

SPAUG

Vol. XXVIII No. 7

# Print Screen



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

*It is interesting to note that System 7 is being pushed so hard by Microsoft, but as Hank Skawinski reviewed at the June SPAUG meeting, industry is not even budging to move to System 7.*

Why should they? XP works! Industry is not in the research and debugging business for Microsoft – you are by default.

Microsoft is desirous of having as many people test their products as possible and, of course, your feedback has to help debug the product.

Now we get to the coercion of the Company wanting to have more money because they had their first year of loss recently.

In order to force current users of XP to gravitate to System 7, Microsoft has raised the XP license cost from about \$130 to about \$180, which has the effect of making users balk at the higher price of replacing their XP computer with another XP computer.

The licenses will generally be available to corpo-

rations that have standardized on XP and need to create another batch of computers to place into a newly-formed department—but the licenses will cost more—raising the thought that maybe it is time to shift over to System 7. This scenario is especially potent for the single owner that has a problem and needs to either redo XP or start all over with System 7 for not much more. Further, the XP license will be increasingly more difficult to buy in single or small lots.

**And you don't have the bargaining power of the big companies to purchase XP licenses in the \$40 range as an auto company does.** In reality, the large corporations buy a site license from Microsoft that can be used repeatedly to almost unlimited extent as long as the computers remain within the control of the licensee.

So you will probably be squeezed into going to System 7 as the licenses allocated to the local stores dry up and the ability to purchase a new XP license is exhausted in accordance with the Microsoft plan.

Until then, if a new computer is needed for some reason, you should ask the local store to “downgrade” the computer from System 7 to XP.

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

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### ***Comparison of laptop vs. desktop***

Although a laptop runs the same software as a desktop, the assumption that the laptop is merely a smaller version of the larger brother is not entirely correct.

Starting with the assumption that you want a laptop because your needs include portability, be aware that you will pay a price for that decision. I have one, and it is used to set up communications interfaces and as a SPAUG support device (SPAUG also owns a laptop) for the meetings. Support for the meetings is an excellent use of laptops. But. . . .

#### **A laptop's design is totally controlled by power considerations.**

- **The CPU will run not much more than 1.6 GHz, but a laptop will operate at 3.0 or thereabouts when dual cores are considered.** So immediately the laptop will be slower by about half. Since most computing is characterized by tremendous amounts of wasted cycles, possibly your application will not be noticeably slower – maybe.
- Then again **the hard drive will be running at 5400 RPM and the desktop will be at least 7200.** So you will lose another third of the speed and this one will be noticeable.
- **Generally the laptop will have a narrower keyboard without a numeric keypad** – except for the wider laptops. If you are doing accounting in the field, not having a wider keyboard can affect your performance to a great degree.
- Then **there is the requirement that the battery be recharged periodically** and the battery is guaranteed to die at the most inconvenient time. Guaranteed. Either that

or a 5000 foot extension cord. If you need continuous operation, there is the considerable cost of several batteries and the charge time associated with the recharging.

- And then **there is the absolute requirement for a sprayed screen – e.g. a screen with a non-reflective coating.** I will not buy a screen without the coating, but the most recent trend is for the manufacturers to omit the coating. If you plan ahead, you can order the coating be put on at the factory. That means that I do not have to wear a dark shirt if I am going to operate any computer in bright light or with a window behind me.
- Further, **a laptop has a given configuration and if that needs to be changed or added to, you are generally out of luck.** Worse, parts are almost guaranteed to be available only from the manufacturer or at the local repair facility. If you are a tinkerer, forget repairing it yourself for general lack of specialized parts.

#### **Laptops (and netbooks) have their place; just consider all of the ramifications.**

- Also, **make sure that the Function key is to the RIGHT of the CTRL key**, as that is the way all keyboards were set up for years. Now a few of them come with those two keys reversed, which means that the reflexes you have developed over the years will get you into trouble.
- A similar problem is associated with desktop keyboards that have the POWER button where the PRTSCR key was—causing one to shutdown the computer when you push the key to print a page. I was not happy when this happened to me after a 6-hour run and I needed to capture the results on paper.

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## Meeting Day: Wednesday, July 14

### General Meeting

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

**Meeting time is 7:15 pm**

**Bob Harrington**

Speaking about:

**Google's Fiber for Communities  
proposal  
& Palo Alto's response to it**

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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The “How to Unscrew XP” classes have been attended by about 25 members. The expected slowdown means that we can have the class the first Saturday after the meeting. Other times can be arranged for those that have a constant competing Saturday morning activity.

### ***Standalone Virus Removal***

A recently-started standalone virus removal capability lets you create a virus remover. I have one created by AVG. We each need to make a set of those currently available (about 6) so we all can share and use them.

*Editor’s Note: I did a bit of online checking for [ standalone virus removal ]. Snapfiles found two candidates in its freeware < <http://tinyurl.com/2a9e2zl> >. The Google™ search < <http://tinyurl.com/2f24966> > provides links to more sites for info and/or downloading.*

## **Video of Hank’s June 2010 Presentation Available by Jim Dinkey & Robert Mitchell**

**Jim:** Several of you have asked how to access the video of Hank Skawinski’s talk in June. Here is how:

**Robert:** The video isn't available online, but I can give a DVD copy to anyone who wants it. Right now, I have it on DVD, but [Maury Green] has a tape, too.

## **Planning Committee Meeting minutes for June 15, 2010 by Maurice Green, Recording Secretary**

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

1. Jim Dinkey noted that there is a problem with the index for the Prez Notes on the SPAUG website.
2. July speaker will be Robert Harrington on the Google Fiber to the Home competition.
3. Bev reported that membership has decreased slightly, now at 129 members. There were 51 members and 2 guests at the June meeting.
4. The wireless headset microphone and transmitter is missing. It will need to be replaced. Maury will recommend the proper model number.
5. The SPAUG projector has been replaced with a new unit. The committee agreed to spend not more than \$200 for the repair of the old SPAUG projector to serve as a backup.
6. Future meetings are:
  - JUL – Bob Harrington
  - AUG - Jerry Cellilo,  
Foothill College
  - SEP – Dan Gallo, Microcenter
  - OCT – Angela Hey
  - NOV – Hank Skawinski
  - DEC – NO MEETING
7. The last newsletter was delayed due to Jim’s moving back to his former home.

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8. John Sleeman and Maury both need updates on the speakers for the websites.
9. John Sleeman has parts of an old computer given to him by Jim Dinkey, and suggests that we arrange a build-it-yourself session to convert them into a usable computer which can be donated to a worthy cause.

### Filler

by John Buck

#### Hitachi SimpleTough USB HDD

At our June 2010 general Meeting, Hank Skawinski talked about the virtues of the Hitachi 500-GB SimpleTough USB Hard Drive. A couple of months earlier, I'd bought a 320-GB version at Micro Center, expecting it to be able to use it as a large version of a thumb drive.

One member of the June 2010 SPAUG audience asked Hank if the drive could be used via the "golf-ball" USB cable that Hank had distributed at one of his previous appearances. I have done that with my 320-GB version.

Now a caveat: I bought my Hitachi HDD based on name and Micro Center reputation, as a purveyor of good goods. I've only used it once, with no apparent problem.

However the thing seems to have an Achilles' Heel, in the form of its short (about 8 inches), somewhat inflexible built-in cable. I learned about this, before I even unpackaged it, by doing my usual [ <device description> rating OR review OR problem ] search.—  
<http://tinyurl.com/24wey7o> .

- On **amazon.com**, 41 out of 51 reviewers gave it one star (the lowest-possible rating).—<http://tinyurl.com/235p6du>
- The **PC World** user comments were similarly negative.—  
<http://tinyurl.com/26hjgcc>
- The **cnet.com** average user rating is one-half star of a possible 5.—  
<http://tinyurl.com/25cnsyd>
- On the other hand, over at **walmart.com**, it got 19 five-star reviews out of 21.—  
<http://tinyurl.com/25cnsyd>

I'm hoping to avoid having a problem by avoiding flexing the Hitachi's short cable and only connecting it via an extension like the one Hank distributed long ago.

#### Finding text in pdf or MS publisher files.

I've been editing my church newsletter for only a slightly shorter time than I've been editing Print Screen, and have built up an extensive collection of back issues in both pdf and pub formats. On the very day when I needed to find a name in one of my church newsletters, the program **File Hound** showed up at Snapfiles.com < <http://tinyurl.com/2fmczob> >, and its description said it would do what I needed.. I downloaded it and was pleased with its work.

**Note 1:** File Hound seems to not have a browser, so you may have to copy-paste a starting folder name from your file manager.

**Note 2:** File Hound can find text in file types other than pdf or pub, but I didn't need it for that purpose.

Another bit of info, based on my experience: You can only find text in a pdf file (either via File Hound or using your pdf reader's own search function) if the file's text was created

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by printing directly from a word, pub, html, etc., source. If the visible text was created by scanning a document or by printing from a pdf document, you may be out of luck.

### *Two small-but-useful programs*

**Unlocker** < <http://tinyurl.com/3cyza4> > is a nifty little program that can tell you what program has locked a file or folder you want to move, rename, delete, etc., and can unlock it.

**Emsa Bandwidth Monitor** < <http://tinyurl.com/2bjkscc> > is like having a radar gun to check the speeds of data passing into and out of your computer.

### *Continued Fractions*

I was introduced to this term via Calendar Magic < <http://tinyurl.com/28xg7u9> >. It seemed to me that if the author of a free program like CM thinks it's worth the effort to include the function, maybe there's something useful about it. Here are some related links you may find interesting:

#### **Continued Fractions—**

<http://tinyurl.com/23ya76b>,  
<http://tinyurl.com/25aazzh>

#### **Tree Map—**

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treemapping>  
<http://tinyurl.com/ya33p6q>,  
<http://tinyurl.com/65k5vg>

#### **Disk Space Analyzers—**

<http://tinyurl.com/25w2scn>

### *Slash “/” the BBC*

While readying to go to church, I typically listen to the BBC news on KQED FM (Sundays, 3 pm, 88.5). When I hear their announcer give a website address including “forward slash” I wonder why “forward”. Maybe it's a Britishism, like what they do with apostrophes (calling them “inverted commas”,  
<http://tinyurl.com/37e46g6>).

After all,

- we mostly read from left to right, top to bottom,
- “/” is a “slash”, and
- “\”, its reverse, is a “backslash”.

Simple enough so far, then the Beeb has to muck it up by calling “/” a “forward slash”. How can that be, when its direction (lower left to upper right) is at right angle to our normal reading direction (upper left to lower right)?

There's more online about “forward slash” via <http://tinyurl.com/3yqk89l>.

### *What's That Stuff?*

Ever wondered what's really in hair coloring, Silly Putty, Cheese Wiz, artificial snow, or self-tanners? C&EN presents a collection of articles that gives you a look at the chemistry behind a wide variety of everyday products.  
<http://pubs.acs.org/cen/whatstuff/stuff.html>

### *Traveling? CHP Info may Help*

Check out the **CHP Traffic Incident Information Page**—<http://cad.chp.ca.gov/>



## July 2010 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		30			3—Clinic, by appointment only
4	5 <b>NO SIG TONIGHT</b>		7			10—Clinic, by appointment only
9	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 <b>Speaker:</b> Bob Harrington			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			31—Clinic, by appointment only

### Saturday Clinic

Clinics usually are held when needed. **Call Jim Dinkey** to make a reservation. The clinics are to help you unscrew your Windows XP.

Contact Jim at jimdinkey at jimdinkey.com or 650-493-9307 for an appointment.

### 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, **July 21, 2010 at 7:15 pm, at Bev Altman’s home.**

### SIGS

***NOTE: SPAUG-member participation in any of these SIGS requires membership in SVCS, currently \$12/yr. SVCS is not a part of SPAUG.***

- **Build It Yourself 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

**For more info about these SIGs, go to [svuga.org](http://svuga.org)**

SPAUG  
PO Box 20161  
STANFORD CA 94309-0161

July 2010

First Class Mail

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## General Meeting—Wed. July 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/](http://www.svpal.org/)





# ***PC USER GROUP Meeting***

**WEDNESDAY**

**July 14**

**7:15 PM**

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

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

*Topic:* **Google's Fiber for Communities proposal  
& Palo Alto's response to it**

*Speaker:* **Bob Harrington,**  
Advisor to the (Palo Alto) Mayor—Broadband

In February 2010, Google announced its Fiber for Communities initiative. Eleven hundred municipal and government entities applied to Google by its March 26 deadline. Palo Alto's chances in the Google Fiber competition will be the focus of Bob's remarks to SPAUG.

About a decade ago, Bob became interested in a proposed Fiber to the Home (FTTH) trial in Palo Alto. His home was one of 65 in the 2001–2005 trial. Since 2001 he has been a community advisor to the utility, and in 2007 was appointed an Advisor to the Mayor—Broadband.

Retiring in 1992 after managing the Dean Witter (now Morgan Stanley) Palo Alto office, Bob increased his mentoring of start-up companies and angel investing through the Band of Angels.

Bob was a radio and television commentator, the first to broadcast 'business reports from Silicon Valley' on KSFO San Francisco and KXRX San Jose.

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: (2010): **7/14**, 8/11, 9/8, 10/13, 11/10

(2011): 1/12, 2/9, 3/9, 4/13, 5/11, 6/8

**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:

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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!