



February 4, 1999 Meeting Announcement

Paradise Innovations

At our February, 1999 meeting we'll have the opportunity to see some innovative modems from Paradise Innovations. They manufacture the WaveCom line of internal, external, and PC Card 56K modems. Their modems all meet the V.90 ITU/56Kflex standard, which means they will provide the fastest performance. One unique feature is that all Paradise products are covered by a lifetime warranty, for the original purchaser. Paradise also manufactures video cards and sound cards. They are located in Fremont, and were Established in the early 1980's as a leading provider of high quality performance video graphics adapters. They have now branched out into the sound card and modem business.

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 main meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. From 6:30 to 7:00 we'll have the *New User's SIG* meeting; the Real Estate SIG will be manning a table to tell you all about this unique SIG and their very interesting meetings; you can visit the Networking Table if you have something to sell or trade, need technical help, or just want to exchange views; and, as usual, we'll have library disks and those great DVPC mugs (version 2) for sale. The main meeting will include SIG news, random access, our program, and some of our usual great door prizes. See you in January!

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President's Corner

By [Alan Mildwurm](#), DVPC

Usually I feel I have a pretty good idea of our upcoming events and presentations. This month, I must admit, I have some uncertainty. Our February speaker(s) have not confirmed. I am hopeful Paradise will be out to demo some of their new modems. I am using one now and it works beautifully. We currently have Corel scheduled in March, along with the swap meet. However, we are thinking of postponing Corel until the release of Draw 9 (around early summer) in order to see their latest products. We are also thinking of postponing the swap meet to give everyone more time to search his or her closets for surplus *excellent* gear. Symantec is on deck to present to us but we haven't nailed down the date. April has Microsoft and Imation set, and the early summer will bring us APC, otherwise known as American Power Conversion, the

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Ken's Korner – Upgrades that Make Sense by [Ken Fermoyle](#)

Part 3: Adding Drive Storage Space

Note: This article was half complete when I began hearing reports of mysterious problems affecting some Ultra DMA (also called ATA, Fast ATA, EIDE or DMA/33) hard drives. The number of incidents was small, but not insignificant, so I felt I needed to investigate. See results in accompanying sidebar. If you have direct knowledge of any such problems, please e-mail me the details at kfermoyle@earthlink.net. I will report new information in future articles.

Women say: "You can't be too thin, too rich, or have too many silk blouses." A computer corollary might be that a system "can't be too fast, have too much RAM or too much hard disk capacity."

One could argue the first premise in both cases. Being too thin might mean anorexia, which isn't good, and a computer can have a faster, more expensive CPU (central processing unit) than its owner needs. There can be no argument, however, that you no longer need to be rich to afford lots of RAM and drive storage space. (I haven't priced silk blouses lately.)

The entry level for RAM now is 32MB and many new machines offer 64MB. Going to 128MB or more may be indicated for servers or some high-end tasks, but is probably overkill for most of us right now.

Running out of storage space often is one of the first limitations you run into with an older computer, especially in these days of ever-bigger software programs. Fortunately, remedies today are easy, inexpensive and varied.

- Large-capacity Ultra DMA (Direct Memory Access) drives can replace, or be used in addition to, existing hard drives in many computers.
- SCSI (Small Computer Systems Interface) hard drives are expensive, very fast, come in many varieties. but require a special interface board.
- Removable-cartridge Zip and Jaz drives from Iomega can be mounted internally or externally (connected through a parallel port).
- High-capacity drive, such as the 120MB Super Drive, can replace traditional 3.5-inch floppy drives,

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President's Corner...

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UPS people – (I hope). I am also working with Iomega and a few new leads. So perhaps we will all be surprised. I will update the voice mail and the web site as soon as things firm up.

We would like to restart our Mentor program. If you have an area of expertise we would appreciate your signing up to help. Members helping members is an incredible user group resource. Each month as we do Random Access I am amazed at the depth of knowledge we collectively share. It would be a great benefit to all of us to "formalize" this expertise. You can specify how (i.e. via phone and/or email) and when you are available to help so it will not be intrusive. More often than not, one of us has already solved a user's problem, and sharing that information can make the difference. (I can't believe how often I hear someone tell me that they called a company's tech support line or brought their machine in for service and the answer was to reformat the hard drive or reinstall Windows!)

Our game night still doesn't have a date, but I expect to have that organized by the February meeting. If there is no speaker for February... does anyone do bird calls?

Access/VB SIG Table at February Meeting by [Ron Ogg, DVPC](#)

The Access/VB SIG will host a table at the February meeting on the 4th from 6:30 to 7:00 to tell members and guests all about the SIG. This is DVPC's SIG for Access, VB (Visual Basic), and VBA (Visual Basic for Applications) developers, beginners, intermediate, and advanced. Stop by the Access/VB SIG table and learn more about the very interesting meetings put on by the SIG, and how you can attend. Visit their web pages at www.dvpc.org/sig_vbaccess.html.

We're going to have a different SIG man a table at each of DVPC's monthly meetings. The Access/VB SIG is in February; look for next month's *Diablo Blue* to find out which SIG will be at the March meeting.

Problems Afflict Some UDMA Hard Drives by [Ken Fermoye](#)

I first learned of some UDMA drive problems in Win95/98/NT systems last November from Brian Livingston, InfoWorld's "Window Manager" columnist. He wrote:

"There seems to be a discernible minority of UDMA drives that have been installed in systems that aren't quite capable of supporting the maximum speeds UDMA can produce." He suggested that the problems could result from electromagnetic interference on the system bus, poor flow control in firmware or hardware, or poor drive circuitry.

Upon investigation I discovered that difficulties ranged from failure to complete Plug and Play drive installation and slow-down/speed-up during file transfer, to extremely long shutdown times for Win98 and even failure of hard drive access!

Moreover, it appears that not everyone who installs a UDMA hard drive is getting UDMA performance. Let's take this situation first because it's easy to check (1) whether your system supports UDMA, and (2) if it does, whether DMA (Direct Memory Access) is enabled or not.

- (1) Click Start/Settings/Control Panel/System, then the Device Manager tab and plus sign at left of "Hard Disk Controllers." If you see an entry that includes "PCI Bus Master IDE Controller," your system supports UDMA. If an entry reads "Standard Dual IDE Controller," no bus mastering drivers are loaded and UDMA is not supported.
- (2) While still in Device Manager, click the plus sign at left of "Disk Drives," double-click a hard drive icon (not a floppy or removable-cartridge drive), and then click the "Settings" tab. If you see a DMA box under "Options" and that box is checked, the computer is configured for UDMA drives.

As for the other issues, I have two pieces of advice. First, a much more knowledgeable expert than I am, Mark Stapleton (aka Sporkman), a mechanical engineer at Georgia Tech Research Institute, has studied the complex problems extensively. His take and that of Micheline "Tink" Long, an author-writer who does a lot of software tech support work, appear on Tink's Website (<http://www.csiway.com/~tink/techno-talk---computer-and-softw/and-sundry/dmawhite.lwp/odyframe.htm>) in the form of a White Paper prepared by Stapleton. The paper covers the complex issues far better and more extensively than I could in the limited space available, and I recommend it to you.

Second, all drive makers are now aware of the situation and should have suggestions, if not solutions, should you have UDMA drive problems. Don't hesitate to contact them. (See URLs in main article.) You might be lucky enough to get a tech support person like Bill Rudock at Seagate, who helped me with a drive installation problem (caused by my error in misreading instructions) and was the best, most patient tech support guy I have encountered to date.

See the accompanying article on adding a hard drive to your system on [page 2](#) of this issue of *Diablo Blue*.

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 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. At our meeting on Tuesday, February 23 we're going to continue to enhance the DVPC membership roster program to add a feature that will let us automatically generate the monthly meeting announcement email messages. Even though this is an Access program, we'll be working in Visual Basic (VBA). If you are interested in Access or Visual Basic, be sure to join other programmers at this month's Access/VB SIG meeting.

The Access/Visual Basic SIG will have a table at the February DVPC meeting to tell everyone about our programs, which are open to all DVPC members. Stop by and say hello.

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 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. 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. TopSpeed's Clarion 5 is a powerful object-oriented database development tool that competes 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 some hands-on experience before joining. Be sure to come early for a good seat; the meetings are very well-attended.

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 the Clarion SIG's Web page for a map. If you get lost, call Ron Ogg at 283-7900 Ext. 215.

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

The Education & Entertainment SIG 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. 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 –

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SIG NEWS...

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they'll have a great time, too! 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

The Internet SIG meets 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, please call Craig Peterson at 671-7025 or him an email message 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, or send an email message to him 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 Real Estate SIG meets on the third Monday of each month. Because we're tying down the meeting location, you will have to check with Bill Thompson for the time, location, and directions. Our February meeting will be held on the 15th, and we'll have an exciting program for our members. We have limited seating so you **must RSVP for this one**. Please contact SIG Leader Bill Thompson at 925-998-8530 or email him at thompson@DLSNetwork.com.

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. Based on our December meeting, everyone agreed that the Community Room at the Concord Police Department Building is an outstanding facility, but the only available nights of the month that we can schedule are on Fridays. So, we're going to be meeting on the fourth Friday of each month, and we'll have our first Friday meeting on January 22 at 7:30 p.m. We'll have to decide if we want to continue meeting on Friday nights, or if anyone in the SIG has found an alternative meeting location that is available on another week night. 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.

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.

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SIG NEWS...

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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 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.

If there is something that you want to know about WordPerfect, come to the WordPerfect SIG meetings on the 4th Monday of each month. The SIG meets at the Parsons' home in Walnut Creek. Due to limited seating, please RSVP in advance to the e-mail address: waltnewf@pacbell.net. Anybody wishing to get on the e-mail notification list should contact Walt at the above e-mail address.

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:

Internet Volunteers Needed by [Ron Ogg](#), DVPC

[Lori Brown](#), the Technology for Teens in Transition project coordinator for the Contra Costa County Library, needs volunteers to become Internet mentors to bring Internet services and instruction to youth in Juvenile detention facilities here in the county. We are seeking Internet savvy adults who would be interested in volunteering to work with this client population. Probation Department screening and training and Library Internet docent training will be provided.

We have a one year grant to make this project a success.

I can send you information about the program and how you can participate by fax, by mail, by email, or even come to see you if you are interested. Please give me a call at 925-646-6050 or [email](#) me. Or, you can contact Mari Metcalf, Director of Volunteers In Probation, at 925-313-4187.

Make a difference in a young person's life!

Thanks!

DVPC Board Meeting Minutes not by [Tom Krauss](#), DVPC

Meeting Date: 12/9/98 **Time:** 7:00 p.m. **Location:** Alan Mildwurm's house

Bank Account: \$837 (Approximately)

Upcoming Speakers:

- March: TBA
- April: [Microsoft Office 2000](#)
- May: [Symantec](#)
- June: DVPC Swap Night

In response to the many cards and letters which my loyal readers sent (I haven't actually seen any, but that's the Post Office for you), don't worry, I'm fine. I missed the December Board meeting because the class which I teach had it's final session the same evening. Forced to choose between my students, who needed my help desperately in their quest to understand Microsoft Word, and the Board, which needs more help than I can provide, and which never listens to me anyway, I chose my students.

Old Business:

Speakers: The schedule of potential speakers was discussed. Corel gave us our choice of March, at which time they would present the current Word Perfect suite, or June, at which time they would present the then newly released version 9. It was decided that they would have less opportunity to claim that they were snowed in at the last minute in June, so we chose that month. Keep your fingers crossed.

Ron phoned in from his car during this conversation and suggested the Swap Meet be pushed back to May to give us more time to plan and to get the word out to everyone. He expressed such keen interest in the Swap Meet that he was unanimously proclaimed the Sultan of Swap and given full responsibility for that event. It should be outstanding!

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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:

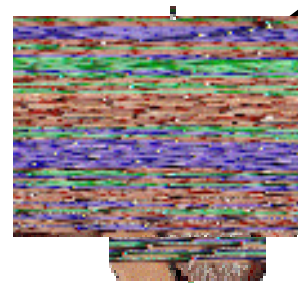
Name _____

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"/>	Real Estate SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clarion SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>	Windows SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education and Entertainment SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>	WordPerfect SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internet SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

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Get a Friend to Join DVPC!

DVPC Board Meeting Minutes...

