

# COMPUTER NEWS



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*Seasons Greetings from your editor. Recently I got a new computer with Windows 7, but due to complications with the editor's computer, this is a very small newsletter this month. You will receive a longer issue in the future.*



*The Napa Valley Personal Computer Users Group has served novice and experienced computer users since 1983. Through its monthly meetings, newsletters, online forum, special interest groups, mentor program and community involvement, it has helped educate people of all ages. The NVPCUG provides opportunities for people to find friends who share common interests and experiences. From January 2003 to October 2007 the NVPCUG provided 783 computers and 140 printers to local schools. Additional equipment has been given to charitable nonprofit organizations and to disadvantaged individuals.*

## Members of the NVPCUG YOU'RE INVITED

**WHAT:** Annual Holiday Potluck Party for Members

**WHEN:** Wednesday,  
December 16th  
at 6:00 PM

**WHERE:** Peterson's Family  
Christmas Tree Farm  
**(IN THE CHRISTMAS HOUSE)**  
1120 Darms Lane, Napa

**BRING A POTLUCK DISH (PLUS BYOB)**

**R.S.V.P. TO DIANNEPRIOR: [prior@napanet.net](mailto:prior@napanet.net)**

OR

**CALL HER AT: 252-1506**

**PUT "NVPCUG PARTY" IN THE SUBJECT AREA. LET ME KNOW YOUR NAME, HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE ATTENDING WITH YOU, WHAT YOU ARE BRINGING FOR THE POTLUCK, AND IF YOU CAN BRING EXTRA FOLDING CHAIRS OR HELP WITH CLEANUP.**

**THE COMPUTER USERS GROUP WILL PROVIDE NONALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, PAPER PLATES, CUPS, PLASTIC WARE, NAPKINS, & KENTUCKY FRIED CHICKEN. AT THIS EVENT WE WILL INTRODUCE THE NEW OFFICERS AND PRESENT THE MEMBER OF THE YEAR AWARD. THIS IS A TIME TO VISIT WITH OLD FRIENDS AND MAKE NEW ONES. WE HOPE TO SEE YOU ALL THERE. THE PARTY IS ALWAYS A LOT OF FUN AND THE FOOD IS GREAT AND PLENTIFUL.**

*Could you use some practical information that would help you make better use of your computer? Come to this meeting! Guests are always welcome. Admission is always free.*

*Interested in becoming a member? See page 8 for application information.*



# Napa Valley Personal Computer Users Group Contact Information

## Officers for 2009

### Board of Directors

<b>President</b>	Ron Dack	unlisted	<a href="mailto:President@nvpcug.org">President@nvpcug.org</a>
<b>Vice President</b>	Dick Peterson	738-1812	<a href="mailto:VicePresident@nvpcug.org">VicePresident@nvpcug.org</a>
<b>Secretary</b>	Marcia Waddell	252-2060	<a href="mailto:Secretary@nvpcug.org">Secretary@nvpcug.org</a>
<b>Treasurer</b>	Roy Wagner	253-2721	<a href="mailto:Treasurer@nvpcug.org">Treasurer@nvpcug.org</a>
<b>Other Directors:</b>	Susy Ball, Ron Dack, Jim Gray, Dick Peterson, Bob Simmerman, Kathy Slavens, Dean Unruh, Marcia Waddell, and Roy Wagner.		
<b>Director</b>	Jim Gray	unlisted	<a href="mailto:Director_Gray@nvpcug.org">Director_Gray@nvpcug.org</a>

### Appointed Officers

<b>Computer Tutor Coordinator</b>	Jeff Solomon	553-2114	<a href="mailto:Tutor@nvpcug.org">Tutor@nvpcug.org</a>
<b>Facility Arrangements Coordinator</b>	Dianne Prior	252-1506	<a href="mailto:Facility@nvpcug.org">Facility@nvpcug.org</a>
<b>Greeter Coordinator</b>	Kathy Slavens	251-9193	<a href="mailto:Greeter@nvpcug.org">Greeter@nvpcug.org</a>
<b>Greeter Coordinator</b>	Bob Simmerman	259-6113	<a href="mailto:Greeter2@nvpcug.org">Greeter2@nvpcug.org</a>
<b>Librarian</b>	Dean Unruh	226-9164	<a href="mailto:Librarian@nvpcug.org">Librarian@nvpcug.org</a>
<b>Membership Director</b>	Bob Simmerman	259-6113	<a href="mailto:Membership@nvpcug.org">Membership@nvpcug.org</a>
<b>Newsletter Circulator</b>	Jim Hearn	224-2540	<a href="mailto:Circulation@nvpcug.org">Circulation@nvpcug.org</a>
<b>Newsletter Editor</b>	Susy Ball	337-3998	<a href="mailto:Editor@nvpcug.org">Editor@nvpcug.org</a>
<b>Product Review CoCoordinator</b>	Susy Ball	337-3998	<a href="mailto:Reviews@nvpcug.org">Reviews@nvpcug.org</a>
<b>Product Review CoCoordinator</b>	Marcia Waddell	252-2060	<a href="mailto:Reviews2@nvpcug.org">Reviews2@nvpcug.org</a>
<b>Programs Director</b>	Susy Ball	337-3998	<a href="mailto:Programs@nvpcug.org">Programs@nvpcug.org</a>
<b>Publicity Director</b>	Ron Dack	unlisted	<a href="mailto:Publicity@nvpcug.org">Publicity@nvpcug.org</a>
<b>Random Access Moderator</b>	Jerry Brown	254-9607	<a href="mailto:Questions@nvpcug.org">Questions@nvpcug.org</a>
<b>Special Projects Director</b>	<b>VOLUNTEER NEEDED</b>		<a href="mailto:Projects@nvpcug.org">Projects@nvpcug.org</a>
<b>Webmaster</b>	Ron Dack	unlisted	<a href="mailto:Webmaster@nvpcug.org">Webmaster@nvpcug.org</a>

• All telephone numbers are in Area Code 707.

## NVPCUG Computer News

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Editor: **Susy Ball**,  
[Editor@nvpcug.org](mailto:Editor@nvpcug.org).

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# dotCrime Manifesto

Reviewed by John Lundgren, Member, NOCCC (North Orange County Computer Club) California, Orange Bytes, August 2009, [www.noccc.org](http://www.noccc.org), [editor@noccc.org](mailto:editor@noccc.org)

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This is a book review of the above hard cover book, which has a subtitle (in upper case) of HOW TO STOP INTERNET CRIME. The ISBN-13 is 978-0-321-50358-9; the publisher is Addison-Wesley. The book has four sections: 1. 'People not bits', 2. 'Stopping the cycle', 3. 'Tools of the trade', and 4. 'The accountable web'.

The book is a bit more than 400 pages. MSRP=\$24. A 35% discount is available when ordered from the publisher if your user group is a member of the Pearson User Group Program) (<http://www.informit.com/store/product.aspx?isbn=0321544714>)

The author, Phillip Hallam-Baker, lectures and knows how to keep his audience's attention, at least in print, since I can't speak for his in-person lectures. Although the book's subject seems rather dry, this author kept me entertained with anecdotes such as the Mr. Coffee machine example on P. 62, and good Web historical content. It's not filled with geek speak, it's an excellent Layman's guide, and I think it's a good read. I should point out that although the author is British, I thought it odd that I didn't find the text to have typically British grammar; perhaps that's because his employer is a U.S. company. To help the reader refresh, each chapter is ended with a page of Key Points for review. Some examples have a reference number and in the back of the book there is a list of reference notes for each chapter.

This book discusses the Internet crime problem with historical examples and in the future what must be changed to reduce this problem. The book describes the crimes on the web, and points out that they are essentially the same crimes that have been going on for eternity, just that they have now been adapted to the web. It's the same old fraud, confidence games, tricksters, liars, cheats and thieves. Hallam then points out that the reason these crimes prosper on the Net is lack of accountability, and how this makes it difficult or impossible for law enforcement to trace down the suspect. He explains his well thought-out solutions to these problems.

One example he uses is the automobile, and how early on people found that license plates and driver's licenses, and traffic laws that made people accountable have helped to make the highways a much safer place.

Hallam then shows how to make the net accountable through the widespread use of public key encryption to make certain that transmissions are really from where they say they're from. Again I should point out that as the author stated in the preface he has deliberately avoided the use of Geek Speak, or jargon. This helps the layman

to truly understand the simple, underlying principles and methods he lays out.

The author is a senior at Verisign, and thus has to speak for his company at times when he puts forth solutions, since his company is involved in this. But the book is not a sales brochure for his company's products. Throughout the book, he stresses the user's experience, and how security and accountability must not negatively impact the user.



I quote one of my favorites: "The user is ... bombarded with information he simply doesn't need, such as warning dialogs of the type that lawyers write to dump responsibility for security onto the user." I can speak from my own experience how important this is. I have seen situations where, in the name of security, the password complexity and mandatory change intervals are so onerous that most users have their passwords written on a Post-it on their monitor. This completely defeats the security! Anyone can walk up and sign on as another person.

In one example that Hallam used, you want to know that your child is visiting a chat room that is for children, and that other chatters are not pedophiles posing as children. Some form of authentication must be required so that the chat room users must prove that they are children, yet must not require the child to reveal his or her true identity. Then I had to think about his example of Alice, and her visit to the local bar. He points out that the bartender only needs to know that Alice is of legal drinking age, but Alice does not need to prove that she is Alice - that's none of the bartender's business. And the bartender does not need to know how many times Alice has been there before.

Thus, when Alice shows her driver's license, it is really revealing too much information. These are interesting thoughts, now that he has compared the online world to a situation in the real world I hope you find this book as enjoyable as I did. I just hope that his accountability solutions are soon implemented; they were desperately needed long ago.

## A Few Closing words

I must mention spam, for that is one subject the author discusses. Right now our email statistics show that more than 90 percent of all emails are spam, which means we are continually deluged with a tsunami of junk emails. Of

the remaining 10%, some of those emails are spam that managed to sneak through, so the actual percentage is even higher than 90 percent. Statistics from some authoritative sources say it's 92 percent. That small percentage that sneaks through is still enough to make it worthwhile for the spammers. If no one bought any of their fraudulently advertised products, the spammers would have to do something else to make money. Two wise advisories are: 1. Never buy anything advertised in junk email. 2. Never click on a link that is in a junk email. This is especially true for phishing emails, those that say



# Google Docs 4Everyone

Reviewed by John Krill, Member, NOCCC (North Orange County Computer Club) California, Orange Bytes, August 2009, [www.noccc.org](http://www.noccc.org), [editor@noccc.org](mailto:editor@noccc.org)

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Confession first: I'm a big Google fan. After two nightmare situations with Yahoo!, I went over to the bright side and got a Gmail account. Now I have four Gmail accounts. The center of my Internet existence is Google's Personal Web portal. I also use Google Blogger for three blogs. Lastly there is Picasa for organizing all my photos and the Picasa's web space for displaying the photos I want to share with others.

The one Google application that I have wanted to use but have put it off is Google Docs. This application is a word processor, spreadsheet, and presentation program in one wrapper. Why use Google Docs when Microsoft Word and Excel are fast and easy to use? The primary reason is Google Docs ability to easily collaborate and share with others.

You can't learn this stuff on your own — can you? That's where Google Docs 4Everyone comes into play. Let's be honest I really didn't think I needed a manual to learn Google Docs. I was wrong. The first chapter alone gave me information on Google accounts that I've already taken advantage of. If you only read about the collaboration tools (Chapters 5, 8, and 10) in Google Docs you will benefit greatly. The book covers word processing, spreadsheets,

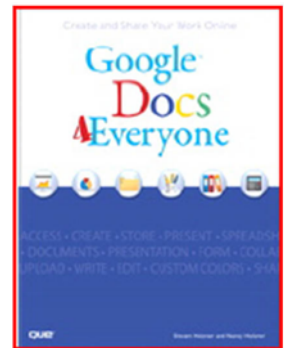
your bank or Paypal requires you to verify your account. If you have reason to believe that the email might be true, go to your web browser and type in the URL for the bank or [www.paypal.com](http://www.paypal.com), and log in using this method. If you click on a link in a junk email, it will steal your account and password. My hope is that all the spammers get thrown in jail. I was elated to read recently that a prolific spammer was locked up for 3-1/2 years. The problem is there are many more out there. Will the Net survive? Only time will tell. ■

presentations, and collaborating and sharing the documents you work with in Google Docs.

Remember the manual you received with your software? Well Google Docs 4Everyone is your manual for Google Docs. It's that simple. Most of you have a wealth of knowledge using word processors, spreadsheets, and presentation software and what you need is a manual that gives the basics of Google Docs, especially its limits. The important subjects are those that make Google Docs special. Primarily its collaboration tools and Google Docs ability to publish to the Web and post to blogs. It's all covered in Google Docs 4Everyone.

This book is very much recommended. I'm now a big fan of Google Docs because of Google Docs 4Everyone. The list price for Google Docs 4Everyone is \$19.99 and it can be had at Amazon for \$13.59. (It also can be ordered from the publisher with a 35% discount if your group is a member of the Pearson User Group program). ■

*Google Docs 4Everyone is authored by Steven Holzner and Nancy Holzner. 251 Pages. Publisher: QUE, 800 East 9th St., Indianapolis, Indiana, 46240. (<http://www.informit.com/store/product.aspx?isbn=0789739364>)*



## Dedicated Backup Hard Drive

In order to avoid a data loss disaster, invest in an external hard drive. This device will serve as a separate location where you can save your PC's photos, music, and important documents from a data loss disaster. Most external hard drives have preloaded backup software that will help you choose the files or folders you want to automatically back up, so be sure to look for that feature.

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**Editors Note:** I thought this would be the perfect opportunity to remind you how important backups. I found out the hard way. I neglected to make a backup of my data when I after I moved it all to an external drive. Last week it failed and after taking it to several stores, I was told it was toast and I would have to pay over \$1,000 to retrieve the data from it. Just before I was told it appeared to be a fried drive, I was told that Hitachi Drives are low end drives and not to expect too much. I did have one consolation. Costco took back the drive. I turned around and bought another one and then I made a second copy on a separate drive of the files I was able to salvage. So remember ... **BACKUP!**

# Build it, Fix it, Own it

## A Beginner's Guide to Building and Upgrading a PC

Review by Joe Mizer, a member of NOCCC (North Orange County Computer Club, CA),  
[www.noccc.org](http://www.noccc.org), [editor@noccc.org](mailto:editor@noccc.org)

*This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).*

This book, published by QUE, is a good guide to understanding a PC from the inside out. Building a PC is easier than selecting stereo and video entertainment equipment for your home; you decide on the features you want and the performance level desired. In both situations the components inside a PC such as the mother board, memory, disk drives, optical drives, sound cards, and video cards all have standard interfaces and when connected, become a PC inside the case you selected.

This book is targeted for beginners with the desire to build a PC from scratch. The book is laid out in two parts; the first part is about getting to know your PC. The chapters cover in detail the options and decisions to be made when selecting a motherboard, and CPU, memory type and size, drives, audio and video options, networking, parts and building skills. The author in a step-by-step approach discusses the choices available with each of these components and how to guarantee your selections will operate as a fast and reliable system. This book was an introduction into the technology changes that have occurred since I last built a system from scratch. My understanding of the latest hardware options, are clearly much different from the past. In fact, many of the performance changes make the devices more than just updated versions of those available only a few years ago.

In a careful step-by-step journey, the book explains the technology so you will really understand the choices you need to make when selecting the parts for your new computer and how to get the best deals on the parts you decide on. My favorite chapter in the first section is chapter six which introduces the reader to networking and security without the complex technical discussions which are normally included with networking. The second part of the book puts all of the details discussed in part one into action by designing five computers, each as a project / chapter and aimed at different jobs. Chapter 10 Building a Basic Business PC explains goals and expected requirements as well as how to select components and to overcome problems you will probably encounter. A detailed assembly section answers a lot of the expected questions, and gives a check list procedure to actually use when powering up a new machine for the first time. Chapter 11 is on Building a home theater PC. This project builds a computer which connects to your television either analog or digital, your audio system, cable box, gaming interface, and other digital and analog devices. Chapter 12's project

is Building a high performance computer. Chapter 13's project is Building a Killer Gaming PC, and Chapter 14 covers building a Building a Budget PC.

The most important reason for building a new computer is the chance to configure it exactly as you want it - you can have a blazing fast machine or an average business computer. You can have the best audio or the

standard small speakers, and the best of all internal components, or not. You also get to select the operating system of your choice, which in my opinion is not any version of Vista. As you can guess I do not like the Vista operating system, and really I do not know whether Vista is the problem or just that I am out of date again. This is why I am now going to read "Windows Vista" by Steve Johnson and see if I can learn to do things the Vista way.

Avoiding only one mistake will easily save you more than that amount. I recommend this book because since I last built a system, so much has changed in the hardware available, I was just plain not up to speed on selecting the best stuff. With this book at my side, even though I skipped the chapters on salvaging parts from old computers and renovating old computers because I just don't like to reuse old parts. I now feel I know the questions to ask and where to get advice when making the necessary decisions to build a new system, hopefully it will be faster and live longer. ■

*This book is available from amazon.com, the publisher (<http://www.informit.com/store/product.aspx?isbn=0789738279>) And, of course, your local book store. The list price is \$29.99 USA. ISBN-13 978-0-7897-3827-1*



### Backup Battery

A backup battery for your digital camera or other CE device is useful only if it is fresh; for optimum performance from your backup, be sure to:

- keep it out of the heat (which can drain the battery faster)
- keep it out of the cold (condensation can form and cause corrosion)
- remember that even a charged NiMH (nickel-metal hydride battery) battery will lose its power over time, so it's a good idea to recharge it if it has been sitting around for a while

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# Let's never forget the first king: DOS

Written by Rick Smith, a member of the Channel Islands PC Users Group, CA,  
[www.cipcug.org/vccomputers.com](http://www.cipcug.org/vccomputers.com), [Rants@vcmail.net](mailto:Rants@vcmail.net)

Oh where, oh where has my little DOS gone.  
Oh where, oh where can it be,  
with its life cut short and windows cut long  
Oh where, oh where can it be?

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Some might say that I'm losing it, but you cannot lose what you never had. Where has DOS gone? Some might say it's still around in the various forms of Linux. Others might say it's buried deep in Microsoft operating systems waiting to be called out by a powerful wizard to cast potent spells with a command prompt. But most of us just believe that it's just lost, never to be found again. Like a lost pet that you once had affection for, once it's gone you seem to remember only the good times and seem to forget all the problems that it caused you.

DOS does that to people. There are still a few of you "old-timers," and you know who you are! Those who sit at the doughnut table at club meetings and reminisce about the "good ol' days" when all you needed was a Northgate keyboard and a monochrome screen to have absolute power over your world. You know what I'm talking about. Way back when people spoke about computers with fear and awe. They were things better left to experts and shady government entities. The quickest way to kill a conversation in those days was to talk command line technobabble. It always made everyone in the room feel uncomfortable that they couldn't understand you, like you were speaking a different language.

On the flip side, though, it gave you an incredible feeling of power, that you, and you alone, could master the savage beast and control your own destiny. Neh Ahh Ahh Yahh. (Sometimes I think all those comic books I read have permanently warped my thinking.) But really, didn't you feel special? That you and you alone, could master something that would make others wince and shirk away. You didn't have to be popular at school. You didn't have to be good looking. You didn't have to be wealthy. You did not have to have any of those things that everyone else needed to be important. You had knowledge.

And knowing the secrets of the PC universe, did you use that knowledge to gain wisdom or for greed? I think most of you, unfortunately, like me, used it for personal greed. We gave ourselves over to the dark side of the force and used our skill to enrich ourselves financially. But eventually as we all grew older, and some of us wiser, we started using our skills to teach and help others, which led you to me, to read these words and words of others in this tome. You all became a band of brothers forming the fellowship of the DOS.

And just! And just as your powers were at their peak, everything came crashing down like the Jedi of old. A new power rose in the universe to supplant the old ways. Windows came rushing down like a wind from heaven with trumpets blazing and fire and smoke billowing up in great clouds. And when this behemoth came to rest, its great weight crushed the last vestiges of DOS underneath its feet.

A new group came forth to rule the PC world. A group of men, and, yes, women, too, who knew nothing of the old ways but were formed from clay in the new ways. These new acolytes grew up in the ways of the PC, each having their own since they were young.

Gone was command prompt. In was the mouse. The wizards of old became legend. And after time they have become forgotten to be remembered by only a few at computer club meetings. There are still a few prophets preaching to us not to forget the old ways. I saw one at last month's meeting giving a history lesson at the club meeting. But they are old and feeble now with most of their words echoing on deaf ears.

So I say to all today! Remember the DOS! Don't let the old ways die, as you never know when you will be called upon as I have this week to use my skills again. Fortunately, I have not been found wanting as I was able to vanquish the beast with my skill at the command prompt. I have beaten down one enemy, but more are waiting to attack.

So be on your guard, be ready, and be faithful to the cause. Put away your mice as they are no use against such foes. Operate your PC only with the keyboard and keep yourself ready for the fight. For it shall come. It shall come. ■

## Go Wireless

If you play your video games online, but you don't want a big fat Ethernet cable snaking into your family room, make your network wireless. You'll need a wireless access point and/or a router to provide Internet connections to your PCs, and you'll need an 802.11b or 802.11g wireless adapter for your Xbox or PS2. You can buy these adapters from companies such as LinkSys or Dlink. Establish the Internet connection on the adapter (the instructions in the box tell you how) and then plug the adapter into the game console. Power up the console, enter the network configuration screens, and enter your username and password to access the gaming network.

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