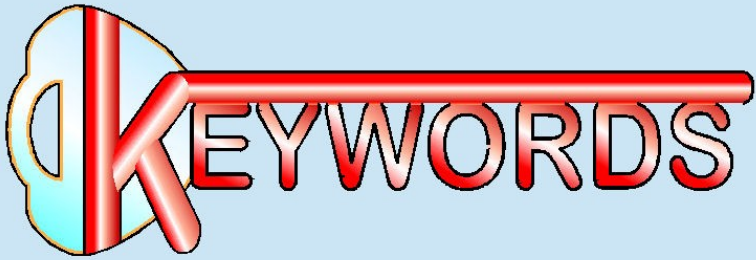


TUGNET



## A Monthly Publication of The Users' Group Network

### June 2009

### Volume 16 No. 6

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## This Month

### June 2 MailWasher Pro



Many of you saw Nick Bolton at the conference over the weekend. What a delightful couple Nick and his wife, Helen, are. He has come all the way from New Zealand to participate in the conference and was pleased when I invited him to our meeting. This is the only computer club (user group) meeting he'll be attending so let's show him how great we are!

If you were at the conference, please wear your badge holder (put your TUGNET badge in it when you come in). What a thrill it will be for him to see those tomorrow night!

(See *Meetings*, page 4)



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TUGNET is a non-profit computer users group. TUGNET's mailing address for membership information, submissions to the TUGNET Newsletter, or other club-related material, is TUGNET, 3926 Community, La Crescenta, CA 91214-2375.

We welcome your submissions, including technical questions or letters to the editor, on PC disk (in a popular word processing format), or by e-mail to Marian Radcliffe. **Hardcopy alone will no longer be accepted!! All submissions must be presented on disk or e-mail as described above!!** The number one rule when writing for us is: **Do not attempt to format your article**, except for bolding and italicizing. Instead, focus on writing a clear, organized, grammatically correct article. We'll take care of the rest. We reserve the right to edit as necessary for space considerations. Other non-profit user groups may reprint articles (except for those copyrighted) without prior permission, provided proper author, title and publication credits are given. Newsletter produced using Microsoft *Publisher*. Membership database is in Microsoft *Access*.

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## More Meetings

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(From *Meetings*, Page 1)

The ultimate spam blocker software. Stop spam and unwanted e-mail with the award winning *MailWasher Pro*. It's easy to use and very effective. Save time by only getting the e-mail you want. Over 8 million people use *MailWasher Pro* as their spam blocker. (You're apt to get the program free if you are here.)

He'll also tell you about a brand new program, *Encrypt*. He says they've solved a major problem with encryption – usability and user authentication. Now there will be no excuse to not send every e-mail encrypted without it affecting how the receiver gets their e-mail. This simple solution means you don't need to change anything about how you send email and also proves the identity of the sender.

Having Nick Bolton here is a rare treat for TUGNET members and their guests. Don't miss it!

### June 9 Topaz Labs Enhancement Software



We will be welcoming an old friend, Greg Rostami, to our June 9<sup>th</sup> meeting. If you attended the Computer Shows in the past, you have seen Greg – his was the booth that **always** had a crowd around it. The same still holds true since he had quite a group surrounding his booth at the Expo of the recent Southwest Computer Conference. Greg began his career in 1988 using computers to develop special effects for film and television; long before many even knew that such things were possible with personal computers.

From the ages of 20 to 24, Greg created graphics for animation projects, flying logos, on screen playback of monitors for sci-fi

movies and games. He broke into the big leagues with a job for Dream Quest working on a 70mm ride film project called *Space Shuttle America*.

For many, working on computer special effects for films such as *Batman Forever*, *Outbreak*, *Species*, *Under Siege 2: Dark Territory*, *Deep Blue Sea*, and *Mortal Combat* would be enough. Not for Greg. Always an innovator, he went to work for EDS Digital Studios where he developed technologies to restore films, including *Gone with the Wind* and *In the Heat of the Night*.

In 1999, he built the world's first all digital transfer process for Disney's animated features. His work on *Tarzan* changed the way Disney viewed electronic distribution, and was a critical element in the emerging E-Cinema technologies.

Today, Greg continues to contract special effects and animation projects. In 2006, Greg's love of image/video processing brought him together with Dr. Albert Yang from Topaz Labs. Over the last 3 years he has represented the revolutionary products of Topaz Labs which include:

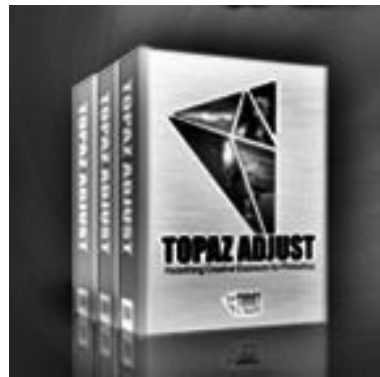
*Topaz Adjust*: A powerful & unique exposure, detail, and color adjustment tool

*Topaz Denoise*: Critically acclaimed the best noise/grain reduction technology

*Topaz Simplify*: Convert photos to stunning art without drawing skills

*Topaz Clean 2*: A power tool for converting photos to smooth and crisp art

*Topaz Vivacity*: An advanced collection of photo tools including 'Enlarge,' 'Sharpen' and 'DeJPEG'



Greg will be demonstrating never-before-seen solutions to common photography problems along with some amazing ways of effortlessly converting your photos into ready to frame art.

## June 16

### Microsoft *Office Excel*

We'll finally welcome Rani Stoddard back to give us a lesson on *Excel*. If you use *Excel*, you're bound to pick up a tip or trick to help you make it even more useful. Rani is quite an expert on the program so if you have any questions about it, this is when you can get an answer.



Microsoft *Office Excel* is a powerful and widely used tool that helps people analyze information to make more informed decisions. Based on the job you need to accomplish, whether it's creating a table or writing a formula, *Office Excel* presents the appropriate commands when you need them.

Since most of us have a spreadsheet program in our computers, we will see how we can make good use of it and Rani will help us to do so.

## June 23

### Computing 101 (date subject to change to June 30)

#### Preventive Maintenance

You spend a lot of money on your computer equipment – so learn how to take care of it, make it last longer, and keep it out of the repair shop! Come learn how to safely remove dust from your computer's innards, how to make your own cheap LCD screen cleaning fluid, identify needed upgrades, and speed your computer up like it was when you first bought it.



## Hardware Lab

This is the meeting when members can bring in a misbehaving computer. Our techies will try to make it work as it should. Please leave it in the car when you arrive and bring it in at the break.

## June 30

### Pot Luck, Business Meeting, More

Our pot luck, usually scheduled for a meeting in July, will see us kicking off the summer which officially began the week before, June 21<sup>st</sup>. Same procedure as in the past with everyone bringing a



dish of choice, hopefully serving about 10 people. If you are unable to do so, we'll seek a donation of \$10 to cover your meal – to be used to fill in the table as the committee feels necessary.

Following our scrumptious dinner we'll have a business meeting to discuss a number of things, including upcoming events.

Then we'll relax with some Fun Stuff and a few other activities being planned.

Hope you'll plan to be here!



## **What You Can Bring to the Meetings**

- **Recyclables:**

Cell Phones

CDs &

Floppy Disks

Ink Jet Cartridges

Toner Cartridges

Drink Cans & Bottles

- **Your checkbook**

to renew your membership if the label on the back page of this newsletter shows your expiration date is near. Why don't you check it now?

- **Your smiling face!**

## **Renewing Members**

Chris Christopher

William Cohen

Howard Friedowitz

and Susan Varon

Will Hector (Newsletter)

Kathy and

Steve Krogh

Lewis Siewert

Bill Susel

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# Door Prize Winners



## April 28

HD-PLC Canvas Bag: Arnold Giesbret  
*How Computers Work* (book): Asa Watanabe  
50-pack DVDs: Maritza Bodine  
Retractable Telephone Line Extender: Pierre Plauzoles

## May 5

*System Mechanic Professional*: Paul Flynn,  
Bill Geist and Anna Chung

## May 12

*Pinnacle Studio Ultimate 11*: Marian Radcliffe  
*The Facebook Era*: Anna Chung  
50-pak DVD-Rs: Helaine Cummins  
Mobile-net Reusable Bag: A.J. Camou

## May 19

Trend Micro *Internet Security*: Ray Ives  
50-pack DVD-R: Conrad Laliker  
*Speed It Up* (book): Dave Sanborn  
*Microsoft Windows Vista - Learning Series* (book):  
Chris Christopher  
ADI Canvas Bag: Marvin Hirsch

# Special Interest Groups

## Specializing in the unique interests of our members

### Novices and experts are welcome

**Real Estate SIG**  
**First Monday**  
**@ 7:00 p.m.**

February's Real Estate SIG meeting will attempt to continue keeping our knowledge current in all aspects of real estate.

Meets at Nancy Cook's home  
 818-349-1542  
[Cook8@aol.com](mailto:Cook8@aol.com)

**Investments SIG**  
**Second Monday**  
**@ 7:00 p.m.**

— Open Forum Discussion —

The What, Where, and How of Financial Investments.

Meeting at Nancy Cook's home  
 818-349-1542

Marcie Green (818) 594-1272  
[mercimarcie@hotmail.com](mailto:mercimarcie@hotmail.com)

**Imaging SIG**  
**Second Thursday**  
**@ 7:00 p.m.**

We will continue working with the *Photoshop* tutorials.

We find much can be learned from these lessons as we all want to hone our skills.

If there is a project anyone has in mind, bring it in and we'll try to work on it as well.

Meets at Granada Pavilion, Upstairs.

Contact Susan Phelps  
[sidecarsusie@earthlink.net](mailto:sidecarsusie@earthlink.net)

**Check with SIG leaders to confirm SIG meeting locations**

**Web Design SIG**  
**Third Thursday**  
**@ 7:00 p.m.**

Now that the SIGs have their own web sites, those attending will learn about adding new features.

The upcoming meeting will focus on downloading a server program and learn what to do with it. This will be particularly interesting for those who don't know they can create a server on their own machine.

Next David wants to learn about adding a contact manager.

David Wendt  
818-993-4204

Meets at Nancy Cook's home  
818-349-1542  
[Cook8@aol.com](mailto:Cook8@aol.com)

**Linux SIG**  
**Fourth Thursday**  
**@ 6:00 p.m.**

Join the throng to see if you are interested in adding Kubuntu to your partitioned system, ask questions and get good answers from an expert.

Attendees at Linux Kubuntu SIG explore the vast 23000 file collection for new and useful items

Meets at Nina Van Leeuwen's  
[ladynina1@gmail.com](mailto:ladynina1@gmail.com)  
818-784-6144

Bill Tracy  
[tracium@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tracium@sbcglobal.net)  
818-618-8741

**Check with SIG leaders  
to confirm SIG meeting  
locations**



**Discount to TUGNET members**

# Marian's Memos



MARIAN'S MEMOS MARIAN'S MEMOS MARIAN'S MEMOS

## **SOUTHWEST COMPUTER CONFERENCE**

The 2009 conference last month is in the history books as having the highest number of registered attendees ever. Once again, TUGNET had the most attendees among computer clubs. 39 of us enjoyed the lovely Town and Country Resort along with the varied conference activities. Also, our members took an active role entering and winning in the Digital Photo Contest, leading a number of workshops as well as pitching in to help when asked. I'm proud of all of you!

Those of you who didn't attend missed an outstanding weekend event so I hope you'll plan to attend next year.

## **YARD SALE**

The yard sale dates, June 12-13-14, will be upon us by the time this publication reaches you. I hope you have participated in some way: donating a bit of your time, donating items you are no longer using, or whatever way you found to participate. We do need everyone's help. Remember, help is needed after the sale closes also!

Tom Vogel, this year's chairman, deserves a big thank you along with the other major 'players' who make this happen: Nancy Cook, A.J. Camou, and others who will be mentioned in an upcoming review of the sale.

Although I am writing this before the event, I am confident that it will be as successful as our past sales and produce the funds we need.

**WEB SITE**

Kathy Koch, from her 'perch' up there in Washington State, continues to do an outstanding job with our web site. She keeps it up to date as we send her the current information. Although she has fallen behind on the past meetings, she has assured me that she will be bringing that portion up to date in the near future.



I hope you look at it often since she puts some interesting items up. For instance, as I looked this morning I discovered this:

**Siglet of the Moment**

*Computers make very fast, very accurate mistakes.*

Anybody not in agreement with that?

Thank you so much, Kathy! (Note how she's looking down on us from Washington)

**SPECIAL OFFERS**

Speaking of the web site, do you remember to check out the Special Offers when you are in the market for a product related to your computer? I know some who head down to Fry's without thinking that a better price may be had by taking just a few moments to see what is available via our web site. Most of the time what you are shopping for can wait when delivery is in a couple days and save you 'x' number of dollars.

Ed Jameson is working hard to keep the information current. There will be new and additional offers posted that are a result of

the recent conference. Do remember to check it out.

Please permit me to get on a soapbox here. The companies who make these offers expect them to be used. We have lost participation by more companies than you would imagine simply because the response to their offer was poor or nil. Even when it pertained to items I know our folks were looking for in the stores. Too bad!

We're going to try to feature a different offer each week which you can see on the screen as you enter the meeting room and I think I'll include one in our newsletter each month as well. Perhaps that will remind you to check them out.

### **SPECIAL EVENTS**

There are some exciting tours being considered for our future calendar. You'll find more information on page 22.

Keep in mind that a sheet for each to sign, showing you are interested, is available at our Tuesday meetings. If you would like to express an interest in one or more and don't get to a meeting, or forget at the meeting, just drop an e-mail to that effect to Kathy Krogh: [kakrogh@yahoo.com](mailto:kakrogh@yahoo.com).

Dates will be set as the interest in each is determined.

We thank Kathy and Helaine Cummins for the effort involved in organizing and setting up these terrific tours.

### **RIP**

It's sad to report that our former member, Ethan Albert, passed away last month. Ethan was an active member of TUGNET from 1997 until his health failed in 2007. During that time he served on the Board of Directors and attended regularly.

Our sincerely sympathy is extended to his family.



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# Highlights of Recent Meetings

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## WINE

(April 21)

When this is announced it sounds like you should bring your favorite goblet with you for tasting, doesn't it? Actually, this is an unusual name for software. Their slogan:

**“Leave *Windows* behind - but bring your apps with you”**



We welcomed Dan Kegel who explained how WINE can be a useful tool for running legacy applications without having to purchase *Windows* for every computer. Powerful trends today are making non-*Windows* operating systems attractive to many people and organizations, but everybody has a few key *Windows* applications they can't do without. This presentation showed us how and why you can leave *Windows* behind – and still use key *Windows* applications.

Linux is thought of as being ‘geeky.’ However, some computer makers are starting to load Linux on some of their systems, particularly since Ubuntu has made it much easier to use. It has thousands of applications and they are all free. New versions are readily available and as yet, there are few viruses. Since we all have our favorite apps that we wouldn't want to be without. WINE is actually a clone of *Windows* so all programs will run. If you have dozens of *Windows* apps, this is probably not for you. But if you only **need** a few, it might be a choice to consider. If your favorite program has a Linux version, that might be a better choice.

The process to run WINE is to download it at: [www.winehq.org](http://www.winehq.org). The web page tells you if the program needs anything special to run well. Sometimes it will tell you a new version is needed. (You

might be interested to know that there have been quite a few large companies who have contributed to WINE's progress.) Run WINE, then install your *Windows* apps. Your files will be in the WINE folder.

Note: there is no 64-bit support; Direct 3D coming.

Question: "Why is it named WINE?" Answer: **Windows Emulator**

Dan Kegel is a software engineer at Google working on the *Chrome* browser. He enjoys working on WINE in his copious spare time, and wrote the tool 'Winetricks' to make using WINE easier. He served as the release manager for WINE 1.0 in 2008. Dan started programming before MS-DOS came out, and has the scars to prove it.

Thank you, Dan, for enlightening us on a program of which we were not aware.



[www.winehq.org](http://www.winehq.org)

## Computing 101

(April 28)

Jay Cunnington continued his introduction of *Windows 7* which he started last month. Although this *Windows* "upgrade" won't be available for several months, at best, it helps us to know what to expect, therefore being able to make a more educated decision when the time comes. Everyone needs to know the hardware requirements, etc., so that anything you purchase will not need to be replaced to run the new version.

Jay finds it faster than *Vista* and comes in three versions which will be of interest to us: Home Premium, Professional and Ultimate.

A couple of changes he pointed out:

- The ‘Sidebar’ in the previous version is gone
- ‘Aero Snap’ is a new feature
- Improved taskbar and full screen previews
- Improved search



Jay is very pleased with *Windows 7* and is using it on his computers.

*Internet Explorer 8* was also discussed. It will now bring up a history list, ‘Jump List,’ with quick mouse swipe or right click.

Jay says we should upgrade since the security is so much better.

*Note:* Since Jay’s presentation it has been announced that *Windows 7* will be available for purchase October 22, 2009. We can be sure there will be much more said about this in the interim.

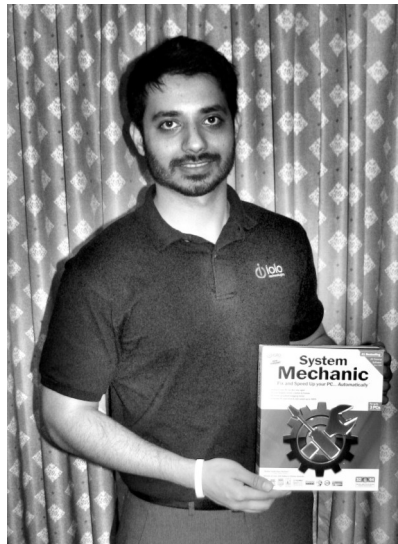
## ***System Mechanic Professional***

May 5

We had a look at the new version of one of our old favorites, *System Mechanic* by iolo technologies. With the tools included in the *System Mechanic* products you can boost your computer’s performance and stability with tools that work automatically or, if your prefer, manually.

We welcomed Abbas Mehdi back to show us their newest version.

He said, “People think a PC is like a car but that’s not the case



since, aside from the hard drive, there are no moving parts. A PC slows down because of the clutter that accumulates over time.” *System Mechanic* keeps our PCs running at peak performance two ways: manually for those who like to get ‘under the hood’ or automatically for the rest of us. He claims that we can extend the life of our computers five years by keeping it in good condition.

Their flagship product, *System Mechanic Professional*, protects and tunes your computer. Combining five award-winning iolo ‘PC Tune-up’ and data security products, *System Mechanic Professional* is everything you need to keep your PC safe, fast, and error-free. This is the first comprehensive utility product on the market compatible with 64-bit PCs. Hooray!

A few noted features:

- Incinerator will delete files permanently
- Safety net allows you to undo any changes
- Defrags sector by sector, creating a tighter file system which cuts down on future fragmentation
- New version will install automatically over an old version



Looking ahead, they have made the product compatible with the upcoming *Windows 7*, a real advantage to those who will be upgrading to the new operating system.

We thank Abbas for spending his evening with us – bringing us up to date on all that is new in *System Mechanic*. It is a subscription model but the program will work forever – just no updates. Be sure to check out the generous special price he offered us.

[www.iolo.com](http://www.iolo.com)

## ***DartPro***

(May 12)

There's been a lot of interest in retrieving that music you love from your old vinyl records and tapes. We've seen one product which will do that for us quite easily, and this week Larry Nye briefly showed us another product that has been around a long time but you've probably never heard of. It's *DartPro*, Audio Restoration and Noise Reduction Software, from an independent company in Minnesota. DARTECH produces award-winning audio restoration and noise reduction software products for users of all levels.



The web site says “Use *DART Pro MT* for superior 24-bit audio cleanup to vastly improve audio quality of older recordings (like LPs) plagued with hiss, clicks, hum and more.”

Larry explained that it does indeed do what it says, but is far more difficult. *DartPro* is designed more for professionals or experienced sound technicians than hobbyists and casual users as most of our members are.

[www.dartech.com](http://www.dartech.com)

## **Klassic Specialties**

**Check out Klassic Specialties at  
<http://www.klassicspecialties.com/tugnet.html>  
TUGNET members receive a 5% discount and  
TUGNET receives 5% of member's purchases.**



# Getting to Know . . . Tom Vogel

by Bill Tracy

APPRECIATION APPRECIATION APPRECIATION APPRECIATION

Tom was living in Buffalo, New York, when one Sunday he found himself driving on the highway and decided to just keep going. Crossing state after state, he eventually reached Los Angeles, California. When he found a job and a place to live, he decided to stay so called his sister, asking her to send him his stuff.



He was in the United States Marine Corp during the Viet Nam War. Along with many others, he was flown to the conflict which resulted in him being wounded, then flown back. With his Purple Heart he receives some well-earned medical benefits.

In 1984 he visited a Commodore Computer club in Balboa Park and became enamored with computers. He bought one and enjoyed playing the games that were so popular.

Tom is busy every day as he is involved with woodwork; making things is his source of income. Fishing in the Pacific Ocean is exciting to Tom. When his friend calls him to go to the Channel Islands, he is quick to rearrange his schedule, grab his pole, and head for the sea. He sadly admits he does not always bring fish back. Tom goes to many fishing Expositions to see what is new. Sometimes he'll come home with a new lure or hook so he'll be better prepared to return to the sea.

Tom put new shingles on the roof of his house a few years ago. Interestingly, a City Inspector was supposed to approve the job but never did. Tom is still waiting for that inspector.

He found TUGNET in 2007, started attending and became a member. By that time, he had stopped using his Commodore Computer and built a Personal Computer, so the presentations at TUGNET were particularly interesting. Guess what? He still has the Commodore! It is treasured and stored in a corner of the living room.

Tom's best friend is his dog who has been with him for 16 years. Sixteen years for a dog is 112 years for a human.

Living in North Hollywood, he is close to the Hollywood Freeway which he uses often, including when he heads to TUGNET. Tom's name was put on the ballot at the last election and, as you know, Tom was elected as a Director in January 2009. Within a few months, he was made chairman of the Annual Yard Sale. As a Director, Tom says he is learning a great deal; everyone is telling him what to do.

*Note from Marian:* We are delighted to have Tom as a member of our Board of Directors and hope he will continue for a long time!

# Possible TUGNET Events

**Kathy Krogh and  
Helaine Cummins**

ANNOUNCEMENT ANNOUNCEMENT ANNOUNCEMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

Here are some of the suggestions we'd like you to consider. As soon as we know your preferences, we'll start putting the trips together.

1. The Page Museum — Rancho La Brea Tar Pits  
Probably via car and carpools
2. The Peterson Auto Museum  
Probably via car and carpools
3. The Walt Disney Music Hall  
Via Orange Metro bus and Metro Rail
4. The Huntington Library, Arts and Botanical Gardens  
Probably via car and carpools
5. The Long Beach Aquarium Field Trip  
Via Metro Subway and Light Rail

We may be able to arrange a bus for some of these. Members have suggested other field trips to some interesting places, and information will soon be available for those future field trip suggestions.

Please e-mail your interest choices to:  
Helaine Cummins, [HelaineBC@verizon.net](mailto:HelaineBC@verizon.net)  
and Kathy Krogh, [kakrogh@yahoo.com](mailto:kakrogh@yahoo.com).

Thank you.

*Article*

# Cell Phone Knowledge

From E-Mail

ARTICLE ARTICLE ARTICLE ARTICLE ARTICLE ARTICLE ARTICLE

## 5 Things You Never Knew Your Cell Phone Could Do

For all the folks with cell phones. (This should be printed and kept in your car, purse, and wallet. Good information to have with you.)



There are a few things that can be done in times of grave emergencies.

Your mobile phone can actually be a life saver or an emergency tool for survival. Check out the things that you can do with it:

### **FIRST** **Emergency**

The Emergency Number worldwide for Mobile is 112. If you find yourself out of the coverage area of your mobile network and there is an Emergency, dial 112 and the mobile will search any existing network to establish the emergency number for you, and interestingly, this number 112 can be dialed even if the keypad is locked. Try it out.

### **SECOND** **Have you locked your keys in the car?**

Does your car have remote keyless entry? This may come in handy someday. Good reason to own a cell phone: If you lock your keys in the car and the spare keys are at home, call someone at home on their cell phone from your cell phone. Hold your cell phone about

a foot from your car door and have the person at your home press the unlock button, holding it near the mobile phone on their end. Your car will unlock. Saves someone from having to drive your keys to you. Distance is no object. You could be hundreds of miles away, and if you can reach someone who has the other 'remote' for your car, you can unlock the doors (or the trunk).

*Original Editor's Note:* It works fine! We tried it out and it unlocked our car over a cell phone!

### **THIRD**

#### **Hidden Battery Power**

Imagine your cell battery is very low. To activate, press the keys \*3370#. Your cell phone will restart with this reserve and the instrument will show a 50% increase in battery. This reserve will get charged when you charge your cell phone next time.

### **FOURTH**

#### **How to disable a STOLEN mobile phone?**

To check your Mobile phone's serial number, key in the following Digits on your phone: \*#06#. A 15-digit code will appear on the screen. This number is unique to your handset. Write it down and keep it somewhere safe..

If your phone gets stolen, you can phone your service provider and give them this code. They will then be able to block your handset so even if the thief changes the SIM card, your phone will be totally useless. You probably won't get your phone back, but at least you know that whoever stole it can't use/sell it either. If everybody does this, there would be no point in people stealing mobile phones.

And Finally.....

## **FIFTH**

### **Free Directory Service for Cells**

Cell phone companies are charging us \$1.00 to \$1.75 or more for 411 information calls when they don't have to. Most of us do not carry a telephone directory in our vehicle, which makes this situation even more of a problem. When you need to use the 411 information option, simply dial: 800-FREE411, or 800-373-3411 without incurring any charge at all. Program this into your cell phone now. This is sponsored by McDonalds.

### **Reloading Web Pages**

When your browser retrieves a page you have asked to see, it stores the page on your computer. If you ask for the same page again five minutes later, the program doesn't have to retrieve the page again -- it can reuse the copy it already has. The space your browser uses to store pages is called its cache (pronounced "cash").

Some of us hardly ever exit from our browsers, which is probably not a good idea for our long-term mental stability. If you are one of us, however, remember that the pages your browser has cached aren't normally reloaded from the Web (they're taken from your disk) until you reload them.

If you want to make sure that you're getting fresh pages, reload pages that you think may have changed since you last visited. Your browser is supposed to check whether a saved page has changed, but because the check sometimes doesn't work perfectly, an occasional Reload or Refresh command for pages that change frequently, such as stock prices or the weather report, is advisable.

Click the Reload or Refresh button on your browser's toolbar, or press Ctrl+R.

From Dan Gerber

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*Article*

# Five Ways to Keep the Dust Bunnies Out of a PC

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Guest post: This quite useful post by TechRepublic's Bill Detwiler originally appeared on the IT Dojo blog. Given this advice we all need to go dust bunny hunting.

If your users keep their PCs on the floor or they operate in dirty environments, the dust bunnies can quickly take over. Don't believe me — check out the dirty machines in our gallery of dirty computers.

Jody Gilbert, host of our 10 Thing blog, recently published a 10-point cleaning checklist for keeping equipment healthy. She reminds us that cleaning, although boring, is an essential part of regular system maintenance.

Yet as critical as cleaning is, I suggest you encourage users to try the following tips that will help keep their systems dirt-free in the first place.

- Don't keep the PC on the floor. I know this is a tough sell with many users. Tower cases naturally lend themselves to be placed on the floor, users often hate to give up their valuable desk top real estate, and older case fans can be a little loud. But, moving the computer off the floor is one of the best, and easiest, ways to keep the dust bunnies at bay.
- Keep the area around the PC clean. This can be tough in naturally dirty environments. (I know. I supported computers in coal-fired power plants.) Yet, most users should be able to regularly vacuum around their machines and keep the area

generally free of dirt and debris. This includes the tangle of cords and cables that snake their way around most PCs.

- Keep your pets away from the PC. I'm not suggesting you kick Fido out of the house for the sake of a clean computer. But, it's a good idea to keep pets, particularly long-haired ones, away from the computer while it's running. Intake fans and cat hair just don't mix.
- Don't regularly eat or drink directly over or right next to the PC. I know almost everyone, including myself, violates this rule. But, it's worth repeating. If you **are** going to eat and drink near a computer, just make sure you're not directly over the keyboard or the computer's case. And, don't set that 64oz soda or nonfat, chai latte right next to the PC. This goes double for laptops.
- Keep your sticky fingers off the PC. This seems like common sense, but I've seen enough dirty keyboards and mice to know that too many people refuse to wash their hands before they sit down at the computer. Why? Were they suddenly inspired to finish that sales presentation while eating hot wings and couldn't take 5 minutes to use the sink—or at least a wet nap?

### **RAM Issue**

If RAM errors start only after the PC has been running for a few minutes or during heavy workloads, you may have a cooling problem.

Check that the PC's fans are all running and that there is decent airflow over the RAM and other devices. Carefully blow out any dust.

Also, verify in the BIOS that the RAM is running at its specified voltage, such as 2.2v.

*From Smart Computing*

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*Article*

# Moving on to *Vista* – Part 14

by Neil Stahfest

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One of the features that I liked about previous versions of *Windows* was the ‘Search’ feature. Just click on the ‘Start’ button, Click on ‘Search’ and enter the file name that you want to find. If you have multiple hard drives, you can specify which ones to search. It’s easy and simple.

*Vista* is different. *Vista* has a totally new search feature that is in some ways easier to use, fast and very sophisticated. It doesn’t just try to match file names. It looks inside files and reads and searches the contents of text files, your *Windows* ‘Contacts’ and ‘Calendar,’ as well as any Microsoft *Office* files (documents,

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## *Vista has a totally new search feature that is in some ways easier to use*

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spreadsheets and *PowerPoint* files). To do this *Vista* automatically maintains an index file which contains all this information for the file linked to your personal user folder. To keep the index file from becoming too large and to speed up the search process, it does not maintain a list of files located in your *Windows* system folder, contents of application file folders or on a local computer network (information usually only useful to computer programmers). When you start searching for a file or word, it only has to check this index file to find what you want. The results are displayed almost as fast as you can type the search name.

To use the most basic features of *Vista's* search engine, click on the 'Start' button. When the 'Start Menu' appears, a 'Start Search' box appears directly above the 'Start Button.' As you start to type a folder or file name, a list of folders and files appears above the box. As you type more letters, the list of names becomes more specific. If you don't see what you are looking for, at the bottom of the list is an option to search for the file name on the Internet (assuming that you have an Internet connection of course). When you do this, the Internet search uses your default Internet search engine whether it be Microsoft, Google, Yahoo, etc.

The 'Search Results' window does not show the name of every file match found. Using some form of artificial intelligence, *Vista* limits itself to the 20 most likely matches. It shows them under file group headings such as 'Programs,' 'Files' and 'Communications.'

An interesting aspect of this feature is that you can point and click on a program listed in the 'Search Results' window and actually run it. Document or spreadsheet files can also be accessed this way. Printing at the file name activates the default file program, such as Microsoft *Word*.

Using this feature of *Vista's* search function moves it beyond just a way to locate files and folders. It becomes a way to quickly locate files and then take action to use them. To prepare this column I simply went to my desktop, clicked on the 'Start' Button, entered '*Vista.rtf*' in the 'Search Box' and then clicked on the file name to open it with my word processing program. How simple is that! No need to open a series of folders to burrow down to my *Vista* column files.

In most cases, doing the above steps will locate the information you are looking for. But suppose it doesn't. *Windows* will tell you that the information can't be located and suggest that you use some of the advanced search features. We'll address advanced search features next.

*Article*

# Best Web Sites for Geeky Savings

By Steven Steven Rosenberg  
Staff Writer, *Daily News*

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You wouldn't see me in line at the liquidated Circuit City.

Sure I darken the automatic doors of Best Buy every once in a while, and I'm a semi-regular at Fry's for sale items, but when it comes to computers and computer accessories, it's easier to find what I want – and get it for less – online.

Before I buy anything, I check Google's 'Product Search' site (<http://google.com/products>, or the cooler-sounding <http://froogle.google.com>). It's both a good place to get a feel for the price range of a product, as well as where to find it.

Another good resource is eBay, particularly if you'd be OK with (or actually prefer) a used part. Chances are more than a few somebodies are selling what you want, and that kind of competition tends to drive prices down.

Here are a few of my favorite online tech retailers (where prices are usually well below retail):

- [eCost.com](http://eCost.com): This is a site I learned about only recently. It offers a wide range of items, from everything tech to office supplies and sporting goods. At eCost, you can always find good prices on backup hard drives, with current deals including a 250-gigabyte Seagate FreeAgent drive for \$32.99, and a 500-GB

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Buffalo DriveStation Turbo for \$49. A refurbished Dell GX260 PC with 512 MB of RAM and Windows XP is \$131.99.

- A Buffalo 2-terabyte network storage system that's \$999.99 at OfficeDepot.com is only \$279. Sure its recertified, meaning slightly used, but that's quite a savings.
- TigerDirect.com: Tiger Direct will sell you every part, large and small, that goes into a personal computer, from CPUs and motherboards to mice and cables. The company also has great deals on things like HDTVs and video cameras. A 40-inch Toshiba 1080p LCD HDTV is \$689.99 until they run out.
- Newegg.com: NewEgg turns up the geek factor ever so slightly when compared to TigerDirect. A Western Digital 1-terabyte external hard drive that's \$119.99 at TigerDirect is \$10 cheaper (when this column deadline) at NewEgg. Can you tell I want every one of you to back up everything, preferably more than once?
- PacificGeek.com: This is one of my favorite sites. Its my source for old laptop memory and always has great deals on refurbished Dell and IBM computers. A Dell GX280, with a faster processor than that in the GX260 from eCost, the same amount of memory plus a free Firewire card is \$139.98.

While I may be stating the obvious, it always pays to shop around, and these Web sites make getting the best deal easier than ever.

***Editor's Note:*** The above-stated priced have undoubtedly changed since this column was published. However, they are included to give you a good idea of what the sites have to offer.

Steven Rosenberg also writes at <http://blogs.dailynews.com/click>

E-mail: [steven.rosenberg@dailynews.com](mailto:steven.rosenberg@dailynews.com).

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*Article*

# Things That You Can Do With That Flash Drive

by Ira Wilsker, Columnist  
*The Examiner*, Beaumont, TX; Radio Talk Show Host  
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With the demise of the floppy disk, and the approaching demise of the CD disc for data purposes, the USB flash drive has become the defacto method of saving and transporting files between computers. These small USB drives are known by a variety of monikers, such as flash drive, pen drive, pin drive, and thumb drive.

Since their introduction a few years ago, their capacity has increased, and their prices have plunged. They are readily available in the big box stores, discount stores, club stores, and online. The most recent ones I purchased for the holidays were 8 gig size (almost the equivalent of the data stored on 2 standard DVD discs, about a dozen CD discs, or about 5700 floppy disks), and cost under \$15 each. In the after-Christmas sales, some 8 gig flash drives were advertised for \$9 each (after rebate). This amount of non-volatile storage for the price was inconceivable just a few years ago.

I thought I was getting a bargain a few years ago when I bought my first flash drive, a 64mb Lexar, for \$49, and now a drive with about 64 times that capacity is about one-fourth the price! I have co-workers and students who wear their flash drives on cords around their necks, where they are referred to as 'geek beads.'

Most of us use the drive simply for portable storage, the ability to carry files around with us, but in reality these flash drives can do much more than to simply be used for storage. Most of the USB flash drives on the market today comply with the USB 2.0 standard for high speed transfer, while there still are a few inex-

pensive, low capacity drives that are of the slower USB 1.1 speed standard, or only about 3% of the speed of the USB 2.0 drives. From a practical viewpoint, the user will not notice any significant difference in speed if small files are saved and read, but will notice a difference if large files are used.

There are some other standards for USB flash drives that many users may find beneficial, if their flash drives have the capabilities.

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***Windows Vista introduces  
Windows ‘ReadyBoost,’ a new concept  
in adding memory to a system***

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Users of Microsoft *Vista* (*Home Basic*, *Home Premium*, *Business*, and *Ultimate* versions) may find it advantageous to purchase flash drives that are labeled as ‘ReadyBoost.’ According to Microsoft, *Windows Vista* introduces *Windows ‘ReadyBoost,’* a new concept in adding memory to a system. You can use non-volatile flash memory, such as that on a universal serial bus (USB) flash drive, to improve performance without having to add additional memory ‘under the hood.’ If the drive is compatible with the ‘ReadyBoost’ standard, some of the flash memory in the drive can effectively and temporarily be added to the RAM (memory) installed in the computer, with an improvement on performance.

If the *Vista* user with a compatible flash drive right clicks on the flash drive letter displayed under ‘My Computer’ or *Windows Explorer*, and then left clicks on ‘Properties - ReadyBoost,’ *Vista* will recommend how much of the available memory on the drive can be effectively and safely utilized by *Vista*. Other data stored on the ‘ReadyBoost’ drive is protected from damage, and will not be harmed if the drive is used as a ‘ReadyBoost’ drive. Because of the higher performance requirements, ‘ReadyBoost’ compatible flash drives are slightly more expensive than standard

drives, but are often the least expensive way to add memory to a *Vista* computer.

Another useful feature often found on a USB flash drive is known as ‘U3.’ Drives that are ‘U3’ compatible are labeled as such. A ‘U3’ powered flash drive allows the user to carry special versions of hundreds of programs on the flash drive that can be run directly from the flash drive without being installed on the computer. This is an effective way to carry the actual software the user is familiar with, and run it on other computers.

When unplugged from the computer, ‘U3’ leaves no data or other information left on the computer that was used. Some of the popular programs that come in ‘U3’ formats are the *Firefox* browser, Skype telephone, McAfee Anti-virus (about \$15), *Robo-Form Password Manager*, *OpenOffice* (the comprehensive suite of office software including a Microsoft compatible word processor, spreadsheet, presentation program, database, and more, free), *Thunderbird* email client, and dozens of games. Most ‘U3’ drives

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***For those of us who have standard  
non-‘U3’ drives, there is now  
an alternative***

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come pre-installed with password protection and a ‘U3 Launchpad’ which is a menu driven directory of the software on the ‘U3’ drive.

For those of us who have standard non-‘U3’ drives, there is now an alternative that provides for the same functionality. This alternative to ‘U3’ that will run on almost all contemporary flash drives is called ‘PortableApps,’ and can be found online at [portableapps.com](http://portableapps.com). According to the PortableApp website, “A portable app is a computer program that you can carry around with you on a portable device and use on any *Windows* computer. When your

USB flash drive, portable hard drive, iPod or other portable device is plugged in, you have access to your software and personal data just as you would on your own PC. And when you unplug the device, none of your personal data is left behind.”

Dozens of portable apps are available, including the *Firefox* browser, *OpenOffice* office suite, antivirus software, games, password managers, and many other pieces of software. The PortableApp Suite is totally free, and does not contain any spyware or adware. In addition to the bundled suite, there are many other programs available, almost all free, which will run as portable apps. The PortableApp website keeps a running tally of new software that is available, including new releases and versions, as well as beta (pre-release) software. A simple click will install the selected software on the flash drive.

Now that many of us are routinely carrying flash drives, it is nice to know that they may be capable of doing much more for us than just transport data.

#### WEBSITES:

<http://portableapps.com>

[http://u3.sandisk.com/download/Download\\_no.asp](http://u3.sandisk.com/download/Download_no.asp)

<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windows-vista/features/readyboost.aspx>

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[www.tugnet.org/offers.htm#publications](http://www.tugnet.org/offers.htm#publications)

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# Are You Experiencing Technical Difficulties?

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**HelpContact** is a **FREE** service to members of TUGNET only. The following volunteers have offered to field questions with software and hardware listed. Please be considerate of the volunteer you are contacting. **If you'd like to have your name added to the list, call or e-mail the editor.** Need help on a subject and there's no name listed for it? Try calling one of the SIG leaders.

**DOS**

Jim Burton  
jimbo1928@pacbell.net  
818-344-5300

**Eudora**

Roger Poverny  
rogerp@socal.rr.com

**Hardware Installation**

Jay Cunnington  
jay@jayscomputershop.com  
Jayscomputershop.com  
818-362-8015

**Internet—General**

Roger Poverny  
(See "Eudora")

**Internet Explorer**

Jay Cunnington  
(See Hardware Installation")

**Microsoft Publisher**

Kay Winnert  
lazydazy@winnert.com  
818-884-9441

**Outlook Express**

Jay Cunnington  
(See "Hardware Installation")

**Pagemaker**

Roger Poverny  
(See "Eudora")

**Print Artist**

Jim Burton  
(See "DOS")

**Quickbooks Pro 5**

Rich Kimmell  
sales@brakelathe.net

**Windows thru 95**

Jay Cunnington  
(See "Hardware Installation")

**Windows 98**

Jim Burton  
(See "DOS")

**Windows ME**

Jim Burton  
(See "DOS")

Jay Cunnington

(See "Hardware Installation")

**Windows XP**

Jim Burton  
(See "DOS")

Jay Cunnington

(See under "Hardware Installation")

## DOOR PRIZE POLICY

Only members are eligible to win a door prize. Members must also attend the full presentation in order to qualify for that night's drawing. This is the arrangement that the vendors who donate the door prizes expect and that is the policy we will follow for all meetings. To reduce the distraction of the seated audience and the presenter, registration and the distribution of name badges will cease at the start of the presentation. Those members not yet registered, but who are present at the start of the presentation will be registered and given their badges during the break. Members arriving more than ten minutes after the presentation began have not met the attendance requirement and will not be eligible for the drawing.

### *Word*

Marcie Green  
merci2mar@yahoo.com  
818-594-1272

### *WordPerfect*

Marian Radcliffe  
MarianRad@1stNetUSA.net

Marcie Green  
(See "Word")

Susan Kennedy  
flamingfury@intergate.com

## Why Join TUGNET?

There are many reasons why you will benefit from a TUGNET membership. Here are a few of the most obvious:

**Weekly Meetings** where you'll see the latest and greatest computer products presented by well-known, as well as lesser-known, industry representatives.

**Special Pricing** often offered only to TUGNET members.

**Door Prizes** at the weekly meetings.

**Other Special Offers** that regularly come to us .

**Monthly Newsletter, Keywords,** delivered to your mail box.

**Special Interest Groups** on a variety of subjects.

**Help** with computer-related problems, both at the meetings and via our "Help Contacts."

**Products** that become yours when the editor accepts your written review.

**Late-breaking information** and offers e-mailed to members only.

**Volunteer** opportunity to help with the many activities that keep TUGNET a viable organization.

**Is that enough?** Okay, you'll find a membership application on Page 39. in this newsletter!

# June 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 SIG Meeting: Real Estate	2 Mail Washer & Encrypt From Firerust	3	4	5	6
7	8 SIG Meeting: Investment	9 Topaz Labs Photo Enhance- ment	10 Special Board Meeting	11 SIG Meeting: Imaging	12 Yard Sale	13 Yard Sale Newsletter Deadline
14 Yard Sale Flag Day	15	16 <i>Excel</i> with Rani Stoddard	17	18 SIG Meeting: Web Design	19	20
21 Father's Day Summer Begins	22 SIG Meeting: Media	23 Computing 101	24 Board Meeting	25 SIG Meeting: Linux	26	27
28	29	30 Pot Luck, Busi- ness Meeting	All meetings begin at 7:00 p.m.			

# TUGNET Membership Application

[ ] New [ ] Renewal [ ] Update

I hereby apply for membership in The Users' Group Network. I understand I will be entitled to attend meetings, receive the monthly newsletter and be eligible for special offers that become available from time to time.

Badge Name First Last

**Please Print**

Address  
City, State, Zip +4

Phone: Home Work Date:

E-mail **Please Print:**

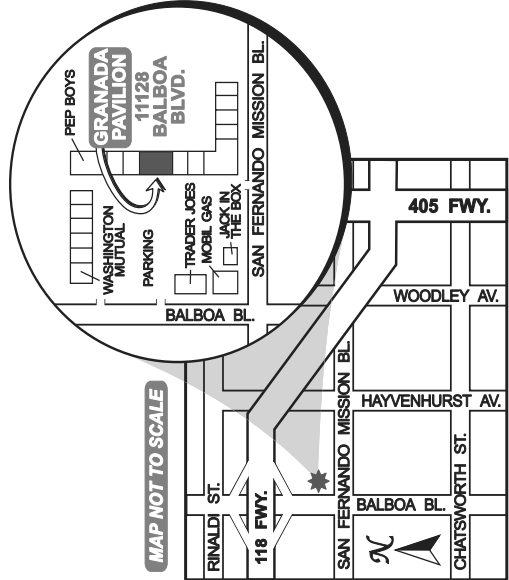
Signature:

Annual Membership	\$45.00	Gold Key Membership	\$100.00
Annual Husband/wife	\$75.00	Gold Key Spouses	\$130.00
Three-year Single	\$120.00	Newsletter Subscription	\$15.00

Please return this form with the  
Correct amount to:  
TUGNET  
3926 Community Avenue  
La Crescenta, CA 91214



**3926 Community Ave.  
La Crescenta CA 91214-2375**



**Tuesday meetings at Granada Pavilion,  
11128 Balboa Blvd., Granada Hills.**