

## **SERVICE AND SUPPORT TIPS**

Even the most competent hardware upgrader must occasionally call for help. So over the next few days, I'll pass along tips to help you make the most effective use of the service and support your hardware vendors offer.

First, don't wait until you have a problem before you look through the service and support information that accompanied your hardware product. Before your vendor provides technical support, they may require that you register your product or at least activate your service and support option by sending in a form via e-mail, regular mail, or by calling a toll-free phone number. If you delay until you need technical support before you do these preliminary tasks, you will have to wait longer for help than you should.

Before you make that technical support call on a malfunctioning hardware device, run through whatever troubleshooting steps the product's documentation and online help offer you. If you don't, the technician on the other end of the phone line will likely walk you through the same procedures to rule out the most common problems. You may find that you can solve your own problem and spend less time waiting on hold if you just perform those documented troubleshooting steps first.

Before you phone for technical assistance, try searching for help on your hardware vendor's Web site. Most hardware companies now offer easy-to-use Web-based technical support databases (it saves them money not to have to staff a technical support call center). It's very unlikely that no one has ever seen your problem before, and there's a good chance that your problem has a fully documented solution available on the Internet. Browsing the hardware vendor's site is often faster than waiting for a live technician over the phone.

Of course, you'll need Web access to go down this avenue, and some hardware malfunctions might cripple your computer and stop you from accessing the Web. In these cases, you must resort to tried-and-true phone support.

Another alternative to phone-based technical support is real-time online chat support. Some companies now offer the ability to chat live with a technician rather than talk over the phone.

The plus side of chat support is speed--for the moment, anyway. You often don't wait as long for chat support as for phone support (probably because most users still rely on the latter, crowding the phone lines).

The down side of chat support is the list of items you need to make it work. First, you must have a Web connection (as I mentioned in the last tip, your hardware problem might limit your Internet access).

You might also need a chat software plug-in module for your browser, depending on what type of chat mechanism your hardware vendor uses. You should find all the details on the vendor's company Web site.

Finally, you'll have an easier time if you're a fast typist. If you hunt and peck at the keyboard, inability to communicate quickly with a Web-based technician may frustrate you. Remember, if you don't find satis-(Continued on page 9 -SERVICE)



Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts

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The LCACE News Journal is published eleven times annually. Members are encouraged to submit contributions and will be acknowledged in this newsletter.

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#### Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts

L.C.A.C.E. c/o Group Ambassador 409 S. Elmwood Ave. Waukegan, Illinois 60085-5219

#### Membership

Membership for L.C.A.C.E is open to all individuals and families interested in personal computing. Annual dues are \$20.00 per individual/family. Associate membership is only \$10.00 (out of state, unable to attend meetings). Membership includes a one year subscription to the L.C.A.C.E. News Journal and access to all club libraries, and functions. Applications for membership may be obtained at the monthly meeting, by request on the club Hotline and is now available on our WEB site at http://inf-net.com/lcace.

#### Meetings

L.C.A.C.E. meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month at the Warren/Newport Public Library, 224 N. O'Plaine Road in Gurnee, Illinois. The meeting location opens at 11:30a.m, and the formal meeting begins at 12pm. All meetings are open to the public. Bring a friend!

#### Advertising

Ad rates per issue: Full page - \$25, Half page -\$15, Quarter page - \$10, Business Card -\$5. Discounts are available on advance purchase of multiple issues. Please send Cameraready copy and payment to the club address by the 21st of the month preceding publication. For more information on ad pricing, please call our Hotline. Ads are FREE to all paid members.

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#### **ARTICLE DEADLINE**

The deadline for all articles being submitted for the News Journal is the 20th of each month. Send your articles via E-Mail to Corky Bell at corky@foxvalley.net or Vic Falkner at rvf@se-iowa.net or the Club's E-mail at lcace@inf-net.com

#### L.C.A.C.E. HOTLINE

Voice: 847.623.3815 Fax: 847.623.9570 E-Mail: LCACE@inf-net.com Web Page: www.inf-net.com/lcace





#### Addresses

The following is a listing of available LCACE members' E-Mail addresses:

Ruth Donahue-Allison Corky Bell Bobby Bell Donna Bell Kerry Broughton Linda Busch Courtnev L. Cain **Bob Carpenter** Lisa Carter **Rich & Pat Crocker** Randell Durk Vic Falkner Tom Fitzsimmons Jack Frost Mr. & Mrs. G Phil Grimm Arnie Gudyka Marta Mata-Guzman Terri Hanlon Edward Herdliska Tom Hudock, Jr. Dwight (J.J.) Johnson Donna Kalinoski Steve Kostelnik Lester Larkin John Lawless LeRoy & Bernice Long Christine E. Marshall Mike McEnery John Nabors Larry Nixon Lee Nordstrom & Family Jeffrey J. Notter Ken Rogers Marcia Rose Bruno Rusanowski James Rutledge Leslie Salsburg Paul Schintgen Walter Sheets Gerald Straw **Bob Tuttle** Steve Yeaton

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As much as we try, we do make errors. Please advise us if there is a mistake in your E-Mail address or if it is not incuded in this listing. Send E-Mail to lcace@inf-net.com with the additions and/or corrections. Thank you.

This listing last updated - April 23, 2000

### **Members Web Sites**

Corky Bell http://users/foxvalley.net/~corky

Phil Grimm http://public.surfree.com/pgrimm

JJ

http://easyfoto.com/jj\_johnson

## Time to Renew

The following members need to renew their membership. This information will be published in the News Journal and will be posted on our WEB site which is:

#### http://www.inf-net.com/lcace

If it is time for you to renew your membership, please fill out a new Application and a Member's Profile Sheet. These forms can be obtained at the meetings or downloaded from our WEB site.

> The following Member(s) need to submit renewal applications:

Courtney Cain 05/00 Christine Marshall 05/00

Rich & Pat Crocker 06/00 LeRoy & Bernice Long 06/00

If you have already filed an application, please disregard this notice.

#### See the CLUB PICTURES at:

www.easyphoto.com/lcace

Take a look, you may be in there!

# The PRESIDENT'S RAM

Hello everyone. We had our yearly elections at the April 8th meeting and I am sure that mainly people have questions as to the results. Before I begin, I would like to explain the changes from what was originally posted to what now is posted on the Web Site. The initial election results were as follows:

Elected to the Board of Directors were:

JJ Johnson Corky Bell Donna Bell Linda Busch Jim Rutledge Terri Hanlon Mike McEnery

Nominated for the position of President were:

Corky Bell Jim Rutledge

Elected was Jim Rutledge

These results were posted to the Web Site immediately that evening. Then I received some E-Mail from Jim, some of which I cannot share with the membership, per Jim's request. However the part of it that I can share is that Jim has declined the position as President and is going to take an indefinite leave of absence from the group. He did assure me that the situation that led him to these decisions had nothing to do with the club or any of the members, but was due to some personal business that he must get completed. He is in anticipation, as am I, of his return to the group in the future.

With the declining of the Presidency, and the leave of absence, this changed the results of the election. Therefore, with no other members being nominated and/or voted on for the position of President, other than Jim and Corky, the second runner up, that being Corky Bell, thereby is awarded and assumes the position of President of L.C.A.C.E. for the 2000 term.

It also left an opening on the Board of Directors. There was one other nomination and two write ins for this position as a member of the Board. Lester Larkin was nominated and received 9 votes, Donna Kalinoski, a write in received 2 votes, Ann Ross-Rodgers, another write in candidate received 1 vote and Minnie Mouse, a write in received 1 vote also. Therefore, Lester Larkin receives the open seat on the Board of Directors for the 2000 term.

The appointments to the various Board of Directors positions are as follows:

Mike McEnery - Vice President Linda Busch - Secretary JJ Johnson - Treasurer Donna Bell - Membership Chairperson Terri Hanlon - Public Relations Chairperson Lester Larkin - Program Chairperson

We, as the Board Members of L.CA.C.E. will continue to strive for betterment of the group and the members' computer usage. If you ever need any assistance with a computer problem, please contact any of us and we will do our very best to either assist and/or to find someone who can assist you. That is the meaning of our "Members Helping Members" slogan, which has been synonymous with our group for many years.

Remember the next meeting of L.C.A.C.E is at the Warren/Newport Library in Gurnee, Illinois in the Youth Room on May 13th. Until then, good computing to everyone.



## MEMBERS' PROFILE

#### Lester Larkin



E-MAIL LesLarkin@NetZero.com

Month of Birth: July

My Job Is: Applications Engineer

My Hometown Is: Mundelien Illinois

**My Family Consists of:** My wife, 4 children & 5 Grand children

For Entertainment I Like: Riding my motorcycle in the boonies

My Favorite Meal Is: Chinese food

My Prized Possession(s) Are: Life

**Something I Wish I Could Stop:** War, crime, poverty, disease and Microsoft

I Use My Computer For: Mostly Web Access

My Favorite Computer Program Is: Linux

#### **EDITOR's NOTE:**

Lester has been a member of L.C.AC.E. since 1986. He has started a LINUX Special Interest Group and was elected to the L.CA.C.E. Board of Directors in the April 8, 2000 Election. He has been appointed as the Program Coordinator, Chairperson, succeeding Mike McEnery.

### Year 2000 Calendar

The following are the tentative dates, locations, and/ or the agenda for each of the L.C.A.C.E. Meetings for the Year 2000:

> May 13th Warren/Newport Library Networking - Mike McEnery & Company

> > **June 10th** Grant Township Meeting Hall Round Table (Q&A)

#### July - NO MEETING

August 12th TO BE ANNOUNCED Linux - Lester Larkin

September 9th TO BE ANNOUNCED Scanning & Digital Cameras

October 14th TO BE ANNOUNCED Diamond Rio

November 11th TO BE ANNOUNCED CD Writers

**December 9th** University of Illinois Auditorium Grayslake, Illinois

#### Annual Christmas Party & Swap Fest

If you have an article for the News Journal. please forward it to the News Journal Editor at **corky@foxvalley.net** or **lcace@infnet.com** or deliver the article on disk to one of the officers at the Meetings.

#### Hi Corky,

I'm writing you because Enfish Technology is ready to release its newest product in May and I think this will be of interest to the readers of the *L.C.A.C.E. Newsletter*. The product is free to download from the Internet for Windows 95/98/2000/NT 4 users.



Enfish Onespace is a personal desktop service that integrates information from the Internet with data in your own files (e-mail, document files, and other application files) -- so users can have one convenient place to work with everything. Now you can click on a contact in your address book and instantly see all the information from the web and your own hard drives that are related. Pick a topic and Onespace brings up your bookmarked web pages and your related files. No more searching through bookmarks, mysterious file names, and e-mail folders. Create your own special searches to track information relative to your current project. Open your Enfish page and everything is always up-todate.

The Onespace desktop application is free to download (5.5 MB). ZDnet Launchpad is hosting Enfish Onespace beginning May 9 at

#### www.zdnet.com/downloads/lpad/lpad.html

Direct downloading from the Enfish site is available starting May 11 at

#### www.enfish.com

With Onespace, Enfish Technology brings users the first product capable of delivering a

comprehensive array of personalized information -- from both the Internet and the desktop -right to your fingertips. For more information, please visit

#### http://www.enfish.com

Enfish's previous flagship product, Tracker Pro, was demonstrated at numerous PC groups and reviewed in UG newsletters.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

My best,

French Prescott

User Group Liaison for Enfish Technology, Inc.

www.enfish.com

frenchp@earthlink.net

909-585-2012

#### **INTERESTING WEB SITES**

Rivals.com is a huge online community for sports fans. Like the other big sports sites, it provides tons of news and information on college and high school sports, and the NFL. NHL. NBA. and But what sets Rivals apart from the crowd is that it makes it easy for people to join in creating their own specialty and fan sites. There are also other interactive features like very active message boards and fantasy leagues. So search through Rivals' database of thousands of players, watch some videos, read some analysis, and then start your own sports column!

#### http://www.rivals.com

#### http://searchengineshowdown.com

So, you think you know how to search the Net? Feeling pretty confident in your abilities, are you? Did you know that there are an estimated 1 billion Web pages out there? And that none of the top 13 (13?!) search engines catalog more than 300 million of them? And furthermore, about half of all Web pages out there appear in only one search engine! Maybe it's time to tune up your Web searching skills. Search Engine Showdown teaches you searching strategies and provides you with search news, reviews, feature comparisons, and mountains of search data and statistics, just in case you start feeling a bit overconfident.

## Windows 95 Tips

#### WINDOW RECOVERY

We've had numerous complaints from readers who have lost windows off the edge of the screen, with no title bar (for dragging it back) in sight. The easiest remedy we've come across is to use one of Windows' ready-made window arrangements. Right-click a blank area of the Taskbar and in the resulting menu, select Tile Windows Horizontally, Tile Windows Vertically, or Cascade Windows. Regardless of your selection, the title bar of every open window will appear on screen.

#### MISSING TASKBARS

Oftentimes, we get e-mail from readers with missing Taskbars. "All I have is a small gray line at the bottom of the screen. When I hold the mouse pointer over it, the line gets wider, but the Taskbar doesn't appear."

This behavior occurs when you have the auto-hide option turned on AND you've manually shrunk the Taskbar down to nothing (by clicking and dragging it downward--most likely by mistake). Holding the mouse pointer over the Taskbar's edge instructs Windows to display the Taskbar (as auto-hide was designed to do), but the Taskbar expands only as far as the size you've defined (currently a flat line).

Regardless of the cause, here's how to fix the problem. Hold your mouse pointer over the Taskbar's edge, and when the pointer changes to a doublepointed arrow, click and drag upward until the Taskbar appears at normal size.

#### Finding a Missing File

When you move or copy a file in My Computer or Explorer, it appears at the end of the list instead of automatically taking its place in the alphabetical order. Press F5 and you'll refresh the lists, which will put them in order.

#### USE ALT-TAB TO SWITCH AMONG APPS

In Windows 95, you're almost always multitasking. So what could be more important than getting from one open task to the next? For fast navigation from one window to the next, remember Alt-Tab.

Press Alt-Tab, and you'll see a box that holds a row of icons--one for every open application or window. Hold down Alt as you press Tab to rotate from one icon to the next. When the one you want is highlighted, let go and you'll jump directly to that window.

#### **Clean the Registry**

Microsoft gives you several utilities for checking and cleaning the Registry--that file storing important system attributes. These include:

\* Regedit.exe--to view and edit the Registry

\* Cfgback.exe--to make backups of the Registry

\* Hwdiag.exe--to view detailed registry information about Emergency Recovery

Regedit and Cfgback are available on the Windows 95 CD-ROM and Microsoft's Web site. Hwdiag is on the Win95B and Internet Explorer 4 CD-ROM

#### MAKING QUICK FLOPPY COPIES

Need to copy a whole disk? Windows 95 makes it a snap. Put the disk you want to copy in your floppy drive and open a My Computer or an Explorer window. Right-click your floppy drive icon and select Copy Disk. In the resulting dialog box, click Start and you're off and running.

Once Windows 95 has read everything on the original disk, you'll be asked to insert the destination disk. Pop it in, click OK, and wait as everything from the first disk is copied to the second. When the operation finishes, you'll get a message telling you it was a success.

## WINDOWS 98 TIPS

#### **RIGHT-MOUSE WINDOW COMMANDS**

Did you know that many of the options available through menu commands in an Explorer window are also available in the right-mouse context menu in Windows 98? Right-click a blank area inside an open window and check out the resulting list. There, you'll find almost every command from the View menu (except Folder Options and the three toolbar commands). Additionally, you'll see a couple of favorites from the Edit and File menus. Hey, why waste all that energy clicking on an exact menu command when you can right-click anywhere in a window and accomplish the same thing?

#### SEND FILE OR FOLDER TO FLOPPY DRIVE

Need to copy a file or folder from your hard drive to a floppy? You could go the long route--drag the file or folder to your floppy icon in a My Computer or an Explorer window--or, you could be quick about it: Right-click the file or folder, select Send To, and in

#### SHORTCUT TO PROPERTIES

When you want to know all about an icon--file, folder, whatever--you right-click the icon and select Properties. Getting tired of dragging your pointer all the way down to the bottom of that context menu to the Properties command? Next time, hold down the Alt key as you double-click the icon. Properties dialog box, at your service.

#### LAUNCH STARTUP APPLICATION MINIMIZED

Is there an application you'd like to launch when Windows 98 starts, without it being a total desktop hog? Instruct the application to open minimized. All it takes is a quick trip to its Properties dialog box.

Right-click the Start button, select Open, doubleclick Programs, and double-click Startup. Inside the Startup folder, right-click the shortcut of the program you want to open minimized and select Properties. Click the Shortcut tab, and on the Run line, select Minimized. Click OK. The next time you start Windows 98, that application will open and then shrink to the Taskbar.

#### THE MANY FACES OF PAINT TOOLS

The next time you're creating a work of art in Paint (Start, Programs, Accessories, Paint), keep in mind that there's more to those tools than meets the eye. Many of them can take on multiple personalities.

Take the tool that looks like a paintbrush, for instance. Select this tool, and a palette of 12 tips appears under the toolbar. For a great calligraphy effect, try one from the third or fourth row.

#### PRINT FROM THE DESKTOP

Need to print a file that's sitting on the desktop (or inside an open window)? Don't waste time opening the file and selecting the application's Print command. Windows 98 will do all of that for you. Simply right-click the item you want to print and select Print in the resulting menu. Done.

(Note: If you don't see the Print command, no go-sorry. Certain file types don't support this feature.)

#### ADJUST KEYBOARD REPEAT DELAY

Have you ever noticed that when you press an arrow key to move your cursor in one direction or another, the cursor thinks about it for a second and then goes? Hel-LO! Can we shake a leg here?

Light a fire under that cursor by adjusting your keyboard delay. Open the Control Panel (Start, Settings, Control Panel), double-click Keyboard, and on the Speed tab, move the Repeat Delay all the way right, to Short. While you're at it, adjust that Repeat Rate to Fast, if it isn't already. Now take your cursor for a test spin in the white text box.

That's more like it. Click OK to keep the change.

#### (Continued from page 1 - SERVICE)

faction with chat support, you can always go back to the phone.

When you do finally connect with a technical support staff person, describe the details of your problem and all the steps you've taken to resolve it. This has two effects: First, it lets the technician know what you've already tried so he or she won't cover the same ground. Also, it informs the technician about your level of expertise.

There is nothing more frustrating than having a technician talk down to you about computers when you've been using them for years. If you are an experienced PC user and you communicate this to the technician, you may find the quality of support quickly rises to a more sophisticated level. Instead of holding your hand over every step ("Click the button marked Start"), the technician might just give you a quick list of possible diagnoses and the remedies to try.

If you don't feel you're getting the help you need from a particular technician, ask to speak with someone else. Technical support call centers are often structured hierarchically, and the first-level staffers are the least experienced or knowledgeable about the products. By asking to speak with someone else, you'll most likely get bumped up to the second-level support staff--they're usually better equipped to solve your problems quickly.

#### PESKY AOL 5 DIAL-UP BUG

Much has been made recently of AOL 5's alleged interference with other ISPs when multiple accounts from multiple ISPs exist on a single computer. While not all the alleged problems exist on all machines, Bugnet (with the assistance of KeyLabs) has discovered what it believes to be an actual bug in the AOL software, version 5. Even though you may not have AOL set as your system's default Web and e-mail service, when you obtain a TCP/IP or PPP connection to any service provider, AOL invariably asks, "Would you like to start AOL now?" If you choose Yes, your system generates a blue error screen and crash. At that point, you have to reboot. Bugnet offers the solution of turning off AOL's Auto Start options. Right-click the AOL icon in your system tray and select AOL Auto Start Options. Click the button indicating that you wish to disable all Auto Start Options. Click OK.

For more information, check out Bugnet's article "AOL Found Unruly But Not Reprehensible" at

#### http://www.bugnet.com/alerts/ bugalert\_21100.html

#### HOW TO RECOVER AFTER A VIRUS DAMAGES FILES

#### from: TipWorld - http://www.tipworld.com

A reader wrote: "I wonder if there are viruses out there that cause damage that requires rebuilding the files on the hard disk of your PC."

If a virus or Trojan overwrites files, one has no choice but to replace them from original installation disks or backup media. You can't reconstruct destroyed files using antivirus software or any other software. If the virus destroyed records of the file locations (that is, it overwrote directory and file allocation table data), you'll also need to replace files from original installation disks or backups. In such cases, if copies don't exist, data recovery specialists can often reconstruct valuable records manually--at a price.

In most cases, a virus merely changes files to add its code to them. This is where antivirus software is most useful, because it can reverse those changes. However, depending on the virus and the software involved, results can vary. To make absolutely sure that files are restored with 100 percent accuracy, replacement from originals or backups would be the preferred choice.

Henri Delger henri\_delger@prodigy.net http://pages.prodigy.net/henri\_delger/

Is your membership up to date? Check with the Membership Chairperson, Donna Bell, to find out what you status is. Contact her at 815 344-1271 after 7:30pm daily or send E-Mail to: lcace@inf-net.com to be kept informed.



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## **Computer Country Expo**

#### May 20, 2000

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We will have Certified A+ Technicians at the show who will help people as personal shoppers and take them around the show and make recommendations for what they are looking to purchase. Buyers can also have their products installed and/or tested by the technicians <u>FREE</u> of charge at the show.

#### Location

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Main Exhibit Hall - Building #1

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**\$6 Admission** 

All L.C.A.C.E. Members who present their membership card will receive a \$1 discount.

#### See our WEB Site at

#### www.ccxpo.com/

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- LCACE E-mail addresses
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- LCACE history and pictures
- LCACE meeting location and map
- LCACE members e-mail addresses
- LCACE online membership application

## **Next Meeting!!!**

#### May 13, 2000

Warren/Newort Library Youth Room 224 N. O'Plaine Road Gurnee, Illinois

12:00pm - 2:00 p.m.

This month;s presentation is Networking (continued) by Mike McEnery & Company.

#### L.C.A.C.E

Lake County Area Compuer Enthusiasts 409 S. Elmwood Ave Waukegan, IL 60085-5219

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED