

Diablo Blue

September, 1999



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

September 2, 1999 Meeting Announcement Lernout and Hauspie

Our September, 1999 DVPC meeting will feature **Lernout and Hauspie**, one of the leading publishers of voice recognition software. We'll see version 4 of their *Voice Xpress* package, which comes in versions for all levels of users. Depending on the version (Standard, Advanced, Mobile Professional, and Professional), *Voice Xpress* features dictation into Microsoft Word, or almost any Windows applications. And it has been updated to work with Microsoft Office 2000. The demonstration will show how *Voice Xpress* achieves up to 98% accuracy, how L&H *XpressStart* lets you begin using the package as soon as you install it, *TalkingTools* (five desktop accessories designed to be operated by voice), and *TalkingText* (hear your documents or email read out loud to you, making editing easier).

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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Windows 98 Upgrade Deal

by [Duane A. Peterson](#), DVPC

I just found some information that the members of DVUG might be interested in regarding upgrading from Windows 95 or 3.x to Windows 98 Second Edition. [Club Computer.Com](#) sells the Windows 98 upgrade for \$63.94 to members, and a person can get a 30-day temp. membership for \$1.00. They can be reached at www.clubcomputer.com and are located at 2771 Rockfish Valley Highway, Nellysford, VA 22958. Their phone number is 1-800-449-1776. The part number of this version of Windows 98 is 730-00002. Both the temporary membership and the item can be bought using a charge card (i.e., VISA, MasterCard, etc.).

If you already have Windows 98 installed, you can buy a special upgrade from [Microsoft's web site](#) for \$19.95 plus \$5.00 shipping and tax at <https://order4.microsoft.com/scripts/startwin98se1.asp?> (note the https).

President's Corner

[Alan](#) is on vacation. His column will return in October.

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

STILL WAITING!!!!

I'd like to take a page out of the Jack-in-the-Box TV advertisements where Jack is waiting for McDonald's and Burger King to call him back. I'm still waiting by my computer waiting for Governor Gray Davis to do the right thing. By the time you read this it will have been almost 9 months since he took office and he has yet to establish an e-mail address that his constituents (read the whole state of California) can use to tell the good Governor their viewpoints on his performance as Governor. In May one of his staff e-mailed me saying that the Governor didn't want to establish an e-mail address until he can do it "properly". Give me a break!!!! How long does it take to establish an e-mail address and to assign an intern to tally the e-mails and pick particularly interesting ones to show the Governor? The good Governor is my only elected official above the local level that does NOT have an e-mail address. They all at least give the appearance of welcoming input from their constituents. In fact State Senator Richard Rainey has actually replied to several of my e-mails. I'm beginning to get the impression that the good Governor isn't interested in hearing from me or any other California voters unless, of course, you are in the \$1000 a plate fund raiser dinner category.

Okay Governor Davis. I'm going to continue to wait by my computer for you and your crew to get off your tails and actually set up an e-mail address.

Mandatory Registration

Microsoft has now joined Caere in forcing people to register their software. The latest version of MS Office 2K now tells you shortly after you install the software that you have fifty uses to register your software. After fifty uses it will stop working.

Now here is my problem. I loaded AND REGISTERED the program a couple of weeks ago. Then on Friday the 13th I had a major problem with the Explorer in Windows becoming corrupted and ended up having to do a clean install of Windows. The side effect of this is that ALL applications have to be re-installed. Of course when I re-installed MS Office 2K it started the fifty day countdown again. A week later I still haven't heard back from MS with the magic numbers to stop the count down clock.

I am therefore nominating Microsoft to the Curmudgeon's Hall of Shame for their registration policy.

All in favor vote "Aye".

Women Then and Now by [Helen Sanford](#), Fallbrook PC User's Group

As I work on my computer I can't help but think of the changes that have taken place during my lifetime (especially in the lives of women) since technology – any kind of technology – came along. I remember when I was very young my mother washed clothes using a scrubbing board and a wringer that was turned by hand (that was my job). What a big day it was when we got our first washing machine – what a wondrous laborsaving device – new technology! And I remember when we got our first crystal radio. My mother often sat up until three in the morning with headphones listening to KDKA Pittsburgh – it was the most powerful station on the air. And then what a miracle it was when we got our first regular radio! Advanced technology!!!

And then there were typewriters – type a little, throw the carriage, type some more, throw the carriage twice when you wanted a paragraph – make a mistake and try to correct it so it didn't show too much. In high school in the 20's I learned there was something called a ditto machine to make copies. I also learned that when you used it you'd probably get blue ink all over your hands. A better way – at least I thought it was better – was to use a mimeograph. We had to type the original material on a special blue-filmed paper. There was correction fluid to fix any mistakes. Then we'd ink up the drum of the mimeograph (more ink on your hands), fasten the blue copy onto the drum and turn the handle to crank out whatever number of copies were needed. Ah, those were the days – we really had laborsaving devices.

When I went to work at Ryerson Steel Company in 1934 we had a big room for the largest computer – and it had to be

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Women Then and Now...

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kept at a certain temperature. I remember the punch cards going through at what seemed like a hundred miles a minute - and of course there was always the "do not spindle, fold or mutilate" sign on the cards. I didn't have to take shorthand any more - there were Dictaphones for our transcription work - big advancement. It was an unbelievable time for the fast processing of information and most of this work was done by women - a lot of men didn't even know how to type and besides that was "women's work". But it presented an opportunity for more and more women to enter the business world.

Then came World War II and everyone's life changed. It didn't make any difference what the job was - whoever was available did it. We all learned to do things we never thought possible.

After the war came a big boom period and things began to happen - television!!! Who could ever imagine that we could get a picture through the air? And then later we even got color reception! Technology was advancing so fast we couldn't believe it.

And then came computers and copy machines! Wow! Right on the heels of that were fax machines and it seemed almost every month we'd hear of something new - scanners, Internet, computer programs that could handle any task - it would be difficult to list them all. But what a tremendous period we have gone through with technology and what a boon it has been to give more and more women an opportunity to advance in the business world.

But here is an interesting observation. There is a book by Tom Standage called *The Victorian Internet: The Remarkable Story of the Telegraph and the Nineteenth Century's On-Line Pioneers*. He reminds us that, as revolutionary as the Internet may seem, it has all happened before! He says the advent of telegraphic communication in the mid 19th century did more to change society than the development of today's Internet. And he certainly could be right when you think back to how things were then.

But how about technology that has **really** changed the lives of women? I think that today's advancements have changed women's lives more than it did back then. Now there are many, many more women in the business world - some of it caused by economic necessity but also because technology offered them the chance to be on an equal footing. And how about women in their 60s, 70s, 80s and even 90s who have computers and go on-line to keep abreast of events? A lot of us never had the chance to be involved with this new technology in the business world - either because it was before computers or we were busy raising families. Today more and more women are saying "I can't let this Age of Technology pass me by - I want to get involved!" Nowhere is this more in evidence than in our own Computer Club! Yes, lives of women have really changed and how wonderful it is!

This article is furnished as a benefit of our membership in the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization to which this user group belongs. The author, Helen Sanford has lived in Fallbrook, CA since 1967. She is 83 years old and got a computer the first time she heard there was a good bridge program and it just grew from there. She has 5 sons who talk "computerese" and wanted to know what it was all about - she didn't want this age of technology to pass her by. She's been active in community affairs, was President of the Fallbrook PC Users Group from 1995-1998 and still helps with computer classes and is forever learning.

The Latest Y2K "Quick Fix" from the NovaStor Web Site, www.novastor.com

There is currently a round of e-mails being spread telling people how to change the way the date is displayed on a Windows 95/98/NT machine (using 'Regional Settings' in the Control Panel) which will supposedly make your system fully Y2K compliant (this was also recently made worse by a posting in LockerGnome, a very good internet newsletter). The e-mail states that if you don't change the way your date is displayed in Windows, your machine will not be Y2K compliant.

This is **not true**. While doing this is probably a good idea (to get you used to seeing 4-digit years), this procedure has absolutely NO effect on how your system processes date/time information.

Think of it this way: If you add two zeros to the left of your odometer, will your car last longer?

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

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. We're continuing 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.

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 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. 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.

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SIG NEWS...

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Internet SIG *Craig Peterson, SIG Leader – 671-7025*

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

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.

Photo SIG *Chuck Graham, SIG Leader – 680-1333*

The Photo SIG usually meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. ***There will be no meeting in September.*** Check back in the October issue of *Diablo Blue* for information about our next meeting.

New people are welcome at our meetings. Please email your and full name and current email address to 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.

If you're interested in digital photography, scanning photographs, and more, check back for all the details about this interesting new SIG. You can also contact Chuck Graham, the Photo SIG leader, via email at graham@value.net for more information.

Real Estate SIG *Bill Thompson, SIG Leader – 693-0174*

The Real Estate SIG has been rather quiet the last few months. We have been getting calls inquiring as to why. There is good reason. In addition to running SIG's most of us have other professions or interests that we bring to the SIG that gives the SIG meaning, life and purpose. I am from the title insurance industry and work with real estate agents and lenders. My mission is evangelistic in that I continually bring technology and the real estate industry together hoping to spur insight, production and greater understanding of the tools and services born each day to aid us in our work effort.

The Real Estate SIG has been around a long time and I take pride in what it has brought to the real estate community as well as being a very comfortable part of the Diablo Valley PC Users group. Being first usually puts us out in front of the competition. The real estate community is no exception and it didn't take special science to see that real estate agents and lenders in Contra Costa County would be adopting technology spawning the need for a few geeks and techies to get them through it. Therefore I exist, the SIG exists and our current dilemma exists.

There are approximately 14 title companies in Contra Costa County and the industry is governed by RESPA which is the Real Estate Services Protection Act. One of the "clauses" states that we as title companies cannot do anything for our

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SIG NEWS...

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clients that would reduce the cost of their doing business. So anything free is out of the question. All of the title companies do whatever they can to compete and that includes reporting RESPA violations to the insurance commissioner. Guess who is getting turned in for everything they do including holding SIG meetings. You guessed it. Me! Now you know why the Real Estate SIG has been kinda quiet.

We didn't get this far by lying down and taking it. So we will have a SIG meeting in the month of September. We are working out the details with an online company known as bamboo.com. They are the present leader in virtual home tours. In addition, we will be taking a look at some web marketing ideas that will help agents and lenders save money and advertise smarter on the web.

The meeting will be held on Friday, September 10th from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at 3480 Buskirk Avenue, Suite 120, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523. This date is tentative and you will need to check our website at www.dvpc.org for the final date and time. We are waiting for one more confirmation. Contact SIG Leader Bill Thompson at (925) 998-8530 or email at thompson@dlsnetwork.com for additional information.

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Switch to the Diablo Blue Web Edition

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Email address for meeting notification: _____ Also notify me about these SIGs:

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DVPC Board Meeting Minutes by Tom Krauss, DVPC

There was no Board of Directors meeting in August because of vacation schedules. There will be a September Board of Directors meeting, and Tom Krauss' popular column will be back for all to enjoy.

Ken's Korner by Ken Fermoyle

Microsoft Office Doesn't Like to Work on Floppy Disks

Problems I have been asked about often in recent months concern Microsoft Office. The difficulties occur in all versions of Office, with Word documents and Excel spreadsheets most often involved. Symptoms vary, from obscure error messages to total system lock-up.

Investigating the complaints and checking several sources, including the *Woody's Office Watch* newsletter, I found the answer to the problems. In all cases, users were trying to work with a document/worksheet stored on a floppy disk.

Even if it seems that there is plenty of room left on the floppy disk, there probably is not enough. Word and Excel often write a temporary file in the same location as the original file. That temporary file can quickly fill the available space on a 1.44MB floppy disk.

Ideally, and if Microsoft programmers were more thoughtful, you would get an easy-to-understand "Out of Disk Space" message, but no such luck! Instead, you get all sorts of strange actions and/or messages that give you no clue to the true problem.

Floppy disks also are generally less reliable and more prone to failure than hard drives. You're more likely to lose a document through mechanical failure of a floppy disk (or simply to lose it). Floppy disk drives are much slower than

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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"/>

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Value Net
doesn't charge **Value Net**
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ADSL is a remarkable new technology that allows fulltime high speed connection to the Internet, and Value Net isn't even charging you for it! For home (single station)ADSL, you only pay our regular low monthly rate (see below), and Pacbell charges only \$39/month for the DSL line. For this low flat rate, you are always on, at speeds that put dial-up to shame!

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Get a Friend to Join DVPC!

Ken's Korner...

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hard drives and Office programs run more slowly as a result.

The solution: Always copy a document supplied on floppy disk (after the obligatory anti-virus scan) to a temporary location on your hard drive. Work on the document from there and when you're finished, copy the revised file back to the floppy disk. Voila, no more problems!

Free Computers may not Really be Free in Long Run

Which adage do you believe? "Don't look a gift horse in the mouth" or "There is no such thing as a free lunch." When it comes to taking advantage of many of those "free" computer offers being hyped recently, you'd best consider the latter one.

First came the giveaway offers from Free-PC and clones. They promise a free computer to people who are will to watch continuous ads. The deals include all sort of restrictions on your Internet activity and require that you agree to answer questionnaires and otherwise give up aspects of your personal privacy.

So, in a sense, you do pay a price for the "free" computer. You lose a great deal of privacy and have restricted Internet access. Anyone with the slightest trace of paranoia won't be comfortable with these deals.

Then came free computers from Internet Service Providers (ISPs) like Gobi and InterSquid. They give you a "free" computer in return for a long-term (30 to 36 months) contract for Internet access service at higher-than-normal rates of \$26 to \$30 per month. These rates will really seem excessive in a few years for reasons explained below.

Next we got a spate of partnerships between companies like eMachines, Compaq, large electronic retailers and various ISPs or online services such as CompuServe and Prodigy (which are not true ISPs).

Most of the latter offers don't give you a free computer after all. Many are like the one Circuit City and Fry's chains have been promoting in partnership with CompuServe. Staples has a similar tie-in with MSN, Microsoft Network. Mac fans also are being wooed with offers of "free" iMacs; more on that later. They offer rebates, usually \$400.

The Fry's deal is typical. It includes a \$400 rebate on a \$499 "eMachines/Compaq" computer with 366 Cyrix MII MMX-enhanced processor, 64MB of SD RAM, 4.3GB Ultra DMA hard drive, 56Kbps modem, but no monitor. It's decent, low-end, entry-level home computer. You pay \$499 up front and wait for the \$400 rebate "within 45 days of credit approval... from eMachines/Compaq/CompuServe Internet Service."

Ah, but the cost doesn't stop there. Part of the deal is that you must sign a "contract commitment to a 3-year/36-month subscription for CompuServe 2000 Internet Service at a monthly rate of \$21.95." And therein lies the rub. (You didn't really think that Steve Case, honcho of AOL, which owns CompuServe, would really play Santa Claus, did you? Not blooming likely!)

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Ken's Korner...

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That monthly cost is 10% to 20% over the going rates (currently running from \$17.95 to \$19.95) The kicker is that \$21.95 may be double, even quadruple, what industry analysts and other experts project Internet access to cost in the not-too-distant future! Some predict monthly access fees may go as low as \$5 within a few years, as reported in the Los Angeles Times during July. Why? There are several reasons.

1. Telephone and Internet gurus report that competitive effects of the Telecommunications Reform Act of 1996 are finally beginning to appear. We have already seen long-distance rates drop substantially, to as low as 8 cents per minute in some cases. This ultimately means lower costs for Internet Service Providers.
2. Broadband technologies that offer fast Internet access are beginning to show significant growth. More users will turn to DSL (Digital Subscriber Line) and cable access, as they become available. DSL and cable not only offer fast access, the "always-connected" benefit and simultaneous multi-user capability, but they can be very competitive in cost compared with current dial-up access rates. This is especially true for users who have a second phone line, dedicated to modem use, because that line can be dropped if you get DSL or cable.

So if you sign a 3-year contract for Internet access at \$20 or \$22 per month and access rates drop to \$10 or \$12 in 12 or 14 months, your "free" computer won't be so free after all. And don't think you can terminate your service contract early to take advantage of lower rates. Read the fine print. The CompuServe contract "requires repayment of \$400 rebate plus

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SIG News...

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

The Windows SIG 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.

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 or Bill at 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.

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. It's up to you!

Ken's Korner...

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a \$50 cancellation fee" for early termination.

As Bank of America Securities analyst Kurtis King commented in a L.A. Times Business Section article (July 3), "These contracts are pretty onerous. There's nothing free about the offers."

How about the FreeMac deal? All details weren't clear at this writing, but it appears that the offers requires a 3-year commitment to Internet access with Earthlink at \$19.95/month and submission of a demographic profile. The latter would be used to target advertisements to specific users.

FreeMac plans to distribute 10,000 free machines in October. I have no information yet on what penalty would be invoked if you try to terminate the contract with Earthlink before 36 month have elapsed.

(Author's Note: Just as I was finishing this article I received an offer of Internet access through MSN, the Microsoft Network, at \$11.99 per month. The deal is available through Costco, a large membership retailer, and requires a 3-month prepayment (\$35.97) but no long-term contract. Take this as an omen of things to come!)

Copyright 1999 by Ken Fermoye. 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. To subscribe or for permission to reprint this article, contact kfermoyle@earthlink.net.

Microsoft Word 2000 Tip by [Bruce Feld](#), DVPC

I was having all kinds of problems getting Word 2000 to send a Fax using Microsoft Fax. I went into Word, clicked Tools on the menu bar, then the Print tab and unchecked "Background Printing." The *File/Send To FAX* now seems to work fine.

Special Offers for DVPC Members by [Craig Peterson](#), DVPC

Remember, as a Member of DVPC you get a Discount at the Following Stores

COMPUSA, 1975 Diamond Blvd., Concord: Present your card and get the corporate discount on items on sale

Computer Renaissance, 959 Contra Costa Blvd., Pleasant Hill: Present your card and get 10% off goods and services

Looking for a great way to help the club?

We are accepting volunteers to help answer questions about the club at the Robert Austin Computer Show on Saturday and Sunday September 24 & 25 , 1999. Even if you can only stop by for an hour or so one of the days it would help us as we get the word out about the club.

Contact Craig Peterson at 510-671-7025 or by email at compmail@pacbell.net to volunteer or to get information.

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

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

Guide for Product Reviews by Gary Pelphey, Atlanta IBMers' PC Club

Outline/Check-Off List for Information Needed Product Identification: The product should certainly be identified sufficiently completely so that any reader interested in buying it would know precisely how to do that, and what it's likely to cost. It should include the name of the manufacturer with his address and phone number, as well as any local retailer who may be offering the product at a special price. If either the manufacturer or a local retailer is offering a club discount, tell us what that is, and how we can take advantage of it. Make sure you spell the product name right, i.e. WordPerfect, not Wordperfect. If the release level is significant, make that obvious too.

Functions: It's a surprising, but frequently encountered fact of life, that the reviewer is so familiar with the product, and its intricacies, that he forgets to tell the uninitiated reader up front what the product is, and, in general terms, what it does. There are several cuts to this; first, what does the vendor say the product will do? Second, what do you think it will do? After using the product, what did it do – and how well?

Guzinta: An essential document in manufacturing is the exploded parts list for a manufactured product, commonly called the guzinta (goes int'a). Since I like the word, I've used it for the reverse view of this important aspect of the product. What do you need to use it? 640k, DOS 3.0 or later, Windows, a special speech card. Optional gadgets that this product can use (mice, scanners) should also be indicated. And an equally important facet of guzinta; what does the product go into? What is the minimum system requirements, earliest software release level, etc. Are there known conflicts with subsequent releases of other popular products?

Placement: There's not much point in talking about a product, for example a word processor, unless you can offer some comparisons to word processors that the general audience is likely to be familiar with. If you're talking about a Menu program that costs \$600, it would probably be worth mentioning how it is \$575 better than AutoMenu, or something else. One way of indicating placement is through price. Try to give both the list and street prices, if you have them. If there is some promotional deal offered to our club members, also list that price, along with any other factors, expiration date, identification, germane to a member's taking advantage of the deal.

What Does It Really Do? This is where the experienced reviewer generally starts his writing. This is the meat of the review, but the preceding parts are important to enable the reader to keep up with the reviewer's expertise. This section should describe the special attributes of this product which make it unique, and worth considering. In this section you should not only talk about the things the product can do, in whatever sequence you choose as most appropriate, you should also discuss the supporting material/documentation, templates, tutorials.

Support: Maybe this fits into the previous section, but I think that any good review has to include some discussion of how the manufacturer supports this product, and how well. If there is some indication in the package reviewed, or, if the review has personal knowledge of how past and future releases of the product have been/are likely to be handled, these should be described.

Schedule: Naturally everything which is assigned for review carries an unrealistic deadline. Without such a ridiculous time-frame, journalists would lose their principal justification for doing such a haphazard job. We will continue this tradition by asking that you return a draft review within 30 days of your assignment to the review. There is really some time sensitivity to products received for review. There is no longer much interest in an in-depth review of EasyWriter, or DOS 2.0. The time sensitivity heightens if we're dealing with a leading edge product, and if the manufacturer has asked for a review keyed in some fashion to its announcement.

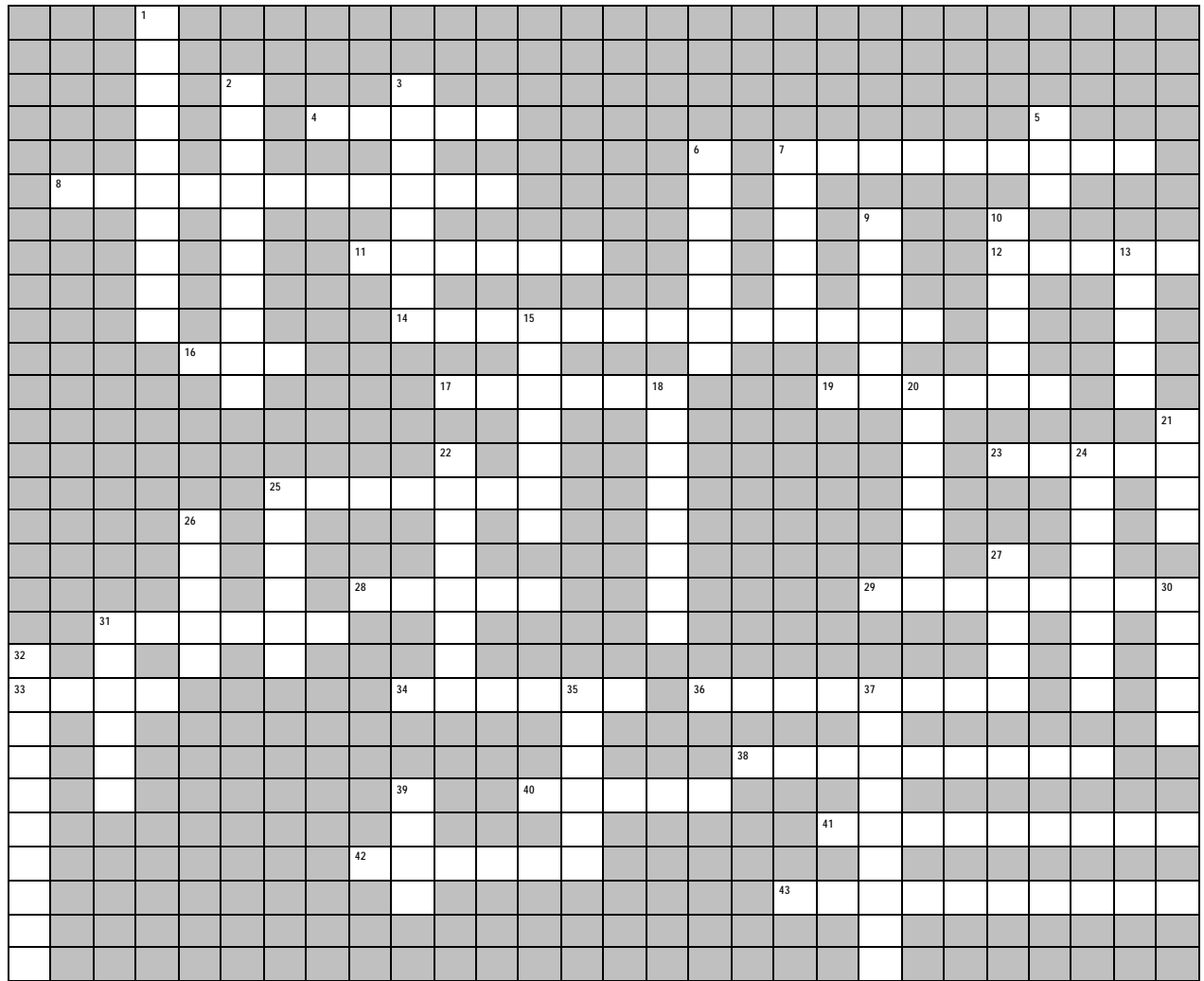
This is an estimate of the time required to prepare a review:

- √ Install the Product: 1 hour
- √ Use the Product: Approximately 8 hours
- √ Outline the Review: 2 hours
- √ Review the Documentation - 4 hours
- √ Draft the Review: 3 hours
- √ Confer with/Telephone the vendor: 1 hour

So, get out that pen and write that review article for Diablo Blue! [Editor]

Computer Crossword, September 1999
It Does What?

by Craig Peterson, DVPC



ACROSS

DOWN

- 4 1/72 of an inch
- 7 Program to keep track of items in stock
- 8 Tests of the status of a system
- 11 Computer known as "notebook"
- 12 12 characters per inch
- 14 The layout of a computer system
- 16 A problem in a program
- 17 To divide a disk's surface into tracks and sectors
- 19 Bookkeeping software format
- 23 Program the value or function of an input
- 25 Program for keeping track of earnings
- 28 Maker of the 1-2-3 spreadsheet program
- 29 Simultaneous processing of on-line devices
- 31 Temporary data storage
- 33 10 characters per inch
- 34 Command to find a word or value
- 36 What a printer produces
- 38 The connection between two parts of a computer
- 40 Computer built by Cray
- 41 A very large computer
- 42 Computer inside another device
- 43 What comes between input and output

- 1 Command to change to uppercase
- 2 Print jobs yet to be done (two words)
- 3 Invented in 1979, it was the first spreadsheet program
- 5 Spreadsheet cells in a line side by side
- 6 Spreadsheet program named because it "comes after 1, 2, 3"
- 7 Command to add a character
- 9 Command to eliminate data
- 10 Command to remove a character
- 13 Heading of a column
- 15 Calculation of data
- 18 To replace a character in a document
- 20 Computer known as "PC"
- 21 The act of electronically transferring a program
- 22 The time a computer is out of service
- 24 Program that translates into machine language
- 25 Computer also known as "handheld"
- 26 1/60 of a second
- 27 Command to provide number of words
- 30 Visually display information
- 31 Command to produce a second copy of data
- 32 Program to find misspelled words
- 35 Spreadsheet cells in a line up and down
- 37 Program to find synonyms
- 39 Command to end a function

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) 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 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: _____

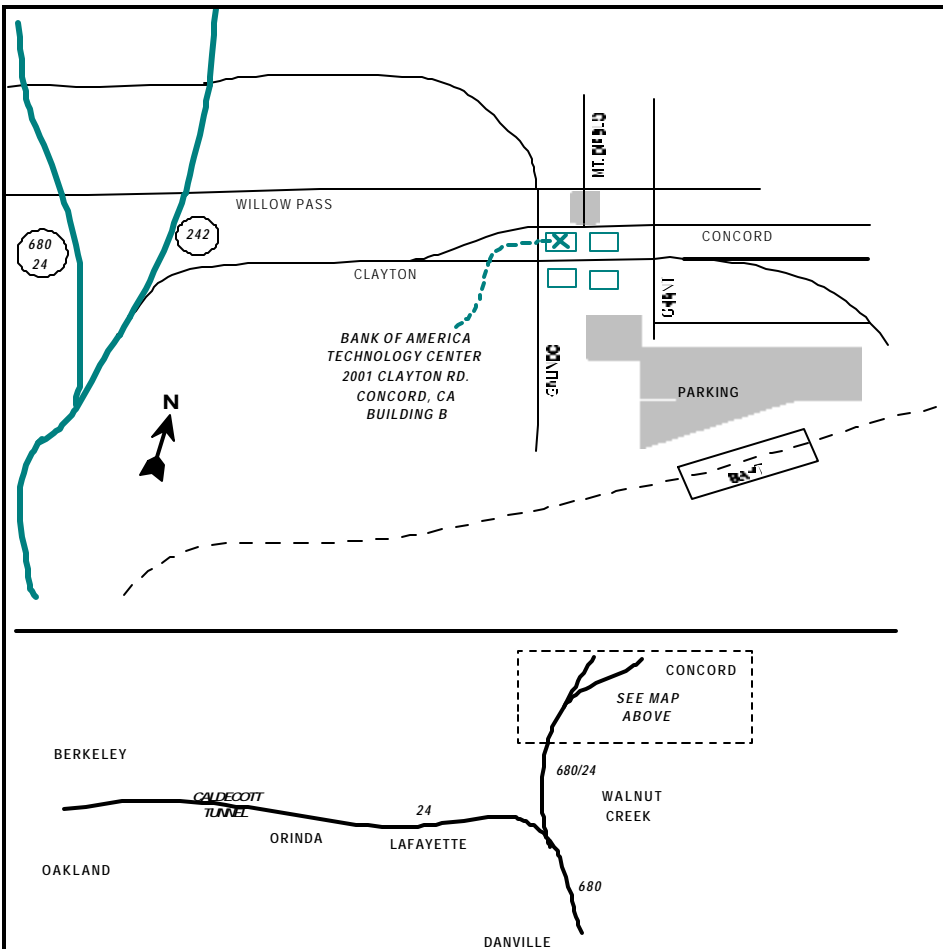
City/State/Zip: _____

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 September 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>		1	2 DVPC Monthly Meeting 7:00 p.m. New User's SIG 6:30 p.m.	3
6	<p>Photo SIG <i>No meeting this month</i></p>	7 Board Meeting 7:00 p.m. Alan Mildwurm's house	8	9 Real Estate SIG 9:00 a.m.
<p>Microsoft Project SIG 7:30 p.m.</p>	13	14 Internet SIG 7:00 p.m.	15 Advanced Users SIG <i>New meeting location</i> 7:30 p.m.	16 <i>Diablo Blue deadline</i> Email articles and ads to the Newsletter Editor: rogg@value.net
20	<p>Access/Visual Basic SIG 7:30 p.m.</p>	21 Education & Entertainment SIG 7:30 p.m. Clarion SIG 7:30 p.m.	22	23 Windows SIG 7:30 p.m.
27	28	29	30	

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

FIRST CLASS MAIL

TO: