



December 3 Meeting Announcement *The DVPC Web Site with Cybernet Express and *The Steve and Alan Show**

In December we have a fun evening planned. Our own Ron Ogg and Stan Umlauf will give us a private tour of our web site, showing us all of their secrets. We hope to do this utilizing Cybernet Express – a wireless Internet provider. After the web site presentation, Steve Israel and Alan Mildwurm will do their yearly “Steve and Alan Show” telling us about all of the goodies they saw and (hopefully) brought back to demo from Comdex. And, they should have lots of great digital photos that they can show us. Here’s your opportunity to attend Comdex, even if it will be voyeuristically! Should be informative *and* enjoyable!!

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). Please use the main entrance of the building, which is in the center of the front of the building that faces Clayton road.

Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and the meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. The *New User's SIG* has their meeting from 6:30 to 7:00. 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'll probably have one of our ever-popular mini-auctions with great products, so bring your checkbooks and cash! Also, as usual, we'll have library disks and those great DVPC mugs (version 2) for sale, SIG news, random access, and some of our usual great door prizes. See you at the meeting!

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President's Corner

By Alan Mildwurm, DVPC

As I write this column, I am getting ready for the hard week I am facing: *Comdex*. I have explained to my family, to the point of exhaustion, the grueling time Steve and I have in store for us starting on the 14th through our return on the 20th. Their sympathy for our plight is not great – perhaps because they saw my invitation to *GEEKFEST* (Microsoft's blow out party) which is being held at Quark's Bar on the Promenade Deck of the Star Trek Pavilion at the Hilton Hotel. (Having been to Quark's and seen the Star Trek Experience, I know we're in for a good time!) Oh well...

Window's Night is behind us and I was personally disappointed at the 3 vendors who did not show. (I can forgive Storm because they filed for Chapter 11 protection.) I *do* want to thank the vendors who did come as well as Lincoln Spector for their support of our club.

In December we have a fun evening planned. Our own Ron

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Ken's Korner – Networking Upgrades by [Ken Fermoye](#), TUG-NET

Networking: Upgrade that makes sense

First came “sneaker networking” in the late ‘70s, early ‘80s, when we carried floppy diskettes from computer to computer. Then came “poor-boy networking,” using simple switches, null modem cables, software like LapLink, and MacLink to share printers and transfer files. Often we simply plugged and unplugged cables. Macintoshes had the advantage of built-in network capabilities, although at just 230.4 Kbps transmission speed was slow.

I tried all of the above during the 1980s in my home office and as a partner in a small, pioneering publishing service bureau. A “real” network, with servers and client workstations, was out of reach.

Things have changed! Low prices, simple peer-to-peer networks, and support built into current operating systems now make it inexpensive and easy to link computers and peripherals in home or small business offices. Today you can enjoy the benefits of a true Ethernet network for under \$100 if you run Windows for Workgroups (3.1.1); Windows 95, 98 or NT; or Mac OS (and want more speed than AppleTalk provides)

Adding a simple network is especially attractive if you are adding a new computer. Don't get rid of your old one. You won't get much for it, and it can still be a useful asset. How? By linking it to the new computer via a simple network. Consider these possibilities.

First, you can keep all your pet programs, especially “legacy” 16-bit Windows 3.x and/or DOS apps, on the older machine and use them as you always have. Use only 32-bit software on the new computer to improve performance.

Second, you can eliminate duplication of programs. Why invest in a new word processor or spreadsheet, for example, if the ones you've been using still do everything you require? Save your new machine for up-to-date graphics, games or Internet-related programs that really benefit from better performance.

Third, you can use each of the two computers to back up the other one. John Bowen, honcho of the Black Lake Computer Club, Nipomo, CA, showed me some months ago how he and his wife do just that with their His & Her computers. It's probably the easiest way to do backups.

One thought here: If your old computer has its hard drive(s) filled to bursting, consider adding another one just for

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President's Corner...

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Ogg and Stan Umlauf will give us a private tour of our web site showing us all of their secrets. We hope to do this utilizing Cybernet Express – a wireless Internet provider. After their presentation, Steve and I will do our yearly “Steve and Alan Show” showing you what goodies we saw and (hopefully) brought back from Comdex. Should be informative *and* enjoyable!!

On December 10th the Education and Entertainment SIG will host an *Arcade Night* at Cal High from 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. (9870 Broadmoor Dr., San Ramon, 94583 – follow the signs to the lab). We will take over one of the Pentium labs and load a different game on every machine. We will have the latest games with prizes awarded for the highest scores!

