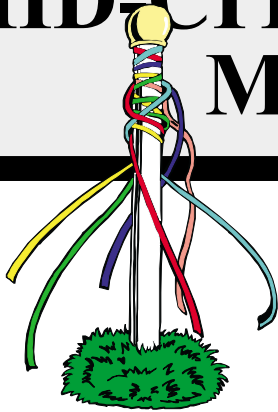


MID-CITIES PC USERS' GROUP

May 2001 Newsletter



Quips N' Tips

by Rick Howell



I'm not saying, "I told you so". Intel introduced their 1.7 GHz processor on April 24th. You would think when they send a marketing weenie out to speak to a group that he would be aware of things that are going on in his own company. Ah, what the hell...I told you so. Preliminary reports that I am reading on the 1.7 chip are that nobody is impressed and they don't see a significant improvement over the AMD 1.33 GHz processor. In fact, in some of the tests I have seen, the AMD outperformed the Intel. Perhaps that is why Intel dropped the introductory price of the 1.7 GHz processor to their lowest introductory price in the history of the Pentium chips. Now if they could just get the price of Rambus memory down.

There has been an interesting fight going on in the courts over the past few months. On October 28, 1998 a new bill called the Digital Millennium Copyright Act became law. This law provides copyright protection for certain types of digital data, most notably music CDs and video DVDs. This protection goes so far as to make it illegal to publish information about methods by which you can break the encryption routines that make it impossible to copy data from these types of media. 2600 Magazine publisher Eric Corley contends that the DMCA violates rights guaranteed to every

American by the first amendment, freedom of speech. However, Federal District Court Judge Lewis Kaplan claims that not all speech is protected, particularly when it is being used for illegal conduct. This case will be the second test of the DMCA in court (we all remember Napster), and it will definitely have repercussions in the computer community. If you are interested in learning more about this, go to Yahoo and search on DMCA. You may learn more than you want to know. By the way, there are some copies of the DeCSS code that 2600 Magazine published floating around the newsgroups too. Not that I would ever condone using it.....;

Wireless technology is growing in leaps and bounds. The future looks very bright for wireless. Here's whassup wid dat. The television industry is undergoing a lot of change. By next year, the networks are supposed to begin their transition to HDTV, and will be vacating lower frequencies for their new higher frequency transmission slots. The old frequency ranges are to be completely empty by 2005. At that time, the frequency slots will be auctioned off by the Federal Communications Commission for use by high frequency digital communications companies. The current standard that looks like the most promising for this frequency range is called 3G. The 3G standard allows data transmission at such a rapid rate that you will be able to have a handheld PDA which can send and receive data faster than current cable and DSL data connections. I can visualize a Palm X with full-color display which I can use as a video telephone or to access the internet from anywhere in the country. Technology like this gives me a warm fuzzy feeling. What ticks me off is that the Japanese will probably have this a couple of years before us.

Another wireless technology that is coming to fruition is the wireless LAN (Local Area Network). If you are planning a home network and don't feel like fishing

MEETING NOTICE

by: *George Miner*

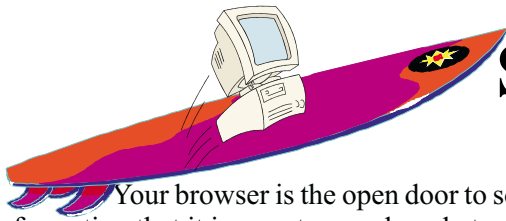
When: Tuesday, May 8th at 7:15 PM

Where: Old Bedford School (in 1800 block of Bedford Road)

Program: Our speakers for May will be **Ann & Ted Drake**, librarians at TCC North Campus. They will be discussing Internet searches and using them more efficiently. This will be a great program, and will add to your enjoyment and knowledge of the Internet. Bring a friend.

category 5 cable through the walls and up in the attic, you might want to look into using a wireless LAN. Although the wireless LAN transmits data more slowly than a hard-wired network, the speed is still sufficient to transmit streaming audio with no noticeable loss of performance. If you are planning to stream video, better stick with the cables for now. The thing that is making the wireless LAN more attractive is the fact that several companies are now making components, and the competition is driving the prices downward. (Can you say capitalism?) Also, the freedom of moving a laptop anywhere around the house or yard while maintaining connection to your home network or

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Surfing Like a Pro

By Sheryllynn Roberts

Your browser is the open door to so many areas of information that it is easy to wonder what gems are waiting undiscovered. Finding pages that can help you search across the web may lead you to even more interesting places with less frustration and wait.

When you find a page of results, hold your mouse cursor over a desired link and right click; select "open in new window" to keep your results open in the background while looking at the topical page. To make one of the engines your opening page, go to the browser menu: Netscape: "Edit > Preferences> Home Page Location"; Internet Explorer: "Tools> Internet Options> Home Page Address", and type or select the web address you want.

You can keep the best engines for your use in a folder in your bookmarks or favorites labeled "Search Engines". Netscape: Bookmarks> Edit Bookmarks> File>New Folder. In the name field type: Search Engines. To add an engine address, go to the engine page, click Bookmarks> File Bookmark> move mouse cursor to and click on "Search Engines"; Internet Explorer: click Favorites> New Folder. In the name field type: Search Engines. To add an engine address, go to the engine page, click Favorites> select the Search Engines folder, click Ok.

Here are a few helps compiled by experts:

<http://www.searchenginewatch.com/>

Spend some time at this site to learn more about how search engines work, rummage through top and topical engines, and get the latest gossip, er a, I mean, news on what is going on in the search engine world. Some special pages here:

<http://www.searchenginewatch.com/facts/powersearch.html>

This page discusses wording to use in your searches to help define what you want the engine to find.

<http://www.searchenginewatch.com/facts/math.html> Learn to use math with your search terms.

<http://searchenginewatch.com/links/> "Lists all types of search engines, from the popular ones to those for children."

<http://www.searchenginewatch.com/resources/reviews.html> A series of newspaper and magazine reviews that inform, poke fun, and even interview engines.

<http://www.searchenginewatch.com/facts/sprechen.html>

"Parlez vous motors de recherche? Learn how to say "search engines" at those important international conferences with this quick guide."

<http://www.cybereditions.com/aldaily/> "Arts and Letters Daily: an updated report of news and reviews . . . published Monday through Saturday." This site lists newspapers, books, reviews, music, etc from across the world.

<http://www.about.com/> A directory of information chaperoned by guides who specialize in categories.

http://ourstory.about.com/index.htm?PM=59_1100_T is the history behind the site.

<http://www.clearinghouse.net/searching/index.html> The Argus Clearinghouse is "The Internet's Premier Research Library; A Selective Collection of Topical Guides" It is short on text, long on resource.

<http://www.altavista.com/help/default> This page on the famous search site describes some of the types of searching possible: search for images, music, shopping, and news. Learn how to use the AltaVista tools: email, maps, and BabelFish, a text language translator.

<http://help.yahoo.com/> Yahoo! Help Central has tools, tutorials, and an alphabetical list of information areas and portal features.

<http://www.excite.com/info/> "New to the Net" and "Search Help" in the blue box on the left of this page has links to very basic info about your browser, searching, and terminology.

<http://www.lii.org/> The Librarian's Index to the Internet consists of sites tested for relevant and academically rated content. Poking around in the categories can be as absorbing as walking through your favorite library stacks. "Maintained by Carole Leita:leita@lii.org on the Berkeley Digital Library SunSITE. Funded by the Library of California through the Library of California Board. Original grant funding from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act administered by the California State Librarian."

<http://www.digital-librarian.com/> "Digital Librarian: a librarian's choice of the best of the Web" This has an alphabetical list of subjects that each click through to an alphabetical list of sites-easy to see at a scroll.

<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/MetaSearch.html> "Meta-Search Engines" A page describing what they are and why to use them. Has a nifty chart with ratings.

<http://www.firstgov.gov/>

"FirstGov™ is an official U.S. Govt. website. Office of FirstGov c/o GSA,



See Surfing on page 3

Disaster Recovery

By Helpteam at znet.com

When your system crashes, there is no lonelier feeling in the universe. The cause might be as simple as a bad power supply or it could be as bad as a trashed hard drive. While you can always buy a new power supply or hard drive or reinstall Windows, there's often no way to recover important financial records or work assignments, and there's no compensation - monetary or otherwise - for the loss of personal correspondence or creative projects. Let's discuss how you can recover from disaster.

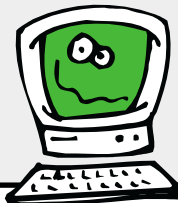
Listen to Your Sick PC. Your ears can be very helpful in providing information to help you identify the causes of certain types of problems. Listening to the types of sounds your disk drive makes when booting up the PC can tell you about how far the boot process is proceeding and also the status of the drives themselves.

Record Any Error Messages. When an error message appears on screen, press (Alt) (Print Screen). Then, click the Start button and launch a word processor such as Word Pad. Once it launches, pull down the Edit menu and select the Paste command. You may also wish to type what steps you took to produce the error before saving it to file.

Boot Windows 95 and 98 in Safe Mode. Safe mode starts Windows with a minimal set of drivers and services, disabling most third-party drivers, network services, and startup utilities. Its purpose is to help you diagnose and repair problems that prevent Windows from starting normally. If your system fails to boot twice in a row, Windows 95 and 98 will start in safe mode automatically. To force Windows to start in safe mode, restart the computer and press the F8 key when you see the Starting Windows 95 message. To start Windows 98 in safe mode, restart your computer and hold down the Ctrl key. In both cases, you'll see the Startup menu, which includes a choice for safe mode.

The best reason to start in safe mode is to remove a driver or a startup program that is causing boot problems. Don't attempt to install applications or new device drivers when you're in safe mode, and don't be confused by an unsettling quirk that causes all devices you've ever installed to appear in Device Manager, even if they're not active.

ZDNet's Downloads has a number of products and utilities that will help you bounce back from a crash.



Surfing

Continued from Page 2

1800 F Street, N.W. Room 5240, Washington, D.C. 20405-0002" This website was born in our local GSA office, and is part of a project to have public Internet kiosks for citizen access. Here is one part of Government that has an open ear.

<http://www.findthecarkeys.com/> Sigh. No, it is not a real site. But with time, mobile computing, and a Checkpoint chip on the key ring, maybe someday . . .

see also <http://www.wherethekids.com> (can the browser find them?) <http://www.imlost.com/> and <http://www.wheresdinner.com>.

And of course, you can go to any search engine or directory, and enter the words "search engine" for exhaustive lists of search directory, crawler, and engine addresses. Happy surfing!



Quips N' Tips

Continued from Page 1

high bandwidth internet connection is quite desirable. Wouldn't it be great to read your morning stock report online while out by the pool having your morning coffee? Linksys now has a base transmitter unit which will hook up to your server or hub for about \$300. The PC card transmitters for laptops sell for about \$200, and the PCI card transmitters for desktops sell for about \$150. If you keep an eye on the prices, I'm sure they will be dropping more in the future. Also, you need to be aware that there is a fight going on with standards for this market. The current accepted standard is 802.11b, which delivers data at 11Mb/s. Upcoming standards which we will see on the market this summer are 802.11a and HiperLAN2 which promise data transmission at up to 54 Mb/s, but these standards will have to be accepted widely before you see price breaks on equipment utilizing these protocols.

I guess if you have been reading any computer magazines at all you are hearing about Windows XP which Microsoft originally scheduled to ship in June, and will be pushed back to August. One representative for a major PC manufacturer has been quoted as saying he would be surprised if it shipped in time for Christmas. Windows XP is the long-awaited convergence of the Windows 9X and the Windows NT technologies. Promising security, stability, and utility, it is supposed to be the culmination of the best that Microsoft has to offer. I just hope they did away with that darned blue screen.

See y'all at the meeting.

THE MID-CITIES PC USERS' GROUP

The Mid-Cities PC Users' Group is a not for-profit organization whose objectives are:

- * to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and experience,
- * education in the form of seminars and programs, and
- * community as pertains to the computer industry.

Annual membership is \$24.00 per family with one vote per membership. Members are encouraged to notify the Membership Chairperson of any change of address as soon as possible to continue receiving their monthly newsletter. Please address any notifications to: Mid-Cities PC Users' Group: Attn. Membership Chair, P.O. Box 54141, Hurst, TX 76054

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THE MID-CITIES PC USERS' GROUP NEWSLETTER

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Article Style: Type all copy flush left without justification; use word wrap feature for your paragraphs. This includes headings, by-lines, and the first line of each paragraph. Place a credit by-line (author's name) between the title and first paragraph. Leave no blank lines between paragraphs. Use only one space between sentences.

File Formats: MS Word or Word Perfect is preferred. If formatting is crucial and you do not have access to the above programs, send a hard copy to show the layout.

Submitting Articles: You may use one of two methods. Uploading the article to Nancy Hester at newsletter@mcpcug.org or you can hand them to her on diskette (3.5" preferred) during the general membership meetings .



Thanks a lot!

Deadline: The last Friday of the month prior to intended publication.

Advertising Rates:

7½ in. x 9 in.	Full Page	\$40.00
7½ in. x 4 in.	Half Page	\$20.00
3¼ in. x 4¼ in.	Quarter Page	\$12.50
3½ in. x 2 in. Business Card		\$5.50

Discounts: 3 months = 5%; 6 months = 10%. 1st month full price, discount applies to months thereafter.

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