

Accounting Software  
For Small Business  
Thursday, September 12, 2002 7 p.m.  
Carr Gottstein Building on the APU Campus



**Jacque Briskey, CPA,  
will compare consumer quality accounting packages.**

The SBA reports that many small businesses fail because of poor recordkeeping. Yet, doing the books for a small business is a task that most business people loathe. Selecting the right software should be made after thorough research for the program that best fits your business.

Explore some of the features and benefits of three of the best packages targeted at small business:

- long-established Peachtree Complete,
- feature-rich MYOB, and
- popular QuickBooks.

If you own or are starting a small business, bring your CPA and discover together the accounting program that can help you better manage your business.

The Alaska Computer Society is a nonprofit educational organization. Our meetings are always free and open to the public. We meet the second Thursday of each month, usually at Carr Gottstein building at APU.

For further details about our group and a map to the meeting location, visit our web site at [www.acs-pcug.org](http://www.acs-pcug.org) Serving Alaskans since 1983.

## Contents

<b>1 Special Delivery</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2 August 2002 Meeting Report</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3 The DealsGuy</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>4 Friends of ACS</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>5 What's Next?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>6 The Editor's Keyboard</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>7 The Back Page</b>	<b>19</b>

---

## 1 Special Delivery

### IT Expo

Reserve October 1 and 2, that is the first Tuesday and Wednesday, for IT Expo 2002 right here in Anchorage at the Egan Center. Don't take my word for it, surf over to: [www.sourdough.net/events/itbe/index.html](http://www.sourdough.net/events/itbe/index.html) to find out what it is all about.

We are going to have a presence there. Come to the September meeting to get the latest word. (ed.)

### Interesting Concept, but ...

Here is a copy of an email I received just as this issue was going through its final copy editing. I am presenting this without comment and without recommendation. (ed.)

Dear Fielder George Dowding:

I am a practicing physician and the founder of [www.MDhub.com](http://www.MDhub.com) <<http://www.mdhub.com/>>, a free service that allows anyone to send an Internet message to their doctor.

Since most doctors do not yet use the Internet in their practice, messages are automatically delivered to the doctor's FAX machine as well as online.

Every practicing physician's website is already up and running (nearly 400,000). MDhub.com is a free service. All messages are encrypted for security and privacy. There is no advertising and no data is collected. Most people find reaching their doctor to be a very frustrating experience, with busy signals, waiting on hold, press 1 for... press 2... and telephone tag. MDhub is a solution to this problem.

I hope you will let your members know about MDhub via your website and newsletter.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me directly.

Thank you.

Jerry Spitz, M.D., Founder  
@ Medical Office: 860-525-3434;  
[www.MDhub.com/8605253434](http://www.MDhub.com/8605253434)  
<<http://www.mdhub.com/8605253434>>  
"MDhub...For Patients Who Love Their Doctors  
But Hate Their Phones"

## **2 August 2002 Meeting Report**

by Howard L. Bonar  
Secretary

**Call to Order:**

The Thursday, August 8, 2002 meeting was held at the Carr Gottstein Lecture Hall at Alaska Pacific University. Gene White called the meeting to order at 7:09 PM.

**The presentation:**

Our scheduled speaker wasn't able to make it because of a serious health problem in his family. The floor was opened to anyone with a question or information about Digital Cameras. It turned out that we had many in attendance who offered much valuable information. We ended up with a spirited and informative discussion of the whole gamut of digital camera issues.

**Issues for Choosing a Digital Camera**

**Problems You May Encounter** Dolly has a Sony Digital Camera and an HP Color printer which is supposed to be able to print photo quality pictures. The camera plugs into a USB port. She is using Windows 98SE. When she first set it up she was able to get a few pictures to print. Something happened and the system quit working regardless of what she tried. Reinstallation of the software didn't do it. Numerous calls to HP brought many suggestions but no results.

Suggestions from the floor: Go to Start/Settings/Control Panel/System and check the condition of the drivers for all three devices; the printer, the camera, and the USB port. Uninstall both the camera and the printer software. Go to the [www.hp.com](http://www.hp.com) website and download the latest printer drivers for that printer for Windows 98SE. Do the same for the Camera. Reinstall the printer first and make sure it is working. Then reinstall the camera software. The USB drivers may need to be updated also.

