

# Abort, Retry, Ignore...



## Computers Are Easy User Group



January 2005

Suggested Retail Price \$1.95

Volume XXI

Issue 01

### Hard Drive HouseKeeping Is Vital by Dennis Schulman, Tampa Bay Computer Society

For those of you who surf the net on a regular basis - and that includes those who use dialup access as well as cable or DSL - it is absolutely crucial that you take your hard drive housekeeping more seriously than you ever thought necessary. Many users think that by having a suite of utilities, such as Norton or McAfee, that you are protected. You might be, but I seriously doubt it for so many reasons I won't go into it now except for three:

You use auto update and auto scan. This requires that your computer be online at the time to run the auto update. In the case of cable or DSL, that is possible, but the computer has to be on at the time also. In the case of dialup, the computer won't go online unless your password is saved and used automatically. That, of course, defeats keeping friends and annoying children from messing up the computer without your knowledge. So, you might want to run your antivirus update manually, just to make certain it worked and there were no errors.

The second reason is based on the fact that if you did not clean house before scanning, you risk the possibility of the antivirus finding a virus it could not delete or quarantine and you did not know it. You also risk the possibility of not knowing if the auto update was not run successfully for one of many reasons (and time and space won't permit that discussion at this time) and consequently your subsequent full system auto scan may not be able to recognize the latest nasties you have managed to acquire.

There is a third, more obtuse, reason. If you don't really know if your system is truly clean and clear of all the bad stuff, how will you know what to do when you get a message that says something to the effect: "It has been determined that your computer has been sending messages infected with the \_\_\_\_\_ trojan horse virus to what appears to be the email listing of your address book. If you do not take appropriate action immediately, your email service will be discontinued. If your anti virus program has failed to protect you, please download the following trojan horse removal tool and run it immediately."

So, here is a housekeeping procedure I use - which is manual - because then I am more certain that I know the status of my files than most of the "suite" programs. And it

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Calendar  
of  
Events

!!!IMPORTANT!!!

Meeting date  
Saturday  
January 22  
Time 9:45 - noon

\* \* \* \* \*

MEETING PLACE  
will be the  
Glenside Public  
Library

\* \* \* \* \*

SEE YOU  
THERE!!

\* \* \* \* \*

COD  
Computer  
Show Dates

2005  
January 30  
February 27  
April 24  
May 22

**CAEUG OFFICERS & CHAIRPERSONS**



President	John Spizzirri
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Webmaster	
& Technical Consultant	John St. Clair
Coffee Service	Joan Thompson
Picnic Chairpersons	Mike Goldberg Roger Kinzie

Reminder: You'll get better, faster service if you use CAEUG in the subject of your e-mail.

**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 HP Laserjet III. 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.

**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??

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

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

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

## Great Midwest Computer Show

Next show date  
SUNDAY January 30  
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  
Kids 12 and under FREE  
<http://www.greatmidwestcomputershow.com>  
E-mail address:  
[info@greatmidwestcomputershow.com](mailto:info@greatmidwestcomputershow.com)

## Great Midwest Computer Show © 2005 dates

January 30, 2005 at COD  
February 27, 2005 at COD  
April 24, 2005 at COD  
May 22, 2005 at COD  
June 26, 2005 at COD  
July 31, 2005 at COD  
August 28, 2005 at COD  
September 25, 2005 at COD  
October 30, 2005 at COD  
November 20, 2005 at COD  
December 18, 2005 at COD

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 \$50.00 a year for 10 months. This is \$20 annual savings over buying them for \$7 each month. Lynn Johnson, the treasurer, will keep track of anyone placing a 10-month order.

(cont' from page 1)

doesn't use much - if any - of my system resources except when I use it. Just in case you think you have all the utilities you need, let me comment that I am not an expert on your system, but I spend more time now than ever before on systems that have too many over-burdensome utilities that are truly unnecessary and in some cases more dangerous than what they claimed to be designed to do. What I am proposing is basically using 3 little free utilities that only work when invoked, along with utilities that already come with your computer.

