



# NEWS JOURNAL



## Pet Nanny

*Taking care of your pets while you are away*

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## Picture Publisher

*Bring back the quality of that picture*

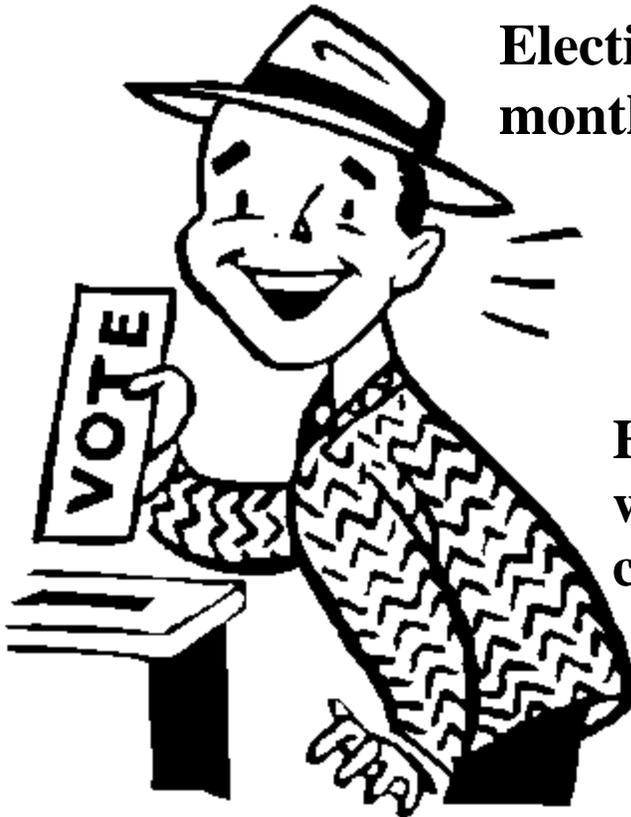
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Volume 19, Number 11

*"Members Helping Members"*

March 2003

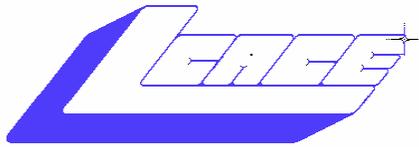


**Elections are a month away.**

**Have you decided who you want as club officers for the coming year?**

**Do you want to run for an office and support your club?**

**Reminder: The March meeting is on the first Saturday to the Month which is March 1st. See you their.**



**Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts**

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2002-2003**

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**Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts  
L.C.A.C.E.  
c/o Group Ambassador  
409 S. Elmwood Ave.  
Waukegan, Illinois 60085-5219**

**Membership**

Membership for L.C.A.C.E is open to all individuals and families interested in personal computing. Annual dues are \$20.00 per individual/family. Associate membership is only \$10.00 (out of state, unable to attend meetings). Membership includes a one year subscription to the L.C.A.C.E. News Journal and access to all club libraries and functions. Applications for membership may be obtained at the monthly meeting, by request on the club Hotline and are now available on our WEB site at - <http://www.lcace.org>

**Meetings**

L.C.A.C.E. meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month at the Grayslake Area Public Library 100 Library Lane, Grayslake, Illinois. The meeting location opens at 12:00 a.m., the formal meeting begins at 12:30p.m. All meetings are open to the public. Bring a friend!

**Advertising**

Ad rates per issue: Full page - \$25, Half page - \$15, Quarter page - \$10, Business Card - \$5. Discounts are available on advance purchase of multiple issues. Please send camera-ready copy and payment to the club address by the 21st of the month preceding publication. For more information on ad pricing, please call our Hotline. Ads are FREE to all paid members.

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## PLACES4ACES (web)'Sites 4 Soaring ah's"

by Howard Shaughnessy, site seeker

Where I ferret out interesting, neat & great sites for Elsie Acers.

Beware the woman who smells of herbs, she will waste thy thyme~ is from the Fakespeare section of RECITOPIA, found at <http://Worldwiderecipes.com/> -70,000 food lovers in 140-countries, over 116,000 hits- This site shares not only recipes along with friendship, food humor as well as the love of great cooking. You can sign up for their e-mail recipes or go to the hundreds of them posted. Hey, I get hungry just writing about this site.

Annoyed by MS Windows? Click onto [www.annoyances.org/](http://www.annoyances.org/) (there's an organization for these people?) where Window users tell how to enable features you want, turn off the annoyers, improve performances, trouble shoot, custom displays, icons, keyboard mapping and the all important etc.

With the Oscars coming up, which classic movie actor, upon receiving an Academy Award, is quoted, "I won this award for keeping my mouth shut, so I think I'll do it again?" Current trivia question on [www.reelclassics.com](http://www.reelclassics.com) where you'll find actors, actresses, movie makers, A to Z, script quotes, movie posters, music, video clips 6 Moore - Victor Moore. I clicked on Audrey Hepburn (who, in May will be on a USPS postage stamp) to once again visit a lovely lady & fine actress. Birthdays listed, too. Today, March 8 th is the birthday of Cyd Charisse. Watch out for construction going on here as this site is updated.

This one is clever. [www.solinas.com/clock.html](http://www.solinas.com/clock.html) has a clock (with the day & date as well) that follows the cursor around your page. As much as you try to scramble this timepiece it always returns to shape. Comes in colors, too.

Answering the Internet questions, where did I come from, where am I now, where am I going? is <http://livinginternet.com> which beats the stork story. This ball of wax includes: internet, e-mail, web, usenet,

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All L.C.A.C.E. Members who present their membership card will receive a \$1 discount.

# Review

## Micrografx Picture Publisher

By Leslie Salsburg

I know that I am not the only one in our club that enjoys working with photographs whether they are scanned in or downloaded. But I do think that so far I am the only one to use a little known program called picture publisher. I think to date that micrografx is out of business which is a shame because I think it is a really great program. There are more intense programs or more complicated programs out there and it seems that they are bundling photographic software with just about everything from scanners and digital cameras to operating systems these days.

So what makes this one so special? Well nothing really it is just that I have gotten used to the way it works for what I want a photo program for.

So what is a photo program anyway? It is a program that will in put your photo and use various commands to change the picture. Unless you are the perfect photographer (I have not met one yet) you have run into pictures that are not quite what you want to hang on the wall or send to someone. Or you may have an old family picture that time has aged or has been damaged in some way.

What do you do? Well as of yet you can't go back in time and take a new picture so I guess that point in time is gone forever.

This is what a good photo program is for to bring back the quality of that picture and in some cases improve the quality of the original. To do this it is helpful to know what a picture really is. Yes it is an image a visual representation of an event but let us get a little more basic then that. A picture is a series of dots formed in a special way and if you look closely is not perfectly round. Someone a long time ago gave these dots a name they called them pixels. Well they still call them pixels and if you want to do anything with a picture these is what you will be working with.

Well enough with the technical jargon already and

back to why I like picture publisher to work on my pictures. I have found that you have to start in some area of a picture to fix what you want so how do you localize that area? In most photo programs you use what is called a masking tool. This tool will section off the area or areas that you want to do things to. It lets you know by putting a glowing broken line where you have indicated. Most of the programs I have used have what they call a lasso to rope it a specified area. Well in picture publisher they do it a little differently they give you a pencil to trace an area or make a circle or square or a wand like device for all objects of a same color. I found this a lot easier then the lasso tool found in most photo programs. Another difference is what is called a copy tool. This tool is used to copy one area of pixels to another area of the picture. In most photo programs you have what they claim looks like a stamp that you are supposed to put in one area and another stamp that is put in the area you wish to copy. In picture publisher you can have a circle, square or various other shapes to copy from one place in the picture to the other. One has an **X** in the middle to let you know that this is where you are copying from the other is blank to let you know this is where you are copying to. To me this is a much simpler method to uses and gives you better control. The program also comes with easy to read and understand tutorials that help you do just about anything to a photograph that you wish to do. So far it has done all that I have needed to do in what I consider an easy straight forward manor which is why I use it over some of the more complex programs out there.

If you have an interest in working with photographs not so much on a professional level but maybe to restore a piece of family history. But do not want to spend a couple of hundred dollars or spend weeks or months learning to use a photo program but want to do more then just download and print this may be a program you might try. I have only scratched the surface on what this program can do there is a lot more.

It is a hard program to find in stores these days but I have seen it at computer shows or some of the department stores that sell computer products for under forty dollars.

## Review 2

### The Net as Pet Nanny

*Connect with your pet via the internet*  
Reviewed by Sammy D. Katz

We Katz can't always travel with my human when he travels but he can ensure we get fed when he's not home.

AlphaOmegaSoft's ISeePet ([www.isspet.com](http://www.isspet.com)) lets he check on us Katz (or dog for you lovers) via the Internet. The iSeePet machine has a built-in network camera, which allows our owner to view a real-time video of us through the website. The site features a call button that,



when activated, triggers the iSeePet unit to play a little jingle to summon us to our bowl. Now you know Katz are not pruned to be summoned anywhere, but this trick might work for those dumb dogs. The ISeePet feeding unit pours a set amount of pet food-snack-or meal-size portions-that out human has choose for us. Pressing "A" will deliver a small amount of food, while "B" will release a meal.

The internal camera on the unit is a CCD with a 130-degree lens and a video frame unit of 30 frames per second with TCP/IP network protocol. An ADSL/CATV modem provides connection between the Internet and the feeding unit. No PC is needed for the Internet connection; therefore out human can use his laptop to check in on us. The food floor unit made of ABD plastic, weight 6.6 pounds. iSeePet requires Windows 98/Me/2000 Professional/XP Home Edition and Internet Explorer 5.5 of greater. We have be beta testing this unit, so pricing has not been determined.

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lists, relay chats, multi-users, dungeons, internet news (where I learned about ENUM, where governments hope to combine your numbers, mobile phone, e-address, IMs & faxes, into one number on CNet News.com, a daily Tech News First.

Finally, do you know where YOU come from? Genealogy sites abound, however Dick Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter, a weekly summary of events & topics of interest to online genealogists is the best. Sponsored by Ancestry.com his newsletter is available both in ASCII text & HTML. His archives also available at [www.RootsForum.com/newsletter](http://www.RootsForum.com/newsletter).

## Review 3

### LapVantage Dome

Reviewed by Sammy D. Katz

Since my laptop is essentially my desktop replacement, I found the LapVantage to be a unique device for us laptop users. It raises my laptop to eye level for an optimal viewing point. LapVantage is designed to use an external keyboard and mouse for as they call it" ergonomic computing."



For example, the Dome Deluxe stand swivels 360 degrees on its circular base, something an iMac doesn't do. This is very convenient, as you can easily spin the laptop around to reach ports and bays on the sides and back of the computer.

The swivel turntable contacts the desk or table support service with six, crystal clear, soft plastic feet, which are generously-sized and appear to be securely glued. The rubber-like plastic compound used is "sticky" enough to provide excellent traction and a secure footing.

The arm is secured at these levels or anywhere in between with a comfortably -sized to lock knob at the back of the Dome base, making height adjustment quick and convenient.

The turntable swivel base is just over eight inches in diameter, and even at the highest elevation, which cantilevers the support platform farthest forward, I found no lack of stability or tendency to tippiness, even with my Dell Inspiron laptop. Even when I applied substantial downward hand pressure to the front edge of the platform, the big Inspiron was in no danger of toppling. The Dome, even at

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its maximum height position, supporting a heavy laptop, has been engineered to be exceptionally stable, weight-tested to support 75 lbs. The unit also swiveled smoothly with the Inspiron in place

Included with the Dome are two, self-adhesive, clear plastic "gumdrops" -- larger versions of the turntable feet -- that can be affixed to the Lexan platform to elevate the back of the computer, allowing air to circulate underneath and improve cooling by convection. Their use is strongly recommended, especially if you have one of the hot running notebooks



Why use a laptop stand? More and more people are replacing desktop computers with laptops, and understandably so. Laptops are great. However, the inherent design of laptops a fixed screen and keyboard violates the most basic ergonomic guidelines

The Deluxe model comes in black or white, made of super durable recycled ABS plastic with a polished acrylic platform and height adjustment and rotating features, selling for \$79.95.

There is also a standard model that comes in solid black or white with a stationary base and platform, both also made of recycled ABS plastic, which sells for \$49.95. All four are available at The Plasticsmith's online store at: <http://www.lapvantage.com>.

We are always looking for new Members. Have you discussed LCACE with your friends?

## OPINION

### Internet The Final Frontier?

Leslie Salsburg

Well I don't know if it is the final frontier but I had to come up with a title for this article. That solves lets get to it. Most people are perfectly content to use what comes with their Internet provider. If this is you then you need not read any further. But for the rest of us who are not afraid to try new things to explore to seek out new browsers to boldly go where some but not all have gone before please read on.

Most of us are know about Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator and use them on a regular basis it is usually the first step to getting on the internet even before a search engine. Well I have nothing against either one of them but I craved more. Choice is a wonderful thing and I choose to have several browsers installed. Yes they will all get you to the same place usually in the same amount of time but where is the fun in that? Do you only have one way to get to work, probably not or you have never run into an accident or construction. Well guess what this also happens on the Internet not often but it does. As I have stated in a previous article I wrote for the club I am an avid watcher of tech tv. On a show called call for help they had a presentation of what they called alternative browsers. So I figured why not give it a try they are all free to download. That is a big word in my vocabulary when it comes to downloading a program **free**. Anyway I settled on two browsers to try and they both seem to work well and even have a few features that do not come standard on Internet explorer.

Number one is called Mozilla the web site is [www.mozilla.org](http://www.mozilla.org) it is easy and fast to download and is a Netscape like browser. It comes with a few features already installed, which can be found in the tools menu. It has a built in pop up stopper and even some Spam filters. There are also quite a few add ON's and you can change the way the start page looks. They give you three different looking colors for a start up page but you can download many others. I have found it very adaptable and

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# Members Update

## New Members

**Shen Zhong-He** is from Grayslake and is interested in learning programming, although he has found our other presentation of much interest. Shen learned about the club from the article in the newspaper.

**John & Patricia Ortseifen** from Lake Forrest joined the club in hope to learn more about using their PC which they use for business and desktop publishing.

**Howard Shaughnessy** is retired and from Gurnee. Like many others Howard has joined the club to learn more about using his PC. Howard enjoys writing for newsletter and has volunteered to supply our newsletter editor with some articles. We hope to see Howard as a regular columnist.

**Fred Barnett** is Computer Consultant from Grayslake and said "Spend most of my time with computer, but always needs to learn more." Fred does some programming, but also uses his computer for business, database management, and education.

**Terry Prange** is from Waukegan and joined the club during the Christmas Party. Terry is into ham radio and uses his computer to compliment his radio equipment. Terry also enjoys using his computer for music and entertainment.

## Renewals

**Arnold Gudyka** from Mundelein has been a member since 1986. Arnie is retired and enjoys using his computer for word processing and music. Recently Arnie has involved himself with preserving his old 8mm videos to the new digital format.

**Leslie Salsburg** is from Round Lake Park and had been a member since 1998. Leslie using is computer for almost every imaginable aspect of computing, but mainly enjoys music and photo manipulation. His favorite programs are Picture Publisher and Music Match.

**Jack and Winnie Frost** are from Round Lake and have been members since 1998 when they where

cornered in Computer City by J.J. Jack is a mold maker, and Winnie a controller assistance/data entry. They enjoy attending the club meeting for up-to-date information in the computing world and asking questions. Their home computer is used for entertainment, word-processing, e-mail and financial management. And of course, their favorite program is Quicken.

**Phil Grimm** resides in Waukegan, and has been a member since 1999. Phil said he is a "Geek" but we know him to be one of the "Gurus" when it comes to answering questions and providing the members with the latest computer news. We know Phil to have collection of several computers and enjoy using them for Graphic, desktop publishing, music and entertainment.

Continued from page 6 OPINION

easy to use. Your favorites or bookmarks will also show up as needed. Best of all it loads up and installs fast something I have not seen happen with Microsoft explorer or Netscape navigator.

Now for number two it is called Avant Browser this is an Internet explorer like browser with a little more color to the menus. The web site is [www.avantbrowser.com](http://www.avantbrowser.com) it also has its share of skins and add ON's and will export your favorites or bookmarks.

These are just two that I have been playing with and so far I am happy with the results. There are many out there to choose from but you will never know till you try. If you can not load them from the links that I have provided then you can try [www.techtv.com](http://www.techtv.com) and in the search box type in browsers. Or you should be able to find the sites through your favorite search engine. However you get there you might want to give them a try for the variety. One other thing to remember do not check the box to use as your default browser unless that is what you want.

Me I do not have a default browser and do not want one. If you are an AOL user you will have to wait till after AOL loads up then click on the icon to open up either browser.

So happy browsing and see if getting there is half

## OPINION 2

# Maxtor Personal Touch

**Huge 250GB storage capacity, fast read, and write.**

*Reviewed by: Dr. I. Luv Irata*

Protecting my work by faithfully backing it up is something that everybody needs to do. But I don't actually do it. Although one of the main features of the Maxtor 5000XT is backing up your data an absolutely simple, hands-off, no-brainer routine, is not why I bought it? It also stores 250GB of DV footage, ran at 5400 RPM, and could be hooked up to my laptop in seconds via your choice of 1394 or USB 2.0? If this concept appealed to me and the \$399 Maxtor Personal Storage 5000XT external drive may be for you.



About the size of a hard cover book, the sleek-looking cobalt blue 5000DV is about the right size to sit atop your computer case, within easy reach. It's not too big, though, to slip into your briefcase for some XT on-the-go. It's a good idea to keep it at arm's length, because it has a "One Touch" backup button that's about the easiest way to protect computer data I've ever seen.

I didn't install the backup software, so I can't comment on how well it works.

I have struggled for years with various storage systems, from Zip disk to CDs to DVDs, and I have never seen a system that's as easy to use as this. Since it's 8X the size of my drive "C," it's plenty big for anything I could fit on my computer's main disk. And it's quick, too. Using its 1394 I/O, it measured a 35MB per second read time and a 20MB/s write time. That makes it more than fast enough to use for DV editing. I was trying to choose which of Maxtor's Personal Storage drives would be best for my purposes -- the company offers a 80GB 7200RPM drive and a 120GB 7200RPM model (this one, designated "DV"), and since I do lots of DV work, I opted for the smaller but faster model, and the 250GB for storage.

But the 250GB turns out to be a gracious plenty. Even after backing up everything on my main production drive, I still had 44GB of space left over for DV files. That's enough for about four hours worth of DV footage. When it's empty, you could store 20 hours of DV on it. And since it's hot-swappable, you can carry around an entire project with you and just plug it into another PC elsewhere to continue working.

When I plugged the drive into a FireWire EEE-1394 the read/write speed was about 35/20MB/s. Since I don't have an available USB 2.0, I don't know how this compares. With 1394 I/O, the capture performance was also flawless, where I captured a one-hour tape start-to-finish without a hitch. I did make sure to re-format the drive to NTFS when I first configured it, so there would be no 4GB file size limit that is inherent with a FAT32 formatted disk, which was the default out of the box.

If you go shopping for a 5000XT, make sure it's in stock if you're ordering over the Internet. Lots of those stores are cagey about what they do and don't have available. And, it seems like this particular drive is so popular, if it's in stock, it's not heavily discounted, at least not yet. There are two other models in this "family" of products, too -- the easy-to-find 5000LE, an 80GB 5400 RPM disk retailing at around \$200, and the 120GB 5000DV, an 7200 RPM, at \$399. The smaller 80GB drive is USB 2.0/1.1 only.

Overall, I am very happy with the Maxtor 5000XT. It's the backup system I've been looking for, and that one-button routine is about perfect for the amount of effort I'm willing to put forth in the interest of backing up all my stuff. It runs silently, and stays cool, too. And there it sits, a huge closet for all my data, waiting to extricate me from a jam that I might run into due to the vagaries of computing in the early 21st century. Pretty good peace of mind for \$400 bucks. Best of all, it's quick-like-a-bunny for DV capturing, too. Highly recommended.

## Members



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If it is time for you to renew your membership, please fill out a new Application and a Member's Profile Sheet. These forms can be obtained at the meetings or downloaded from our WEB site.

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March 1, 2003

Grayslake Public Library

12:00pm—3:00pm

Meeting Room Opens 1200

This month:

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Microsoft Office XP*

**Sign the Guest Book and tell us what you think**

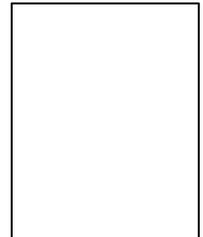
- ?? LCACE E-mail addresses
- ?? LCACE information
- ?? LCACE history and pictures
- ?? LCACE meeting, location and map
- ?? LCACE members e-mail addresses
- ?? LCACE online membership application

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## L.C.A.C.E

*Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts*  
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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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