

**A
BIT
OF A**

RASCAL

VOL XIX ISSUE VIII — AUGUST 2006 - ROGUE AREA SENIOR COMPUTER ASSISTANCE LEAGUE

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**THIS IS A CALL FOR
HELP**

*If you received a call for help from a friend, would you come running?
Of course you would. Please consider this to be:*

An Urgent Call From Your Friends at RASCAL.

YOUR CLUB NEEDS TEACHERS!

For much of the past couple of years it has been very difficult to find teachers available to teach RASCAL courses, both for beginners and for the more advanced. Our Education Director, Patricia Hentges, and recently our Teacher Scheduler, Judy Engel, have been filling in by learning programs for beginners and teaching these programs themselves. This is in addition to the challenging responsibilities of the Director and Scheduler. As much as she loves to teach, Patricia will not be able to continue to do this. Nor will the very talented, Judy.

Surely there are members of this club of over 900 who have some experience in computer usage and who would be able to share their knowledge with others. Could you be such a person? We have a special need for teachers of **Beginning Computers, Beginning Windows, and Beginning E-mail and Internet**; as well as interesting programs for the more advanced.

This is a critical need, dear friends. If we want RASCAL to continue to fulfill its stated mission: "To Teach Seniors to Learn and Enjoy Their Computers," we must have teachers. Simply put, without teachers RASCAL cannot offer classes. Please consider this carefully:

YOUR CLUB NEEDS YOU!

If you think you could help, please step forward. You will find that teaching is very rewarding and we are here to help you get started with whatever you need, including course outlines and lesson plans, if you can use them, and handholding through your first teaching experience. You may discover a whole new world of sharing, joy, fun, and friends.

For more information contact Teacher Scheduler, Judy Engel, at
<judyengel@msn.com>





Hi there, you RASCALS. In view of the many questions our database managers are presented with, almost daily, it appears that we need to know more about how our membership list is managed. Just check out these typical FAQs (frequently asked questions) that are received by our database managers:

1. **“My new badge doesn’t have my old join date on it. It has the date I paid my dues.”***
2. **“I thought my renewal date was a year from the last date I paid. You sent me a confirmation notice with a different date on it. I think you guys made another mistake.”***
3. **“I just paid my dues --- why are you asking me to pay again?”** [This is a frequent question asked by those who paid Smartwire for their ISP service, not their RASCAL yearly membership dues.]
4. **“When is my renewal date?”***
5. **“I can never remember when I need to renew.”***
6. **“I recently moved. Whom do I contact in order to change my address, etc.”** [Answer is, the database managers. Their contact information is on the front page of the newsletter, under “Officers & Support Staff.” Also see the frequently recurring notice on the address page of your newsletter. At a General Meeting you may report a change to the Membership table at the back of the room.]

*See answers below.

How are members notified about their membership fee due dates?

In case you need a reminder, the yearly “due date” appears on the back page of your *A Bit of A RASCAL* newsletter, just above and to the right of your address label. If you remember to get your dues in prior to that date, you are all set for the next year.



If you should happen to overlook the date or just forget to submit dues in time, you are allowed a period of “grace.” You will be given a reminder after about two weeks---via e-mail or by telephone, if you don’t have an e-mail address. If, after approximately another six weeks you haven’t been heard from, your database membership record will be deleted. If the record has been deleted and you renew after the final date, part of your membership record can be recovered. Unfortunately, the original join date will have been lost. It can only be recovered with a great deal of time and effort which will only be undertaken in very unusual circumstances.

Another frequent question is why the renewal date doesn’t show the date you joined the club. The due date is always **the first day of the next month of the next year following the payment.** It is calculated using this formula:

- Ralph Rascal joins on June 1, 2006; his due date is July 1, 2007.
- Jane Adams joins on June 17, 2006; her due date is July 1, 2007.
- Judy Jones joins on June 30, 2006; her due date is July 1, 2007.

A renewing member’s due date is always one year from the date their dues were payable---regardless of the date that payment was actually made.

The RASCAL Database which contains the names, addresses, and other contact information for each RASCAL member is a complex system to manage. Those who build, maintain, and manage this list deserve our admiration and respect. Those currently most involved in the management, and doing a superb job with diligence and grace, are managers Audrey Williams and Betty Buskirk and designer, Mark Simonds. Kudos and many thanks to these accomplished, dedicated, and hard-working volunteers who devote many hours of their time to our service!

