SPAUG

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Newsletter of the **Stanford/Palo Alto Users Group for PC**
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Post Office Box 20161, Stanford, CA   94309-0161

Notes from the Prez
by Jim Dinkey

"Trick or Treat"—
It's Not Just For Halloween

Whether it's software you bought from a big-name source or something you got for free from a no-name, you have to be alert when you install it so you **don't open yourself up to some ghoul or pirate or other attacker who wants more from you than you expected.** And those ghouls, pirates, etc., are always adding to their bag of tricks to use on you. It is a sad commentary on the ethics of some companies that they use this type of "software pushing". It is also a fact of life that most of us just press NEXT when doing installs—and the unscrupulous ones take advantage of this!

One of their tricks is to present you with a small box that they hope you'll ignore or miss, with an already-checked permission to allow their software to be inserted onto your computer. I wonder how many people who aren't paid to do so take the time to really read all the garbage presented when they're doing something as mundane as updating software.

If you have accidentally installed some junk-ware, go to ADD/REMOVE and delete it; your computer will run faster without it and you'll have more "real estate" at the top of your browser. Also remove anything else that you are sure is no longer needed. If you don't recognize a program, put its name into GOOGLE and see if the program is merely left over from some other software.

Secunia is a program that will check for the latest updates for non-Microsoft software. You should probably run the program's scanner about every two weeks just to assure that your software is up-to-date.

Here are some examples of ghoulish tricks that are not treats.

Java

The **"Java Setup - Yahoo Toolbar"** has a check box labeled "Install the Yahoo Toolbar".

You need to keep your Java Runtime Environment (JRE) current, but doing so shouldn't be an invitation for the manufacturer to dump junk onto your computer and slow it even further.

General Meeting @ American Legion Post—Wed. October 14 @ 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)

◀ *(Continued from page 1)*

Another Java updating trick is to display **"Java Setup – MSN Toolbar"** right at the top. If you're not careful, you'll miss unchecking the boxed line titled "Install the new MSN Toolbar". You don't need this junk slowing down your computer. Remember OVERHEAD!

Adobe

Adobe has a number of items that they want to install.

When you're trying to update Adobe Flash Player, Adobe—using some obscure logic—will ask if you want the **"Free McAfee Security Scan"** (with the permission box already conveniently checked).

Adobe presents at least <u>two</u> items (the other choice is **"Free Google Toolbar"**). Each time you update, Adobe evidently picks out something else to push to you in hopes you will miss the required unchecking of the box.

I wonder how many products Adobe has lined up to push onto our computers!

Apple

Basically you need to have QuickTime on your computer to handle some animated downloads and other generally useful presentations. But what does this have to do with their pushing a window at you that says: **"Upgrade from Video Watcher to Video Maker"**, with the default that your next mouse click goes to "GoProNow"?

Microsoft

When updating Microsoft software, do not click on that little yellow shield that appears at the bottom right of your screen when Microsoft has made patches available. The reason is that if you do click on that shield, Microsoft will go

ahead and install ALL updates that could be applied, whether you wanted those updates to happen or not, or even had marked them as "Do Not Install".

For example, IE8 is not yet ready for the big time as Microsoft is still patching it heavily. Thus I (and I hope you) have not permitted IE8 to be downloaded from Microsoft. But if you click on the yellow update indicator, you will not get the opportunity to block the installation of IE8 and you will have been out-foxed by Microsoft. It is fine to note that there are some updates for the Microsoft software, but **go to Windows Update by clicking on TOOLS in IE** to control the updating process yourself.

Enable DEP—Whether you're updating or not

And finally, one argument for going to IE8 is the presence, natively, of DEP (Data Execution Prevention).

It has been stated that IE7 has DEP turned OFF by default, but I found that was it not only turned ON in IE7, but that there was a program that was already being accepted by my computer via DEP. Officially, DEP has been turned on since SP2, so hopefully, you will only have to check that it is ON.

All you have to do to check or turn on DEP in IE7 is right-click on "My Computer", select "Properties" and "Advanced", and then "Performance" and "Setting". Then select "Data Execution Prevention" and you can then activate or find that DEP is already turned on – possibly by a Microsoft Download Patch. **No matter what, it is in your best interests to have DEP ON.** Since it's so easily done in IE7, there's no good reason to install IE8 to get it.

You can find more DEP info from Microsoft via http://tinyurl.com/n4serv.

Meeting Day: Wednesday, October 14

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 Los Altos 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

website: http://www.aldolosaltos.com/
directions: One block west from American Legion Post
map: http://tinyurl.com/6hm3ga
menu: http://www.aldolosaltos.com/Menu.php
reviews: http://www.aldolosaltos.com/Recognition.html

Dinner time is 5:45 pm

"Contemporary Italian Food With International Infusion."

"This is not your daddy's spaghetti joint!"

—*website*

Product Report: My New ASUS 1005HA Netbook—*by Robert White*

In our July 2009 general meeting, Hank Skawinski recommended the ASUS 1000HE. The key distinguishing feature is a 6-cell battery instead of a 3-cell. There are several models in the series, the designation appears to be 100xHE, fill in your own 'x'. Other info about Hank's netbook, and the series:

- Hank bought a 10" ASUS 1000HE EEE-PC with the Atom processor.
- Photoshop would NOT run well.
- Battery life was 9 hours with the 6 cell battery.
- Has WiFi, wired network and bluetooth.
- Has good tactile keyboard and runs on 12 volts.
- Needs an external CD/DVD drive (USB powered).

I bought an ASUS Eee PC 1005HA at Micro Center. It has the 6-cell battery Hank recommended. With Linux running on an external HD, from which the machine will boot as Hank claimed, I have seen in excess of 5 hours **battery life.** I've not had a chance yet to run the battery from full charge to shutdown, so I don't yet know its full life. My measure is with the machine fully active and powering the external disk, so I suspect it is consistent with the mfr's 10-hour claim, which typically results from applying several power reduction techniques.

The only disappointment I have with the machine is that **the screen is only 600 pixels high,** so tool bars, etc. at the top of browsers and other apps eat a lot of screen height. It is otherwise an excellent light-duty long-duration machine, and I heartily recommend it to anyone for whom its capability is appropriate!

When it's connected to an external 1440x900 display, it can simultaneously drive the display to full resolution and use its own display as a secondary monitor. **Someone who needs a large screen for home use and a good traveling machine can get both simultaneously with this netbook and an external display.**

General Meeting Notes
9 September 2009
by Stan Hutchings, edited for use here

Crosstalk

- The **Microsoft updates from Patch Tuesday** look good; you should install them at your earliest convenience. Do this first, using the Windows Updater in Windows Explorer or Internet Explorer unless you use the automatic update.
- Next, run **Secunia** (http://secunia.com/) to check for updates to other applications, and make any updates suggested. [N.B.- I use Secunia PSI, an application that installs on my computer and monitors my apps for updates. It checks periodically, and reminds me. Also, Secunia will send reminders if you sign up for them]
- Watch out for Orbit. (**Orbit Downloader** is a free social music, video and file downloader. Also it supports streaming media protocols including RTMP and can download music and ...) It's apparently a downloader that installs itself on your computer. It doesn't seem to be harmful, but it is no value added over the MS downloader, and may be a security issue in the future.
- Periodically run the ● **Microsoft Windows Live Safety Scanner,** ● **CCleaner**www. ccleaner.com/download), ● **MalwareBytes,** to ensure trouble-free (at least from malware!) computing.

- **Windows 7** is available as a 90-day free trial, by download only. There are a limited number available, so if you are a glutton for pain and frustration, go for it. Don't try it on any mission-critical hardware, though.

- John Sleeman will be coordinating the **vinyl-to-CD program at Peterson's** company, 26 September is latest proposed date; watch for more information. Cost will be $6+tax per vinyl ($33^1/_3$, 45, or 78 rpm). Be sure record and sleeve are labeled with your ID (use those free return address labels).

- The **slide scanner** is now at Micro Center. Maury will send info how to qualify and sign up for use. Expect to attend a training session.

- Expect to replace the **motherboard battery** about every five years. If you don't, your computer date will not be correct, and other unpleasant things will happen. It would probably be good to make a record of your BIOS settings (a digital camera works, or just use pen and paper).

Presentation

Les Laky and **Stan Hutchings** served as panel members for a discussion on "Why your own domain name?" If you need to, contact Les at 650-208-5708 or les AT DomainKeep.com. He can advise you on getting your own domain.

Notes on email and domains

- **Prodigy** (so long ago I've forgotten my email address)—It came with the service, I think it used a proprietary application. Also, transferred via modem - no attachments, photos, etc.

- **Lockheed Martin—**Same address since they gave email addresses to employees, provided by LMCO and works via Microsoft Outlook and the Company Outlook Server. Can use Word to compose and read messages. Company policy does not allow forwarding email automatically (i.e. when on vacation, etc.) and there is no Internet access to messages.

- **Hutchings family domain, ct-sv.com**—provided service, so stan@ct-sv.com worked for a while, until we dropped the domain. We could use any of the standard SMTP programs, and I tried several, including Eudora, but still went back to OE.

- **Earthlink**—Was our ISP for a while. We tried to use our ct-sv address, but Earthlink would require a service upgrade at higher price. I was using Outlook Express with their server. This caused frequent problems due to connection via their DSL modem, configuration and uptime issues. Although you could supposedly access your account from the Internet, it was complicated and we had trouble doing it. When we switched to Comcast, we could not keep the addresses. A classic case for the need of a DOMAIN.

- **Gmail**—Was introduced and I opened an account so I could send and receive email from anywhere Internet was available. I also did not have to use Outlook Express to compose and receive email.

After getting used to the interface and Label instead of Folder concept, I grew to use it in preference to other systems. Unfortunately, Lockheed security forbade using gmail, hotmail, yahoo, and other Internet based systems. The work-around was to automatically forward incoming gmail messages to lmco; then answer the urgent ones from work.

The features of gmail caused me to prefer it to all others. I use filters to automatically categorize email based on senders. The new ● keyboard commands mean less mousing, ● the contacts are available at any time (unlike OE and other SMTP accounts), the ● choice of plain text or HTML formatting wysiwyg style, ● easy file attachment, ● autosave of drafts as you type, etc. have

◀ *(Continued from page 5)*
caused me to remain loyal.

Further, I am currently using 296 MB (4%) of my 7367 MB free quota, and see at most one or two spams per week.

- When my family joined **Comcast** to get the broadband cable, we got a number of free email addresses, but I almost never use them. I would have to go back to Outlook Express. So **I configure gmail to receive the Comcast email; and also allow me to send from gmail as if from the Comcast account.**

Planning Meeting Notes
16 September 2009
by Maurice Green, PhD, Secretary,
edited for use here

Present: Bev Altman, John Buck, Jim Dinkey, Maurice Green, Nat Landes, Robert Mitchell, John Sleeman.

General Meetings:

- **Review of September meeting:** Les Laky and Stan Hutchings presented a good panel discussion on the advantages of having your own domain name. Maury has the slide presentation from Les Laky, Stan Hutchings' notes and a copy of the audio recording of the presentation. He will combine this material for a story on the website.
- **Next month:** the October 14th meeting will feature Red Calub from Micro Center
- **Upcoming meetings:** Speakers have been arranged for monthly meetings thru Feb 2010.

Website issues: Jim reported he was unable to find an article (October 2008 Prez Notes) when he did a search on SVUGA site for "SPAUG" and "630" but was able to find it with Google. (ed. After the meeting Maury reset the search sensitivity on the website and the search succeeded.)

Film Scanner program: Maury reported that DISIG (SVCS) has purchased the Epson scanner and a computer. It is housed in the tech support area at Micro Center. DISIG will present seminars on proper use of the scanner and only those who attend the seminar will be eligible to use it. **An automated reservation system is being set up on the SVUGA website** and the scanner will be available during regular Micro Center store hours, except Saturdays and Sundays from 2PM to 4PM when they present their in-house clinics.

"Vinyl" record conversion: John Sleeman will oversee the program for members wanting to have their LP/45/78 records converted to CD. **The event is scheduled for Sept 26th at Peterson's in Cupertino.** Cost will be $6 per vinyl record (2-side) plus tax. Details will be provided in an email and on the website.

Membership: The current count is 129 including 3 family memberships. There were 33 attendees at the last meeting (31 members and 2 guests). Seven people renewed their memberships.

Raffle prizes: The Board decided that a single prize (value ca. $100) will be offered in the raffle at the monthly meeting. Other smaller items may be raffled as consolation prizes, if available.

Finance: Nat Landes reported that the club treasury is in good standing.

PA system: We continue to fine tune the system. It was found that we need to maintain main volume at max and individual channels at lowest level possible to reduce loss of synchronization.

SPAUG history: Robert Mitchell has been compiling an extensive history of SPAUG. He will send copies to other board members for review and editing.

Other business: Maury and Nat are preparing an agreement between SVCS and SPAUG regarding joint membership and dues policies. Ω

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		**30**			**3**—Clinic, by appointment only
	5 **7–9 pm** MultiMedia SIG Micro Cente		**7**			**10**—Clinic, by appointment only
	12 **7–9 pm** WinSIG Micro Center		**14** **5:45 pm** Dinner (Optional), Aldo Los Altos, 388 Main, LA **7:30 pm** General Meeting Amer. Legion Post, 347 First St, LA **Speaker:** Red Calub			**17**—Clinic, by appointment only
	19 **7–9 pm** DISIG Micro Center		**21** **7:15 pm** Planning Meeting, Bev Altman's			**24**—Clinic, by appointment only
	26 **7–9 pm** WebSIG Micro Center		**28** Halloween			**31**—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, **October 21**, 2009 at **7:15 pm,** at **Bev Altman's home**.

SPAUG
PO Box 20161
STANFORD CA 94309-0161

October 2009

General Meeting—Wed. October 14, 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**

hosted by

**www.
svpal.org/**   SV-PAL Silicon Valley Public Access Link

PC USER GROUP Meeting

| **WEDNESDAY** | **Oct 14** | **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 **Aldo Los Altos,** 388 Main Street, Los Altos,
One block West from American Legion Post

Upcoming meetings (2009): **10/14,** 11/11
(2010): 1/13, 2/10, 3/10, 4/14, 5/12, 6/9, 7/14, 8/11 9/8

SPAUG — Stanford Palo Alto Users Group for PC   **Dues: $35 for 12 months**
PO Box 20161, STANFORD CA 94309-0161
http://www.pa-spaug.org OR http://svuga.org/
Jim Dinkey, President, 650-493-9307 jimdinkey at jimdinkey.com

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 _____
<div align="center">Last, First</div>

Your mailing address: _____
<div align="center">Number and Street, PO Box, etc.</div>

_____
<div align="center">City, State, ZIP</div>

e-mail: _____

Phone: _____   Fax: _____
<div>(Area Code) Number   (Area Code) Number</div>

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!