**Storage Media - Smart Cards**

There are two kinds of recording media in cameras just as in Computers. There is the SDRAM for the camera operating systems and instant pictures. Then there is the removable media. These range from 3-1/2 inch floppies, Smart Media, San Disks, Stick Media, compact flash cards, and micro-drives. (CD R/W disks) The number of pictures per card is determined by the resolution you are using and the recording capacity of the media. Compact flash cards are available up to 256 MB and the memory stick up to 128 mb. Most folks seemed to shop at Costco for their media.

### **Transferring Picture Files to the Computer**

Before you can get started you need to install the software that came with your camera. Use the cable supplied to connect the camera directly to your computer. It usually goes to a USB port. Carefully read your camera manual for more information on how to set this up. This method is effective but it takes awhile and may use up a lot of your camera's battery power. The best way is to use an accessory "Card Reader" which plugs into the USB port. It is treated just like another floppy drive. This is probably the fastest and by far the most efficient as there is no drain on the camera battery.

A Smart Card Reader is available for about \$20.00 at Costco. With the reader installed, you should be able to go into Windows Explorer - find the removable camera card, click on it. You should be able then to see all the picture files on it. These can then be downloaded to the hard drive or displayed if you have a suitable software package. The media from the camera will be treated like just another floppy disk and this should eliminate many types of driver problems. Another kind available reads all three of the major kinds of media. If you use several different cameras it may be the best buy.

### **File Formats**

The file formats inside the cameras are mostly all proprietary but the outputs may be any of the standard file transfer protocols such as .tif; . jpeg; etc. The differences are in the amount of compression used resulting in larger or smaller picture files.

When a picture is taken at high resolution, it can be compressed to a lower resolution with out much loss of picture quality. If taken at low resolution, a picture cannot be enlarged without noticeable loss of quality.

### **Vacation Pictures While Traveling**

X-ray scanning at the airports may do damage to any unexposed or undeveloped film even if stored in a lead lined bag. It is not clear if the X-ray will have any effect on the digital cameras and the recording media. The checked baggage scanners being installed will be much more powerful than those at the security gate. It remains to be seen if they will do anything to the digital storage.

While on vacation, you take lots of pictures and runs out of storage space. Depending on the type of media and the resolution used, you may be able to get

as many as 128 pictures on a card. Buy one extra card and edit the pictures to delete those you don't want to keep. This frees up disk space for still more shots. One other option is go to a computer kiosk and download your pictures to CD-R disks.

### **Batteries**

Watch out for proprietary batteries that are only available from the camera manufacturer — they will most certainly be more expensive. They may not be rechargeable. The cost of extra batteries you will want may have a significant effect on any price differentials when comparing cameras.

Battery life is a function of many things. If you are expecting to take a lot of pictures, use rechargeable batteries to cut your costs. Nickle-metal hydrides make the best but may require a special charger. They do not have the “memory” problems experienced with other types and tend to last longer. They provide a larger volt/ampere rating which offsets their slightly higher cost. This means more pictures can be taken with each charging. Units with four batteries will also have an advantage over those with only two. If you are going on a trip, make sure you have extra batteries.

Cold temperatures may substantially reduce the amount of battery charge available for use resulting in fewer shots per charge. By keeping the camera warm and dry between shots, e.g.: inside your coat, the effect may be minimized. The standard operating temperature range seems to be between 32 and 95 degrees F.

Some cameras have DC connectors for attaching external batteries, AC adaptors, and docking stations. These can also greatly extend the number of photos between battery changes.

Again, transfer your pictures to your computer via a card reader to save your batteries and to speed up the process.

For an extensive selection of batteries in Anchorage, try Batteries Plus located at 910 W International Airport Road. It's on the South side between Arctic and Minnesota. Frigid North also carries a selection. The Camera stores usually carry a supply of the batteries used by the models they sell.

### **Resolution**

What you are going to do with the camera will determine how high your resolution needs will be. If you are only going to use it to make pictures to email to family

and friends, then low resolution cameras with from 1.5 to 3 megapixels will do just fine.