Run Disk Cleanup (under System Tools under Accessories on the Programs menu) and process all options (don't worry about compressed files, but do them at a later time when you have nothing else to do, since it could take quite a while if you haven't done it the first time.)

Clear your browser cache (In Internet Explorer go to Tools, Internet Options. Delete cookies and delete all offline files.) In Netscape Communicator go to Edit, Preferences, Advanced, Clear Memory Cache and Clear Disk Cache)

Open Windows Explorer (right-click on My Computer, select Explore), Select the folders/ View option and select show all files except system files (You can leave it this way.) Find any folders called tmp, temp, or cookies. Unless you have a good working knowledge of what cookies you

need or do not need, you probably don't need the contents of any of the temp, cookies, or temporary internet folders except the index.dat file (you might want to save the contents of the History folder)

### Empty the Recycle Bin

Update and run the latest core version of Adaware SE Personal Edition (currently version 1.05). Once the scan is complete, click on an object found, right-click a lined item and select all, click next and remove all.

Update and run the latest version of Spybot (currently version 1.3.) Before running the scan, run immunize. Then run Look for Problems. Once problems are found, select them all and click on Fix Problems.

Note: Some spyware may be associated with programs you want to use, so read the help section for a further understanding of the features and options on both of these programs. These spyware objects detector utilities can be downloaded from [download.com](http://download.com) or [majorgeeks.com](http://majorgeeks.com).

There is a third utility, called a hijack remover. There are many available, but I like CWSshredder.exe (current version 2.00) (use [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) to find the program) Just make certain you are not online and that your browser is not open when you run it. You may be

(cont' on page 4)

surprised and pleased if it finds something and fixes it (generally really bad stuff).

Now you should be able to update and run your antivirus more successfully than ever before. The only catch is that it takes time. Once you figure out about how much time each step takes, you can determine whether you can walk away and come back later when it is done.

I recommend running HouseKeeping at the end of every day you go online - if you can manage it. (cough! cough!) Otherwise, run it every 3 days for certain.

Now, if you know your computer is clean and pure, then this is the only condition to justify running the defragmentation utility (once a week or twice a month). Defrag does not "fix" anything. It enhances the performance of a healthy environment. If you attempt to defrag a "sick" system, you could make it worse to the extent that the computer will fail to boot or run. If you have Windows 2000 or Windows XP, you can run defrag directly. If you have Windows Me, 98, or 95, run it in Safe Mode. I prefer running Defrag in Safe Mode as I have a UPS and the computer can complete the defrag, even if the lights go out in the house.

Now that you have successfully learned the housekeeping routine and understand its importance without the need for complex and sometimes dangerous free software utilities that can cause conflicts, you can set up the program scheduler to run your housekeeping routine for you and just check up on it from time to time to see that it is accomplishing your wishes.

Feel free to email me for further details and other fine, free utilities available for keeping your hard drive and system performing at its best.

Dennis Schulman, known as the PC Miracle Man, has been a practicing field consultant in Largo, Florida for over 22 years. He has been a member of the Tampa Bay Computer Society for over 15 years and was the editor of its sometimes 40-page newsletter for 5 years. He can be contacted at [dschulman@myrapidsys.com](mailto:dschulman@myrapidsys.com).

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## Gmail

by Dr. Herbert A. Goldstein  
 Editor, Sarasota PC Monitor  
 Sarasota FL PC Users Group  
 ( <http://www.spcug.org> - [pcug@comcast.net](mailto:pcug@comcast.net) )

Gmail is a new, free, web based email service from Google, the people who brought us that remarkable search engine. Gmail, as offered today, is an experiment in a new kind of email. Similar to

Hotmail, it has some important differences. Its foundation is the concept that emails need never be deleted, and you should always be able to find any message at any time by searching for it.

There are several major reasons why Google's concept of how email should work is suspect. You get one gigabyte of storage space for your Gmails. No other Internet Service Provider offers even one-tenth of this amount. With this quantity of space available, deleting mail seems less urgent.

