

Newsletter

Volume 15 Issue 10

October 2002



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

(by Lon Hosford)

The September meeting first round of officer nominations resulted in the following candidates (alphabetical by last name in each category) accepting nominations:

President: Lon Hosford, Vice President: Peter Czerwinski and Don Franklin, Secretary: Jim Aller and Don Columbo Treasurer: Jac Carrol.

Joe Burger declined nomination for Vice President.

We thank Joe for his role as Vice President for several years. He has provided us with technology industry trends reports at each meeting followed-up in the newsletter.

We look forward to Joe as a valued continuing member and meeting contributor.

I think the nominations presented an unexpected change for all who attended. There is much need for folks in these positions (including mine) to keep the club alive.

Win or lose folks, it is a real honor to have members consider you for these posts.

The October meeting also is a nomina-

tion meeting and then elections are the first order of business for the November meeting.

For November 9th we have the hospital auditorium for the Web Master's SIG. Topic is yet to be decided and definitely will be set for this upcoming meeting.

For December 12th the Digital Photography SIG will have a meeting in the hospital auditorium. Topic also is yet to be decided.

Meeting times are 9:00AM and it is buy or bring your own refreshments. The Bagel Club at the hospital is one choice.



OCTOBER MEETING

(by Jim Russ)

This months demo will be on "CD Recording Studio & CD Labeler", \$9.95, from "Free-iRewards.com" (www.free-irewards.com). This is a versatile audio suite for digitally recording high quality music CDs from various sources such as CDs, MP3, MIDI, wave, cassette, reel-to-reel, radio and 78, 45, or 33 rpm records. With it you can remove unwanted pops, hissing or noises from the source material, catalog albums, adjust silence threshold between cuts to separate tracts and record them. Set day of the week, time on & off, and repeat the settings to record radio broadcasts anytime. The CD also includes "Sure Thing CD Labeler SE" for designing beautiful CD labels and jewel cases for your CDs to print with your ink jet or laser printer. Suggested Retail Price for this CD is \$59.95.

The CD also includes a multimedia tutorial on using the program which I'll show at the meeting to demo the program.

The program on GPS which Peter Czerwinski and I are trying to set up has still has some bugs to be worked out.



THE BUGBEAR WORM

(by Lon Hosford)

Around the beginning of October the BugBear worm began spreading on the Internet. The worm peaked on Thursday October 3rd but still is virulent into the following week.

BugBear uses a backdoor in Microsoft's Internet Explorer. Once in it executes simply when you read your email without opening any attachments.

All email programs can spread the BugBear worm but only Microsoft email products are vulnerable to the automatic execution.

Some of the nasty features of BugBear include attempting to delete your anti-virus software and leaving a backdoor that creates a security hole for other attackers to delete files or stop running programs.

Another frustrating feature of the BugBear is that it can copy itself to any device on a network. If the device is a printer, then code prints on hundreds of pages.

More information: <http://www.auscert.org.au/render.html?it=2452>



-Marlyn Reuter

Receives the message "Data Resources Low" and nothing else happens.

Bill Woodall pointed out you know your computer is frozen if the numlock key does not change the LED. Add more RAM or run less programs.

-Marlyn Reuter

Shadows on monitor screen.

Bill Woodall suspects the video card. Swap in another to see or move monitor to another computer.

Joe Burger suggested reseating the video card.

Bill Woodall and echoed by other members suggested calling tech support like Dell early in the morning as you may get a more experienced person.

-Peter Czerwinski

Clicking on wave file in Netscape 6.23 launches Apple Quick Time. He wants it to launch WinAmp instead. Peter reported making the change in preferences in Netscape 4.79 worked but not in version 6.23.

Bill Woodall suggested downloading an update to WinAmp and reinstalling. He claims this is a known problem in Netscape. Bill suggested everyone look at the Mozilla 1.1 browser as an alternative at <http://www.mozilla.org/>.

-John Warsinski

Reported that Earthlink now provides a web browser pop-up blocker. John has a copy for those interested. Also Earthlink has installed Spaminator. For more info: <http://www.mindspring.com/acct-mgmt/spam.html>

Paul Glattstein is looking at Mail-Washer. More info at <http://www.mailwasher.net/>.

