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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

June 2008 | Suggested Retail Price $1.95 | Volume XXV | Issue 6

Calendar of Events

!!! IMPORTANT !!!

*** * * NOTE * * ***
Confirmed 2008 meeting dates will be on

CAEUG Picnic on JUNE 28

July 26

August 23

**** ** ** ****

MEETING PLACE will be the Glenside Public Library
*** * * ***
SEE YOU THERE!!
*** * * ***

COD Linuxfest http:// www.codlug.info/

The CAEUG annual Picnic
Seven Gables Park
Wheaton, IL

Saturday June 28 :: 11:00am to 3:00pm

See pages 2 and 3 for maps and directions

Make Your Wireless Network Safe
By Marjie Tucker, Editor
Mountain Computer User Group http://www.mcug.org
mcug(at)dnet.net

Obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

Wireless networks are becoming more and more popular, but they do add some additional security risks. You need to spend a little extra time to ensure that your data and your identity are secure.

What are the Risks?

Because wireless networks don't require a cable between the computer and your Internet connection, it's relatively easy for someone else to use your Internet connection for free, to hijack your messages, or to sneak into your computer and view or steal your data.

So What Should I Do?

There are several important steps that you should follow to protect yourself and your computer:

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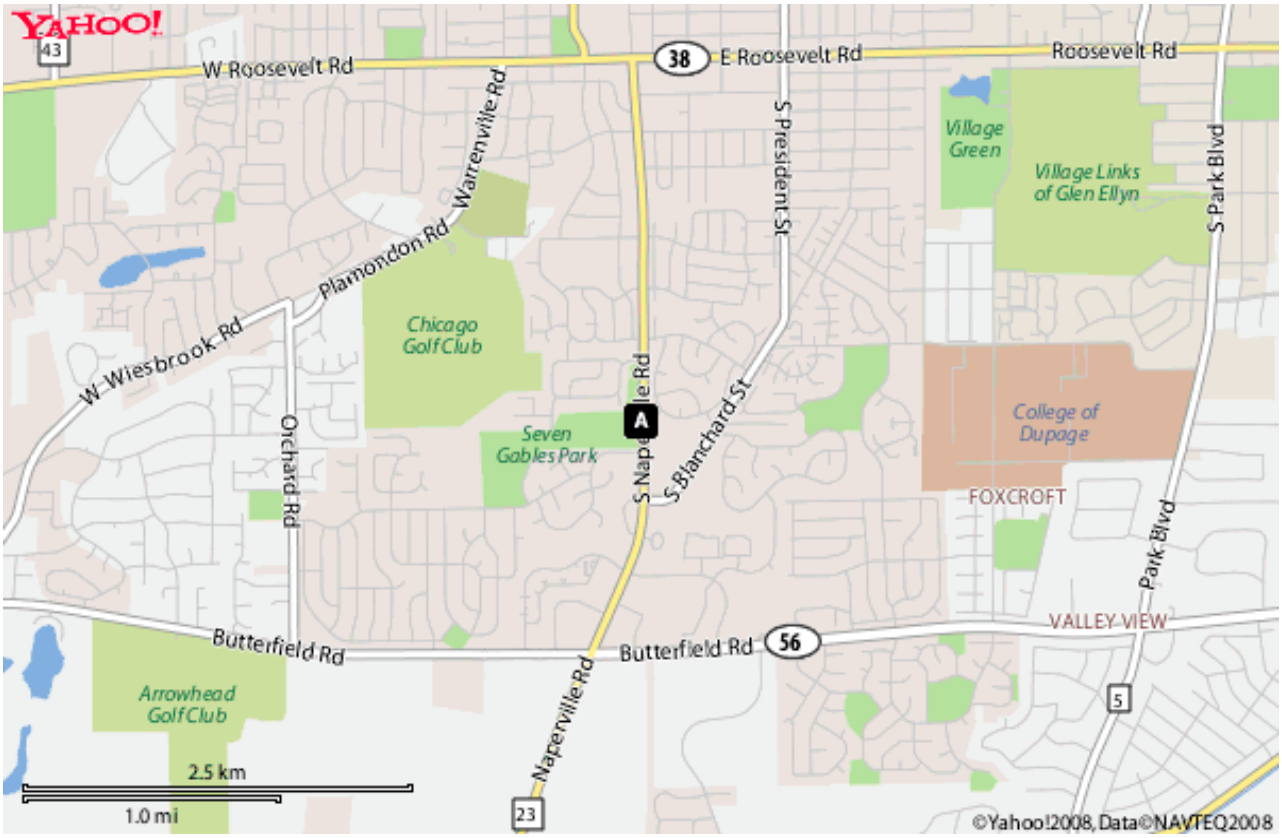

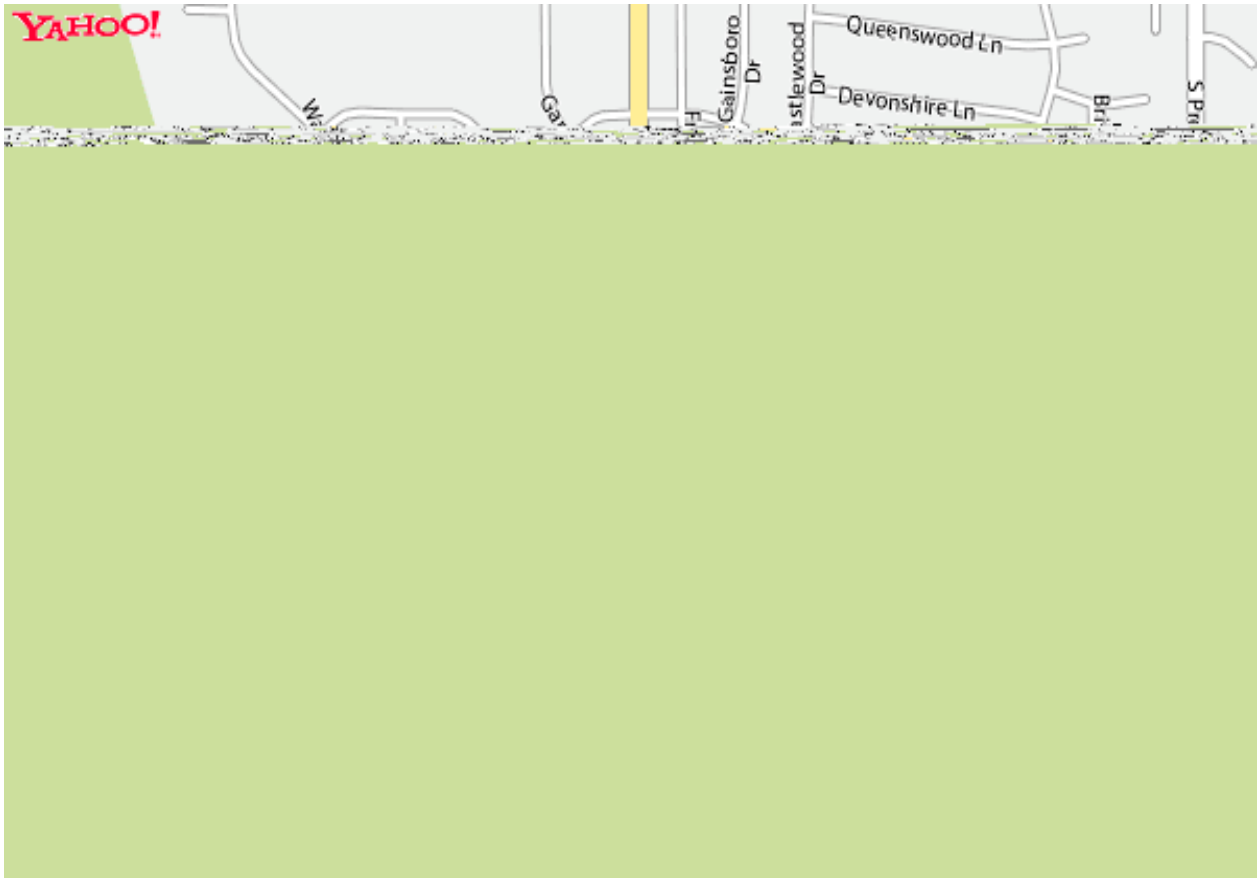

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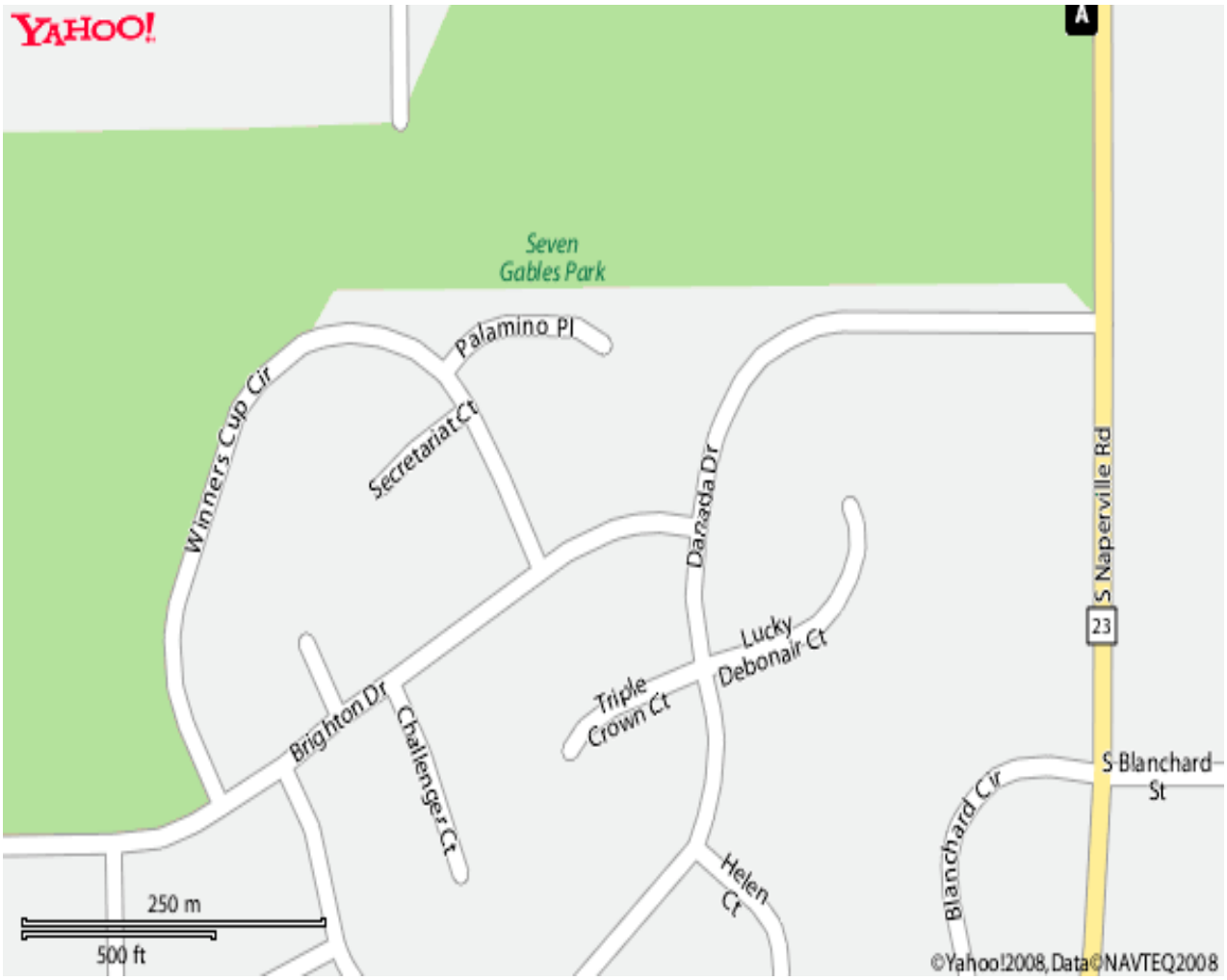

CAEUG Picnic Directions

Directions to CAEUG Picnic at Seven Gables Park:
From Naperville and Butterfield Roads head NORTH on Naperville Road 0.8 mi.
Turn left (WEST) on Danada Road.
Follow Danada for 0.2 mi. to the stop sign at Brighton Road.
Turn right (WEST) on Brighton Road.
Stay on Brighton Road for 0.2 mi.
Turn right (NORTH) onto Winners Cup.
Follow Winner Cup 0.2 mi. to the entrance to Seven Gables Park . Entrance is on the left.
A short distance into the park is a stop sign, At the stop sign turn right. That road will take you past the football field.
We will be at the EAST end of the football field in an area that looks like a refreshment stand.

(con't on page 4)

1. Don't use a default password on your wireless equipment. Most networking devices are pre-configured by the manufacturer with a simple password to simplify the setup process. This is the password that allows you to access the router configuration. These "default" passwords are well known by anyone who has used a similar device and they are available online, eroding any protection they might have provided. Check the instructions that came with your device and immediately change the password.

Remember that the best passwords contain both upper and lowercase letters as well as numbers. And, always shy away from passwords that can be easily guessed by your friends - such as the names of your children or your dog.

Experts suggest using a poem to derive a "pass phrase." You merely take a line from a poem or poem title and use the first letter of each word. For example, using the poem "Mary had a little lamb" you would use the letters from the first line - Mary had a little lamb; its fleece was white as snow - mhallifwwas. Add at least one uppercase letter by capitalizing the M for Mary - Mhallifwwas. Next add at least one number by changing some of the letters to numbers, such as making the first letters for little and lamb into 1s. Now we have a phrase (Mha11ifwwas) that is reasonably secure and very easy to remember.

2. Restrict your network to only your computers. Every computer device has an embedded address on it called a media access control (MAC) address. Wireless access points and routers can be configured to exclude all other MAC addresses.

3. Encrypt the data on your network. Encryption prevents outsiders from viewing your transmissions. There are two methods of ensuring that your information is adequately protected, Wired Equivalent Privacy (WEP) and Wi-Fi Protected Access (WPA). Because WEP has several security issues associated with it, WPA is considered the more effective method, if it is supported by your equipment. However, since this is another area where a secure password is important, you should use a passphrase like I described in item #1.

4. Choose a unique SSID. Your equipment may have a default name that identifies your network, called an SSID. Be sure to setup a unique name and, if possible, avoid broadcasting that name. That will make it harder for outsiders to find your network.

5. Install a firewall for your network. Microsoft Vista and XP both provide a firewall that is designed to protect your computer, but your network itself will be safer with its own firewall. A host based firewall is easy to obtain (some of them are free over the Internet) and can be installed directly onto your wireless device.

6. Install and regularly update both anti-virus and anti-spyware software. You can keep attackers at bay with these protective programs. However, remember to update both of them on a regular basis. New viruses and spyware attacks are being developed daily; so your software must be updated to be effective.

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Why I like the Ubuntu Operating System

By Phil Vogel, Director at Large, The Olympia Microcomputer User Group, Washington
http://www.olymug.org director3(at)olymug.org

Obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

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My interest in alternative operating systems started 20 years ago when I worked for the State of Maryland during a year of computer chaos. We had a good office system using WordPerfect but some high State official(s) made a decision to go with Microsoft Word. At our facility WordPerfect was no longer funded and we were no longer able to use it. Yet our mental facility didn't have the budget to buy all the copies for all of our computer, only a few.

Thus my co-workers and I became interested in alternative sources of software. One of the writing programs that we used was the predecessor of OpenOffice and not very good. And because of the high prices charged for an inferior product (Word compared to WordPerfect) at the time, we looked to finding an alternative Operating System to Microsoft products. I remember investigating Red Hat distribution of Red Hat Linux at the time. But at the time it was not up to par with Microsoft's Windows 95.

When I joined OMUG, I was delighted to find that there was a Linux SIG. "Linux" is a term for many operating systems (OS) using the Linux "kernel" or "heart" or "engine." The kernel "drives" the system like a car engine powers a car. Conrad Schuler, one of the leaders of the Linux SIG was promoting SUSE, a "distribution" of Linux which originally came from Germany. Paul Braget, another leader, liked Ubuntu. When joined, I found I was totally lost. However, I stuck it out and some of the understanding and data is beginning to stick to the walls of my mind.

I listened, worked on the Linux programs on the computers in the Senior Center and became convinced that I wanted to try it out for myself. I like laptops. I can grab a computer and move it to a room or across the country easily. In this country all computers are Microsoft friendly but only some brands and some models of the other brands such as Dell are Linux-compatible.

I decided after some research to take a chance on a new Toshiba Qosmio. We had difficulty installing SUSE and because of inexperience it became corrupted. However, it was easier to install Ubuntu.

"Ubuntu" is a South African word which means, "I am because you are." I am writing this article because you are here, OMUG. I am using Ubuntu because a lot of people around the world contribute to its innovation, maintenance, and security. By the way, the Toshiba came with Windows Vista Home Edition. I only use it for QuickBooks; that is, I can boot into Vista when I need to, but use Ubuntu most of the time.

I use Ubuntu to surf the web because it has a very secure hard kernel. It is almost impossible to attack a Linux based machine because all the software programs are attached to the outside of the kernel. At most a particular program will become dysfunctional but not the operating system. For this reason about 90 percent of the servers around the world use Linux based software. Some servers are so reliable that service is minimal.

The Linux kernel is simple, clean and fast, allowing me to turn it on and be on the web in a fraction of the time required by my Windows machine. My web browser is FireFox, an excellent free program.

I am writing this article with OpenOffice because it is another excellent writing program that is on a par with Microsoft Office. And it is a free program also. I must admit that Microsoft's "Access" program is superior to OpenOffice's "Data."

All the above programs are "open source" which means that you can obtain them for free by a download, or on DVD or CD for a nominal charge. However, there are also companies that will supply a person with disks, manuals and service contract just like Microsoft. But everyone is bound by the EULA of the "open source" contract, including companies and also users like me. For instance anyone who comes up with a change or improvement must make it available to any one else for free.

So this is why I like Ubuntu, FireFox and OpenOffice. I also use other features such as watching movies, burning DVD's, and WiFi—and they work well. Now I want to edit and burn a home made movie. Plus Ubuntu has an extensive Internet support system. New programs and updates are coming out all the time. It is an example of a technology rising up from the grassroots rather than from the top down.

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How to Partition a Drive Using Vista Disk Management

by Kathy Groce

Using Vista's Disk Management is unlike Partition Magic because you have to think of the number of bytes you want to SHRINK the drive and not how many bytes you want free. Also, you must do this as the administrator. Here are the steps to take.

Shrinking Windows Vista Partitions or partitioning:

* Start Menu -> Control Panel -> System and Maintenance -> Administrative Tools -> Double Click Computer Management -> Storage -> Disk Management.

* Right click on vista disk partition that you want to shrink and select the shrink option.

* Then , A pop-up box will be appear and you need to enter the amount of space you want to shrink the partition by (By default, the maximum is entered).

* Click Shrink and Vista partition application will start to shrink the disk according the amount that you enter.

* After shrink the partition, You can click the new partition and format it the way you want it.

Or you can do as I did, install Ubuntu (Linux). The PC was then a duel booting work horse. There was no ill effects with Vista, Linux runs fine and boots faster than Vista.

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Check out the CAEUG web site at **http://www.caeug.net** Post your question or get useful tips.

LampPost 96

by John Spizzirri
June 15, 2008

Something to think about during your next fill up - A Danville, California woman has been charged with arson after she allegedly set fires at two gas stations and a coffee house. She stated that she was protesting high gas prices.
(**http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/odd_gas_protest_fires**) Fortunately, she set fire to the restrooms and not the pumps.

OpenOffice (**http://www.openoffice.org/**) 3.0 available in beta. If you want to try it out, it is available at **http://download.openoffice.org/3.0beta/** .

Open source project OpenOffice.org has released OpenOffice 3.0 beta, an application suite that runs on Apple OS X's native Aqua user interface.
http://www.cbronline.com/article_news.asp?guid=12B3F4E8-BEDC-49C2-8459-97119A9AE004. It has been reported that the product will be out of beta testing on June 17th. It will be on the July CD of the Month.

Microsoft (MS **http://www.microsoft.com/**) earnings decline as Windows (Vista) sales drop was reported by Computer Business Review at
http://www.cbronline.com/article_news.asp?guid=F711912D-506B-464A-8876-13A532ECDADB. Paul Thurrott, a Vista cheerleader, reported in an article at
http://windowsitpro.com/Mobile/Article.cfm?ArticleID=99464&News=1 that financial estimates for MS have been lowered for the next two fiscal years. Thurrott blames Apple advertising (**http://www.apple.com/getamac/**), "know-nothing tech pundits and bloggers" - I guess that includes me, and the "growing consensus" (I guess that may include some of you) that Vista does not fit with the needs of the average computer user. Thurrott did not mention the many governmental units and businesses across the world that have decided not to switch (upgrade) to Vista because of it poor performance and huge expense. Thurrott did not mention that Linux, an operating system that Thurrott uses or at least claims to, is now seen by many (including hardware makers) as a good alternative to Windows (Vista or otherwise). The company that lowered the financial estimate, Sanford C. Bernstein (**https://www.bernstein.com/**), does not expect MS to come back from its doldrums until the release of Windows 7, currently scheduled for release in mid 2010.

Microsoft offers online synchronization platform as part of it software as a service. Computer Business Review reported it here
http://www.cbronline.com/article_news.asp?guid=F9FEBDF2-ED0D-4DC3-9CA9-8D09C577EA8A . It did not mention that true synchronization was developed by Novell (**http://www.novell.com/**) as part of their Local Area Network (LAN) operating system about ten or eleven years ago. It was called iFolder (**http://www.novell.com/products/ifolder/**). It's functionality included synchronization of files across platforms (Windows, Linux, and Mac). It is now sold separately as part of an open source project.

Apple, **http://www.apple.com/iphone/** , recently introduced the new iPhone. The iPhone price ($200.00) is less than half the price of last year's model. Hope you did not buy one last year. The price drop may be due to poor sales this year. Apple projected that they would sell 10 Million phones this year. So far they are about 7 million phone shy of that projection. This iPhone has new features - 3G (**http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/3G**), Global Positioning System (GPS), and MobileMe Internet (**http://www.apple.com/mobileme/**), a pricey feature that sounds like a

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synchronization platform. The phone still sports AT&T Edge service (only), which is still costly at $75 per month but is going up $10. Those of you who paid up to $600 for an iPhone last year can get a software upgrade for a few dollars more.

NetworkWorld Magazine reported that the “iPhone 2.0 Upgrade Will Backfire On Apple” **http://www.networkworld.com/community/node/28736** . What the article title fails to mention is that it applies only to techies. A techie will keep the old iPhone and upgrade only some of the software. The new phone is harder to crack to get a cheaper carrier. Regular iphone users don’t crack or hack their phones so the purchase of a new phone or an upgrade of the software will probably work out for Apple.

One of the major problems that iPhone / PC users have is that Outlook and iPhone will not synchronize address books, calendars, or task lists. This has been an ongoing problem that Apple has just ignored, probably in hopes to get the iPhone users to buy a Mac. If you are thinking of buying an iPhone and want to synchronize with any PC application, I would recommend against it unless you have a technical understanding of the problem. Here is an article about how to do it with Outlook 2003 or 2007 (**http://www.iphoneatlas.com/2007/10/09/another-fix-for-outlook-to-iphone-sync-problems/**). Don’t even consider it with Outlook Express.

MS will discontinue the sales of Windows XP on June 30th of this year as planned. The Infoworld Magazine (**http://www.infoworld.com/**) petition to MS failed. Paul Thurrott of Windows Supersite (**http://www.winsupersite.com/**) reported (gleefully) that XP will no longer be sold directly to consumers. It will continue to be sold to hardware manufacturers until December 31 of this year. It will be sold to manufacturers of ‘nettop’ devices also known as ultra-low-cost PCs. Thurrott interviewed a MS spokesperson that acknowledged that Vista will not run on ultra-low-cost PCs. Thurrott indicated that MS thought that hardware was a problem and not Vista. You can read for yourself what the story is at **http://windowsitpro.com/mobile/pda/Article.cfm?ArticleID=99389&News=1** and **http://windowsitpro.com/article/articleid/99361/microsoft-extends-xp-home-licensing-to-include-nettop-devices.html** . I think that MS will continue to sell XP to manufacturers as long as they can keep people away from Linux.

FindToto (**http://www.findtoto.com/**) is a lost pet service. They offer no guarantees and are quite expensive but they seem to get results. Check the site for the details.

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

Annual CAEUG Picnic
Saturday June 28
11:00am to 3:00pm

CD of the month will return next month.

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Membership Chairperson & Circulation Manager	Pete Nicchia
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Reminder:
You'll get better, faster service if you use CAEUG in the subject of your e-mail.

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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.

Beginner's SIG

Ask questions and discuss computer experiences
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??

SIG meets before regular meeting from **9:05 to 9:45**

MEMBERS HELPLINE

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

Beginner Helpline . . . . . Billy Douglas

Beginner hardware problems . . . Dick Fergus

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

CD OF THE MONTH FORMAT: Is now available in **two** (2) flavors. The **Basic CD** will be packed with the standard items, while the **CD of the Month** will have NEW and updated items.

NEW Money Saving Offer for CD of the Month
Pre Order + Prepay = SAVE $$

The club will offer the CD of the Month on a pre order, prepaid basis. The charge will be $70.00 a year for 9 months. This is $20 annual savings over buying them for $9 each month. Lynn Johnson, the treasurer, will keep track of anyone placing a 9-month order.

MAIL Request - There will be a $2.00 mailing charge per CD

Meeting Location and Special Accommodations

The Glenside Public Library is located at 25 E Fullerton Avenue, Glendale Heights, Illinois. The Library is located on Fullerton between Bloomingdale Road (stop light intersection) and Schmale Road (stop light intersection) on the south side of Fullerton. Fullerton is parallel to North Avenue (Route 64) and Army Trail Road. North Ave. is south and Army Trail is north of Fullerton. Please park away from the building. Thank you.

The meeting(s) are not library sponsored and all inquiries should be directed to MikeGold60137@yahoo.com. Individuals with disabilities who plan to attend this program and who require certain accommodations in order to observe and / or participate in the program are requested to contact CAEUG president, Mike Goldberg at MikeGold60137@yahoo.com, at least five (5) days prior to the program, so that reasonable accommodation can be made for them.

CAEUG
P. O. Box 2727
Glen Ellyn, IL 60138

FIRST CLASS MAIL

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* ! ** ! ** Notice Date information ** ! ** ! *

The next **REGULAR** meeting will be held at the **Glenside Public Library**
25 East Fullerton in Glendale Heights, Illinois
starting 9:45am on
Saturday July 26, 2008

CONFIRMED Future Meeting dates for **2008** at Glenside Public Library:
CAEUG Annual Picnic on Saturday JUNE 28, 2008 ::
July 26 Room B :: August 23 full room A+B

The CAEUG annual Picnic
Seven Gables Park
Wheaton, IL

Saturday June 28
11:00am to 3:00pm

See pages 2 and 3
for maps and directions

Hope to see you there!

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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