

The Virus Scare!!!!



LCACE Meeting Dates 2006
11 February - Shareware/Freeware
04 March - Anti-Virus Software
01 April - Build Your Own PC
(LCACE ELECTIONS)

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secretary@lcace.org

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treasurer@lcace.org

Jim Rutledge..... Programs
programs@lcace.org

Dorothy Sutherland..... Membership
membership@lcace.org

Robin Seidenberg..... Public Relations
pr@lcace.org

Zack Gilbertson..... Jr. Member Rep.

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Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts
LCACE
c/o Group Ambassador
409 S. Elmwood Ave.
Waukegan, Illinois 60085-5219

Membership

Membership for LCACE 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 are now available on our WEB site at - <http://www.lcace.org>.

Meetings

LCACE meetings are usually held on the second Saturday of each month at the Grayslake Area Public Library, 100 Library Lane, Grayslake, Illinois. The meeting room opens at noon and the formal meeting begins at 12:30 p.m. 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 camera-ready 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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Dwight "J.J." Johnson
President
Lake County Area
Computer Enthusiasts

Presidents Notes

February 2006

I consider myself an "end user", so every time we hold "Ask the Gurus," I'm all ears. My computer experience might extend back twenty-four years, but I still have a lot to learn. I would like to thank our gurus (David, Jim, and Mike) for sharing their knowledge with us last month. Not to let them down, Carolyn and Lois brought some very good questions to the table, and I hope that the gurus were able to answer all their questions to their satisfaction. We have found that "Ask the Gurus" sessions are some of our most productive meetings. For this reason, we intend to schedule them as needed.

I would like to thank Linda for summing up the December minutes with a one-pager that stated "PARTY". Thanks, too, to Don Martin for introducing our newest member, John Urh, to the club. One of our guests at the January meeting was Mary Ann Lawson, who I met at a CLC photography seminar last year. I gave Mary Ann one of our club cards, which prompted her to attend our meeting. The club cards are available at the membership table, so pick up a few and put them in your pocket or purse so that your friends and people you meet will learn about the club.

Again, congratulations to all our Holiday Party prizewinners. I would like to commend Jean Anderson, the winner of the desktop computer. Jean donated the computer to the Lake County Council for Seniors' office in Waukegan. Leslie was the

winner of January's 50/50 raffle, but we could not talk him into paying for lunch after the meeting. Congratulations also to the member who sold the most raffle tickets (244) and who won a \$25 gift card for Gurnee's Marcus Theatres... ME!

Nominations for our 2006-2007 elections begin in February. Our board of directors consists of seven members who are responsible for overseeing the club's operations for the year. If you would like to run for a position on the board, or know someone you would like to nominate, you can do so at the February and March meetings.

Let us not forget that all members will need to renew their membership in April. This is the new policy and for those who have paid within the past several months, your dues will be pro-rated to carry you through to April 2007. For those wishing to pay early, your dues will be pro-rated. This change will help make our bookkeeping easier, and help us with the financial planning for our annual Holiday Party.

LCACE strives to keep its members informed about changes in meeting dates and locations. We need to make sure that we have your latest email address to do this. If you haven't been receiving meeting announcements, then I suggest that you check with Dorothy at the membership table to insure we have your correct email address. Jim informed us at the last meeting that he didn't receive any return notices, so let's keep it that way. If you don't have internet

access and are unable to download the monthly newsletter, then you are entitled to have a paper copy delivered to your home address. PLEASE notify our Newsletter Editor that you desire this service. You will also find meeting calendars on the membership desk along with club cards. Be sure to pick up a calendar and a couple of club cards to pass out to family and friends.

If you haven't had your photo taken for the membership database, we will be asking you to step in front of the camera and give us a big smile. If we miss you, or you know we don't have a recent photo of you, please see Dorothy at the membership table. The photos will also be used for membership cards, which everyone will get some time after the April meeting.

Robin has been doing an excellent job of notifying local publications about our meetings. If you are aware of other places where we can publicize our club meetings without charge, please contact Robin @ www.pr@lcace.org

It was also brought to my attention that Office Max is now offering an Ink Refilling Station where you can get your "Inkjet Cartridges Refilled While You Shop!" The prices are \$14.99 for Black and \$22.99 for Color. At this time, refills are available for DELL, HP, and Lexmark brands only. Other brands may be added, so ask a sales person. We also talked about the price comparison between using an inkjet and a laser printer. With laser printers under \$200, if you print mostly black & white, then it would be more economical to purchase a laser printer. Mike mentioned that he picked up a used HP laser printer at the College of DuPage computer show for \$60. We will try to come up with a chart in order to compare the price differences.

I understand that Jim will be doing a presentation on "Shareware and Freeware" software at the February meeting. What is Shareware? It is: "Computer software developed for the public domain, which can be used or copied

The Programs for the next months are:

- 11 Feb Freeware/Shareware
- 4 Mar Anti-Virus
- 1 Apr Build Your Own PC
- 13 May DSL
- 10 Jun Camera/Photo

Experts: 'Hype' May Have Mitigated Worm

By ANICK JESDANUN, AP Internet Writer

Companies and individuals heeded this week's warning — some may call it "hype" — about a file-destroying computer worm known as "Kama Sutra," helping minimize its damage Friday, security experts said.

One Italian city shut down its computers as a precaution, but otherwise the worm's trigger date arrived with relatively few reports of problems.

For days, experts warned that the worm could corrupt documents using the most common file types, including ".doc," ".pdf," and ".zip." It affects most versions of Microsoft Corp.'s Windows operating system, prompting the software giant to issue a warning Tuesday.

Hundreds of thousands of computers were believed to be infected, but security vendors say many companies and individuals had time to clean up their machines following the alarm, carried by scores of media outlets including The Associated Press.

For Milan, Italy, though, the discovery came too late. Technicians switched off 10,000 city government computers after discovering the infection Thursday and deciding they didn't have enough time to clean the machines.

"It has spread to all our computers," said Giancarlo Martella, Milan's councilman for technological innovation and public services. "Knowing how destructive it is, we turned

off all personal computers to avoid losing our data."

Only the municipality's registry office had been kept open because its "passive terminals" don't store data, Martella said, adding he hoped the computers would return to normal by Monday.

Unlike other worms generally designed to help spammers and hackers carry out attacks, Kama Sutra sets out to destroy documents by overwriting data.

The worm — called "CME-24" but nicknamed after the Hindu love manual Kama Sutra because of the pornographic come-ons in e-mails spreading it — also tries to disable anti-virus software, but vendors have generally posted updates that should protect users.

Assuming the computer's calendar settings are correct, users can also avoid the worm by leaving their machines off until Saturday, although the worm is set to trigger again on March 3.

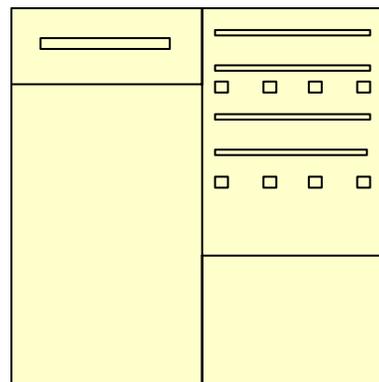
Security vendors Trend Micro Inc. and CA Inc. both assessed the overall risk and distribution as low. The worm wasn't designed to spread any more quickly Friday. Rather, Friday was the first trigger date for the file-destroying code.

Ajit Pillai, India's manager for U.S. security firm Watchguard Technologies Inc., said about 10 percent of his customers in the country had the worm, but they "followed the remedies and managed to avoid any problem."

"We didn't have to do any firefighting today," Pillai said.

So was the public bamboozled by the warning?

Hardly, experts say.



"The importance of media attention from an awareness and educational standpoint has been a very good thing," said

(Continued on page 6)

Shareware/Freeware & others!

J. Rutledge

These are the different software packages available to the public/private/governmental segments today. In the old days, 1980's and 1990's, a lot of us computer users had shareware to go on because of the shortage of cheap software. A program could cost as much as thousands of dollars. Here are the different categories:



Shareware is software that is distributed free on a trial basis with the understanding that the user may need or want to pay for it later. Some software developers offer a shareware version of their program with a built-in expiration date (after 30 days the user can no longer get access to the program). Other shareware (sometimes called liteware) is offered with certain capabilities disabled as an enticement to buy the complete version of the program.

Freeware (not to be confused with free software) is programming that is offered at no cost and is a common class of small applications available for downloading and use in most operating systems. Because it may be copyrighted, you may or may not be able to reuse it in programming you are developing. The least restrictive "no-cost" programs are un-copyrighted programs that are in the public domain. When reusing public domain software in your own programs, it's good to know the history of the program so that you can be sure it really is in the public domain. Free software, a somewhat newer and unrelated concept, is software that can be freely used, modified, and redistributed with only one restriction: any redistributed

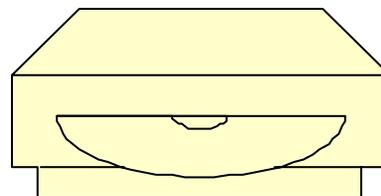
version of the software must be distributed with the original terms of free use, modification, and distribution (known as copyleft). The definition of free software is stipulated as part of the GNU (GNU NOT UNIX) project and by the Free Software Foundation. Unlike freeware, free software may be distributed for a fee. Freeware is liable to be more limited in capability than free software.

COTS, MOTS, GOTS, and NOTS

are abbreviations that describe pre-packaged software or (less commonly) hardware purchase alternatives.

A COTS (commercial off-the-shelf) product is one that is used "as-is." COTS products are designed to be easily installed and to interoperate with existing system components. Almost all software bought by the average computer user fits into the COTS category: operating systems, office product suites, word processing, and e-mail programs are among the myriad examples. One of the major advantages of COTS software, which is mass-produced, is its relatively low cost.

A MOTS (either modified or modifiable off-the-shelf, or military off-the-shelf, depending on the context) product is typically a COTS product whose source code can be modified. The product may be customized by the purchaser, by the vendor, or by another party to meet the requirements of the customer. In the military context, MOTS refers to an off-the-shelf product that is developed or customized by a commercial vendor to respond to specific military requirements. Because a MOTS product is adapted for a specific purpose, it can be purchased and used immediately. However, since MOTS software specifications are written by external sources, government agencies are sometimes leery of these products, because they fear that future changes to the product will not be in their control.



A GOTS (government off-the-shelf) product is typically developed by the technical staff of the government agency for which it is created. It is sometimes developed by an external entity, but with funding and specification from the agency. Because agencies can directly control all aspects of GOTS products, these are generally preferred

(Continued on page 6)

for government purposes.

A NOTS (NATO off-the-shelf or niche off-the-shelf, depending on the context) product is developed by NC3A (for NATO Consultation, Command, and Control) to meet specific requirements for NATO. In the more general context, niche off-the-shelf refers to vendor-developed software that is for a specialized and narrow market segment, in comparison to the broad market for COTS products.

Lots of choices today.

(Continued from page 3)

without infringing copyright. Programmers typically get paid a small one time fee from users who find the software useful." As stated, most shareware is free for an evaluation period, but requires payment if you continue to use it beyond the evaluation period. There are programs like WinZip that allow you to use it beyond the trial period, but if you are unwilling to pay, then you should remove the program from your computer. After paying the registration fee, you may be eligible for technical assistance and updates. Developing any program is not a small task. For this reason, I believe that anyone who creates a program that makes my computer experience a lot easier, deserves to get paid for their efforts. Jim will be telling us more about these programs at the February meeting.

See you at the meeting.

J.J. Johnson

Marc Solomon, director of product management at security vendor management McAfee Inc. "It alerts users to what may have happened and the destruction that could have occurred."

Call it hype if you wish, but "the hype was probably what prevented the disaster from happening," said David A. Milman, chief executive of the Syracuse, N.Y.-based Rescucem.

He said his U.S. computer-repair chain initially saw a 20 percent increase in call volume, but mostly from customers seeking reassurance.

Security experts benefited from advance warning. The worm has been circulating for weeks but is set to destroy files only on the third day of each month. That gave vendors time to update their products and warn customers.

It's possible virus writers next time will have the file destruction start immediately, but that could also blunt a worm's ability to spread, said Ken Dunham, director of the rapid response team for VeriSign Inc.'s iDefense.

If files get wiped out right away, "you would notice that immediately, and people would start mitigating it," Dunham said. "If you let it build up, there's a much (greater) chance of spreading."



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Rome: Total War Barbarian Invasion

Part 2 of the Rome: Total War Software Review

J. Rutledge

Again, when I use RTW or RTWBI they mean Rome: Total War or Rome: Total War Barbarian Invasion. So, bear with me.



When RTWBI came out I snatched it up as quickly as I could. I had a real love of the game. I bought RTWBI for \$19.99 + tax at BestBuy. Got home and loaded it up as soon as I could.

First of all, in RTW you have to follow all the patches and up-dates closely. With RTWBI, it will bring the game up-to-date to version 1.3. Great, no downloading, right? Wrong. There was an immediate patch for 1.5 and 1.6 when I looked at the patch page. Ugh!

As you can tell, this is not going well. So... I patched up the game and started to play it. Not bad at all. First of all, the game time in which you play has been moved to about 350 AD. The Roman Empire is on the brink of falling to the herds of Barbarian Tribes. The Franks, Germans, Huns, Vandals, and others are ready to pounce on the empire.

There are two Roman Empire capitals: Rome and Constantinople. Or you can think of it as an east and west

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Roman Empire. The Romans are starting to trip over themselves with all the corruption and political turmoil.

As for the aesthetics, it is really nice. You have armies that wade across a river now. That is cool. There are nighttime battles now, with torch carriers. The cinematics are nice. Generals can be recruited right now for the armies. They can be adopted by a faction family at anytime now. A faction does not need to hold a town/city for it to play. Most of the factions start as roaming nomads.





There are a lot of good points. The main point now is how much religion your faction has instead of how powerful your army is. Only Romans can build Awesome Temples and churches of religion now. All others just have groves or sacred circles.

Winning the game means you have to take a few city-



states and main cities such as Rome or Constantinople. This makes for a really short game. You can still play the long game, but I don't see the point of it.

In my game, I chose the Huns. It took five hours of playing time to win the game. That is way shorter than playing RTW in which the short game can take days. So, it seemed to me the challenge wasn't really there.

I would like to offer up a warning to you. If you put RTWBI in and want to go back to RTW, you have to take the whole thing out. Then, re-load. That means you have to patch all the way up again. What a pain!

I really don't recommend RTWBI. It is just not the same challenging game.



e-mail



Alleman, Elizabeth S.....esa2204@aol.com
 Anderson, Jean M.....jaride77893@aol.com
 Berg-Wells, Lois J.....luldefl@yahoo.com
 Busch, Linda.....lindashrub@juno.com
 Cirvello, Walter.....waltc1@msn.com
 Frost, Jack.....Jfrost@megsinet.net
 Frost, Winnie.....jfrost@megsinet.net
 Galla, Sue Ann.....villesuzie@warpmnet.net
 Grauzas, LaweranceMrG2156@aol.com
 Gothaun, Edward.....eddiegothaun@hotmail.com
 Grimm, Phil.....pgrimm4@comcast.net
 Guthman, Carolyn A.....carolyng5@aol.com
 Halley, Jack W.....jack96@aol.com
 Hobson, Marshia Y.....marsgraphics@netscape.net
 Horen, Bob J.....goteim@sbcglobal.net
 Johnson, Dwight R.....jj1450x1@megsinet.net
 Kalinoski, Donna L.....donnaaleek@juno.com
 Korell, Keith K.....kkorell@sbcglobal.net
 Krause, Scott.....scott.krause@neostudios.com
 Larkin, Lester.....LesLarkin@NetZero.net
 Martin, Donald L.....dmartin339@aol.com
 McDonald, Kathleen.....clbavp@aol.com
 McDonald, Mark J.....markym36@aol.com
 McEnery, Mike.....mmcenery@sbcglobal.net
 Reinholds, Roy E.....uncleroy@iwie.net
 Rivera, Julio & Lordes.....guaynabo2000@lightfirst.com
 Roback, Luis.....luisroback@hewitt.com
 Rutledge, James W.....jrutnet@aol.com
 Salsburg, Leslie D.....leslie164@juno.com
 Schintgen, Paul.....patys@theramp.net
 Seidenberg, Lewdrlew1@aol.com
 Seidenberg, Robinangusskechat@aol.com
 Shaughnessy, Howard & Dianeolisha1@aol.com
 Sheet, Walter W.....eddoc85@access4less.com
 Straw, Gerald.....gkstraw@comcast.net
 Sutherland, Dorothy.....dorothy4263@sbcglobal.net
 Vogt, Grace.....g.vogt@sbcglobal.net
 Wells, Alden H.....luldefl@yahoo.com
 Wilson, Dennisdcwilson@exepc.com

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FEBUARY 11, 2006

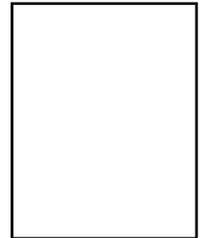
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This month:
Sharware/Freeware

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