Jac Carrol uses this product. Company has an address in New Zealand.

FUN WITH FORMATS

(Computer Shopper 10/02)

What if the online music you want to download is in another audio-file format, such as Windows Media, Real Audio, or Liquid Audio? Can you include these files with your MP3 files on your compilation CD? In many cases, the answer is yes, though you could run into complications. Files using these other formats may be copy-protected so that you can stream them over the Internet but can't save them to your hard drive.

If the tracks aren't copy-protected, you have three options. If your CD-burning software is compatible with the format, you can select these files along with your MP3 files and let the software convert them for your CD. If it's not, you can convert the files to the MP3 format yourself, before you burn the CD, but you'll probably take a big hit in audio quality.

A better strategy is to convert any files that aren't compatible with your CD-burning program into WAV files. The WAV format uses lossless compression, which has no effect on audio quality. The downside is WAV files require considerably more space on your hard drive than MP3s.

If you need a program to convert your audio files, you may want to download the free MP3 jukebox program RealOne Player (www.real.com). It can convert a wide range of audio files to the MP3, RealAudio, or WAV formats.

DEVICE DRIVER

A program that lets a hardware peripheral, known as a device, communicate with a computer. Some device drivers, such as those for the monitor and keyboard, usually come with the computer, while others, such as those for CD-ROM drives or sound cards, come packaged with their corresponding devices. Device drivers, as well as updates for the device drivers, also can be obtained from the manufacturer of the component.

SEND ANY MESSAGES TO YOURSELF LATELY?

(NY Times, 9/19/02)

Marketers who send out bulk quantities of unsolicited commercial e-mail have a variety of techniques to get your attention and to evade spam filters on e-mail servers and programs. A popular method is to forge the recipient's name in the Form: field, because it is not likely that you would have your own e-mail address on a list of blocked addresses of known spammers. Spammers have software that can automate much of their work, and if they have your e-mail address, hiding their own address and substituting a forged version of yours is probably not difficult. Spam continues to be a serious annoyance for many Internet users. Many organizations are devoted to helping people learn more about unsolicited mail and how to avoid some of it. Among them are the Spam-Con Foundation (www.spamcon.org), Abuse.net (spam.abuse.net) and the Coalition Against Unsolicited Commercial E-Mail (www.cauce.org).



ERROR MESSAGE: "Application Error: Insufficient Memory to run this application. Quit one or more Windows Applications and then try again."

ERROR MESSAGE: "There is not enough memory available."

Although these error messages pop up when you launch software, they're most definitely hardware-related. Sometimes it appears because you don't have enough RAM to load a program or file, and the only way to get around that problem is to shut down other programs that are running or add more memory chips to the computer. Windows also uses the hard drive for Virtual Memory, where the drive acts as a temporary RAM bank (albeit running much more slowly than real RAM). If your hard drive is full or nearly full when you launch a program, there may not be enough virtual memory available to sustain it. Always try to keep 500MB or more free on your hard drive to avoid this problem. (Smart Computing 10/02)

"Online MIT Courses- FREE"*(written by Ilene Shope)*

MIT OpenCourseWare (OCW) <http://web.mit.edu/ocw/> MITOPENCOURSE-WARE

(NEW) September 30, 2002, MIT opens Free Online Web-based electronic access to MIT's course material. This is FREE to anyone, anywhere in the world, at any hour of the day.

MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA) Charles M. Vest, President, said, "... We are opening our pilot to the public for review and feedback. It contains a sample of MIT courses, offering an early look at the content and design of OCW..." <http://ocw.mit.edu/index.html> (OCW Pilot 09/30/2002)

MIT expects to air nearly all its course material, obtainable FREE on the World Wide Web. Individuals, researchers, students and educators may benefit from this digital knowledge resource release. A Degree cannot be earned from these sessions.

Release of course material from MIT's Faculty, is on a voluntary basis. The majority of MIT's Professors are participating in OCW.

<http://ocw.mit.edu/global/all-courses.html>

- Aeronautics and Astronautics
- Biology
- Chemical Engineering
- Chemistry
- Civil and Environmental Engineering
- Earth, Atmospheric, and Planetary Sciences
- Economics
- Electrical Engineering and Computer Science
- Engineering Systems Division
- Linguistics and Philosophy
- Mathematics
- Mechanical Engineering
- Ocean Engineering
- Physics
- Political Science
- Urban Studies and Planning

This ambitious initiative was introduced by MIT in April 2001. Charles M. Vest, President of MIT said: "...It is innovative. It expresses our belief in the way education can be advanced--" <http://web.mit.edu/ocw/#launch>

MIT is a private institution, funded through tuitions, donations, and assistance from foundations. OCW funds are from Andrew M. Mellon Foundation (\$5.5M) and William and Flora Hewlett Foundation (\$5.5M). This carries OCW for the First Phase, 27 months. <http://web.mit.edu/newsoffice/nr/2001/ocwfund.html>

OCW is perceived to reach full potential by Summer 2007. (Temporary technology is HTML- standalone course site). <http://ocw.mit.edu/globalabout-ocw.html> (09/30/2002).

ITS TIME FOR SPAM LINES*(by Lon Hosford)*

Here are some poorly worded spam subject lines that needed re-writing.

1. You Shall Live Forever in our Memories
A contract is out on your life.
2. You mean your friends haven't told you?
Zip up your fly.
3. Remeber me?
Plese hep mes width mine shpelling.
4. Quickly & Easily Improve Windows Reliability!!!!
Use the MSDOS prompt.
5. Pentagon redies war plans.
Plese hep mes width mine shpell-ling.
6. Over 157 Degenerative Diseases
Are you sick of spam?
7. Oops Alonzo, You've Been Selected,
But I Need Your Address
Alonzo I need your address to complete stealing your identity.

8. NOT AN AD: Invitation to Be a Fellow of the North American Academy of Arts and Sciences
THIS IS AN AD: Invitation to Be a Sucker of the North American Academy of Arts and Sciences
9. Hey Lhosford, it's Elise
Wanna buy porn?
10. Hey Lhosford, it's Ramona
Wanna buy porn?

BURNING ISSUES*(Computer Shopper 10/02)*

Burning CDs and MP3 music are hot topics online, so you'll have plenty of resources to choose from if you want to learn more. Sites that offer MP3-related news, music, and software include MP3.com (www.mp3.com), DailyMP3.com (www.dailymp3.com/main.html), and MP3Planet (www.mp3planet.com). If you're looking for more technical information about the MP3 file format, check out MPEG.org (www.mpeg.org).



One of the best sites for answering CD-R questions is Andy McFadden's CD-Recordable FAQ (www.cdrrfaq.org). Here you'll find answers to a wide range of common questions, such as "Can I just copy files onto a CD-R like I would to a floppy?" (it depends) and "Can DVD players read CD-Rs?" (maybe).

If you prefer a forum setting, stop in at CDROM-Guide.com (www.cdrom-guide.com). You can join discussions with CD-burning enthusiasts from all over the world. Many of the forums are directly concerned with creating compilation CDs.

Betty and I have new e-mail addresses. Please do not use the old AT&T Worldnet addresses as they will be discontinued as of October 3, 2002. The new addresses are for Betty: bjones630@earthlink.net and for ken is: kjones17@earthlink.net

SPAM HITS 36% OF EMAIL TRAFFIC

(by Robert Lemos
Contributed by Don Colombo)

Corporate networks are becoming increasingly clogged by e-mail pitches for pornography, money-making schemes and health products, and there's little relief on the horizon. Once a mild annoyance, unsolicited bulk e-mail--also known as spam--could make up the majority of message traffic on the Internet by the end of 2002, according to data from three e-mail service providers.

Businesses "are seeing an enormous increase in spam," said Enrique Salem, CEO of anti-spam service provider Brightmail. "It's become a huge problem." In July, according to Brightmail's latest interception figures, unsolicited bulk e-mail made up a whopping 36 percent of all e-mail traveling over the Internet, up from 8 percent about a year ago.

Once considered a productivity-enhancing tool, sorting through e-mail has become daily drudgery as employees separate wanted messages from heaps of spam. Market research firm Gartner estimates that a company of 10,000 employees suffers more than \$13 million worth of lost productivity because of internally generated spam. Add the Internet, and the problem gets much worse. It's a drain...not just on bandwidth, but on storage.

Dennis Bell, director of information technology for Cypress Semiconductors of San Jose, Calif., found out just how draining the problem can be. A year ago, he estimated the company saw one Spam for every 20 legitimate e-mail messages; today the ratio is closer to one in four.

Using anti-Spam software on specialized servers, Brightmail can discern spam from legitimate e-mail. The software can also upload potentially new forms of spam for analysis, and develop recognition algorithms to identify and filter new types of junk e-mail.

Although spam still accounts for nearly 25 percent of the e-mail sent to Cypress, with Brightmail, Now only about 5 percent of the junk e-mail gets through.

Companies aren't the only ones suffering. Gartner believes that consumer mailboxes may be inundated with even more junk e-mail than those of businesses.

And the mess is likely to grow worse, said Steve Linford, director of the London-based SpamHaus Project. The nonprofit organization posts information about the groups behind the majority of unsolicited e-mail, and maintains a "black hole" list of domains from which spammers operate. Companies can block any e-mails from the listed domains, stopping a great deal of spam, but running the risk that legitimate e-mail messages may also be blocked.

Public efforts, as well as young companies with new technologies and services, have made sending spam a lot more difficult. However, legislators have been slow to enact laws that would help stop the onslaught, leaving companies and home users to foot the bill.

"It's an arms race," Linford said. "The more we lock (spammers) down, the more techniques they try to get around us."

Efforts by grassroots groups have caused many U.S.-based Internet service providers to crack down on spammers that use their networks. But, unrepentant "spam gangs" simply start launching their attacks from other countries.

Brightmail competitor Postini, a relative newcomer to the business, found that spam made up 33 percent of customers' e-mail last month, up from 21 percent in January. "There is apparently, because of the economic times, more of an inclination to use spam to drum up business," said Doug McLean, vice president of marketing for Postini. Earlier this year, the company released a study concluding that 53 percent of e-mail server processing time is wasted on junk e-mail and e-mail attacks.

MessageLabs, a U.K. company that offers services to stop viruses and spam, reports that its customers classify 35 percent to more than 50 percent of their e-mail traffic as spam. "For a spammer it's

a cost effective way to (reach people). It's cost shifting: Everyone else is taking the burden for these guys sending out 50,000 or 100,000 e-mails."

Spammers work harder. While the e-mail service providers believed that the hard economic times could account for the increase, SpamHaus' Linford said the trend was a natural result of an increase in new anti-spam technologies. Such technologies have made it harder for the Internet marketers to connect with unwilling customers, so they compensate by sending out more e-mail.

"They are getting really bad returns, so they have to spam millions more," Linford said. "It's happening because it is nearly free to send e-mail to a million people. It would have happened regardless of the economy." The increase in spam may be a blight for users and companies, but it's gold for the e-mail service providers.

Brightmail, which focuses on providing services to large Internet service providers such as the Microsoft Network and Earthlink, expects to double the number of e-mail accounts it scans to 200 million by the end of the year. The company's products already screen more than 2 billion e-mails every month.

Postini closed its third--and last--round of funding, for \$10 million, in January, and the company processed its 1 billionth e-mail message in April. In addition, new firms are entering the market: MailFrontier closed its first round of funding this week, netting \$5 million.

Legislation, rather than an arms race with spammers, is needed to curb spam, Linford said. "We are hoping that the U.S. government will bring in a federal anti-spam law. That will take care of the majority of the problem." If the United States passed a restrictive law, other countries would be more likely to follow, he said.

"We will still have the spam gangs, but they will be doing it illegally," Linford said. "We would be running them out of business, or underground."



SIT UP STRAIGHT AND KEEP YOUR WRISTS IN NEUTRAL

(by Monte Enbysk
Don Colombo, contributor)

Ergonomics is not a four-letter word — even though many business owners may think otherwise. That's because when business people hear the word ergonomics, they immediately think of dollar signs — as in what it will cost to outfit employee workstations with new setups to prevent sometimes crippling injuries.

But the money needed may be minimal, and your employees' health should be the overriding concern, says Dan Eisman, vice president of marketing and product development for HealthyComputing.com, an ergonomics consultant. Painless simple adjustments to a computing environment, such as getting a better chair or raising a monitor, may cost little but makes a huge difference in injuries and employee absences.

Understanding how poor positioning combined with no breaks can lead to musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) should be a priority for anyone who works at a PC and/or employs others who do.

"Businesses very often don't have to spend \$1,000 or more on equipment — or completely overhaul the workplace," Eisman says. "But if you have the knowledge, you can better know what to do and what to spend." Employers should learn about what triggers wrist pain and other repetitive-stress injuries, and spend time watching and training their employees, he says.

Because people come in different shapes and sizes, solutions to ergonomic problems differ. However, there are some generally accepted guidelines when it comes to sitting at a computer for several hours a day, day after day. Here's a look at some.

Keyboards: Your wrist position is key

The ideal computing position, most agree, is to be sitting upright or slightly reclined. Your shoulders should be straight, upper arms hanging straight down, close to your body, and elbows at

a 90-degree (or even slightly more) angle. Your forearms and hands should be flat and your hands relaxed.

All this leaves your wrists in a neutral position — just what you want, says Edie Adams, manager of user research for Microsoft's hardware division. Those who type with their wrists pointed up or down, or extended outward or inward, are asking for trouble. It generally means they're sitting too close or too far away, or they don't have a keyboard that suits them.

Split keyboards — ergonomically designed keyboards sloped in the middle — are growing in use and popularity, although they still command only 10% of the market. One reason for their increasing use is that they do a better job, with most users, Adams says, of ensuring that the wrists remain in a neutral position. Microsoft manufactures both flat and split keyboards, but Adams foresees more users migrating to the split keyboard because of its ergonomic enhancements.

"Based on our research, there is more of a chance of being comfortable with a split keyboard," she says. "But we realize that 'comfortable' is a subjective term, and that you can be perfectly comfortable with a flat keyboard too."

Mouse: Does it fit your hand?

Hands run in all different sizes, but so do mice. What you want is one not too big or too small, but that fits snugly under your relaxed hand. The bottom of your hand should feel the mouse, and the point where your hand turns into your wrist should be on the table. "It needs to fit well enough so you can easily click and know the click is successful," Adams says.

If you're pooh-poohing this, don't. You'd be surprised how many people suffer hand or shoulder pain because of a mouse that's an unnatural fit.

A trackball mouse often works better for people with shoulder pain, Eisman says, because it takes less overall movement to

use. For those already suffering from hand or wrist pain, the answer might be a foot-operated mouse, which eliminates stressful hand motions.

Monitor: eye level and minus glare

If it isn't positioned correctly, your PC monitor can cause neck pain, shoulder pain, and eyestrain from glare.

Keep it directly in front of you, and at an arm's length in distance. Your neck should be straight, not leaning forward. The top of the screen should be directly level with your eyes. The monitor should be tilted slightly upward. Put stacks of paper underneath it if necessary — and be wary of using a laptop PC in place of your desktop for long periods of time

Beyond this, glare from poor positioning related to your windows or lighting could result in eyestrain and headaches. Reposition your monitor, and adjust your font size and color, if necessary.

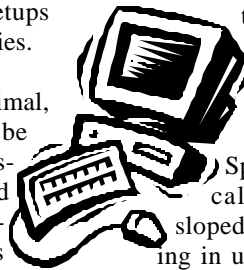
HealthyComputing.com also recommends putting your monitor on a swivel arm if you are frequently interacting with others, and want to move your monitor to the side while you do. And it strongly urges following a "20-20-20 rule." "Every 20 minutes you are working at your computer, look 20 feet away for 20 seconds," explains Eisman. (For more HealthyComputing.com tips, check out its Web site.)

