Ask the Gurus

FUTURE MEETING DATES & PROGRAMS

March 22, 2008—TBA	**4th**
April 12, 2008—TBA	**2nd**
May 10, 2008—TBA	2nd
June 14, 2008	**2nd**
July 12, 2008—No Meeting	2nd

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2007-2008

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Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts
LCACE
c/o Group Ambassador
Mr. Mike McEnery

Membership

Membership for LCACE 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 LCACE 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

LCACE meetings are usually held on the second Saturday of each month at the Grayslake Area Public Library, 100 Library Lane, Grayslake, Illinois. The meeting room opens at noon and the formal meeting begins at 12:30 p.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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President's Ram

Hello, All,

We have made it through the holidays and the beginning of the New Year and I sincerely hope everyone is doing well. I myself am looking forward to the end of this cold snowy weather!

I would like to thank the Holiday Party committee for a wonderful event! My granddaughter and I had a wonderful time. Congratulations to all our prize winners.

I would like to thank Teri Hanlon for her excellent presentation on Genealogy. I found it so interesting, that I went out and bought a copy of Family Tree Maker (VERSION 16).

This month we are having the famous LCACE Roundtable. Have your questions ready.

The season for elections is upon us. The Club nominations will start at the February 9th meeting. **Would you like to hold an office?** We are always looking for new people with fresh ideas

Mike

Meeting Minutes
January 12, 2008

The meeting was called to order by President McEnery at 12:27 p.m. He reminded everyone to please be sure to sign in at the Membership table.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to accept the November 3, 2007 minutes as published in the *News Journal*.

December was our Holiday Party. No business was conducted; therefore, no minutes were taken.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to accept the Treasurer's Report (12/31/07 balance of $1,654.30) as read.

April will be the Club's 25th anniversary. A HP Laser Printer will be our door prize for that meeting.

Membership Chair, Dorothy Sutherland, reported four (4) guests and one (1) new member at this meeting.

Public Relations Chair and Webmaster, Lester Larkin, reported all was going well. There is a slide show on the Website of the Club's 25 year history.

President McEnery thanked the Holiday Party committee for another great event. Everyone had a good time, especially Robin — she won the laptop!

NEW BUSINESS: April is our annual elections and all local dues are to paid then, too. Nominations for the Board will be accepted at our February and March meetings, as well as at the April meeting before the election. Annual dues are $20.00.

The Lake County Fairgrounds have been sold. Lew Siedenberg has checked with the State Bank of the Lakes in Grayslake for the use of their meeting room. No go. At this time they are not accepting new groups. Robin will check on the availability of the extension site for our December meeting.

APCUG articles can be printed right from them.

Motion was made, seconded, and carried to close the business portion of the meeting. Business closed at 1:43 p.m.

The door prize and 50/50 raffles were conducted. Winnie Frost won the 1-year subscription to *Smart Computing* and Jean Cameron won $12.00.

Doreen handed out a flyer for the Forum for Seniors on Aging.

Meeting turned over to Terri Hanlon for her presentation on genealogy.

The Grayslake Library Board is looking for a focus group.

President McEnery thanked J.J. for the meeting announcements.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda E. Busch

Linda E. Busch
Secretary

URGENT NOTICE:
Read This Article Immediately
How Spoofers Grab Your Attention

Ever been to a movie set? Stand in the middle of a Hollywood re-creation of Main Street, U.S.A., and all those houses and storefronts look just as real as the ones back home. Change your perspective a bit, and you'll see it's just a big façade held up by a bunch of sticks. The Internet works much the same way, except that most people don't ever bother to peek behind the curtains.

Criminals know this and use it to their advantage using a trick called **spoofing**, which is the Web equivalent of creating an Academy Award-worthy movie set. They steal graphics, text, and other components of real corporate emails and Web sites to create carbon copies that can fool even the most vigilant Web experts. Then they use a variety of means to get you to click links within emails or visit fake sites. Pure spoofing attacks download malicious software such as viruses to the computer once a link is clicked. A more common spoofing variant called **phishing** lures unsuspecting victims to legitimate-looking Web sites, where users part with sensitive personal information that the spoofer can misuse. Spoofing represents a huge threat to Internet users because it's so easy to let your guard down when you think you're dealing with a trusted company. Fortunately, there are ways to detect and avoid spoofing attempts.

Smoke & Mirrors

The most common way spoofers draw you to a phishing site or a page that loads malware onto your PC is by sending an email announcing that something dramatic is happening to one of your accounts that requires your immediate personal attention. Maybe the email claims there's a big problem with your PayPal account or that there's been some strange activity with your credit card, or even that you've won some sort of prize that can only be claimed in a short period of time. The specifics don't really matter—spoofers just want to create a sense of urgency that will make you click the link embedded in an email or Web page.

Spoofing techniques are often used in the email so that the link looks like it's going to lead to a legitimate Web site, but it's actually pointing to a spoof site. Emails are also doctored to look like they come from a real company, and while there's really not much an average user can do to determine whether an email is legitimate, there's plenty a user can do to investigate the links the email contains.

Anatomy Of A URL

Pretend you receive an email claiming to come from *Smart Computing*, telling you about a special offer that can only be claimed by clicking a link in the email. The underlined or highlighted text for the link might say something like "Click here for special offer" or even "www.smartcomputing.com," but what you see isn't necessarily what the link really is. Place your mouse cursor over the link, and a tooltip pops up that shows you the exact URL that the browser will load when the link is clicked. This tooltip is your first line of defense when deciding whether a link in an email is legitimate.

URLs for Web pages all follow the form http://XXX.YYY.ZZZ or sometimes http://YYY.ZZZ. The first part, "http," tells you that the protocol (or computer language) used to access the page is the Hypertext Transfer Protocol, which is used for nonsecure Web pages. XXX represents a subdomain, YYY is the registered domain name, and ZZZ is the top-level domain.

If the email link tells you it leads to a login page, or if you accidentally click the link and end up at a login page, look closely in the Address bar to see if the protocol is HTTP or HTTPS. Data flowing through an HTTP is not encrypted, while data flowing through HTTPS is. Most legitimate sites use HTTPS at the login page, so that any information you type there is transmitted securely. Spoofers will sometimes overlook this and create a fake login page that uses HTTP, which is a dead giveaway that you're at a fake site.

Even if HTTPS is used at the login screen, the rest of the URL provides several clues that can expose an illegitimate site. The top-level domain will always be something like .com, .org, or .edu, so look to make sure that a link that said it was taking you to SmartComputing.com, for example, didn't actually take you to SmartComputing.cat. Registered domain names must be registered separately for each top-level domain, so

PayPal

Dear Customer,

We have detected what appears to be fraudulent activity regarding your PayPal account. Please login using the link below to verify that your account has not been compromised within 24 hours or we will be forced to close the account for the purposes of our investigation.

Thank you,

The PayPal Team
www.paypal.com
Click to follow link
www.paypal.com

We created this spoof email in just a few seconds using a logo downloaded from the PayPal site. Note the link in the text says "www.paypal.com" but the one in the tooltip says "www.paypa1.com."
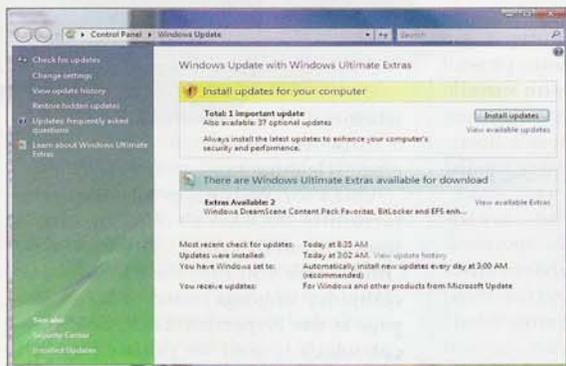
Keeping Internet Explorer and Windows as patched as possible using Windows Update can help protect you from spoofers.

it's possible that a legitimate company registered for common top-levels, such as .com and .net, while a thief registered the same name under a more obscure top-level domain.

If the top-level domain checks out (and it often does), look just to the left of it in the registered domain name portion of the URL. This is the name of the company or Web site—for example, smartcomputing, amazon, ebay, etc.—that the site uses to identify itself. If it reads differently, something fishy is probably going on.

The biggest clue to watch for is a legitimate-looking subdomain name placed next to an illegitimate-looking registered domain name. For example, "smartcomputing.spoof.com" is completely different than "spoof.smart computing.com." The former would take you to the smartcomputing subdomain at a site called "spoof.com," while the latter would take you to the spoof subdomain at a site called "smartcomputing.com." Always look at the text immediately to the left of the top-level domain and pretend

subdomains don't even exist.

Even an authentic-looking URL within an email or displayed in the browser's Address bar should be viewed with suspicion. Spoofers have been known to use PayPa1 (with a number one on the end) instead of PayPal, for example. A misspelling such as this may stand out on a printed page; but in an Address bar, it is difficult to distinguish from the real deal. In fact, according to a joint Harvard and Berkeley study titled "Why Phishing Works," 90.9% of participants—all trained to spot fakes—fell for a site called "www.bankofthevvest.com" (with two *V*'s in the middle), thinking it was the real bankofthewest.com Web site.

Let Your Fingers Do The Walking

If you receive an email that appears to be from a legitimate business where you have an account, don't click any links it contains. Instead, manually navigate to the business' Web address using its standard URL and then access your account from there to see if the issue referenced in the email exists. Better yet, call the company using the number printed in the phone book or

on a recent statement and talk to a representative. If there isn't a problem with your account, the institution you're calling can start investigating the possible spoofing attempt.

Watch Your Browser

There are some tools built into Internet Explorer 7 that can help you determine whether a site is legitimate. If the Address bar turns green, the site's security certificate checks out, and it is verified by the browser as a legitimate secure site. If the bar turns red, there's a very good chance you're looking at a spoof site. Also, keep an eye out for a padlock icon, which should lock when HTTPS is displayed in the Address bar. If a site claims to be secure but the padlock isn't locked, call the company.

Update, Update, Update

Many of the most insidious spoofing tricks rely on weaknesses in Web browsers to immediately install malware on the PC as soon as a link is clicked. Most of these weaknesses are fixed once they are detected, but your browser will only benefit from the update if you download and apply patches on a regular basis using Windows Update (update.microsoft.com). For maximum protection, automate this process. In Vista, click Start, click Control Panel, double-click Windows Update, and then click Change Settings to access these options. In Windows XP, right-click My Computer, click Properties, and select the Automatic Updates tab to configure the feature.
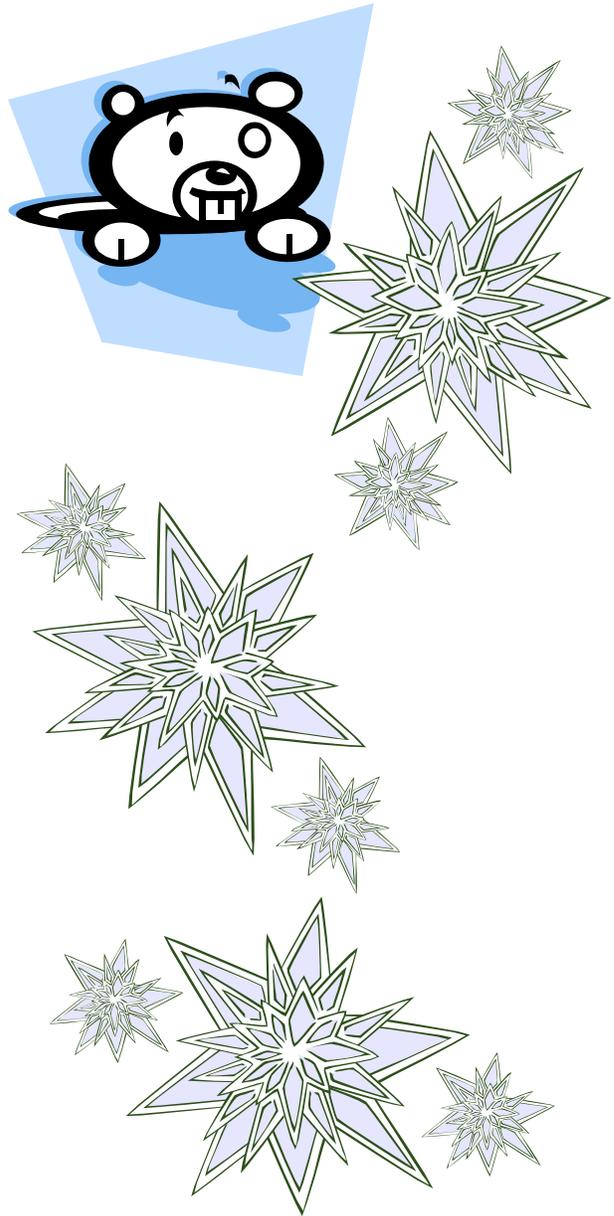
Spoofers sometimes attack your ISP (Internet service provider) to redirect you to a spoof site even when you click a legitimate link or enter a legitimate address in the browser bar, foiling all of your efforts to avoid a spoofing attack. If this happens, contact the institution in question immediately and then pray for technology that makes spoofing impossible in the future. ▌

BY TRACY BAKER

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"Apple vs. Microsoft"

Three Microsoft engineers and three Apple employees are traveling by train to a computer conference. At the station, the three Microsoft engineers each buy tickets and watch as the three Apple employees buy only a single ticket. "How are three people going to travel on only one ticket?" asks a Microsoft engineer. "Watch and you'll see," answers the Apple employee. They all board the train. The Microsoft engineers take their respective seats, but all three Apple employees cram into a restroom and close the door behind them. Shortly after the train has departed, the conductor comes around collecting tickets. He knocks on the restroom door and says, "Ticket, please." The door opens just a crack and a single arm emerges with a ticket in hand. The conductor takes the ticket and moves on. The Microsoft engineers saw this and agreed it was quite a clever idea. So after the conference, the Microsoft engineers decide to do the same on the return trip and save some money. When they get to the station, they buy a single ticket for the return trip. To their astonishment, the Apple employees don't buy any ticket, at all. "How are you going to travel without a ticket?" asks one perplexed Microsoft engineer. "Watch and you'll see," answers an Apple employee. When they board the train the three Microsoft engineers cram into a restroom and the three Apple employees cram into another one nearby. The train departs. Shortly afterward, one of the Apple employees leaves his restroom and walks over to the restroom where the Microsoft engineers are hiding. He knocks on the door and says, "Ticket, please…
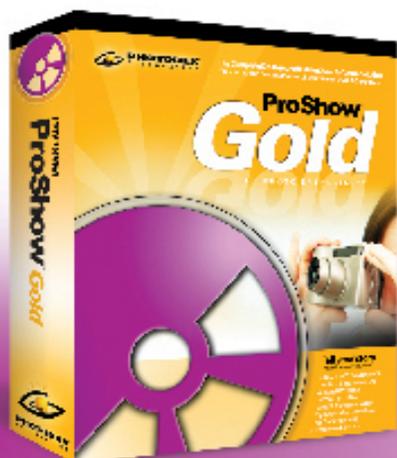
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As much as we try, we do make errors. Please advise us if there is a mistake in your E-Mail address or if it is not included in this listing. Send E-Mail to Ms. Dorothy Sutherland at membership@lcace.org with the additions and/or corrections. Thank you. This listing last updated February 3, 2008.

Take a good look, you just might see

LCACE **CLUB PICTURES** at:
http://lcace.org/PhotoAlbums.htm

TIME TO RENEW

All memberships are now renewable annually on April 1st. This change in the paying of annual dues will allow the Treasurer to budget our money more closely. Members joining after April 1, will have their dues prorated.

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View Our Site
http://www.lcace.org

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webmaster@lcace.org

Sign the Guest Book and tell us what you think
- ♦ **LCACE e-mail addresses**
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- ♦ **LCACE history and pictures**
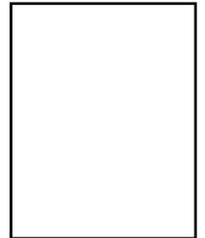- ♦ **LCACE meeting, location, and map**

NEXT MEETING
February 9, 2008

Grayslake Public Library
100 Library Lane
Grayslake, IL

12:30 — 3:00 p.m.

This month:

Ask the Gurus

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED