

SPAUG



PrintScreen

Post Office Box 20161, Stanford, CA 94309-0161

Vol. XXVI No. 7- Newsletter of the Stanford/Palo Alto Users Group for PC
A Non-Profit / Educational Organization - <http://www.pa-spaug.org>

Notes from the Prez

by Jim Dinkey

SP3 is not, at this time, to be installed for another month or so because the problems are still showing up. At some time, the patches for the induced problems will be ready and at that time, SP3 can be installed for XP and then the patches can be immediately applied that will make SP3 a useful product.

However, SP3 *is* a good tool to install when a customer's computer is so messed up that a desperation move is to install SP2 or SP3 in order to not lose the customer's data. Installing either SP2 or SP3 is an appropriate move when the basic structure is OK and you need to attempt to stabilize the computer from crashing and general malaise.

Sometime the above actions are taken to merely get the computer running well enough to get the data squirreled away safely somewhere before scraping the hard drive clean and reinstalling.

There are times that reinstalling is required, but the action of reinstalling causes all personalizations and files accumulating data over a period of years to be lost. One must reinsert the changes into the software.

For instance, I had a complete new load installed and found that years of email whitelist and blacklist entries were gone and attempts to restore the entries from backup files were not effective.

One of the problems that universally seems to show up is that Microsoft has an update procedure and non-Microsoft programs tend to not have an automated procedure.

Secunia has a program that checks the revision level of ALL programs on your computer with its 15,000+ database of current revisions of programs and then provides the user with a button to start the download of the update. Everyone should run the program once every month.

As with so many other programs, Secunia will also implant itself into your START UP queue so that each time you restart your computer, Secunia will also be restarting. The preferred technique is to stop the program from restarting after a single run by removing the program from the startup menu by putting MSCONFIG into the RUN box and unchecking the offending program from there. Another solution is to just remove the program from the computer.

(Continued on page 2) ►

**General Meeting @ American Legion Post—Wed. July 9@ 7:15 PM
347 First Street, Los Altos (directions on page 3)**

**Optional Dinner at Ristorante L'Acquolina, 397 Main St., at First, Los Altos,
5:45 pm (see page 3)**

◀ (Continued from page 1)

If you get a new LCD panel and you are wondering what to do with what it replaced, keep the old one and put it beside the new screen to make your screen double in size or able to handle two completely separate programs – one on each screen. All you have to do is obtain a dual head video card such as the VisionTek Radeon HD2400 AGP (\$70 at Micro Center) which will drive two screens simultaneously. Then install the supplied software and XP will then drive both screens as though they were one. I have the Device Manager up on the left one, Word on the right screen as I am writing this. Often I leave MailWasher on the left (smaller) screen so I can see if email has come in.

If you have an old hard drive and you want to save copies of Acronis backups or other data, install the drive either into the main box (preferred) or into an external USB drive case (\$25). The USB will be just a bit slower than the inside hard drive, but the difference will be negligible because the USB channel is not involved with reading data from the internal hard drive.

Quite a large percentage of the Clinic work is merely to accomplish the **maintenance that a normal user needs to do on a weekly basis.** Routine stuff like defragging, keeping the computer free of excessive files, and keeping all parts of it current – certainly a monthly task. Most critical missed: Non-critical updates. Most effective missed: MSCONFIG cleanup.

CrossLoop is an implementation of TightVNC which is literally one-click activation. By setting up CrossLoop on any broadband-based computer, you can assist (for free) your offspring in college, your mother in Timbuktu, or friends with their own problems. You email them a URL to click on and then when the initial panel shows up, have

them click on SHARE and tell you the resultant 12-digit number. You plug the 12 digits into your ACCESS panel; the two computers will handshake and the next thing you see will be the screen of the remote computer. It is simple and it works. Once in a while a firewall gets in the way, but that is fixed by shutting down the firewall, starting up the CrossLoop session, then restarting the firewall, which will remember the needed setting. Simple.

The capacitor problem is back! And it's a mess! You may remember that in 2000 two Taiwanese nationals stole from Japan the formula for the electrolyte in capacitors. took to Taiwan and produced billions of defective capacitors because they didn't steal ALL of the formula. That little debacle meant that millions of power supplies and computers failed in the field about 3-5 years later as the capacitors all leaked, bulged, and dribbled themselves to oblivion.

Now we find that the problem has spread not only to Taiwan but to China and other countries. The position of the companies producing the defective capacitors is "tough", because the problem does not show up for years and they long-ago received their money.

When your computer begins to act flaky and especially if you ever see a BSOD (Blue Screen of Death) it is usually a hardware problem and the first thing to do is to resolve the power supply issue. In the BIOS, the voltages will look OK because there is a low current draw in that situation, but when the CPU begins to cause significant current draw when the computing load increases, then the crashes start which allow the data to corrupt. After the first crash, inspect the power supply capacitors and replace the entire power supply as inspection dictates.

