

# Diablo Blue

October, 1999



The Monthly Newsletter of the Diablo Valley PC User's Group

## October 7, 1999 Meeting Announcement Enfish Tracker Pro

Our October, 1999 DVPC meeting will feature [Enfish Tracker Pro](#) from Enfish Technologies. If you're like most PC users, your hard drive contains so many data files with so much information that, when you want to find something it's a set of interlocking challenges. Windows has a built in Find tool, but the challenges are how to describe the information you want to find, and how to quickly retrieve the list of files that contain that information. To the rescue: programs in the *file indexing* category. *Enfish Tracker Pro* from Enfish Technologies is a new entrant in the file indexing category of software, and we'll see it demoed at our October meeting. This is an automatic indexing program that indexes your files, email, and web pages in the background as you use them, and deletes references when you delete files.

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 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; 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 presenters, and some of our usual great door prizes. See you at this month's meeting!

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### President's Corner

by Alan Mildwurm

As I write this column, our Board of Directors is enmeshed in the awesome task of lining up vendors for Windows Night in November. As many of you know, Windows Night is a mini trade show where we invite several vendors to set up tables and display their latest and greatest products. Quite honestly, it is getting harder to get vendors to come. One very large company, who has been very generous to our club, Symantec, is currently evaluating their entire user group program with an eye towards eliminating it altogether. On their last visit to us earlier this year, they required an attendance of 200 people before they would come to a group. (We got around this requirement by associating with PC Clubhouse of Hayward. Symantec did our group on Thursday and theirs on Friday and that counted – thanks to PC Clubhouse and Symantec for bending their rules). Now it seems Symantec may drop their program altogether. They are not the first company to make this decision. Regrettably, they won't be the last.

[\(Continued on page 12\)](#)

## More Blasts From the Past by Ron Ogg, DVPC

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That stack of old issues of *Diablo Blue* that Alan Mildwurm handed me continues to provide material that reminds us that, when someone tells you about “the good old days of computers,” you should remind them that today is *much* better! And, so you know exactly what I mean, a reprint of one of those old articles follows for your interest and amusement. Look for more in future issues of *Diablo Blue*.

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## Our Archives: DVPC Classified Ads from the August, 1986 Issue

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FOR SALE: RBASE 4000 with Extended Report Writer, new, never used, \$75; IBM PC-XT Hard Disk controller card, \$125; AT Serial Parallel Adapter card, \$50; JRAM-AT card, OK, no software, \$125; Hayes Smartcomm II software, new, \$50; IBM Topview, \$35. All on consignment, call for availability. 555-5555.

FOR SALE: IBM single side double density disk drive, \$50; Parallel, serial port board, \$50. Call Rick Marx 555-5555.

FOR SALE: OKI 193 new, 132 col. \$450; IBM Mono board \$100; Computer Inovations “C” Compiler \$200; Financier II \$75. Call Val at 555-5555.

FOR SALE: General Ledger! BPI GL, never used, includes all original papers, etc. \$75; 360K “B” diskette drives, used not abused, \$25 each; AMDEK 300A Graphics Monitor, amber, used, \$35; I2 External Hard Disk, 16.6 mb, 14 mo. Old, new \$1,300 will take \$650; Modem Cables 3’ long \$10; Parallel Cables 9’ to 10’ long \$25. Call Al Hunt @ 555-5555.

FOR SALE: TURBO TAX, Personal, Federal and California, in shrink wrap, \$65; ASR33 TTY Terminal, will donate to charity or sell for \$50. Call Vince 555-5555.

FOR SALE: Panasonic Sr. Partner, 512K, 2 - 360K drives, Built in printer, green screen, carrying case, IBM Compatible, \$1,000. In interested contact Mike LaRoche at 415-555-5555 nights or 408-555-5555 days.

FOR SALE: Santa Clara PC Terminal, 256K, monochrome, serial & parallel ports w/Orchid PC Network board, 4 exp. Slots, \$500; 2 Orchid PC Network boards, \$600 – both of above for \$1,000; PC Draw with Light Pen \$200. Steve Israel 555-5555.

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## Our Archives: Should Diskette Drive Heads be Cleaned?

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*By Don Weir*

There are many cleaning products on the market, yet I’ve heard that cleaning drive heads is not necessary, not recommended and even potentially damaging. The experts I spoke to all said that head cleaning diskettes are overrated and potentially harmful.

As it turns out, the iron oxide coatings used on most floppy disks are rather abrasive and provide your drive with a head cleaning action during ordinary use. Unless you use disks of poor quality that flake oxide as they spin, your drive’s heads will likely wear out before accumulating enough residue to cause data errors. Still, if you must clean your drive’s heads (perhaps you were unlucky to use some of those “flaky” disks), the experts recommend that you avoid commercially available head cleaning disks.

Such products tend to be either completely ineffective or so highly abrasive that they may cause harm to the head’s mirror like surface. If the head becomes scored as a result of cleaning with an abrasive cleaning disk, it will attract foreign material in the scored surface requiring more frequent cleaning, a CATCH 22, wouldn’t you say?

The cleaning method used by most professionals is to place a drop of isopropyl alcohol on a cotton swab and then rub the head’s surface with a gentle back and forth motion. Since this procedure requires removing the drives from the cabinet (and possibly voiding the unit’s warranty), it may be best to have a service professional do this job for you.

Incidentally, not all read/write errors are caused by a dirty or worn drive head. The problem may be attributable to an improper head alignment, an incorrect motor speed, or worn head load pad.

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## Ken's Korner Turns Two by [Ken Fermoye](#), the User Group Network

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### ***'Korner' Turns Two: Looking back... and ahead***

It doesn't seem possible that two years have flown by since I clicked on "Send" to launch the first *Ken's Korner* column into cyberspace. Yet, when I stop to think, it's equally incredible that so much has happened in just 24 months.

In September, 1997, that first article (Prehistoric DTP, or Publishing in the Stone Age) went out to just 11 editors, all of whom had signed up at the Southwest Regional User Group Conference in San Diego a month earlier. Now 225 editors and webmasters subscribe. In addition, the list of computer pros who have asked to receive the column has swollen to more than 50 since I started adding individuals some 10 months ago.

Several Ezines (electronic magazines) feature *Ken's Korner* regularly, as do such differing Websites as the North Carolina Dept. of Education, Australia Seniors Online and the Mac-oriented User Group Network. (I think I'm UGN's token PC person.)

Practically all of the early subscribers were from California and Arizona. Now almost every state is represented, including Alaska and Hawaii, plus Australia, Canada, Costa Rica, Great Britain, Greece, Japan, New Zealand and Panama.

What makes this growth surprising is how it happened. Most subscribers have come aboard as a result of word of mouth, or seeing the column in other group newsletters or web sites. *APCUG Reports*, official publication of the Association of PC User Groups, has run several articles about *Ken's Korner* and its availability. Fred Showker at UGN has been another booster. I have written to acquaint some groups with the column after learning about their publications while surfing the Net. Of course, the fact that articles are free doesn't hurt! But still, a 25-fold increase in 24 months is impressive.

The growth also indicates that my two main premises in starting the column were on the mark. First, having been "volunteer" editor of many newsletters over the years, I knew that many editors have to scratch for good material. Second, I felt the mainstream computer press was so focused on corporate computing and "enterprise solutions" that it often failed to provide information for grassroots computers, the area on which I concentrate.

### ***New projects are born***

*Ken's Korner* gave birth to a major new offshoot early this year: the User Group Media Workshop project. It resulted from reading hundreds of group newsletters and journals over the past two years. Most editors comply with my request that they send me a copy of any publication in which one of my articles appears.

From two to six newsletters arrive every day, either via snail mail or e-mail (usually in PDF format). I don't claim to read every word of every one but I do go through them all, and I do read many of the articles. A lot of editors can testify to that because they've received e-mail from me commenting on their newsletters and/or specific articles.

(Many a cyberspace friendship has developed as a result. I started with one "UG Column" mailbox, added one for "First Contacts" as requests for the column began coming in. Then I opened folder in the UG Column mailbox for individual editors and groups after I had corresponded with each one several times. Now I have about 110 folders in the UG Column mailbox!)

I also visit group web sites regularly, checking out their design and just generally trying to keep up with what's happening in various groups. I do this to keep in touch with grassroots computing, to get ideas for future columns and quite simply to learn from many of the great articles I find.

Quality of the newsletters and web sites is surprisingly good, given that most editors and webmasters are volunteers (or draftees!) with little or no publishing background. My correspondence revealed that these volunteers, particularly the least experienced ones, are eager to improve and welcome any help they can get.

This, and some discussions with Rick Altman, founder and host of *CorelWorld*, led to planning of what was to have been the first User Group Media Workshop, during October in Orlando, FL. Another conversation soon after that with Judy Taylour, one of the Southwest Regional organizers, resulted in the first Media Workshop being presented in August. (You can find more details on Workshop history at my new web site: [www.zyworld.com/wordsmithken](http://www.zyworld.com/wordsmithken).)

The web site is the latest project from *Ken's Korner*. Started in late August, it is still very much a "work-in-progress." I

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

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

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### **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. If you are interested in Access or Visual Basic, be sure to join other programmers at this month's Access/VB SIG meeting. Check out the Access/VB SIG on the web for information about each month's meeting at [www.dvpc.org/sig\\_vbaccess](http://www.dvpc.org/sig_vbaccess) – or navigate there from the DVPC home page ([www.dvpc.org](http://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 and Sharon Noyer](#), SIG Co-Leaders – 778-4348

**New meeting location!** 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!

### **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](http://www.dvpc.org/sig_clar). 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. We're continuing with coverage of the Clarion 5 *Programmer's Guide*, so see the [Clarion SIG web site](#) to find out what chapter to read. 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 usually meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month at Montevideo School in San Ramon at 7:30 p.m. 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! 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 at 7:00 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month at Computer Renaissance, 959 Contra Costa

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## SIG NEWS...

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Bldv. 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 [compmail@pacbell.net](mailto:compmail@pacbell.net).

“SQRL2”, one of the members of the Internet SIG, would like to share some top rated web sites. He wants you to know that these sights are not necessarily rated by his interests, but are rated by ease of use, quality of information, quality of graphics, etc.

[www.privacyrights.org/identity.html](http://www.privacyrights.org/identity.html)    [ciac.llnl.gov/ciac/CIACHoaxes.html](http://ciac.llnl.gov/ciac/CIACHoaxes.html)    (Note no www)    [www.cslb.ca.gov](http://www.cslb.ca.gov)  
[www.contra-costalib.ca.us/index.html](http://www.contra-costalib.ca.us/index.html)    [members.xoom.com/stupidlaws/](http://members.xoom.com/stupidlaws/)    (You will be redirected – no www)  
[www.lovecity.com](http://www.lovecity.com)    [www.thetp.com/](http://www.thetp.com/)

If you like or dislike these sites, come to the the next Internet SIG meeting. There you can find and share all that is out there in the “wild wild web”.

### **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](mailto: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.

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

The Photo SIG meets on the second Tuesday of each month.

Tuesday, October 12th 7:00 pm the Photo SIG will meet at Graham Family Photo, 5100-35 Clayton Road. at the corner of Ayers and Clayton Road, Concord. We'll have Stephan Phillips who is going to show us Digital Photo albums. Stephan has created some great uses for Abobe PhotoShop. He is working with Kinkos to produce some exciting ways to preserve family photographs. Come and join us. For directions call 925-680-1333.

New people are welcome at our meetings. If you're interested in digital photography, scanning photographs, and more, you should attend this interesting new SIG. Please email your and full name and current email address to [graham@value.net](mailto:graham@value.net) for follow-up information and to be placed on the Photo SIG notification list Please let us know what programs or speakers you can provide for our monthly meetings.

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

The Real Estate SIG meeting for October has been cancelled. Our corporate attorney asked us to cancel it until he could get more information from Quackenbush's office. The Insurance Commissioner's office is prosecuting 5 other title companies for current RESPA violations. My boss and I are trying to figure out how to side step the commissioners office and make our efforts legal. If you have any ideas they would be appreciated. The Real Estate SIG is 4 years old this month. It would be a shame to have to terminate it. The Real Estate SIG meeting was born out of necessity as real estate professionals began embracing technology. Our goal was simple. Keep the industry “in the know” on technology. We gave nothing away, charged nothing, and expected nothing. It doesn't make sense to a lot of us. Contact SIG Leader Bill

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## SIG NEWS...

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Thompson at (925) 998-8530 or email at [thompson@dlsnetwork.com](mailto:thompson@dlsnetwork.com) for additional information.

**Windows SIG** *Ron Ogg* (283-7900 Ext. 201) 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 fourth Friday of each month at 7:30 p.m. 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: 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.

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## Switch to the Diablo Blue Web Edition

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*"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](mailto: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 by Tom Krauss, DVPC

**Meeting Date:** 9/8/99 **Time:** 7:00 pm **Location:** Alan Mildwurm's house

**Bank Account:** \$1,500 (Approximately)

**Old Business:**

Projector: Despite the presence of Charlie, we did not talk about this for the third month in a row.

**New Business:**

Windows Night: Yes, it's nearly that time of the year again. November 4<sup>th</sup> will be our annual Windows Night. As usual, Alan has been thinking about this for some time and has already lined up Microsoft and Partition Magic. Also as usual, the rest of us have been waiting for him to sign up the rest of the vendors.

We discussed publicity, tactics, successes and failures of the past. Then we got down to listing potential vendors and assigning people to contact them.. Any members with an idea of a vendor who might participate should call a Board member for details on what to tell the vendor, or just pass the vendor on to the Board for follow through.

High Cost of Doing Business: Craig interrupted the Windows Night discourse to ask for permission to redo the club banner, which has seen considerable use in his capable hands at computer shows. It was approved as were funds for a fire retardant table cover for use at the shows. Apparently there is concern on Robert Austin's part that when Craig gets rolling on his DVPC sales pitch enough heat is generated to set a normal table cover on fire.

Mentors: Peggy interrupted Craig's computer show conversation to ask what is going to happen with our much-talked about mentor program. We debated how to handle the sign up of mentors and decided to have a sign up at the next club meeting and reward those willing to be mentors with extra raffle tickets. After considerably more debate it was decided that these tickets would be special ones good for Windows Night, when there are lots of prizes raffled off. Ron actually moved that this be done, I seconded it, and the vote was unanimous. Yes, we voted, just like a real board.

While we were explaining to some of the Board the details of the motion they had just voted for, someone else interrupted

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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"/>	Photo 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"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

# Attn: DVPC Members!

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## Board of Directors Meeting...

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with another topic, and this was left hanging, too. You have to attend one of these meetings to appreciate the fact that very little that is brought up is ever discussed fully and finalized in one meeting. There are constant interruptions, digressions and side conversations. Like the time at this meeting that Ron moved that Charlie be removed. Sitting next to Ron, I heard this and quickly seconded it, but the other end of the table was having their own conversation and nothing ever came of it. Another disappointment for admirers of democracy.

Grammar: Sometime in the past month or two, perhaps while I was having my own private conversation, the Board apparently settled once and for all the issue of whether to spell "users" in the club's official name User's or Users'. Shakespeare, King James and Mrs. Garber (my fourth grade teacher) lost, and we are now the DVPC User's Group.

History: Ron gave an interesting and comprehensive description of the origin of the Ponzi scheme. Those of you interested in hearing this fascinating story, send me \$10 and you will learn.

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## Ken's Korner...

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*(Continued from page 3)*

do invite you to visit it, and will appreciate your feedback. Be forewarned: don't expect music, animated GIFs, abundant graphics or other gimmicks. And you definitely won't find blue type on a black background! My goals are to provide easy readability and navigation, plus reasonably fast downloading.

### *Plans for the future*

I hope to do more Workshops and to keep updating and improving the web site. Beyond that, I am researching several subjects for future columns, and could use your help in that respect. I'll list the subjects I have in the works below. If you have any experiences, suggestions or comments you care to contribute, I'd love to hear them. Reader letters and input have often been a big help in the past, and I hope that continues in the future.

AOL censorship – The Irish language, American Civil Liberties Union and various other groups have been the target of Steve Case and company in recent months. In addition, serious security breaches allegedly have occurred on AOL. I will welcome any experiences, pro or con, you have had with the service.

Net conferencing – We've been working on this for some time, but new developments keep appearing. If you use this technology, I want to hear from you.

Digital web cameras – We have two units installed now in *Ken's Korner*: Kodak's DVC323 and Vista Imaging's VI-CAM. Each has excellent features, which we will be reviewing soon.

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Get Involved! Learn!  
Join a SIG today!

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## Ken's Korner...

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*(Continued from page 9)*

**Broadband Internet Access** – This is a complex, fast-evolving subject. I've started an article on it at least four times in recent months, only to have new developments change the picture. I think I have a handle on it now, but would like to hear any experiences you have had with cable, DSL, wireless or ISDN.

**Opening Cable Access** – This deserves its own separate treatment. Cable companies have valid arguments against opening access through their expensive new cable infrastructure. Proponents of opening cable access to other providers have their own arguments (often hypocritical ones, I might add). I've studied the situation carefully and will give you my in-depth take on it ASAP.

*Copyright 1999 by Ken Fermoye, Fermoye Publications. Ken Fermoye has written some 2,500 articles for publications ranging from Playboy and Popular Science to MacWeek, Microtimes & PC Laptop. Ken's Korner, a syndicated monthly column, is available free to User Groups. For information or permission to reprint this article, contact [kfermoyle@earthlink.net](mailto:kfermoyle@earthlink.net).*

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## SIG News...

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### **Linux SIG?**

Bill Walsh and Nick Chase are interested in starting a Linux SIG. Is there anyone else who would be interested in joining? Bill is using Red Hat Linux 6.0, and Nick is using Red Hat 6.2. If you are interested contact Bill or Nick at the September DVPC meeting, or email them: Nick at [nachase@yahoo.com](mailto:nachase@yahoo.com) or Bill at [bwalsh3@ix.netcom.com](mailto:bwalsh3@ix.netcom.com).

### **Any Other New SIGs?**

Are you interested in starting a new SIG? It's easier than you probably think! To get started, just see our new SIG Coordinator Nick Chase at the monthly meeting, or send him at email asking about starting your new SIG at [nachase@yahoo.com](mailto:nachase@yahoo.com).

There are lots of areas where you may find DVPC members with interests that are similar to yours. How about a database SIG? Or a genealogy SIG? You'll never know until you give it a try. Ask Chuck Graham who started the popular Photo SIG, or Bill Thompson who started what's probably the first Real Estate SIG in the country. There's been interest in a Music and Multimedia SIG. Talk to Nick and get **your** favorite SIG started. It's up to you!

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## Ken's Korner Tips by [Ken Fermoye](#), the User Group Network

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This column includes an assortment of tips, comments and answers to questions from readers that have been cluttering up Ken's Korner for some time...

### **Phone Combo Relieves Pain in the Neck**

How many times have you tried to juggle a phone receiver and follow instructions from a support technician using your keyboard and mouse? Tough, isn't it? I don't do it anymore; instead, I use a headset plugged into a cordless phone. When I went shopping for a new cordless last fall I found a remanufactured Uniden 900MHz model on sale for half the price of a new one. Seeing that it had a headset jack, I snapped it up.

(Note: I don't hesitate to buy remanufactured hardware IF the refurbishing was done by the original manufacturer or its authorized supplier and IF it includes a reasonable warranty. I've had good luck with several pieces of remanufactured equipment over the years.)

I also got a Panasonic headset (about \$25). The combination was one of the best buys I've made in years. I use it a lot for taking notes during phone interviews, conference calls and just plain chatting. Where it really shines, however, is when calling tech support

*(Continued on page 11)*

## Internet Explorer Tip from PC Computing E-Letter

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**PROBLEM:** How can you make Internet Explorer open with the same size and position each time?

**SOLUTION:** Resize and position the browser window to where you want it. Then double-click on the 'close window' icon on the top left side of the window while holding down the Shift key. Reopen Internet Explorer, and the window should be in the saved position.

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## Microsoft Word 2000 Tip by [Ron Ogg](#), DVPC

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If you are editing an existing document in Word 2000, and you try to save the document, and an error dialog box is displayed that says that you are out of disk space, but there is plenty of available disk space, here's one possible solution to the problem. Cancel out of the save error dialog box. Select the entire document by pressing Ctrl+A or selecting Edit/Select All from the menu; the entire document will be highlighted. Press function key F9; this will update all links in the document. After the link update is complete, click anywhere in the document to unhighlight the text. Now retry your save. In most cases this file save problem will be resolved.

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## Ken's Korner...

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*(Continued from page 10)*

numbers. It eliminates pinning the phone receiver against your shoulder and neck during long "on hold" periods and leaves both hands free for typing and mouse use as you follow a technician's instructions. Using the headset relieves me of a chronic pain in the neck (mine was damaged by a falling tree limb).

Any phone with a headset jack will work, but the cordless/headset combo lets me walk around and talk with the phone tucked in a shirt pocket.

### *Love that KVM Switch!*

Another favorite is my KVM (keyboard, video, mouse) switch. I wrote about this in an earlier article (if you haven't seen it, ask your editor to print it), but I grow fonder of it every day. The ability to control two or more computers (my workstation and our network server, in this case) from a single keyboard, monitor and mouse is terrific: convenient, saves space, is utterly reliable. I'm trying out several other types of switches that many of you may find helpful. Watch for an article soon.

### *Brass Thumbscrews*

The least expensive, but probably the most convenient, items I use in maintaining our office computers are brass thumbscrews that replace the normal screws used to attach case covers. They make quick work of removing and replacing the "lids" on our four computers. The thumbscrews have the same diameter and pitch as the hex-head screws they replace, of course, but you don't need a nut driver or Philips-head screwdriver to remove and replace them.

One of our *Tugnet* stalwarts, Bruce Doshier, found the thumbscrews at a computer show (aka "swap meet") and bought several hundred. They were packaged in sets of six and sold to members for \$2 per package (a slight profit that went into the group's coffers).

*(Continued on page 12)*

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## Become a Mentor by [Alan Mildwurm](#), DVPC

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DVPC has a large number of knowledgeable members who are intermediate to expert users of various software packages. We're going to resurrect our Mentor program and take advantage of this storehouse of knowledge and let members share their knowledge with other members. If you use particular software packages, and would like to help other members when they have questions about any of those packages, you are a candidate for becoming a Mentor. Check the web site and look for a Mentor Information Form at the May meeting, and help your fellow DVPC members

## Ken's Korner...

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*(Continued from page 11)*

Bruce reports that you could probably get similar thumbscrews at local stores or Web sites that specialize in electronic components, if they don't show up a computer shows in your area.

### **Browser Tip**

Have you tried using two browsers, one for fast Internet searching and the other for general Web surfing?

I have an older version of Netscape with graphics disabled that I use when I use search engines and to do research. This allows me to do quick checks of sites to see if they offer information I want. If I do want to view a graphic on any given page, all I need do is click on its icon. (Check your browser's manual or Help Menu for instructions on how to disable graphics.)

I use Internet Explorer 4.x for more normal, leisurely Web browsing and when I want to explore a site thoroughly. The only drawback is the extra hard drive space that having two browsers installed consumes, but with hard drives so cheap now this isn't the limiting factor that it once was.

### **Put Some Light on the Subject**

This one is really off the wall and makes you look like a weirdo, but it makes computer maintenance a lot easier for me. Like many of us who have reached "senior citizen" status, my eyes aren't what they used to be, especially since macular degeneration destroyed central focusing ability in my left eye 12 years ago. I need a lot of light on the subject when I work on a project, otherwise I have difficulty seeing the slots in screws, inserting interface cards, etc. I've tried various types of flashlights and work lamps, but they all require three hands or have other failings.

My latest solution to the problem combines a small clip-on flashlight and a baseball cap. I clip the flashlight to the bill of the cap, so I can shine it directly on an area where I'm working. Even better is a clip-on flashlight I found recently that has a flexible extension. You can bend it to point precisely when you need the light, and the extension puts it closer to your work area. Like I said, it looks weird, but it works. (What really shook up my wife recently was seeing me wearing both the cap-and-light combination and the phone headset! Her reaction: "It's the creature from outer space!")

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## President's Corner...

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*(Continued from page 1)*

We have noticed that our attendance these past few months has dropped off. Hopefully it was only due to the summer but... who knows? Obviously for computer clubs to survive and for vendor support of them, we need to offer a "service" to our members that they feel is important and valuable enough to want to spend money on dues and perhaps more importantly, their TIME to come to meetings. I think the dues are negligible, it's the TIME. If we don't provide a good reason for members to come, they won't. Computers are becoming more like appliances – easier to use (although not yet at the toaster level). The old days of software shipped in baggies, running on machines that sometimes work, are gone. For the most part, things work. If it doesn't, the web is there as a safety net. We have been asking for member input for as long as I have been a member- for the most part we hear very little in the way of feedback. We have tried to initiate new ideas and programs – like the mentor list – with little (no) member response.

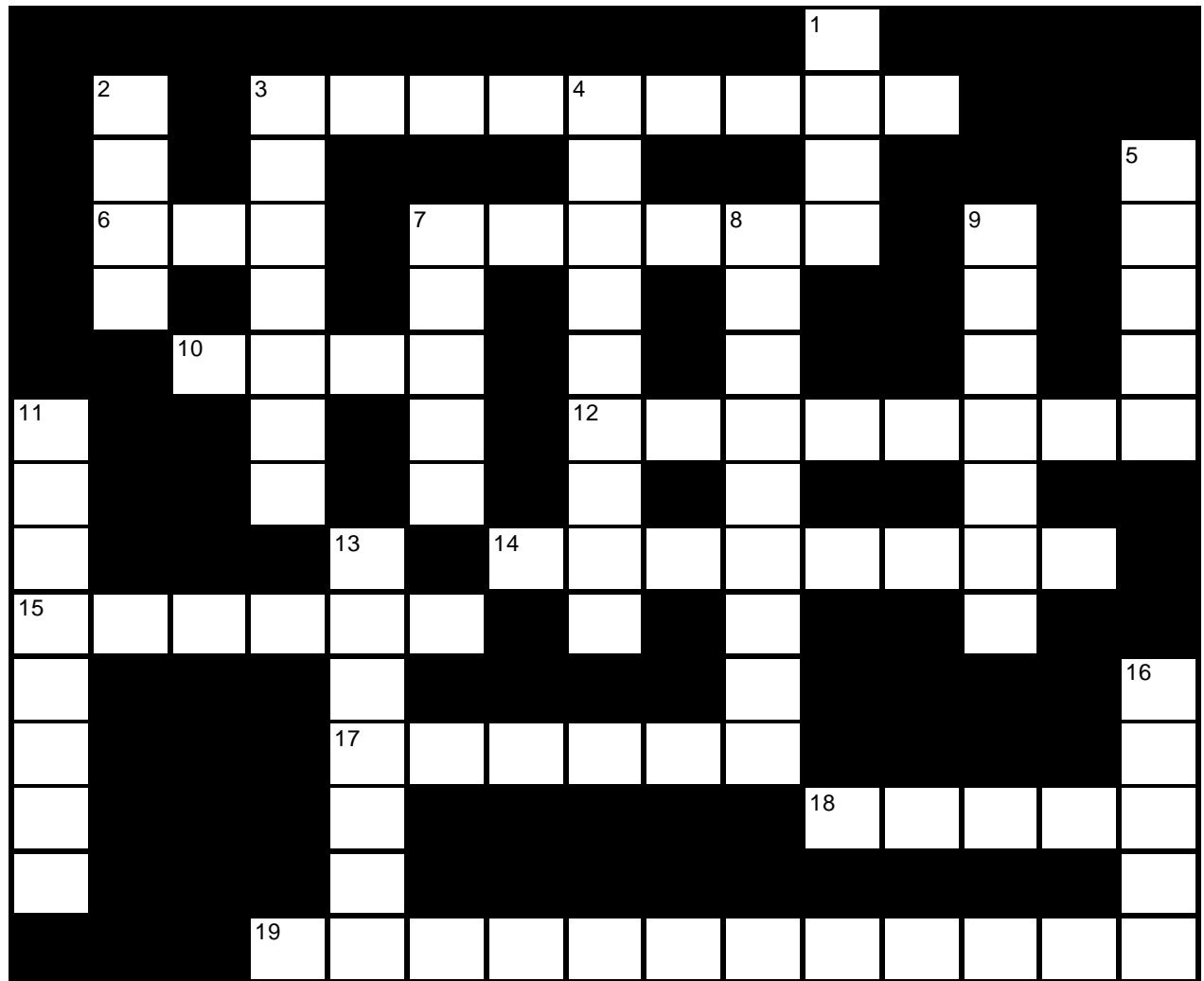
### **ARE YOU OUT THERE? ARE YOU CONNECTED? WHAT'S UP??**

Let us hear from you! Tell us why you come to the meetings. Tell us why you don't. Tell us what you want and don't want to see. BRING A FRIEND, introduce them to the club, and get them to join. Help out at the Robert Austin Computer Show and Sale – Craig Peterson does a yeoman job of representing DVPC and recruiting new members without help from any of you reading this. Let's all work to get the club growing again. Otherwise, Symantec will be justified in their decision – and I would hate that to be true.

### **Windows Night**

Windows Night will be held as our November meeting, on the 4th. It's always a great show, and something your friends should enjoy. Bring them along and show them that they should join DVPC and take advantage of what the club offers!

**Computer Crossword, October 1999**  
**Computer Games**  
 by Craig Peterson, DVPC



**Across**

- 3 Card game played by yourself (9)
- 6 Game of take away (3)
- 7 The game that includes Mr., Ms., Super, Baby, etc. who eat energy pellets and ghosts (two words) (6)
- 10 Game of empire vs empire (4)
- 12 Arthur Samuel was the first to teach a computer to win at this game (8)
- 14 Game of gathering wealth (8)
- 15 Russia's way to spend hours and hours and hours . . . (6)
- 17 Card game where you do not want the queen of spades (6)
- 18 id Software update to Doom (5)
- 19 Microsoft gave us this "hack and slash" game (three words) (12)

**Down**

- 1 Movie about a game programmer scanned into the computer to play the game (4)
- 2 The first popular arcade game (4)
- 3 Game where you build and manage a city (two words) (7)
- 4 Game used by Matthew Broderick to teach a computer about games in "War Games" (three words) (9)
- 5 Game where you try to hit the center of the target (5)
- 7 Strip, five card draw, seven card stud, . . . (5)
- 8 You get to shoot at space rocks and space ships (9)
- 9 Reversal is the name given to this program because this name is trademarked by Gabriel Industries (7)
- 11 Game where your player gets to dance when he gets to the end of the field (8)
- 13 Game that is the ultimate in "catch and release" (7)
- 16 Richard Greenblatt wrote the first decent program for this game at MIT (5)

## 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: 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) Mark Allen, Publicity 680-7746 (home)  
Nicholas Chase, SIG Coordinator 680-4211 (home) Charlie Crothers, At Large 829-2237 (home)  
Bill Earl, Sergeant-at-Arms 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 Ext. 201 (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](http://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 Users' Group. Editor: Ronald Ogg, Mailing: Peggy Johnson  
Please submit articles and columns to the Newsletter editor by email at [rogg@value.net](mailto: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:

**DVPC User's Group, PO Box 667, Danville, CA 94526**

Renewal \_\_\_\_\_ New Member \_\_\_\_\_ Referred by current member? Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company/School: \_\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

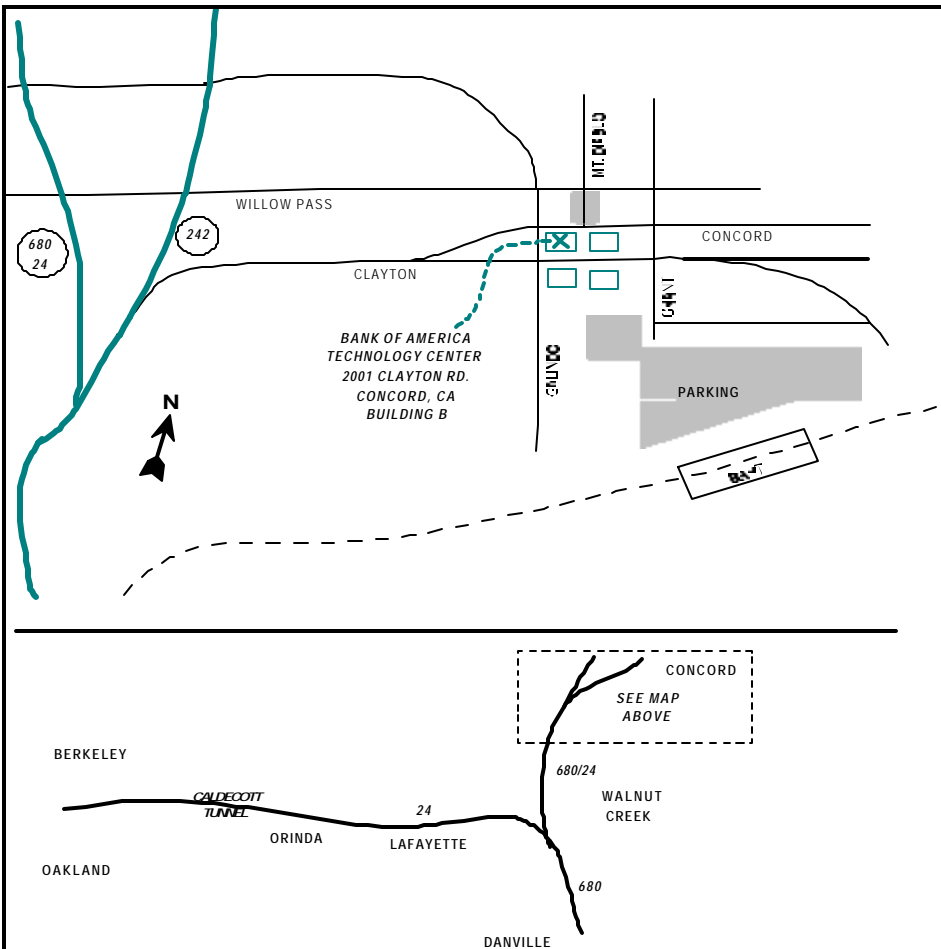
City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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 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 October 1999 Calendar

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
<p><i>See SIG News starting on page 4 for more information about SIG meeting dates, times, topics, and locations</i></p>				<b>1</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<p>DVPC Monthly Meeting 7:00 p.m. New User's SIG 6:30 p.m.</p>	<b>8</b>
<b>11</b>	<p>Photo SIG 7:00 p.m.</p>	<b>12</b>	<p>Board Meeting 7:00 p.m. Alan Mildwurm's house</p>	<b>15</b>
<p>Microsoft Project SIG 7:30 p.m.</p>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<p>Advanced Users SIG New meeting location 7:30 p.m.</p>	<b>22</b>
<b>25</b>	<p>Access/Visual Basic SIG 7:30 p.m.</p>	<b>26</b>	<p>Education &amp; Entertainment SIG 7:30 p.m. Clarion SIG 7:30 p.m.</p>	<b>29</b>

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

**FIRST CLASS MAIL**

**TO:**