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# RASCAL

VOL XVII ISSUE XII — DECEMBER 2004 - ROGUE AREA SENIOR COMPUTER ASSISTANCE LEAGUE

## RASCAL OFFICERS\* & SUPPORT STAFF

### President

rascalprez@rascal.cc  
\*Chris Oman 474-0161

### Vice-President

rascalvp@rascal.cc  
\*Lou Garrotto 955-1950

### Secretary & Historian

rascalsecretary@rascal.cc  
\*Vivian Dagnan 582-0824

### Treasurer

\*Ron Willing 582-9694  
rascaltreasurer@rascal.cc  
Arlie Smith 476-9424

### Education

rascaleducation@rascal.cc  
\*Lou Garrotto 955-1950  
Lois Burke 474-6485

### Membership

rascalmembership@rascal.cc  
\*George Simington 474-7645  
Shirley Byrd 476-4978  
Joan McDowell 472-0377

### Communications/Facilities

\*Wally Zittle 476-9800  
rascalcomm1@rascal.cc  
Bob Booth 474-2993  
rascalcomm2@rascal.cc

### Administrative Assistants

Lou Lyons 476-6405  
rascalaa1@rascal.cc  
Nancy Kain 955-4800  
rascalaa2@rascal.cc

### Community Relations

Bob Cartmell 476-9437

### Data Base

Mark Simonds 955-4810

### Facilities

rascalfacilities@rascal.cc  
Henry Cotter 471-0750  
Stan Self 479-9673

### Human Resources

Ed Alcantar 476-4697

### Membership Greeters

Marie Hutchins 476-3783  
Jody Nigh 472-8337  
Wanda Andrews 474-6481  
Lynn Harmon 471-9349  
Lloyd Dunwald.....479-9076

### Newsletter

editor@rascal.cc  
Joan McDowell 472-0377

### Social Director

Nancy Kain 955-4800

### Sunshine - Artistic Design

Lee Cathcart 479-5778

### Webmaster

rascalwebmaster@rascal.cc  
Ginny von Gal 474-7566

## A FESTIVE HOLIDAY PARTY IS COOKING!

Join in the fun of mixing it up at

The Annual RASCAL Christmas Party.

Here is the recipe:



- One large bunch of RASCALS
- Lots of Holiday spirit and good cheer
- Lavish festive decorations
- Songs of the season by *The In Accord Singers*
- A full buffet featuring pork loin with apricot chutney sauce

Place RASCALS in the Wild River Pub and Publick House at 11:30 a.m. on December 14, 2004. Coat with holiday spirit and good cheer. Sprinkle generously with festive decorations. Fold in songs of the season by the singing group *In Accord*. Spread with a delicious buffet featuring pork loin with apricot chutney sauce and all the trimmings, including coffee, tea and dessert. Cook for three hours for a delectable holiday party to be enjoyed by all.

~ by Jane Frincke

## PARTY DETAILS

Date: December 14, 2004

Time: 11:30 a.m.— 2:30 p.m.

Doors open at 11:00 a.m.

Place: Wild River Pub & Publick House

533 NE 'F' Street, Grants Pass

Entertainment: *The In Accord Singers*

Tickets: \$11.50 per person

(for members & guests — includes gratuity).



Tickets may be purchased at RASCAL meetings from  
November 2 through December 7.



# GOLDEN OLDIES

~ by Vivian A. Dagnan



*Editor's Note: RASCAL was begun about fourteen years ago by folks who knew that seniors love to learn and that they still have a lot of living to do. Some of these self-starters and movers are still active in the club. We thought you might like to meet a few of them here and pick up on a bit of history.*



**George Spencer.** George has been a member of RASCAL since its' inception in 1990. In March of '91, George instructed a Spreadsheet class and donated 200 disks to the club to get the Lab off to a good start. In August of that

year, he suggested that a "Problem Solving Session" should be held after the Council Meetings. Council Meetings (the equivalent to our current Board Meetings) were held weekly, while Membership Meetings occurred very "irregularly" until about October of '92. At this time, Council Meetings were held only once or twice a month, with General Membership Meetings weekly. The "Problem Solving Session" evolved into our Q&A's, which George conducted for many years. To this day, George is still a vital part of our Q&A's. He stopped for awhile in March 1993 to teach classes and resumed with Q&A's in June 1993.

the By-Laws Committee. In addition, he worked on the Grants Committee and helped out with Facilities. For years, George conducted the Beginners' Q&A classes every Wednesday, from 10:00 a.m. to 12 noon, at our RCC classroom.



**Ben Skinner:** Ben joined RASCAL in March of '91. He served as Secretary of the club in '92. Ben is a great Ham Radio Hobbyist and continues to offer his experience and expertise to club members who may find him listed on the Dial-A-Pro Page in this newsletter — along with stalwarts Spencer and Steffensen.



**Madeline Howard:** Madeline was present at the July 25, 1990 meeting of RASCAL. She was one of eight attending the meeting. Madeline served as the Head Greeter for about five years and served on the By-Laws Committee in 1996. In late '93, when most of us were fearful of

just turning our computers on, Madeline unscrewed the case on her computer and installed a one gig hard drive! In her own words, "Fools rush in where Angels fear to tread."



**Betty Best:** Betty attended her first RASCAL meeting in August of '91. She served as Vice President from July '92 until January '93; (also serving on the Telephone Committee at this time); then became President from January '93 to July '93. In '93 she served as Treasurer for one year. Note that during these early years, our Vice Presidents were elected twice a year, served six months, and then were automatically advanced into the President's position for six months.



**George Steffensen:** George attended his first meeting in February of '91. In '91 and '92 he was the Computer Lab Committee Chairman. In '92 and '93, he was the Education Chairman and also served on

**Each of these pioneers were a vital participant in the beginnings of this computer club. Each of them were instrumental in making RASCAL the great club that it is today. We are pleased and happy to honor them and to be able to say that they are still with this club and attending meetings!**



## The RASCAL ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING and VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION DAY

~ by Jane Frincke



Shown here are about forty-four of the seventy-nine RASCAL volunteers honored at the October 19 meeting.

Members who gathered on October 19 for the 2004 Annual Business Meeting found that business could be fun! We were welcomed to a meeting hall filled with fall foliage, pumpkins, scarecrows, delicious refreshments and abundant appreciation for our fellow RASCALS; all thanks to the decorating and organizational talents of event co-chairmen Dawn Shively and Nancy Kain.

President Chris Oman spoke about the club's activities and accomplishments in 2004, and its vision for 2005. (Please see page 7 for his "Overview" message.) Vice President Lou Garrotto conducted the election of officers for the year 2005. Members moved, seconded, and voted by acclamation to accept the slate of officers as follows: **President**, Chris Oman; **Vice President**, Lou Garrotto; **Secretary**, Jane Frincke; **Treasurer**, Sandy Dreyer; **Education Director**, Patricia Hentges; **Communications/Facilities Director**, Wally Zittle; **Membership Director**, George Simington.

A break for complimentary coffee and cake followed the election of officers. Karen Janssen, once again, applied her magical spatula to the four cakes which she had decorated to scrumptious perfection with edible frosting pictures of the 2004 officers and a gallery of RASCAL mascots. Bill Porter served ably as master of ceremonies for the volunteer recognition ceremony. Seventy-nine volunteers were thanked for their valued contributions to RASCAL during 2004. Their dedication enables the club to accomplish its educational goal and more! Special honors went to visitors Arlene Dowell of RCC and to Sandy and Bill, sister and brother of RASCAL's late Social Director, Connie Brown. Volunteers were thanked with a custom mouse pad, designed by Nancy Kain and Jane Frincke. Board members received engraved pens in appreciation for their service.

All in all, the morning was a delightful reminder that RASCALS always have fun, be it conducting business, teaching and learning, appreciating one another, or just plain enjoying all of the benefits our club has to offer.

**For a better view of the photo above and others of this event, please go to our website at  
[www.rascal.cc](http://www.rascal.cc)**

# TIPS, TWEAKS, AND TRICKS

by Lou Lyons—[luckylou@charter.net](mailto:luckylou@charter.net)



**1. For those of you who have either upgraded to XP or bought a new system with XP preinstalled, here is a site that will get you all the information you'll need to help you during the learning process.** It is filled with tips covering almost anything you might want to know about XP and it will help you with any troubleshooting problems you might have. You could spend hours snooping around this site. Hopefully you won't have many problems but if you do, this is the place to start looking for help.

Remember, from a user viewpoint, there isn't that much difference between XP and 98, except in the looks, and you've got lots of control over that. Also, remember that since this is in print, you'll have to type the URL into the address bar of your browser manually. It's really tough to click on a paper newsletter! Be sure to type it EXACTLY as you see it here: <http://www.theeldergeek.com>

**2. Some folks are constantly adding/removing programs and find a lot of "leftovers" on their hard drive that trouble them.** They like to have their drive "clean and tidy". Add/Remove is not a particularly efficient way to remove programs, but it is OK for the majority of items. If a program has an UNINSTALL component, that's best to start with. With many leftovers to deal with, you probably won't notice anything unusual if you just leave them be. However, if you're a "neat freak" when it comes to your hard disk, the simplest (tedious, but simple) way to deal with files of unknown use is to rename them in an orderly, consistent manner. For example, rename "program.dll to xprogram.dll and see what happens. If it screws something up, or the computer complains that it can't find that particular file, then simply change it back to the original name. It all depends on how you use your computer.



If you are installing and removing programs somewhat frequently, your hard drive probably has hundreds or perhaps thousands of useless entries stored somewhere. Unless you know exactly what a particular file is or does, either leave it be or rename it, as I mentioned, and you'll find out pretty quickly whether it's essential or not. Unless you're running out of space, most of the time, it's just better to accept that Windows is not perfect and just let things be---unless they are causing trouble. About every year or two, I backup my critical data, reformat the hard drive, reinstall Windows, and start over again, just to get rid of accumulated junk.

It's almost impossible to keep only current useful files on the hard drive. Junk accumulates over time, but almost always, it's harmless. Follow the old rule---"if it ain't broke, don't fix it"! If something bugs you or the computer starts misbehaving in some way, then fix **that** problem, but don't try to make things perfect or pristine. It's hopeless. Unless you know exactly what a particular file is or does, either leave it be or rename it as I mentioned and you'll find out pretty quickly whether it's essential or not.

**3. Memory leaks---you have them, I have them, and (gasp) Windows has them!** After prolonged usage your computer "free system resource memory" decreases, sometimes to the point where your computer becomes unstable or freezes up entirely. What's happening is that various applications, drivers, and utilities grab memory when they startup, and then fail to release it when they exit. Slowly, but surely, your memory resources diminish to an unstable point. This has little to do with the amount of RAM your system has. It has to do with little things that Windows calls "heaps." But we'll talk about that another time. It's pretty technical. The main thing is, **WHAT DO YOU DO ABOUT THIS PROBLEM?** It's pretty simple. Simply reboot your computer and the problem disappears, at least until it happens again! The problem is poorly written applications and they appear in commercial software, downloaded programs, and even from Microsoft itself. For most of us it's more of a nuisance than a serious problem, so just reboot and go back to whatever it was you were doing when the problem appeared.



Please note that Lou Lyons is not currently submitting regular columns. These are still-timely reprints.



# Need Help? • Dial-A-Pro

Just call or e-mail and an attempt will be made to solve the problem by phone or e-mail. If that isn't enough, most of those listed will make house calls on an individually arranged basis.



### GENERAL TROUBLESHOOTING Most Areas of Computing

Lou Lyons	476-6405	luckylou@charter.net
Chris Oman	474-0161	ckoman@rvi.net
Len Richardson	866-2541	len_r@yahoo.com
George Spencer	474-0899	gspencer1@earthlink.net
George Steffensen	474-4305	steff@budget.com
Gerry Tank	476-7667	gwtank@atiinternet.com
Wally Zittle	476-9800	wzittle@charter.net
Bob Booth	474-2993	robtb@terragon.com
Ray Lake	956-6302	raylake@charter.net

### BEGINNER'S HELP

Laura Dunwald	479-9076	beagenie@charter.net
Ginny von Gal	474-7566	skipjack@echoweb.net
Gordon Rendall	955-1000	grandpaw1@charter.net
Gerry Tank	476-7667	gwtank@atiinternet.com
Marv Wilson	471-1867	mwlw86@charter.net

### WINDOWS INFORMATION

Laura Dunwald	479-9076	beagenie@charter.net
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### WINDOWS 95 RELATED

Ray Lake	956-6302	raylake@charter.net
Chris Oman	474-0161	ckoman@rvi.net

### APPLICATIONS & OTHER SPECIFIC HELP

<b>ANIMATIONS</b>		
Cliff Worden	471-1292	marcliff@charter.net

<b>EXCEL</b>		
Ron Willing	582-9694	rwilling@charter.net

<b>GENEALOGY</b>		
Laura Dunwald	479-9076	beagenie@charter.net

<b>GRAPHICS</b>	Bill Porter	silverfox@terragon.com
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<b>HAM RADIO</b>	Ben Skinner	479-3965	K7XU@rascal.cc
<b>I CQ</b>	Jean Kraft	664-8197	hikraft@charter.net

**INTERNET, General.** ..... *Help Wanted*

<b>MACINTOSH OS</b>		
Joanne Shields		maclady@charter.net

<b>OUTLOOK EXPRESS</b>		
Nancy Kain	955-4800	nankain@rascal.cc
Jean Kraft	664-8197	hikraft@charter.net
Cliff Worden	471-1292	cliffmar@charter.net

<b>QUICKEN</b>		
George Steffensen	474-4305	steff@budget.com

<b>SOUND</b>		
Cliff Worden	471-1292	cliffmar@charter.net

<b>WEB PAGE HTML BASIC</b>		
Mark Simonds	955-4810	mcsimonds@rvi.net

<b>WORD PERFECT</b>		
Karen Janssen	965-6067	ilea@terragon.com

<b>MS WORD</b>		
Marion Miller	955-0712	marion@uci.net

### EXCHANGE COMPUTER RELATED QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

For RASCAL members only. Limited to technical problems and responses. Subscribe to the **Technical Help Listserver E-mail Forum** for help with your computer problems at <http://mailman.userservices.net/mailman/listinfo/rascal-tech>. Subscribers use **rascal-tech@mailman.userservices.net** for discussion. The Listserve Moderator is reached at **rascal-tech.admin@mailman.userservices.net**.

## An Overview of RASCAL - 2004

~ by Chris Oman, RASCAL President

During the past year the Board held several planning sessions focusing on RASCAL leadership for better coordination of problem resolution, goal setting, and defining the future direction needed for the club

The club maintained quality presentations and classroom training in spite of location and facility changes involved in the move by RCC from 8<sup>th</sup> & C St. to the SBDC at 4<sup>th</sup> & H, and the continued shrinking financial funds from Salem; we implemented Internet DSL Broadband access for our General Meetings at the Floral Building for General Meetings; we engaged in cooperative programs between RASCAL & Computer Bugs for Camera and Photography training events. We intend to identify additional areas where we can work together to provide training programs to benefit RASCAL members and some of the other computer related clubs

We continued to work on defining where RASCAL needs to grow and/or evolve as our membership demographics change in the near future. For example, Special Interest Groups (SIGS), Photography, Graphics, Internet Capabilities, Information Research, Genealogy, and Internet Security. Mark Simonds and Rick Woodard implemented increased capabilities for the Membership database for education levels and selecting volunteer assistance. We replaced volunteers due to medical conditions and/or death. We researched and identified club equipment needs for doing a better job of presentations and training.

RASCAL continued to maintain strong relationships with RCC leadership for ways to provide education for the Senior Community in more areas of interest. For example, our participation in Senior Information Day. We continue to work with the local community for development of a Grants Pass Community Center. The primary leadership being Bob Cartmell and other RASCAL members. We assisted in the Advanced Technology Fair in July to familiarize the local community with new technology: information research, Internet access, security systems, and other problem areas.

Our club still has a few leadership positions where one person is attempting too many tasks and we do not have backup support in case of emergency or vacancy.

We urge members to pick an area of interest and get involved. Club membership fluctuates due to relocation, snow-birding, having received sufficient training, and non-renewal for other reasons.

The club treasury is decreasing due to increased costs for facilities, newsletters, additional meetings, COLA, decreasing membership, adding new capabilities to the club, such as the sound and projection system, for better viewing of presentations. The club has not raised membership dues since it was established in 1990. We would like to start a Computer Library for membership for additional education opportunities. Grants Pass needs a Community Center to provide additional capabilities for General Membership Meetings: one room for General Meetings and another for new members, to help them to get started using computers and/or to participate in Beginner Q & A Sessions.

Overall, this club is healthy and continues to evolve in its membership and leadership. RASCAL is its own entity in the local community. We want to continue to provide a positive impression for membership and outsiders who associate with us. We need to look to where the club membership will be in the next three to five years. We are either Green and Growing or Ripe and Rotting.

A lot of effort has been put into the club over the past fourteen years and we need to continue to look to the future and plan accordingly. Where do we want the club to be when it turns twenty — and in the years beyond? We would do well to consider how we would like to leave RASCAL for the next generation of members!



### BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

~ by Vivian A. Dagnan

Board Highlights will appear in the newsletter as space permits.

This month, please check the RASCAL website at [www.rascal.cc](http://www.rascal.cc)

The complete Board Meeting Minutes, as well as Highlights, will be found there.



*RASCAL regrets the passing of Marvin Ogg on October 3, 2004. Marvin had been a member since February 2000. Our condolences to his widow, Betty Jo, who is a current RASCAL member.*

**RASCAL**  
COMPUTER CLUB  
214 SW 4th STREET  
GRANTS PASS, OR 97526



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**Return Service Requested**



PLEASE NOTE: Your month of membership renewal is located in the upper right corner of your mailing label.  
Please mail yearly dues to the RASCAL address listed above.



**KEEP in TOUCH**

Let RASCAL know when you change your e-mail address, your telephone number, or your residence address.  
Contact Shirley Byrd at [sndbyrd@uci.net](mailto:sndbyrd@uci.net)

RASCAL meetings are held in the Floral Building at the Fairgrounds in Grants Pass. Weekly meetings are on Tuesdays, except holidays. The General Membership meets from 9:30 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. Come early for coffee and chat with friends.

We also invite you to visit our website:


[www.rascal.cc](http://www.rascal.cc)

You will find up-to-date information about our club, our members, classes, meetings, and links to other websites. Our website is hosted by Smartwire Internet.



## SPECIAL HOLIDAY NOTICE

There will be no General Meetings of RASCALS on December 14, 21, 28, and on Jan 4



### BIT OF A RASCAL STAFF

Editor.....Joan McDowell  
e-mail: editor@rascal.cc  
Columnists.....Bob Booth, Tom Crittenden  
.....Laura Dunwald, Jane Frincke, Patricia Hentges, Nancy Kain, Lou Lyons  
Copy Editors.....Lloyd & Laura Dunwald  
.....DeVerne Jacobsen; Nancy Kain  
Photos.....Nancy Kain, Bill Porter  
Graphics Artist.....Patricia Hentges  
Printing.....MacGraphically Yours  
Seventh & 'L' Streets, Grants Pass

*We reserve the right to edit and/or omit submissions.*

*Items received after the newsletter deadline may appear in the next issue.*