In January, [MGI](#) will present PhotoSuite II and VideoWave, with a second presenter to be announced. In March we will reprise our famous *DVPC Swap Night*. Clean out your closets of all your surplus priceless stuff! In April, [Microsoft](#) will demonstrate *Office 2000*.

Starting with the next *Diablo Blue* we will reestablish our *Mentor List*. If you have expertise or experience in some area (s) and don't mind helping other *DVPC* members, we'd appreciate your volunteering for our Mentor List. We anticipate most contacts will be through email; or, if a mentor is willing to have their phone number published, by phone, so it should not be a burden to our mentors. There is a great deal of knowledge in our club, and it will be a real benefit to share

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

The resident of this month's Dog House is no other than [PacBell.Net](#).

I am of the old school that feels that customer letters should ALWAYS be answered. Unfortunately, in today's world that no longer seems to be important.

PacBell.Net takes this attitude to a new level of arrogance.

About a month ago I was trying to put together a talk for a bunch of retired telephone workers on the subject of "Why You Should Break Down and Buy a Computer" or "Keep out of Trouble by Surfing the Web." So I thought that since this was a telephone group, who would be better to show off the Wide World Wait than Pacific Bell's own PacBell.Net. And, PacBell.Net is *my* ISP, which made their selection seem even more appropriate to me.

First, I sent an e-mail and waited for an answer. And waited. And waited.

Second, I sent a fax given as a contact fax number for PacBell.Net. Surely this would do the trick. So I waited for an answer. And waited. And waited.

So, as is my standard procedure with recalcitrant companies, I send a certified snail mail letter to the head of PacBell.Net. Surely this would do the trick. So I waited for an answer. And waited. And waited.

Finally, I got an e-mail response – some two months after I initiated the messages – from somebody who apologized for the lack of a response and that she would try to find somebody. I tried to thank her by replying to the e-mail address but, you won't believe this, the address given bounced.

The long and short of it was that PacBell.Net never came up with a speaker.

Accordingly I nominated PacBell.Net as the DogHouse resident for this month – and I'm seriously considering changing

Earth Mate – A Hardware Review by [Alan Mildwurm](#)

EarthMate is the name of the new GPS receiver by Delorme. Many of you have seen their earlier Tripmate GPS. The Earthmate retains the same distinctive "rain poncho" yellow color but is less than ½ the depth of its predecessor and sports a new more powerful Rockwell chip. It runs on 4 AAA batteries. I have learned that it goes through batteries even with its power circuit. If the batteries are low, it may not be able to get a fix. On two occasions, a new set of batteries made all the difference. As a result, I have learned to carry an extra set of batteries! (Hint 1)

GPS systems are not new. What is new is the ability to run a GPS on a Windows CE with a real-time map. Using Delorme's new Solus Pro software I was able to download a map to my CE, get a fix on a set of satellites and locate my position on a map as I cruised up 680. I don't recommend looking at your CE screen while you are driving—it upsets nearby drivers (probably jealous—Hint 2). In addition to real-time location on the map, you can get your course and speed.

I have used both the Solus Pro Maps and also Delorme's Street Atlas 6.0 maps on the CE. Both work great. Street Atlas 6.0 ships with Solus Basic but to really utilize the system, you need to upgrade to the Pro version. My last hint is to download small segments of maps. If you download too large a map, you will lose fine detail when you try and zoom in. Remember that a CE, unlike a laptop, does not have a lot of spare memory!! Notwithstanding the CE's limitations, the screen

Get Involved! Learn!
Join a SIG today!

SIG NEWS *Compiled by Bill Earl, SIG Coordinator, DVPC, 939-5874*

See the DVPC Calendar on [page 16](#) for the date and time of each SIG meeting.

Access/Visual Basic SIG [Ron Ogg](#) (283-7900 Ext. 201) and [Ted Armstrong](#) (939-4096) SIG Co-Leaders

The Access/Visual Basic SIG usually meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at Gateway Group's offices, 3687 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Suite 350, in Lafayette. Because of the holidays, we're not having a meeting in December. See you on Tuesday, January 26. Check out the Access/VB SIG on the web for information about each month's meeting at www.dvpc.org/sig_vbaccess – or navigate there from the DVPC home page (www.dvpc.org), select SIGs from the menu bar at the left, then click on the Access/VB SIG icon. See the web page or the Clarion SIG announcement below for directions to the meeting.

Advanced Users SIG [Jeff Noyer and Sharon Clark](#), SIG Co-Leaders – 937-5282

The Advanced Users SIG meets on the third Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at 336 El Divisadero Avenue in Walnut Creek. Directions: From downtown Walnut Creek, take Ygnacio Valley Road toward John Muir Hospital. Continue past Walnut *Boulevard* and John Muir Hospital. At the intersection of Ygnacio Valley Road and Walnut *Avenue*, turn right onto Walnut *Avenue*. At the first traffic light, turn right onto Blackstone Drive, then make the first right onto El Divisadero Avenue. Follow the road as it curves to the left. 336 El Divisadero Avenue will be on your right, immediately after the curve. It is a one-story, gray/brown house with white trim. 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!

Clarion SIG [Ron Ogg](#), SIG Leader – 283-7900 Ext. 201

The Clarion SIG usually meets at 7:00 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of each month at Gateway Group's offices, 3687 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Suite 350, in Lafayette. Because of the holidays, we're having our December meeting on the *third* Wednesday, December 16. Check out the Clarion SIG on the web for information about each month's meeting at www.dvpc.org/sig_clar – or navigate there from the DVPC home page (www.dvpc.org), select SIGs from the menu bar at the left, then click on the CWSIG icon.

Directions: take Highway 24 west to the Central Lafayette exit, and keep to your left to the stop sign at Deer Hill Road at the end of the exit ramp. Turn left onto Deer Hill Road, and continue to where it dead ends at Happy Valley Road. Turn left onto Happy Valley Road. Turn right at the traffic signal at Mt. Diablo Blvd. Take Mt. Diablo Blvd. through the next traffic signal and turn left into the driveway at 3685/3687. Immediately turn right into the parking lot in front of 3687. Take the elevator to the third floor to the door on the right just before the end of the hallway. See Gateway Group's Web site at www.gatewaygroup.com for a map. If you get lost, call Ron Ogg at 283-7900 Ext. 201. TopSpeed's Clarion 4 and Clarion for Windows are powerful database development tools that compete with products like Visual Basic and Delphi and even products like PowerBuilder. If you are an advanced Clarion developer you are invited to join the SIG. This is a SIG for advanced users, so beginners will want to get more hands-on experience before joining. Be sure to come early for a good seat; the meetings are very well-attended.

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. Call Alan at (510) 770-5770 (work) to confirm the date. Because of our *Arcade Night* on December 10 (information is on [page 2](#) in the *President's Corner* column), we won't be having a regular meeting in December. See you on the 10th, and in January on the 27th. The E&E SIG is oriented to exploring the best in education and entertainment software for the PC. Everyone is invited to attend our meetings, and bring your kids along – they'll have a great time, too!

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SIG NEWS...

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Directions: 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

Please join us as we restart the Internet SIG on Wednesday, December 16, 1998 at 7:30 p.m. We will be meeting the third Wednesday of each month at Computer Renaissance, 959 Contra Costa Blvd. in Pleasant Hill. For more information, please call Craig Peterson at 671-7025 or e mail him at CDPeterson@Compuserve.com.

Microsoft Project SIG [Elias Asmar](#), SIG Leader – 299-8500

The Microsoft Project SIG meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the third Monday of each month at InterPro ADF's office at 3569 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Suite 210. Park in the lot behind Radio Shack. The entrance to suite 210 is at the back of the building. Enter through the door marked "210" at the parking lot end of the walkway from the street and take the stairs to the second floor. Everyone who is interested in Microsoft Project and project management is invited to attend. If you plan on attending, please call Elias Asmar at 925-299-8500, Fax 925-299-8511, leave a message on the DVPC BBS, or send an E-mail message to Elias on the Internet at elie.asmar@iadf.com.

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 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.

Real Estate SIG [Bill Thompson](#), SIG Leader – 693-0174

The November Real Estate SIG meeting was held in the conference room of Paine Webber on California Street in Walnut Creek on the 6th from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Our topic was "The Internet, as a Marketing Medium in Real Estate". We covered the basics of the Internet and how to get started with building a web site. Then Debbie De Sousa, President of IMA (Internet Marketing Association) presented her products and services. You can see her site at www.i-m-a.com

On Monday, December 14 we will be holding the next Real Estate SIG meeting at 2185 N. California Blvd, 4th Floor, in the conference room of Paine Webber. This meeting place is temporary and we will have a new place to meet in January 1999.

The December SIG meeting will be full of important tax and investment information. The topic is "Real Estate Commission Tax Planning and Investment Strategies". We will be looking into automating your tax processes. We will cover the use of Quicken, Quickbooks, TurboTax, and investment software.

Janet Lewis Silverman, CPA, will discuss the processes and how to save money on your taxes with the new tax laws that were enacted for the upcoming year. She will be covering the new relaxed code on the "home office deduction" for the new year.

