



PC USER GROUP Meeting

WEDNESDAY

Sept 12

7:15 PM

Elks Lodge, 4249 El Camino Real, Palo Alto

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

Topic: **Frugal Computing**

Speaker: **Stan Hutchings**

Topic description: Use of the tools already provided or available free for Windows (Vista, Win7, and WinXP). I'll demo

- **MS Moviemaker,**
- **Google Docs** (as a free replacement for Microsoft Office),
- **Freemake Video Converter,**
- **Windows Photo Gallery,** and
- **Irfanview.**

That should take up pretty much a full presentation schedule, including Q/A.)

Speaker info: Stan Hutchings, a retired Lockheed Martin Rocket Scientist, has been working and playing with computers since the TRS-80.

Stan's first computer was an IBM PC/XT. He's been updating computer and software ever since. Lately he's been trying to avoid buying software, preferring to use tools provided in Windows, and applications available free online. After spending a lot of time travelling, he has come to love Gmail, and to appreciate the advantages of applications available anywhere over the Internet. He will demonstrate the use of some of his favorite applications.

You are invited to join us for an optional no-host dinner
before our meeting, at **5:45 pm**, at
The Bistro—Elks Lodge, Ground Floor

Upcoming meetings (2012): **9/12**, 10/10, 11/14

(2013): 1/9, 2/13, 3/13, 4/10, 5/8, 6/12, 7/10, 8/14

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: \$30 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 **\$30.00**, 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 (All Nine Digits—xxxxx-xxxx—Please) ZIP+4 _____

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: _____

SPAUG

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Notes from the Prez

by Jim Dinkey

“SHOULD I UPGRADE MY WIN XP TO WIN7 NOW, OR SKIP IT AND WAIT FOR WIN8?”

Continuing my upgrade theme from last month, I say that one is easy. There is no good reason for NOT doing the Win7 upgrade NOW.

Get Windows 7 NOW, AND buy the \$15 Option to upgrade to Windows 8 for free, when Win8 becomes available.

“SHOULD I UPGRADE FROM XP ON MY CURRENT PC OR BUY A NEW WIN7/WIN8-COMPATIBLE MACHINE?”

The easy answer is to buy a new Win7/Win8-compatible machine with Win7 installed, and the Win8 upgrade option, and then migrate your data and applications to your new machine.

If you think you want to upgrade your current PC, use the procedure below as a guide to what you should do.

UPGRADING AN EXISTING XP PC TO WIN7

Note: This procedure writes a Microsoft Windows 7 image over an existing Windows XP image, and avoids your having to buy new hardware—almost.

Realistically, upgrading your OS would be a good time to physically replace your existing “C” drive with a new, larger one, giving you an immediate backup and also meet space demands of the newer operating systems. You could repurpose your old hard drive for backups, a separate data drive, etc.

Also, if you happen to have some programs that will only run under XP, don’t forget that Win7 comes with a Win XP emulator that will run your older programs.

Preparation

1. **Have a technical support team set up** to provide help and guidance in case you have a problem.

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General Meeting @ Elks Lodge—Wed. September 12 @ 7:15 PM
4249 El Camino Real - Palo Alto (directions on page 3)

Optional Dinner at Elks Lodge Bistro
Elks Lodge, Ground Floor, 5:45 pm (see page 3)

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2. **If you don't have Win7, get it now**, and pay \$15 for a Win8 upgrade, to use when Win8 becomes available.
3. **If you are going to upgrade your hardware (storage, RAM, etc.), get it now**
4. Run Microsoft's free **Windows7 Upgrade Advisor** to find out if your computer has all the hardware needed for Win7. The results will be a successful run or the discrepancies that must be resolved.

Doing It

1. Run **Belarc Adviser** to benchmark your system's current hardware and software configuration. Save the Belarc output to compare with a similar post-upgrade report.
2. **Back up** your data and your current operating system, using Acronis Home.
3. If you want to **increase your PC's robustness** by installing a larger memory drive (SSD or HDD) or by adding RAM, do it now.
4. If you installed a new drive,
 - a. **Create separate partitions** on it for your operating system(s), including applications, and for your data. It's good practice to keep your data in a separate partition from your operating system and applications.
 - b. **Copy (restore) your old operating system** to the new drive's "C" partition.
 - c. **Copy (restore) your data** to another partition on the new drive.
 - d. **Repeat steps 1 and 2 of the main procedure**, to be sure your machine is still Win7 capable and to benchmark this new configuration.
5. **Install Win7 now.**
6. Download and **install all the updates** Microsoft has for your setup.
7. **Install your applications as necessary.**