As a general rule, 1.5 to 3 mega pixel cameras are fine for portraits and for printing 4x6 prints and smaller. If you'll be doing a lot of 8x10s or if you are going to publish your photos, use 5 or more megapixels. For best quality prints, set your camera to high resolution when taking pictures

Resolution settings make a difference in how long the batteries will last. High resolution requires more battery power than low. You may get up to 40 shots at high resolution, but use of the flash may cut the number of shots per battery charge to 20 shots. Micro drives use lots of battery power also so the higher the resolution, the longer the recording time, the more battery drain.

### **Lenses**

The consensus is that for regular "family" use, a camera with at least a 3X optical zoom is best. If you'll be taking wildlife pictures you may want to go for a more powerful lense of about 6X to 8X. The digital zoom is less important but 3X to 6X is common. Your picture editing software can also perform electronic zoom. Keep in mind that with large digital zoom capability, picture quality is sacrificed for the zoom range.

If you plan to do close-ups on small subjects, check out how close to an object the camera lets you get and still be in focus.

**Removable lenses:** The beauty of the 35mm SLR (Single Lens Reflex) cameras is their ability to be fitted with many different kinds of lenses to fit the requirements of the photographer. The same camera can be used for close-ups, long distance shots, and, with a zoom lens, the shot could be framed for the best possible effects. Check to see if adaptors are available that will allow you to use your existing lenses with the digital camera.

### **Electronic view finders**

There are two kinds, through the lens, and electronic. The question to be asked, "is the display you see in the viewfinder the same that will be snapped?" Some cameras seem to have a noticeable parallax problem not present in through the lens viewers. There may also be differences in the actual "framing" of the pictures.

The LCD view finders may be nearly impossible to see in bright sunlight. At low light levels, some cameras shift to a B&W display. When you are shopping

for a camera, be sure and check it out at the store and see what the display looks like under bright light conditions.

A good camera will have built-in or attachable filters to compensate for the differences between natural light and incandescent and fluorescent lighting. Cloudy days, bright sunlight, and other conditions can also make them very desirable.

### **Printers and Ink**

The question of how flesh tones from digital cameras compare with those from film is difficult to assess. The only fair comparison would be to take the same picture with the two types of cameras and have them both processed by the same developer. It will be interesting to see how that question pans out. When you are printing out your own pictures, there are a lot of factors that contribute to the quality of the result. Flesh tones are the easiest to judge because you know what normal appearance is.

Your typical type of print job will determine which type of printer is best suited for your needs. If most of your printing is text or photos, the standard black plus three colors will be just fine. If you do a lot of printing with one color predominating, then printers with separate ink tanks will probably prove most economical over the life of the unit.

Canon and Epson both offer printers with six separate ink tanks. Find a ready source of ink cartridges of the type you want then buy a printer that uses those.

Refilling physics. The ink jets in the print head of an ink-jet printer are incredibly small. The ink must be very clean and of high quality with cleaner included so the jets don't clog and ruin the unit. Using off-brand refill ink may not be a good thing to do if print quality is an issue. The big question is whether refilling printer ink is worthwhile.

### **How about Color laser printers?**

The HP 4500 which costs about \$1200 does a nice job. It has a resolution of 1200/1200 dots per inch. It has four color cartridges and prints one color per revolution of the drum. It does take quite awhile each time it starts up to warm up and to synchronize and calibrate the colors. Printing speed is also much slower than black and white since it takes four revolutions per copy rather than one.

Do the pictures fade in sunlight? The answer is yes but there is a wide variation in how long it will take for serious damage. Some printers guarantee their prints for from 6 to 12 years.

In ink-jet printers the ink is sprayed on to the paper and is water soluble. The pictures smear badly if you get water drops on them.. In a laser printer the toner is fused to the paper and is not water soluble. It may last much longer in direct sunlight than a print from an ink-jet printer.

Typically, when using the glossy picture paper, the images come out shiny. They will look much better if you use the matte finish.

### **Printing Directly from Camera to Printer**

A few photo printers such as the HP1315 have the capability to preview your pictures before printing. Unless your printer has this preview feature, you have to know the numbers of the pictures you want to print before inserting the media. Check the collection of shots in the camera and identify those numbers that you want to print out before putting the Smart Card into the printer. Some Cameras have a menu item in the camera to mark the pictures to be printed. Be sure your new printer will read the media used by your camera.

### **Advantages of Digital Photography**

You don't have to wait for your pictures to be developed. You will print only those pictures that you really want. You can make photo albums on CD R/W and make as many copies as you want for very little money. You will save a lot of money by not printing the bad ones. Pick the best poses and delete the rest.

### **What Don't You like**

Multiple quick action shots with a digital camera are normally not possible. For most digital models it takes an appreciable amount of time (from 2 to 30 seconds or more) to record the last shot before you can take the next. Some expensive cameras have extra memory so that photo shots can be quite fast, but you may pay dearly for the capability.

### **Where to Buy It?**

When you go in to buy a camera, know what you want and what you want it to do with it before you start. The salesman will be tempted to sell you what earns him the highest commission. He may not be too interested in what is best for your needs. When comparing prices of cameras, watch out for the cost of batteries

and extra memory cards. The differences may wipe out any perceived savings in camera costs.

With the exception of one overly pushy salesman, there were no reported stories about bad experiences buying digital cameras. All those in attendance who owned cameras said they were satisfied with their dealings.

The local stores mentioned as being good sources where: Sam's Club which has an exchange policy of up to 90 days if you are dissatisfied. Costco has a very liberal policy as long as you have your sales receipt. Several people shopped at CompUSA with good results. Other locations mentioned but no purchases reported were Stewart's Photo and Today's Electronics. There are several other stores in the city that will probably be just fine. Check them out.

One other source mentioned, especially for solving problems with HP equipment, was Lewis and Lewis. They are the local HP service agency and their reputation for service and customer care is great.

### **Look Out For**

Make sure the installation and operating instructions are in English. Some models not intended for export to USA are being offered for sale so watch out. If you buy mail order or off the Internet, make sure the camera is a US model and that the warranty is good in the US. Make sure that the software that comes with it is compatible with your operating system.

### **Other Features**

Some cameras have the option to make short videos up to 1 minute long. Some have an RCA jack for connection to a VCR or TV set.

Camera Size is an issue for some. Will it fit in a pocket?

Digital steadying locks on the scene while you take the picture. It would be especially good for long distance pictures at high zoom settings, It is a very expensive option available on only a few models but it could be very much worth while.

### **Used Cameras**

Is it a good idea to buy a good used camera when someone has upgraded to the latest and greatest? The answer is the same for almost any used equipment. It depends on the condition of the camera, the price, and does it have all the features

you need and will soon want? Will the seller take it back if it doesn't do what you want.

Whatever you buy, one year later it will be worth one-half as much so keep that in mind when you are negotiating. Prices on the new models are coming down rapidly. There may be new models available with similar features available at or even below the asking price for the used equipment.

For More Information, Check out These Web Sites

[www.ubid.com](http://www.ubid.com) for purchasing. If you are in the market for a camera or other equipment, check out this site. If you see something you want, make a bid at the price you are willing to pay - who knows, you may get a great bargain.

[www.dpreview.com](http://www.dpreview.com) to see side-by-side comparisons of images taken with various cameras. This site requires you have the macro media flash player installed on your machine for the side to side comparison to work. It looks like a great way to see what you are getting before you buy.

ZD Net carries reviews of digital cameras among other things that appears to be an unbiased analysis of features, performance and price. See them at:

[www.zdnet.com/special/filters/sc/camera](http://www.zdnet.com/special/filters/sc/camera)

Check out [www.shutterfly.com](http://www.shutterfly.com) for storage of photos at no charge. It is unclear what that means. The site is essentially a photo processing business where you upload your images to be processed and distributed. They will print them and mail them out for you for a fee. Check for hidden fees before you commit yourself.

Another site where you can store and display your pictures is:

[www.myfamily.com](http://www.myfamily.com). Create your own web site then make your pictures available either to the whole world or to family members and friends only. It used to be free but not they charge. They offer 100 mbytes of storage for \$29.95 per year and up to 500 mb for \$109.95. Be sure and read the terms and conditions before you sign up - you might not like some of it.

There was a report of an Adobe site where you could upload files and order pictures on CD, Slides, or photos but I could not find it on [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com). HP may also have a similar service but again it was not to be found on [www.hp.com](http://www.hp.com). If someone knows the URLs for these sites, please let us know at [info@acs-pcug.org](mailto:info@acs-pcug.org).