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Unfortunately, the signal began to break up as he quickly attempted to express his gratitude for our vote of confidence. You're welcome, Ron!

Mentors: Peggy expressed concern that more needed to be done to get the Mentor program going. As that old adage says, the squeaky wheel gets the assignment. It will be interesting to see what she does.

New Business:

Spare Change: Stan requested that he and Peggy be given a supply of change to be used at the sign-in desk at meetings when members present \$50 dollar bills and want to buy one extra ticket for the drawing. Against our better judgment we agreed, but Alan was prudent enough to give the money to Peggy to carry.

The conversation then turned to p-mail (printed mail), how trains used to sort mail while in transit and how they used to pick up and drop off mailbags at stations without stopping, the potential for using nuclear power to run trains, and other related topics. It's great to be back.

Ken's Korner...

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- CD-RW (rewriteable compact disk drives) are coming on the scene but are still pricey.

All have good and bad points. Ultra DMA drives these days provide huge capacities, are inexpensive (as little as 5 to 10 cents per megabyte), generally easy to install and are as fast as some SCSI drives. They double disk read and write speeds of earlier DMA drives from 16.6MB per second to 33.3MB/sec. (Some UDMA drives that support 66.6MB/sec are coming, may be available by the time you read this; they require an 80-pin cable instead of the 40-pin cable standard for 33MB/sec drives. The two cables are pin-compatible, but the 80-pin version has added ground wires to reduce crosstalk.) UDMA also allows data transfers to take place with very little CPU involvement, which can mean better overall system performance.

A very few UDMA drives have had problems (see sidebar) and buyers should be aware of a few cautions, but I believe they are the best current choices for mass storage in typical home or small office systems.

SCSI drives come in a bewildering number of categories: Wide, Fast-Wide, Ultra Wide and the latest, Ultra 2 LVD (Low Voltage Differential). They need SCSI boards of varying types (and prices) to provide maximum performance. Frankly, I feel that SCSI drives are great for servers, serious game-players, multimedia or high-end graphics work and heavy-duty publishing or video editing, but not necessary for most "grass-roots" users.

They cost a lot: 50% to 100% or more than Ultra DMA drives of similar capacity. (One big computer chain store near me recently sold an 8.4GB Maxtor UDMA drive for \$179, while a no-name Ultra Wide SCSI drive went for \$299. Both were "bare drive only" prices so you would have to add the cost of a SCSI board unless you already had one.) And a SCSI drive may not be noticeably faster for the work most of us do most of the time.

Removable cartridge drives appear to be losing ground. Syquest apparently went belly-up late last year and Iomega's profits were down in 1998. *[Editor's Note: There was a recent announcement that Iomega was purchasing Syquest's inventory, designs, tooling, patents and copyrights, and would begin manufacturing media and drives. The article in the San Francisco Chronicle said that Iomega would not be supporting current Syquest users, but you should check the computer press for the latest on this story.]* Cartridges are not cheap and they are slower than UDMA drives. High-Capacity Floppy drives and media cost about the same but have the advantage of backward compatibility (i.e. they read

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Ken's Korner...

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and write to traditional 3.5-inch floppy diskettes). CD-R/DVD drives may be a better choice as prices drop, but let's leave them for a future column when they have achieved a more mainstream status.

How about the UDMA drive cautions mentioned above? First, read ads carefully. Drives advertised as "OEM" or "bare drive only," common practice for some large chain retailers (e.g. Fry's Electronics), normally don't include any cables, instructions, software (drivers and utilities) or mounting hardware. The latter come in full retail packages, which typically cost about \$30-\$40 more.

You can usually download drivers and utilities from the drive maker's web site but unless you're comfortable dealing with hardware and have some know-how, the retail package is your best bet. The instructions and installation utility alone can be invaluable. If installing hardware is scary for you, ask about having the drive installed or seek help from a knowledgeable User Group member. I have found that utilities such as Seagate's *DiscWizard* make installation virtually painless IF you follow the directions!

If you have a computer built in 1997 or before, its BIOS likely won't support a UDMA drive larger than 8.4GB; most systems built after about mid-1998 include such support. OnTrack's Disk Manager may correct this, but the easiest way to avoid problems with older computers is to go no larger than 8.4GB. Also, if you run a WinTel system without Windows 95 OSR2.x or Win98 with FAT32, you must divide the drive into partitions of no more than 2.1GB. PartitionMagic from PowerQuest is the best tool for this job.

