

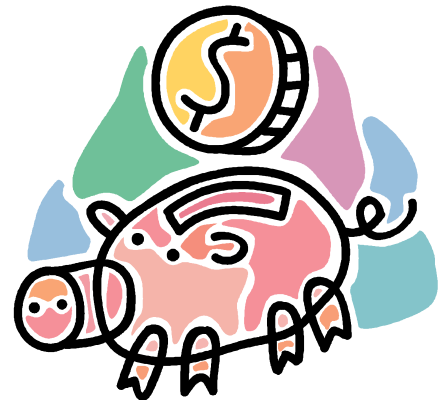
Published by  
The ROCKLAND PC USERS GROUP  
**January 2003**

**P**lease join us for the next GENERAL MEETING of the Rockland PC Users Group on Tuesday, January 14th, 2003, at 7:15 PM, in the RASO Community Room, fourth floor, Palisades Center Mall, West Nyack, NY.

The Rockland PC User Group is a great source of useful information. At our general meeting, Linda Lemond, of Provident Bank, will be doing a presentation on "Personal Internet Banking". Learn how to make payments to most merchants, individuals and institutions via the Internet.

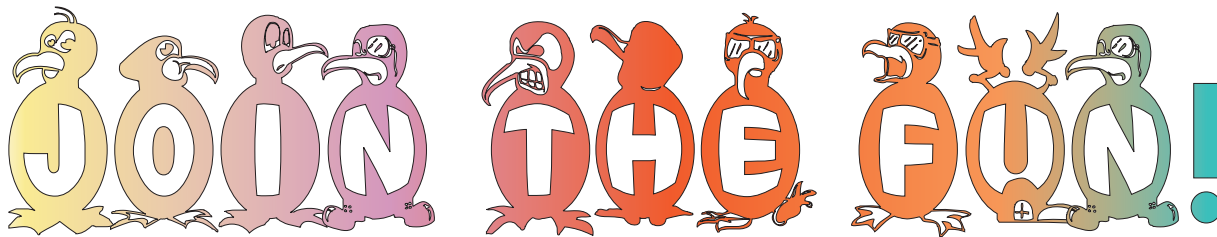
#### WHY BANK ON LINE?

- ✓ Convenient!
- ✓ Saves you time.
- ✓ No more monthly hassle of writing checks and preparing bills.
- ✓ Saves you money. No more stamps or envelopes!
- ✓ No more last minute trips to the post office.
- ✓ Bills are paid in the comfort and safety of your own home.



Come out and learn how to be comfortable banking on the Internet.

This month's **Multimedia Workshop** will be held on January 14th, at 6:00 PM. The meeting will be held in the Raso Room in the Palisades Mall, prior to the RPCUG scheduled monthly meeting. Roberta Mikkelsen will be doing the first part of a two part presentation on Adobe PhotoShop. This should be a very informative evening. Make sure you get there early.



**MEETINGS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC** *with newcomers especially welcome.*  
For directions and up-to-date meeting information, visit RPCUG's Website at [www.rpcug.org](http://www.rpcug.org)

## WEB SITES editor's picks:

### HOAX PHOTO TEST

Test your pop culture literacy  
[www.museumofhoaxes.com/tests/hoaxphototest.html](http://www.museumofhoaxes.com/tests/hoaxphototest.html)

**ZE's PAGE:** Kaledioscope toy  
[www.zefrank.com/byokal/kal.html](http://www.zefrank.com/byokal/kal.html)

### SHORT MOVIE

[http://media.smilepop.com/smilepop/flash/06\\_2002/may02-smilepop-soapbox2.swf](http://media.smilepop.com/smilepop/flash/06_2002/may02-smilepop-soapbox2.swf)

### DUSTY OLD INFORMATION

Almost forgotten, but important  
[www.dustyinfo.com/](http://www.dustyinfo.com/)

### THE ORACLE OF BACON AT VIRGINIA

Movie trivia  
[/www.cs.virginia.edu/oracle/](http://www.cs.virginia.edu/oracle/)

### FALSE ADVERTISING

A Gallery of Parody  
<http://parody.organique.com/>

### GOT A FAVORITE?

email the editor!  
[mcbaade@aol.com](mailto:mcbaade@aol.com)



## THE ROCKLAND PC USERS GROUP

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**PCReNew:** Hank Feinberg / [pcrenew@totalpromotions.net](mailto:pcrenew@totalpromotions.net)

### NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Marian Baade, 634-8435 ~ [mcbaade@aol.com](mailto:mcbaade@aol.com)

### The Purpose of the Group:

To exchange computer-related ideas and information among its members; to engage in computer-related activities for the benefit of the membership and the community at large; to increase understanding and utilization of the personal computer; to provide an opportunity for the formation of special interest groups (SIGs), to provide a medium for the exchange and propagation of public domain software, freeware, and shareware.

—(From the RPCUG Constitution & Bylaws)

## MEETING SCHEDULE

### GENERAL MEETING

7:15 PM

### MULTIMEDIA WORKSHOP

6:00 PM

Tuesday, January 14, 2003

The Palisades Center Community Room  
Palisades Center Mall, West Nyack, NY

**Multi-Media Workshop** meets on the second Tuesday of the month, prior to the general meeting at 6:00 PM in the Raso Room in the Palisades Mall, West Nyack

**Windows 98/ME SIG** meets on the third Tuesday of the month in the Pearl River Room at the Pearl River Library, 7-8:45 PM.

The **Investment Workshop (SIG)** meetings will vary for the present; please consult the web site for details

The **Executive Board** meets last Thursday of the month  
West Nyack Library, 7:00 PM

The Rockland PC Users Group, a tax-exempt educational organization, meets monthly, usually on the second Tuesday. Meetings begin at 7:15 PM. The latest information about meeting programs and dates is available on the Internet at

<http://www.rpcug.org>



## Happy New Year!

Every year in December Microsoft has been here doing their "Holiday Road Tour," demonstrating their newest software and hardware. Five to six months ago, we received an announcement that they would no longer be coming to user groups. They made a corporate decision to send their field representatives out to their Microsoft Partners.

They were aware that user groups looked forward to their presentations and that the groups have been a great help in promoting their products. With that in mind, they formulated a plan that Mindshare, the user group division of MS, would supply the groups with all the materials and information that is needed to help the groups do in-house presentations of their new products.

Sy Berber & Steve Weinberg agreed to do the presentations for us, and as usual, they did a **fantastic** job.

**Sy & Steve...Thanks!**

The **Windows XP Workshop** has been growing by leaps and bounds. **Steve Dombrowsky** and **Alain Lajoux** have been doing a great job. Remember, the third Tuesday of the month, Pearl River Library from 7:00pm to 8:45pm. Bring your questions on any of the Windows platforms and I am sure they will be able to help. **Steve and Alain...Thanks!**

The **Multimedia Workshop** has also been doing well. Try to make it to the General Meeting at 6:00 pm and join **Gene Frank**. I am sure that you will walk away with a bit of knowledge that you didn't have when you came in. There are going to be some exciting things going on in the next few months, So keep looking on our web page for updates. **Gene...Thanks!**

Speaking of our Web Page, **Steve Weinberg** has really been busy. For those of you that don't go to the site often, there has been a major makeover! Steve have been working very hard to give us not only a great looking site, but a very functional and informative one. Go on line and take a look at the improvements. Drop Steve a note and let him know what you think. If you feel that there should be something added or if you find a link that is broken, let him know. If we all help out it will keep our site

up to date and maybe even let Steve spend some time with his family! **Steve...Thanks!**

**PC-Renew** has been a special project of many of our members for quite sometime. This project has really shown that when give a good cause, our group can pull together and get things done. Anyone that hasn't been to New City or Pearl River should go and take a look. You never know, you may like it and want to get involved. Remember, if you are having problems with your computer or you want to do an upgrade and you need help, PC-Renew is there to help. Go on line and request bench time. If you have any questions there will be someone there to help you. It is really a great feeling when you upgrade or repair you own computer! Thanks to Feinberg and to all who have given their time to this worthwhile project.

Our January program will be a representative from Provident Bank showing us how to use On-Line Banking. When the weather is bad and it becomes difficult to get out, on-line banking may help.

I hope everyone had a happy and safe holiday season.



Ken

Remember...A group is only as good as its members.

## Happy New Year !





## Rockland's Neediest Families

**E**ach year around the Christmas and New Year holiday season the New York Times runs a series called "New York's Neediest." The idea is by telling actual stories of some of New York City's neediest families people will open their wallets and contribute to a Charitable Fund that the Times runs.

All year long volunteers from the RPCUG donate their time and expertise to help hundreds of Rockland's neediest families. It would be easier for these men and women to stay home, pick a comfortable chair and watch any of the TV programs on Monday or Wednesday night—Monday night Football, or all of The West Wing on Wednesday night.

It would be very easy for those volunteers who get up on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday morning to roll over at 7:00 AM and get another hour's worth of sleep; to look outside and say it's too cold or too warm, or a slight drizzle is forecast, or someone else will be there so I don't have to go down to the Hazardous Waste Drop Off Center today.

It is always easy to say someone else will take care of .....

We are beginning our third year of running **PC ReNew**. Hundreds of Rockland's neediest families have received computers through our working partnership with United Way, Volunteer Counseling Services, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, People to People, The Rockland County Department of Social Services and The Rockland Mental Health Association, just to name some of the organization's we work with all year long.

**To all the "Big Hearts:" I want to thank you for your dedication, hard work, unselfish sharing of your skills, knowledge and time. I enjoy working with each and every one of you and know that you have collectively made PCReNew the success it is in our community.**

We have been recognized by many groups and non-profits in our area for our professionalism, credibility, and knowledge about computers. People and other organizations are referred to

us throughout the Metropolitan New York area, to find out who we are and how we can work with them. Companies like *Dress Barn*, *Novartis*, *Provident Bank* and *Volvo* continually donate their old computers so we can give them new life. We turn trash into gold and enrich so many lives. We will soon be adding *Pepsi* and *Minigrip*

We have received many letters of thanks from grandparents parenting grandchildren, families with five or more children who can't afford a computer for their kids to use and learn from; people who are handicapped and can't work; senior citizens who can't afford computers because they live on barely enough money to get by.

We have hundreds of stories about "Rockland's Neediest Families." Unlike the New York Times, we operate our charity twelve months a year. Add this to your New Year's resolutions: o become the "someone" who joins with the great group of "Big Hearts" in 2003. You can make a difference in so many lives by volunteering some of your time to **PC ReNew**.

I wish you all a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous 2003!

Hank Feinberg  
Director, PC ReNew



### TRI-STATE COMPUTER FAIRS

Saturday, February 8th

Orange County Fairgrounds, Middletown, NY.

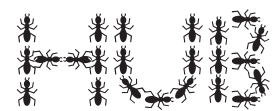
10am-3:30pm, admission: \$6 - 200 tables!

[www.tri-statefairs.com](http://www.tri-statefairs.com)

for directions and discount coupons!



*by Paul Lujan*



**S**o, last night, I come home after a 4-1/2 hour drive back from LA (note to law enforcement officials: that's a "6" there, really), and sit down in front of the computer to check my mail. My connection is, for lack of a better word, ass-slow. I go to look at the hub to see if everyone else is having this problem.

Nope, Mike and David's activity lights are busily flickering; it's only me who has been screwed. I reach down to fiddle with the connection, and notice that the hub is covered with ants (as well as my hand, after the fiddling). "That's odd," I think to myself, "what would ants want with our hub?" But I'm way too tired to deal with it at the time, so instead I go to sleep.

I wake up this morning, and decide to investigate further. Yep, the hub is definitely swarming with ants. And it doesn't look like the ants are just going over it to somewhere else (especially since there aren't any tasty ant treats anywhere nearby); they're clearly going into and out of the hub. Some of the ants going in are even carrying little white pellets. "Is that food?" I wonder. "Where is it coming from?"

I unplug the hub and pick it up, and then kill all of the ants that come out of it. And kill some more ants. And kill some more ants. This goes on for a while. I begin to think that the little white pellets look an awful lot like eggs. I shake the hub, and it sounds like someone has poured a handful of coarse sand into it. "That's odd," I think to myself, "I could have sworn this hub didn't come with the sand option." I initially thought that there were just some ants here, but it's pretty clear I've got more on my hands now.

So, I decide to take a closer look at the hub. Unfortunately, the hub boasts a screwless construction, but I know that my screwdrivers can be used for more than merely removing screws, so I start prying. As I do so, a bunch of ants and eggs, as well as what look like larvae

(basically, they look like slightly-smaller-than-normal ants, but a very pale brown instead of black) continue to fall out (into the sink, since I've become clever enough to do this over the sink).

I finally get the thing open, and see a bunch of eggs lying on the circuit board, but less than I would have expected if there's really a colony set up here. So, I figure that they're probably under the circuit board, and set to work unscrewing the circuit board to take it out of the box.

Jackpot! (That is, if my goal were to win an ant colony, which it really *\*wasn't\**.) The entire bottom of the box is coated with eggs, and I see a large ant which I can only assume is the queen. I terminate the queen with extreme prejudice, and then wash out the box (it's made of metal, so I figure it'll be okay.)

The circuit board, on the other hand, I can't just wash off (since I hold hopes of saving the hub, not really wanting to have to drop \$30 on a new one), and there are lots of eggs wedged in small places, like between the link lights or between the chips connected to the ports, where they'll be really hard to get out of. So, I set the circuit board aside for the moment to take a shower.

When I come back, I notice that the ants have actually done me a favor! (Suckers!) In their futile attempts to save the colony, they've picked up the eggs themselves to scurry around like maniacs, solving my problem. I pick off the ants, and then vigorously shake the board to try to dislodge anything still stuck in the ports, and much to my surprise another queen falls out. (I've read that Argentine ants can have more than one queen per colony, but this is still a surprise, especially since I thought I had already gotten almost everything.) I dispose of her, too, clean up the remaining ants, and figure I might as well try putting the hub back

together. Not that I can completely undo my prying, but hey, that's cosmetic anyway.

Much to my surprise, it actually works! And my performance is back from miserable to normal. Ants 0, Me 1.

Man, I hate ants. If I could choose one genus to completely wipe off the Earth, assuming that it wouldn't, like, destroy the ecosystem (but really, what depends on ants? Anteaters? Well, they're not doing a very good job, are they?!), it would be them. Well, okay, I suppose I should probably choose something like mosquitoes, since even though they're less personally annoying to me, they still have the whole large-scale disease-spreading thing. But I'd expect some serious compensation from the WHO for not choosing ants!

*Article reproduction coordinated by Steve Bass, Pasadena IBM Users Group. This article is brought to you by the Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an International organization to which this user group belongs.* 🖨

## Computer Prayer



*thanks to  
Steve Weinberg*

**E**very single evening  
As I'm lying here in bed,  
This tiny little prayer

Keeps running through my head.  
God bless all my family  
Wherever they may be,  
Keep them warm and safe from harm  
For they're so close to me.

And God, there is one more thing  
I wish that You could do.  
(Hope you don't mind me asking)  
Bless my computer too.  
—Now I know that it's not normal  
To bless a motherboard,  
But listen just a second  
While I explain to you, my Lord.

You see, that little metal box  
Holds more than odds and ends.  
Inside those small compartments  
Rest so many of my friends.  
I know so much about them  
By the kindness that they give  
And this little scrap of metal  
Takes me to to where they live.

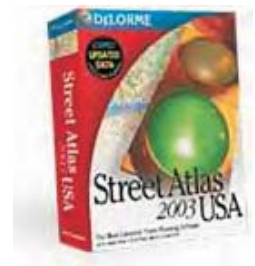
By faith is how I know them  
Much the same as You  
We share in what life brings us  
And from that our friendship grew.  
Please take an extra minute  
From your duties up above  
To bless those in my address book  
That's filled with so much love!

Wherever else this prayer may reach  
To each and every friend,  
bless each e-mail Inbox  
And the person who hits Send  
When you update your heavenly list  
On your own CD-Rom  
Remember each who've said this prayer,  
Sent up to God.com.  
*Amen.*





## STREET ATLAS USA 2003 by Delorme *reviewed by Ken Herbig*



Everyone has grabbed for the Road Atlas stored in their vehicle at one time or another. We thumb through the pages trying to find the state that we need to view. The next step is always the hardest, locating that small street that we are looking for. Of course, it is always in the smallest print on the map. If you have a computer or a laptop your search has ended. **Street Atlas USA 2003** has the solution. If you use a palm device, you will need an additional program ( **Xmap Handheld Street Atlas USA Edition** \$39.95 ) to make full use of the route maps that you produce in Street Atlas.

I have been using mapping programs for many years. If all you do is start up the program, locate an address and print out the map that is on the screen, then any program will do; I'm sure that many of you even go on the Internet to get directions.

**Street Atlas USA 2003** takes you to the next level. Plan a trip, print out detailed directions of the entire trip. Print out all the maps that you will need during your travel. You have many choices to choose from.

- ✓ Travel Package: Prints maps in sequence so they are easy to follow.
- ✓ Directions: Prints out every turn and road for the entire trip.
- ✓ Turn Details: Prints small detailed maps of every turn.



Figure 1

I'm sure that you get the idea. You can choose which ever makes you the most comfortable (figure1).

Have a laptop? Use a GPS for tracking your route and showing you where you are at all times. It can even talk to you, telling you when and where to turn, left or right. Now that is really taking you to the next level.

Ever wonder what conveniences are at the next exit? What type of gas, lodging or even restaurants? You can plan ahead where to stop for gas and meals. Takes away the anxiety of traveling and makes it more pleasurable (figure 2).

I have mapped out a route from Pasta Cucina on Airmont Rd in Tallman to Pomona. The map shows the roads that will be used by highlighting them (figure 4, next page). The printed directions tell you every turn, even the distance to the next one (figure 3, next page).

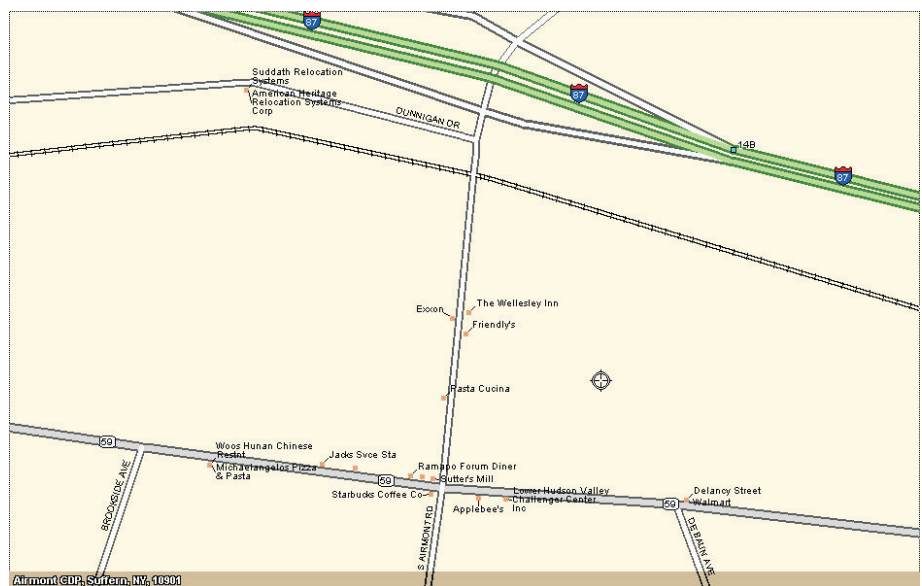


Figure 2

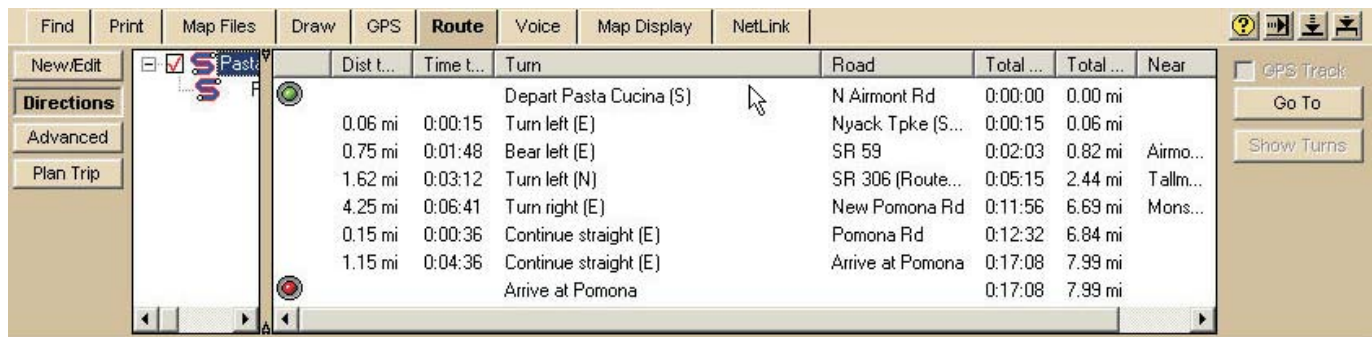


Figure 3

One of the biggest problems with mapping software is that it is difficult to keep up-to-date with new roads and developments being built every day. Adding roads has been a difficult task until now. With **Street Atlas**, you can add roads, name them, and even use them in your route maps. As you draw the road a distance and angle box pops up, so that the road that you are mapping can be as accurate as the information you have for it. You can connect the roads with the click of your mouse and you are done. The program also comes with a Netlink Tab that connects to the Internet and downloads updates automatically. It doesn't get any easier than that! (Figure 5)

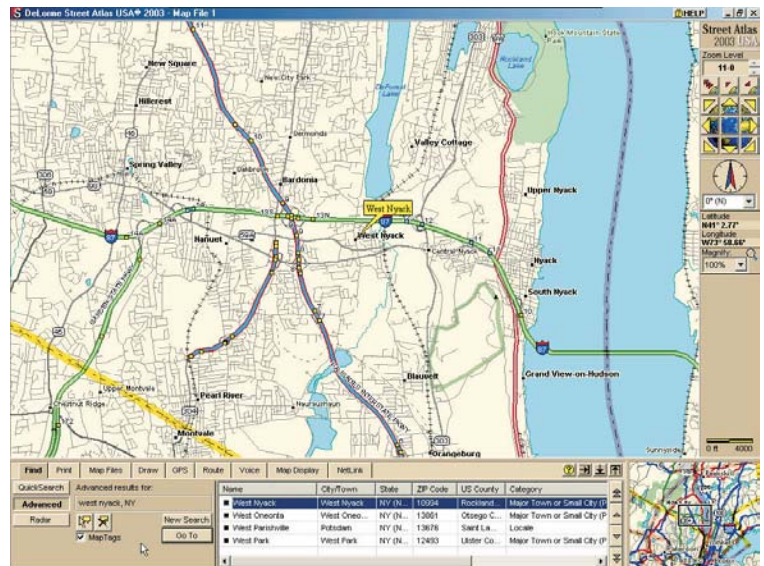


Figure 4

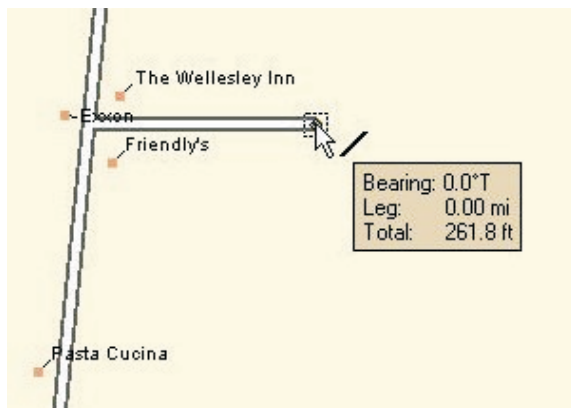


Figure 5

### System Requirements

- Microsoft® Windows® 98/2000/Me/XP, Windows NT® 4.0 (service pack 4 or later)
- Personal computer with Intel® Pentium II (or equivalent) 233 MHz or higher processor (300 MHz recommended)
- 64 MB RAM (128 MB recommended)
- 405 MB of available hard-disk space (580 MB recommended for voice)
- Microsoft Windows-compatible Super VGA card
- CD-ROM drive
- Sound card, microphone and speakers (for voice capabilities)
- \$ 49.95



# USE YOUR CD DRIVE MORE PRODUCTIVELY

by Ira Wilsker

**A**lmost all newer computers come with a CD-RW drive, a CD drive that can write and rewrite compatible CD discs. For older computers, with a standard CD reader (play only, not write), the addition of a CD “burner” is a very popular and fairly inexpensive upgrade. A simple review of the Sunday sale books for the major electronics and office supply stores shows an abundance of CD-RW drives for between \$30 and \$100, often after rebate. These drives are typically easy to install, and may possibly be installed in addition to the existing CD reader (good for copying CDs), or as a simple replacement. If internal installation is not desired, there are several external CD-RW drives, advertised weekly, that connect to an available USB or firewire port. The external drives, typically the USB models, are also often a good choice for older notebook computers where internal installation is difficult or impossible. The Sunday ads often show the external USB drives for under \$100, after rebates.

Almost all CD-RW drives, whether factory installed, or after-market add-on, come with some CD burning software. The most widely distributed CD software provided with the drives is from **Adaptec**, or Adaptec’s successor (Adaptec sold their CD writing software division), **Roxio**. Another common software package included with some drives is from **Nero**, while other drives come with a variety of lesser-known software titles. As the price of blank CD discs plunges, often “free after rebate”, burning (writing to) CDs has become very popular. Still, many PC (and Mac) users are not using their equipment to its potential; large number of users still only use their CD-RW drives in read mode to install other software, and not to burn discs.

As had been stated many times ...the three most important words in computing are “Backup, Backup, and Backup.” Remember that “Murphy’s First law of Computing” states that “A properly backed-up hard drive will never fail; a hard drive that has not been recently

backed up will always fail at the most inopportune time.” All too many users who have ready access to CD-RW drives have lost all of their important files to viruses or hard drive failures, despite the ease and low expense of copying important files to CD discs.

The common blank discs hold from 660 to 700 megabytes of data, and are very inexpensive. Other than some time, there is no great investment to back up critical files at a minimum, or even better, entire hard drives.

There are a variety of excellent utilities available to backup hard drives. Some CD-RW drives come with a “lite” or “limited” version of popular backup programs. While minimally functional, these “lite” versions often lack useful functions such as compression (getting more data on a CD disc than its native capacity), or incremental backup (only backing up new files or files modified since the previous backup). I have been using “BackUp MyPC” from **Stomp Software** ([www.stompinc.com](http://www.stompinc.com)), which was formerly known as Backup Exec, by **Veritas** (Seagate). This program is probably one of the most full featured backup programs, and easy to use. BackUp MyPC can backup to almost any type of device from CD-RW drives, tape drives, Jazz and Zip drives, and other devices. Some competing products are Roxio’s Go Back, Norton’s Ghost, and NTI’s BackUp Now (which I have also used). Since almost all computers can utilize some form of CD writer, and blank discs are cheap, there is absolutely no reason NOT to have at least critical data files backed up. The cliché “ounce of prevention...” is most apropos here. With over one in five PCs currently infected with at least one variety of the Klez worm, several versions of which are capable of destroying critical files on a hard drive, backups are imperative. The appearance and rapid spread of other destructive worms and viruses, such as the new “Hunch” worm which explicitly destroys the files in the Windows, My Programs, and My Documents directories, emphasizes the need for backing up hard drives. Still, probably the most damage is done by the old-fashioned hard

drive crash. Remember Murphy's law, and always have a reasonably current backup of critical files. For long-term archival purposes, better quality CD discs are advertised as having a 100-year archival life.

There are other popular uses of CD burners. One of the most popular and most controversial uses is burning music to blank CD discs. Often in the popular MP3 format, or in native commercial music CD format, studies show that this is the most popular use of CD burners. Provided that copyright laws are rigidly obeyed, and we all know that they always are (snicker), homemade music CDs are very widely created and used. Online music or swap services, ranging from the now defunct Napster, to the very much alive and controversial KazAa and Morpheus, as well as the legitimate commercial music sites such as Sony, are popular sources of such music.

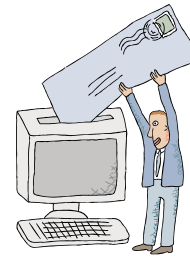
Another popular use is copying entire CD discs. Generally, it is considered "ok" to make a single archival backup of commercial CDs, provided that the copy is only used as a backup, and properly disposed of (destroyed) when the original software is no longer needed. With some software CDs, and an increasing number of commercial music CDs, this archival backup is becoming more difficult to create as sophisticated copy protection is being utilized more commonly.

Many use their CD drive, often with rewriteable CD-RW discs, as an additional, but removable adjunct to their hard drive. This allows archival and portable storage of massive amounts of data, at minimal expense. CDs are often ideal for moving large files between computers.

There are several other uses for the CD-RW drives now so common in our machines. Many other CD drive utilities are readily available for download, such as from [tucows.exp.net/system/cdrutil95.html](http://tucows.exp.net/system/cdrutil95.html) or [tucows.exp.net/mmedia.html](http://tucows.exp.net/mmedia.html).

*This article is brought to you by the Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an International organization to which this user group belongs.*

## The 10 Commandments of Email



**Thou shalt include a clear and specific subject line.**

**Thou shalt edit any quoted text down to the minimum thou needest.**

**Thou shalt read thine own message thrice before thou sendest it.**

**Thou shalt ponder how thy recipient might react to thy message.**

**Thou shalt check thy spelling and thy grammar.**

**Thou shalt not curse, flame, spam or USE ALL CAPS.**

**Thou shalt not forward any chain letter.**

**Thou shalt not use e-mail for any illegal or unethical purpose.**


**Thou shalt not rely on the privacy of e-mail, especially from work.**

**When in doubt, save thy message overnight and reread it in the light of the dawn.**

**And, here's the "Golden Rule" of E-Mail: That which thou findest hateful to receive, sendest thou not unto others.**

# SOFTWARE available for REVIEW

Email Roberta at Roberta316@yahoo.com or Ken at hobbikat@hobbikats.com

- ✓ **ADVANCED CATALOGUER 2.3** (\$34.95)  
a catalogue for all media files for Windows NT 4.0/2000/XP.  
*Evgeny Software, Inc.*  
[www.evgenysoft.com/](http://www.evgenysoft.com/)
- ✓ **CDH Media Wizard** (\$50.00)  
is a powerful, all-in-one multimedia application supporting playback of all popular formats.  
[www.cdhnw.com](http://www.cdhnw.com)
- ✓ **Express Thumbnail Creator 1.45** (\$39.95)  
create HTML image galleries ready to be published on the Web.  
*ExpressSoft, Inc.*  
[www.express-soft.com](http://www.express-soft.com)
- ✓ **GreenFace:**  
**The Virtual Reality 2.01** (\$19.95)  
Updating the timeless and addictive gameplay with even more cunningly designed puzzles and newer, deadlier obstacles. An update of the classic arcade puzzle/action hits BoulderDash and Dig-Dug.  
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## ROCKLAND PC USERS GROUP

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