(Continued on page 4) ▶

Meeting Day: Wednesday, July 9

General Meeting

American Legion Post
347 First Street, Los Altos

Meeting time is 7:15 pm

Hank Skawinski Speaking about: Marketplace 2008

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 American Legion 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 —

Ristorante L'Acquolina

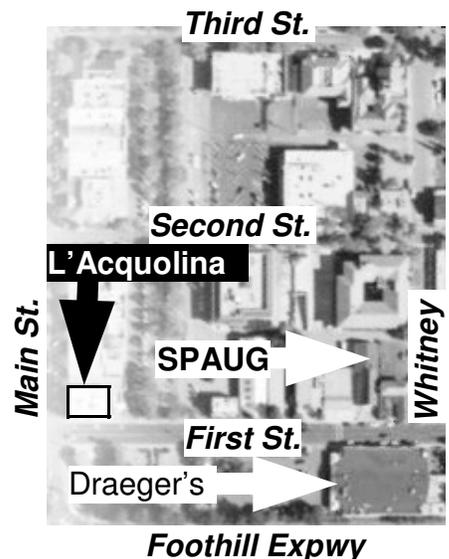
Southern European Cuisine

397 Main St, Los Altos, CA, (650) 948-4600

3/4-block west of our American Legion Post meeting place

Website: <http://www.lacquolina.com/>

Dinner time is 5:45 pm



◀ (Continued from page 2)

For years all LCD panels were sprayed with a coating that diffused the surface of the screen, thus eliminating the screen acting as a mirror by showing all of the objects and lights behind you. That coating has largely disappeared from the marketplace for

(especially) laptops, yet is essential for a good computing experience. The argument is that the characters are a bit clearer. Probably true, but the reflections make the screen almost unreadable as compared to just a bit fuzzy. So my suggestion is to seek out and purchase only sprayed screens.

SPAUG Planning Meeting

June 18, 2008

by Maurice Green, Recording Secretary

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

1. **Speaker review**—All agree that the talk by Red Calub at the June 9th General meeting was very well received as evidenced by the number of persons who remained to ask questions after the presentation. The July speaker will be Hank Skawinski who will talk about the marketplace in PC computers. Restaurant for the pre-meeting dinner will be Ristorante L'Acquolina at the corner of Main and 1st streets.
2. **John Sleeman is maintaining the old SPAUG website.** The index to the Notes from the Prez archives has been linked in the main navigation bar. All of this information will be transferred to the new SVUGA website.
3. **SIGS**—Maury reported on the programs for the various SIGs. He noted that we still have not found a volunteer to lead the Multimedia SIG.
4. **The number of members** has remained stable and we acquired 2 new members at the last meeting. Total is 124.
5. Nat reported that the **treasury** is in good shape. Bev gave him monies from a group of new memberships and renewals.
6. Walter Heyman has resigned as **publicity chairman**. We need a new volunteer to handle this task in order to keep our membership growing.
7. A subcommittee consisting of Jim Dinkey, Robert Mitchell, John Buck and John Sleeman remained after the planning meeting adjourned to review the contents of the new proposed **club CD**.

**Start buying SPAUG Mid-2008 CDs
at our July meeting.
Still only \$20 each.**

SPAUG CALENDAR

Always subject to change; verify event with host or Jim Dinkey

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	30	1	2 Independence Day 		4 	5—NO Clinic
	7	8	9 5:45 pm Dinner (Optional), L'Acquolina, 1st & Main, LA 7:30 pm General Meeting Amer. Legion Post, 347 First St, LA Spkr: Hank Skawinski			12—Clinic, by appointment only
	14 7-9 pm WinSIG Micro Center	15	16 7:15 pm Planning Meeting, Bev Altman's			19—Clinic, by appointment only
	21 7-9 pm DISIG Micro Center	22 7-9 pm Multi-Media SIG Micro Center	23			26—Clinic, by appointment only
	28 7-9 pm WebSIG Micro Center	29	30			2—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

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

MultiMedia SIG—4th Tuesday each month, at Micro Center, 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 7:30 pm.

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

Next meeting: Wednesday, July 16, 2008 at 7:15 pm, at **Bev Altman's home.**

SPAUG
PO Box 20161
STANFORD CA 94309-0161

July 2008

First Class Mail

General Meeting—Wed. July 9, 7:15 PM

Amer. Legion Post, 347 First St., Downtown Los Altos, across from Draeger's (betw. San Antonio and Main)

Contacts

Jim Dinkey
jimdinkey at jimdinkey.com
President (650) 493-9307

John Sleeman
sleemanjc at copperhouse.net
Vice President (650) 326-5603

Maury Green
mauryg3 at comcast.net
Recording Secretary (650) 493-5914

Nat Landes
natlandes at aol.com
Treasurer (650) 851-2292

Beverly Altman
bevaltman at aol.com
Membership (650) 329-8252

Stan Hutchings
stan.hutchings at LMCO.com
co-WebMaster (650) 325-1359

John Sleeman
sleemanjc at copperhouse.net
co-WebMaster (650) 326-5603

Walter Heyman
heymanw at comcast.net
Publicity

Susan Mueller
susan_mueller at yahoo.com
Newsletter Publisher (650) 691-9802

John Buck
jbuck1467 at mindspring.com
Newsletter Editor (650) 961-8859

Listsriver

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/



Let someone else know about SPAUG—Please post or share this flyer

PC USER GROUP Meeting

WEDNESDAY

July 9

7:15 PM

American Legion Post, 347 First Street, Los Altos

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

Topic: Marketplace 2008

Speaker: Hank Skawinski, Owner/Manager, Datawise



Hank will give his update on what you should buy, what you should avoid, based on his extensive experience supporting over 1,000 computers (including many for SPAUG members). He'll discuss hardware and software, and probably compare and contrast Windows with Linux. This is always an informative presentation, and if you are considering an upgrade of your peripherals, computer or software, be sure to attend. Hank will also help with the CrossTalk session, so if you're having problems, bring your questions.

Hank is a favorite SPAUG speaker. He was also featured in a March 23, 2006 Larry Magid *New York Times* article, which you can read here—<http://tinyurl.com/rnzfw>.

You are invited to join us for an optional no-host dinner before our meeting, at **5:45 pm**, at **Ristorante L'Acquolina, 397 Main St, Los Altos, (650) 948-4600**
At traffic signal 3/4-block west of our American Legion Post meeting place.

Upcoming meetings: 7/9, 8/13, 9/10, 10/8, 11/12, 12/10

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](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!