If you have programs that will only run under XP, remember that Win7 comes with a **Win XP emulator** that will run your older programs.
8. **Check for updates (including 64-bit versions) for your applications.**
9. **Run Belarc Adviser** again, to benchmark your new setup.
10. **Compare the before and after runs of Belarc** to assure that all the programs you originally had were successfully brought over from the original load. Do any tuning necessary to get all issues resolved.
11. **When Win8 becomes available—**
 - a. Use your \$15 upgrade to **get it.**
 - b. **Back up** your current operating system and data.
 - c. **Run Belarc Adviser.**
 - d. **Install Win8**, then get **and install all the updates** Microsoft has for it.
 - e. **Replace the Win 8 screen with the Win 7 screen** and you will have a fully-patch-updated system—with the Win 8 patches and without the dumb Win8 screen.
 - f. **Back up** your new setup
 - g. **Run Belarc Adviser** to benchmark your new setup. Save this report and compare it with earlier ones.

At this point your updating should be done. Enjoy your new OS.

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Meeting Day: Wednesday, September 12

General Meeting

**Palo Alto Elks Lodge,
4249 El Camino Real, Palo Alto**

Meeting time is 7:15 pm

Stan Hutchings
Speaking about:
Frugal Computing

The Elks Lodge is a light-colored two-story building on the North (bay) side of El Camino Real (ECR), just east (toward Los Altos) from the Charleston-Arastradero-ECR intersection. It's diagonally across ECR from the Crowne Plaza Cabaña hotel.

Park in the lot that wraps around the lodge, and proceed to the front door (on the West side of the bldg.). This is a keycarded door. If you cannot get in the front door because you are late, press the intercom button on the post to the left of the main entrance, identify why you're there (try "computer club"), and you should hear the door unlock. Pull the handle and enter

Proceed to the Lodge Room—upstairs. An elevator is available behind the stairway.

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 dinner

Join us for dinner before our General Meeting at —

The Bistro—at the Elks Lodge

Note the **time** for
this month's
dinner.

There's no dining place closer to our meeting place than this. It's on the ground floor toward the back of the building,

Directions: It's on the ground floor toward the back of the lodge building.

Menu: <http://www.paloaltoelks.org/bistro-menu>

Review: <http://www.yelp.com/biz/palo-alto-elks-lodge-no-1471-palo-alto>

Dinner time is 5:45 pm

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MICROSOFT WORD

About 63% of **Microsoft Word** users never bother to upgrade past Microsoft Office Word 2003. Why should they! Word 2003 had all the basic functionality needed and Office 2007 and 2010 didn't have any features that were desired by the 63%. It is a classic case of doing the job right the second time (don't forget Word 2000) and then trying to capitalize on little features needed by very few.

08 August 2012 General Meeting

by Stan Hutchings—*edited for use here*

*Stan's notes cover both the
CompuSIR (noon) and the
SPAUG (evening) meetings.*

THE EXPERTS

The panel of SPAUG experts for both meetings consisted of **Jim Dinkey**, **Stan Hutchings**, and **Maury Green**.

NOON SESSION—COMPUSIR

- **The major topic was upgrading to Windows 7 or Windows 8**, and what hardware would be most appropriate for a general use computer.
- **WinXP will be obsolete in June 2014 and no longer supported.** We need to upgrade to Win7/Win8 before then to avoid virus, security and other issues.
- A new computer could well have a **Solid State Drive (SSD)**—
<http://tinyurl.com/yug3gh>. If so, plan to have frequent (e.g. nightly) **backups**. SSDs are not a mature technology, and may fail suddenly.
- **Central Computers** —
www.centralcomputers.com/—has a deal for SPAUG/CompuSIR.

Jim Dinkey sent a quote for a universal computer for us to review.

