

THE LOW-END PC: A MOVING TARGET

from TipWorld - <http://www.tipworld.com>

You can now find ads offering PCs for purchase over the Web for as little as \$300. Are these deals for real? Not really. Yes, you can buy a cheap PC, but the deals aren't usually as good as they sound. For example, one Web company (which shall remain nameless in this venue) advertises a \$300 Cyrix 300 MII-based computer, but the CD-ROM drive, floppy drive, and monitor all cost extra.

If you're shopping for a low-end system, shop wisely. Following are some tips to keep in mind.

First, watch out for distractions. Many of these online PC sellers try to distract you with contests, auctions, and special deals, such as free Internet access for a limited time. These promotions work the same way on the Web as they do in a traditional store. Their goal is to keep the excitement level up and to distract you from the downsides on the products. Pay attention to the products, not the hype.

Don't be fooled by the high clock speeds (300-plus MHz) listed for the processors on these low-end systems. Most are not as fast as the rating would have you believe. There are too many available processor chips to analyze here, but to help you separate the good chips from the bad, find a comparative review of the latest CPUs, then use the information to check the deals these Web stores are offering. You might not be expecting to buy a blazing-fast PC for around \$500, but you also don't want to get ripped off.

What components do you require in your new low-end PC? Do you need a CD-ROM drive? Do you

need a modem? How much money would these components add to the cost of your new PC? Will the PC store install these components for you, or must you separately purchase and install these components yourself? How much money is your time worth?

All of the above are important questions to ask about PC configuration before you buy a low-end system.

Many low-end PCs come without a monitor. Believe it or not, that may be a good thing. In order to keep the price down, the companies that do include a monitor usually designate a small (14- or 15-inch), poorer-quality tube. At least if the system doesn't include a monitor, you get to choose your own. Try to get your hands (and your eyes) on the exact monitor model included in any online PC deal by stopping at a local computer store and looking at the monitor in question, if that store has it on display.

It would be nice to compare the service and reliability ratings of these new Web PC companies against the established PC manufacturers. Unfortunately, most of the Web companies are so new that there hasn't been any time to gather data on them. What you can do is carefully read the warranty and return policies of any company with which you plan to do business.

Due to competition, traditional PC manufacturers now include a lot of software with their PCs. But these new Web PC stores are really playing the same game. Thus, your low-end PC might come with an operating system and little else, and you'll likely need to buy some software for your new system. This hidden cost could be very high. A single software package or application suite may cost several hundred dollars. Add the cost of additional software before you buy your hardware.



Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts

L.C.A.C.E.

c/o Group Ambassador
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The LCACE News Journal is published eleven times annually. Contributions by members is encouraged and will be greatly acknowledged in this newsletter.

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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 is now available on our WEB site at <http://inf-net.com/lcace>.

Meetings

L.C.A.C.E. meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month at the Warren/Newport Public Library, 224 N. O'Plaine Road in Gurnee, Illinois. The meeting location opens at 11:30a.m, and the formal meeting begins at 12pm. 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.

Notice

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ARTICLE DEADLINE

The deadline for all articles being submitted for the News Journal is the 20th of each month. Send your articles via E-Mail to Corky Bell at corky@foxvalley.net or Vic Falkner at rvf@se-iowa.net

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NOTICE

If your E-Mail address is incorrect or missing or you want to add or change your WEB site url, please E-Mail us at lcace@inf-net.com with the correct information.

WEB Sites

Our members own WEB Sites.

Corky Bell

<http://users.foxvalley.net/~corky>

Nancy Larson

<http://users.foxvalley.net/~mamanan>

Jim Rutledge

<http://pweb.netcom.com/~jrutnet2/couples.html>

Time to Renew

If the mailing label on your News Journal is highlighted in YELLOW, this means it is time to renew your membership to L.C.A.C.E. This information will be published in the News Journal and will also be posted on the club's WEB site which is

<http://inf-net.com/lcace>

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.

The following Member(s)
need to submit renewal applications:

Bob Carpenter - 06/99

Vic Falkner - 06/99

If you have already filed an application,
please disregard this notice.

MAY 50/50 WINNER

Courtney L. Cain was the winner of our
May 50/50 drawing.

CONGRATULATIONS!

The PRESIDENT's RAM

I would like to thank Bill Gaede and the World Connect people who made their presentation to our group last month. Remember you can see Bill and his staff at the Expo each month at the Lake County Fairgrounds in Grayslake.



The World Connect Staff

www.worldconnectcomm.com

While I'm on the subject of demos and presentations, I want to let everyone know that a lot of work has gone into the planning of the upcoming meetings. The Board of Directors and Volunteers of the group are to be commended for their hard work. Before the last election, Jim Rutledge and Mike McEnery both stepped forward to assume the responsibility of planning the agendas of the upcoming meetings, making contacts with companies, such as World Connect, or members of L.C.A.C.E. to do a demo of some sort. This is why it is so important that we receive your input as to what you would like to see at the meetings. Mike McEnery is now the Program Coordinator and if you have a subject that you would like to have covered, please contact him. His E-Mail address is mmcenery@ix.netcom.com or talk with him at one of the meetings.

A subject that hasn't been touched on in quite a while is the News Journal. I would like to see more articles written by members about their hardware, software or computer experiences. Let us know what you think about that new version of Whatever Program, or how well your new Titanium VI CPU (formerly a heart

valve replacement part) works in your old 286 or how your recent trip to the Year 2010 Computer Expo was. We are interested in this and would really like you to share it with us. So get out the word processor and write an article. You can E-Mail it to me at lace@inf-net.com or corky@foxvalley.net or put it on a disk and deliver it to me.

Another part of the News Journal (and also included on the Web Site) that many of the old members may have forgotten about and the new members are not aware of is the **FREE** (nice word) advertising for the members. If you have something for sale or trade or want something, just compose an ad and submit it. All ads are posted in the News Journal and on the Web Site for a period of two months. Remember these are personal ads and commercial advertisements are not allowed.

Last, but not least, we are in need of sponsors. Since the closing of Software City a few months ago, the group has not yet obtained another computer vendor who would be willing to give the members a small discount for purchases, donating certain items for our raffles and special events in return for **FREE** advertising in the News Journal and on the Web Site. During your ventures about the outside computer world, if you happen to strike up a good conversation or friendship with a computer dealer, mention this to them and have them make contact with any of the Board Members. Give them the E-Mail address or the Web site URL so they can contact us.

The next meeting is June 12th and Jim Rutledge will demo the Family Tree Maker program. Until then, Happy Computing to everyone.

Corky



Windows 98 Tips

ONCE A FAVORITE, ALWAYS A FAVORITE

Do you wonder how to copy your Favorites to a second PC. Actually, it's more straightforward than you might think. Just use a floppy disk to copy the files from one Favorites folder to the other.

Open an Explorer window and display the contents of the first system's Windows\Favorites folder. Hold down Ctrl as you click on each favorite you want to copy to the second system; then, with a blank, formatted disk in your floppy drive, right-click the selection and select Send To, 3 1/2 Floppy (A).

Now just pop the disk in the second computer and copy its files to that system's Windows\Favorites folder. Open an Explorer window and display the contents of the disk. Open a second Explorer window and open the Windows\Favorites folder. Select all of the items in the floppy drive window, right-click and drag the selection into the Favorites window, let go, and select Copy Here. Instant Favorites Folder!

WITH A TWEAK, TWEAK HERE..

Unlike its predecessor, Windows 95, Tweak UI for Windows 98 is included right on the installation CD. Pop the CD in your CD-ROM drive, click Browse This CD, and navigate your way to the tools\reskit\powertoy folder.

To install Tweak UI, right-click tweakui.inf and select Install. (When the About Tweak UI help window appears, close it to proceed with the installation. Don't worry--you can access this same information from inside Tweak UI later.) To launch Tweak UI, open Control Panel and double-click the new Tweak UI item inside.

THE ASTERISK KEY REVEALS ALL

Occasionally, you need to fully expand a folder (to display all folders and subfolders inside) in an Explorer window. The old Windows 3.x File Manager had a specific command for this task. What is the equivalent in Windows Explorer?

While inside a two-paned Explorer window, the easiest way to expand a folder is to use the keyboard way. Select any folder and press the asterisk key (*) on your numeric keypad. The result is a fully expanded view of all folders and subfolders inside.

MIX AND MATCH FOLDERS

How can you change the icons of the yellow folders on your desktop? Unfortunately, this technique isn't as straightforward as the one for changing shortcut icons described in our last tip (right-click a shortcut, select Properties, click the Shortcut tab, click the Change Icon button, and so on). To change your folder icons, you'll need a shareware program, such as AnyFolder.

Point your Web browser to:

<http://www.pcworld.com/r/tw/1%2C2061%2Ctw-0504msw98%2C00.html>

After downloading afolderx.zip, extract its contents to your hard drive using an unzipping utility (the result is a folder named 'afolderx'). Then, to install this program, open this new folder, right-click Folders.inf and select Install.

Now to change those folder icons. Right-click the folder you want to change and select Properties. You'll notice a brand new Icon tab inside the Properties dialog box. Select this tab, select Closed or Open (you can use a different icon for each), and click the Change Icon button. From here, the technique is identical to changing a shortcut icon: Select a new icon and click OK twice (or click Browse, select another icon file--such as one of the new *.ico files in the afolderx\AFIcons folder--click Open, and so on).

Y2K TERMINOLOGY: COMPLIANCE

What makes a system Y2K compliant? You'll get many definitions once you start looking.

One definition, found on the federal government's Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) Web site, sums it up well: "Year 2000-compliant application systems are capable of correct identification, manipulation, and calculation using dates outside the 1900-1999 year range and have been tested as such." The term "compliance" continues to be the source of serious debate.

This FAA definition allows for short-term compliance using procedural approaches and long-term compliance using data approaches.

More on Scanners

Resolution vs. Interpolation

by Dr. I. Hatedos

A SCANNER'S TRUE resolution is measured in two directions; horizontally (across the width of the scanning bed) and lengthwise (in the direction of the scan). While vendors sometimes fudged a little in the past when giving these specifications, today a scanner's sharpness is usually expressed in terms of optical resolutions. For example, a 600 x 1200 dpi scanner would have 600 individual charge-coupled device sensors per-inch horizontally, and would move the device sensor lengthwise in 1/1200-inch increments.

Whenever a scanner operates at something other than its optical resolution using 100-percent (1:1) scaling, some interpolation takes place. The scanner creates estimate values for pixels based on the actual infor-

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Grandma's Connected

In the not too distant past -I remember very well- Grandmas tended to their knitting, and their cookies were just swell.

They were always at the ready, when you needed some advice.

And their sewing (I can tell you) was available - and nice.

Well, Grandma's not deserted you. She dearly loves you still.

You just won't find her cooking, but she's right there at the till.

She thinks about you daily - you haven't been for-sook.

Your photos are quite handy, in her Pentium notebook.

She scans your art work now though, and combines it with cool sounds,

To make electronic greetings, she prints pictures by the pounds.

She's right there when you need her, you really aren't alone.

She's out now with her "puter" pals, but she took her new cell phone.

You can also leave a message on her answering machine;

or page her at the fun meet, she's been there since nine fifteen.

Yes, the world's a very different place, there is no doubt of that.

So "E" her from her web page, or join her in a chat.

She's joined the electronic age, and it really seems to suit her.

So don't expect the same old gal, cause Grandma's gone "Computer".

The next meeting of L.C.A.C.E. will be held on June 12th at the Warren/Newport Public Library, 224 N. O'Plaine Road in Gurnee, Illinois. The formal business meeting will begin at 12PM (NOON) followed by a presentation demo of the Family Tree program by Jim Rutledge.



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Windows 95 Tips

WHAT'S GOIN' ON?

Want a hard copy report of everything installed on your system? Load up your printer and print a Configuration Summary, as follows:

1. Click Start.
2. Choose Settings + Control Panel.
3. In the Control Panel window, double-click the System icon.
4. In the System Properties dialog box, click the Device Manager tab.
5. Click the Print button.
6. Under Report Type, select either of the following:
- System Summary to print a report of which hardware is currently using which system resource (IRQ, RAM, and so on) - All Devices and System Summary to print a report on EVERY device connected to and/or installed on the computer
7. Click OK.

Only drawback here: The report MAY look like so much Greek to you (or if you're Greek, it may look like so much English). But try to slug through it; you may learn something.

FIND THAT MESSAGE!

Here's a pretty common scenario: You're absolutely certain that someone recently sent you an e-mail message about flanges. But you can't remember the person's name or the date or anything else about the message. You've got hundreds of messages in your Inbox, and you don't want to read them all. What can you do?

Search your messages, like so:

1. From the Exchange menu bar, choose Tools + Find (or press Ctrl + Shift + F).
2. In the Message Body text box, type a word you're pretty sure is in the message--in this example, "flange" (without the quotation marks).

3. Click Find Now.

A list of all the messages containing that word appears; just double-click any message in the list to open it.

HE'S MAKIN' A LIST

Tired of entering e-mail addresses--one name at a time--to the same group of people over and over again? Combine those people into a distribution list, as follows:

1. On the Microsoft Exchange (the "inbox" program) toolbar, click the Address Book button.
2. On the Address Book toolbar, click the New Entry button.
3. Under Select the Entry Type, select Personal Distribution List; then click OK.
4. Type a name for your list--for example, Clients or Friends.
5. Click the Add/Remove Members button.
6. In the list of names on the left, double-click each name you want to include in the list. (If you accidentally add a name you don't want to include, select the name and the semicolon following it and then press Delete to remove the name.)
7. After you add all the names you want, click OK; then click OK again to create the list.

Upcoming
L.C.A.C.E. Meetings

June 12, 1999
(conference Room to be announced)
July, 1999 - No Meeting
August 14, 1999
September 11, 1999
October 9, 1999
November 13, 1999
December 11, 1999

INTERESTING WEB SITES

NOW EVEN YOU CAN
COLOR IN THE LINES

Yes, the Internet Coloring Book, at

<http://coloring.com>

eliminates coloring's final challenge. Select a picture, choose your color from the Crayon box, click the area of the picture, and--voila--you've colored that area perfectly, without a stray mark. And when you're finished, you can e-mail your creation to anyone on the Internet. Have the kids use this site to send a picture to the grandparents; refrigerator art may never be the same.

RESOURCES FOR SENIORS

Access America for Seniors provides information on government services of interest to older Americans, covering topics that range from Social Security and employment to travel and consumer issues. You can search by topic or by agency, but the search box provides the best way to access specific information quickly.

<http://www.seniors.gov>

FREE EVERYTHING FOR YOU

What would you say if you were we told there was a Web site from which you could download thousands of pictures, animations, and fonts for NADA? You might say there are PLENTY of sites like that. But what would you say if you were told this site also lets you create 3D text, buttons, animated banners, and pictures, AND reduces the size of your existing Web site images so they load faster--STILL for free? You'd have to admit you're being told about a pretty unique site. See it for yourself at

<http://www.mediabuilder.com>

Member's Profile

June, 1999

Member's Profile

Lester Larkin



LesLarkin@NetZero.net

E-MAIL ADDRESS

Month of Birth: July

My Job is: Applications Engineer

My Hometown is: Mundelein, IL

Family Consists of: My wife and 4 kids

For Entertainment I Like: My computer

Book/Movie Recommendations: Fiddler on the Roof

My Favorite Meal is: Veggies & Salmon

My Prized Possession(s): Life

Someone I Admire: My parents

Something I Wish I Could Stop: War & Crimes

I Want People to Remember Me: Why?

I Use My Computer For: Many things

My Favorite Computer Program(s) Are: Linux, O.S.

My Favorite Phrase or Expression Is: I only gamble in mutual funds

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mation scanned. When scaling down-say from a scan of 600 x 600 dpi to the equivalent of 300 x 300 dpi - you may scarcely be aware of the conversion. The change becomes more noticeable going the other way, however, because the scanner can produce simulated resolutions much higher than the unit's actual capabilities.

Smart interpolation algorithms can boost apparent resolutions. An image scanned at 2400 x 2400 (interpolation) will actually be visibly sharper than one that was scanned at 600 x 600 and enlarged four times in each direction. Saving your image as a JPG file will usually result in a little loss of resolution. Saving a file that is already a JPG file will not result in any further degradation of the image. But whenever you make a change to a JPG file you will degrade the image further, each time you you save the image.



FIX2000

This software-testing tool can assist you in locating potential failure points in your software. FIX2000PRO helps you identify and repair your software's Year 2000 bugs. Its search engine searches your system for potential Year 2000 conflicts and then recommends a course of action to fix them. You can allow FIX2000PRO to correct all potential conflicts, or you can specify just those changes you would like to be made.

No programming knowledge is needed. FIX2000PRO has versions for MS-DOS, Windows 3.x, and Windows 95.

For more information on this tool, visit the Intelliquis Web site at:

<http://www.intelliquis.com>

CHECK 2000 PC

Need a tool that can verify whether your PC is Y2K compliant? Check 2000 PC scans your machine, analyzing your hardware and shrink-wrapped software for Y2K problems. It flags and fixes Y2K PC hardware problems and analyzes and advises on Y2K PC software and data problems. It can identify CPU type, operating system, number of drives, hard disk size, and free space.

When complete, Check 2000 PC compares the test results against the industry-leading Greenwich Mean Time knowledge base to define PC Y2K status. Finally, it fixes hardware level BIOS problems automatically after performing all necessary BIOS checks.

For more information on Check 2000 PC, visit the following Web site:

<http://www.gmt-2000.com>

IS IT LEGAL?

from TIPWORLD

Tips@Tipworld.com

We often mention how to download artwork and sounds from various Internet sites. As often as we mention downloading objects, we get mail from readers who want to point out that such material may be illegal. This is correct--it's up to you, the user, to determine what copyright restrictions are in effect for the objects you download.

In some cases, the objects may be free for personal use. However, this usually doesn't give you the right to use such objects in your presentations to clients. That would be a commercial application.

In some cases, an object's creator may give you the right to use the objects in your in-house presentations. But this is generally a gray area.

Whenever you use artwork someone outside your company has created, some kind of copyright is probably in effect. If you have any doubts about how you can use a specific object, contact the person who owns the copyright and explain how you intend to use the object.

Summer is Here

STEEL YOURSELF

from Dummies Daily

The hottest trend for summer is the backyard barbecue grill, amazingly recast in some circles as a luxury accoutrement. Today's grills offer enough choices to make smoke come out of your ears. Before you venture a patio purchase, we recommend that you do a little homework on the Web first. Here are some suggestions for sizzling reading:

The BBQ People

<http://www.bbqpeople.com>

The site sells a wide variety of grills, accessories, and sauces.

Grill Lover's Catalog

<http://www.charbroil.com>

This site's a real gas and offers online ordering.

Weber

<http://www.weberbbq.com>

Bone up on Weber's Performer, Summit, and Platinum II series.

BBQ Joints

<http://www.bbqjoints.com>

Here's one for the road: a list of barbecue restaurants around the U.S.

WINDOWS 98 UPDATE

EASY ACCESS TO WINDOWS 98 UPDATES AND UTILITIES

Updates to Windows 98 will be easier than in previous versions of Windows, thanks to a special section of the Microsoft Web site. If you've made the switch to Windows 98, you can download updates and utilities from the new Windows Update site, Microsoft's online extension of Windows 98. From Windows Update, you can download the latest updates for your Windows 98 system. You can access this site at:

<http://windowsupdate.microsoft.com>

Outlook Express Tip

HAVE IT YOUR WAY

Did you know you're not stuck with the default Outlook Express window? With just a few clicks in the Layout dialog box, you can display or hide the Outlook bar, the folder window and the folder bar.

1. Click View + Layout.
2. Under Basic, check the items you want to appear and uncheck those you don't.
3. Click OK.

You can also customize your Outlook Express toolbar by changing its position in the window and adding or removing toolbar buttons:

1. Click View + Layout.
2. Under Toolbar, choose the toolbar location you prefer--Top, Left, Bottom, or Right.

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3. Check the box next to Show Text on Toolbar Buttons if you want text; remove the checkmark if you don't.
4. Click on Customize Toolbar, select which buttons you'd like to appear, then click Close.
5. Click OK.

Now your toolbar has exactly what you need!

Now you're ready for the next Layout task, customizing the Preview Pane, which lets you view the messages in your inbox without opening a separate window.

1. Click View + Layout.
2. Under Preview Pane, put a check in the box next to Use Preview Pane.
3. Choose where you'd like the Preview Pane to appear, either below or beside the messages.
4. Put a check in the box next to Show Preview Pane Header.
5. Click OK.

Your window should now be divided into the panes you've chosen.

IMAGINE IF SOMEONE DELETED ALL YOUR MESSAGES from Dummies Daily

M.G. Swift writes, "Lately, I've been backing up my Inbox, Sent Items, and other folders, as my system seems to crash with regularity. What's the easiest way to restore these backed up files to Outlook Express?"

Let's back up a bit, for those of you who aren't familiar with backing up folders. The messages in every Outlook Express folder are stored in two files-- a *.idx file and a *.mbx file--on your system. To back up a folder, simply create a copy of the corresponding *.mbx file (for example, Inbox.mbx or Sent Items.mbx) in a convenient location, such as a floppy disk:

To back up a folder, exit Outlook Express, if you haven't already, and then follow these steps:

1. Select Start + Find + Files or Folders.
2. Type "*.mbx" (without the quotes) on the Named line.

3. On the Look In line, select your hard drive.
4. Click Find Now. (Typically, on a Windows 98 system, these files are located in the C:\Windows\Application Data\Microsoft\Outlook Express\Mail folder.)
5. In the resulting list, hold down Ctrl as you click each folder you want to back up (or press Ctrl + A to select all the folders).
6. To copy the files to a floppy disk, right-click the selection and choose Send To + 3 1/2 Floppy (A). To copy the files to a folder, right-click and drag the files into this folder; then release the key and mouse button and select Copy Here from the shortcut menu.

Note: If you're copying the files to disk, the total size for all the folders you're copying can't be over 1.44 MB. If it is, you need to either split the files into smaller groups or compress the files by using a utility such as WinZip.

You're officially protected. Now restoring these files should be a disaster strike.

1. Exit Outlook Express, if you haven't already.
2. In an Explorer window, navigate your way to the folder that contains your Outlook Express *.mbx files. (Typically, on a Windows 98 system, these files are located in the C:\Windows\Application Data\Microsoft\Outlook Express\Mail folder. If you aren't sure, use Find to locate them.)
3. Rename the *.idx and *.mbx files that correspond to the folders you're about to restore. For example, if you plan to restore the Inbox folder, rename Inbox.idx to Inbox.idx.bak and Inbox.mbx to Inbox.mbx.bak.
4. Copy the backed-up *.mbx files to the Mail folder.
5. Delete the folders.nch from the Mail folder. The folders.nch file contains a list of the current folder names.

Restoration complete. Launch Outlook Express, and your messages should be right back where they belong.

(Note: Feel free to delete the renamed *.idx and *.mbx files once you're sure the operation was a success.)

Computer Country Expo

June 26, 1999

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Location

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Next Meeting!!!

June 12, 1999

Warren/Newport Public Library

224 N. O'Plaine Road
Gurnee, Illinois

11:30 am - 2:00 p.m.

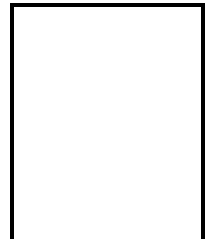
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L.C.A.C.E

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