

# the HUG Update

**The Newsletter of the Harrisburg pc User Group**

**Web Site - <http://hug.paonline.com>**

**19<sup>th</sup> Year, Charter Member APCUG**



## GUI Programing Using Borland's Tools At February GenMem Meeting

Whether it is a window on the KDE desktop, OS/2 desktop, BeOS, a Microsoft Window, or even on a Mac OS system or within a java application, they often share certain similarities: handles to resize or drag it, a cursor, menus. How we interact with these programs is by manipulating its Graphical User Interface or GUI (pronounced 'goeey').

Join us on Tuesday, February 12 for "GUI Programing Using Borland's Tools" with Bob Grabau. Borland is well known in the development community for its C++Builder, Delphi, and Jbuilder tools to name a few.

Besides being one of HUG's Support Members for several years, Bob Grabau has been a network administrator for the Navy base in Mechanicsburg and Bob can code as well. At past meetings he has wowed the membership with presentations of Linux, home networking, broadband, and astronomical digital imaging on his own handmade hardware, to name just a few.

All General Membership meetings are held on the **second Tuesday of each month** at 6:45 P.M. in the basement of Skyline View Brethren in Christ Church, 7733 Hillcrest Avenue. *See inside for directions.*

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<http://hug.paonline.com>



*February 2002*

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## Annual Dues:

\$15 (electronic newsletter only)  
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**Classified Ads** in *The HUG Update* are  
**FREE** to members.

Computer Related Ads:  
Page \$30, half page \$15.  
Non-Computer Ads:  
Page \$50, half page \$25.

The Harrisburg PC User Group assumes *no* responsibility for anything in the Newsletter. Trademarks/names are owned by their respective companies. Articles reflect the opinions of their authors, not necessarily those of HUG.

## Meeting Schedule

### General Membership Meeting:

HUG for Linux, OS/2, DOS, and Windows (all) meets the *second Tuesday* of each month, at the Skyline View Church, 7733 Hillcrest Avenue, Harrisburg. See inside for directions. Next scheduled meeting: **February 12, 2002**. See inside for directions.

Visitors Welcome!

### HUG Computer Workshop:

The HUG Computer Workshop (formerly known as the DOS/Windows SIG) where beginners' questions are answered and problem computers are analyzed for free, is held on the *third Sunday* from 2:00 to 4:00 P.M. (**February 17**), at the Skyline View Church, 7733 Hillcrest Avenue, Harrisburg. See inside for directions.

Visitors Welcome!

### HUG Executive Board Meeting:

The Executive Board of HUG meets on the *third Thursday* of each month from 6:00 P.M. to 7:30 P.M. in Brian's Pizza, 6301 Grayson Rd., in the Swatara Square Shopping Center, near the east shore WalMart. **February 21, 2002**.

Visitors Welcome!

### Other Information:

**Electronic Distribution System for the HUG Update:**  
Members who have chosen to receive their newsletter subscription electronically will be notified by Email of availability for download. YOU must provide a correct email address and inform us of any changes thereafter. HUG assumes no responsibility of delivery.

### UPDATE ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS:

Please use ASCII text (.TXT) for submitted articles. Related images may be submitted in TIFF, PCX, GIF, or BMP formats of two to sixteen colors, but if it looks good to you in black and white, then it will most likely look great printed here.

### A Reminder.

This could be your last Newsletter. If the date on your mailing label is circled in red, this is your last Newsletter. If the date is highlighted in yellow, dues are due now.

## ***Directions to GenMem and Computer Workshop Meetings Location***

- ! East on US 22 through Colonial Park
- ! Right on Fairville Avenue (look for sign, "Skyline View.")
- ! Left on Hillcrest. Church is on right. Enter through side door. Note: Church is visible from US 22.



## ***Show/Auction Schedule***

MarketPro Computer Show & Sale

[www.marketproshows.com](http://www.marketproshows.com)

(see website for directions to a specific show)

### **Upcoming Harrisburg Shows:**

State Farm Show Complex

March 9&10

### **Other Shows in greater area:**

York	February 9
Reading	February 18
Lancaster	February 23
Newark, DE	February 24
Allentown	March 2&3
King of Prussia	March 9&10
York	March 16&17
Newark, DE	March 30

### **Notes:**

- 1) All shows are from 9:30 A.M. to 4:00 P.M..
- 2) Always check the MarketPro web site schedule for changes, just before driving to a show.

## **Computer Auction Schedule**

Keystone State Auctioneers, Inc.

"Computer Parts and Electronics"

[www.keystoneauctioneers.com](http://www.keystoneauctioneers.com)

717.558.9188

5970 Derry Street, Harrisburg

(Behind the Bakery)

These auctions are usually held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, and on Saturday mornings. Weekday auctions begin at 6:20 P.M. with previews starting at 5:20 P.M.. Weekend auctions begin at 10:00 A.M. with previews starting at 9:00 A.M..

February Auctions -

2/20 Chambers Hill Fire Co.

2/26 Chambers Hill Fire Co.

2/28 Emmaus Fire Company. (50 South Sixth St)

Their blurb:

"Excess inventory sale. New and used IBM and Compaq computers, Pentiums, 486's, and more. 100's of accessories, cases, speakers, and monitors. Lots of 'as-is' products to be sold to the highest bidder (floppies, power supplies, logics, etc.). Inventory subject to change."

PC Parts, Inc.

"Great Parts at Great Prices"

[www.pcsurplusonline.com](http://www.pcsurplusonline.com)

1.800.666.9373

1800 Paxton Street, Harrisburg

(Near Brenner Dodge)

PC Parts auctions are held sporadically, usually on a Saturday morning at 10:00 A.M. with previews beginning at 9:00 A.M.. If you're interested, check the classified column for 'Computers' in The Patriot-News. Also look for the sign in front of their store and their web site.

Note - Check PC Parts web site for auction dates.



***HUG's 2nd Tuesday  
GenMem Meeting  
January 8, 2002***

***~ by Joseph Ronemus***

President Lou Samsel began the General Membership meeting of HUG at 6:45 P.M. We had about 23 in attendance. Lou began with some announcements to the group and asked if there

where any pressing computer problems that members of the audience were experiencing. There being none, we moved on to the evening's main topic, running one of the newest versions of Linux.

Earlier that day Lou had just completed a clean installation of the recently released Mandrake 8.2 on a legacy Pentium II system he bought from the state surplus store for about \$65 for computer, keyboard, mouse, and monitor. The computer included a sound, modem, and Ethernet as well as between 16 and 64 megabytes of memory and couple of gigabytes of hard drive space. (Sorry I did not get all the exact specs on the demonstration system, but know that this and other Linux distributions will run on EVEN LESSER systems!)

Now when we talk about Linux there are several different distributions of it packaged with all kinds of added programs and files that make it even easier to use and install by various publishers. There are the Red Hat distributions, SuSE, Corel, Mandrake, etc. to name a few. SuSE (pronounced like the composer of martial music, John Phillip . . . or sometimes like Suzie) is popular with Linux programers because of all the tools and libraries it includes on some six CD-ROMs the last time I checked. Corel is not currently publishing new versions with which to include their popular WordPerfect for Linux, since Microsoft bought a large portion of their company. I started with Red Hat some time ago, but gravitated to the Mandrake version because I felt it was just a little more polished.

You might also wonder how we come start talking Mandrake distributions when we started to introduce Linux. Just a little more background is in order. LINUX could be compared to DOS that lies underneath all the consumer versions of Microsoft Windows except for Windows XP. In terminal mode sitting at the LINUX command prompt is not unlike running DOS with a few small differences, more power, and more simultaneous users possible. Continuing the analogy both have a kernel (or the smallest part of an operating system) and when you think of the LINUX kernel you could recall those services available from COMMAND.COM in DOS. All of the other programs in the DOS directory or in

the WINDOWS/COMMAND folder are added to DOS to make it easier to use and more productive, right up to the graphical user interface (GUI) of Windows itself and all the Windows programs. The same with Linux, except that it also has many more possible GUIs to run out of the box, each as customizable as MS Windows in many ways. What particular tools, GUI, and office productivity suites are included with a given distribution is determined by the publisher and the number of CD-ROMs they want to furnish. The particular distribution of Linux demonstrated this evening comes on three CD-ROMs. Since it not really practical to show every distribution of Linux in one evening, Lou chose Mandrake. Now, with that back to the show...

On the installation of Mandrake 8.2, the setup routine had options to set the system up for targeted uses, like as an office workstation, a scientific workstation, a development workstation, a firewall/proxy server, etc.

Linux is really a Unix for microcomputers or PCs, rather than minis and mainframes, so it is a networked operating system, as Microsoft Windows has come to be. And like Windows XP on the first install there is a need to setup an administrator's account. From that account one sets up various user accounts as needed and assign them rights to the system.

Lou shared an important caveat, "Be careful on the install to pick a monitor from the list that NEVER over drives that monitor's sync rates. That could fry the monitor. If you don't know, pick plain VGA and then you can change it later when you know the monitor's specifications." I should mention that I noticed we had no problems running Mandrake Linux on our new computer video projection system at all, though we did during our demo of Windows XP. Doubtless this is because of our growing familiarity with the projector, but the irony was not lost on us.

As I mentioned before there are various GUIs and office productivity suites to choose from on most LINUX distributions and Lou has chosen to install the very popular KDE Desktop. (Again time only

permits us to show this GUI. And if you would like to see more give Lou a call a few days before an upcoming Computer Workshop meeting so it can be arranged.) After showing us the online help, Lou opened a terminal window, which as I said is like opening the DOS Prompt from in MS Windows, only more powerful. Then Lou opened Kword, KDE's wordprocessor, and then switched to - another desktop. This function can only be crudely approximated on high-end systems by power users in the 'Windows World,' although without any of the power to the user. Kword can open, edit, and save to Rich Text, Plain Text, SGML, HTML, as well as its own format. So it is possible to easily exchange documents from say Microsoft Word or Corel WordPerfect and Kword.

The KDE desktop also includes presentation software and a spreadsheet program, now unlike Microsoft Office for Windows.

From the floor HUG Support Member Bob Grabau wanted to warn new LINUX users to, "Watch using some Windows only hardware, like WinModems or some Windows only printers. It may be hard to find drivers for them especially if they are the newest of hardware. NICs, or network interface cards, "are no problem. You can still get drivers for old eight bit [network] cards. Try that with Windows," Bob added. Lou summed up this point by saying that unless it is a piece of hardware that came out in the past few months, there probably are drivers available for that device for download, if not on the install disks.

Next Lou demonstrated how to manipulate different partitions for LINUX. While MS-Windows uses a swap file to add virtual memory to the system, LINUX needs a swap partition to do the same. The install program of Mandrake does all this automatically, based on how you answer some of the questions, unless you want to set it up more customized. Having a graphical tool to manage and view how the hard disk is partitioned is much better than FDISK.EXE that comes with other familiar OSs. To be fair MS Windows has included such a tool with Windows NT, 2000, and XP, just not with consumer versions of Windows.

HUG Trustee, Axel Walsen asked, "What is the difference between this and Microsoft's Windows then?" Lou replied, "In a word: Money. If you are a student or just want something to hack around with, you can install LINUX on a system that other people, your business, your neighbors are trying to throw out." Now that's recycling.

It seemed like there were more questions and features that the audience wanted to see, but the clock was already passed closing time again. So Lou ended his demo to much applause and he began the raffle or door prizes for members in attendance. Hazel Meek won the premium IBM/Woods Computer Surge Protector as a door prize and Ed Dober won VB Scripting Edition. A note of interest: at one of the first HUG meetings I attended the founder of Woods did a presentation on his surge protector that was the best in the industry then and now bar none, but those minutes are in the archives now . . .

Lou closed the meeting at 8:47 P.M. and those who still want to kibitz went to MacDonald's down the street for more.

### *HUG's 3rd Thursday Executive Board Meeting*



*January 17, 2002*

*~ by Joseph Ronemus*

Newly elected President Lou Samsel called the meeting to order at 6:19 P.M. Beside the President, those in attendance were Past President and Support Member George Eckard, First Vice-President Mark Berkheimer, Treasurer John Reinhardt, Second Vice-President Hazen Meek, Trustee Axel Walsen and of course Secretary Yours Truly.

We began by reviewing the General Membership meetings of the past two months and segued to forecasting upcoming GM meeting topics and speakers. In February Bob Grabau is to present

"GUI Programing Using Borland's Tools." Then in March Bob will present "Kylix" an Object Pascal RAD tool for Linux. April may be an IT Job Fair and in May perhaps American Tonex or IT training groups.

HUG Member Drives at the March MarketPro Show will have Lou Samsel and Mark Berkheimer on Saturday the ninth. John Reinhardt and Hazen Meek will be there on Sunday the tenth. If you too would like to be there, get in for free, and be eligible to win prizes at the end of the year, let one of these people know. All the contact info for them is on Page Two of the Update each month.

Lou read out some announcements and reminders to the Board members for that month.

Mark Berkheimer motioned that with the exception of a member who wants to withdrawal from the club, all of the club's past Support Members be held on in their present roles for the remainder of this Executive Board's term. The motion was seconded by Axel Walsen and approved unanimously.

The Treasurer reported that Founder Jack Stahl contributed software to the group and that the Treasury is growing again after the purchase of the display unit. Figures to follow at an upcoming meeting.

The President feels that if the club needs more volunteers the best way to get them is to get more new members, so increasing the membership is of prime importance. The Board agreed.

Lou also pointed out that HUG needs better advertising of itself to the public at large. We need to take advantage of free media like the local newspapers, shoppers' sheets, cable TV ad channel ads. I pointed out this is the time of year radio is looking for public service announcement spots, appending a "Sig. file" to all official E-mail from officers and that business cards and pamphlets need updating and printing to reflect changes in the Board's make up.

Lou announced that he and Dennis Mumma are

going to set up another ListServ at Yahoo for members and nonmembers to opt into for HUG information.

Mark Berkheimer announced that he wanted to get the club's database online for the members to update their information in it as well as set up a PayPal account so that new and renewing members can use their credit cards online! Mark pledges to help Dennis Zellers, our Webmaster, make it happen.

The next HUG Executive Board meeting is slated for February 21 (or the THIRD THURSDAY of the month) at 6:00 P.M. in Brian's Pizza. Pubic welcome.



*HUG's Third Sunday*  
***HUG Computer Workshop***  
*January 20, 2002*

~ by Lou Samsel [lou.samsel@pa.net](mailto:lou.samsel@pa.net)

HUG Computer Workshop attendance continues to remain high. The January 20th Workshop was no exception. We had 14 people show up, even though it was a big "football Sunday." Perhaps some of us do not believe that our time is best spent sitting, "zoned out," in front of the old "idiot lantern," mentally absorbing the pabulum that the major networks continually present as "entertainment."

But obviously everyone is not so easily "entertained." The 14 attendees obviously thought that their time was better spent in our HUG Workshop. A few even had their computer hardware problems or software problems diagnosed and repaired for free [not counting the travel costs to get to the meeting]. Other attendees, who did not have specific computer problems, also benefitted by observing and learning. And, of course, the very talented computer experts who donated their time to help others benefitted from the experience. What do any of the television watchers have to show for their

time spent after the afternoon is over? In summary of the activities at the workshop:

1. Mark Berkheimer assisted a member who bought a IDE CD-ROM drive, installed it, and couldn't get it to be recognized by his computer. Mark quickly diagnosed the problem - incorrectly set configuration jumpers. Once the jumpers were properly set, the computer recognized the new CD ROM drive and it worked perfectly.

Mark says that on the first IDE channel, typically labeled "IDE0" on the main board, there is a cable that can accommodate either one or two drives. The first drive [usually the first hard drive] is jumpered to be the master drive, otherwise windows won't start. You can add a second IDE drive, either a second hard drive or the first CD ROM drive, to IDE0, using the second connector on the cable. This second IDE drive, if installed, must be jumpered to be the slave drive. Older 486 computers only have one IDE channel so two drives are all you can [normally] have.

But all Pentium style computers have two IDE channels, IDE0 and IDE1. One or two drives are connected to IDE0 as described above. Then, drives are connected to IDE1 in the same configuration - the first [if any] is the master and the second [if any] is the slave.

With two IDE channels, and one hard drive and one CD ROM drive, the hard drive is the master on IDE0 and the CD ROM is the master on IDE1.

With two channels, one hard drive, and two CD ROM drives [the second may be a CD ROM writer], the usual arrangement is to make the hard drive is the master on IDE0, the CD ROM reader the master on IDE1, and the CD ROM reader/writer the slave on IDE2. And, a second hard drive [if any] can be placed on IDE0 as the slave drive.

2. George Eckard and Dennis Mumma assisted another member. A CD writer was installed but CD Creator software would not work with it. Nero was tried and it worked flawlessly.

Next, a network sharing connection, using a crossover cable, was connected between two computers. This allowed files to be "burned" onto a CD, using a single CD ROM writer, from either of two computers.

Lastly, George and Dennis set up Internet sharing on the computers. This allowed the owner to access the Internet from either computer at home, even though only one computer has a connection to a phone line. It seems at though home networks are all the rage.

3. Lou Samsel and Wes Samsel evaluated a tower case computer that was donated to HUG by a benevolent [nonmember] person. A VGA monitor and keyboard were obtained from the HUG inventory of donated equipment so it could be tested. Turning it on and reading the information provided by its BIOS revealed that it had a Pentium-S CPU rated at 75 Mbps, 16 MB of RAM, an Advanced Logic video card with 1 Mb of video RAM, and Award BIOS vintage 1996. Certainly a usable machine for Windows or LINUX.

The computer appeared in nice shape but lacked a hard drive. The previous owner, an attorney, removed the hard drive prior to donating it in order to assure that no client files on it would be compromised. Luckily, we had several 540 Mb hard drives on hand that were donated last year. These 540 Mb drives may be considered rather small but are sufficient to install in a computer in order to run a basic operating system and a few applications.

Power problems were evident from the start. All power would suddenly quit or else the computer required several flicks of the on-off switch to start. We removed several non-essential plug-in boards (a modem, a sound card, and a USB card) to lower the power requirement and to help eliminate the possibility of a bad card that might be shorted.

[Tip: Modems are renowned problem cards due to their susceptibility to high voltage hits from the phone line to which they are always attached.]

Oula! The computer ran without any voltage problems. But the muffin fan in the power supply

*From the DealsGuy  
for February, 2002*

*~ by Bob Click,  
Greater Orlando Computer Users Group*

did not spin. This is a common problem and a replacement fan [around \$5 new at a computer show] will be required.

After switching the computer on and off a few times to test the power supply we realized that the setup information held in CMOS memory by the BIOS was not retained after power was shut off. A sure sign that the CMOS battery was dead. We removed the battery [about the size and shape of a U.S. quarter] from its socket on the mainboard and tested it - it was flat dead. We obtained a replacement from the corner drugstore for \$6. Luckily it was a common type.

[Tip: If you notice that your computer has lost time since it was last turned on then it's a sure bet that your CMOS battery is losing voltage as it nears the end of its service life. They typically last from three to six years. Read the type number stamped into the battery's top and buy a new one at the next computer show. Most types are less than \$10 and they are easy to replace.]

Replacing the CMOS battery cured the computer's "amnesia". It appears that, besides the muffin fan, the computer needs a serial mouse and new rubber feet for the bottom of the tower case. It would be nice if someone donates a larger hard drive [hint]. But these items will have to wait until the next workshop, in February, to be addressed.

4. A member bought one of the 540 Mb hard drive in the HUG spare parts inventory for \$5. He will use it in a computer that he has at home.

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As you can tell by this description of our HUG January Workshop, we repaired a few computers and everyone had a good time. Even though you don't have a computer with a problem you can still stop by and learn some techniques of computer repair. Everyone there usually has a good time even if they just hang out. It's also a convenient place to drop off your old computer, computer components, or software and perhaps take a charitable tax deduction on your 2002 federal taxes. So perhaps we'll see you at the next computer workshop.

**\*Who's Foreign?**

Two months ago I included an item with the intention of promoting "Buy American." One of my proofreaders had concerns that since the column is international, I might offend some people. His concern was well taken, but I'll explain why I went ahead. I guess this column really is international for sure, but to my knowledge, the only other country I reach (with regard to sales) is Canada and I have a hard time thinking of Canadians as foreigners. I'm not aware if the column goes to other countries. I was born and raised about 15 miles from Canada and have visited Canada many, many, times. I also have many Canadian friends, and even belong to an organization in Sarnia, Ontario.

It's always been so easy to cross into Canada that I have a hard time thinking "foreign country." If you buy Canadian, I'll understand. In fact, at least one car I've owned was made in Canada. Canada is not a backward country and if they have people working for two dollars a day, I have not heard of it. Their work force makes a decent wage and many blue-collar workers are organized, so I assume workers are well treated. Not that crossing the border is just a "walk in the park" any more, but if you have nothing to hide, it is still no problem. I cannot imagine American and Canadian citizens having differences of any significance, especially since they are right next door. To many of my readers, Canada is a foreign country, but not to me.

Why not ask all those air travelers that became stranded in Gander, Newfoundland on 9/11 how they feel about Canadians. The Gander citizens welcomed them into their homes and made them feel comfortable until the planes were back in the air. That's why I say, "What Canadian foreigners?"

## **\*Gobe Problems**

When I set up the Gobe Suite special last month, readers were supposed to be the only ones to see the \$74.95 price, but problems with their "Web site store" software ended up letting everybody see the price, so they made it available to anybody until they solve the problem. Since then, a hacker has wreaked havoc with their Web site, so things have gone from bad to worse. They wanted you to know the circumstances, so please bear with them if you had trouble ordering.

## **\*Still Good**

The Gobe special should still be good so go to [<http://www.gobe.com/dealsguy.html>]. The MedioStream DVD software is still good. [<http://www.mediostream.com>] Be sure to enter the discount code "COMDEX1" when you check out. The pcpinpoint troubleshooter deal is still good. [<http://www.pcpinpoint.com>] Use the "DealsGuy" code.

## **\*Turn Your Palm Into A Word Processor**

Who says your Palm is just an organizer? No more! Blue Nomad is offering WordSmith for your Palm. WordSmith, co-developed by [<http://www.BlueNomad.com>] and Quik Sense Software, LLC [<http://www.quiksense.com>] is the most revolutionary, intuitive and full-featured word processor, doc viewer and enhanced memo pad available for the Palm organizer. Some features are:

- 3 products in 1! Includes; a full-featured word processor, free electronic book reader and enhanced memo pad!
- Seamless integration with Microsoft Word (Windows only).
- Bi-directional conduit for Windows and Mac OS and command-line converters for Windows and Linux/Intel!
- Excellent keyboard support - supports full speed touch-typing and menu navigation without tapping!
- Cut, copy, paste, multi-paste, select all, undo, redo, find and more!

- Bold, underline, italics and color fonts - preserved and functional on your organizer!
- Beam, delete, duplicate, rename, save, save as, abandon changes and More!
- Paragraph formatting, such as setting page breaks, indents and line spacing!
- Support for bulleted lists.
- Word count and Font styles, sizes and color - preserved and adjustable on the organizer! Even supports background colors, superscript, subscript and strikethrough.

Blue Nomad is offering DealsGuy readers a great discount via their Web site [<http://www.bluenomad.com>]. Normally \$29.95, you get a \$10 discount by using a coupon for this offer making it just \$19.95. When you order WordSmith (add to cart, checkout) etc., you are required to fill in an order form (name, credit card, etc.), the second item on that form asks for a coupon code. Just enter the coupon code "wxgsclick" there. Enjoy!

## **\*Is Your Computer Desk All Cluttered?**

Here is the answer to that one. Omega Frame [<http://www.omegaframe.com/>] is one of the ultimate organizers for the unorganized geek's computer desk. I've seen people's computer desk (including mine) literally covered with all kinds of slips of paper with notes scrawled on them, along with tons of other items laying all over. The Omega Frame is designed to fit on most monitors and has all kinds of clips etc., for hanging papers and other stuff. It even includes a mirror to spot the boss watching while you work. There is "sticky note" space, document hangers, business card holders, a calendar and photo clips. Omega Frame attaches to your monitor with Velcro and will clean up your desk a lot. It fits monitors from 15 to 21 inches and is easy to attach or remove from the monitor.

They are offering us a discount during February and March. Instead of the MSRP of \$29.95, my readers get it for just \$19.95 + S&H. To order, e-mail your request to George Johnson [[jenco@pacbell.net](mailto:jenco@pacbell.net)] and mention the "DealsGuy column" for ordering instructions. This is a bit different, but George prefers to handle these orders personally.

**\*Good God -- Where Do I Carry All This Stuff -- I Know -- The Scott eVest**

You heard right. I know people who have more electronic gadgets than you can shake a memory stick at. They have stuff coming out of every pocket and they love to use them and show them off to their friends, who are fascinated. The Scott eVest contains so many "nooks and crannies" that you would be hard pressed to have enough gadgets to fill them all. It's possible to discreetly carry a cell phone, pager, PDA, CD/MP3 player, digital camera, portable keyboard, GPS device, two-way radio, wallet, keys and even bottled water or soda, and more!

The vest has a Personal Area Network (PAN): patent-pending system of conduits for headphones/earbud and other connecting wires. That's right, passages built right into the vest for any connecting wires. It's actually an attractive piece of clothing, and its even water-repellent to keep your delicate electronics safe from Mother Nature.

People at Comdex were fascinated with the eVest so find out much more by visiting their Web site at [\[http://www.scottevest.com\]](http://www.scottevest.com). I liked the ongoing description on the home page. I told them about my readers and they were interested, even though they had never done this before. Here's the deal: The holiday special has been \$99.99 (Regular price \$119.99), but get this --- you folks can get it for only \$89.99 during February (just one vest for that price, and while supplies last). S&H is based on destination and shipping method, ranging from about \$10 to \$15 for ground shipping.

Order on their Web site and enter the special code "DealsGuy" at checkout. My friend Bob Esch, of Dayton Microcomputer Assn., bought one at Comdex and was proudly showing it off. He said he unloaded his entire briefcase into the eVest to free both hands while touring Comdex!

**\*The September issue of the Macon Users Group's newsletter was a veritable treasure trove of good deals so I'll pass one on to you this month.**

**\*How About a Free CD Burner And MP3 Ripper!**

Here is an alternative to the software you get with any CD-R/RW drive. Not that it is all bad, but there is more than one way to get the job done. Use MusicMatch to rip CD-quality MP3s and convert your records, tapes and CDs into MP3s with an easy one-step recording process. It lets you choose your recording formats with a choice of MP3, Windows Media Audio (WMA) or WAV files.

MusicMatch is available at [\[http://www.musicmatch.com\]](http://www.musicmatch.com) just for the download time. Of course, if you want a step-up, they have a more deluxe version.

**\* That's it for this month.** Meet me here again next month if your editor permits. This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of products, no matter how enthused I might sound. Bob (The Cheapskate) Click [\[Bobclick@dealsguy.com\]](mailto:Bobclick@dealsguy.com). Visit my Web site at [\[http://www.dealsguy.com\]](http://www.dealsguy.com) for past columns. Also, interesting articles (taken from user group newsletters) to my "Articles of Interest" page for viewing or downloading.



***Founder's Corner***

***~ By Jack Stahl***

Various DVD drives are available for computers. But the fog surrounding these drives is thick.

Regions - and other not-so-good things!

The (DVD) world is divided into six DVD regions. A version made in one region is not compatible with one made another region. However, discs which are marked ALL will play in any player. Both player and

disc must be coded for the same, one region only or it will not play.

We are all familiar with CD-R drives, and now DVD computer drives are available as DVD-RW drives. However, here the picture becomes even more murky. I believed that there was no difference between the dash (-) and the plus (+) when the manufacturers designated their discs. HP uses the plus. This is not at all clear, as the following seems to indicate.

Could DVD+RW be confused with DVD-RW? If these are two formats that are being produced by the various companies, there is bound to be unhappy consumers if they are not diligent in discovering the differences. The compatibility between older DVD players is best when using the DVD+RW format, so it is said.

And, let us not forget the DVD-R/RW and DVD-RAM formats! Where do they come into the picture, and what about compatibility? Does anyone know, or are the facts concealed to keep you in the dark about the consequences?

Pioneer makes the Elite DVR-7000 which they designate as the "Reference" model. (Exemplar for others to follow?) This is a stand-alone unit which is larger and much heavier than any VCR. The cost of this model is \$1800, plus tax. The disc types used for recording are DVD Video, DVD-RW, and DVD-R. It cannot record CD-R or CD-RW discs. Also, even if you record in a compatible format, it is possible that it will not play because of the settings of the application software used to create the disc.

The capacity of the discs ranges from one hour to six hours. These capacities are obtained by setting the recording speeds, just as is done with VCR tapes. The best quality recording is obtained by setting the recording time to two hours or less, if desired. But no better results ensue.

VCR tapes degrade with time and use, are subject to external magnetism, and sometimes just break. Any DVD disc should be substantially more durable. If you have taped homemade movies, or anything else

to preserve, then transferring them to a DVD-R disc would seem to be the thoughtful thing to do. A DVD-RW disc allows rewriting and erasing about a thousand times. Their 4.7 GB rewriteable disc costs \$15.95.

Pioneer also makes an internal DVD-RW/CD/RW drive (\$549.). This is a dual usage drive from a top manufacturer.

HP makes a DVD+RW drive (\$499.), software included. Fast DVD rewriting/recording, 8x DVD reading, 10x CD rewriting, 12x CD recording, 32x CD reading. DVD rewriteable discs are about \$12.00 each, in pack of five. My experience with HP has been excellent.

QUE! Makes an internal DVD-R, DVD-RAM drive (\$469.); an external USB 2.0 DVD-R/DVD-RW drive \$610.); a superdrive USB DVD-R/DVD-RW/CD-RW drive (\$719.).

Yes, as you read in the last HUG Newsletter, there is software available which enables you to use a DVD recorder to make either a DVD or a CD disc, at cost of about \$80. In the HUG article, "you can record up to 15 minutes of DVD format (compatible with all formats) on CD/R/RW disc." Fifteen minutes? Is this an error? A new DVD standard? It wonders me.



## The Computer Guy Show

The Computer Guy Show is a weekly LIVE computer and Internet information, help & talk show that you can listen to with your computer, featuring Guy Partin, a computer professional for the last 15 years.

**Wednesday evenings 8 to 10 P.M.**

**[www.pawebcast.com](http://www.pawebcast.com)**

*FREE PC & Internet Help line during the show:  
730-6737 or join the on-line chat room.*

# What is HUG all about???

Members helping members, who are seriously dedicated to computers to enhance their lives and their work. At meetings, they enjoy the camaraderie while sharing valuable tips, seek answers to problems, view demonstrations, listen to presentations, participate in raffles, door prizes and auctions.

**Next Meeting:** February 12 (second Tuesday) from 6:45 to 8:45 PM, At the Skyline View Church, 7733 Hillcrest Ave,  
Harrisburg

**HUG Computer Workshop:** February 17 (third Sunday) from 2:00 to 4:30 PM, At the Skyline View Church, 7733 Hillcrest Ave,  
Harrisburg

**HUG Executive Board:** February 21 (third Thursday) from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM, In Brian's Pizza, 6301 Grayson Rd., in the  
Swatara Square Shopping Center, Harrisburg

## The Help Desk (Specialized and General Help on Call or by Email by Members for Members)

Ralph Corigliano, Denver, CO - VisualBASIC/VisualC/C++/.NET ..... ([ess@attbbs.com](mailto:ess@attbbs.com))  
Dennis Mumma, Mechanicsburg - Win 98/SE/ME/MSIE 4+/More ([netwizzz@earthlink.net](mailto:netwizzz@earthlink.net)) ..... 796-0955  
Lou Samsel, Harrisburg - Linux SIG Founder ([lou.samsel@pa.net](mailto:lou.samsel@pa.net)) ..... 564-8273  
Dan Grabenstein, Harrisburg - OS/2 ..... 652-1607  
Justin Zellers, Anneville, PA - Windows (all), SQL/ODBC, Networking ..... ([j\\_zellers@yahoo.com](mailto:j_zellers@yahoo.com))  
Ed Smith, Harrisburg - GFA BASIC Programming ..... 545-3037  
Bill Chen, Harrisburg - Database / Networking ([aimaim@usa.net](mailto:aimaim@usa.net)) ..... 540-9566

**Please Note: This Could Be Your Last Newsletter, Unless Paid By The 15th Of The Month. It Is Your Responsibility To Check Your HUG Expiration Date Which Appears After Your Name On Your Address Label... Dues Can be Mailed In Or Paid At Meetings. If Date On Your label Is Circled In Red, This Is Your Last Newsletter. If Date Is Highlighted In Yellow, Dues Are Due Now.**

## INSIDE:

- HUG Info and Announcements
  - Member Reviews and Columns
  - Classified Ads
- AND MUCH, MUCH , MORE!!!**



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