~ Joan McDowell

*“Memory is a complicated thing;
a relative of truth, but not its twin.”*

~ Barbara Kingsolver
American Novelist, 1955 - .



*Search sites promise access to billions of Web pages.
But if you don't enter the correct search terms
in the proper way,
you'll be swamped with wrong information.*

According to Nielsen Net Ratings, over 80 percent of internet users turn to the top three search sites: Google, Yahoo! and MSN. However, despite advances in indexing the Web, these sites are not fool-proof. Type the words, "miserable failure" into any of those search sites. The top result is George W. Bush's biography. A few savvy pranksters were able to manipulate those results.

So, how can you improve your search results? There are three ways: **choose your search terms carefully, use keywords, and learn operators*** [see definition below].

When choosing search terms, be specific but not wordy. For example, imagine you wanted information on artists. If you use "painters," you'll receive returns on both the artistic kind and those who charge \$300 to paint a bedroom. However, since search engines are not case sensitive "18th Century Painters" and "18th century painters" yield the same results.

Google, MSN, and Yahoo! each have operators to focus results. For instance, use quotation marks to find complete phrases. "New York" "fashion institute" will give different results than "New York fashion institute." You can use plus and minus signs to include or exclude words. By entering **+domestic cats**, the search site will find pages that contain all the terms preceded by +. If you enter **+rescue cats -feral**, search site will return pages of rescue cats with no mention of feral. The word NOT in all capital letters can be substituted for the minus sign, such as **+rescue cats NOT feral**.

Use the word OR in all capital letters if interested in alternatives. Let's say you want information on camping or swimming in Hawaii. In the search box, type **Hawaii camping OR swimming**. You can also use the pipe symbol (|), such as **Hawaii camping | swimming**.

Google, MSN, and Yahoo! say they include the operator AND by default. Therefore, it's supposedly unne-

cessary to use AND or **&**. However, Google produces different results with the search terms **cat dog** and **cat AND dog**. So you should include the operators.

To focus results further, use the advanced search features. By selecting variables from a drop-down box or clicking a check box, you can limit results to sites updated within a specific time frame, and that contain a certain file type such as: html, pdf, doc; and that use a specific domain suffix such as: .com, .edu, .gov, and so forth.

On Yahoo!'s main page, the Advanced link is to the right of the search button. Google's Advanced Search link is to the right of the search box. MSN uses Search Builder; its link is below the search box.

Use keywords (sometimes called meta words or query words) if the advanced search is inadequate. Keywords are used with a colon. For example, if you enter **amazing grace contains:mp3**, MSN will return a list of Web pages that contain the words **amazing grace** and an .MP3 file. The MP3 may not always be the song "Amazing Grace," but you've weeded out a lot of junk.

Other keywords are **site** (searches one specific Web site), **prefer** (adds emphasis to a word or operator), and **language** (results are in a selected language).

There are many more keywords, specific to each site. Check the search site. Check the search site's help section.

Finally, even the most innocuous keywords can return pornography. To avoid that, the big three search sites have a SafeSearch feature. It is located in Google's "Preferences," Yahoo's "Advanced Search," and MSN's "Settings."

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Kim Komando Computer Show. www.Komando.com*

***Operators** (aka Boolean operators) refer to the words AND, OR, NOT, and NEAR. They have a math equivalent: AND = +; NOT = -. OR is any search engine's default setting for automatically returning all the words you type in. NEAR is equal to putting a search query in quotes: you're telling the search engine that you want all of these words, in a specific order.

~ jm

*"When words are scarce
they are seldom spent in vain."*

~ William Shakespeare
1564-1616



Q & A

Q. I have an older computer with Win98se installed. For several years it has functioned quite well whenever I shut it down from the Start button, including completely powering down automatically. But recently it quit powering down and gave me the message, "It is now okay to shut off your computer," or words to that effect. In order to power down completely now I have to manually press the stop/start button on the front of the computer tower. I checked the Control Panel Power Management function and found it was set to "Always On." I changed it to "Home/Office Desk," but it still requires a manual turn-off to power down. I couldn't find any other way of regulating the system other than in the Control Panel. What happened to the automatic turn-off function? How can I restore it? It's no big deal, except that I had become used to the automatic turnoff feature and I miss it. I tried following some instructions from Microsoft Support on the internet but nothing worked. I thought about reinstalling Win98SE, but have been hesitant to do so because I have a lot of files on my computer I would hate to lose. Have you any suggestions, or recommendations?

A. You needn't lose any files if you back up important data before doing anything as major as reinstalling Windows. The only way to do a true "clean" install of any Windows system is to reformat the disk. If you have only one disk, you will lose all the data on that disk when you reformat. If, on the other hand, you have files saved on another drive (or partition), then the data on that disk will not be lost if you reformat the primary disk (usually the "C" drive).

Before you go to all the trouble to reinstall Windows 98 you should consider upgrading. Windows 95, 98, and ME are all ceasing update support from Microsoft. That means that if you are going on the internet, you are at increasing risk for some un-patched security issue. I know that a lot of RASCALS are still using 98. It is a pain to upgrade, as it frequently means buying a new computer. But, also consider the risk of losing everything you have due to a hacker gaining control of your system. If you don't want to upgrade now, consider doing so next year or later, after Vista comes out.

If you do wait, be aware of the risk you are taking in the meantime.

Q. Our computer has slowed down, and we have not been able to correct the problem. We have talked to Charter and they say they are operating at 99% or more of their speed. We have defragged and restored but it still takes quite a few minutes to start. We recently installed a new keyboard. Could this present any problems? Does anyone have any suggestions? Thank you.

A. These days, the most likely cause of a dramatic slowdown is an accumulation of spyware and adware. First, do a Disk Cleanup. You'll find that utility under `START>>PROGRAMS>>ACCESSORIES>>SYSTEM TOOLS`. Then download **Spybot Search and Destroy** and **AdAware**, which you can find by doing a Google search. Both are free programs and are quite effective. Be sure to carefully read the directions on both programs. Run them repeatedly until the results show that your system is relatively clean.

The new keyboard is unlikely to be the cause of the problem unless the problem began immediately after you installed it. In that case, the easiest way to confirm that is to reinstall your old keyboard and see what happens. **However, doing the disk cleanup and cleaning out the spyware and adware should fix things up.** If you're running XP, download Microsoft's **Windows Defender** (formerly "Antispyware") and install it. Microsoft describes Windows Defender (Beta 2) as "A free program that helps you stay productive by protecting your computer against pop-ups, slow performance, and security threats caused by spyware and other potentially unwanted software." I have found that it is working well for me.

A general caution to all XP users: if you haven't yet installed SP2, whatever you do, **DO NOT** attempt to install it until you have all the spyware and adware cleaned out.

~ Lou Lyons

COMPUTER DEFINITION of The Month

Blue Screen of Death (BSOD): The informal name given by users to the Windows general protection fault (GPF) error. Named in honor of the error's dreaded display image of white text on a blue background, the BSOD is generated by the operating system when it has suddenly terminated with an error. The system locks up and must be rebooted. The BSOD can strike anyone, anywhere. At the Comdex trade show, MS Chairman Bill Gates encountered the BSOD during a demonstration of Win 98. (He had a spare computer standing by.)

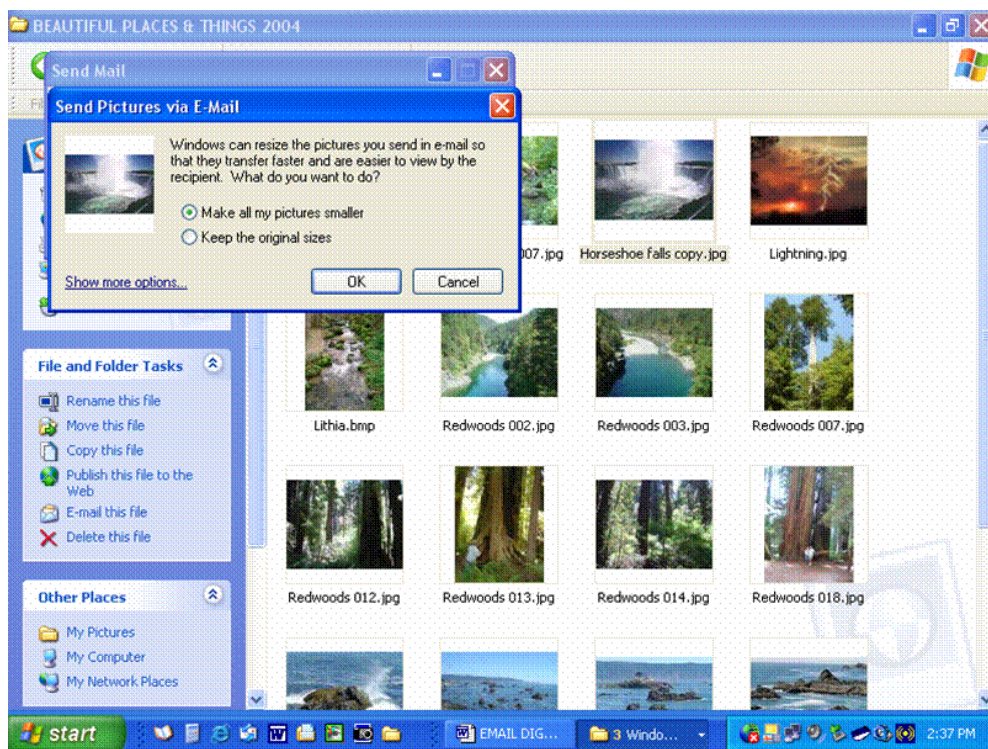


These instructions apply only to Windows XP users. Windows XP has made things easy for us by automatically reducing each photo's file size and inserting the photo into a new e-mail message for us. Here is how it is done.

- The very first thing you need to know is the location of your digital photos. Windows XP automatically stores them in **My Documents** in the **My Pictures** file.
- Open **My Pictures**, and choose a photo you wish to e-mail by left clicking your mouse: one click, to highlight your photo with a blue frame around it. OR If you wish to send more than one photo in your e-mail, after highlighting the first photo, press down and hold your finger on the "CTRL" key while you go on to select additional photos, and then let go of the "CTRL" key. Notice that once you have done that, a new option appears, called "E-mail this file", on the far left side of your screen in the **File and Folder Tasks** section of the blue dialog boxes.
- Left click on "**E-mail this file**" and a new, smaller dialog box will appear on your screen (see illustration on the right) telling you that Windows can resize your pictures for e-mailing. The box comes with a default setting of "**Make all my pictures smaller**". Click "OK."
- **Now a word about photo file sizes.** Digital cameras come in various Mega Pixel sizes. My own camera is a 5 MP (Mega Pixel). In my case, my camera produces very large file size pictures, ranging in size from 1.75 MB (Mega Bytes) to 2.50 MB (in JPEG format) or more. A 3 MP camera will produce much smaller file sizes and a 7 MP camera will produce much larger file sizes. Why is this important? Because when e-mailing

photos, the smaller file size, the better, because it goes through cyberspace much faster, cutting down on long send and download times. When you choose the "**Make all my pictures smaller**" setting mentioned above, Windows XP will reduce them in size all the way down to approximately 30-200 KB (Kilobytes), causing them to send in a fraction of the normal time. Even though the file size is smaller, it is not visually detectable. The quality of what you see on your screen will not change.

- Once you have clicked "OK" on the "Make all my pictures smaller" screen, after a few seconds you will see Windows automatically open up a new e-mail message with the chosen photo included in the message attachment area. It will also show the new photo size.
- Enter the recipient's e-mail address in the "To" box and delete the Windows generated message in the body of the e-mail, replacing it with your own message. You may also wish to change the wording in the "Subject" box. Click on "Send" and your photo is on its way! Enjoy!



*"A good snapshot stops a moment
from running away."*

~ Eudora Welty
Acclaimed Southern Writer & Photographer
1909 — 2001



Need Help? • Dial-A-Helper

Just call or e-mail and an attempt will be made to solve the problem.



GENERAL TROUBLESHOOTING

Most Areas of Computing

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George Steffensen	474-4305	stefff@peoplepc.com
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Wally Zittle	476-9800	wzittle@charter.net
Bob Booth	474-2993	robth@terragon.com
Ray Lake	956-6302	raylake@charter.net
Lou Lyons	476-6405	luckylou@charter.net

APPLICATIONS & OTHER SPECIFIC HELP

DIGITAL CAMERAS & PHOTOS (for beginners)

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EXCEL

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GENEALOGY

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Gerry Tank	476-7667	badger1at@charter.net
Marv Wilson	471-1867	mwlw86@charter.net

WINDOWS INFORMATION

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WIRELESS HARDWARE

Please note: Phyllis Wilkey, who formerly offered help under this and other headings, has moved out of state and will no longer be available on the Dial-A-Helper List.

QUICKEN

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WEB PAGE HTML BASIC

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WORD, MS

Marion Miller	955-0712	marion@uci.net
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WORD PERFECT & MS WORD (for beginners)

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EXCHANGE COMPUTER RELATED QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

For RASCAL members only. Limited to technical problems and responses. Subscribe to the FREE **Technical Help ListServe** e-mail forum for help with your computer problems at <http://mailman.userservices.net/mailman/listinfo/rascal-tech> or access through www.rascal.cc. Subscribers use rascal-tech@mailman.userservices.net for discussion. The ListServe Moderator is reached at rascal-tech.admin@mailman.userservices.net.

RASCAL COURSES, MEETINGS, and Closure Dates for AUGUST, 2006

There is one class offering in August:

GRAPHIC SOLUTIONS

Bill Porter - \$10.00

Tuesdays, August 1, 8, 15, 22

1:00 to 3:00

RCC Lecture Hall - Limit 20



The Fairgrounds will be closed for the Josephine County Fair for most of August, including the Tuesdays of August 1, 8, 15, & 22

There is one scheduled Tuesday Meeting
in August:

GENERAL MEETING

9:30 - 10:45

BEGINNER'S MEETING

10:45 - 11:30

August 29



RASCAL COURSE DESCRIPTION

AUGUST, 2006

GRAPHIC SOLUTIONS (Pre-Req: Previous Experience with any graphic program.) For beginning, intermediate and advanced students. The goal of this class is to seek a solution for each student's graphic project. The method is to teach graphics concepts and how solutions are arrived at, regardless of the software being used.



BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

~ by Jane Frincke

Please see the RASCAL Website at www.rascal.cc
for complete minutes of the
June 13, 2005 Board Meeting.

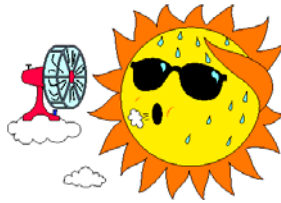
Secretary Jane Frincke confirmed that, on June 6, 2006, the membership ratified amendments to the RASCAL By-Laws. The primary amendment changes officers' term limits from two years to four years. The other amendments are minor language and grammatical revisions. Vice President Lou Garrotto's report updated the Board on progress to install a high-speed computer data line in the Illinois Valley membership's facility. According to Social Director Dawn Shively, plans are moving along for the annual picnic on July 18 and local merchants are donating many prizes for the raffle. The Board was reminded that, because of the County Fair, there will be no meetings on August 1, August 8, August 15 or August 22. The only general meeting in August will be held on August 29.

LIFE IN 2006

You know you are living in 2006 when:

1. You accidentally enter your password on the microwave.
2. You haven't played solitaire with real cards in years.
3. You have a list of 15 phone numbers to reach your family of three.
4. Your reason for not staying in touch with friends and family is that they don't have e-mail addresses.
5. You pull up in your own driveway and use your cell phone to see if anyone is home to help you carry in the groceries.
7. Every commercial on television has a web site at the bottom of the screen.
8. Leaving the house without your cell phone, which you didn't have the first 20 or 30, or 60 years of your life, is now a cause for panic and you turn around to go and get it.
9. You get up in the morning and go on line before getting your coffee.
10. You are too busy to notice that there was no #6 on this list.

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



Non-Profit
 Organization
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Permit #22
 Grants Pass, OR

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 (\$15 single membership: \$20 for couples, \$75 Lifetime) to the RASCAL address listed above or submit at a General Meeting.

KEEP in TOUCH



Let RASCAL know when you change your e-mail address, your telephone number, or your residence address. Contact the Membership Manager at rascalmembership@rascal.cc

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. to 10:45 a.m. The Beginners' Meeting is held from 10:50 to 11:30. All members are welcome to attend both meetings. Come early for coffee and chat with friends.

We also invite you to visit our website:
www.rascal.cc
 for up-to-date information about our club, our members, classes, meetings, and links to other websites. Our website is managed by Ginny von Gal and hosted by Smartwire Internet.

Are You Receiving NEWS DISPATCH?



Every member of RASCAL is automatically entered, at the time of enrollment, into our database to receive the News Dispatches. These are sent out to inform you of urgent club news and, routinely, of General Meetings and Special Events. If you aren't receiving these announcements, most of which go out weekly, please let us know.

Contact our Data Base Managers at
rascalmembership@rascal.cc

BIT OF A RASCAL STAFF

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Nancy Kain
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 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.*