- **You can save bucks** by lowering or eliminating the SSD and other mid-level components.
- A **bulk purchase** (3 or more) would give us a price break.
- Adding a **Blu-Ray** would add \$15 or so, and would give the advantages of that technology.
- The **CPU** is an Intel i5-3470 —<http://tinyurl.com/cfqfwcp>
- The Intel **processor** i5-3470 is good, but not top of the line.
- Hank Skawinski did not like the ASUS **motherboard**, and recommended the Gigabyte GA-Z77M-D3H-MVP motherboard —<http://tinyurl.com/9tr8ga6>—with very good **specs**—<http://tinyurl.com/8gv8bbk>.
- 4 GB is the **RAM** price sweet spot, a pair of 4s is best, giving 8 GB RAM. This fills 2 of the 4 slots, so upgrading to 16 GB is simple. For very memory-intensive applications, a pair of 8 GB chips is more expensive, but desirable, giving upgrade path to 32 GB.
- Interpreting the list further, the Antec Sonata mid-size **tower**—<http://tinyurl.com/cnouytz>—is a nice size with many desirable features.
- The Corsair 550W **power supply**—<http://tinyurl.com/dx68du3>—is possibly overkill at \$160; you could get a tower plus 400W power supply for a lot less, maybe \$70.
- The Sony/NEC DVD **reader/writer**—<http://tinyurl.com/lmeohj>—is quite capable, but—
 - ▶ If you want really **permanent archives**. investigate the M-DISC—<http://www.m-discs.com/>.—The

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discs must be written by an M-compatible DVD drive, but can be read by any existing DVD drive.

- ▶ And/or a **Blu-Ray reader/writer** may be a desirable option for those doing a lot of video, or who require the **huge storage capacity**—<http://tinyurl.com/dqhm9>—and ability to play Blu-Ray DVDs on the computer.
- ▶ The Seagate 500GB drive—<http://tinyurl.com/buvf5a3>—is for **data and backups**.

Another external hard drive for an additional disk image backup would be a good idea.

The Intel 520 Series 120 GB, Internal, 2.5" (SSDSC2CW120A3K5) (SSD)—<http://tinyurl.com/cdxybkg>—will be the **boot drive (C:)** for the OS, pagefile and applications, for maximum speed. It will boot in 3 to 5 seconds! You could get a 240GB SSD, or a smaller 64GB.

- **Win7 Pro 64-bit is the OS of choice.** We will recommend letting Central Computers do the installation for \$80; they will make sure everything works.
- An **alternative to the Seagate and SSD drives** is a "Hybrid" drive, combining SSD and HD, gives the best of both technologies.
- **Micro Center is gone from the Bay Area.** The landlord wanted a large increase in rent, and MC felt they could not afford it. The probability of a new Bay Area location is very low due to high rent. You can still order online [<http://www.microcenter.com/>] and get their correspondence. The Santa Clara Service De-

partment remains open until 20 September or so to honor returns, warranties, etc. After that, you will have to deal with the main store [<http://www.microcenter.com/>].

MC donated a huge amount of software, books, and references to SPAUG.

The SVCS flatbed Epson slide scanner and computer have been moved to **Central Computers'** Santa Clara site (address below), where they will be available to SVCS members (\$12/year membership). Contact **Maury Green** for more info.

For a **local brick-and-mortar shop**, Central Computers is the recommended alternate. CC is also providing meeting venue for the SIGs.

Central Computers' Santa Clara site is at 3777 Stevens Creek Blvd—take Saratoga exit across Stevens Creek, turn right at Keystone and pull into the parking lot. CC's website is <http://www.centralcomputers.com/>

CC has a site closer to most of us at **1255 W. El Camino Real, Sunnyvale**. It's on the bay side of ECR between Bernardo and Hwy 85.—<http://tinyurl.com/9x3rp72>

- **Will Win7 work on my old computer?** Use the Windows 7 Upgrade Advisor—<http://tinyurl.com/y1fguw5>—to confirm in advance. Many older XP and Vista computers can be upgraded, but they may be relatively slower. Some old XP programs may not run, but the compatibility mode in the Professional version will allow older programs to run in a virtual WinXP session.
- **The M-DISC is the first ever permanent file backup disc that lasts for 1000 years.** Millenia and LG have developed the writing technology—<http://www.m-discs.com/>—that is like en-

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graving on stone. The discs must be written by an M-compatible DVD drive, but can be read by any existing DVD drive. It is best for permanent archival.