In Outlook, when you delete an email message, it really isn't deleted. You're simply transferring it to another folder. Deleting it permanently from that folder requires confirmation on your part. Outlook doesn't make you go to the Recycle Bin to finish the job, but some Internet Service Providers aren't so considerate.

With Gmail it seems much easier to let the messages accumulate, and use the search feature to find what you want when you need it. Even if you decide to delete the message, it may not be gone. Google says that deleted messages will remain on the system, and they will be accessible at the company's web site for as long as Google cares to keep the information.

Because of a new law in California, Google was forced to admit that the company will be pooling any information you give them from any of their services. They will keep this information not only as long as they wish, but they reserve the right to give it to whomever they wish. Don't worry, however. Google probably has confidence that its intentions are good. Its corporate motto is "Don't be evil". It says so in their corporate IPO filing to the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Upon close examination, Google's privacy policies aren't any different from Amazon, Microsoft, and others. Their good guy image derives from their unconventional corporate culture coupled with their astonishingly successful search engine.

Most people have no idea what's in the Electronic Communications Privacy Act, and why should they? Most people aren't legal scholars. One of the Act's provisions says that after 180 days, emails are no longer protected. Their status reverts to just another record in a database. Any level of government, from local to national, can force Google to release your records armed with nothing more than a subpoena.

(con't on page 5)

Google has never issued any statements about its relationships with other countries, and this should give you cause for concern. Check out the language in the agreement you have to make with Google when you sign up for Gmail. You are giving permission for Google to release your Gmail records to any official from any government, U.S. or otherwise, who requests it for any reason. Would you even want to send an email to someone who has a Gmail account, knowing that your email may be examined by a foreign government?

Google has also stated that your email will be scanned so that you can receive advertising and links to relevant web sites. This applies to both incoming and outgoing email. Nothing in any of Google's policies or public statements applies to those of us who don't have Gmail accounts. There is nothing in Google's privacy policy that would prevent them from storing a list of keywords scanned from incoming email, and associating these keywords with the incoming email address in their database. Google has promised their advertisers won't receive any information that would allow personal identification, but what's to stop Google from keeping this information for some other future use? No one except Google knows if the company has deleted any of the data they've collected since going online. The cookie they dropped on your hard drive doesn't expire until 2038, and it's kept track of every search term you've ever used. How's that for scary?

We don't know for certain if Google will build a colossal database derived from keywords associated with email addresses. If that does turn out to be the case however, there is incredible potential for abuse. The RIAA has sent out thousands of "John Doe" and "Jane Doe" subpoenas to Universities and Internet Service Providers to identify people who download MP3 files illegally. If the RIAA can force AOL to comply, they can do it with Google.

Would an intelligence agency make anything sinister of keywords like "Send us the secret Martha, it's only a recipe, not a nuclear launch code"? Much more ominous would be combinations like jihad coupled with assassination. All kinds of patterns can be generated from keyword combinations. We're beginning to sound like paranoid conspiracy theorists, but the potential for abuse is real and should not be ignored. What

makes Gmail appear so suspicious, sinister, and frightening is the enormous storage capacity that Google offers, combined with its super efficient search engine.

There is also the problem of inappropriate ad matching. Stories abound about online merchants who send themselves email for testing, and discover that something in their emails generates ads for their competitors. The "Backspace" section of the October 5, 2004 issue of PC Magazine shows a juxtaposition of an advertisement for an all-inclusive vacation in the Caribbean along with an ad that says "Just say no to all-inclusive".

Gmail was launched presumably as a response from Google users complaining about the poor quality of their current email services. Be careful what you wish for.

The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you.

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### Simple But Powerful Tools Find Misplaced PC Files

By Gabe Goldberg [gabe@gabegold.com](mailto:gabe@gabegold.com)

As PCs have gotten more powerful in every dimension - faster processors, larger memories, and (especially) giant hard drives — software developers have kept pace by bloating their applications. Where PCs once ran happily with 10 megabyte (not gigabyte!) disk drives, now most applications are many times that size, containing hundreds or thousands of files. As applications proliferate and users create their own blizzards of data files (documents, pictures, sound and video files, etc.) PC files become needles in a haystack.

Or, more annoyingly accurate, PCs are like gigantic haystacks hiding needles, since a PC's pile of files is always much more visible than the one file that's missing. Windows versions include a built-in tool for locating files. It's sometimes called Search and sometimes called Find; I guess that Finding sounds more optimistic than Searching. But they share problems: they don't search inside all filetypes (files' types are the second part of their names, what follows the dot, such as "doc" for Microsoft Word files), they don't always find all copies of files, they may completely skip files, and they run slowly.

Picking a file search tool is like choosing a Web browser or your favorite ice cream flavor: a matter of very personal taste. The search tool (or browser or ice cream) you favor matters less than your knowing about choices.

Sometimes it's hard to escape an already-made choice, to try the unfamiliar — though the pleasure of discovering a new favorite flavor helps the process along. This article describes two powerful utilities that

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January 2005

## Minutes of CAEUG Meeting December 4, 2004

President John Spizzirri called the combined November/December meeting to order at 9:50 am.

There were 31 members in attendance and 4 guests.

The minutes were approved as printed in the ARI.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Johnson reported the last couple of month's financials due to her being away on personal business. She will have the November/December report ready for the January 2005 meeting

### Old Business:

President Spizzirri reminded everyone that the next computer show at COD is Sunday December 19th and asked volunteers to work at our table. Remember your admission cost is reimbursed by the club.

President Spizzirri also advised of the need for articles for the newsletter, submit articles to Kathy Groce. You can e-mail her at [kgroce@iwon.com](mailto:kgroce@iwon.com)

The new brochure is ready to be printed; prices have been obtained.

New Business: There was no new business this month.

Members' Forum: A question was asked if DOS can be used in Win XP to print directory files. Press F-8 during boot up, go to DOS mode. XP is not very friendly to DOS. Another question pertained to problems with Win XP SP2. Apparently it affects SBC DSL by turning it off. It was also noted that Win XP SP2 will not open certain photos files either. It was announced that AVG Anti-Virus at <http://www.grisoft.com> has released version 7.0. This is an upgrade that works with Win XP SP2. They have also eliminated the separate e-mail registration where you had to wait for the response and then key in your number.

Abort, Retry, Ignore..

President Spizzirri recognized that Past President Larry Bothe was present at the meeting.

John Spizzirri advised of the contents of this month's CD of the Month. As you know the CD has been divided into two parts. The CAEUG Basic CD consists of the basic files that are on the CD each month and are updated when necessary. The Basic CD will cost \$5.00 each. The monthly CD will have files that are not repeated. The Monthly CD will cost \$7.00 each. All new members will be given a CAEUG Basic CD as part of their membership. President Spizzirri reminded that you can preorder, on a prepaid basis and save money, the CD of the Month prepaid for only \$50.00 for ten CD's. See Treasurer Lynn Johnson for if you wish to sign up.

We then took a break for coffee and doughnuts, bagels, muffins and conversation.

Raffle items this month included:

Microsoft Office Pro v 4.3

Family Tree Maker 2005

3-D Album v 2.0

JASC Paint Shop Pro v 5.0

Program Presentation:

Terry Ryan of Tyche Technologies Inc. an Internet Architect, presented a program on how to set up a personal web site. Terry is self-employed. Her web site is <http://www.tychetech.com>.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Dean Holste, Acting Secretary

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Several articles in this newsletter have been provided by The Editorial Committee of APCUG. Special thanks for their contribution to computer club newsletters.



The Lamp Post Number 58  
by John Spizzirri  
January 14, 2005



I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season. I would wager that you used a credit card at least once in the weeks that led up to the New Year. Being security aware, you probably did not make any of the common mistakes that allow others to steal your identity. Philip Cummings, or someone like him, could have compromised your identity. Philip was involved in a conspiracy to steal identities. It is fortunate for the victims that he worked in the United States. His job could have just as easily been 'off-shored' and no one would have found out who stole the identities. The only satisfaction for the victims is that Phil will spend some years in prison. Get the full detail of this story at <http://www.securitypipeline.com/showArticle.jhtml?articleId=57700846>

Mike Goldberg tipped me off to a site that has a database of companies that do computer recycling. Some of the companies charge, while others do not. Check it at <http://www.nrc-recycle.org/resources/electronics/search/getlisting.php> .

In case any of you are thinking about Internet dating, you should check out this story, <http://www.cbc.ca/story/world/national/2005/01/13/black-widow-050113.htm> or this one [http://www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/email/news/breaking\\_news/10624201.htm?1c](http://www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/email/news/breaking_news/10624201.htm?1c) Melissa Ann Friedrich a.k.a Melissa Ann Stewart of Pinellas Park, Florida uses Christian dating Web site to find her victims. She has been charged with trying to poison her most recent 73-year old boy friend after she depleted his accounts of nearly \$20,000. She has had two husbands that have not survived the marriages.

Here, <http://www.securitypipeline.com/showArticle.jhtml?articleId=56900729> , is an article that takes you step by step in identifying and removing spyware on your machine. The article recommends the same free software that is on the Basic CD of the month. It also talks about Microsoft's (MS <http://www.microsoft.com/> ) purchase of Giant Company Software ( <http://www.giantcompany.com/> ) a producer of anti-spyware software. MS calls the product it purchased Windows AntiSpyware. It requires Windows 2k or newer (no 9x or ME). The Windows AntiSpyware program is available for a 'beta' download (6.3MB) at <http://www.microsoft.com/athome/security/spyware/software/default.msp> . I will include it on the CD of the month for January, but as of this writing I am not sure how or if it will work. TheRegister reprinted another article from Security Focus, a subscription site, at [http://www.theregister.co.uk/2005/01/07/microsoft\\_anti\\_spyware/](http://www.theregister.co.uk/2005/01/07/microsoft_anti_spyware/) .

I'm from Microsoft and I'm here to help you. Sound familiar? Windows Digital Rights Management (DRM) is MS's way to protect the rights of music manufacturers (not the artists). Crackers have found the security holes in DRM that allow spyware, adware, and virii to be loaded on your machine. The MS wisdom is to protect corporate interests at your expense. Crackers take advantage of anything MS does. The trojan is called WmvDownloader with a dot a or dot b extension. A few video files that are traded on some peer to peer sites are infected. These files, when executed, download the bad stuff to your machine pretending to download the licenses for the video file. The story, <http://www.securitypipeline.com/showArticle.jhtml?articleId=57700549> , has some startling details. McAfee details the action of the trojan at [http://vil.nai.com/vil/content/v\\_130855.htm](http://vil.nai.com/vil/content/v_130855.htm) . Most antivirus software, if updated, will remove this ploy that affects only Windows Media Player 10 in Windows XP with Service Pack (SP) 2.

Is someone you know in college or ever been to college? You may want to check how that college is handling sensitive ID information. George Mason University computers were cracked and 30,000  
(con't on page 8)

identifications were exposed to theft. Many colleges and universities use the Social Security Number (SSN) as an identification number for students in violation of the intent and letter of the law (in the mid 1930's). The Social Security Administration ( <http://www.ssa.gov/> ) has the information on the law today. The story about GMU is at [http://news.zdnet.com/2100-1009\\_22-5519592.html?tag=nl.e550](http://news.zdnet.com/2100-1009_22-5519592.html?tag=nl.e550) .

MS will be offering a virus clean up tool, soon. Whether it is part of Windows Update or offered separately is unclear. Its function will be to clean machines that become infected and NOT to prevent an infection. You may recall the Blaster virus required a clean up tool. This new tool will be an all-purpose tool. I will post any information about it as soon as it is released. The story is at [http://www.theregister.co.uk/2005/01/11/ms\\_viral\\_clean-up\\_tool/](http://www.theregister.co.uk/2005/01/11/ms_viral_clean-up_tool/) .

Secunia, an antivirus software company, released news of another flaw in Internet Explorer (IE) at <http://secunia.com/advisories/12889/> . The flaw allows unwanted HTML (HyperText Markup Language) code to execute on the victims PC. This vulnerability only exists on PC running Windows XP with SP2. Available on the site is a test to see if you are vulnerable. My advice is to use Firefox 1.0 to avoid all IE problems.

Secunia and Security Focus both announced security flaws in Mozilla, Firefox, and Thunderbird. The flaws are all in older versions of the browsers and the e-mail client. Find detail at <http://www.securityfocus.com/archive/1/386070/2005-01-04/2005-01-10/0> . The Basic CD of the month has the newest versions of all the software.

You are aware that the Illinois Toll Highway Authority ( <http://www.illinoistollway.com/> ) doubled the tolls for cash paying customers on January 1, 2005. There was a quick approval process where the tollway board ignored the dissenting voices. If you were a vocal or silent dissenter, someone has taken up your cause. Boycott the Illinois Tollway at <http://www.tollwayboycott.com/> has detailed alternate routes and methods of how to complain. I was on the tollway just before the toll increase. I thought about a method of protest that, to my knowledge, no one has yet to say in public. The way I will protest the toll increase is to drive the speed limit in the center or right lane, of course. You cannot drive the speed limit in the left (fast) lane because you can be arrested for obstructing traffic. Yes Virginia, you can be arrested for doing the maximum-posted speed limit. I drove the speed limit on that last trip and EVERYONE passed me except a UPS semi, who was also doing the speed limit. If protesters would drive the speed limit, the tollways would turn into very long parking lots. The protest is not just the doubling of tolls on highways that were supposed to be paid off in 2001 but the whole I-Pass concept. The I-Pass keeps track of every toll you pay by date and TIME. The toll authority is a quasi-governmental unit. The toll authority in Oklahoma has the PikePass, a device like the I-Pass. Oklahoma police have issued speeding tickets to vehicles that had elapsed times that indicated they were speeding. Governmental cooperation at it's finest. I would expect Illinois to do the same. The I-Pass also keeps track of where you go in the system. I, for one, do not need another governmental body looking over my shoulder. If you use the I-Pass you pay a penalty if you do not use a credit card. You must pay in advance. You must list every car that the I-Pass may be in and notify the Authority when you move it to another vehicle. If you own a Buick Roadmaster, Oldsmobile Silhouette, Pontiac Montana, Pontiac Transport, Cadillac Catera, Mercedes S class, New Mercedes E class, New BMW 7 series, or New BMW 5 series you cannot use an I-Pass because the windshields in these cars do not allow the I-Pass to work. As you can see, I do not like the heavy-handed tactic and intrusion of the Tollway Authority. With this most recent cold snap, you may want to think about ways to save money on energy. The Department of Energy has a helpful site with tips on what to do to conserve energy and money at <http://www.eere.energy.gov/consumerinfo/> . That may become even more important because Nicor, the northern Illinois natural gas company, has asked the Illinois Commerce Commission for a rate increase. The site with Nicor's justification is at [http://www.nicorinc.com/en\\_us/residential/rate\\_case/index.htm](http://www.nicorinc.com/en_us/residential/rate_case/index.htm) .

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Several articles in this newsletter have been provided by The Editorial Committee of APCUG.

Special thanks for their contribution to computer club newsletters.

Symantec (<http://www.symantec.com/>) bought Veritas (<http://www.veritas.com/>). With this move Symantec is becoming the MS of the antivirus, antispysware, and backup business. Veritas is a tape backup software for large installations.

If you haven't heard, Google is trying to out-Gutenberg, Project Gutenberg. Google has a plan to digitize all the books in 'several large libraries' (about 15 million books) and index them for searches. This program will take about ten years and a lot of money. The details are at

<http://print.google.com/googleprint/library.html> . Project Gutenberg is the plan to transcribe all books out of copyright for access on the Internet. The Web page is <http://promo.net/pg/> .

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

can be your PC's lost-and-found. But remember that many other choices are available on software download sites such as [www.tucows.com/](http://www.tucows.com/) .

Agent Ransack (a free download) and FileLocator Pro (\$25), near-twin-brother file-find utilities, greatly surpass Windows' native tools: they're faster, friendlier, more flexible, and more accurate. Both programs are easy downloads (less than two megabytes) and install by simply executing the downloaded .exe file. They offer many tasty features. For example...

1) They display file lines containing your search string with their filenames: an overdue facility, and much more useful than displaying only filenames!

2) They can search multiple unrelated (non-nested) folders: what a concept, and so much better than having to repeat searches!

3) They can save and reuse search criteria. So if you ever repeat file searches — for example, to find all files containing your family name — you'll save time.

4) They allow saving and printing lists of files found: very helpful if a file search is the first step in a larger process which manipulates found files.

5) Both programs provide basic and expert interfaces. This choice allows using only simple search functions or enabling more detailed search criteria.

6) The programmer's tool "regular expressions" provide a more powerful wildcard notation than "\*" for specifying matching search strings and filenames. Nearly everyone gets along just fine without using these, but people who like them \*really\* like them.

You'll be encouraged to register Agent Ransack. This is optional but a friendly gesture towards the developer who makes the program available.

Big brother FileLocator Pro — whose registration cost includes a year of updates — adds several features: it searches additional filetypes (PDF, ZIP, etc.); it displays found file lines as they appear in the file, with customizable numbers of lines above and below each one; it allows immediate inspection of found files with a built-in viewer or tailorable external editor; it provides a detailed status line with found-file statistics; and it's programmable via scripting and plug-ins.

While it's perhaps a little unfashionable, I

appreciate the 24-page FileLocator Pro manual. Full of screenshots illustrating basic and advanced facilities, it's a quick read revealing tips and nuggets that might otherwise be missed.

After paying for and downloading FileLocator Pro, you'll be given a registration key that enables using the program past the free evaluation period. You'll apply the key by executing a small registry update file or by copying a string from an e-mail into a dialogue box. Note that while you're safe executing the registry update file from a trusted vendor, caution is required with such files and they should \*not\* be accepted and executed from strangers.

A minor oddity is that invoking either product via right-clicking a folder in Windows Explorer — a handy facility — starts a new copy of the search tool rather than making an open copy the active window.

Until PCs can read our minds and do what we want without detailed instructions, tools like Agent Ransack and FileLocator Pro are great productivity enhancers. And don't neglect options available in Windows built-in search tools: they can tailor and refine searches to be more effective.

Specifications

Company: Mythic Software

Programs: Agent Ransack, FileLocator Pro

URL: [www.mythicsoft.com](http://www.mythicsoft.com)

Price: Free (Agent Ransack); \$25 (FileLocator Pro)

OS: Windows 95 or newer

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## FIRST CLASS MAIL

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### Meeting place and date information:

The next REGULAR meeting will be held at the  
Glenside Public Library in Glendale Heights  
starting 9:45am on  
Saturday January 22

The library is located. Please park at the West side of the lot, away from the building. Thank you.  
The meeting(s) are not library sponsored and all inquiries should be directed to John Spizzirri.  
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, John  
Spizzirri, at least five (5) days prior to the program, so that reasonable accommodation can be made  
for them.

CONFIRMED Meeting dates for 2005 at Glenside Public Library:  
February 26, March 26, April 23, May 28, June CAEUG Picnic (date will be announced at a  
later date)

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**\*\*NEW\*\*** 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. Both are  
available at the meeting.

Presenter to be announced

Hope to see you there.