Mark Flower of Paine Webber will be presenting the unbelievable products and services of his company. He will be covering commission tax management and investment services.

If you don't attend this meeting you will miss out on a lot of hot information that will save you money and time with your taxes this next year. We have limited seating so you **must RSVP for this one**. Please contact SIG Leader Bill Thompson at (925) 998-8530 or email at thompson@DLSNetwork.com.

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SIG NEWS...

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Windows SIG [Ron Ogg](#) (283-7900 Ext. 201) and [Walt Parsons](#) (934-0775), SIG Co-Leaders

The Windows SIG has been meeting on the first Tuesday of the month at Nordic Computers in Concord. Unfortunately, Nordic Computers has closed, and we need to find a new meeting place. The Community Room at the Concord Police Department Building is available, but there are some scheduling problems: the only regular nights of the month are on Fridays. We're going to have our December meeting on the first Wednesday of the month, the 2nd, at 7:30 p.m. (this Wednesday is available because the group that normally meets on the first Wednesday isn't having a meeting in December). We'll have to decide if we want to meet on Friday nights (ugh!) or if anyone in the SIG has found an alternative meeting location (we hope!).

Here are directions to the Concord Police Department Building:

The Concord Police Department is in a new facility 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 just past the signal at Cowell Road.

Everyone who uses, is interested in, or is curious about Windows on their PC, is invited to attend. See you all at the next Windows SIG meeting.

WordPerfect SIG [Walt Parsons](#), 934-0775, SIG Leader

The WordPerfect SIG meets on the fourth Monday of each month, and is held at Walt Parsons' home in Walnut Creek. It

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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:

DVPC Board Meeting Minutes by Tom Krauss, DVPC

Meeting Date: 10/8/98 **Time:** 7:00 pm **Location:** Alan Mildwurm's house

Bank Account:

\$700 (Approximately)

Upcoming Speakers:

January: **MGI** with *PhotoSuite II* and *VideoWave*

March: **DVPC** Swap Night

April: **Microsoft** with *Office 2000*

Logistics:

Monday, two days before the meeting, Alan broadcast an email to the Board, pointing out that our meeting would be on Veteran's Day, and many people would have that day off. He asked if we wanted to meet as scheduled, reschedule for the following Wednesday (when he would be out of town, but that was okay with him as long as he was not given any new assignments: would we do a thing like that?) or some other day, or just cancel.

Well, as most of you know, the Board does not do too well making decisions when there is more than one possible choice and this was no exception. Plus, since we were communicating by email, debate was on a time-delay basis (this turned out to be a positive factor, as digression was held to a minimum). I responded that I was working on Veteran's Day and was planning on the Board meeting, but I would go with the majority. Nick and Stan were just about as decisive as I was. Finally Nick asked if we should just email each other some pizza, which prompted me to find a pizza.gif on the net and route it around.

While we were enjoying the pizza Ron, ever the voice of reason, suggested we should meet to discuss Windows Night while it was still fresh in our minds, and his suggestion carried the day. And so we met...

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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:

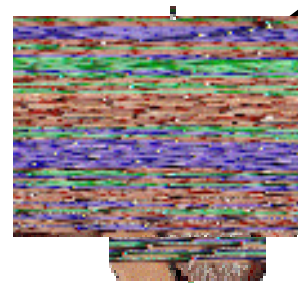
Name _____

Email Address _____

Also send me Email notification of each of the SIG meetings I've checked below:

Access/VB SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>	Microsoft Project SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced Users SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>	Paradox SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clarion SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>	Real Estate SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education and Entertainment SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>	Windows SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internet SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>	WordPerfect SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>

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- Custom Business Solutions

Get a Friend to Join DVPC!

DVPC Board Meeting Minutes...

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Old Business:

Windows Night: Three vendors were no-shows, but the evening was a success nonetheless. Alan is attempting to contact these three to find out what happened and to explain how donating their products will go a long way to easing their guilt and helping us forget. Nine new members joined the club.

Amazon@DVPC: Ron reiterated Amazon.com's offer to give DVPC a percentage of any book orders they receive when the person ordering jumps to amazon.com from our web site. Stan was at first reluctant to go along with the idea because you can't get Starbuck's coffee from the amazon web site like you can at the Pleasant Hill Barnes & Noble, but we finally agreed to proceed. Ron has a similar offer from Xcom. Look for these two jump points coming soon on the DVPC web site.

New Business:

Windows SIG: Nordic Computer has closed it's doors, and the Windows SIG needs to find a replacement meeting place ASAP. Several alternate locations were suggested, and Ron and others will follow up on them.

Education & Entertainment SIG: this SIG will put on an Arcade Night December 10 at California High School in San Ramon. They will have lots of games running on lots of PCs for guests to try. Here's your chance to preview 'Mutant Surfer Dudes and the Vestal Virgins of the Temple of Gor' and other classic games before you shell out the bucks to buy

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Ken's Korner...

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backup use. New multi-gig hard drives are really cheap now, and I suspect it's possible to find decent used 1.2 to 2.5 gigabyte drives for \$25 to \$50. (Part 3 of this Upgrades that Make Sense series will zero in on hard drives, incidentally.)

All you need to set up a network are the following:

- A Network Interface Card (NIC) for each computer and appropriate driver
- Thin coaxial or unshielded twisted pair (UTP) cabling in appropriate lengths
- BNC connectors and terminators, if you use coaxial cables
- Multiport hub, optional if you want to connect more than a handful of computers, necessary if you want a Fast Ethernet network (100 Mbps versus 10 Mbps for standard 10Base-T Ethernet), which is probably overkill for most of us.

Prices? Very reasonable! I've seen full-duplex, Plug-and-Play Ethernet cards for as little as \$15 to \$20; 5-port hubs run from about \$40 to \$100.

UTP 10Base-T cables resemble ordinary telephone wire but use RJ45 connectors and have eight wires inside. Coaxial 10Base-2 cables look like those that connect TVs to VCRs, with similar twist-on BNC connectors. Prices vary by length, but a 10-footer typically sells for about \$11 to \$14 for either type. Use cables that meet Category 5 standards to ensure top performance and future expandability. For networks with more than a few computers or when using Fast Ethernet, experts recommend UTP cabling.

To connect just two computers, it's often cheaper and easier to buy a kit that includes two NICs, a 10Base-2 coax cable,

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SIG NEWS...

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was also decided to limit the majority of the discussion to the Windows version of WordPerfect, and mainly versions 7 and 8. Other members of the suite will only be discussed in passing; the emphasis will be on WordPerfect.

DVPC Board Meeting Minutes...

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them!

Internet SIG: Craig Peterson has volunteered to reconstitute the Internet SIG and be the SIG Leader. See [SIG News on page 5](#) for information about the first meeting.

Swap Meet: This idea was discussed and is tentatively planned for the March meeting. Stay tuned...

Mentoring: The idea of a mentoring program was discussed. The general consensus was that it would be good to post on our web site, in a 'members only' area, a list of members willing and generally able to assist other members with hardware and software questions and problems. Mentors could opt to have their phone number listed. There will be more discussion.

The obvious problem is that everyone wants to use a mentor, but it is difficult to find people willing to be a mentor. We tend to think that unless we are masters of a subject, able to field any and all questions, we won't be able to help at all. This is far from the truth. I have been teaching a class in Word for three years, and am far from an expert in it. There are a lot of features I never use. But I know it well enough to be able to answer or at least find answers to most students' questions, even about features I have never used. If you have used a computer or run a program, you know more than a lot of people. And you have begun to learn how a computer 'thinks', and what is really going on when some of those ambiguous messages appear or strange things happen. Whatever your experience, it can help someone else. And even if you can't answer the question, you can learn something yourself by trying.

Member's Want Ad

Have backup tape for Colorado Jumbo/Trakker 700 series tape (new) that I can't use.
For sale or trade for DT 350 tape for Colorado Jumbo/Trakker 350 unit.

Call Duane Peterson, 825-2109 or email duanep@hotcoco.infi.net

Membership Drive!

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Get Them to Join DVPC!

For Each Guest You Will Receive an Extra Raffle Ticket!

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Ken's Korner...

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connectors and terminators, driver setup software and detailed installation instructions. This is especially true for novice networkers. With a kit, you're sure that components match, and you have a single source to contact should you need tech support.

You can add one or two computers to this type of network later, daisy-chaining them with additional NICs and cables. Use a hub and UTP cables for bigger networks.

I've used the LinkSys (www.linksys.com) Network in a Box and StarTech Computer Products (www.startechcomp.com) Network Kit (under \$100) and they worked well

Make sure the NICs have both BNC and RJ45 connectors so you can upgrade to twisted-pair cables if you decided to add a hub and expand your network later. I haven't tried Netgear's starter kits (about \$120) that uses UTP cables and a 4-port, externally powered hub, or a similar one from Linksys (two PCI NICs, 5-port hub, about \$95), but both are attractive, expandable options.

My entry to networking in 1996 came after buying a new HP inkjet printer designed for use with bidirectional parallel ports and IEEE-1284 cables. We already shared two printers, using A-B switches. I couldn't find a switch that was compatible with the IEEE-1284 standard, and I tried! Installing a network was the farthest thing from my mind, until I spotted Network in a Box from LinkSys. It looked simple enough (though I had grave misgivings) and the cost (then about \$90, now under \$70) was less than some of the switches I priced.

Physical installation was easy. Pilot error (I misread a key direction) created a few problems with the software setup. A little help from my friends at ASC Computers, my local computing life support system here in Woodland Hills, CA, solved that. Life instantly became much easier. My wife and I had easy access to the printer and each other's files. If I was working on a newsletter and needed a graphics file Liz created, it was a snap to import it from her computer.

I'm currently nearing the final stage of a major system overhaul, including one new computer as a server, upgrades to three others, adding another printer, and new modems. Instead of having just two computers linked I will have four on the new net via a 5-port 10BaseT hub and UTP cables. I'll fill you in on that project in a future column.

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Ken Fermoyle has written some 2,500 articles for publications ranging from Playboy and PC World to MacWeek, MicroTimes & PC Laptop. He was cohost/producer of a radio show on computers and a partner in a DTP service bureau during the '80s. If your group would like to receive the column regularly, send e-mail to kfermoyle@earthlink.net. If you use the above article, please mail

Earth Mate...

(Continued from page 3)

resolution is quite good and the software works great. Of course on a laptop, you can get spoken instructions! If you program a trip with a CE, you should hear beeps when you come to course changes. I am still working on this and will write a follow up—in the meantime; at least I shouldn't get lost- or have to ask for directions!

Announcement

by [Bill Thompson](#)

Diablo Valley PC Users group member Robert Boraten of Better Homes Realty in Concord passed away. Bob was an active member of the Real Estate SIG and will be sorely missed. We would like to send our condolences and prayers to his wife Ruth. Donations in Bob's name can be made to the Boy Scouts of America.

Bill Thompson, Real Estate SIG Honored by [Ron Ogg](#)

Contra Costa Association of Realtors Names Bill Thompson "Affiliate of the Year"

Bill Thompson formed the [Real Estate SIG](#) in September of 1995 as a professional in the title insurance industry. Over the years many real estate agents have attended the SIG meetings and joined the Diablo Valley PC Users group. The real estate industry has been slow to migrate towards technology and it has been Bill's personal mission to bring technology into real estate offices.

The DVPC Real Estate SIG is probably the first, and maybe even the only, such SIG in any PC user group in the United States – in fact, the world. Bill had done yeoman duty starting, and building, the SIG to the point where it's one of the most successful of DVPC's SIGs.

Here's the Contra Costa Association of Realtors' press release:

We are pleased to announce that on Saturday, November 14th at the annual Inaugural of the newly elected officers of the Contra Costa Association of Realtors at the Claremont Hotel in Berkeley, Bill was honored as "Affiliate of the Year" for his efforts in technology. Bill says that this prestigious award has validated technology as a necessary part of selling real estate.

Partition Magic 4.0 – A Software Review by [Alan Mildwurm](#)

[PowerQuest](#) has just released *Partition Magic 4.0*. Many of you recall that we saw a presentation of version 3.0 several months ago, so I will focus on the new features. First and foremost, the Help systems have been improved. I am happy to report that Powerquest has continued their excellent tradition with a truly wonderful manual- it not only instructs as to the operation of the program, it also educates as to what is happening and why. Other companies should take a lesson! Wizards can automate common tasks such as creating partitions, etc. The interface is clear and the controls intuitive. You can create FAT32 partitions over 8GB and automatically detect and fix errors on NTFS partitions. Additionally, scandisk now runs from Partition Magic. The DriveMapper is also integrated to remap drive letters.

With PartitionMagic you get BootMagic as well. BootMagic allows multiple operating systems to run on a single PC. Each time you start (or restart) your PC you get a list of operating systems to choose from. (You supply your own operating systems!). Choices include Win98, Win95, WinNT, DOS, OS/2, Linux, Win3.x or BeOs. As expected, the manual is great. I have used an earlier version of this program but have not tried this latest iteration.

Does Partition Magic work?? Yes, I had a system with a FAT16 drive, which Windows 98 couldn't convert to FAT32 because of a bad cluster. Partition Magic converted the drive in a few minutes with no problem. I then installed a second hard drive and the Drive Mapper remapped everything so that software on the computer now looks to "drive e" instead of "drive d" for the CD-ROM.

This is a utility which you may never need but, if you ever want to resize a partition, or add a drive, or convert to Fat32 (when Windows 98 can't) or HPFS or NTFS, or convert from Fat32 to Fat16, or set up multiple operating systems, you won't find anything better.

