# SPAUG PrintScreen

Post Office Box 3738, Stanford, CA 94309-3738
Vol. XVII No. 6 - Newsletter of the Stanford / Palo Alto Users Group for PC
A Non-Profit / Educational Organization - http://www.mediacity.com/~spaug


## Jim Dinkey - Notes From the Prez

We have an interesting schedule:

June 30 – Don Teague explaining about how to set up a website that handles total accounting flows within a company.

July 28 – Hank Skawinsky – A down-to-earth dialog from a person having the over-all experience of over 800 machines in the field for many clients.

August 25 – Rick Altman – Some of the experiences of consulting.

September 29 – TBD

October 27 – Seth Shostek – SETI (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence.) a review of what they are doing, why, how and what is next.

SPAUG is looking for a used video projector that we can purchase. Please call Jim Dinkey with the lead.

We need a VP willing to fill in for me when I am unable to either run a meeting or Planning Meeting. Please plan to say yes when you are asked.

Normally an organization such as ours has a Program Chair to make arrangements for speakers. I would like to create this office if I can. Volunteers are encouraged. Until then, your suggestions are entertained.

I attended the Microsoft Office 2000 kickoff. The problem with Office 2000 is that Microsoft did a pretty good job when Office 97 was released – the additional changes are nice, effective, and not critical for many. The usage for many can be deferred until a real need arises.

## Meeting Agenda.

7:30 Announcements.

7:35 Guests introduction.

7:40 Random Access (Crosstalk)

7:50 Break

8:00 LECTURER

9:15 SIG Reports

9:20 Raffle

9:30 Adjourn

General Meeting @ Elks Lodge - Wed. June 30 @ 7:30 PM
4249 El Camino Real - Palo Alto ( directions on page 4 )

## SLAC - Field Trip

by Walt Varner.

On May 27 twelve of our members and guests spent a very interesting and informative three hours at the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center, which is located near Sand Hill Road and I-280. The time was spent in three areas.

For the first hour our tour guide tried to educate us in the science of particle physics and why anyone would be interested in studying things you can't see or put in a bag and which don't do much until they get excited (much like a couple on their honeymoon). In a very understandable presentation the guide described the makeup of atoms and their components which can be deduced indirectly by bombarding them with other high energy particles.

The second part of the action was to clamber aboard a bus for a physical inspection of the mechanisms which produce the energetic particles needed to break matter into its smallest components. It was quite an experience to look down a two mile long tunnel housing the equipment necessary to accelerate the particles in a tube several feet under the tunnel that will do their thing two miles away. Their "thing" is to shatter another particle and note the trails produced by the liberated particles.

The last part of the tour took us to the SLAC cafeteria where we purchased an excellent lunch and recounted what we had just seen (and only partly understood).

Whether an individual had a physics background or not, everyone seemed to feel that their knowledge of the composition of matter was vastly increased by our visit. Everyone also learned a bunch of new words like hadrons, baryons, mesons, leptons, muons, gravitons, and a lot more "... ons". It was certainly three hours very well spent and very much appreciated by the attendees.

Notes from the Ed.

Unfortunately, I missed the trip. But here are a few points that were probably mentioned..

- Many of these "...ons" got their names in the early days of particle physics. Baryons, mesons, and leptons come from Greek words meaning heavy, medium, and light, because the first ones found were. Now we know of leptons more massive than some baryons.
- Baryons, mesons, and leptons are families of particles. Protons and neutrons are baryons. Electrons and muons are leptons.
- Hadrons (another Greek origin) are particles that are affected by the "strong force", and include baryons and mesons. Leptons are affected by the "weak force" but not by the strong. These are two distinct families.

You could visit their Web site at: http://www.slac.stanford.edu/

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That's all, folks. Look forward to seeing you at the next meeting.

Regards,

Jim

**General Meeting @**
**Elks Lodge**
**4249 El Camino Real**
**Palo Alto**
**June 30, 7:30 PM**

**Donald Teague will talk on Uptime Corporation's "Total Solutions".**

### A WORD FROM THE TREASURER

I am pleased to report that over the past year SPAUG has not only remained strong but has increased membership and purchased an up-to-date computer and projection system while still keeping the operating balance within a few dollars of $4,000.

Also the meetings over the past year have become more interactive and dynamic. The field trips have been popular and enlightening. The raffle prizes have become very popular and a key part of the organization's income. Having a "permanent" meeting place at the Elk's building has been instrumental in producing

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## *Future Meetings*

| | |
|---|---|
| June 30 | Donald Teague Uptime Corp Total Solutions. |
| July 28 | Hank Skawinsky Mid Year Review |
| Aug 25 | Rick Altman – consulting. |
| Oct 27 | Seth Shostak – SETI at Arecibo. |

## PLAY FREECELL?

By Walt Varner

If you would like to know more about Freecell and the people (nuts) that play it, here are two places you can learn more about freecell than you probably want to know:
1. http://www.freecell.org
2. http://users.aol.com/wgreview/freecell.html

If you are a beginner, here are some hints on strategy.
1. Don't dive into posting aces immediately.
2. Concentrate on all moves that get the columns in order. (This will usually expose aces unexpectedly).
3. Try to empty our one column as soon as possible. The more the better.
4. Never, unless absolutely necessary, leave less than two open spaces (free cells plus empty columns) unless you can see your way out of it.
5. As in Chess think ahead several moves before making a play.

If you want to relax and have fun, try these easy games:
164, 892, 1012, 1922, 2514, 2585, 5295, 8842, 13302, 13809, 14042, 19034, 23089, 29949,30584, 31316.

If you re a masochist, make yourself happy (miserable) with these games:
169, 1025, 11114, 14965, 24063, 30000, 31465 which are all solvable but not without some effort and mental pain.

Don't waste your time with 11982 since it is impossible.

Some freecell aficionados use only three free cells and others try to do it with only two, one or no freecells.

Some players think that only 32,000 games are possible. This is not true. There are millions of arrangements. Only 32,000 of them have been documented and stored in Freecell for instant retrieval and their solutions published.
If you have one you can't solve, go to the URL's listed above and you can find out how get the solution.

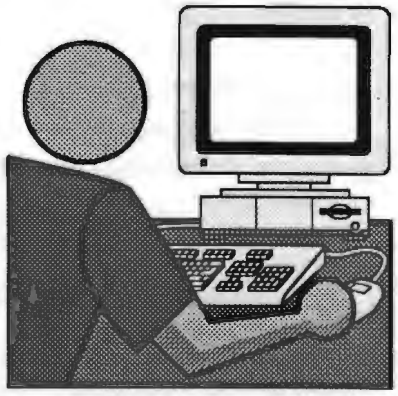
## An Interesting Website

By Robert Mitchell

The website at: **www.getspeed.com** will tell you if your home location supports any high speed access such as DSL, Cable modem and Satellite service.

The user needs to enter the zip code and area code/ prefix of the phone number. It will then determine the distance from the nearest phone and cable switching station and give you the results with a list of possible companies that will provide the service to your area.

As far as satellite service is concerned, it will give you the Direct PC satellite location in the sky.



# Questions and Answers

| *Name* | *Area Of Expertise* | *Phone* | *Hours* | *e-mail* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Jim Bailey | DOS , Quick Books 6, Quicken 98 | 650 494 0631 | 9AM - 9PM | Jimby@pobox.com |
| Jim Dinkey | Win NT/Win 98 | 650 493 9307 | 9AM - 9PM | jimdinkey@jimdinkey.com |
| Bill Goldmacker | DOS | 650 691 0911 | 6PM - 9PM | gold@svpal.org |
| Bill McElhinney | Quicken, Dazzle, Plug In, Word Express, Daytimer, Sidekick | 650 325 9808 | 9AM - 9PM | Mcels@aol.com |
| Robert Mitchell | AOL, ZIP managers, Win 95/98, MS Picture it 99 | 650 941 5792 | 4:30PM-9PM | Rfmitch702@aol.com |
| John Sleeman | Fortran, UNIX | 650 326 5603 | 9AM - 8PM | sleemanj@earthlink.net |
| Walt Varner | All PC areas: Software and Hardware incl. Win 95 | 408 739 3488 | 9AM - 9PM | walt2222@aol.com |

**Arlan Kertz - "SPAUG 501(c)"**

This is to remind you that SPAUG is a non profit organiztion registered with the IRS under Internal Revenue Code 501(c)(3). In this regard, your dues (except for $12 for the newsletter) are deductible. Also, any additional cash and or other non-business assets donated to SPAUG are also deductible.

## Elks Lodge, 4249 El Camino Real, Palo Alto, CA 94306-4496

The Elks Lodge is at 4249 El Camino Real on the North side of the street, between Charleston and San Antonio Road, but very close to Charleston. It is next to Ricky's Hyatt House, which is on the corner.

Park your car in the parking lot at the front of the lodge, and proceed to the center door. This is a keycarded door so we will have someone at the door to let you in. Proceed to the Lodge Room straight ahead, and to the left.

If you cannot get in the center door because you are late, press the new wireless doorbell that will be in place for each SPAUG meeting, and someone will come and let you in.

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instrumental in producing increased active attendance and participation.

The board is currently considering the acquisition of a better projection system to enhance presentations. It is planned that even with such an acquisition the bank balance can still be in the vicinity of $4,000 a year from now.

Walt Varner, Treasurer

## Two invaluable sources in event of system crash or battery loss:

By Stan Hutchings

Printout your WIN 95 system settings.

A printout of your system settings is a good reference to keep handy for hardware troubleshooting. Right-mouse click on My Computer, select Properties, and click on the Device Manager tab. Click on Print, choose the type of report you'd like to print, and click on OK.
"System summary" prints a report organized by resource type - IRQ, I/O port, memory, and DMA channel - listing the hardware that uses each resource. (Double-click on Computer back on the Device Manager tab to view this information on-screen.)

"Selected class or device" lists the resources and any device drivers used by the selected hardware. Of course, you'll need to select the hardware before clicking on Print. And the third option.

"All devices and system summary," prints a system summary and details for every piece of hardware on your system.

Printout your system's BIOS setup.

The following technique works on most systems: Boot your system normally. Select Start, Shut Down, choose the restart option, and click on Yes.

During the second boot, press the key indicated (on screen) to enter Setup mode - probably F1, F2, or Delete. At the first Setup screen, press your keyboard's PrintScreen key. (Whereas in Windows 95, the PrintScreen key sends the screen contents to the Clipboard; here they go straight to the printer.)

If necessary, press your printer's page feed button to complete the printing of the first page. Go to the next Setup screen, press PrintScreen, and so on.

## *Planning Meeting*

Planning meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month, usually at Beverly Altman's home – 1670 Oak Avenue, Menlo Park – at 7:15pm. All members are welcome, and encouraged, to attend.
Next meeting: July 7th, 1999 at 7:15.

## *SIG News.*

QUICKEN – There is a proposal to start a new Quicken SIG, and interested members should contact Beverly Altman. A leader/tutor for this group is needed, and potential volunteers should make themselves known to Beverly.

Internet and Win95/98 - These special interest groups have concluded for the present. They were well attended and might be revived if there were enough member interest.

## New Computer – part 2

Continued from last month

By Walt Varner

Now that you understand all of the above, you order the shiny new computer that is going to solve all of your problems. The $500 price doesn't include shipping and handling or the tax so the price is not really $500 but considerably more especially when a number of custom features you decide you want are added. (In any case, be sure to read and understand all of the fine print before signing a contract.) One of the first complaints I hear from buyers of the

## Tech Support.

Don't overlook the list of members (on page 4) who are willing to offer help and advice on their areas of expertise. It's free so there are no guarantees! However, it provides one-on-one help, and more time than the ten minutes of Random Access at the General meetings.

If you have questions on subjects not listed, try calling Jim Dinkey. If he can't help, he may know who can.

Jim also maintains a laboratory in his home which is available to SPAUG members when intractable problems arise. Call (650) 493-9307. This service is also available to non-members, but at the cost of a suitable donation to the Club's coffers. (That alone should be an inducement to join - any appropriate contribution would be more than the annual membership, but less than you would pay a commercial outfit. Tell your friends.)

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$500 to $1500 machines is that the performance speed is much slower than they expected. Support plans differ with various suppliers but the help you get is in getting the computer to operate, but doesn't cover help with applications like Word , Excel and AOL.

You finally get the new PC working and are enjoying the big improvement over your old PC that now rests in a recycling yard or dump. Now, how many months or years is it going to run before it requires service? There are two very vulnerable areas in any computer-heat and mechanical breakdown. The small cases and small fans supplied in the cheapies do not circulate cooling air effectively. Because of this and the fact that the power supply runs hot because it is running close to saturation case temperatures run very high. Also the new high speed CPU's run very hot, so you have potential problems since heat is the most serious threat to the chips on the circuit boards.

If the heat doesn't bring the PC down sometime the hard drive will. The hard drive is electro-mechanical with combs that whip in and out hundreds of times a minute and can tolerate little misalignment. The other potential problem with the new high capacity hard drives is that to produce that capacity, the disk spins at very high speeds (5400 rpm, for instance). Because of space limitations the bearings supporting the disk stack cannot be made massively strong so, depending on the amount and kind of storage requested of the hard drive, the support bearings can and will ultimately allow a head crash resulting in the loss of umpteen gigabytes of data and replacement of the drive. Reconstructing that data can be a massive job since the cheapie PC's don't have a backup disk.

So what should you do to minimize trauma and disappointment with your dream machine? Recall my suggestion that you have to pay for what you get. For about twice as much as you want to pay for a mass produced commercial machine you can get a custom built PC in a full case with a 300 watt power supply, 4 to 6 RAM sockets, 3 ISA and 4 PCI slots, 3 or 4 trays for floppy and backup drives, an 8 GB hard drive, CD-ROM and/or DVD drives, 8 MB of video Ram (preferably 16 MB) and a 17 to 19" monitor. If at all possible , all components should be made and stocked in the Silicon Valley so if you have problem components you can get immediate service or replacement.

Finally, to put things in perspective, would you be happy with the performance of a new car you could buy for $5000 to $9000 or a house in Silicon Valley for $50,000 to $90,000.

## The Web

From Ron Nicholas

### "Car Talk" Is On the Web

One of the funniest shows on the dial, National Public Radio's "Car Talk" also brings its distinctive combination of humor and helpfulness about all matters automotive onto the Internet. The hosts, Click and Clack, the Tappet Brothers (two Boston-based, M.I.T.-educated mechanics named Tom and Ray Magliozzi, who really are brothers), know just about everything there is to know about any car or truck on the road (or not on the road, as the case may be). During their call-in show they dispense sage advice, recommendations, and wit in equal measure.

Their Web site **http://www.cartalk.cars.com** is just as helpful, and just as entertaining. The content changes frequently, so it pays to check it out often. The archive, which features e-reprints of their syndicated weekly newspaper column, is particularly good. For topics ranging from engine pings to fuzzy dice, not to mention sharp wordplay, "Car Talk" is your source for information about everything on wheels.

### Free Downloadable Software

In addition to its millions of sites, the Web also offers a lot of free software that you can download to your own PC--anything from games, health-related software, zip and other compression/decompression utilities, screensavers, antivirus programs, and much more. A huge number of such files are available through Juno Web's home page. To get there, go to the "Computers" Web Guide from our home page at http://home.juno.com and click on the "Software" button. Then follow the "Download Library" link on the software page. Below we list other sites that may yield other downloadable files.

http://download.com
http://freewarehome.com
http://hotfiles.lycos.com

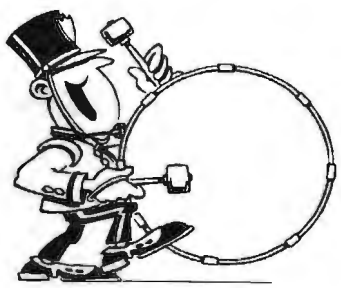
## Thanks.

We should like to express our continuing gratitude to the Elks Lodge for the use of their room.

## Editor's Corner.

We hope you will post the enclosed flyer where it will catch the public eye. Suggestion – if you have posted last month's flyer, take it down and post this one in a different position so people will not think it's the old one and look right past it.

Members have started responding to the appeal for newsletter material. Many thanks – please keep it up; but it's still sporadic. What we want is a surplus of good stuff, then we can both serve the readers and avoid the last minute scrambles.



**Stanford/Palo Alto Users Group for PC (SPAUG) annual membership dues are $35, payable to SPAUG, at PO Box 3738, Stanford CA 94309-3738.**

**Please include your name and address, and optionally an e-mail address and any special interest group (SIG) you want more information about.**

**Questions? Call Beverly Altman (650) 329-8252 or Jim Dinkey (650) 493-9307.**

**The SPAUG Web Page**

**available at**

**http://www.mediacity.com/~spaug**

**sponsored by**

**MediaCity**
**500 Logue Ave**
**Mtn View, CA 94043**
**(650) 321-6800**

**PPP/T1/Frame Relay/ISDN**

**General Meeting**
**June 30, 7:30PM**
**at Elks Lodge,**
**4249 El Camino**
**Palo Alto**

## Listserver

**spaug-list@lists.ispchannel.com**

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: **spaug@mediacity.com**

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