Not so incidentally, hard drive manufacturers have some of the best, most helpful web sites around. Go to: Seagate, www.seagate.com; Western Digital, www.wdc.com; Maxtor, www.maxtor.com; Quantum, www.quantum.com; IBM, www.storage.ibm.com/hardsoft/diskdrdl.htm; or Fujitsu, www.fujitsu.com/harddisk.html.

Hope this helps you expand your computer horizons and gives you room to grow!

*Ken Fermoye, columnist (Ken's Korner) & publisher
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Internet Splitter – A Hardware Review by [Alan Mildwurm](#), DVPC

Two computers + one ISP = problems. Two computers + two ISPs = \$\$\$\$\$. Do the math. These days, many of us have more than one computer. Invariably everyone wants to be online at the same time. While your local access company (phone or cable) and ISP is happy to add additional lines and accounts for you, it can get rather pricey. Luckily, there are some alternatives.

A new product I saw at Comdex is *Internet Splitter* by Star Tech, (www.startechcomp.com). This product is a very interesting alternative to the above problem. Inside the box you get everything you need to share one Internet connection between two computers. In addition to their software, you get 50 feet of cable with either a serial or parallel module that connects two PCs. Essentially, the cable is regular category 5 cable but you get a special connector that the cat5 plugs into which then plugs into either your serial or parallel port. The serial connectors have data transfer indicator lights.

Installation is very easy. You must install “Direct Cable Connection” software on both machines. DCC is on your Windows 95 or 98 CD-ROM. Be sure to install the latest version of Dial up Networking (if you are using Windows 95). Load the Internet Splitter CD-ROM and install the software on the server machine. Plug the Internet Splitter Module into an available serial port. The Client machine gets the module with the data transfer lights. The Default setup should be fine. You will need to know your ISP’s Outgoing Mail Server (SMTP), IRC server for chat and News servers. (You can leave unused options blank).

You must register this product to use it. BE VERY CAREFUL BECAUSE IT IS EXTREMELY CASE, SPACE AND FIELD SENSITIVE. After this, you will set up Direct Cable Connectivity. You will need to specify whether you connect to the Internet by phone or cable (dial up or LAN). A default IP address and IP Mask will be specified. This, in essence, is the address of your server. The client machine will connect with your server machine through this address on its way out to the Internet. There should be no reason to change the default address. You are now ready to install the software on the Client Machine. This installation should be very simple in that you should again use the default settings. (The Client will connect to the Internet “through” your server. This is why the supplied IP address and Mask must match.) After you reboot, you will need to configure your Internet programs on the client machine. Here is where you install your email address, select your browser, etc. There is a connectivity test to make sure everything is set up properly. If you setup the program to load automatically on your server, then just by launching your browser on the client, it will launch out to the net. You can setup AOL to work with this software.

So, does it work? Absolutely. It works fine. This program is similar to winproxy (www.winproxy.com) which we use at home for our network. The major difference is that winproxy can address more than one computer and does not require software loaded on the client. By the same token, it does not include the actual cabling, and a NIC card connects the machines. In essence though, both products do the same thing: they allow you to connect to the net through a proxy server (the machine you set up as a server).

Internet Splitter has a list price of under \$40.00. While I might be inclined to use winproxy for a permanent installation and this for a temporary one (since I’m always short of serial ports!), it is a great product! This is a terrific way to share

SHARE 1999 Conference – Attend for Free! by [Ron Ogg](#), DVPC

Would you like to attend one of the leading technical computer conferences in the world? Here’s your opportunity to do so – and a chance to do so for free!

[SHARE](#) is the IT industry’s leading forum for users of complex IBM information technology systems. SHARE is about users learning from each other, sharing solutions and influencing key developers. SHARE is about expanding the boundaries, reaching for new enterprise system solutions and bringing to life a new vision for the future.

This February, SHARE’s information charged line-up of technical sessions and other events addresses hot topics in seven

(Continued on page 12)

SHARE 1999 Conference...

(Continued from page 11)

high priority programs at their meeting at Moscone Center in San Francisco:

System/390 Server

- New System/390 Technologies
- Parallel Sysplex
- UNIX Services on System/390
- OS/390 Systems Managed Storage
- Tape Technologies
- Technical Nitty Gritty
- Helping to Run Your Shop
- SHARE Classics
- P/390 Hands on Lab

Enterprise-Wide Systems Mgmt.

- Y2K and Beyond
- Capacity Planning and Performance Tuning
- Computer Operations Management
- Enterprise Computing Management
- Data Security
- Enterprise-Wide Disaster Recovery
- Enterprise-Wide Storage Management
- Systems Management and Network Automation
- Featured Speaker -- Fred Moore

Networking

- High Speed Networking
- TCP/IP Networking
- Local Area Networks
- Network Computing
- Java in Network Computing

RISC/Open Systems

- UNIX: The OS and The Tools to Use It
- IBM RS6000 SP
- AIX Operating System
- RS6000 Hands on Lab
- Featured Speaker -- Dave Turek

(Continued on page 13)

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SHARE 1999 Conference...

(Continued from page 12)

Desktop Computing

- Notes and Domino
- Windows NT 4.0 in Depth
- IBM Middleware on Windows NT 4.0
- Windows NT 5.0 in Depth
- Personal Systems Hardware
- PC Hands on Lab

Internet/Intranet

- Electronic Business on the Internet
- Internet Application Development
- Webmaster - Design and Administration
- Featured Speaker - Pat Gibney

Professional Development

- Featured Speaker: Dr. Larry A. Smith

The SHARE Technology Exchange is a three-day trade show that hosts a unique national audience of qualified IT decision makers. Exhibitors have access to more than 2,400 professionals representing leading U.S. and international corporations, world-class educational institutions, government agencies, and IBM management and technical personnel. Held in conjunction with the SHARE Technical Conference, this comprehensive trade show is designed to showcase your latest products and services, offer product demonstrations, and develop one-on-one relationships with SHARE conference attendees. Here's a partial list of exhibitors:

Action Software, ADPAC, Allen Systems Group, Aonix, Applied Expert Systems, Automated Migration Services, Barr Systems, Beyond Software, Boole & Babbage, Candle Corporation, Cisco Systems, Computer Associates International, Computerm Corporation, Compuware Corporation, Data 21, Diversified Software Systems, DTS Software, EKC, Emprise Technologies, Esker, Forté Software, Fundamental Software, H & W Computer Systems, Harbor Systems Management, Hummingbird Communications, IBM, InCert Software, Information Builders, Innovation Data Processing, Intercomp, Interlink Computer Sciences, Interskill Services, IONA Technologies, Isogon, Landmark Systems, Levi, Ray & Shoup, Lincoln Software, Mainstar Software, MicroEdge, MiraSoft, MODCOMP, MVS Solutions, NaSPA, NEON Systems, Network Software Associates, NewEra Software, OpenConnect Systems, Oracle, Phoenix Software International, PLATINUM Technology, Polaris Communications, PolyGlott, Reasoning, Response Networks, SAS Institute, Seagull, Softworks, Sterling Software, Tivoli Systems, Tone Software, Trident Services, Unicom Systems, Velocity Software

So, how can you attend SHARE 1999 for free? Come to the DVPC February meeting. We'll be raffling off ten one-day conference registrations, valued at \$315 each, complements of SHARE 1999! Here's your chance to actually attend the conference sessions, not just the exhibits, of a major conference. Come to our February meeting on the 4th, get your free raffle ticket, buy some more for only \$1.00 each, and wait for the drawing at the end of the evening!

Swap Meet Coming! Swap Meet Coming! by [Ron Ogg](#), DVPC

In the past years DVPC held several popular swap meets. These swap meets let members sell computer hardware and software that they didn't need, and members and guests buy lots of great computer stuff at bargain prices. Well, it's back! In June (a new, later date, so you can find all of that *excellent* stuff to bring) we'll hold an official DVPC Swap Meet! So, go through your closets, cabinets, drawers, and computer slush pile and get those unused but usable items ready for the Swap Meet. Look for all the details about how it's going to work in the February issue of *Diablo Blue*.

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 [APCUG](#), the Association of PC Users Groups

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:

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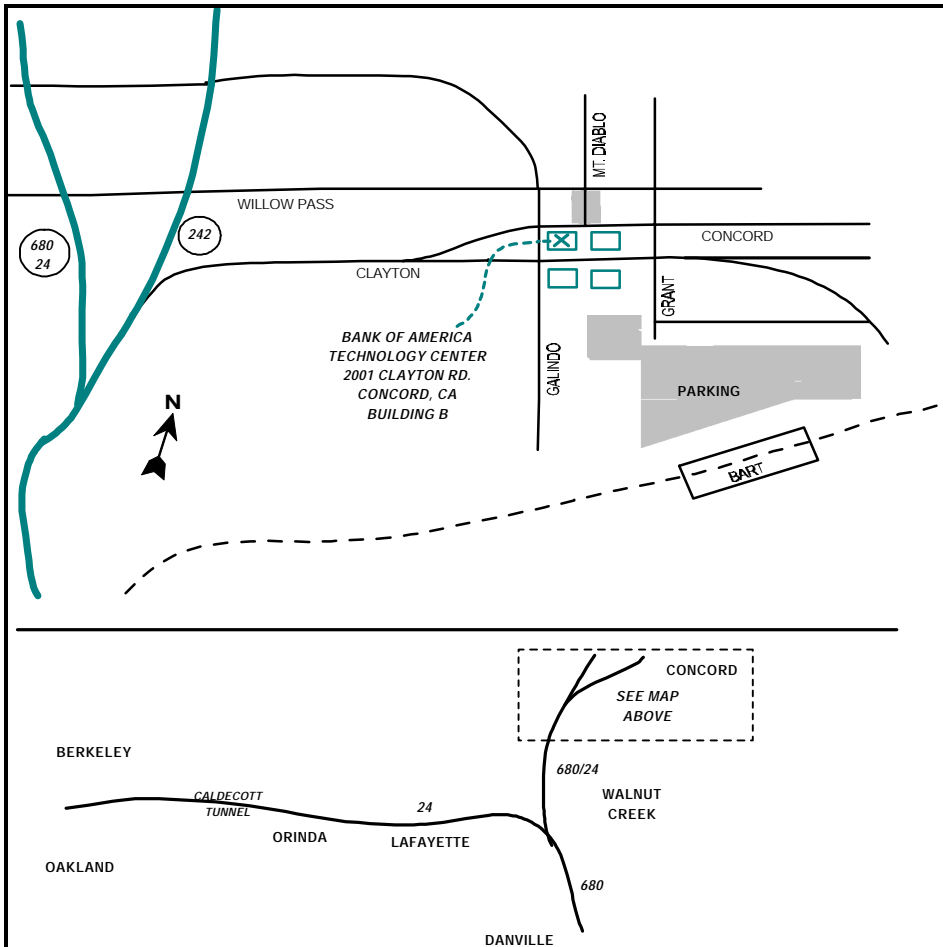
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On occasion DVPC publishes a list of members **for distribution to DVPC members only**. Please check how you would like to be listed: **No listing** _____ **List Name and Home** _____ **Work** _____ **phone number(s)** _____

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 February 1999 Calendar

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
1	2	3	4 DVPC Monthly Meeting 7:00 p.m. New User's SIG 6:30 p.m.	5
8	9	10 Board Meeting 7:00 p.m. Alan Mildwurm's house	11	12
15 Microsoft Project SIG 7:30 p.m. Real Estate SIG 9:00 a.m.	16	17 Internet SIG 7:30 p.m. New SIG	18 Advanced Users SIG 7:30 p.m.	19 <i>Diablo Blue deadline</i> Email articles and ads to the Newsletter Editor: rogg@value.net
22 WordPerfect SIG 7:30 p.m.	23 Access/Visual Basic SIG 7:30 p.m.	24 Education & Entertainment SIG 7:30 p.m. Clarion SIG 7:30 p.m.	25	26 Windows SIG 7:30 p.m. <i>New night starting this month</i>
				<i>See SIG News starting on page 4 for more information about SIG meeting dates, times, topics, and locations</i>

Diablo Valley PC User's Group
PO Box 667
Danville, CA 94526

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