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Access Bug by [Ron Ogg](#) from Bug of the Day on www.pcworld.com on November 20, 1998

Problems Launching Access

Are you one of the 1.5 million who upgraded to Windows 98? Or are you considering making the big move? If you are, and you use Microsoft Access 97, you should be aware of a potential problem. When upgrading to Windows 98 or installing Access 97 on a Windows 98 system, you could have trouble launching Access. When you attempt to launch the application, you may receive the following error message: "Microsoft Access can't start because there is no license for it on this machine."

Fortunately, Microsoft has already released a fix for this. This file contains a tool that corrects the problem and enables you to run Microsoft Access 97 successfully. You'll find the file on the Microsoft Web site at the following address:

<http://www.pcworld.com/r/tw/1%2c2061%2ctw-bug1117%2c00.html>

Internet SIG Restarted by [Craig Peterson](#), DVPC

Please join us as we restart the Internet SIG on Wednesday, December 16, 1998 at 7:30 pm. We will be meeting the third Wednesday of each month at Computer Renaissance @ 959 Contra Costa Blvd, Pleasant Hill. For more information, please call Craig Peterson at 671-7025 or e mail him at CDPeterson@Compuserve.com.

MGI PhotoSuite II – A Software Review by [Ron Ogg](#), DVPC

Did you take advantage of the special offer for [MGI's](#) PhotoSuite II at Windows Night? I did, and I have to say that I'm pleased with the product. I had the prior version of PhotoSuite, and I have a dozen other graphics packages including Adobe's *PhotoShop 5.0*. In other words, I have *lots* of graphics packages.

So, why do I like PhotoSuite II? It automates lots of tasks that I do regularly, like red eye removal, cleaning up and enhancing photos, and fixing color, brightness, and contrast problems.

I don't get the kind of control that I get from PhotoShop or many of the other graphics programs I use (some of which are very specialized, like Adobe ImageReady), but for at least half of the images I work with I don't *need* that kind of control. Especially when it comes with the need to spend lots of time working with the tools in these other packages, and the time it takes to accomplish results.

PhotoSuite II does these things automatically, and instantly. If you need to you can make small adjustments to brightness and contrast, adjust colors, and sharpen or soften the image. If you only want to adjust one part of an image, you can use one of several selection tools (ellipse/circle, rectangle, freehand, magic wand, and edge selector) to pick the area, and apply the changes to that selection. A complete selection of editing capabilities are provided, including drawing and painting tools, a clone tool, filled shape tools, a color picker, and a flood-fill tool. There are tools for rotating and cropping images, and automatically straightening images that were scanned at an angle. Once you have your image, it's time to do something with it. PhotoSuite II has a wide range of predefined projects you can use, and you can download more from MGI's web site. Included are greeting cards, posters, postcards, calendars, bookmarks, wedding invitations, sports cards, magazine covers, fake (fun) identification cards, business cards, labels, stickers, certificates, and name tags. And, you can create photo albums and slide shows from your images. Imagine, those 783 digital photos you took on your family vacation to Mt. Kisko, New York can be organized into a slide show for your friends and relatives! Sorry, I'll be out of town that evening... whenever it is! PhotoSuite II even has a built-in browser for connecting to the MGI (or any other) web site, so you don't have to leave the program to download images or check the latest news about the product.

All in all, MGI PhotoSuite II is a good choice for someone who wants a graphics program but doesn't need a product with professional features (or price). The list price for PhotoSuite II is \$49.99. PhotoSuite II requires a Pentium 133, Windows

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 scannable.

Send your articles or member ad copy as email attachments to the [Newsletter Editor](#), or mail to: Editor, Diablo Blue, P.O. Box 2222, Orinda, CA 94563-2222. 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: Cindy Barnes, 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 770-5770 (work) Cindy Barnes, Recruitment, Web Site
Nicholas Chase, Special Events 680-4211 (home) Charlie Crothers, Publicity 829-2237 (home)
Bill Earl, SIG Coordinator 939-5874 (home) Peggy Johnson, Membership Secretary 676-7522 (home)
Tom Krauss, Secretary 689-9960 (home) Jessica Mildwurm, Treasurer 829-5858 (home)
Ron Ogg, Newsletter Editor 283-7900 x201 (work) Craig Peterson, Librarian 671-7025 (home)
Stan Umlauf, Web Site 458-5560 (home)

The Board of Directors usually meets on the Wednesday evening following the general meeting each month. 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, 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 556-1449. This communication vehicle provides members with up-to-date information about monthly and SIG meetings, potential new members with information about DVPC, and a message center for Board of Directors members and SIG Leaders.

