32\DLLCACHE contents.

Leave the directory alone. Erase the contents only. This gets rid of all the programs downloaded over the past months.

13. Now go back up to SYSTEM32 and **get rid of MRT.EXE**, which is about 20 MB of space assigned to the now-obsolete program *Malicious Removal Tool*, of which Microsoft gives you a new load each month on Patch Tuesday.

14. **In WINDOWS\SOFTWARE DISTRIBUTION\DOWNLOAD\\*.\***, get rid of the contents, as the Software Distribution has long since been installed.

15. Sun Java seems not to clean up old versions, so you can safely **remove any lower-numbered SUN JAVA entries** via ADD/REMOVE.

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Remember: OVERHEAD.

Reboot and your computer should be back to normal.

If you have problems, make an appointment to come to the Clinic.

### Planning Meeting Minutes 21 Jan 2009

by Stan Hutching; edited for use here

*Attendees:* Maury Green, Jim Dinkey, John Buck, Bev Altman, Stan Hutchings, Nat Landes, Robert Mitchell, John Sleeman

#### General Meetings

- **February 11**—Bill Young (BYOC—build your own basic starter computer); Also, Election of officers (delayed from our November 2008 General Meeting)—All the current officers are candidates for re-election. We are still looking for a Program Chair.
- **March 11**—SETI, Allen Array;
- **April 8**—Larry Templeton (BYOC—build your own high-end media home entertainment computer). Expect Alan Hutchings to be scheduled to present “Home Theater Installation” at Multimedia SIG in 1st Monday in May.
- **May 13**—Possibly a talk about copyright matters.
- **Other possible meeting topics**—“Dragon Naturally Speaking” Ver 10 demo might be useful. Other Accessibility situations may be addressed.  
**Jim Dinkey wants suggestions for speakers by name or subject.**

- **The 7 Jan 2009 Computer History Museum tour** was a good outing/meeting; 45-50 people from SPAUG and SIRS attended, including guests. If you want to visit on your own—2 pm is Babbage Engine operation display (ending in April or May), 3 pm is full tour.

Website Transition—The old website is up to date. Maury is getting copies in usable format. Each Prez note can have a URL assigned; preznote/year/month. Jim wants his blog to be a searchable document for any term(s) that he can refer to callers in trouble. Google search might work. Or, Druple has its own search engine. *Print Screens* for 2008 are in; 2007 and 2006 should be added. Older ones are for historical reference only, don't need to be searchable.

John Sleeman says old site is up to date, Maury is continuing on Jim's Prez blog. **We need other blogs to be submitted.**

Review of CD sales—slow now; we need more demonstrations. We've sold about 20 so far. With Broadband, more people have been going online. ShareWhere links might become more useful.

DISIG (Digital Imaging SIG) had good attendance Monday; we were in the small room and it was full; maybe 30. We (SPAUG) need more programs; Maury will try.

#### Publicity

- *Mercury News* won't publish our meetings;
- *Town Crier* says against their policy;
- *PA Weekly* doesn't have that kind of service. **Check PA Daily online and Weekly's Forum page.**
- *Community Calendar on NPR.*

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- *Post generic flyers with website URL* on bulletin boards, library notices, Micro Center, Fry's, computer repair shops, ink sales, .

**Mail**—John Sleeman reports 3 pieces of mail. POBox expires in March.

**Corporate**—We are registered via Arlan Kertz for purposes of the State 501(c)3.

**Membership**—We have 128 members. Raffle prizes are OK for now. Sell 6 raffle tickets for \$5.

**Dinner location**—Continue at **Aldo Los Altos** for February.

**Treasurer**—Our finances are in good shape.

**Other Discussions, Info Shared, etc—**

- **Dump Spybot and Adaware** as they don't do the job.
- **Use AVAST!** Free version.
- Go to **virus.gr** (in Greece), ask for English mode, look at rankings.
- Go to the **Avast** website and get the anti-virus. **Do not choose "run at boot time" the first time.**

After installation, reboot so it can update.

Then reboot again to use the most recent update.

Then do boot-time scan with full updating.

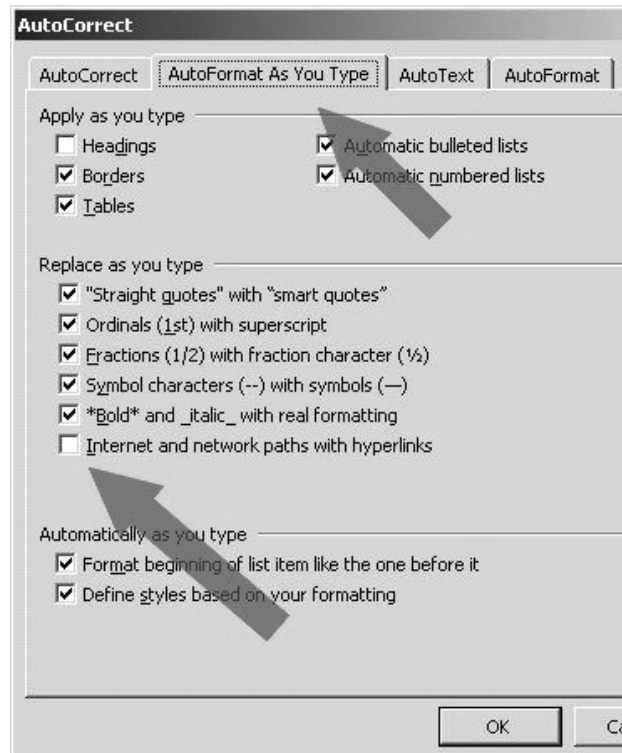
- The **Winbook** line is discontinued.

**Filler by John Buck**


**Dealing with Hot Links in Word (2000)**

You've probably not been aware of it, but I haven't used Word (2000) as much as I might have. The reason is that I didn't like that I couldn't find a way to **keep it from converting to hot links the url strings that I wanted to have it handle only as text.** Well, I finally learned how to stop that behavior on Word's part and am a much happier user of it.

The path to success was figuring out how to phrase my question to the search engine I most-often use. My search string—[ "word 2000" link url text ]—turned up this Q-A Exchange—<http://tinyurl.com/d59vmk>—which led me to a solution I couldn't have guessed. It involves **Tools/AutoCorrect/AutoFormat As You Type**, and also provides a helpful picture.



## February 2009 SPAUG News

SPAUG CALENDAR						
Always subject to change; verify event with host or Jim Dinkey						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	2 7–9 pm Multi-MediaSIG Micro Center		4			7—Clinic, by appointment only
	9 7–9 pm WinSIG Micro Center		11 5:45 pm Dinner (Optional), Aldo Los Altos, 388 Main, LA 7:30 pm General Meeting Amer. Legion Post, 347 First St, LA Speaker: Bill Young			14—Clinic, by appointment only <b>Valentine's Day</b> ♥ Day ♥
	16 7–9 pm DISIG Micro Center		18 7:15 pm Planning Meeting, Bev Altman's			21—Clinic, by appointment only
	23 7–9 pm WebSIG Micro Center		<b>President's Day—Feb 16</b>			28—Clinic, by appointment only
	2 7–9 pm Multi-MediaSIG Micro Center		4			7—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

**MultiMedia SIG—1st Monday** each month, at Micro Center, Santa Clara

**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

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 7:15 pm.

All members are welcome and encouraged to attend. **Please phone Jim Dinkey or Bev Altman to confirm venue.**

**Next meeting:** Wednesday, **February 18, 2009 at 7:15 pm, at Bev Altman's home.**

SPAUG  
PO Box 20161  
STANFORD CA 94309-0161

February 2009

First Class Mail

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• **General Meeting—Wed. February 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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**Listserver**

**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>**

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**www.  
svpal.org/**





# *PC USER GROUP Meetings*

**WEDNESDAY**

**Feb 11**

**7:15 PM**

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

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

## *Topic: Why Build Your Own Computer?*

*Speaker: Bill Young, SPAUG Member*

These days, most of us buy our computers “off the shelf,” “in the box,” or however else you want to say “ready-made”. But there are some among us who build their PCs.

Why? Well, consider—

- Personal satisfaction
- Customization, including choice of components for performance vs price
- Learning

Bill Young has built three computers. At this meeting he'll share with us information about building a generic computer.

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: **2/11**, 3/11, 4/8, 5/13, 6/10, 7/8, 8/12, 9/9, 10/14, 11/11

**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**

**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:

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Areas of special interest:

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What are you hoping to find in SPAUG?

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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!