- **There are programs to lock your icons in place.** Changing resolution may disturb the order; some programs or updates also rearrange icons. Try—

- <http://tinyurl.com/4o86bwn>
- <http://tinyurl.com/cypz7wa>

[*Editor's Note: I (jb) use the free program **MultiRes**—<http://tinyurl.com/22653r>—for resolution changes (in XP); it automatically saves and restores icon positions.*

*Another favorite program/utility with an icon save/restore capability is **PTBSync**—<http://tinyurl.com/4phsl>.]*

- **Laptop mouse periodically goes crazy, zipping to a corner.** Try reinstalling or upgrading the mouse driver; see if other mouses do the same thing.
- **How to move MP3 files?** iTunes, Windows Media Player, and Audacity are all possibilities. Audacity—<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>—allows extensive MP3 file editing as well as recording. From a commercial CD, that is called ripping. From your own recordings, Windows Explorer should work fine
- **Here's a quicker way to copy/paste from a web page to a document,** select the range, click and drag to the destination—<http://tinyurl.com/btwl6mg>—even to the icon of an open program.

No need to ctrl-c, alt-tab, ctrl-v. Win7 has a Snipit application—<http://tinyurl.com/2vplhjl>—that will grab a selection to be pasted somewhere else. PrintScreen and alt-PrintScreen will cap-

ture the screen or the open window respectively to the Clipboard. Then with the cursor at the destination location, Paste or ctrl-v to insert the screen capture. You can resize or crop with standard tools.

EVENING SESSION—SPAUG

- First part was a repeat of the Noon discussion on the **proposed computer**.
- **Ink issues on printers:** how to avoid plugging/drying out.
- **Win7 has many applications that were requiring 3rd party applications.** Jim had a list of 7 apps that have been supplied by Win7. By default they are active, and should be left alone to do their work. **Win7 is much more secure than previous versions,** and they work well by default.
- **A new computer should be cleaned of bloatware before use.** The CC computer will be clean; a brand name product will have lots of bloat.
- **Some optional programs are being installed during Windows updates.** Be sure to uncheck any you don't want, and Hide them so they don't appear in the future.
- **Gmail inbox is all bold, read or not.**
- An **accident and damage warranty** at additional cost may be worthwhile for a laptop. But look at your homeowners policy first; you may be able to get a rider that is much less expensive.
- An **i7 vs i5 processor** would be determined by your use. For example Premier Pro can take maximum use of Nvidia cards, so a larger amount of RAM would be faster on i5 than a different video card on an i7. The more processor intensive your usual usage, the more power you can use effectively.

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**SPAUG 2012-08-15
Planning Meeting Notes**
by Stan Hutchings—*edited for use here*

Location: The meeting was at Bev Altman's home.

Attending: Jim Dinkey (presiding),
John Sleeman,
Bev Altman,
Stan Hutchings,
Nat Landes,
Robert Mitchell

GENERAL MEETINGS

- **Review of August 8, 2012 General Meeting**—Featured: SPAUG Experts panel: Jim Dinkey, Maury Green, Stan Hutchings.

32 members and 2 guests attended the meeting,
- **September 12**—Stan Hutchings will demonstrate frugal computing
- **October 10**—TBD
- **November 14**—SPAUG Elections. and TBD. We'd like to elect or have a volunteer for an Archivist, a Publications Manager, and a Program/Presentations Manager.

Plans for possible 30-year bash—SPAUG turns 30 in January. Should we do something? If so, What? Spouses? Program? Entertainment?

Jim Dinkey would like to encourage spouses, so suggests ticket would be for 2 people. Jim can get the Santa Clara Fiddlers to perform; that should be entertaining. Perhaps year-awards could be given: for 5, 10, 15, etc.,

years of membership, maybe a gift certificate depending on length of membership.

Door prize discussion—

- Should we buy less-expensive but useful items?
- The door prize is popular, though it does not bring in new members. [it may encourage attendance due to "must be present to win"]
- If we can afford more, is it better to have one big expensive prize, or multiple smaller prizes? More-expensive items cause extra ticket sales.
- Is it better to put all tickets in one basket, or allow members to choose which prize to try for?
- It is OK to save tickets until something desirable comes along.
- Multiple same items are best all tickets in one basket; different items allow for choice of what is most needed/wanted by members.
- Alternating between one big item and multiple smaller items at different meetings may be a good strategy.

MEMBERSHIP (BEV)

122 members

UPGRADE TO WIN 7 (AND WIN 8)

SPAUG recommends upgrading to Win7—\$120 for Windows7 Home Premium, but many members would be better off with Win7 Professional. If you already have Win7 you can upgrade anytime. Best to look for a good deal online and at local computer shops and sales.

Be sure to get a Win8 upgrade coupon for \$14.99.

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Filler

by John Buck

The Senior Alphabet:—

A for arthritis,

B for bad back,

C is for chest pains.

Perhaps cardiac?

See the rest at

—<http://tinyurl.com/cldccx3>

CCFinder Simplifies Creative Commons Image Searches—[Lifehacker]—

“ . . . if you need to find CC [Creative Commons] images daily you may want to consider the Windows program CCFinder.”

—<http://tinyurl.com/74ttd84>

Easy Way To Use Linux In Windows—

[Gizmo]—“Portable Ubuntu is a distribution that, like Linux, is based on the coLinux kernel. It allows you to use Ubuntu 8.04LTS while you are booted into Windows.”

—<http://tinyurl.com/cqznmu>

Free grammar checkers—[Google]—

<http://tinyurl.com/9s6h4bu>

Daily Tip: Converters & Viewers—

[Smart Computing]—File format incompatibilities happen every day. If you work with a high volume of other people's documents, it's almost inevitable you'll run into file format woes. And what happens when you spend hours crafting a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation only to discover that the person whom you sent it to doesn't have PowerPoint? To combat these problems, Microsoft has a number

of converters and viewers at its disposal. Converters let certain Office applications convert files from third-party programs to usable Office documents, and viewers let others view and, in some cases, print and email Office documents even if they don't have access to the program you used to create the original. To view Microsoft's list of Office converters and viewers, go to the Microsoft Office Online site—<http://office.microsoft.com>

—via *Smart Computing email*, 7/27/12.

Split your Monitor into Sections with Acer GridVista—[Gizmo]—

“I . . . find that I often need to have two windows open at the same time so that I can read one, while I write in another. You can split your monitor into two (half size), three (one half, two quarter) or four (all quarter) sections. You can then “maximise” your windows into any of the sections so that no screen real estate is wasted by simply dragging the window into one of the sectors.”

—<http://tinyurl.com/6o8rjp>

The [Gizmo] Editors' Choice List: Our Selection of the Best PC Freeware—

[Gizmo]—“ . . . [Y]ou may be surprised what freeware gems you will discover.”

—<http://tinyurl.com/cdyjyc>

Best Local Gas Prices

—<http://tinyurl.com/3sakrxz>

DiffPDF—[Snapfiles]—Compare PDF files.

—<http://tinyurl.com/cth2m4q>

Free software—Definition, Licensing, more—[Wikipedia]—

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_software



September 2012 SPAUG News

SPAUG CALENDAR						
Always subject to change; verify event with host or Jim Dinkey						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	27		29			1—Clinic, by appointment only
	3 7-9 pm HOLIDAY NO MEETING Labor Day		5			8—Clinic, by appointment only
	10 7-9 pm WinSIG Central Computers		12 5:45 pm Dinner (Optional), Elks Lodge—Bistro 7:15 pm General Meeting Elks Lodge, 4249 El Camino, PA Speaker: Stan Hutchings			15—Clinic, by appointment only
	17s 7-9 pm DISIG Central Computers		19 7:15 pm Planning Meeting, Bev Altman's			22—Clinic, by appointment only
	24 7-9 pm WebSIG Central Computer		26			29—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 and Windows 7.

Email: jimdinkey at jimdinkey.com or call 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, **September 12, 2012 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
- **WinSIG**—2nd Monday of the month
- **DISIG**—3rd Monday of the month
- **WebSIG**—4th Monday of the month

For more info about these SIGs, go to svuga.org

ALL SIG Meetings Are Held At
Central Computers
3777 Stevens Creek Boulevard
Santa Clara
—<http://tinyurl.com/bu5m1cl>

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/



Door Prize Tickets

Free

You get one ticket for free when you sign in at a general meeting.

Buy a Ticket

\$1 each

Buy More Tickets

Quantity discount: Six tickets for \$5

Must be present to win



Without-Whoms

SPAUG is an all-volunteer operation. Listed below is contact information for those who work to keep it happening.

You are invited to help.

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

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

Recording Secretary: *Stan Hutchings*
stan.hutchings at gmail.com
(650) 325-1359

Treasurer: *Nat Landes*
natlandes at gmail.com
(650) 851-2292

Membership: *Beverly Altman*
bev at altman.com
(650) 329-8252

WebMasters:

- *Stan Hutchings (see above)*
- *John Sleeman (see above)*

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

Newsletter Production:

- *John Sleeman (see above)*
- *Robert Mitchell*
rfmitch66 at gmail.com
(650) 867-2852

Computer Clinic: *Jim Dinkey (see above)*

►►► Positions Open:

- Program Chair
- Publicity