### **Door Prize Winners:**

Winners of the door prizes were Elwin Davis who won a copy of Delorme's TOPO USA and Kerry Walley who won the canvas tote bag with a collection of gadgets. Congratulations.

### 3 The DealsGuy

by Bob Click

September, 2002

Greater Orlando Computer Users Group

How much do you concern yourself about buying American to help American jobs? I saw an interesting excerpt from a write-up by a Washington Post writer concerning a typical routine on an average day by a couple he rode with to observe. His theme was US brands owned by European Companies. The couple drove a foreign car with an American name and gassed up at Amoco, owned by British Petroleum. They enjoyed lunch at Burger King, owned by a British Company, Diageo. The husband bought a book published by a french company, Vivendi, and a cassette to play in his car, also produced by Vivendi. In defense, the wife later purchased more gas at a Shell station only to learn it was Dutch owned. She also picked up a bottle of Snapple, made by a British company, Cadbury Schweppes. At home they had coffee, Tasters Choice, made by Nestle SA of Switzerland.

There is more, but I found it interesting. With all the mergers and acquisitions, most of us hardly know who we are buying from. Perhaps foreign entities need not engage us in war to take us over, but will simply buy us up while many American companies are moving operations to foreign sites, but I still try to help American jobs. A friend cringes at my "buy- American" attitude telling me he never buys American. He says foreign products are superior to American products because American workers are lazy, conceited, overpaid people always looking for a free handout. Maybe I shouldn't say I was ever an American worker, but I live in America and I am what I am. My American friend also worked for an American company and, I think, enjoys an American pension.

### **Don't Have Acrobat? Then Get Your PDF Files FREE**

When I reformatted my HD, I had misplaced my copy of Acrobat and needed to convert a file to PDF. Sometimes when I get stuck, I call one of my best local resources, which is Hewie Poplock. He told me to go to [www.gobcl.com](http://www.gobcl.com) and get it done there for free. By golly, he was right. goBCL is a free online document publishing service by BCL Technologies, the maker of plug-ins for Adobe Acrobat. They can publish your documents into either PDF or HTML.

Not everything is free, but for occasional use, they offer a free service. They also have paid services, but the free one was just what I wanted. I have since found

my Acrobat copy, but that service would have been handy.

Hewie also has a Web site where he posts all kinds of information and publishes a newsletter called “Hewie’s Favorites,” consisting of good URLs he finds. You can get on the list to receive “Hewie’s Favorites” each time he sends them out, and it always includes other good information. [www.hewie.net](http://www.hewie.net).

### **Hey, Clean Up That E-mail**

I printed a similar item a few months ago (Stripmail), but some readers have since sent me this information. Since it’s their favorite, I’m passing it on. Some people always feel compelled to forward all kinds of stuff. Most, especially newbies, include the »>, hard returns and whatever junk there is. These readers recommend using “The Cleaner” on those messages. It gets rid of all those »> and the unwanted hard returns creating a dreadful looking message. It also offers other features to help.

If you are a “forwarder,” get “eCleaner” V.2.01 at:

[pcworld.com/downloads/file\\_description/0,fid,6492,00.asp](http://pcworld.com/downloads/file_description/0,fid,6492,00.asp)

at no cost and help your fellow humans. There is a later version at:

[ecleaner.tripod.com](http://ecleaner.tripod.com)

but this page may have moved by the time you read this. It’s only for a PC, but the article’s author, Steve Chin, mentions “SpellTools” that is meant for a Mac. He did not say where to find it.

### **Everything Under One Roof, and Cheap Too (for Linux)**

How much did you pay for your Office Suite? Or are you still using an older version because you didn’t want to pay that much? If you are using Linux, you could be saving a lot of money with Hancom Office 2.0.2 just released. I don’t know if it will do everything you are doing now, but how much of your present office suite are you REALLY using?

I didn’t take the time to check out this new offering from Hancom because I don’t have a Linux machine yet, but it offers word processing, spreadsheet, graphics and presentation applications. It has many improvements including foreign language support and is compatible with Microsoft Word format (their words).

It now has Unicode support which has to do with foreign language special characters. They fixed problems affecting Mandrake and SuSE users who had upgraded to KDE 3.0. Fixed bugs when exporting text documents in HTML format.

This suite appears to be only Linux based, but if you own a previous version, your upgrade is free for the download. New users may purchase the software for \$49.95 (CD Case or download edition) or the boxed version with documentation for \$59.95 (regular prices). If you just want to check it out, a free 30-day trial version is available for downloading at [en.hancom.com](http://en.hancom.com). Some features aren't included in the trial version. I'm not sure I understood the above information on their Web site so take a look. For a dialup connection, this large download may not be very practical, but the trial version is much smaller. See their solution.

## **Hey, Give Me Back That File, Ya Hear!!**

In Windows 9x, deleted files are normally sent to the recycle bin so that it's easy to get them back if you change your mind. However, not everybody sticks to that method of deleting files. For instance, if you delete a file while holding the shift key down, you can forget about getting it back from the recycle bin. The same is true if you delete it from a Zip Drive.

A short write-up by Ken Marple of Space Coast PC Users Group recommends software called "Drive Rescue," A Hard Disk Recovery Tool. The Web site says it will find any lost and deleted data on your drive (e.g. hard disk) even if the partition table is lost or the drive has been quick-formatted. Also recovers lost data that is the result of a system crash. But if the disk has been physically damaged, it cannot recover that data.

Supported file systems are FAT 12/16/32 (used by hard disks, disks, Smart-media, Compact Flash, Memory Stick and other) and NTFS (incomplete). Supported operating systems are Windows 95, 98, ME, NT, 2000 or XP, and a second hard disk (or network drive) is recommended for recovery. Other amazing capabilities can be seen on their Web site.

The best part is that it's freeware. However, if it helps you, the programmer would like a donation. That's not too much to ask for a good product. The URL is:

[home.arcor.de/christian\\_grau/rescue/index.html](http://home.arcor.de/christian_grau/rescue/index.html).

Remember though, if you write to the disk after deleting the data, there is a good chance you would overwrite the deleted data, thus making recovery difficult to impossible.

## **Will The REAL File Manager Please Stand Out!**

Also written up in the same Space Coast PC UG's Journal is a report by Jack Davidson about a great replacement for Windows Explorer. Many people would rather Microsoft had kept the old file manager instead of its Windows Explorer because of the way it works. How would you like to check out a REAL file manager that was originally said to be "a file manager on steroids" when it was created? Power Desk is just such a program. Originally, it was a product of Mijenix, but now belongs to OnTrack.

I can't adequately describe the many features of PowerDesk so go to:

[www.ontrack.com/freesoftware](http://www.ontrack.com/freesoftware)

and look for it. There are two free programs and two evaluation programs for downloading, including the standard version of Power Desk. If you click on download for the free version of PowerDesk, you will have to sign in and create a password. You may wish to upgrade to the Pro version for \$29.95. I had a problem finding the list of features in the free version. I don't know how many of PowerDesk Pro's features are contained in the free version.

## **That's it for this month.**

Meet me here again next month if your editor permits. This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of products, no matter how enthused, or disgruntled, I might sound. Bob (The Cheapskate) Click [Bobclick@dealsguy.com](mailto:Bobclick@dealsguy.com). Visit my Web site at [www.dealsguy.com](http://www.dealsguy.com) for past columns. There are also interesting articles from user group newsletters on my "Articles of Interest" page for viewing or downloading.

## 4 Friends of ACS

We thank those businesses and individuals listed below and the many others who have donated all or a portion of some of the services, materials, and time required to help make the Alaska Computer Society succeed.

**AARP** – resource center, classroom space, and meeting space in the Northway Mall.<sup>1</sup>

**Alaska Pacific University** – General meeting room, special pricing.

**Michael Ardaiz** of Mad Dog Graphx – ACS PCUG logo.

**Brown Bear Software** – iCal program used to create the monthly event calendars.

**Lewis & Lewis Computer Store** – door prizes for the annual technology show and monthly meetings.

**Microsoft Corporation** – software for user group support functions and door prizes for monthly meetings.

---

<sup>1</sup>Ed.:The initials used to stand for “American Association of Retired Persons”. However, one does not need to be retired to join.

## 5 What's Next?

Keep tuned! Visit the [ACS-PCUG](#) web site frequently. Late breaking news regarding events of interest to members will be posted by our WebMaster as soon as possible.

### October:

The main computer related event for Anchorage (and perhaps Alaska) is [IT EXPO 2002](#). The "Information Technology Business Exposition", for 2002, will be two days, Tuesday and Wednesday, October 1 and 2. Do visit the web site to get the latest information on registration, technical sessions, exhibitors, etc. Do attend our September meeting to find out what your organization is doing at IT EXPO 2002.

### ACS-PCUG Programs:

In the coming months, October, November, and December, to be exact, three interesting presentations are in the planning stages. Look for a presentation on wireless networking, spam defence, and digital photography. More details later.

## 6 The Editor's Keyboard

by Fielder George Dowding  
Editor and Publisher

I just have a couple of items this month.

### Font Encoding Hell

In preparing this month's edition, I have been plagued by incompatible encodings. On the one hand it was proprietary encoding, and on the other, it was too many choices, the extent of which and ramifications I did not initially understand.

### Gratuitous Alternative Encoding

Yes, I can't help it, but Microsoft promulgates their own encodings. Thus, I admit to being a Microsoft basher but with good reason. I have utilities that can translate

Microsoft Word documents to plain text so I can incorporate its substance in this newsletter. However, sometimes I am at a loss as to what a character is really supposed to be. This month, the confused gylf was subtle to the point where I almost missed it. I think I caught them all. Please let me know about the ones I missed.

### **Alternative Font Rendering**

There are two basic rendering technologies: bit map and vector. Suffice it to say I ran into this problem this month. I knew where I wanted to go, but I couldn't figure out what I needed to do to get there. After some web searching and document study, I found the answer. Yes, another win for open source and the freedom to roll your own.

These choices popped up when I initially attempted to incorporate graphics into the newsletter. The ones you see are all bit maps. Bit mapped graphics and fonts do not scale well. Vector graphics and fonts do scale well. Adobe type 1 PostScript fonts not only scale well, but, in my most humble opinion, they look better than their TrueType cousins. Again, score a goal for the freely available type 1 fonts used in this newsletter.

### **Security**

I was perusing the "mbug-pc newsletter" for this month,<sup>2</sup> and I came across some chilling information. I checked on my name at [www.hotbot.com](http://www.hotbot.com) and was surprised to find so much information for sale about me.

I don't have the time to run down these security issues. Is there a member out there who would like to take on the task of a monthly column? Please contact me if you would like to do this.

---

<sup>2</sup>Vol 21, No 9, Monterey Bay Users Group – Personal Computer

## 7 The Back Page

A note to the gentle reader: replace the “{at}” in the address with the “at-sign” should you desire to contact one of the below listed volunteers. I have mangled the address to thwart harvesting by spam-bots.

### ACS Board of Directors

President:	Gene White	President{at}ACS-PCUG.org
Vice-President:	Mike Jacquot	Vice-Pres{at}ACS-PCUG.org
Secretary:	Howard Bonar	Secretary{at}ACS-PCUG.org
Treasurer:	Fred Erickson	Treasurer{at}ACS-PCUG.org
Program:	Dawn Scott	Programs{at}ACS-PCUG.org

### ACS PCUG Volunteers

Community Services	Dawn Scott	Programs{at}ACS-PCUG.org
Evaluation Coord.	Howard Bonar	Evals{at}ACS-PCUG.org
Meeting Desk Regs.	Al Schuerger	SugarShak{at}GCI.net
Meeting Reminder Fax	Sharon Dunkle	Dunkle{at}CoreCom.net
Membership Coord.	Fred Erickson	Membership{at}ACS-PCUG.org
Newsletter:	F. G. Dowding	Newsletter{at}ACS-PCUG.org
Publications Coord.	(Position Open)	
Publicity Coord.	Holly Hawkings	Publicity1{at}ACS-PCUG.org
SIG Coordinator	(Position Open)	

The Alaska Computer Society - PC Users Group (ACS-PCUG) publishes *PC News* monthly via the Internet. This newsletter is copyright © ACS-PCUG 2002. The current edition and the archive of the newsletter may be found at the ACS-PCUG web site:

<http://www.acs-pcug.org>