



March 7, 2002 Meeting Announcement Endicia and Nick Chase

The March DVPC meeting is going to be a double header: we will have Patrick Whitehead of Endicia (www.endicia.com) telling about their Internet on-line postage system, followed by our own Nick Chase who will discuss video editing. Endicia Internet Postage lets you print postage over the Web — all you need is your PC, a laser or inkjet printer, and an Internet connection. Patrick will be showing us ways of using our computers to print out postage, calculate rates, check postal regulations, and even how to set up for express and priority mailings. Then Nick Chase will discuss video editing, and the hardware and software you'll need to do it on your PC. Nick will also touch on music production, so you can add sound to your video productions. Nick always puts on a great show, with lots of information. This will be an interesting evening. We'll see you there!

DVPC meetings are held in the lobby conference room in Building B at the Bank of America Technology Center office complex in Concord, located near the northeast corner of Clayton Road at Galindo (see the Map to Monthly Meetings on page 15). Please use the entrance that's on the east side near the southeast corner of the building. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. and the meeting starts at 7:00 p.m.

The New Users SIG holds its meetings at 6:30 p.m. prior to the regular DVPC monthly meeting on the first Thursday of each month at Bank of America building B. We discuss whatever is confusing or puzzling new PC users. If you are a new user of PCs who would like to meet with other new users — and some experienced users who can answer your questions as well — then join us at the New Users SIG meetings at 6:30 p.m. prior to each DVPC monthly meeting.

We'll also have the Networking Table from 6:30 to 7:00; if you have something to sell or trade, need technical help, or just want to exchange views, visit the Networking Table. We will have one of our pre-meeting games, with a great prize for the winner! Also, as usual, we'll have library disks and those great DVPC mugs (version 2) for sale, SIG news, and some of our usual great door prizes.

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President's Corner

by [Alan Mildwurm](#), DVPC

I am really pleased to announce that this month we will be treated to a double program. Our own Nick Chase has volunteered to do a digital "multimedia" presentation. As many of you know, Nick is on the cutting edge when it comes to new technology dealing with digital music and video presentations. Craig Peterson has arranged for us to see a presentation on an "at home" (my description) post office. I am certain there will be no disgruntled attendees!

Next month we will see a presentation from Microsoft on digital photography that will tie in with FrontPage, PhotoDraw and some interesting new Microsoft products. If that wasn't enough, we will also have our annual elections. As we say every year — we want more member participation on the Board. I want to encourage every member to think about becoming more active in the club — whether running for the Board, starting (or

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President's Corner...

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joining) a SIG, mentoring others, giving presentations, suggesting speakers/topics, helping with advertising – anything. This is a volunteer organization and it works best with lots of volunteers!

I hope to get Chris Pirillo, host of [TechTV's Call for Help](http://www.techtv.com/callforhelp/) program (www.techtv.com/callforhelp/) and purveyor of the [Lockergnome](http://www.lockergnome.com/) web site and email newsletters, as our speaker for our May. Talk about energy – if you've seen Chris on the cable TV show, you know what I mean.

Beyond that – what would *you* like? Let me know what presentations you would like to see in the upcoming months. Send me an email at awm@mildwurm.com or come up and talk to me at a monthly meeting.

Caveat Emptor by [Alan Mildwurm](#), DVPC

I had hoped to get an article done this month on the [Belkin KVMA](#) switch that I showed you at the last meeting. While the switch is terrific, I just haven't had time to get the article finished and will do so shortly. In the interim, an interesting thing occurred which I thought I would share with you.

I have my own domain, which I use for email: awm@mildwurm.com. No ego problems here! Anyway, it came up for renewal in January, and prior to the renewal date I got a bill in the mail from a company asking me to send them \$100.00 for my one-year renewal. It was from a company I didn't recognize but of course companies merge and break away all the time in this industry. (Unfortunately, I can't find the bill right now to blast the company by name). Needless to say, the bill was from another company hoping to hi-jack my account registration! Shortly afterward, I received a bill from Network Solutions (now owned by [VeriSign](#)) for \$70.00 for 2 years. I went to the Network Solutions on-line renewal webpage and was able to renew for 2 years for \$52.00. I haven't figured out why it was so much cheaper to renew on line than by mail, but I am not complaining.

Bottom line: caveat emptor!

The Curmudgeon Report by [Walt Parsons](#), DVPC's Official Curmudgeon – Accept No Substitute!

Changing Drive Letters

In the last issue of the Diablo Blue there was an interesting article written by our resident Windows Guru, Ron Ogg, about how to change a drive letter in a Windows XP machine. According to the article you ran "diskmgmt.msc".

The program did just what I asked it to do, changed my CD drive from "D" to "X" with no problem. Then I asked it to change my "E" (Applications) drive to "D". It did this also. So I shut off the lap top and went to dinner.

After dinner I fired up the lap top again and decided to do some work on a data base using MS Access. Lo and behold after I clicked on the Access shortcut it said that I had to reinstall my Access program. PANIC. Then I decided to run Norton System Works in order to check out the laptop. Same result. PANIC and MORE PANIC. I finally got Norton System Doctor to run and it came back with 1013 errors. PANIC squared.

Fortunately the Windows XP SYSTEM RESTORE worked and I was back in business with the drive letters back to what they were.

It seems that diskmgmt.msc does change the drive letters BUT it does not correct the paths of all the applications found on a given partition.

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Curmudgeon Report ...

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Rebates

Here is another installment of my ongoing gripes about computer store rebates. The culprit this time is CompUSA. On 12/31/01 I purchased a floppy drive from CompUSA that had a \$5.00 rebate. As soon as I got home I jumped through all the hoops including cutting out the bar code, copying the receipt, filling in the rebate

form, and mailing it. I also put the rebate information in my rebate abeyance file noting that I would get my refund in 10 weeks or about the 13th of March.

Today I received an e-mail from CompUSA proudly announcing that my rebate had been APPROVED and that I would be receiving my rebate in approximately 8 weeks. 8 weeks from today is 4/13/02. (It takes 8 weeks to write a check and mail and envelope?????)

So, now let us do the arithmetic.

Rebate mailed	12/31/01
Rebate approved e-mail	02/16/02
"Promised" receipt of check	04/13/02

Total time: 14.7 weeks to receive form, approve rebate, write a check, and mail it. It is too bad that I can't pay my tax payment to IRS using the same time schedule using April 15th as the start date!!!!!!!

Change of subject: Windows XP.

We discussed the possibility of setting up a "DVPC" user on my notebook PC with the resolution settings that our projector uses. This would also involve using large fonts for the higher resolution and larger font size.

Well, I tried it today.

No problem setting up a DVPC user (limited). I selected the desktop image that I wanted to use and adjusted the resolution to the lowest setting. So far so good. DVPC should now be set up to work with the projector.

Next I went back to the WALT user which had been set for middle of the range resolution Unfortunately it appears that when I changed the resolution for the DVPC user it also changed the resolution for all other users. BUMMER.

Any ideas?

Freeware Graphics Viewer by *Dennis & Linda Grubb, DVPC*

IrfanView – A Freeware Graphic Viewer

If someone wants a free picture viewer (from a comment in one of the articles), the following program is simple to use – just press the space bar to view the next picture in a subdirectory. IrfanView will also do other editing functions such as batch renaming, downsizing pictures to send over the internet and index print.

IrfanView is free for personal and non-commercial use. You can download it at <http://irfanview.tuwien.ac.at/english.htm>.

Highly recommended!

Moving? Changing Your E-mail Address?

Tell us so you will continue receiving Diablo Blue!

E-mail your name and new information to changes@dvpc.org

SIG NEWS Compiled by [Nick Chase](#), SIG Coordinator, DVPC, 680-4211

Be sure to see the DVPC Calendar on [page 16](#) for the date and time of each SIG meeting, and any changes in meeting location or schedule.

Advanced Developers SIG [Ron Ogg](#), SIG Leader – 415-281-0431

The Advanced Developers SIG is a learning co-op. Every month we choose a topic and let people know where they can learn about it. We then get together and go over the information. We hope that if everyone learns a little on their own, and when we get together everyone can learn a lot. If you are an advanced developer you are invited to join the ADSIG. Beginners will want to get some serious development experience before joining the SIG. See the ADSIG page on the DVPC web site at www.dvpc.org/clarion.html for meeting location, dates, and time.

Advanced Users SIG [Jeff and Sharon Noyer](#), SIG Co-Leaders – 778-4348

The Advanced Users SIG meets on the third Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at 4208 Amargosa Drive in Antioch. Directions: Go east on Highway 4 through Antioch to the Hillcrest Avenue exit. At the light at the end of the exit ramp, go right onto Hillcrest Avenue, and then stay towards your left. At the 3rd light, Hillcrest Avenue turns to the left. Go left and stay on Hillcrest. (Landmark: "The Crossings" Shopping Center is at intersection). At the 4th light, go left onto Wildhorse Drive. (Landmark: 7-Eleven on corner at intersection). At the 2nd left turn, go left onto Meadow Lake Drive. At the 4th right turn, go right onto Amargosa Drive. 4208 Amargosa Drive is the 3rd house on your right, blue and white one-story. The Advanced Users SIG is for anyone interested in discussing advanced topics such as hardware and software issues, cutting-edge technologies, networking, Windows NT Server and Workstation, troubleshooting, etc. Please join us to participate in this very informative and educational forum. We hope to see you at the meeting!

Genealogy eSIG [Peggy Johnson](#), SIG Leader – 676-7522

The DVPC Genealogy SIG is a group of computer genealogists who share helpful websites, databases and source information found on the internet. It's an opportunity for members seeking help to put forth a question or problem to the SIG and receive suggestions and advice. When you locate a useful website, database or visit a research facility, please email the group of the details so we also can take advantage of this information. If you wish to be included in this Genealogy SIG, please email Peggy Johnson, pegszone@aol.com.

Education and Entertainment SIG [Alan Mildwurm](#), SIG Leader – 510-770-5770

The Education & Entertainment SIG usually meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month at Montevideo School in San Ramon at 7:30 p.m. Check the DVPC web site (www.dvpc.org) for information about each month's meeting. The E&E SIG is oriented to exploring the best in education and entertainment software for the PC. Come back in the fall when everyone is invited to attend our meetings, and bring your kids along - they'll have a great time, too! Directions for our next meetings: Take 680 to Bollinger Canyon Road, go west to San Ramon Valley Blvd., go south to Montevideo Rd. and turn left. Proceed east on Montevideo about 3 blocks to Broadmoor and turn left. The school is 1 block on the right. We meet in Room 22.

Internet SIG [Craig Peterson](#), SIG Leader – 671-7025

The Internet SIG meets at 7:00 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month at Computer Renaissance, 959 Contra Costa Blvd. in Pleasant Hill. We cover everything about the Internet, from browsing and email to creating your own web site and the tools for doing so. For more information, contact Craig Peterson by email at compmail@pacbell.net or phone at 671-7025.

March is a time when many of us start thinking about "spring cleaning" and other ways to get our homes and lives into better order (then there are those who are still trying to dig out from the winter of 1994). We will be checking web sites and tools that can help us become ready for the spring.

New Users SIG [Bill Earl](#), SIG Leader – 939-5874

The New Users SIG holds its meetings at 6:30 p.m. prior to the regular DVPC monthly meeting
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SIG NEWS...

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on the first Thursday of each month at Bank of America building B. We discuss whatever is confusing or puzzling new PC users. If you are a new user of PCs who would like to meet with other new users – and some experienced users who can answer your questions as well – then join us at the New Users SIG meetings at 6:30 p.m. prior to each DVPC monthly meeting.

PC 101 SIG [Craig Peterson](#), SIG Leader – 671-7025

PC 101 (a class on how to use the computer) will be holding its next class on the Saturday following the general meeting in the community room of the Concord Police station, 1350 Galindo Street. The classes will start at 1:00 pm and end at 3:00. Join us for some hands on, one on one, help at the nuts and bolts of using computers. Those in the class enjoy the extra time we can now devote to each problem, as well as the time to answer questions in class.

Photo SIG [Chuck Graham](#), SIG Leader – 680-1333

The Photo SIG usually meets on the third Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm at Graham Family Photo, 5100-35 Clayton Road, Concord. Vineyard Center at Ayers Road next to KMart. Call for directions at 925 680-1333 or check out our map at www.grahamphoto.com. Please bring anyone that is interested the Photo SIG. Please continue to let me know what your interest are. Also be sure to see our page on the DVPC web site at www.dvpc.org/photo.html. Because of the holidays, there will be no Photo SID meetings in November or December.

Windows SIG [Ron Ogg](#) (415-281-0431) and [Walt Parsons](#) (934-0775), SIG Co-Leaders

The Windows SIG usually meets at the Community Room at the Concord Police Department Building on the first Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. We discuss the latest version of Windows, demonstrate interesting shareware and freeware, and have random access sessions where we all try to answer SIG members' questions. Everyone who uses, is interested in, or is curious about Windows on their PC is invited to attend.

Directions: The Concord Police Department is at 1350 Galindo Street in Concord. From the 242 Freeway take Clayton Road east to Galindo and turn right; the Police Department building is 3 blocks south on your left. From Highway 24 take Monument Blvd. east and continue on Monument Blvd. to where it changes to Galindo; the Police Department building will be on your right a short distance past the signal at Cowell Road.

yourDictionary.com by [Ron Ogg](#), DVPC

Here's a link to a free web-based dictionary and thesaurus, <http://www.yourdictionary.com/>. They have (or have links to) dictionaries in over 280 languages, over 120 specialty dictionaries (finance, computers, law, etc.), grammar guides, and more.

Do you have a document in some language, but you don't know which one? Perhaps one of the Language Identifiers can help. There's a list of over 750 endangered and extinct languages. And, perhaps the most fun, are the 'Nyms and Such – links to thesauri, lists of abbreviations, an anagram dictionary, quotations, pronunciation, over 1,000,000 Scrabble links, the Bible in 60 languages, general and specialized multilingual dictionaries.

Need something translated? There are links to dozens of translations services.

All in all, worth checking out!

Bring a Friend to a DVPC Meeting
Help Them Grow their PC Knowledge
Help Grow DVPC Membership

DVPC Board Meeting Minutes by Tom Krauss, DVPC Secretary

Meeting Date: 2/13/2002 **Time:** 7:00 pm **Location:** Alan Mildwurm's house

Two months in a row now I have managed to show up, at the right time and on the right day, for the Board meeting. A few others did, too, so we met.

We eased into the meeting by performing an autopsy on a machine that Alan's partner had bought. At first glance it seemed perfectly normal. Then one noticed a number of receptacles for various cables and gadgets (USB, Firewire, audio, etc.) on the front of the machine. And then, when you turned it around and looked at the back, it really got weird. The same types of receptacles as were on the front, plus more, were on the back.

To cap it off, there was a cable that looked like a three inch paint brush plugged into the back that split off into six or seven individual cables, all a foot long, and again for USB, firewire, audio, joy stick, etc. An unusual machine, to say the least.

The insides were more normal, however, and thus a little disappointing to Ron, Alan and Nick, who led the inspection.

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Switch to the Diablo Blue Web Edition

"I am a real computer person and as such recognize the ultimate reality of the 'Paperless Society'. In keeping with this spirit and in an effort to help DVPC reduce overhead costs, I say "Nay" to a written newsletter. Give it to me electronically, I want to get my copy of DVPC's Diablo Blue off the Web. (I can always print it out on blue paper and don't even have to admit that I did!)" Turn in this form at the monthly meeting or email to: nopaper@dvpc.org

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Email address for meeting notification: _____

Also notify me about these SIGs:

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DVPC Board Meeting Minutes...

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New Business:

Freeware/Shareware: Once the hardware portion of the Board meeting was over (although with Nick in attendance we're never really through with hardware discussions) the conversation turned to software. Something I can understand a little better. I mentioned having lost my Camedia CD. This software came with my Olympus camera late in 1999, and is used to download the pictures from the camera to my computer and to do some basic manipulation and viewing. What I like about it is that it will let you view all the photos (.jpgs) in a folder as thumbnails and as a slide show of full-screen images. Camedia was also the only software I had on my machine that had a Y2K problem. Pictures taken in 2000 were dated 1900.

Anyway, mentioning this started a conversation about equivalent software which in turn led to freeware/shareware in general. Ron suggested Photo Designer as a free replacement for Camedia. Site names were flying fast and furious, and I didn't even have time to record what was to be found on some of them I noted. If you are feeling adventuresome, here are some of the ones I recorded:

- Ulead.com (Photo Designer?)
- Ilore.com (a search engine with neat features)
- Lavasoft.com (or maybe .de - a search engine in Denmark)
- Completelyfreesoftware.com
- Nonags.com
- Teoma.com
- Uselessknowledge.com

This last one is my kind of site. It has lots of trivia, quotations, odd words, answers to questions such as "What is a booger made of?" ... The list of fascinating things goes on and on. Here are two tidbits to whet your appetite:

- *In 1908 a writer within the automobile industry proved that the wealth of the United States was insufficient to support more than 200,000 new cars every year.*
- *Every day your nose makes approximately one cup of snot.*

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Email Meeting Notification Available by Ron Ogg, DVPC

We're providing an Email Notification service for the DVPC monthly meeting, and for SIGs as well, for all current, paid-up members. If you're interested in receiving an email message announcing each monthly meeting, and for the SIGs you attend, fill out this form and mail to the address on page 16 of this copy of *Diablo Blue*. Note that there's no separate notification for the New Users' SIG since it's held on the same night as the monthly meeting.

Send me Email notification of each monthly DVPC meeting and these SIGs:

Name _____

Email Address: _____

Advanced Users SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>	.NET SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced Developers SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>	New Users' SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education and Entertainment SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>	PC 101 SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>
Genealogy eSIG	<input type="checkbox"/>	Photo SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internet SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>	Windows SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>

DVPC Board Meeting Minutes...

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On some pages there is even a button labeled "The Boss Is Coming", which when clicked opens a page that claims to be the front page of the New York Times!

.NET: Ted reported a meeting he attended in San Francisco and hosted by Microsoft. It was to kick off .NET user groups in the Bay Area. This group is aimed more for the professional developer who uses software such as Visual Studio. Ted is starting a SIG for this, which will hold its first meeting near the end of April at the Concord Police Department. Watch the Newsletter for more details about this interesting group.

New Search Engines by Ron Ogg, DVPC

It's not too often that a major new search engine is introduced. But here are two, both (in a way) extensions of existing search engines.

iLor

First, there's iLor (www.ilor.com). iLor is short for Internet Lore. iLor describes itself as "...the most user friendly search engine in the world" — no egocentric folks at **this** web site, folks! However, iLor does have a couple of neat features. First, it runs on top of Ask Jeeves. When it was initially introduced in beta form it ran on top of Google — but, for some reason, that arrangement went away and now it uses Ask Jeeves. What makes iLOR Search different is that it does not work with the search, *but rather with the navigation*, after the search is done. For example, enter "diablo valley" in the Find box and press Enter. First, note that DVPC is the second entry — or, at least, it was on 2/24/02 at 8:45 p.m. when I was writing this article (#2 ranking is pretty good, folks!). Now, point to "Diablo Valley PC Users Group" — you'll see a little pop-up window with red underlined links on a yellow background with a black border. These are called LorLinks The links are:

put in my list: Put link in a temporary list.

go now-anchor here: Open link, and open a link back to iLor page in a small window.

open in taskbar: Open link in a small window, keep iLor window in the foreground.

open in new window: Open link in a new window.

There's a fourth link — Use menu on all websites — that takes you to a page where you can download iLor's HydraLinks, a add-in tool for your Internet Explorer browser (only) that will give you LorLinks on every web site you visit, not just in the iLor search engine.

Give iLor a try for searching the web.

Google Catalog Search and Google Catalog List

OK, you've used Google. But have you tried the Google Catalog Search? Or the Google Catalog List? "What are those?" you ask. Here's what.

Google Catalog Search (<http://catalogs.google.com/>) lets you search mail-order catalogs online for their content, much as how you search for web pages for their content. Enter what you're looking for, and the relevant catalog pages will be displayed with your search words highlighted in yellow. The catalog cover is displayed to the left of the catalog page that has your search result, and a zoomed view of your search result is displayed to the right. Click on a catalog page or zoomed view, and the catalog page will open for browsing. Click on the cover and that will open.

At the top and bottom of the page you'll see a navigation bar. It shows the name of the catalog, the publication date, the telephone number for placing orders, a link to their web site (if they have one), and the catalog code (if there is one). The catalog page you are viewing is shown, along with the total number of pages in the catalog. Back and forward buttons let you

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New Search Engines...

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browse the pages of the catalog, and there's a Jump to page box where you can enter the number of a page that you want to view. You can choose to view one or two catalog pages at a time, or view 30 thumbnail pages. You can also enter a search string to find something in the current catalog (instead of in all catalogs, which is how the Google Catalog Search home page works).

Google Catalog List (http://catalogs.google.com/catalog_list) lets you search for a catalog by name instead of by content. The Google Catalog List is a great place to see if a particular catalog is in the Google mail-order catalog directory. It's an alphabetical list of catalogs; click on a catalog name to view it starting with it's cover. Once you've selected a catalog, the navigation bar is available. The Google Catalog List home page has a handy useful help page link (<http://catalogs.google.com/googlecatalogs/help.html>) that's not displayed on the Google Catalog Search home page.

If you're looking for something that might be found in a mail-order catalog give the Google Catalog Search and Google Catalog List a try.

Try WordPerfect Office 2002 Online by Ron Ogg, DVPC

Did you know you can evaluate the full-featured versions of the applications in WordPerfect Office 2002 online? Runaware.com allows you to try Corel applications from within your Web browser – for free, with no download or installation required. WordPerfect 10, Quattro Pro 10, Paradox 10, and Presentations 10 are available for on-line evaluation.

Visit Runaware.com at <http://ri-r1.corel.com/servlet/cc?KtDABEkhnFOHsNLDgLmEaEUU> and try WordPerfect Office 2002.

Roxio Acquires MGI Software by Ron Ogg, DVPC

One of DVPC's regular vendor presenters, MGI Software, has been acquired by Roxio, the leading digital media software publisher. Roxio best known software package is *Easy CD Creator*, the leading CD-R/RW writing software for Windows, and *Toast*, the leading CD-R/RW writing software for the Macintosh. Roxio also publishes *GoBack*, the leading data recovery software package for Windows.

By adding the best-selling photo and video editing software products, PhotoSuite and VideoWave, the acquisition creates one of the world's largest digital media software companies with a global installed base of more than 100 million consumers. Roxio's products are sold by leading retailers worldwide including Best Buy, CompUSA, Circuit City and Staples, and are bundled with devices including PCs, PDAs, digital cameras, digital camcorders, scanners and printers by leading OEMs such as Dell, Toshiba, Sony, Palm, Olympus, Nikon and Lexmark.

The former shareholders of MGI will receive 0.05050 shares of common stock of Roxio for every one common share of MGI or a total of 2,203,451 shares. Based on Roxio's closing price as of January 31, 2002 and the exchange rate, this amount represents a purchase price of approximately \$35.4 million U.S.

Get Involved! Learn!
Join a SIG today!

Pre-Meeting Game News by [Craig Peterson](#), DVPC

Yes, as you might have noticed, we did not have a pre-meeting game in February. We hope to try a new game in March that many of you might find a nice change from what we were doing before. Please let Peggy or Stan (or whoever is at the table when you enter) know what you think of the new game. As always, the more you get involved, the more you will enjoy and find value in your membership.

Oh – don't forget – one member gets a prize. Good luck!

Are User Groups Infected with Tunnel Vision?

by Lynn L. Kauer, Saginaw Valley Computer Association

Funnel vision is a malady that too often infects small organizations. This malady isn't restricted to user groups per se as it can infect any organization. The development of the malady originates from the thinking that only information gathered from a closed group is important or meaningful. I've seen the writing of editors pleading for articles from their members so that they will have something to put into their publication. This article is intended to bring to light my thoughts and opinions I've come to realize since I became involved as editor over eight years ago.

It is no secret that the SVCA exchanges newsletters with other user groups. They are a wealthy source of information and differing ideas that we use for a number of purposes. I've long seen a pattern that I call "Funnel Vision" that can invade a user group and cause its demise. There are many forms.

When I speak of funnel vision I am speaking to how a group attains information. We all know that a funnel is a cone shaped device that is large at one end and tapering to a small opening at the other. We use a funnel to pour liquids or powders into containers with small openings. The reason is that the liquid we are pouring into the funnel may originate from a saucepan (larger source) that contains a lot of liquid but by its very shape doesn't allow a small stream to flow from it. Thus, the funnel contains the overflow, the transfer of liquid is contained, and the liquid is transferred into the smaller container.

User groups are small containers while the APCUG community is the larger container. If we learn to use the resources of the large community we can use the information to educate our members.

Symptoms of the Disease

As I scan the newsletters we receive, and those I access online, I find two distinctive forms of funnel vision evident. The worst form are the newsletters that contain only advertising with a short message from the President covering the reports of the groups last meeting or where he

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Special Raffle Promotion

Bring a guest to a *DVPC* meeting, you get 10 Raffle tickets!
If your guest joins at the meeting, you get 10 Raffle tickets –
and your new member guest *also* gets 10 Raffle tickets!!

Are User Groups Infected with Tunnel Vision?...

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or she last traveled. There is no information transferred to the reader except for advertisements. I've often wondered why the group wants to spend its money publishing each month. Possibly it's because it is a source of revenue and the monetary reward is all that is important to them.

The less insidious form of funnel vision is more widespread. These newsletters are by and large a good-looking publication with a decent layout. The funnel vision becomes evident when it becomes apparent that only members of the group are contributing to it. Sadly, the editor has elected to only publish articles written by its own membership.

As I watch them over a period of time it becomes apparent that few new insights or ideas are being shared. All the information is basically being recycled into new forms of wording but little new information is offered.

Over the years I have watched the publications of these groups diminish in size. One that I looked forward to reading each month has shrunk from a 12 page to a 4-page publication because of lack of content. Every so often an article will appear by one of its writers that contains a tip or trick, a warning, a new idea or an insight about something the writer experienced the purpose of publishing a newsletter.

Sometimes, I receive a newsletter where the editor has left a page or two blank with a note on it that reads: "This page is blank because nobody contributed anything this month." While it is intended to encourage writers to contribute it has a negative effect. People join user groups for two purposes: to be informed or entertained. When people are cajoled into having to write something, even if it's trivial, this is in my opinion funnel vision at its worst.

Reviews

To often publications contain nothing but reviews written by its members. I'll admit that I am not one to get really excited about reading reviews. I'm not opposed to publishing reviews but I feel that there is a need for balance. My reason for speaking on reviews is that I see it as a form of funnel vision because it again restricts information to a closed group. An argument is that it is a method of getting people to write and contribute to the newsletter. The intent is to have the writer develop into a person who will write creatively.

Yet, if the only information attained is from the closed group where do the seeds of creativity come from? How creative can a person get if all they are reduced to is writing a review in order to have something to print in a newsletter? Possibly, if they were exposed to articles written by authors of other groups they would get the vision and motivation to write something truly creative. When they see what others do they learn to see outside of themselves and look at new products and ideas with a new purpose.

Looking Through The Funnel

To this point I have been speaking of how I perceive some groups look at their organization through a funnel. When the focus of information is contained from within their own group they are looking at the user group community from the large end of the funnel and seeing it restricted by the small end their own group.

I suggest they take the funnel, turn it around and look through it from the small end. You'll see a bigger picture. This bigger picture is the APCUG community. I, as an editor, scan newsletters printed and electronic for fresh new information and use them in our publications. No, the SVCA is not unique in this approach. Some of my favorite exchanges are the newsletters that also contain a nice mix of articles written by their own members plus those attained from others. These groups have learned to use the whole APCUG user group community for

(Continued on page 12)

Get a Friend to Join DVPC!

Are User Groups Infected with Tunnel Vision?...

(Continued from page 11)

information and support. There are no blank pages in their publications.

I've watched the larger group publications like Big Blue and Cousins of Canada and Capital PC User Group of Washington DC. They originate from large member organizations that have people within their membership who write a series of articles focused on their areas of expertise. As I've watched their publications through the years I found that they also use articles from other groups. The point is, they too contribute and acquire from the entire APCUG user group community.

Conclusion

The point I have been trying to make is to encourage editors to use the entire user group community as a resource. There is a wealth of information available and some ideas that are totally new. To attain these resources all that they have to do is to turn their funnel around to see the bigger picture. There is no need for a group's publication to go wanting for a lack of articles. Use the resources from those who learned how to use a funnel for the greater vision the APCUG community.

Differences Between You and Your Boss by [Ron Ogg](#), DVPC

Found on www.humornetwork.com while surfing the net...

When you take a long time, you're slow.

When your boss takes a long time, he's thorough.

When you don't do it, you're lazy.

When your boss doesn't do it, he's too busy.

When you make a mistake, you're an idiot.

When your boss makes a mistake, he's only human.

When doing something without being told, you're overstepping your authority.

When your boss does the same thing, that's initiative.

When you take a stand, you're being bull-headed.

When your boss does it, he's being firm.

When you overlooked a rule of etiquette, you're being rude.

When your boss skips a few rules, he's being original.

When you please your boss, you're apple polishing.

When your boss pleases his boss, he's being cooperative.

When you're out of the office, you're wandering around.

When your boss is out of the office, he's on business.

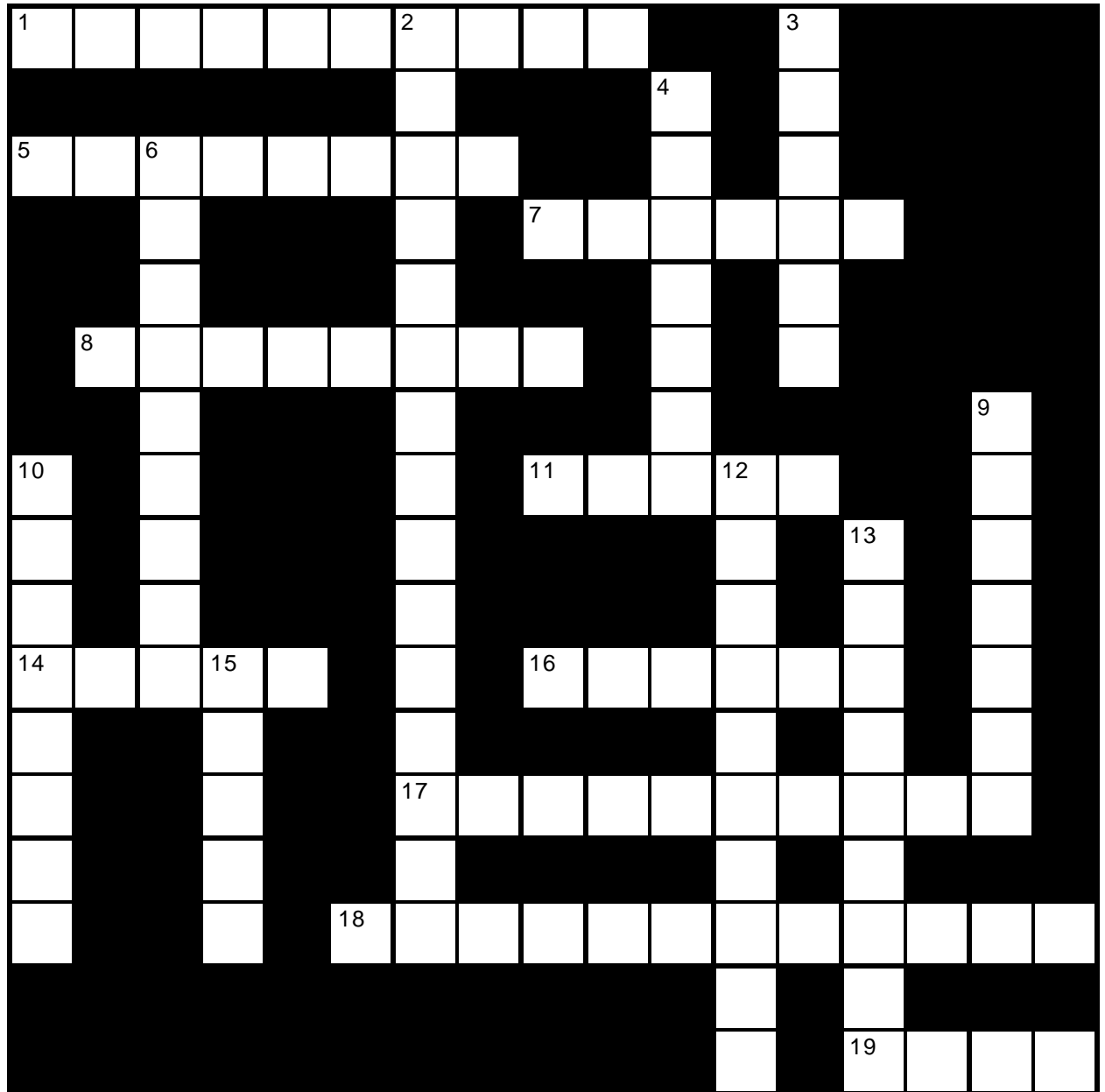
When you're on a day off sick, you're always sick.

When your boss is a day off sick, he must be very ill.

When you apply for leave, you must be going for an interview.

When your boss applies for leave, it's because he's overworked

**Computer Crossword
"March Madness"**



Across

1. The real "madness" in this sport is how schools from Hawaii to Louisiana can all be put in the western conference
5. America's Game
7. Grass or clay, single or doubles
8. Table version of #7 across
11. Think of football without pads
14. King, queen, bishops, and knights
16. A fight that takes place on ice with sticks
17. Dancing on ice without falling
18. Microsoft's best selling game series (3 words)
19. One small ball, lots of clubs, with water and sand traps to make it interesting

Down

2. Same as #17 across but without the ice
3. Ali was "The Greatest"
4. Short distances at great speeds
6. Card game for one
9. Same as #4 down but at a leisurely pace
10. Two person game played with red and black disks
12. One of the oldest games still played
13. The one sport where you have to be perfect every time
15. The name of this sport comes from the underwater breathing equipment needed

About the March Crossword Puzzle by *Craig Peterson, DVPC Librarian*

With the Winter Olympics now concluded, basketball about to get into the end of season, and baseball about to start Spring Training (and if that's not enough, there is the excitement of the 2002 National Open Chess Tournament in Las Vegas March 7th to 11th) it seemed a good idea to look at computer sports and games. So, remember to stretch, get your gear, and grab a cool one.

PS... due to requests by several members, the answers to the current month's puzzle are provided on line by going to www.dvpc.org/solution.html.

Give a *DVPC* Membership Gift Certificate!

Diablo Blue Article and Ad Information

Diablo Blue needs articles from the members of DVPC. See your name in print! Achieve fame and fortune! (Well, maybe just some limited fame in Contra Costa County...) We are particularly interested in product and book reviews and articles about your PC experiences.

Commercial advertising is available in Diablo Blue. Prices are \$75 for a full page, \$40 for a half page, and \$25 for a quarter page for one insertion — or get three consecutive insertions for the price of two. For more information, call editor Ronald Ogg, at 283-7900, Ext. 201 (days). Members of DVPC can submit personal classified ads that will be printed in Diablo Blue for three insertions at no charge. The rules are simple: up to 9 lines (as we typeset it), material must be suitable for publication (the editor is the sole judge of suitability), the member must be in good standing (current dues paid), and ad space is available on a first-come first-served space available basis only. If you want fewer than three insertions note that on your ad copy. If members want their business card reproduced, the rate is \$10 for one insertion, or \$25 for three insertions. The card must be horizontal and must be scanable.

Send your articles or member ad copy as email attachments to the [Newsletter Editor](#), See the deadline information in the Calendar on page 15 of each issue of Diablo Blue.

DVPC on the Internet

DVPC has a web site on the Internet - thanks to our Web Team: Ron Ogg and Stan Umlauf. You can surf your way to our own domain and home page by starting your favorite Web browser and typing the following URL; be sure to save it in your browser's hotlist so you don't have to type it each time: <http://www.dvpc.org>

DVPC Officers and Directors

Alan Mildwurm, President/Programs 510-770-5770 (work)
Ted Armstrong, Publicity 939-4096 (home)
Nicholas Chase, SIG Coordinator 680-4211 (home)
Charlie Crothers, At Large 829-2237 (home)
Peggy Johnson, Membership Secretary 676-7522 (home)
Tom Krauss, Secretary 689-9960 (home)
Jessica Mildwurm, Treasurer 829-5858 (home)
Ron Ogg, Newsletter Editor 415-281-0431 (work)
Craig Peterson, Librarian 671-7025 (home)
Stan Umlauf, Web Site 458-5560 (home)

The Board of Directors usually meets the week following the general meeting. Check the DVPC Calendar on page 16 of each issue of *Diablo Blue*, or the DVPC home page on the Internet (www.dvpc.org) for the meeting date, time, and location. You can reach any of the officers and directors by talking to them at the DVPC monthly meeting, by email to bod@value.net, or leaving a message on the DVPC voicemail System.

DVPC Voice Mail System

DVPC has a computer-based voice mail system. The phone number for the DVPC VMS is 925-556-1449. Hear up-to-date information about monthly and SIG meetings, information about DVPC for potential new members, and a message center for Board of Directors members and SIG Leaders.

Diablo Blue is the monthly newsletter of the Diablo Valley PC Users' Group.

Editor: Ronald Ogg, Mailing: Peggy Johnson

Please submit articles and columns to the Newsletter editor by email at rogg@value.net

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DVPC is a member of [APCUG](#), the Association of PC Users Groups

DVPC is a certified member of [UGN](#), the User Group Network



Support **DVPC** — Get a friend to join!

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Enclose a check for \$30.00 for one year's dues with printed edition of *Diablo Blue*, or \$25.00 for one year's dues with access to the Internet edition of *Diablo Blue* (\$20.00 for students who must enclose a copy of current Student ID), made payable to **DVPC** and mail to:
DVPC User's Group, PO Box 3244, San Ramon, CA 94583

Renewal _____ New Member _____ Referred by current member? Name _____

Name: _____

Company/School: _____ Email address: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

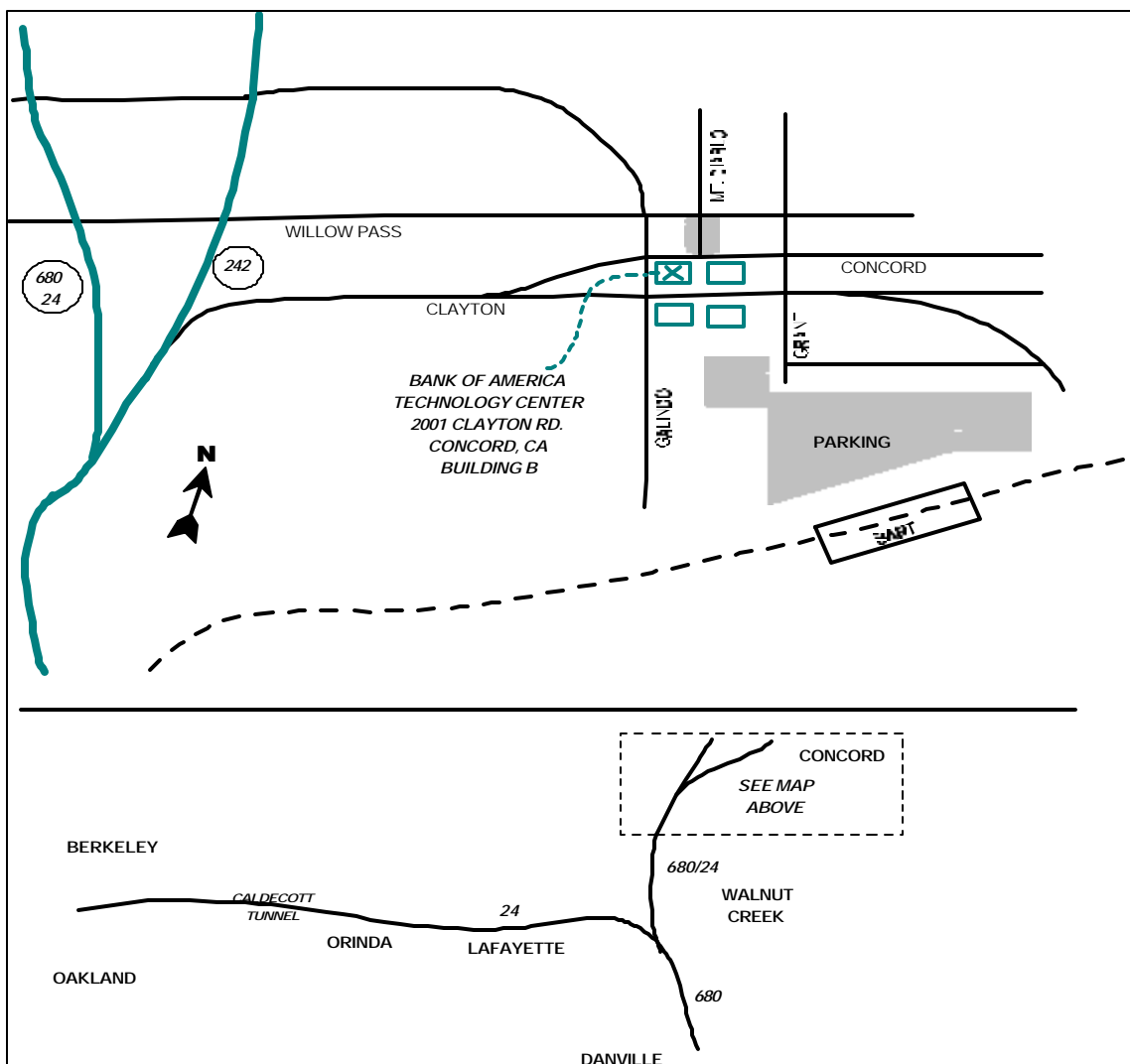
On occasion DVPC publishes a list of members **for distribution to DVPC members only**. Please check how you would like to be listed: **No listing** _____ **List Name and Home** _____ **Work** _____ **phone number(s)** _____

I'm also interested in these SIGs: _____

Directions to Bank of America Building B in Concord

Take the Clayton Road exit off of the 242 Freeway, and go east on Clayton Road. After about 1½ miles you'll come to Galindo, and you'll see the Bank of America complex of four high-rise buildings. Enter the door on the east side near the southeast corner of the building. Building B is the first building on your left, at the northeast corner of Clayton and Galindo.
Parking: Turn right on Grant Street (the first block past Galindo), then right into the BART parking lot at the back of the BofA complex. Or turn left on Galindo then right onto Concord Avenue to find street parking.

Be sure to observe parking regulations! Concord parking officers are very efficient!



DVPC March 2002 Calendar

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
See SIG News starting on page 4 for more information about SIG meeting dates, times, topics, and locations				1	2
4 Windows SIG 7:00 p.m.	5	6	7 DVPC Monthly Meeting 7:00 p.m. New User's SIG 6:30 p.m.	8	9 PC 101 SIG 1:00 p.m.
11	12	13 DVPC Board Meeting Alan Mildwurm's house 7:00 p.m.	14	15	16
18 Genealogy eSIG See SIG News on page 4	19 Photo SIG 7:00 p.m.	20 Internet SIG 7:00 p.m.	21 Advanced Users SIG 7:30 p.m. Advanced Developers SIG 7:00 p.m.	22	23 <i>Diablo Blue deadline: Email articles and ads to the Editor: rogg@value.net</i>
25	26	27 Education & Entertainment SIG 7:30 p.m.	28	29	30

FIRST CLASS MAIL

TO:

Diablo Valley PC User's Group
PO Box 3244
San Ramon, CA 94583