Diablo Blue is the monthly newsletter of the Diablo Valley PC User's Group. Editor: Ronald Ogg, Mailing: Peggy Johnson

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

Ronald Ogg, P.O. Box 2222, Orinda, CA 94563-2222

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DVPC is a member of [UGNN](#), the User Group Network News Service



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 667, Danville, CA 945296

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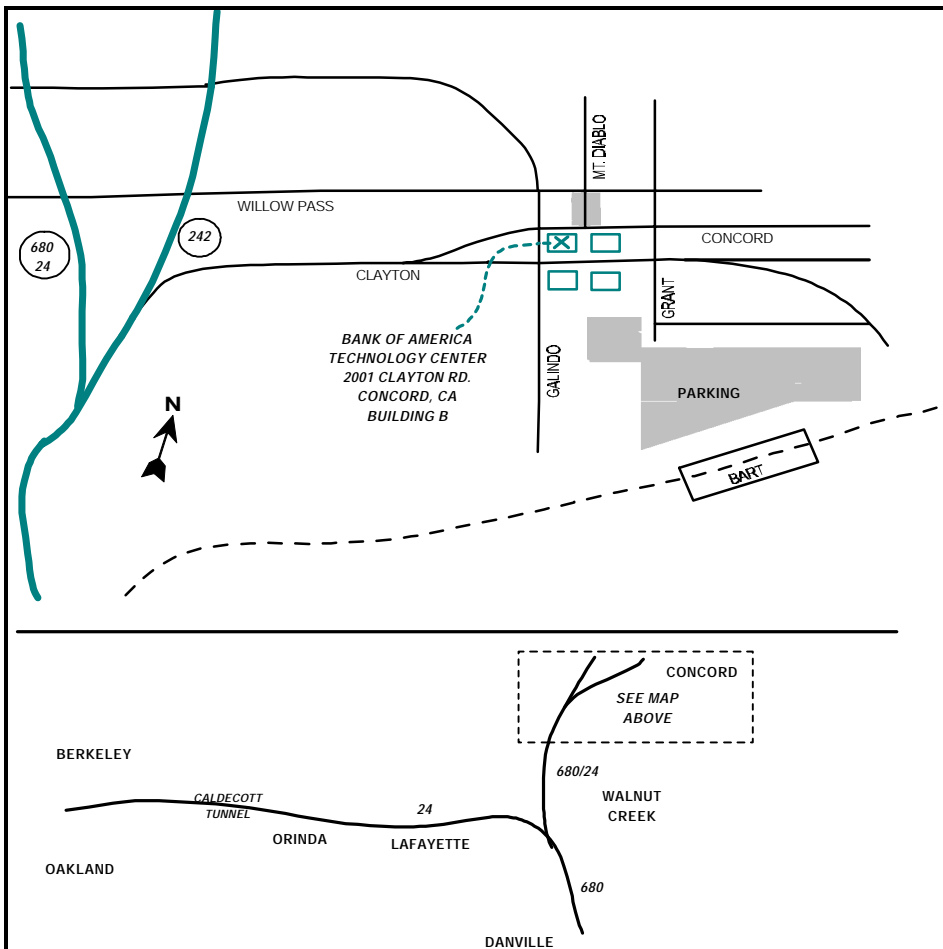
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Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

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 office buildings.

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 December 1998 Calendar

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2 Windows SIG 7:30 p.m. <i>New night this month</i>	3 DVPC Monthly Meeting 7:00 p.m. New User's SIG 6:30 p.m.	4	5
7	8	9 Board Meeting 7:00 p.m. Alan Mildwurm's house	10 Education & Entertainment SIG <i>Arcade Night</i> 7:00 p.m.	11	12
14 Microsoft Project SIG 7:30 p.m. Real Estate SIG 9:00 a.m. <i>New meeting day</i>	15	16 Clarion SIG 7:30 p.m. <i>This month only</i> Internet SIG 7:30 p.m. <i>New SIG</i>	17 Advanced Users SIG 7:30 p.m.	18 <i>Diablo Blue deadline</i> Email articles and ads to the Newsletter Editor: rogg@value.net	19
21 WordPerfect SIG 7:30 p.m.	22 Access/Visual Basic SIG <i>No meeting this month – see you in January</i>	23 Education & Entertainment SIG <i>Meeting on December 10th this month only</i>	24	25	26
28	29	30	31	See SIG News starting on page 4 for more information about SIG meeting dates, times, topics, and locations	

Diablo Valley PC User's Group
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TO: