

THE BUG REPORT

A Publication of the Greater South Bay PC Users Group

GS-BUG, Inc.

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SALUTE



Flag Day



*Every memorandum will leak.
Every memorandum marked
'confidential' will leak even
faster.*

--Robert Reich
former U.S. Secretary of Labor

June 2

Setting up Your Home Network

The General Meeting on June 2nd will be primarily concerned with setting up a home networking system.

The usefulness of a home network is usually slowly appreciated after it is set up — when the things that you want to do are so much more easily accomplished.

Then you start expanding how you use your new capabilities. As an example, you have the option to remotely use your color printer that is in another room attached to another computer instead of the laser printer that you have attached to the computer on which you are working. How convenient!

The discussion will cover the following topics:

- Why set up a home network?
- What can you do with a home network?
- What is needed for a home network?
- What types of networks (wireless and wired) are available?
- What equipment is needed for purchase and what is the cost?
- Where do you go for help, if needed?

Because of a mix up last month, I was unable to confirm that Ed West would make a presentation about the Travelers Aid Society of Los Angeles (TASLA). He has agreed to make his brief presentation at our June meeting. He is one of the long time volunteer TASLA trainers and should have some very interesting stories about the volunteers' experiences.



Greater South Bay PC Users Group

*A member of
Association of Personal Computer User Groups*



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Membership is available for twelve months from the date of joining. Membership rates:

Individual	\$36.00
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All submissions to the GS-BUG Report must be unformatted on PC disk or e-mail (no hardcopy). Limit formatting to bold or italicizing. We reserve the right to edit as necessary for space consideration. Art work submitted must be in a common graphics format (.jpg, .tif, etc.)

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GENERAL MEETING

General meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the first Monday of the month at the Salvation Army Facility, 4223 Emerald Street (at the corner of Emerald and Earl Streets), Torrance.

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President's Thoughts

By U. A. Garred Sexton

Recently, Ted Lieu, our local State Assemblyman, hosted a meeting about problems and solutions concerning seniors. After attending several of his previously sponsored meetings, I was sure that my time would be well spent and it was.

Most of you have probably heard on the radio and seen the advertisements by Todd Davis, CEO of LifeLocks, when he tells the whole world what his social security number is and then offers to protect your SSN with his special system which he has developed, for a fee of course, which is \$10.00 per month per adult or \$100 per year per adult. If this type of protection is important to you, you can do it yourself for a lot less money.

One of the ways of protecting your identity is to freeze any activity relating to your Social Security Number. This is the same protection system used by Todd Davis.

What you do is notify each credit reporting company (there are 3) and tell them to freeze your account activity for a \$10.00 fee each. With this action no new account or credit card or loan can be opened. If you decide to buy anything on a new credit account you will have to unlock your credit again for a \$10.00 fee to each credit reporting company. You can opt-out of receiving pre-screened credit card offers by calling 888-567-8688. This number is used by all three major credit bureaus.

In summary, you can freeze any activity related to you or your SS number for a cost of \$30.00. There cannot be any accounts started, loans started, credit cards started or changed. The same protection that the man on the radio will do for you, you can do for the \$30.00. If need be, you can unlock the block for a cost of \$30.00.

There is auto insurance for \$400.00 annually but this is only for the required liability insurance. In order to be eligible for this insurance, there are income limits with a maximum annual income for one person of \$26,000 up to an amount of \$89,000 for 8 people in the family. For more information, call 1 866 602 8861.

It was mentioned at the meeting that telemarketing calls to your cell phone are illegal, but I could not find a reference in the handouts. The Do Not Call list is good for 5 years and the duration may be extended if the law is changed.

Ted also presented information about funerals, reverse mortgages and other scams as well as a contact list for help and information.

There was a lot more information and hand outs at the meeting. Watch for mailings from Ted Lieu. If you attend one of his educational sessions, I think you will feel that your time was well spent.

Those who were not at the May GSBUG General Meeting missed a very informative presentation on data recovery by Bob Hudak covering how to prepare for a computer backup, several ways to back up and how to recover a failure as well as testing to be sure that the backup is good.

The General Meeting on June 2 will be concerned with setting up home networking. Topics to be covered is why set up a network, what is needed for the network. Types of network (wireless and wired).

The General Meeting in July will be by a Librarian Kimberly Bishop from Redondo Beach Library on Internet services provided by the Library, including e-audio books.

Internet Talk

By Frank Chao
Member, GS-BUG

This is the 104th "Internet Talk" article for "The Bug Report", a publication of the Greater South Bay PC Users Group. Let's start with how you can have some fun with exploring both universe and terra firma with the Internet. Then, we will end with some serious information on upgrading your anti-virus software.

WORLDWIDE TELESCOPE

Our tax dollars have been sending spacecraft throughout the universe since the 1950's. Now you can see the pictures that have been taken by these cosmic explorations with great ease and clarity, using Microsoft's "WorldWide Telescope."

According to the description of this software at <http://www.worldwidetelescope.org/whatIs/whatIsWWT.aspx>

"The WorldWide Telescope (WWT) is a Web 2.0 visualization software environment that enables your computer to function as a virtual telescope—bringing together imagery from the best ground and space-based telescopes in the world for a seamless exploration of the universe.

"Choose from a growing number of guided tours of the sky by astronomers and educators from some of the most famous obser-

vatories and planetariums in the country. Feel free at any time to pause the tour, explore on your own (with multiple information sources for objects at your fingertips), and rejoin the tour where you left off. Join Harvard Astronomer Alyssa Goodman on a journey showing how dust in the Milky Way Galaxy condenses into stars and planets. Take a tour with University of Chicago Cosmologist Mike Gladders two billion years into the past to see a gravitational lens bending the light from galaxies allowing you to see billions more years into the past."

Get your free copy at <http://www.worldwidetelescope.org/experienceIt/ExperienceIt.aspx?exp=true>.

Before installing this software, please check out the system and network requirements to make sure that your computer and it's Internet connection are adequate before installing this fascinating software application: According to the above-mentioned Web page, the system requirements are:

Microsoft® XP SP2 (minimum), Windows® Vista® (recommended)

PC with Intel Core 2 Duo processor with 2 gigahertz (GHz) or faster, recommended

1 gigabyte (GB) of RAM; 2 GB RAM recommended

3D accelerated card with 128 megabytes (MB) RAM; discrete graphics card with dedicated 256-MB VRAM recommended for higher performance

1 GB of available hard disk space; 10 GB recommended for off-line features and higher performance browsing

XGA (1024 x 768) or higher resolution monitor

Microsoft Mouse or compatible pointing and scrolling device

Microsoft® DirectX® version 9.0c and .NET Framework 2.0

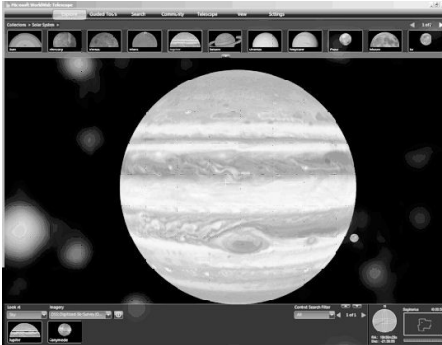
Required for some features; Internet connection at 56 Kbps or higher through either an Internet service provider (ISP) or a network. Internet access might require a separate fee to an ISP; local or long-distance telephone charges might also apply

When you start "WorldWide Telescope", you get the following Welcome box:



After you close out the Welcome box, the application window will open.

Use the buttons and menus to view some of the images of the Universe that your tax dollars have paid for. For example, the initial view of Jupiter looks like this:



EARTHBOUND EXPLORATION

If you are more interested in exploring Planet Earth instead of the far reaches of the universe, you can use two: *Google Earth* and Microsoft's *Virtual Earth*.

Virtual Earth is a Web site that is located at <http://maps.live.com/> and it is also known as *Live Search Maps*.

The free version of *Google Earth* can be downloaded at <http://earth.google.com/>

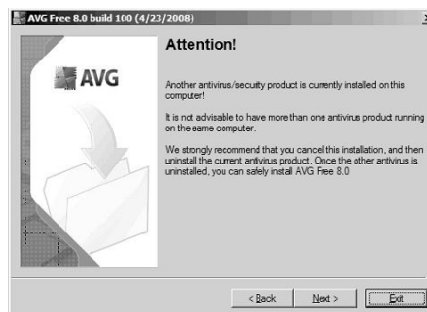
Liz and I use both of these applications together to “visit” a place before we go there in person. We also use them to do localized searches of geographical areas that we are viewing. For example, if we are looking at a point of interest in *Google Earth*, we then do a ‘Find Business,’ type in ‘restaurants’ and

we get a map and listing of restaurants that are close to the point of interest.

AVG ANTI-VIRUS FREE EDITION 7.X DISCONTINUED

At the end of May, Grisoft discontinued support and updates for their excellent *AVG Anti-Virus Free Edition 7* software. If you are still running *AVG version 7*, please do not automatically install *AVG Anti-Virus Free Edition 8.0*. We need to plan our strategy first!! Here is why:

The new *AVG .. Free Edition 8.0* is not just an anti-virus utility. It is both an anti-virus and an anti-spyware utility. This is great if you need both. For example, if you are running *PCTools Spyware Doctor* in your computer, and you attempt to install *AVG .. Free Edition 8.0*, then you will get the following warning from the installation program of *AVG .. Free Edition 8.0*:



If you have enough RAM in your computer or a large enough virtual memory swap file, you can ignore this warning and continue the installation by clicking on the ‘Next’ button. Unfortu-

nately, you will not find out if you have enough RAM or a large enough swap file until *AVG Free Edition 8.0* is totally installed and running in your computer so it's probably best to barge on ahead anyway.

Note that the anti-spyware part of *AVG .. Free Edition 8.0* will not have any potential conflicts with the free version of Lavasoft's *Adaware 2007 Free* or *Spybot Search & Destroy* because these anti-spyware applications do not scan for spyware's memory-resident programs in the background.

UN-INSTALLING AVG ANTI-VIRUS FREE EDITION 7

Since *AVG .. Free Edition 7* is no longer getting support and updates as of the end of May 2008, if it is still installed in your computer, you need to remove it as follows:

Click on the *Windows* ‘Start’ button.

Click on ‘Programs’ or ‘All Programs.’

Click on *AVG 7* or *AVG 7.x*

Click on ‘Uninstall AVG.’

Place an ‘x’ in the ‘Remove user settings’ box by clicking on it.

Please an ‘x’ in the ‘Including objects in the Virus Vault’ box by clicking on it.

Then click on the ‘Yes’ button.

Click on the ‘OK’ button to restart your computer.

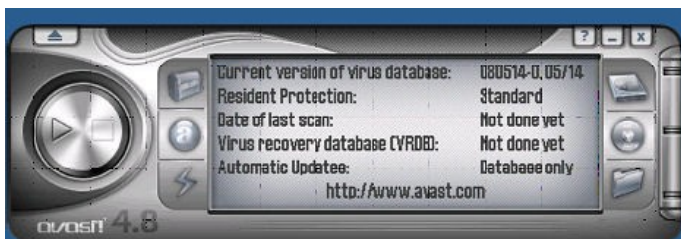
AVAST! VERSION 4.8 HOME EDITION

Avast! Version 4.8 Home Edition is another free anti-virus software utility. Similar to *AVG .. Free Edition 8*, it now also detects and removes spyware in addition to computer viruses. Unlike *AVG .. Free Edition*, *Avast! Version 4.8 Home Edition* also detects and removes root kits. (*AVG .. Free Edition 8* does not detect and remove root kits but the not-free versions of *AVG Anti-virus..* and *AVG Internet Security* are able to do so.)

Get your totally free copy of *Avast! Version 4.8 Home Edition* at:

http://www.avast.com/eng/avast_4_home.html

It's user interface looks like this:



Whenever you start it up, it also provides a set of instructions on how to use it that looks like this:

(Editor's Note: Avast! has a 64-bit version as well)

you install *Avast! Version 4.8 Home Edition* in some of your computers and *AVG .. Free Edition 8.0* into some of them in order to hedge your bets, since no single anti-virus application will remove and destroy all computer viruses and ditto for anti-spyware applications.

If you have more than one computer at your home or business, I recommend that

If you have any questions or problems, I can be contacted by the following methods:

1. Send me e-mail at: fchao2@yahoo.com

2. Send 'snail' United States Postal Service (USPS) mail to

Frank Chao
405 E. Wetmore Rd. #117-484
Tucson, AZ 85705-1792

Or sell your computer and take up gardening instead !!

Article

Benefits of Using a Computer Sandbox

By Gene Barlow
User Group Relations
gene@ugr.com

A computer 'Sandbox' is newer technology that is not very well known, but, it can be quite useful in many situations. By using a 'Sandbox' utility, you can place your computer in a protected state where you can try some rather risky things and not have your computer damaged in the trials. Once you place your computer into 'Sandbox' mode, you can safely run anything on your computer, knowing that all changes to your hard drive will not be permanently made to your computer. While in 'Sandbox' mode, your computer runs as if all changes to the hard drive were actually made to your system. But, at the end of using the 'Sandbox,' you can throw away these changes, putting your computer back exactly the way it was before entering the 'Sandbox.'

Let's take a look at some real life situations to better understand the benefits of using a 'Sandbox' utility.

Installing New Software. Everyone knows that when you install a new software product on your computer, parts of the product are placed all over your computer's hard drive. Entries

are made to the *Windows* Registry, special supporting files are placed in certain directories of the operating system, and other shortcut and setting files are scattered in various places on your hard drive. These are in addition to the main folder that is installed on your hard drive with the software programs.

When they leave, your computer no longer is the same as it was before they arrived. It may take you days to get it working again like you want it to.

Most software will uninstall easily, but often pieces of the product are left behind on your hard drive. These leftover pieces of orphaned software can build up and slow down your computer. Some software products include hidden viruses or other bad programs as you install them. The end result is that installing new software on your computer can be a risky thing to do.

Using a 'Sandbox' to install and test new software is a much better approach. With a 'Sandbox,' you put your computer in 'Sandbox' mode before you download and install the new software. Since the 'Sandbox' lets you use the newly installed software just as if it had been permanently installed on your computer, you can run the new software to try it out and see if you like it. You can also run virus utilities to see if the installation gave you a virus you were not expecting. If you find viruses on your computer or just decide you do not like the newly installed software, you can get out of the 'Sandbox' and throw away all traces of that software product and any hidden virus that came with it.

Letting Others Use Your Computer. Another reason to use a 'Sandbox' is to let others use your computer. Other users may change your computer to match the way they like to use computers. For example, many of us have grandkids that come to visit and want to play on our computer. They may download games they like, change your wallpaper and default font sizes. They may pick up viruses in the

process of getting your computer changed to their needs. When they leave, your computer no longer is the same as it was before they arrived. It may take you days to get it working again like you want it to. With a 'Sandbox,' you can place the computer in 'Sandbox' mode before they arrive and then let them play on your computer to their hearts content. When they leave, you simply exit the 'Sandbox' and throw away all changes that they made to your computer. It is instantly back the way it was before they started to use it.

Computer Labs and Classrooms. User groups that have computer labs or classrooms have a similar situation. The classroom computers are setup carefully by the instructors before the class begins. Once the students have used the computer throughout the day, the computers are different and modified from what they were in the beginning of the day. This may cause problems for the students that follow them, so the instructors will often restore the computer's hard drives to put them back to normal. With a 'Sandbox,' this long restore process is not needed. Instead, put the computers in 'Sandbox' mode at the beginning of the day before the students arrive. Then at the end of the day, exit the 'Sandbox' and throw away all hard drive changes made by the students. The computers are quickly returned to their normal state as you exit the 'Sandbox.'

Browsing the Internet. Much of

the Spyware that you pick up on your computer comes from simply browsing the internet. Some web sites are designed so that simply passing your cursor over a part of the screen is enough to activate a download of Spyware to your computer. Not only that,

Some web sites are designed so that simply passing your cursor over a part of the screen is enough to activate a download of Spyware to your computer.

but your privacy is at risk when you browse the Internet. *Windows* automatically saves all of the places you browse to and all of the screens you see on the Internet. Browsing the Internet in a 'Sandbox' is a much better approach. Place your computer in 'Sandbox' mode before you start to browse the internet. Then browse all of the sites you want to. When you are done browsing the internet, exit out of the 'Sandbox' and throw away all Spyware and traces of web sites you may have visited.

We offer three excellent 'Sandbox' products that you may want to use on your computer. Let's look at each of these briefly to help you decide which one would best meet your needs.

StorageCraft ShadowSurfer.

The smallest and least expensive 'Sandbox' we offer is *ShadowSurfer* by StorageCraft Software. This product is the quickest product to install and the easiest product to use of all of our 'Sandbox' products. With *ShadowSurfer*, all changes to your hard drive are always thrown away when you exit the 'Sandbox,' which is what you want in most cases anyway. This excellent product runs on *Win2000* and *WinXP* systems and is available from us at the discount price of just \$20. This is an excellent beginning 'Sandbox' product for most home users.

Acronis True Image 11 Home Try&Decide. The next step up in ability and price is a feature that Acronis has added to their new *True Image 11 Home* backup utility. This feature is called *Try&Decide* and it is a 'Sandbox' feature built into this award winning backup utility. *Try&Decide* requires that you create and use the Acronis 'SecureZone' on your hard drive to contain the temporary changes to your hard drive. When you exit the 'Sandbox' with this product, you can choose to keep all changes to your hard drive or throw them all away. This excellent product runs on *Win2000*, *WinXP*, and *WinVista* operating systems and is available from us at the discount price of just \$29 for a download or \$33 on a CD. This is a very good 'Sandbox' feature that comes with an outstanding backup utility.

StorageCraft ShadowUser Pro. The most advanced 'Sandbox' utility we offer is *ShadowUser Pro* by StorageCraft Software.

This is a professional level 'Sandbox' product that has many options and features to it. With this product, you can password protect the controls of the 'Sandbox,' so that nobody can disable the 'Sandbox' unless they know the password. Perhaps the biggest differences between this product and the other two 'Sandbox' products is that you can pick and choose what files to throw away and what files to keep as you exit the 'Sandbox.' This top of the line 'Sandbox' product runs on *Win2000* and *WinXP* operating systems and is available from us at the discount

uct, go to www.ugr.com and find the 'Sandbox' product you are interested in. Then click on the 'Buy Now' button on that product page to place your order using our secure web shopping cart. As you complete your order indicate the order code of UGNL0108 to qualify for these excellent discount prices.

If you have questions about this new technology or about any of these products send an email to gene@ugr.com and I will try to help you.

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Obtained from



Article

Moving on to Vista – Part 5

by Neil Stahfest

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A 'Sandbox' offers you a new way to protect your computer from damage . . .

price of \$47. This is the product you should use if you are running a public computer workstation that needs tight controls.

A 'Sandbox' offers you a new way to protect your computer from damage from the software you install or access on the Internet. It also keeps your hard drive safe from damage caused by others using your computer. The selection of 'Sandbox' products we offer lets you pick and choose which one is right for your needs.

To order your 'Sandbox' prod-

APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

As most PC users know, after you've used your computer for a while the data on your hard drive starts to get fragmented. This affects your computer's performance and causes programs to run more slowly. With *Windows XP*, as well as all previous versions, you had three ways to defragment your hard drive. You could do it manually (click Start --> All Programs --> Accessories --> System Tools --> Disk Defragmenter). You could do it manually (click Start --> All Programs --> Accessories --> System Tools --> Disk Cleanup). Or you could create a scheduled task to do it for you automatically (click Start --> All Programs -->

Accessories --> System Tools --> Scheduled Task and the click on 'Add Scheduled Task' and follow the wizard instructions).

Windows Vista automatically defragments your hard disk for you. Not only does it defragment your hard disk, but it does it in background mode. This allows you to do other things on your computer while the defragmenting program is being run. The down side of this is that programs will run more slowly while the defragmenting process goes on. On the other hand, because automatic defragmenting runs fairly frequently it should not take too long to complete.

Of course you still have the ability to defragment manually. Right-click on the 'Computer'

icon on your desktop and select properties. In the window that appears, click on 'Performance' (lower left corner), then 'Advanced Tools' (upper left corner) and then 'Open Disk Defragmenter.' Notice that at this point you have the options of scheduling when the defragmenter runs or running it immediately. At this point *Vista* will defragment ALL hard drives that it finds on your computer. Previous versions of *Windows* allow you to select which hard drive to defragment. *Windows Vista SPI* (when it is released) is supposed to add this capability to *Windows Vista*.

While we are on the topic of computer performance, lets go back to the 'Performance Information and Tools' screen (right click on the 'Computer' icon, click on 'Properties' and click on 'Performance' in the lower left corner of the screen). Note that this screen provides you with some general information about the performance of your computer. It numerically scores processor, memory, graphics and hard disk performance. You'll find links on this screen that explain what the numbers mean and how to improve your computer's performance. Many of the suggestions do not require changes to you hardware but recommend changes to the programs that you run or do not run.

On the upper left side of the 'Performance Information and Tools' screen you'll find a number of tasks which control how your computer performs. If your

PC is a laptop, click on 'Adjust power settings.' On the new screen, examine the 'Power Plan.' The decision you make here affects the length of time that your laptop will run between battery charges and its speed. Most laptops come configured to balance performance against battery endurance. There are many options available. If you normally operate your laptop plugged into an external power source, you'll want to change the setting to maximize performance.

Before we leave the 'Performance Information and Tools' screen, you should also look at 'Adjust visual effects' (in the upper left corner under 'Tasks'). When you click on this item you'll see three tabs. We are only going to address the 'Visual effects' tab for now. The first button, 'Let *Windows* choose what is best for my computer' is probably selected. This gives you the maximized 'eye candy' on your computer but may have a negative effect on performance when resource intensive programs are running (i.e. Video editors). Notice that you have additional choices to 'Adjust for best appearance' and 'Adjust for best performance' as well as a 'Custom' button that lets you choose what features to turn on and off. If your computer performance appears to be sluggish, try selecting 'Best performance.'

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Tips address above).

Spot A Scam Email

There was a time when you could tell a fake email from the real thing just by noticing all the spelling errors or carefully examining the return address. Unfortunately, the crooks have become much more savvy about creating email that looks extremely legitimate. They can "spoof" addresses so that they appear to come from real companies.

Your best bet now to avoid getting taken in by a phishing email is to be very wary of any message asking you to go online and provide personal or financial information. Avoid clicking links in email messages or filling out forms in messages. Don't reply to mail from someone you don't know.

If someone emails you about a supposed "problem" with an account, call the company to verify there actually is a problem.

HDMI Cables

If you have a digital HDTV and HD output device, we recommend you connect them with an HDMI (High-Definition Multimedia Interface) cable.

HDMI will carry a digital audio signal and let you enjoy the highest audio and video quality using a single cable.

From *Smart Computing*

The Bug Report

The Greater South Bay PC Users Group

3623 W. 227th St.

Torrance, CA 90505

2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 General Meeting	3 SIG Meetings Digital Imaging Daytime Hardware	4 Board Meeting	5	6	7
8	9	10 SIG Meetings Digital Imaging Daytime Hardware	11	12 SIG Meeting Linux	13	14 Newsletter Deadline
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