

# The BYTES of LAS VEGAS



Official  
Newsletter  
of the  
Las Vegas  
PC Users  
Group

Aug./Sept. 2006  
Volume 21  
Issue 6



*Supporting your  
technology interests*



Join Us at our Next General Meeting  
and Learn More About

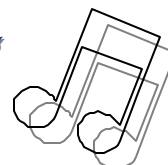
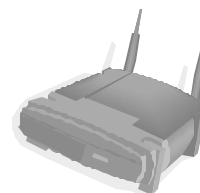
## Our Special Interest Groups



Wednesday, Sept. 6, 2006  
at 6:15PM at the  
West Charleston Library  
Auditorium



More info inside and at  
[www.lvpcug.org](http://www.lvpcug.org)



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# Las Vegas PC Users Group

**“Users Helping Users”**

**Sharing computer knowledge and promoting fellowship among members in the Las Vegas, Nevada community since the 1980s.**

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The Bytes of Las Vegas is the monthly newsletter of the Las Vegas PC Users Group, an independent, non-profit group. We encourage members to submit articles for publication. Articles must be submitted by the first Wednesday of the month preceding the month of publication. All articles received after that date will be considered for the following month's issue. By submitting articles, the author gives permission for publication in this newsletter and in other user group publications.

Articles may be sent electronically to [editor@lvpcug.org](mailto:editor@lvpcug.org). Text may be in ASCII, Rich Text Format, MS Word, MS Publisher, or WordPerfect. Graphics may be sent separately provided they are referenced for proper placement. The Editor reserves the right to edit all submissions, and cannot guarantee publication.

The information contained in this newsletter is believed to be correct and accurate; however, the Las Vegas PC Users Group does not assume responsibility for the consequences of errors or omissions in the articles or misuse of any information provided. Any information used from these articles is at the user's own risk. Upon written notification of errors or inaccuracies in hardware or software reviews, LVPCUG or the editor will print a correction in the issue following receipt and verification of the correction.

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Change of address should be sent to the **Membership Chair**:

E-mail: [membership@lvpcug.org](mailto:membership@lvpcug.org)

Send postal mail or ship to:

**LVPCUG**

**1350 E. Flamingo Rd #188**

**Las Vegas, NV 89119**

Remember, the Postal Service does not forward the Bytes.

# Las Vegas PC Users Group presents **Our Special Interest Groups**

At our General Meeting • **Free and Open to the Public**  
West Charleston Library Auditorium, 6301 West Charleston  
September 6, 2006 • 7:00 pm, with pre-program at 6:15 pm

Did you know the Las Vegas PC Users Group has **FOURTEEN** Special Interest Groups (SIGs) that meet each month? Our users are helping each other in all sorts of areas of computing.

At this month's General Meeting, we'll be taking a closer look at these groups and what they're all about. Our fabulous volunteer leaders will be describing the current and upcoming activities of each group.

SIGs are open to the public and generally involve all levels of expertise. All that is required to participate is an interest in the subject area. The role of the SIG Leader is to coordinate group activities. SIG Leaders do not have to be experts in the SIG subject area.

SIG meetings are held on weekdays and weekends. Current Schedules are subject to changes so be sure to confirm the time and place with SIG leaders.

For additional information or to discuss your interest in forming a SIG, send an e-mail to Wendy Jaroslowski, SIG Coordinator, or call her at (702) 339-3812.

**Anyone interested in computing, from novices to experienced users, is always invited and**

**welcome to attend any of the LVPCUG meetings.** Information on all the Special Interest Groups is available on the LVPCUG web site.

As always, the General Meeting is **free and open to the public**. Invite your family, friends and colleagues! Some things to remember:

- **Members, check in** to receive a ticket for the **door prize drawings**.
- **Renewals and new applications** will be available at the **Membership** table.
- **Printer cartridges and cell phones** are collected for recycling at check-in.
- **Interested in reviewing a product** for the group? Look for these opportunities at the check-in table.
- **Opening Q&A** period at **6:15 p.m.**
- **Presentation** begins at about **7:00 p.m.**
- **Drawings** for Member door prizes will take place **after the featured presentation**.

For information, please call **702-263-5910** or see us at [www.lvpcug.org](http://www.lvpcug.org). ©

## **A Big Thank You...**

...to the members who have been participating in our Communication Team work sessions!

These sessions are focusing on mission-critical tasks for the Las Vegas PC Users Group such as updating the web site and producing the newsletter. (See the President's Message on page 5 for more information.)

The Communication Team has been meeting on an "as-available" basis for the time being, as there is much work to be done to revamp our Group's internal and external communications. As work sessions are scheduled, everyone involved is notified and attends whenever their schedule allows.

If you would like to be on the Activity Notification e-mail list for the LVPCUG Communication Team, please send an e-mail to [editor@lvpcug.org](mailto:editor@lvpcug.org) with your request.



# The Deals Guy

By Bob (The Cheapskate) Click, Greater Orlando Computer Users Group

Thanks for your feedback from my remarks last month. I had no negative responses, but I was assured that there probably were some people out there who didn't bother to write me. Probably so, but I appreciated the responses I did receive.

I read an article in Information Week about a disgruntled employee who was alleged to have planted 50 to 70 malicious lines of code, amounting to a "logic bomb," before he left the company." It disabled about 2000 servers and brought the company system to a standstill. After four years, they have still not repaired all the damage. It is titled "The Threat Within" and revealed how much damage a disgruntled employee in an organization can really cause. The accused perpetrator is in court, but that doesn't change the damages done. Try these URLs to read more about it: <<http://www.informationweek.com/security/UBStrial/>> and <<http://www.informationweek.com/showArticle.jhtml;jsessionid=RQI5JLK20L2XUQSNDLPCKHSCJUNN2JVN;?articleID=188703447>>

I have packed a lot into this column so be sure to check the product Web sites for better information. I cut a lot of description info out to shorten the items. Also, check the Web site's privacy statements. I have not tried any of these. Be sure to check the information closely.

## Get Those Drives & Petitions Back!

DiskInternals NTFS Recovery can scan any physical drive or virtual image. It doesn't make any changes to the drive itself and can be safely used even on the system volume. While scanning the drive, its recovery wizard shows the progress with the number of found files and folders. When the scanning is over, the user can change some disk properties. You can, for instance set up a new cluster size or proceed with the existing one. The program displays all recoverable files and folders in the explorer-like window. A search engine helps find desired files and moves them to a safe location. With DiskInternals NTFS Recovery, you can access files that the system fails to see.

DiskInternals NTFS Recovery v1.5 runs under Windows 98/ME/NT/2000/XP/2003 Server platforms. A single user license costs \$99.95 USD. DiskInternals offers a 15% discount using the link <[https://www.regnow.com/softsell/nph-softsell.cgi?item=11238-8&ess\\_coupon=NTFS-RAJ9-PR](https://www.regnow.com/softsell/nph-softsell.cgi?item=11238-8&ess_coupon=NTFS-RAJ9-PR)>. The coupon code is NTFS-RAJ9-PR. Registration entitles all

users to free technical support and minor upgrades. A fully functional evaluation version of the program is available for download at <[http://www.DiskInternals.com/download/NTFS\\_Recovery.zip](http://www.DiskInternals.com/download/NTFS_Recovery.zip)>.

Product page link: <<http://www.DiskInternals.com/ntfs-recovery/>>

Web: <<http://www.DiskInternals.com>>

Postal Address: Pacific Business Centre, DiskInternals Research, P.O. Box 34069 #381, Seattle, WA 98124-1069

Fax: 206-984-3919

They did not respond to my message when researching the information so I hope the discount is still good. Also, check close to see if there are any catches with the "fully functional" downloadable copy.

## Monitor What The Kids View

Adult Photo Blanker guards computer users from the ubiquitous expansion of pornography and violence in our life. This program not only prevents your children from accessing unwanted websites, but also controls the content of video files and photos loaded into your computer memory from the hard disk. This smart tool monitors nearly all multimedia content. Adult Photo Blanker uses 11 special criteria to reveal objectionable films, websites, images and the like. The program combines this built-in artificial intelligence scanner with the keyword filter, which recognizes unwanted content by specified words, and it is concealed from inexperienced users. Adult Photo Blanker is protected with a password, so if you want to turn it off and watch an adult film, you must use the password you previously specified. It features Block and Safe lists to customize each user settings individually. Each family member can configure options of the program in his/her own way. By the time you read this, a newer version will be introduced.

Adult Photo Blanker runs under Windows 98 (partially) / ME (partially) / 2000 / XP and costs \$49.95 (USD.) Users group members receive a 20% discount. Just enter DEAL-LSFQ-GUY where it calls for a coupon when downloading the paid version. A fully functional trial version of the program is available as a free download at <[http://www.oreware.com/download\\_prog.php?id\\_prog=25](http://www.oreware.com/download_prog.php?id_prog=25)> (4.09 Mb)

**(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5)**

# President's Message

By Dennis Kemper, President LVPCUG

Hello Folks,

In the next couple of months at the General Meeting we are going to focus on our special interest groups... "SIGs" for short. This is at the very core of what users groups do—people helping people.

You can expect a short presentation from each SIG leader, followed by a question and answer session, and we invite everyone to participate.

I would also like to touch base on a few things that we are currently working on. We have been holding Communication Team Meetings at least once each month for the last few months, and we invite the general membership to attend. (Contact me or Sharon Fry to be added to the e-mail notification list for the Communication Team.)

The primary purpose of the meetings is to produce the Bytes of Las Vegas newsletter. We believe that to produce an outstanding publication you need to have everyone involved, so having these meetings is a

precursor to bringing back a printed publication of our newsletter. It is my goal to have at least one printed publication before the end of the year.

Additionally, we are working on some other exciting projects for the benefit of our Las Vegas PC Users Group, such as a "members only" website that will offer services and content available only to LVPCUG Members. Our current website will continue to offer general information for non-members and the public.

Hope everyone is having a wonderful summer, and we look forward to seeing you at the next LVPCUG General Meeting.

Dennis Kemper  
President  
Las Vegas PC Users Group



## (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)

Product page URL: <<http://www.oreware.com/viewprogram.php?prog=25>>

Web: <<http://www.oreware.com>>

### This Product Claims To Further Improve Your Windows Operation

True Launch Bar gets the best of MS Windows OS and streamlines it for greater comfort of use. Its unique system of switching toolbars and expandable menus gives instant access to files, applications, and settings from the taskbar. In addition, overlay images and skins give the system polish and slick looks. The latest update offers support to Windows Vista. You can also group shortcuts into menus that expand and collapse at a click, or float on top of other windows. The use of Drag-n-Drop helps quickly fill the menus with shortcuts for files and applications, system settings and controls. You can customize its color scheme and add gradients and transparency effects. Its plug-ins will equip your taskbar with a newsreader and the weather forecast. You will be able to monitor resources and network activities, access the address book and control media players.

True Launch Bar v4.0 runs under Windows 98/ Me/ 2000/ XP/ 2003/ Vista platforms. A single user license costs \$19.90 (USD). The company also offers a home

license for 4 installations priced at \$49 USD. All registered users are entitled to free technical support and program updates. Additional plug-ins and skinning libraries are on the company web site. A fully functional evaluation version of the program is available for download at <<http://download.truelaunchbar.com/install/tlb4.exe>>. True Launch Bar V4.0 will be available at a 30% discount to user group members on these special links to the order pages: True Launch Bar Personal License: <<http://www.regsoft.net/purchase.php3?productid=51538&pc=7L0L7>> True Launch Bar Home License: <<http://www.regsoft.net/purchase.php3?productid=53346&pc=7U0I4>> Product page link: <<http://www.truelaunchbar.com>>

### Let's Improve That Password Protection!

Double Password, a new security manager, creates your security token on your flash drive (or other USB gadget, such as an MP3 player, PDA or even a USB-pluggable mobile handset). This device becomes the key to your OS. Double Password makes sure that no one can interfere with the work of your computer or get access to your data. It encrypts your password, which can accompany your security token. No external spy program can intercept your password. This is attained thanks to a special "double-bottom" password, which Double Password applies to protect your computer.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8)

# Tech News

By Sue Crane, Editor, Big Bear Computer Club, California  
scrane5@socal.rr.com • www.bigbearcc.org

## Electric Sportscar

Ian Wright has a car that blows away a Ferrari 360 Spider and a Porsche Carrera GT in drag races, and whose 0-to-60 acceleration time ranks it among the fastest production autos in the world. In fact, it's second only to the French-made Bugatti Veyron, a 1,000-horsepower, 16-cylinder beast that hits 60 mph half a second faster and goes for \$1.25 million. The key difference? The Bugatti gets eight miles per gallon. Wright's car? It runs off an electric battery. For a look under the hood, go here: [javascript:openWindow\('popsups/2006/biz2/wrightspeed/frameset.exclude.html','728x445','toolbar=no,location=no,directories=no,status=no,menubar=no,scrollbars=no,o,resizable=no,width=728,height=445'\);](http://javascript:openWindow('popsups/2006/biz2/wrightspeed/frameset.exclude.html','728x445','toolbar=no,location=no,directories=no,status=no,menubar=no,scrollbars=no,o,resizable=no,width=728,height=445');)

## Security Features in Windows Vista

New security features in Windows Vista will largely eliminate the need to run separate antispyware or firewall software, according to a new analyst report. Vista does not include antivirus functionality; Microsoft plans to sell its Windows Live OneCare antivirus software separately starting next month. But while the changes in Vista should reduce the risk for most users, the security features mean upgrading won't be easy. The annoyance would come from features such as User Account Control, which is to be enabled by default and lets users run Windows with fewer privileges. "Although the new security system shows promise, it is far too chatty and annoying," wrote analyst Andrew Jaquit

## Virtualization Software

Virtualization provides not only a way to use computers more efficiently, but it also offers a new, relatively painless way to install software. VMware and other virtualization advocates are working hard to promote the software distribution and installation technique. However, licensing constraints pose a significant impediment. VMware, long considered the market leader for virtualization software, potentially changed the virtualization software market by announcing that the upgrade to their GSX Server product would be renamed VMware Server and made available for free to anyone who wants it. Although VMware Server is free to download, test, and deploy, it may not be totally free to run in perpetuity. VMware plans to sell support plans for VMware Server that are anticipated to cost \$350 - \$400 per installation. These

plans will be made available once VMware is out of beta and released.

## Save Fuel with EDrive Systems

A few small companies will start to offer services and products for converting hybrid cars like the Toyota Prius that currently get around 50 miles per gallon into plug-in hybrids that rely more heavily on electrical power and can get about 100 miles per gallon. But conversion won't be cheap—at least initially. California's EDrive Systems will charge around \$10,000 to \$12,000 to install the extra lithium batteries needed to turn a standard Prius into a plug-in hybrid when its service begins later this summer. At that price, and with gas at \$3 a gallon, it would take around 160,000 to 200,000 miles of driving to break even. But some groups are looking to the do-it-yourself crowd for a cheaper solution. CalCars is working with independent inventors to bring the price of a DIY kit based around an open blueprint to about \$3,000. Mass manufacturing, though, could lower the prices dramatically over time. Andrew Frank, a professor of mechanical engineering at the University of California at Davis said "We can't switch from where we are today overnight. It will take 20 years or more to take the PHEV (plug-in hybrid electric vehicle) to get into our society," Frank said. Nonetheless, "we can greatly reduce the amount of liquid fuel we use for transportation,"

## "Natural" Energy Sources

The next energy source: Barnyard animals? Microgy, which has discovered that manure and other waste products from cows, pigs and other livestock is a largely untapped source of energy. The company builds industrial-sized "digesters" that, through heat and microbes, reduce mountains of waste into gas or electricity that can be reused on the farm or sold on the open market. The plant will start shipping natural gas (methane) in the third quarter and, when fully operational, will churn out an estimated 1 billion cubic feet of biogas a year.

## Healthier Pesticides

AgraQuest is one of a rising number of companies promoting biopesticides—substances that kill bugs with selectively bred microorganisms, rather than chemical concoctions. A novel fungus called Muscador lives naturally in the bark of a type of spice tree found in

**(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6)**

Central America and other tropical regions, emits a cocktail of about 30 gases that kills a variety of pests. Muscador-based products will likely start coming out this year. Organic biopesticides comprise only a small fraction of the overall \$30 billion pesticide market, but they are growing rapidly.

**Robotic Vehicle Contest**

The DARPA plans to hold its 3rd contest for robotic vehicles in November 2007, with a first prize set at \$2 million. The entrants will have to carry out a simulated military supply mission in a mock urban area, and complete a 60-mile course in less than 6 hours, autonomously obeying traffic laws while merging into moving traffic, navigating traffic circles, negotiating busy intersections and avoiding obstacles. A location for the finals of the DARPA Urban Challenge has not yet been named.

**Building Blocks Go High-Tech**

Lego expects to release software, hardware and Bluetooth developer kits. The firmware code and the developer kits should be available by August when Mindstorms NXT is publicly available. 114 Mindstorms fans have been taking part in an invite-only developers program. The idea is that they will be able to write books about Mindstorms, as well as create new software and designs for it. the developer program participants are now free to discuss their projects, and much of that work should begin appearing on the Mindstorms Web site <http://mindstorms.lego.com/?domainredir=www.mindstorms.com> soon. the Bluetooth developer kit details the Bluetooth protocol built into the NXT microprocessor. That should enable users to design programs allowing any Bluetooth device to interact with Mindstorms NXT robots

*There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this article as long as it is kept in context with proper credit given the author. The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you. ©*

# IMPORTANT NEWS



about



In our ongoing efforts to better serve the **Las Vegas PC Users Group** membership and our community in a responsible manner, for the time being, we will be publishing our monthly newsletter, "**The Bytes of Las Vegas**", in PDF format on our web site only.

Members will continue to be reminded of our General Meetings and of the online publication with our mailed postcards and/or via e-mail.

Want to be in-the-know on the activities of the Communications Team that's making all this happen? E-mail us at [editor@lvpcug.org](mailto:editor@lvpcug.org) to join the mailing list.

If you have any comments, questions or concerns, please contact us at (702) 263-5910.



Thanks to **www.ViaWest.net** for the Las Vegas PC Users Group web site.

See us at **www.lvpcug.org**

## The Deals Guy

By Bob (The Cheapskate) Click, Greater Orlando Computer Users Group

**(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)**

This means that you enter one password, but the program remembers another (it remembers it in a special encrypted way, which cannot be seen from the outside).

Double Password offers security levels in low, medium and high. "Low" means all users can get access to your computer. "Medium" means that a user can log into your OS only with the help of a special security token (total security is guaranteed as you resort to the described "double-bottom" password). "High" is similar to "Medium", however in this case you cannot even work if your security token is out.

Double Password runs under Microsoft Windows NT/2000/XP. Users group members get a 20% discount using the coupon code YTR79G3 where requested. Discount prices are: Personal license, \$29.95; Family license, \$79.95 and Business license \$59.95.

Product page link: <<http://www.doublepassword.com/>>

Web: <<http://www.refog.com/>>

### This Game Is A Blood-Chiller

From the creators of "Gunner 2" comes a new breath taker called JetJumper. The plot of the game implies that you become the pilot of an outlandish jumping machine equipped with a powerful jet engine. As soon as the jet engine sets the jumping machine into motion, you will have to jump from one platform to another. JetJumper helps you to collect a variety of useful items, which you are sure to come across; gems, magnets, green keys and the like. All these items help you to score and eliminate some obstacles on your way and to get new lives. Magnets help you to collect more gems. Once you have grabbed a magnet, all gems on your way start sticking to you like flies to an adhesive pad. Once you have jumped aside and have fallen from a platform, the game leaves no chance for your JetJumper to survive. During a takeoff, your JetJumper's jet engine exerts a force of thousands of newtons, so only a professional pilot can handle this aircraft.

JetJumper runs under Windows 9x, Me, 2000, XP (DirectX 8.0 or higher required). The game costs \$19.95 (USD) and they offer a 10% discount to all group members by using TAB000BL code and this URL: <<https://secure.bmtmicro.com/servlets/>

Orders.ShoppingCart?

CID=949&PRODUCTID=9490005> Registered customers are entitled to unlimited game play and a multitude of unlocked levels.

Product page link: <<http://www.warlockstudio.com/jetjumper.html>>

A trial version offering 60 minutes of game play, is available as a free download at <<http://www.warlockstudio.com/download/jetjumper-setup.exe>>

For more information about the company or games, please visit <<http://www.warlockstudio.com>>

That's it for this month. Meet me here again next month if your editor permits. This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers or freebies I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of any products, no matter how enthused I might sound. Bob (The Cheapskate) Click <[bobclick@mindspring.com](mailto:bobclick@mindspring.com)>. Visit my Web site at <<http://www.dealsguy.com>> ☺

# LVPCUG General Meetings

*6:15 pm, 1st Wednesday  
of each month,  
February–December  
West Charleston Library  
Auditorium*

*Always free and  
open to the public!*

*For the latest info,  
visit [www.lvpcug.org](http://www.lvpcug.org)*



# Windows Vista - A Preview

By Brian K. Lewis, Ph.D., Member of Sarasota PCUG, Florida  
Bwsail(at)yahoo.com, <http://www.spcug.org>

As you all probably know by now, Vista is the next version of Windows that Microsoft will be releasing. It was supposed to be available this November, but it's release has been postponed to after January 1, 2007. However, that 2007 release date relates to the non-business versions of Vista. In other words, the versions that most of us will be using. The "enterprise" or business versions are expected to be shipped this November, unless something else slips.

As Dr. Goldstein pointed out in last month's "Bits & Bytes", there will be more than one "consumer" or Home edition. You should realize that the six versions of Vista that are expected are really only two more than are currently available in Windows XP. In XP you have the Home and Professional versions plus the Multimedia and Tablet PC versions. In Vista you will have Vista Starter, Vista Home Basic, Vista Home Premium and Vista Ultimate. (Please remember that these names may change by the time Vista is actually released.) The non-consumer versions will be Vista Business and Vista Enterprise. I will limit the scope of this article to the consumer versions of Vista.

Now for a disclaimer. Although I have a beta copy of Vista, I have not yet installed it on my computer. I do have a large enough partition I could install it and dual-boot my machine. However, current anti-virus, firewall and anti-Trojan software will not run on Vista. There are not yet any new versions of these security programs available for Vista. Consequently, I have no intention of installing this Vista software on my main working computer. I have just acquired a second-hand system that I intend to use with nothing but Vista and connect to the Internet only when absolutely necessary. So this article is being written based on the most reliable sources I have been able to find that have been testing the beta version of Vista. After I return from my two months road-trip, I'll start working with the Vista beta. For those not familiar with the term "beta", this refers to pre-production software or a testing version of software that is not yet ready for the market.

Now, back to the various versions of Vista. The Starter edition is a very low end version that will support only 32 bit software. Its exact limitations don't seem to be available yet. So, we'll just have to wait and see what Microsoft does with this version of Vista. It is fairly certain that it will not support the new graphics interface called "Aero". In fact, it doesn't appear that the Home Basic edition will support this new graphics interface either. However, Home Basic will require a minimum of 512MB of RAM. From most reports it appears to me that Vista running on less than 1 GB of RAM will be seriously slow. Just like computers that try to run XP on only 128 MB of RAM.

So what does Aero offer the average computer user? If you have a 3D graphics card with enough video RAM (128 MB or more), then Aero will provide an entirely different appearance on your screen. (Some commentators have compared the Aero graphics interface to that of the Apple Macintosh OS X!) Graphics designers refer to some of the capabilities as transparency, blurring, window previewing, and graphical rollover indicators. The easiest way to describe some of the effects is to provide some examples. The minimize, maximize and close indicators that you find in the upper right corner of your current window will change color as you pass your mouse over them. And this color will spill out around the edges of the icon. This gives you an additional visual indicator when your mouse is in the right position. Another example is when you place your mouse on the shortcut on the taskbar you will see a thumbnail view of the program. So when you are multi-tasking you can easily see which application you want. Or, you can check on the progress of a video feed or other running processes. Some other advantages of Aero are the ability to see "around the edges" of windows to the windows behind. This involves the transparency and blurring referred to earlier. This is advantageous to those who do multi-tasking. This ability is also apparently built-in to the new tabbed interface being included in Internet Explorer 7. There is also a change to the Alt-Tab function which allowed users to tab through the list of running programs to find the one they wanted to shift to in earlier versions of Windows. In Vista this function, now called Flip, allows users to see a larger thumbnail view of open programs. There may also be a related 3D view which will show all the open windows twisted to a 45 degree angle. The user can then cycle through the windows by repeatedly pressing the Tab key.

The Aero graphics will be incorporated in the Home Premium and Ultimate versions. However, it requires a minimum of 128 MB of fast video RAM, DX9 3D support and a minimum of 1 GB of system RAM. Some comments have led me to believe that it will not work with motherboards that use shared RAM for the video function. It requires a separate graphics card. Also, I would never recommend trying to run a system with these minimums. They should both be doubled at the very least. If your PC doesn't have this capacity, then you will still be able to run Aero, but in a limited or basic mode. It will not display all the features found in the full Aero mode.

There have been a number of articles related to hardware requirements to run Vista. In my mind, I think it's a little early for these specs to be firm. One thing you can be sure of, Vista will require more RAM, a large

**(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)**

**(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)**

hard drive and a fast central processor. Both Intel and AMD are touting their latest generation of processors as being necessary for running Vista. It does appear that current single core processors will be able to run Vista in 32 bit mode. I suspect that at some later date you will need to consider a dual-core 64 bit processors or a 32 bit processors that runs hyperthreading. Naturally, the 64 bit processor will have a definite advantage in running Vista.

The other questions is, how well will Vista run current 32 bit software? Most of the new computers currently being manufactured have 64 bit processors. These are designed to work with both 32 bit and 64 bit operating systems. Vista will be a 64 bit OS. There are very few 64 bit software applications available and most of your current software is, or should be, 32 bit. It is expected that “well behaved” 32 bit software will run on Vista without problems. Only those applications that don't install system level drivers or try to take control of the OS are considered well-behaved. You will have to replace your anti-virus and firewall software. That is a given. New Vista applications should be available when Vista comes on the market. The same is true of anti-trojan/anti-parasite software. Other software that might be a problem would include video games and multimedia applications. Those of you who have been running Windows for a few years and have upgraded from earlier versions are already familiar with one of the real road blocks to getting started with a new OS. That's right – device drivers! Every device driver for your hardware like printers, scanners, external USB drives, etc, will have to be re-written. Early adopters of Vista will have similar problems.

Windows XP runs 16 bit software in “Windows on Windows” (WOW) emulation mode. Vista will run 32 bit software in much the same way using an emulation layer to talk to the software. This converts the 32 bit program calls to 64 bit code. This process should be transparent to the user. Now, if you still have some 16 bit software or DOS software, it really is time to upgrade. These will not run on Vista without the use of third-party emulation software. There is no indication that Microsoft will support 16 bit or DOS applications.

Now the next topic is one that is really of primary interest with this Windows upgrade. It is also the one for which the least info is available. That is – Security! Windows XP and Internet Explorer have developed quite a reputation for being full of security holes. In spite of all the efforts to plug the gaps, new ones keep showing up. Microsoft has indicated that Vista will be far more secure than previous versions. The problem is that in trying to tighten the security net, Microsoft seems to be making things more difficult for the average user. With XP Home, the user generally operates in an administrator mode so that new applications can be installed and unused ones removed without having to

set up additional permissions. With both XP Home and XP Professional, Microsoft has tried to get individual users to use a limited non-administrator mode on a regular basis. This has been singularly unsuccessful. The reason for running in the limited user mode is to prevent malware from accessing system applications in the Windows director and subdirectories and/or the registry. When the computer is set up so that accessing these functions requires a password, less damage can be done, by any outside influence, to the operating system or to the installed applications. However, because the limitations of the user mode are so great, most Windows users end up running in the administrator mode to simplify making changes to their computer. Well, it appears that Microsoft is going to change that. Vista will enforce the limited user or user account control (UAC) to prevent the user from having constant access to administrative functions. Microsoft obviously doesn't believe that users can be allowed unlimited access to their own computers. Included in this there may be increased blocking of online software distribution. You may get more pop-up warnings when your installed software tries to access the Internet. Nearly all applications need to access the Internet at one time or another. This gives them the capability to download updates, patches, bug fixes and other security related information. Many applications also need to hook into the operating system in ways that are similar to those used by malware. If your operating system is constantly popping up warning windows and telling you that your computer is at risk, how would you react? Especially if responding to these warnings by clicking on “Cancel” closes the program and prevents you from using an application. You may try to go back and run all of your applications as an “Administrator” as you did in XP. However, Vista has various levels of “Administrator” and may still require you to enter a password for non-Microsoft applications. Now for the caveat: Vista is not yet in final beta form, therefore there can be many changes, especially in the security setup. It will depend in part, on the comments from the testing community. Hopefully not all of them will be system administrators for large corporations. What Microsoft has admitted in one of their own tech articles is that “Windows services represent a large percentage of the overall attack surface in Windows”. That is a direct quotation. So if Windows is the problem why are they trying to solve it by limiting the ability of users to use their computers and their software?

Over the coming months I will continue to provide updates on my own experience with Vista as well as information I obtain from other beta testers. We'll see just how much benefit we'll really get from this Windows upgrade.

*Dr. Lewis is a former university & medical school professor. He has been working with personal computers for more than thirty years. He can be reached via e-mail: bwsail at yahoo.com.* ©

## August - 2006 – Las Vegas PC Users Group – Meetings & Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
			6:30p -8:30p <a href="#">Databases</a>	6:30p -8:30p <a href="#">Windows Developers</a>		9:00a -11:00a <a href="#">Genealogy</a> 1:00p -3:00p <a href="#">Using Office Suites</a> 3:30p -5:30p <a href="#">Multimedia Lab</a>
<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
12:00p -2:00p <a href="#">Digital Imaging Techniques</a>	6:30p -8:30p <a href="#">Mobile Computing</a>					
<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
1:00p -3:00p <a href="#">Linux/Open Source</a> 4:00p -6:00p <a href="#">Novice (New Users)</a>	7:00p -9:00p <a href="#">Internet</a>		6:30p -8:30p <a href="#">Board Of Directors</a>			9:30a -2:30p <a href="#">How To Workshop</a> 3:00p -5:00p <a href="#">Wireless Networking</a> Has been cancelled for August.
<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1 Sept.</b>	<b>2</b>
						12:00p -4:00p <a href="#">Systems / Applications Review</a> 6:00p -8:15p <a href="#">Saturday Night Bytes &amp; Bites</a>

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 Visit [www.lvpcug.org](http://www.lvpcug.org) and <http://my.calendars.net/lvpcug> for the latest scheduling updates.  
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## September - 2006 – Las Vegas PC Users Group – Meetings & Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>27</b> August	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b> Sept.	<b>2</b>
						12:00p -4:00p Systems / Applications Review 5:00p -8:30p Saturday Night Bytes & Bites
<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
	Labor Day		6:15p – 8:45p General Meeting			9:00a -11:00a Genealogy 1:00p -3:00p Using Office Suites 3:30p -5:30p Multimedia Lab
<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
12:00p -2:00p Digital Imaging Techniques	6:30p -8:30p Mobile Computing		6:30p -8:30p Database	6:30p -8:30p Windows Developers		
<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
1:00p -3:00p Linux/Open Source 4:00p -6:00p Novice (new Users)	7:00p -9:00p Internet					9:30a -2:30p How To Workshop 3:00p -5:00p Wireless Networking
<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
			6:30p -8:30p Board Of Directors			

Visit [www.lvpcug.org](http://www.lvpcug.org) and <http://my.calendars.net/lvpcug> for the latest scheduling updates.

# Special Interest Groups (SIGs) and Meetings



**Note: Times and locations are subject to change.** If you are planning to attend a particular SIG (Special Interest Group) meeting, it is best to **e-mail or call ahead to confirm** that the meeting will take place as listed here. When possible, schedule changes are also posted at [www.lvpcug.org](http://www.lvpcug.org) on the front page.

In addition, if you are interested in a SIG not listed here or if you would like to start a SIG, please contact **SIG Coordinator, Wendy Jaroslowski**, phone 702-339-3812 or e-mail her at [sig-coordinator@lvpcug.org](mailto:sig-coordinator@lvpcug.org).

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***The SIGs are one of your benefits of membership!***

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## General Meeting

**First Wednesday ..... 6:15 PM**

West Charleston Library, Auditorium  
6301 W. Charleston (west of Jones)

Information Line (702)263-5910  
or [www.lvpcug.org](http://www.lvpcug.org)

This monthly general meeting covers topics of interest to all members and guests. The typical meeting includes a beginners/Q&A session of approximately forty-five minutes. This is followed by an update of relevant activities, including SIGs. Each meeting has a feature presentation, usually by a major computer related vendor. See page 3 for information on the next General Meeting.

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## Board of Directors Meeting

**([president@lvpcug.org](mailto:president@lvpcug.org) for confirmation)**

**Fourth Wednesday..... 6:30 PM**

Clark County Library,  
Reader Services Meeting Room  
1401 E. Flamingo (east of Maryland Pkwy)

*President, Officers, Board Members*

Open to members and others. The Board of Directors discusses organizational LVPCUG issues relative to meetings, programs, communications, education, public information and finances.

## Databases

**Second Wednesday..... 6:30 PM**

Boy Scouts of America  
Las Vegas Area Council Office  
7220 S. Paradise Road, Las Vegas

Leader: *Donna Sword (702)795-2653*  
Email: *program@lvpcug.org*

Databases are not as scary as they sound! Beginners to advanced users, and even non-users are welcome to attend. Essentials of good database design are discussed and presented with popular database management tools such as Microsoft Access, Excel & more.

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## Digital Imaging Techniques

**Second Sunday.....12:00–2:00 PM**

Nevada Power Building, Wengert Room  
6226 W. Sahara (west of Jones)

Leader: *Howard Mark (702)256-3662*  
Email: *hmark@earthlink.net*

If you take photographs using a film or digital camera, this SIG will look for ways to use software such as Photoshop and Photoshop Elements, Photosuite, PhotoDeluxe and others, to learn how to scan, edit, correct or manipulate images. If you would like to copy your image onto a floppy disk or CD, you're welcome to bring it to the meeting.

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## Genealogy

**Second Saturday ..... 9:30AM**

Family History Center, 9th/10th & Clark

Leader: *Val Sharp (702)453-4037*  
Email: *sharpvd@yahoo.com*

This SIG covers searching the Internet for information on ancestors and family members, overcoming "brick walls", genealogy publications, and genealogy software evaluations.

***Remember...***

**All of the LVPCUG  
meetings are FREE and  
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.**

**Tell all your family,  
friends & neighbors!**

### How-To Workshop

**Fourth Saturday ..... 9:15 AM**

Paseo Verde Library, in Henderson  
Green Valley Pkwy (south of I-215)

*Leader: Dennis Kemper (702)458-0654*

*Email: director@lvpcug.org*

Hands-on computer workshop, covering a variety of software programs and hardware questions. You are encouraged to bring your computer, or at least a disk with the problem or demo to share. If you have a specific program or problem please call in advance to ensure we will have someone available to assist with your specific problem.

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### Internet SIG

**Third Monday ..... 7:00 PM**

Nevada Power Building, Wengert Room  
6226 W. Sahara (west of Jones)

#### **SIG LEADER NEEDED**

*Contact SIG Coordinator at (702)339-3812*

*Email: sig-coordinator@lvpcug.org*

Covers use of the Internet: how to access the service, Internet access providers, hooking up, surfing the Internet, how to find information, the use of Internet utilities to find information, and software packages supporting the Internet.

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### Linux/Open Source

**Third Sunday ..... 1:00–3:00 PM**

Nevada Power Building, Wengert Room  
6226 W. Sahara (west of Jones)

*Leader: Joseph Mottola (702)310-9980*

*Email: mottola@softcom.net*

A free operating system that is an alternative to Microsoft windows operating systems. The many flavors of this operating system and applications will be covered and explored.

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### Mobile Computing

**Second Monday ..... 6:30–8:30 PM**

Location Pending – contact Leader  
for notification of latest information

*Contact SIG Coordinator at (702)339-3812*

*Email: sig-coordinator@lvpcug.org*

Exchange of information regarding the use of personal digital assistant devices using Microsoft's Pocket PC software and others.

### Multimedia Lab (fmr Digital Music)

**Second Saturday ..... 3:30–5:30 PM**

Nevada Power Building, Wengert Room  
6226 W. Sahara (west of Jones)

**\*\*\* SIG CO-LEADER NEEDED \*\*\***

*Contact SIG Coordinator at (702)339-3812*

*Email: sig-coordinator@lvpcug.org*

Topics to be covered include – but are not limited to – downloading MP3 music, converting audio CDs to MP3; organizing and playing an MP3 music library with software programs such as Music Match Jukebox, WinAmp, Sonique, etc; making audio CDs on a CD-RW drive; digital recording from external sources; and editing digital music. This group has also begun to venture into digital video.

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### Novice (New) Users

**Third Sunday ..... 4:00–6:00 PM**

Nevada Power Building, Wengert Room  
6226 W. Sahara (west of Jones)

*Co-Leader: Charles Frederick (702)452-9440*

*Email: cifgrf4041@yahoo.com*

Topics of interest to the beginning computer user, explained in simple easy-to-understand terms. Each session is complete; beginners are welcome to start attending meetings at any time.

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### Saturday Night Bites & Bytes

**First Saturday ..... 6:00 PM**

**\*\*\* LOCATION(S) NEEDED \*\*\***

**\*\*\* SIG LEADER NEEDED \*\*\***

*Contact SIG Coordinator at (702)339-3812*

*Email: sig-coordinator@lvpcug.org*

(Request notification of each meeting's location by e-mail to director@lvpcug.org)

A time to have a bite to eat and socialize with other users, and enjoy presentations and discussions that cover a variety of general topics of interest to PC users. All discussions are based on member input.

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### Systems/Applications Review

**First Saturday ..... Noon– 4 PM**

Nevada Power Building, Wengert Room  
6226 W. Sahara (west of Jones)

*SIG Leader - Linda DiGiovanni 395-6676*

*Email: Lindigiovanni@spinfinder.com*

A meeting focusing on the Windows environment. Members helping members in the exchange and sharing of knowledge and information.

## Using Office Suites

**Second Saturday..... 1:00–3:00 PM**

Nevada Power Bldg. Wengert Room  
6226 W. Sahara (near Jones )

*Leader: Wendy Jaroslowski (702)339-3812*

*Email: sig-coordinator@lvpcug.org*

*Leader: Sharon Fry (702)562-2028*

*Email: SharonFinLV@hotmail.com*

The Using Office Suites SIG centers around discussions and presentations of techniques applicable to “office” or “productivity” software applications. These include word processing, spreadsheets, personal information managers, presentations.

We demonstrate usually with Microsoft Office products (Word, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint), but we also explore other products with similar functionality, such as OpenOffice and WordPerfect Office. Most information applies to any applications of this genre.

This is an open group driven by member input, so if you run across a problem that you need help with, e-mail the Leaders or bring in a CD or diskette, and the entire group will assist in finding a solution to the problem! Each meeting will usually center around a specific feature of a particular program. Any related programs or add-ins will also be explored. Tools and texts that are available will also be introduced.

## Windows Developers

**Second Thursday ..... 6:30–8:30 PM**

Sahara West Library, Board Room 2nd Flr.  
9600 West Sahara (west of Fort Apache)

*Leader: Richard Rosenheim (702)897-1117*

*Email: windev@lvpcug.org*

The Windows Developers SIG is a forum for those who develop programs and applications targeted to run in a Windows environment. The SIG addresses topics relating to Windows development issues and languages. While the primary focus is on Visual Basic, attention is also given to database design and programming, web programming, and program algorithms. In addition, any other area of interest to the membership (such as Windows API, Visual Basic, C++, Delphi, Java and ActiveX programming , etc. can be addressed.)

## Wireless Networking

**Fourth Saturday..... 3:00–5:00 PM**

Paseo Verde Library, in Henderson  
Green Valley Pkwy (south of I-215)

*Leader: Harold Rozinski (702)870-8946*

*Email: wirelesssig@yahoo.com*

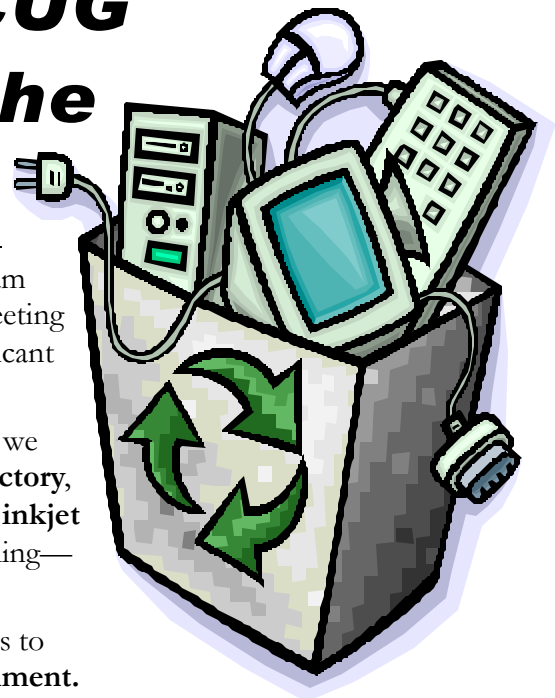
Covers the basics of wireless networking, wireless network criteria and expectations. Discuss the benefits and pitfalls of wireless technologies; introduction to wireless networks in the home, business and traveling (hotspots); site survey for location rules, regulations. ©

# You can help LVPCUG and our planet at the same time!

As you may already know, LVPCUG has a recycling program for most of your inkjet cartridges. If you follow the Board Meeting Minutes, you know that this program has grown to be a significant source of income for the Group, thanks to your support.

Thanks to the efforts of Donna Sword, our past President, we have expanded our program in conjunction with **Funding Factory**, a “Recycle & Redeem” program. Now, we can accept **ANY inkjet cartridges, laser toner cartridges and cell phones** for recycling—and earn money and more!

Collect these items from your family, friends, and neighbors to support your LVPCUG while helping our planet’s environment.



# Quality Freeware

By Brian K. Lewis, Ph.D., Member of the Sarasota PCUG, Florida  
www.spcug.org

I found the article in the July Monitor on "Cost Efficient" software by Joseph Moran to be quite interesting, but noticed that much of the software had a price associated with it. So I thought I'd let you in on the absolutely free software I have been using for the past 2-5 years. In every case I have used it as my standard application for the purpose and, in many cases, totally removed any commercial software that carried out the same function. I have also upgraded the free software when the upgrades became available. All of the software in this article can be obtained without charge by downloading from the various Internet sites I have listed. In every case there is no "trial" period involved.

The foremost item on my list is OpenOffice. I am currently using version 2.0. This version includes word processing, spreadsheet, drawing, database, and presentation software. All of these applications produce documents that are interchangeable with their equivalents in Microsoft Office. OpenOffice will also export documents in either PDF or HTML format. You don't need any PDF software to produce documents that are readable by Adobe Reader (formerly known as Acrobat Reader). Unfortunately it can not open or edit PDF documents. It can open and edit documents in over 25 different formats including HTML, Word Perfect, Word, Adobe PhotoShop, etc. You can obtain your free copy of this software from <http://www.openoffice.org/www.openoffice.org>.

I also recommend Firefox and Thunderbird as free replacements for Internet Explorer and Microsoft's Outlook Express. With the latest versions of Firefox I have not run across any web sites that it can not render correctly. That's not to say that some may exist, I just haven't found them. Firefox will transfer your favorites (bookmarks) from Internet Explorer. As for Thunderbird, it is similar in many ways to Outlook Express, but it includes an RSS Reader that I have found useful. It also filters junk mail and places it in a special folder where you can review it if needed. Otherwise it will be automatically deleted at an interval that you can set. It doesn't remove 100% of the spam, but it does detect about 99% of what comes into my computer. One of the latest additions to Thunderbird is anti-phishing protection. Thunderbird warns you if it suspects that the message might be a scam. Thunderbird can import your address book from Outlook Express. Both Firefox and Thunderbird can be downloaded from [www.download.com](http://www.download.com) or if you prefer, from [www.mozilla.com/firefox/](http://www.mozilla.com/firefox/) and [www.mozilla.com/thunderbird](http://www.mozilla.com/thunderbird).

As for anti-virus software, you can't beat Avast for ease of use and automatic updating. After downloading and installing the software it asks you to register. That simply includes giving up your e-mail address, name and postal address. You receive a license to use the software for a year for personal use. At the end of the year you re-register and get another year's free use. Avast is free for personal use, not for businesses or other organizations. However, non-profit organizations can buy Avast at a greatly reduced price. I have used Avast for several years and have installed it on more than 100 other personal computers. In no case have the users had any problems with this software. In addition, Avast does not sell your e-mail or postal address so you get no spam from this registration. Avast quietly updates itself frequently in the background while you continue to work. Then it simply reports that an update has taken place. I have seen days when I have had 3-4 updates in the same day. If you use a dial-up connection instead of cable/DSL, Avast will attempt to update whenever you go on-line. Since the downloads are usually less than 100 KB, they occur rapidly, even on a dial-up connection. The Home edition of Avast can be downloaded from [www.avast.com/eng/avast\\_4\\_home.html](http://www.avast.com/eng/avast_4_home.html). I recommend using this site instead of [download.com](http://download.com) as your anti-virus database will be more current.

For a good, reliable firewall I recommend ZoneAlarm. It is also free for personal use. I admit they will try to sell the Pro version when you install it, but the free version is really all you need. That is, assuming you have anti-virus and anti-parasite software installed on your computer. It used to be that dial-up users didn't really have much need for a firewall. However, in today's Internet world, I wouldn't want to connect to the Internet without a good software firewall. While traveling with my laptop, I kept both my anti-virus and firewall updated and running for every connection. ZoneAlarm can be downloaded from [www.zonealarm.com](http://www.zonealarm.com). Click on the download link and then the ZoneAlarm tab.

As for anti-parasite software, I have to agree with Mr. Moran. Ad-Aware SE and Spybot S&D are two that I keep on both my computers. But that isn't enough. You have to run them regularly to insure you are not infected. I run mine a minimum of once each week. Both of these can be downloaded from [download.com](http://download.com). Spybot also has an immunization function that can prevent some parasites from installing themselves on your system. Another immunization application that I use is Spyware Blaster. It makes changes to your registry



that prevents parasites from installing. At the present their database lists more than 5,000 items. Using these three anti-parasite/anti-trojan products will certainly upgrade your security and they are all free. Spyware Blaster can be downloaded from [download.com](http://download.com) or [www.javacoolsoftware.com](http://www.javacoolsoftware.com).

For general photo editing I use Google's Picasa. It is not just a photo organizer. I use it to download photos from my camera and organize them into folders. It can also be used to edit photos, print photos and e-mail them. You can make CDs, add captions or post photos on web sites. The advantage of Picasa over other photo software is that it is free. It can be downloaded from [download.com](http://download.com) or <http://picasa.google.com>. It does not have all the bells and whistles of applications like Photoshop or ULEAD's PhotoImpact, but it is more than adequate for most nonprofessional purposes.

You may not need screen capture software very often, but when you do, you really need it. I use MWSnap. It allows you to capture an entire screen or part of it. What you capture can be saved to a file, printed, or edited. It may take you a little time to get accustomed to the interface. But you can't damage anything by playing with it. Once you are familiar with all the controls, it really does copy any part of your screen. Again, this is freeware and can be downloaded from [www.mirekw.com/winfreeware/index.html](http://www.mirekw.com/winfreeware/index.html).

Have you ever considered that you might need an inventory of the items in your home for the purposes of making an insurance claim? Considering that we live in Florida where there are many electrical storms, to say nothing of hurricanes, damage to your home could occur at any time. Can you list the contents of every room and the value of each item? Well, the Insurance Information Institute provides free software to assist you in making an inventory and a photographic record of the contents of your house. This software is very easy to use and very important to any homeowner. The software also includes typical lists of things in each type of room. You don't have to use these as you can enter anything you have. You can include place of purchase, date and price, if you have that info. Pictures of items or general pictures of a room can also be added. This software can be downloaded from [www.knowyourstuff.org](http://www.knowyourstuff.org).

There is one more significant software package that I use that is freeware. That is NVu, web-authoring software. Linspire, the company that produces the Linspire Linux software, publishes it. It has a WYSIWYG editor (What You See Is What You Get) as well as direct editing of the HTML language. It includes the tools for publishing the pages to a web site. You can test the pages against a browser on your computer to insure that everything works properly. It also allows you to add Javascript either directly or in a separate file to

your pages. There is a complete tutorial for NVu included on the web that can be downloaded and printed. There is also an NVu users forum which can be quite helpful. If you have never created a web page before, I think you would find NVu to be just what you need. If you want to see a web site created with NVu, check out [www.sandpiperchorus.org](http://www.sandpiperchorus.org). NVu can be downloaded from [download.com](http://download.com).

There is one other specialized software package that I have used that some may be interested in trying. This is the Personal Ancestral File (PAF). This is free genealogy recording software provided by the LDS Church (Church of Latter-day Saints). Their website also allows users to search on-line files from the family history archives in Salt Lake City. Although I am not currently using PAF I did use it for a few years before switching to a commercial package. PAF is certainly quite useful for beginning family historians and it can be expanded by purchasing the PAF Companion. If you are interested in trying PAF, download it from [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org).

Now that you have all this downloaded freeware, you should make backup copies on either a CD or DVD. Well, for that we have another freeware package, CDBurnerXP Pro. This software will burn CD-R, CD-RW, DVD+R/RW and DVD-R/RW. It will burn and create ISO files. It will burn audio discs from mp3, wav, ogg and wma files. It will convert (rip) files on audio discs to wav, mp3, ogg or wma files. It also works with most IDE, USB, Firewire and SCSI burners. It can be downloaded from [download.com](http://download.com) or [www.cdburnerxp.se/download.php](http://www.cdburnerxp.se/download.php). This software does not have a trial period. It is yours for however long you wish to use it. I have been using mine for over two years and have obtained several updates, one of which added the DVD burner capability.

As you can see from this there is a lot of quality freeware available. If you are interested in finding more, check out the listings at [download.com](http://download.com). Just be cautious because many of their listings are trial packages only. You are expected to purchase the total package before the end of your trial period. But there are many "nuggets" on their very extensive web site. So if you are interested in saving money, try some of these quality freeware items.

*Dr. Lewis is a former university & medical school professor. He has been working with personal computers for more than thirty years. He can be reached via e-mail: [bwsail@yahoo.com](mailto:bwsail@yahoo.com).*

*There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this article as long as it is kept in context with proper credit given the author. The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you.*

# Who, me? Yes, you!

## You, too, can do a Product Review

### Have you recently...

- Read a computer book that was especially well written and helpful?
- Played a computer game that you think is really challenging?
- Found a computer show or program that's quite informative?
- Taken a course that you really enjoyed?
- Got a new piece of equipment that you feel comfortable recommending to others?
- Tried a new or unique software program that solves a problem?

### Why not take some time and share your thoughts with fellow LVPCUG members?

Consider the following to help arrange your thoughts and ideas:

- Identify the item specifically with name, version and the vendor.
- Describe its purpose and what it does – its objective and selling points or features.
- Tell us its price and where other members can find it.

- State any requirements, and if it is for a novice, intermediate, or advanced user.
- Tell us why you selected it.
- Tell us about the original installation or your first impressions.
- Describe your experience – what you liked, didn't like, etc.
- Any unexpected result, or any outstanding feature or function?
- Any improvement recommendations?
- Make your concluding comments and recommendation. Add a rating, if you like.

**Don't worry about your writing skill or grammar, or length of review.** That's why we have an Editor. Just write down your thoughts, put them aside for a day or two, then read them and make sure that you said what you intended and that it all makes sense, then e-mail it to [editor@lvpcug.org](mailto:editor@lvpcug.org)

**Let's get into the habit of sharing our experiences with fellow members.** After all, isn't that one of the reasons we all joined LVPCUG in the first place—to **share** our experiences, **broaden** our horizons and knowledge, and **take advantage** of our pool of **expertise** (that's **all of us**)—giving and getting help, **Users Helping Users?** ☺

## Other User Groups in Las Vegas and Surrounding Area

**Association of Information Technology Professionals (A.I.T.P.)** - Monthly dinner meetings at Palace Station the fourth Wednesday of each month (except July and August) . Social hour begins at 5:45 p.m., dinner at 6:15 p.m. speaker at 7:00 p.m. Reservations, or additional information, contact Roberta Weller at 702-233-1225, [rweller326@earthlink.net](mailto:rweller326@earthlink.net).

**Commodore Users Group** - Meets on the first & third Saturday of the month. Al Jackson [ajax@wizard.com](mailto:ajax@wizard.com) 702-645-2402

**Kingman Arizona CUG** [www.kingmanarizonacug.com](http://www.kingmanarizonacug.com)  
Email: [rbth1@hotmail.com](mailto:rbth1@hotmail.com)

**L.V. Netware User Group** - Meets second Tuesday of month. Roland Hughes 702-455- 4273 [rolandh@co.clark.nv.us](mailto:rolandh@co.clark.nv.us)

**Las Vegas Linux Users Group** Meetings first Saturday of each month at Century 23 Computers from 11:00 am - 3:30 pm. It is located at 4101 Meadows Lane, Las Vegas. (Across from Meadows Mall). About once every quarter we have a Sunday meeting for those that can't make the Saturday meetings. Please check calendar each month in case of changes. [www.lvlug.org](http://www.lvlug.org)

**Meadview (AZ) PC User Group** - Meets first Thursday of month. Chuck Shull 928-564-2782 [Railrider86@citlink.net](mailto:Railrider86@citlink.net)

**Pahrump NV Computer UG** - Meets first Monday of month at 1pm in the Pahrump Moose Lodge. Don Norvell 775-727-1246 [DonNorvell@air-internet.com](mailto:DonNorvell@air-internet.com)

**Southern Nevada Amiga Group**  
Ron Gatreks 702-645-4610 [captg@skylink.net](mailto:captg@skylink.net)

**Southern Nevada Users Group** - Meets second Monday of month. David Gaberel 702-658-6462 [davegabere1@sierranv.net](mailto:davegabere1@sierranv.net)

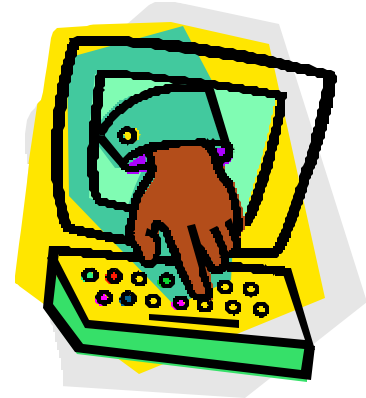
**Sun City MacDonald Ranch Computer Users Group** – Members are residents of Sun City MacDonald Ranch. Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month at 9:00AM in the Community Club House. Contact Ms. Sam Giordano at [samespin1@cox.net](mailto:samespin1@cox.net).

**Sun City Summerlin Computer Users Group** Meets first Thursday of Month. For more information call 615-5735. You must live in Sun City Summerlin in order to join this organization. ☺

— For Members Only —

# Helping Hands

## “USERS HELPING USERS”



When you need help with computer related problems, call a **Helping Hand** volunteer. This service is available only to LVPCUG members.

Please be courteous when you call and make sure the time is convenient. Have ready your manuals, questions, etc. and be at your computer. Or, e-mail a description of your problem along with your phone number and best time to contact you.

If you feel that you could be a **Helping Hand** in any area, please contact one of the Board Members, or contact the Editor and ask to be added to the list. We can always use more volunteers in this area. “**Users Helping Users**” is what it’s all about! ☺

### Beginners & Quicken

Marilyn Mills • 361-6363 • cmxx@earthlink.net

### Communications, Linux/Unix

Rob Winchell • 795-7153 evenings  
r\_winchell@newsbug.com

### Microsoft Access, Databases in General

Donna Sword  
795-2653 evenings  
sword\_nv@hotmail.com

### Microsoft Office, Publisher, Adobe Acrobat

Sharon Fry • SharonFinLV@hotmail.com  
290-3518 evenings/weekends

### Microsoft Excel, QuickBooks Pro

Debbie Hathaway • debhathaway@juno.com  
497-3995 cell

### Windows 98, Nero CD Burning Software, Music Match Jukebox, Cool Edit, Digital Music

Rich Vance • 438-3394 • r.p.vance@cox.net

### Windows XP, Miscellaneous

263-5910 • fixitgeorge@lvpcug.org ☺

## LVPCUG Membership Benefits

The Las Vegas PC Users Group welcomes new members anytime. The only criteria for membership is an interest in computers! The Las Vegas PC Users Group is an exciting non-profit organization of novices, experts, computer professionals and casual users that began in the 1980’s.

Membership includes a subscription to “The BYTES of Las Vegas”, and full access to the web site. Full members may purchase hardware, software, and books made available by the manufacturers and various vendors at discounted prices. Helping Hands are there when you need them. A group of members with experience in particular fields has volunteered to help user group members one-on-one. When you need computing assistance, you can contact a Helping Hands volunteer.

A General Meeting is held the first Wednesday of each month Feb.-Dec. in the Auditorium of the West Charleston Library at 6301 W. Charleston. The pre-meeting at 6:15 PM is a computer fundamentals presentation with general questions and answers. At 7 PM, the General Meeting starts with a presenter on a

topic of broader interest, followed by questions and answers about the presentation. Each meeting concludes with door prize drawings.

What areas are you most interested in? We have Special Interest Groups (SIGs) that focus on various areas of computing such as help for novice users, office software, databases, programming, digital imaging, wireless networking, etc. They meet on a regular basis in a variety of meeting formats—such as workshops, discussions and classes—to share information on diverse topics. We even have a Saturday Night “Bites & Bytes” that shares dinner and computer expertise. And, all of our meetings are free and open to the public.

Visit our web site at [www.lvpcug.org](http://www.lvpcug.org). Members can get answers to questions, and find out when and where the Special Interest Groups are meeting. There are links to other interesting sites as well.

For more information about membership in the Las Vegas PC Users Group, contact President Dennis Kemper at [president@lvpcug.org](mailto:president@lvpcug.org), Membership Chair Dan Spitz at [membership@lvpcug.org](mailto:membership@lvpcug.org), or leave a message at (702)263-5910. ☺

# Las Vegas PC Users Group Membership Application

(PLEASE PRINT)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  New  Renewal

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Alt. Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Have you been a Member Before?  YES  NO

It is LVPCUG policy to keep your information confidential. We do not sell or exchange personally identifiable information with any third parties. Upon acceptance of your Membership Application, you will be automatically opted in to receive electronic and postal mail regarding LVPCUG activities. You may opt out of these notices at any time by notifying membership@lvpcug.org via e-mail.

For purposes of contact regarding SIGs and meetings, may we release the following to other Members?

Your phone # \_\_\_\_\_ and/or Your e-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

### SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION (optional but helpful):

How did you hear about the LVPCUG? \_\_\_\_\_

What type of computer user are you? (Circle all that apply)

Novice      Programmer Consultant      Trainer      Work Related      Home User

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Please put an "X" in front of the **items you use and/or have some knowledge of**, and put an "O" in front of those subjects **you would like to learn more about**.

- |                         |                              |                               |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| _____ Programming       | _____ Art & Design           | _____ BBS/Telecommunications  |
| _____ Networking        | _____ Desktop/Web Publishing | _____ Windows                 |
| _____ Word Processing   | _____ Multimedia             | _____ Databases               |
| _____ Operating Systems | _____ General Computer       | _____ Spreadsheets/Accounting |
| _____ Hardware          | _____ Other: _____           |                               |



Bring completed application and check for \$30 Annual Membership Dues to our General Meeting, or mail to:

**Membership Chairperson**  
**Las Vegas PC Users Group**  
**1350 E. Flamingo Road #188**  
**Las Vegas, NV 89119**