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FOUNDED 1984
The Official Newsletter of THE
COMPUTERS ARE EASY USER GROUP

Abort, Retry, Ignore...

CAEUG Computers Are Easy User Group

April 2003 Suggested Retail Price $1.95 Volume XIV Issue 4

Calendar of Events

!!! IMPORTANT !!!
Meeting dates for 2003
See page 10
for all confirmed dates. Time and Place remain the same.

April 26
Carl Schow
The
XP Experience

SEE YOU THERE!!

COD Dates
2003 dates
April 27
May 18
June 29
July 27
August 24
September 28
October 26
November 23
December 21

About Identity Theft and How To Prevent It
by Lynn Johnson

The Federal Reserve Bank of Boston has a 320K pamphlet available on line with tips to help prevent this crime. The site is http://www.bos.frb.org/consumer/identity/index.htm . (There will be a copy of the pamphlet on the CD of the Month.) Here are some tips:

1. When you order checks have only your initials (instead of first and last name put on them. If someone takes your checkbook they will not know if you sign your checks with just your initials or your first name, but your bank will know how you sign your checks.
2. Put your work phone # on your checks instead of your home phone - no number is better.
3. If you have a PO Box use that instead of your home address. If you do not have a PO Box use your work address.
4. Never have your SS# printed on your checks — you can add it if it is necessary. But if you have it printed, anyone can get it.
5. Place the contents of your wallet on a photocopy machine, do both sides of each license, credit card, etc. You will know what you had in your wallet and all of the account numbers and phone numbers to call and cancel. Keep the photocopy in a safe place. Also carry a photocopy of your passport when you travel either here or abroad.
6. We have been told we should cancel our credit cards immediately. But the key is having the toll free numbers and your card numbers handy so you know whom to call. Keep those where you can find them easily.
7. File a police report immediately in the jurisdiction where it was stolen, this proves to credit providers you were diligent, and is a first step toward an investigation (if there ever is one).
8. MOST IMPORTANT - Call the three national credit reporting organizations

(con't on page 4)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

About Identity Theft and How To Prevent It by Lynn Johnson....1
Helpline....3
Minutes of CAEUG meeting March 29, 2003 by John Spizzirri....4
Choosing a Digital Still Camera by Ira Wilsker....4
The Lamp Post - Number 39 by John Spizzirri....6

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CD of month/Webmaster
& Technical Consultant . Richard Scalzo
Coffee Service . . . . . Joan Thompson
Picnic Chairpersons . . . . Mike Goldberg
Roger Kinzie

CAEUG
Computers
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CAEUG LIST OF SUPPORTING RETAILERS

The retailers listed below have in one way or another supported CAEUG and we thank them.

COMPUTER MAINTENANCE, INC.
1433 W. Fullerton Avenue, Suite M
Addison, IL 60101
630/953-1555

BOOKS & BYTES, INC.
Retail store is closed
630/416-0102
http://www.bytes.com/

AMERICAN COMPUTER
330 S. Naperville Road, Suite 310
Wheaton, IL 60187
630/260-4020

SOFTWARE EMPORIUM
123 E. Front St
Wheaton, IL 60187
630/653-0085

ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER:

This printed version of our newsletter was laid out using Adobe's Pagemaker Version 7.0 for Windows and was printed on a EPSON EPL-7000. Our group's membership database is maintained using MS Access and address labels are printed using MS Access software. Our checking account records are kept in Quicken software.

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The CAEUG newsletter is published eleven times annually. Contributions by members are encouraged and will be gratefully acknowledged in the newsletter. We have a policy of exchanging newsletters with other users groups across the nation. Several CAEUG member articles have already been picked up and reprinted.

Great Midwest Computer Show ©

Next show date
SUNDAY, April 27
College of Dupage
9:30 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.

The Midwest's oldest and largest
Multi Vendor PC show and sale for
Home & Business

COLLEGE OF DUPAGE
Main Arena of Physical Education Building
Corner of Park Blvd & College Road
Glen Ellyn, IL
FREE PARKING
Admission - $7.00
(With this coupon admission $6.00)
www.CODSHOW.COM
E-mail address:
info@codshow.com

In order to have your article or item for sale appear in ARI they must be received by the 10th of the month prior to publication.

MEMBERS HELPLINE

Any member with a specific expertise can volunteer to be on the Members Helpline. Contact Rick Scalzo.

Beginners Helpline.....Billy Douglas

Beginner hardware problems.....Dick Fergus

QuickBooks, Turbo Tax, IBM Lotus, MS Excel, Corel's Quattro Pro....Terry Moye

Win 9x, NT, 2K.....Rick Scalzo
e-mail.....mitsufan@webcentrix.net

Hardware problems,
Win 9x, NT, 2K & Linux.....John Spizzirri

Great Midwest Computer Show © 2003 dates

	June 29	Oct 26
	July 27	Nov 23
Apr 27	Aug 24	Dec 21
May 18	Sept 28	

For Sale

$ $ $ $ $ $ $ $ $ $ $ $ $ $ $ $ $ $ $

Price reduced!

Compaq Armada 1530DM Laptop
Pentium 133, 32MB RAM, 1.2MB HD, floppy, CD-ROM, Sound, Win 98
Battery does not hold charge more than 20 minutes
Runs fine plugged in - $150 obo

Membership Costs.....

	First Yr.	Renewal
Individual	$25.00	$20.00
Family	$30.00	$25.00
Corporate	$30.00	$25.00
Associate	$20.00	$15.00

Beginner's SIG

Ask questions and discuss computer experiences with this group.
Such as:

1. New to Computers? (basic topics)
2. How to use the Web or download information
3. How to install hardware/software
4. Discuss how to troubleshoot hardware conflicts, learn boot up emergency tricks
5. What do you want to know??

Meets before regular meeting from 9:05 to 9:45

!!! COMING in April - CAEUG Election !!!

That time of year again - election of the club officers, the nominating committee is

** Alex Ciciora

** Dick Major

** Bert Orszula

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immediately to place a fraud alert on your name and Social Security number. The numbers are: Equifax: 1-800-525-6285, Experian (formerly TRW): 1-888-397-3742, Trans Union: 1-800-680-7289, Social Security Administration (fraud line): 1-800-269-0271. Please note that a fraud alert will make it more difficult for you to get credit approvals because the lender is obligated to take additional steps in verifying your identity.

Minutes of CAEUG Meeting March 29, 2003

John Spizzirri called the meeting to order at 9:49 A. M.

There were 31 members in attendance.

The previous meeting minutes were accepted as printed in the ARI…

The Treasurer's report for the previous 2 months was presented.

Old Business

The Nominating Committee (Al Cicora, Dick Major, and Bert Orszula) reported no further nominations. The slate of candidates for the April election is:

President - John Spizzirri
Vice-President - Bill Douglas
Treasurer - Lynn Johnson
Secretary - Al Skwara

Bill Douglas and Terry Moye reported on the COD show, asking for volunteers.

The library has been paid for meeting dates through July 2003 at the new increased rate.

New Business

The Picnic Committee was formed with Mike Goldberg and Roger Kinzie volunteering.

John Spizzirri gave the details on contents of the CD of the Month.

Raffle items included a Jim Seymour book, a PIM featuring Warner Brothers characters, "Air" mouse, and QEMM 97 (memory manager).

Members Forum addressed several problems that members were having with both hardware and software.

We then had our traditional break with coffee and doughnuts and bagels.

John Teschky, independent Website Developer, made the presentation on Dreamweaver 4 and Front Page 2000 Web page editors. He is available at teschky@attbi.com. His Web site is http://www.mythofsisyfus.net.

Choosing a Digital Still Camera
By Ira Wilsker

Digital cameras have become one of the most popular new consumer items. As is common for many high technology items, the price of digital cameras has fallen, as the technology improves. The dramatic increase in sales of digital cameras is mostly due to their "instant gratification" by eliminating the cost and inconvenience of film and processing. Another advantage is the ease of editing digital photos. The

(con't on page 5)

increase in sales of digital cameras has often more than offset the decline in sales of film cameras and accessories. Also, digital photography has in some cases, replaced film photography in many professional applications. According to Olympus, one of the leading digital camera manufacturers, the high-end digital cameras are now used by many professional photographers for weddings and other events. Many newspapers and magazines are now employing digital photography, which bypasses the darkroom, and allows the input of images directly to editors. For home users, digital cameras range from very inexpensive (under $30, often before rebates) point and shoot models to sophisticated models that rival 35mm SLR cameras, including accessory lenses and peripherals.

The potential resolution of digital cameras is measured in “pixels”, a condensed term for “picture elements”. Pixels are basically the little colored dots that compose an image. More pixels in an image mean that a larger size picture can be printed or viewed, but increases the amount of storage or memory necessary to hold the image. Contrary to popular belief, more pixels are not necessarily better. Consider that a typical 14" monitor has a resolution of 640x480 pixels, which is about 300,000 pixels. The unedited image from a digital camera with a 300,000-pixel resolution will fill the screen of that 14" monitor. My 17" monitor is currently set at a 1024x768 resolution; a digital photograph of about 740,000 pixels would fill that screen. Many digital photographers take their photos at the highest resolution, which is often unnecessary, and a waste of memory and time. If the image is to be emailed, or posted to the web, the image will likely have to be substantially reduced in size to be practical. Using good quality photo paper and a photo-grade color printer, an 11x14 inch image will require about 4 million pixels (4 megapixels) to approximate the quality of a 35mm print. An 8x10 inch print will require about 2 megapixels. An inexpensive 1-megapixel camera is quite capable of producing satisfactory 5x7 inch photos. The least expensive digital cameras on the market, sometimes under $20 (I recently paid $19 for one), can easily produce a printed picture in the common 35mm print size of 3.5x5 or 4x6 inch sizes. Some digital cameras, such as one of the Olympus CamMedia series, can print directly from the camera, using Polaroid film, or conventionally export images to a computer.

Digital cameras need something to hold the images until they are downloaded to a computer, or printed directly. Various types of non-volatile memory cards, typically compact flash, smart media, or memory stick formats, are used to store images. Currently, these cards are available in capacities up to 1 gigabyte (about 1 billion bytes), with 16meg (16 million bytes) to 128meg being both common and relatively inexpensive. The cards are reusable as images are erased from the cards. The contents of the cards can typically be transferred by the camera to a PC or Mac via a USB connection, or read directly by a card reader. Other popular cameras, such as some of the Sony Mavica series, use common 3.5" floppy disks. These floppies, each holding about 1.4 megabytes, can be read directly by a computer, as the images are written directly to the floppy. Some more advanced (and expensive) digital cameras can write to mini-CD discs, which can hold well over 100 megabytes, and can be read on any CD drive. Generally, the more storage of any type available in a camera, the better.

Many digital cameras also have the ability to record short movies, sometimes with sound. The length of the movie is only limited by the memory or storage available in the camera. For most common movie capable digital cameras, the length is typically measured in seconds, or a few minutes.

Zoom is another feature often available.

(con't on page 9)

The Lamp Post Number 39
by John Spizzirri
April 15, 2003

Memorial Day (also known as Decoration Day) is now celebrated on the last Monday in May. It was originally created as a day to decorate the graves of Civil War soldiers. Sites that have all the information (and products) you might want on this special day are: http://www.usmemorialday.org/, http://www.rootsweb.com/~nyseneca/memorial.htm and http://www.jeannepasero.com/memorial.html . John "Sgt. Fats" Spizzirri (no relation) created another site that is specific to Viet Nam at http://www.angelfire.com/ny2/SGTFATS/page6A.html .

Richard M. Daley (http://www.ci.chi.il.us/Mayor/) quietly closed Meigs Field for the safety of the downtown area. Meigs' Web site (http://www.ohare.com/meigs/home.shtm) went to "404 Object Not Found" almost at the same time. If you get to Google search site (http://www.google.com) and search on "meigs field", you can click on the cached version of the site to see what it once was. It will only be available for a few months. The Friends of Meigs (http://friendsofmeigs.org/) are trying desperately (and probably futilely) to stop any further demolition.

On another front, Mayor Daley is attempting to close the, 100+ year old, Pacific Garden Mission (http://www.pgm.org/) to "increase the size of the Jones Magnet School" which is next door to the mission. This time he is using a condemnation suit in court instead of bulldozers and backhoes. The fate of the mission depends on how patient the Mayor is. The neighborhood of the mission is changing to upscale high rise buildings. The mission's clientele pose an impediment to further gentrification.

The KC Royals (http://kansascity.royals.mlb.com/) played baseball at U. S. Cellular Field (http://chicago.whitesox.mlb.com/NASApp/mlb/cws/ballpark/cws_ballpark_cellularfield.jsp). A fan(?) ran out on the field and attacked an umpire. This is the second time that an attack on field personnel has happened in the past year. "For safety", perhaps, Mayor Daley should close or bulldoze the former Comiskey Park. (Just kidding).

Woody Leonhard (http://www.wopr.com/ & http://woodyswatch.com/) does not like the new iteration of Microsoft (MS http://www.microsoft.com) Office Suite product. He said, "For many of us, Office 2000 remains the 'sweet spot' in the application line-up. Unless you need a specific bell here or whistle there, I see few compelling reasons to upgrade to Office XP. Best of all, Office 2000 doesn't include the onerous product activation garbage."
Woody, whose advice and Web site I have mentioned in this column before, is an expert on MS products. If you must have MS Office XP, he suggests you wait until the new product (Office 11 or Office 2003) is announced. If you wait for the announcement, you can get either the new product or the current product with a free upgrade. Incidentally, Woody's Office Portal Website name (wopr) is the same as the name of the super computer in the movie "War Games" at

(con't on page 7)

http://www.imdb.com/Title?WarGames+(1983) with Matthew Broderick (no official Web site). I recommend OpenOffice (http://www.openoffice.org/) because it is free to download off the Internet and it is on the CD of the Month.

The Business Software Alliance (BSA http://www.bsa.org/), the bully organization of MS and other software publishers wrote a 'nasty-gram' to the University of Muenster in Germany (http://www.uni-muenster.de/en/index.html). The BSA 'detected' that the University was making MS Office available for download. The BSA was wrong. It 'detected' OpenOffice and misidentified it as MS Office. The BSA wrote, "We hereby give notice of these activities to you and request that you take expeditious action to remove or disable access to the materials described above, and thereby prevent the illegal reproduction and distribution of pirated software via your company's network."
(http://distribution.openoffice.org/servlets/ReadMsg?msgId=581265&listName=dev) The BSA has since apologized. It's nice that the BSA recognized it's mistake. Had it persisted, it would have prosecuted or sued the University. If the BSA wants to bully businesses and other organizations, it should make sure it has the facts straight.

MS has cut prices about 27% on MS Office in Taiwan. Why would they do that? Taiwan's Fair Trade Commission threatened MS with legal action. If MS can lower prices at will in one country, can it do it in another? Get story at http://zdnet.com.com/2100-1104-986228.html.

MS makes a product it can't fix???? Last month MS released a security bulletin (http://www.microsoft.com/technet/treeview/default.asp?url=/technet/security/bulletin/MS03-010.asp) which reveals a flaw that allows a denial of service attack. In the details area MS says,

> "Microsoft has provided patches with this bulletin to correct this vulnerability for Windows 2000 and Windows XP. Although Windows NT 4.0 is affected by this vulnerability, Microsoft is unable to provide a patch for this vulnerability for Windows NT 4.0. The architectural limitations of Windows NT 4.0 do not support the changes that would be required to remove this vulnerability. Windows NT 4.0 users are strongly encouraged to employ the workaround discussed in the FAQ below, which is to protect the NT 4.0 system with a firewall that blocks Port 135. "

Win2000 and WinXP, per the MS advertising, is based on WinNT. How can you fix 2000 and XP and not fix NT? I think this is just part of a ploy to force server upgrades.

MS and Apple are reportedly interested in buying Vivendi's Universal Music Group (http://www.vivendiuniversal.com/vu2/en/_home/home.cfm). If Apple Computer (http://www.apple.com/) is successful, it may help them stave off bankruptcy. Don't be alarmed. Apple is NOT close to bankruptcy, yet, but I expect that they will be, in this decade or the next. Apple has already taken $150 million from MS. They are consistently at six to seven percent of the computer market. The Macintosh does do graphical computing better than PC's. Eventually, PC's will have equal performance on all computing tasks. Apple will falter at that point. I base my opinion on an article that is no longer available on the Adobe Web site (http://www.adobe.com/). The article stated that, in tests by Adobe, PC's are significantly faster than Mac's of the same speed rating. If MS is successful, I cannot imagine what impact

(con't on page 8)

that will have on music production and copyright law. It won't be beneficial to anyone (consumers, writers, or performers) but MS.

If you are considering upgrading to WinXP or buying a new computer equipped with WinXP, you should read this article (http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,4149,932685,00.asp) that points out a possible hidden cost. Windows XP will not recognize certain printers. The printer manufacturers will not write an XP driver for an old (4+ years) printer. The article concentrates on printers, but it applies to all peripheral devices. This same problem occurs with brand NEW devices in Linux. Not all peripheral manufacturers write drivers for Linux thus new products have to wait for the open source community to write a driver for a new peripheral.

Kim Komando has started a new e-mail service. It is called Tip of the Day. It is a daily e-mail of a question from a listener and her answer to it. Her radio program is currently on WLS-AM on Saturday evenings from 9 P.M. to midnight in the Chicago area. That time slot is on a delay, so you cannot call in during the show. Should you wish to call in, you can check the actual program time on her Web site (http://www.komando.com/). To sign up for the Tip of the Day e-mail or her weekly e-mail newsletter go to http://www.komando.com/newsletter.asp . Here is one of her tips:

> "Q. Thank you so much for telling me about MSCONFIG. This has really helped me prune the garbage out of my startup menu. Are there other things that the Run command does?
> A. In case you are just joining us, MSCONFIG is this great tool that is part of Windows 98, ME and XP. You can learn more about MSCONFIG here:
> http://www.komando.com/tips_show.asp?showID=4236
> MSCONFIG is not in Windows 2000, though. There is an alternative program that does the same thing. You can find it here:
> http://www.komando.com/tips_show.asp?showID=3920
> There are other useful Run commands. But to use them, you must first open a DOS window. To do that, go to Start>>Run and then, type "command" or "cmd" without the quotes. You're not in Windows anymore, Toto! This is a DOS prompt. Once you see that, here are some commands you might find helpful.
> Having trouble with your Internet connection, want to see how information travels from your computer to a Web site, or do you want to see if your Web site is down? At the prompt type: TRACERT (site address) and press Enter. Replace (site address) with the address of the site you are tracing. So it might look like this at the prompt:
> TRACERT www.komando.com
> Want to see your computer's memory usage? At the prompt, type MEM and press enter. If you need to know your computer's Internet Protocol number or IP address, at the prompt type IPCONFIG and press enter. Need to know your version of Windows? Type VER and press enter. And when you are done working at the prompt, type EXIT and press enter."

This information is interesting although she did skip the WINIPCFG command, which is similar to the IPCONFIG command but typed in at the RUN dialog box. In the Tip of the Day e-mail there is a small amount of advertising, but it might be worth it. She does not add spyware and does not sell your e-mail address.

Between you, me and the Lamp Post, that's all this month.

With the traditional film cameras, optical zoom is used. The zoom on digital cameras can be optical, digital, or a combination of both. In terms of image quality, optical zoom is superior to a digital zoom, with the same magnification. One digital camera I tried is advertised as having a 20x zoom; 4x optical, and 5x digital. At 20x (combining the digital and optical zoom), the images were quite grainy, but at 4x (optical) they were very sharp. The same image at 4x digital zoom was visibly grainy, especially when enlarged. If a choice is available, optical zoom is superior to digital zoom.

Convenience factors, such as size, weight, flash, and battery capacity are often a matter of personal choice. Many digital cameras utilize the common AA size battery for convenience. Disposable alkaline batteries become expensive, if many pictures are taken, as they have a relatively short useful life. Rechargeable Nickel Metal Hydride (NiMH) batteries are much more expensive to purchase, but the better ones have a capacity of two to four times the photos as ay