



BUILD YOUR



OWN PC

LCACE Meeting Dates 2006

04 March - Build Your Own PC

01 April - Anti-virus Software

(LCACE ELECTIONS)

13 May - DSL

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The L.C.A.C.E. 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
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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

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Antivirus software protects you from viruses, trojans, and other threats disguised as valid files on your computer. When you click on a file, Antivirus software starts scanning. If an infection is found, antivirus software will give you a warning. They block infected files BEFORE they do any harm. They let you download files with confidence and security, scan instant message attachments and other files you download, and work seamlessly in the background, always protecting you.

President's Notes

Surprisingly, there is more to shareware and freeware than I knew. Just the acronyms themselves overwhelmed me; Jim did a good job of explaining all of them at the February meeting. For those of you who missed last month's meeting, you may want to do a little research to find out which programs on your computer you may legally use.

The following members have been nominated for election at our April meeting: Winnie Frost, Julio Rivera, Lester Larkin, Robin Seidenberg, Leslie Salsburg, Mike McEnery, Linda Busch. The following members declined nomination: J.J. Johnson, Dorothy Sutherland, Jim Rutledge, and Jack Frost. Nominations will be open again this month. If you would like to become a member of the board of directors, you can nominate yourself.

Lester has volunteered to relieve me as webmaster for the LCACE website. It will be a few months before he gets acclimated and actually assumes the position. Look forward to some changes in the near future.

I suggested that the club consider making a donation to the Grayslake Library for allowing us to use their beautiful facility. In the past, we have made donations to the Warren Township Library and the Ingle-side Township Hall where we previously held our meetings. Leslie Salsberg has volunteered to contact the library; he will give us some direction at an upcoming meeting.

Thank you Doreen for reminding us about the upcoming meeting dates. The March and April meetings will not be on the usual second Saturday, so make sure you **MARK YOUR CALENDARS**. You can pick up a calendar card from the membership desk to help remind you of the remaining meeting dates for this year.

It's time to renew! Let's not forget that **EVERYONE'S** annual membership dues becomes payable in April. If you wish to pay early, make sure you ask the membership director what your pro-rata amount will be before writing that check.

Happy Birthday to our Vice President. Mike McEnery turned double-nickels (55) on February 10th and officially became a senior. Birthday wishes to Dorothy Sutherland, Janet Bernal and Anna Ross-Rodgers whose birthdays were also in February.

LCACE is always working to add to and improve the services we offer our members. If there's something you need that we don't already have, or you have an idea for something we should offer, or if you'd just like to volunteer your time to the club, we want to hear from you.

Spy ware and Ad ware viruses have rapidly become the number one threat to your computer with over 90% of computers already infected. These include "Popup Ads", "Trojans", "Worms", Web Bugs, Monitoring Software and more. Fortunately there are good Spy ware and Ad ware virus removal tools available. Sorting through them all to find the right one is a challenging task and an important decision to make. Spy ware and Ad ware, also called "Malware", are files publishers create to allow them to snoop on your browsing activity, see what you purchase and send you "pop-up" ads. They can slow down your PC, cause it to crash, record your credit card numbers and worse. If you're like most Internet users, chances are you're probably infected with these files. Simply surfing the Internet, reading email, downloading music or other files can infect your PC

(Continued on page 4)

The Programs for the next months are:

04 Mar Build Your Own PC
01 Apr Antivirus
13 May DSL
10 Jun Camera/Photo

Submitted by Jim Rutledge

**IT'S FREE
(USB)!!!**

Don't use the original link...take out the "default.aspx?pf=true" or you will be filling out the form and submitting over and over again.....use this link and then click on the free USB drive...who knows what size, probably 24kb.....

(Continued from page 3)

without you knowing it. Some of the more popular anti-virus programs will be discussed at this month's meeting, so don't miss it.

Happy St. Patrick's Day. I will see you at the meeting.

<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/mysterysolved/corp/>

Submitted by Jack Frost

Computer Tip!

Who knew?

IT WORKS!

Just found this out and thought I'd pass it on. It's very useful when trying to read small print (especially in the early hours).

If you **hold down the Ctrl key** (on your keyboard) and **then turn the small wheel in the middle of your mouse** away from you or towards you, the print size will change - it will either get larger or smaller - depending on which way you turn the wheel.

Try it!

Submitted by Jack Frost

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

This is fun. If you are curious to find out what the #1 song playing on the radio was the day you were born just go to the site below. Enjoy!

<https://home.comcast.net/%7Ejosh.hosler/NumberOneInHistory/SelectMonth.htm>

Apple Unveils Intel-Based Mac Mini

Jay Wrolstad, newsfactor.com

Fresh from trumpeting the billionth download from the iTunes music store, Apple is attempting to push more deeply into the home-entertainment realm by unveiling a new Mac Mini with enhanced multimedia capabilities and a new sound system for the iPod.

The latest Mac Mini features Apple's Front Row media technology and the OS X Bonjour wireless-networking application for turning the machine into an entertainment hub. Users can control content on the Mini -- including music, photos, and video -- from anywhere in the home using a



remote control.

Digital Lifestyle Choices

With the new Mac Mini, which runs the Intel Core Duo processor, Apple has moved 50 percent of its product line to Intel chips.

There are two versions of the machine, a 1.5-GHz model for \$599 and a 1.66-GHz version for \$799. The new system architecture provides a four-fold boost in performance over earlier machines, the company said.

Every new Mac Mini now includes built-in Ethernet technology for high-speed networking, AirPort Wi-Fi connectivity, Bluetooth wireless, and four USB 2.0 ports.

Also included with the new computers is iLife '06, the latest iteration of Apple's "digital lifestyle" application that feature new versions of iPhoto, iMovie HD, iDVD, GarageBand, and iWeb for creating Web sites.

At the same time, Apple has introduced a new iPod speaker system -- called iPod Hi-Fi -- for turning the popular media player into a home stereo system. The speakers are engineered by Apple to deliver superior sound quality, with two wide-range units and a bass system.

Seamless integration with all iPods is provided with a docking station that recharges the player and displays iPod controls. The new system accepts analog or digital signals.

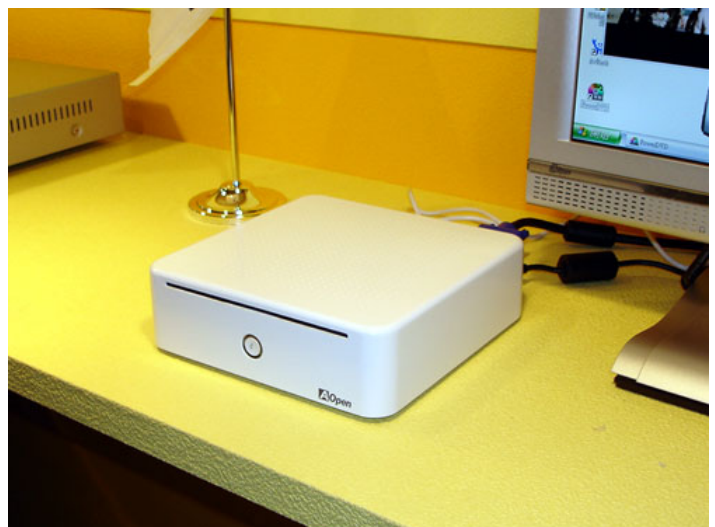
Home Appliance

"The latest Mini marks yet another step toward Apple becoming a 'whole house' computer solution," said Forrester Research analyst Ted Schadler. By making it easy to connect the computer to the TV, free of peripherals like a permanent keyboard, and find and stream video and audio from a computer elsewhere in the house, it becomes a living-room appliance, he said.

The new sound system could have home stereo manufacturers looking over their shoulders, Schadler suggested, given that the market for audio gear designed for the iPod is booming.

"Look at the products available from Bose, Logitech, and Belkin, for example," he said. "Apple has clearly decided to go in the audio-accessories market. While its accessories partners won't be happy, they can't be surprised that Apple has entered this market."

The iPod Hi-Fi includes the Apple Remote, a power cord, and 10 docking adapters designed to fit all iPods on the market. It is available for \$349.



Build PC Materials Required

Tools Required

Screwdriver - A Phillips-head (cross-point) screwdriver is what is used in most PCs.

Screw Extractor - If you have surgeon's fingers you may not need this. But, if you're human, it is likely you might drop a screw into your PC during this procedure and be too big-thumbed to get it out. A screw extractor can help you grab those screws and get them out without messing with the hardware. You definitely do not want to run your PC with loose screws in there. It could cause a short circuit.

Flashlight - Unless you are in a fantastic lighting situation, you will likely need a flashlight to get a look of the landscape in your PC while you're working.

Tweezers - May be helpful for you in switching jumpers later in the tutorial.

Hardware Required

- PC Case
- Floppy Disk Drive
- Hard Drive
- CD-ROM Drive
- Processor
- Processor Cooling Fan
- Motherboard
- Memory Modules
- Power Supply
- Video Card
- Keyboard & Mouse

To build a basic PC, you will need at least a motherboard, a memory module, a processor with cooling fan, a power supply, a hard drive, a floppy drive, a video card and a CD-ROM.

Most electrically sensitive hardware comes in a static bag which is designed to protect the electronics from static electricity shock. Leave your hardware in these bags until you are ready to install them.

Software Required

System Disk

Device Drivers (these usually come with the hardware above)

Operating System (for the purposes of this tutorial, we will assume you are choosing Microsoft Windows as your operating system – PC Mechanic has lots of great information on Linux and other alternatives)

Cables and Miscellaneous

Drive cables

Motherboard spacers (usually come with the motherboard, but are used to space the motherboard up off the mounting plate)

Screws (usually a whole pile of screws will come with your PC's case, but if you are using a case you happened to have around, you will need to collect some screws)

Power cords (for both your PC and your monitor. They usually come with the hardware when you buy it, of course)

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BUILD YOUR OWN PC

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It is increasingly popular to build your own computer. In most cases, it saves money, and it guarantees you get what you want. It also assures you avoid proprietary designs many companies use to keep you coming to them for new parts. Best of all, having built the system yourself, you become very familiar with that system and with computers in general.



People from all walks of life today build their own PCs. Executives, engineers, students, housewives, they all do it today. But, at the same time, pre-built PCs have come down in price quite a bit. Today, one is left to wonder whether it is best to build a PC yourself or to simply buy one off the shelf. I'll address that here.

If you are a real PC enthusiast, this question may be a non-issue. The answer may be as obvious as the color of the sky. This is predictable, of course. When one builds their own PC, they are able to not only understand their PC better because they built it, but they are able to choose each component that goes into their PC. There is really something to be said for choosing your own components, and I'll go into that further below. There is also a certain sense of satisfaction with having built a PC. One spends a

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few hours (or less for those more familiar with the process) to put the thing together. Then comes the moment of truth when one hits the power switch for the first time. If it works on the first try, its beer time!

But, besides the joy of it, is it worth it? Is it a practical use of your time? Will it really save you money? The answer to that question today has become a bit gray. A few years ago, the answer was obvious. Pre-built PCs were typically built from OEM, cheap components. The performance was average to simply awful. The choice was obvious: If you wanted a decent PC, you better build it. Today, the line has blurred. Where many off-the-shelf PCs today still use cheaper components in an effort to save money, there are more pre-built PCs today which do use quality hardware and whose performance ranks up there with the best of them.

Let us look at some of the key areas of interest in this:



Component Selection

Most commercial PC buyers (except for the ones who build higher end models) do not make a big deal of which components they use. They will, of course, tell you the specs of the system, but often do not elaborate on the brands of the equipment they use. Most lower to average priced pre-built PCs use more or less generic hardware. It gets the job done, but what you get is what you get. Upgrading can be a problem for this reason. In contrast, building your own PC means you can handpick all components in your system. You can ensure you get good, name brand hardware which will have proper manufacturer support and driver support. Most importantly, you can ensure you get hardware that will perform. One aspect of pre-built is that compatibility issues are taken care of by the manufacturer, but there is a tradeoff made in that guarantee.



Price

In general, you can get more bang for your buck building your own PC. In many cases, you will find equally priced and comparable PCs, where one is pre-built and one would be homebuilt. You can buy PCs cheaper than you can build them, but when you consider the hardware choices within, the price is offset in favor of homebuilt. One thing to consider here is the value of your time. If you are a very busy person where time is money, then you most likely want to buy a pre-built PC. If you don't mind taking the time, though, you can do better doing it yourself.



Support

Available support is a key concern for do-it-yourselfers. When you build it yourself, there is nowhere to take the

PC for service. You can't say "Here, make this work." On the other hand, pre-built machines typically do come with manufacturer support. But, support is anything but consistent. Some manufacturers have questionable records on support whereas some are quite good at it. Having support for your PC is no guarantee of having a problem-free user experience, and it is certainly no guarantee that they will take responsibility for your PC if it doesn't work. The good news for do-it-yourselfers is that the community of people who do this kind of thing themselves is increasing. There is a lot of data on the internet, and community sources for assistance. I'm compelled to mention our own forums where a community of thousands is available to help you out on your PC.

Warranty

On pre-built PCs, there is typically a warranty on the whole system, and in many instances, you are offered an extended service plan at the time of purchase. Home built PCs do not have full system warranties, of course, but if you buy good name brand hardware, most of the components will themselves have warranties. So, really, either way, you can be covered here.

Software

Pre-built PCs often come with much software on it, most importantly the operating system itself. The actual price of the software is pretty good, because manufacturers get great deals on this software because they buy in bulk. On the flip side, though, these PCs sometimes come with too much software, meaning garbage that you do not want and just clutters the hard drive and bugs you to buy stuff. It can be quite annoying. On homebuilt PCs, you might pay a little more for the software per unit, but you will get what you want and only what you want, plus you can set it up how you want.

In general, I'm a big fan of the homebuilt PC. I've never used a PC I didn't build myself. I think its a huge money saver. In my case, I built it myself, and then as technology progressed, I incrementally upgraded the machine. This saves a lot of money in the long run, because with a pre-built commercial machine, once it goes out of date, you pretty much need to start anew with a new PC.



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March 4, 2006

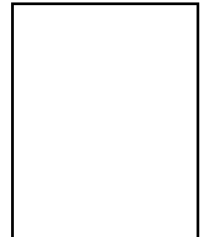
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