

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

It was on one of my routine bi-monthly runs that a virus file—“TrojanClicker:win32/Yabector.gen”—appeared.

About every two weeks my computers are scanned in a series of steps that attempt to assure that all is well—including viruses, structure, data integrity, and software-patch currency.

Many of these activities take hours, but I don't care because the scan is started and I disappear out the door.

So when Google-search [**WINDOWS LIVE SAFETY SCANNER**] was run, I found a message that there was a malware—“TrojanClicker:win32/Yabector.gen”—on my computer, and subsequent use of **Windows Safety Scanner did not remove the offender. Malware Bytes also failed to remove the problem.**

When I went out onto the Net and queried though Google, I found that there were some responses—all dated earlier on the same day—which meant that I was dealing with a “Zero Day” virus—one that had been discovered earlier

the same day, one that the malware fighters had not had time enough to analyze, create a solution for, and then send the solution out to all of their customers.

But the clues supplied by the Google scan were enough to guide me into the arms of **Microsoft Security Essentials**. My thinking was that since a Microsoft program had discovered the problem, possibly another arm of the same company would be able to remove the problem.

So I installed Microsoft Security Essentials, which is the follow-on to the now defunct Windows Live Scanner, which always was physically slow, somewhat costly, and always so far down in the evaluation ratings that Microsoft justifiably just pulled the plug.

The allied, free, and equally slow Google: [windows live SAFETY scanner] is still offered, still being updated, and seems to still be effective—not only at scanning for malware, but also at testing for and fixing a whole host of problems of Microsoft software. Thus the remainder program is Microsoft's agent for unscrewing the problems of the installations of XP.

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**General Meeting @ American Legion Post—Wed. November 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)**

◀ (Continued from page 1)

Microsoft Security Essentials was installed, run, identified the “TrojanClicker:win32/Yabector.gen” virus, and obliterated it. So I decided to leave the program on my computer with intention to run it when necessary.

But Microsoft Security Essentials slowed my computer to a crawl. After putting up with my benefactor for a number of days, I just could not abide the slowness and further—since Microsoft Security Essentials is not running constantly, but merely idling pending being called into action—it had to go. I removed Microsoft Security Essentials and the computer immediately sped up.

Since Microsoft Security Essentials is a relatively new program, I just could not wait for Microsoft to fix the speed problem.

Then there is the question of whether or not all this activity was needed.

Yes it was.

A routine check brought forth the fact that I had, unknowingly, received correspondence from a known friendly entity that unknowingly passed it on to me. If it weren't for that routine check, I would be sitting fat, dumb and happy with a virus doing whatever it may such as keylogging, forwarding passwords and social security numbers to whomever.

Is everybody suspect? Yes. **Of the computers that come into the Clinic, about one-third are infected and their owners had no idea that they were infected!** As a result, I have been adding a scan for problems to the routine I go through in the Clinic. The scan usually adds about four hours to the session, but the time is worth it. Unfortunately, some owners don't want to spend the time, promise to do the scan at home, and never do. Then

they pass the problem on to other unsuspecting users, thereby perpetuating the problem.

To summarize: Use GOOGLE: [windows live safety scanner] to *find* an infection and Microsoft Security Essentials to *remove* an infection.

That is at least how it appears to be currently.

This is from the Microsoft Security Center:

TrojanClicker:Win32/Yabector.gen
Description: TrojanClicker:Win32/Yabector.gen is a generic detection for variants of TrojanClicker:Win32/Yabector.A. TrojanClicker:Win32/Yabector.A is a program that notifies a web server of its presence without user consent. It may be bundled with an installation program as a file "eBayShortcuts.exe".

Published Date: Oct 15, 2009

Alert level: Severe

Note the date I picked up the virus was the very next day. That it was caught at all was somewhat serendipitous.

I have the unique situation of knowing where the infection came from, but have no feedback whether the infection has been removed from the offending computer. That will be reviewed.

For further information on how to avoid and control malware, go to <http://tinyurl.com/yg85ozs>.

Also see the requirement for downloading Microsoft Security Essentials, at <http://tinyurl.com/yewgwqn>

Someone will probably ask, “What is your bi-monthly routine to clean up a computer?”

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Meeting Day: Wednesday, November 11

General Meeting

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

Meeting time is 7:15 pm

Kevin Lynn

Speaking about:

**Two Ways To Upgrade from
Vista to Windows 7**

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.aldolosalto.com/>

directions: One block west from American Legion Post

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

menu: <http://www.aldolosalto.com/Menu.php>

reviews: <http://www.aldolosalto.com/Recognition.html>

Dinner time is 5:45 pm

"Contemporary
Italian Food With
International
Infusion."

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

—website

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Here it is, in outline:

1. Make sure the hard drives all have integrity, by running the Microsoft built-in structure scanners. The "C" disk must be run with a stand-alone boot.
2. Run: Google: [Windows live safety scanner].
3. If a problem is found, run Microsoft Security Essentials.
4. Keep MalwareBytes around for quick scans.

General Meeting Notes

14 October 2009

by Stan Hutchings, edited for use here

CrossTalk

- Jim Dinkey advised that **in Microsoft Update you should always use the Custom option.** Review the proposed updates, and be sure to uncheck any you don't want. You should click to "not show again" so they don't reappear during future updates; if necessary, you can click "Restore Hidden Updates" to show the ones you've skipped. You can get good advice on what updates to accept if you subscribe to the paid version of **Windows Secrets** (<http://windowssecrets.com/>), in addition to all kinds of other useful information and advice.

After the MS Update, **check for non-Microsoft updates using Secunia** (<http://secunia.com/>), either the web-based scanner, or install Secunia PSI and run it periodically. You should check every few weeks, because many programs on your computer have security and stability issues that frequently require updating.

After the updates, running Perfect Disk is a good idea. It will defragment all the mess caused by the updates and use of the computer. It also defrags pagefile, which can significantly improve your computer performance.

One attendee advised that **if the MS Update failed to work, check your computer's clock.** Apparently, having the wrong time can cause problems. Note that one cause of a wrong clock is a failed battery, located on the motherboard, that powers information retention circuitry when the computer is off. A failed battery can cause many problems, so a clock that doesn't keep time may indicate that the battery should be changed as soon as possible.

Another updating failure can be caused if Office Service Pack 3 is required, but not installed. Check your update history and confirm that SP3 was installed successfully.

- Kevin Lynn announced a 22 October Windows 7 roll-out party at Micro Center. **Kevin will present Windows 7 info at our 10 March 2010 General Meeting.**
- Maury Green announced that the 19 October DISIG will feature **Smugmug** presenting their new video capabilities.

Also at the meeting, the club's new **Epson V700 Perfection scanner** will be introduced with an orientation/training/familiarization session. This **orientation is a prerequisite to using the scanner**, which will be available at Micro Center during their hours of operation except 2-4 pm Saturdays and Sundays (when Micro Center presents their in-store clinics). Information on how to schedule a session will be presented. Users are expected to scan to DVD or external hard drive or their own laptop. Editing on the scanner's computer will not be supported.

Presentation

- The presentation featured Red Calub of Micro Center. Red generously donated 6 webcams for the doorprize drawing, which were won by 6 lucky attendees.

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Red expects **Windows 7** and its accessories to be next year's hot item. Win7 will replace WinXP and WinVista in the near future, and will be on most new computers sold. Early reviews are favorable, although he advises to check your computer's and hardware's readiness via the Microsoft website. As the shift to 64-bit-capable software and hardware progresses, Win7 becomes very attractive, since it supports both 64- and 32-bit processors, and loads to an extent appropriate to the hardware. This means low-powered computers (like Netbooks) get a stripped down version, which can be expanded as the need arises (unlike Vista, which loaded everything plus the proverbial kitchen sink).

Red advised that **LCD displays are on the way out**; prices should get very low as manufacturers and retailers try to sell off their stock. LED and OLED displays will gradually supplant LCD and even plasma.

Media Center, included with Vista and Win7, **is a decent alternative to TiVo and other DVRs, if you add a TV tuner to your computer.** It makes it easier to copy material to DVD; its TV guide is free; and your programs can be stored to your huge terabyte hard drive (available from Micro Center if you don't have one yet).

Red invited all SPAUG members to talk with him when they visit the Micro Center store.

Planning Meeting Notes

21 October 2009

by Stan Hutchings,
edited for use here

Location: Jim Dinkey's home .

Attendees: Jim Dinkey, John Sleeman, John Buck, Maury Green, Stan Hutchings, Nat Landes.

Speaker Review.

14 October—The consensus was that Red Calub gave a good presentation that provided timely and useful information to the members.

11 November – Hank Skawinski is scheduled.

13 January - Kathy Marshall (Microsoft)

10 February - Gary Sasaki on CES and possibly progress in 3-D TV

10 March - Kevin Lynn on Win 7 (or April, if Media Center Director only available for March)

14 April - Media Center Director (or March, if she's unavailable for April)

12 May - John Sleeman may be able to get someone from PARC on the smart PDA; or a speaker on the potential effects of an Electromagnetic Pulse (EMP) attack, or just an extra strong solar flare.

Website transition—Use of the website aids. Need individual Prez Letters to be URL searchable., with borders for associated items, updating procedures to be reviewed. GOOGLE-search: [SPAUG amplifier 630] now shows in SVUGA but not SPAUG.

DISIG—The scanner is at Micro Center, but is not yet available to members. Setup and familiarization should be ready by the November DISIG meeting; also, the familiarization session will be given on a day other than a Monday. Trained users will be given status of “scanner user”, and be able to reserve times via the SVUGA website. Reserved times are locked so nobody else can request them, an email is sent to the user, to be printed as permission to use the scanner. The email will be used to settle usage dispute, and to assure Micro Center personnel the user is authorized to use the equipment. There may be a password, if necessary. DISIG will monitor use, and decide if one is necessary.

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Hopefully just a login password would be required. More information will be forthcoming from Maury when details are settled.

Peterson vinyl-to-digital conversion—John Sleeman was coordinator for the first batch, and made suggestions for improving the efficiency.

Membership—Bev, via email—**14 Oct meeting attendance**: 30 members, 3 guests, 4 new members

Finances—**Notice of change in procedure.** We will be combining finances with SVCS; but we will probably not combine current cash balances. Membership dues will be collected by SPAUG only. SVCS may earn money from other activities, and keep in a separate bank account. For example, DISIG bought the new scanner and associated computer, and will oversee its operation; but all SPAUG members are eligible to use it (after receiving a familiarization briefing). All SIG attendees will be encouraged to join SPAUG, which gives them access to all SIGS and general meetings, plus the Newsletter, spaug-list, and other member benefits.

What should we get for General Meeting drawings for about \$100 per meeting? The 1-TB Hitachi drive was nice; maybe a Win7 upgrade; a gift card for Micro Center, a 2- or 3-year membership in SPAUG; any useful software, such as video or photo editing (e.g., Photoshop Elements or Premier Elements or something similar).

Microphone environment. Status—Now working. Amplifier needs to have main up and individual sliders at minimum to control losing synchronization. Batteries in hand-held and head-mounted units need to be replaced monthly for best results.

Review of the SPAUG History Portfolio—Grammar review needed. Increased depth. More authors. Should the history be edited as a Google Document?

N.B. - something to consider for the final version? Fri 16 Oct 2009 Palo Alto Daily News pg A9 “Instant Literature” article by Scott Duke Harris, available online via many sites via <http://tinyurl.com/yzkjhr>. Whatever an author’s preference — how-to guides, poetry, cookbooks, family heirlooms — FastPencil promises to help people “connect, write, publish and sell” their books. Its Web site includes a variety of book templates as well as social-networking functions to enhance collaboration and provide writers with feedback for works in progress.

Lost and found procedure: For items found after a meeting, give to the President for removal from the building. He will make an announcement via spaug-list. If they are not claimed after a month, the items will be returned to the American Legion Hall administrator.

To get rid of obsolete SPAUG equipment, we should first auction/offer to members, then sell through Craigslist/EBay/etc. Rather than SPAUG acting as a clearinghouse, members will be encouraged to recycle their old equipment themselves, either to other members via spaug-list, or to the general public via Craigslist or EBay.

Standing for our November Election: ● Jim Dinkey, President; ● John Sleeman, Vice President; ● Maury Green, Corresponding Sec; ● Nat Landes, Treasurer; ● Stan Hutchings, Recording; ● Bev Altman, Membership; ● Maury Green, Webmaster; ● John Buck, Editor; ● Susan Mueller, Publisher.

We'll look for volunteers for the Publicity and Programs positions, which are currently unfilled.



November 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 MultiMedia SIG 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: Kevin Lynn			14—Clinic, by appointment only
	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		25 Thanksgiving	26		28—Clinic, by appointment only
	30		2			5—Clinic, by ap- pointment 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, **November 18**, 2009 at **7:15 pm**, at **Bev Altman's home**.

SPAUG
PO Box 20161
STANFORD CA 94309-0161

November 2009

First Class Mail

General Meeting—Wed. November 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>**

hosted by

**www.
svpal.org/**



PC USER GROUP Meeting

WEDNESDAY

Nov 11

7:15 PM

American Legion Post, 347 First Street, Los Altos

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

Topic: Two Ways To Upgrade from Vista to Windows 7

Speaker: Kevin Lynn

The two Vista-to-Win7 upgrade paths are: • Upgrading from Vista to Windows 7, or
• Doing a dual-boot clean install with an upgrade version of Windows 7. Kevin uses the second method, which he'll describe in detail at our November 11 SPAUG General meeting. Kevin has been working with Windows 7 for months and will share what he has found so far, including how to avoid problems with Windows 7.

Kevin Lynn has led the Silicon Valley Computer Society (SVCS) Windows & Office SIG for 10 years. He has a blog on the SVUGA.ORG webpage at <http://www.svuga.org/blog/15>. He is a retired Analog Semiconductor Applications Engineer, having worked for IT&T Semi, Harris Semi, Intersil, Fujitsu Micro and Micrel Semi. He has been active in home computing since 1980, having designed part of the CP/M board used in the Xerox 820, which was introduced six months before the IBM PC.

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): 11/11

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

SPAUG — Stanford Palo Alto Users Group for PC

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](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!