Chair: most important component?

A good chair may be the most important part of your workstation, because it affects your position more than just about anything else. An adjustable chair, allowing the user to customize the fit, is the better choice ergonomically than a fixed chair with no options.

Besides sitting straight or slightly reclined, a user's lower back should be fully pressed up against and supported by the back of the chair. His feet should be flat on the floor, or on a foot rest — a platform you can buy inexpensively to help a user maintain a correct sitting position and avoid fatigue.

(continued on page 6)



(Continued from page 5)

Laptop PCs and desktop phones

HealthyComputing.com devotes a section of its site to "mobile ergonomics," including wireless phones and PDAs. Suffice to say here that notebook PCs trigger the most ergonomic fears, because you can't easily adjust the keyboard and the screen — they're connected. Also, many people operate them, literally, from their own laps or in other awkward positions.

But that is the nature of the beast. Having your screen at eye level means you're bending your wrists upward. Keeping your wrists flat means you're looking downward, at the expense of your neck.

The best advice here is to avoid prolonged use of a laptop. If you can't, use a mouse at all times, don't compromise on comfort, change positions often, and take frequent breaks.

A word about phones: A headset used to be an option. Now it's a necessity if you are on the phone a lot. Taking steps to get your PC ergonomically correct, but cradling the phone on your neck for long phone calls doesn't make sense. You can find headsets here for under \$100.

Get up and walk around — often

Having the most ergonomically safe workstation possible still may not prevent MSDs. Users must change positions and leave their workstations several times a day to break up the repetitive stresses.



PERPETUAL CLOCK

(contributed by Don Colombo)

Scientists at Alabama State University, working under a \$64.9M contract from the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), have developed the first Internet Digital Perpetual Clock. Check it out at:
<http://yugop.com/ver3/stuff/03/fla.html>

PAPER CLIPS

(written by Ilene Shope)

Every single time
A green squiggly line

appears on screen in Windows MS
Word 2000
Mister 'Clippie' continues his blinking
goggle-eyed
converse 'say', and clips me one... his
askance glance

... I must of late made a thousand wild
mistakes
to put a gallop on this page, as green-
topped waves
write, to irritate a lifeless pallid page
... form peaks, unlike a poet's speak.

In a languished lake, of a blue lagoon
a page of pleading verse for free...
a bill unpaid to forgotten rhyme,

I rest my case on his twisted form
... his eye-lashed brows, move not...
he leans sideways and raises
slick-backed brows
up and down
... applause
... in motion

... he makes
... my day!



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MEMBERSHIP FORM **RENEW** **NEW** **LAPS**
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City _____ **State** _____ **Zip Code** _____

Home Phone (_____) _____ **E-mail** _____ @ _____

Fax (_____) _____

Information that will help us help you:

- 1. WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO HELP THE CLUB ? (circle one or more)**
 Club officer Technical advisor Setting up for the meeting Taking club minutes Newsletter Programs
 Other _____
- 2. DO YOU HAVE AN AREA OF COMPUTER EXPERTISE? ____ IF SO, WHAT IS IT?**

- 3. PLEASE LIST ANY COMMENT AND/OR LIST WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN OUR COMPUTER CLUB**

NEWSEUM'S FRONTPAGES

(contributed by Ilene Shope)



NEWSEUM.ORG has newspaper frontpages available online. 126 Frontpages for 21 Countries, arranged by regions (USA, Asia, Europe, Middle east, N. America, Oceania, S. America) [http://www.](http://www.newseum.org)

[newseum.org/todaysfrontpages](http://www.newseum.org/todaysfrontpages). (To preview the Frontpage, roll over each Newspaper title or click on [load]. To view Frontpage in a larger window, click on the Newspaper title). This weblink is in the building stage. It was recommended by REFDESK.COM on 10/03/2002 as their LINK OF THE DAY.

Submissions for articles, cartoons, pictures, or other information pertinent to the club are due to the editor by the 3rd of each month. If you plan to email your submission, please be sure to include HCC in your subject line. Send to:

mreuter@ptdprolog.net
or
marlynreuter@hotmail.com

or use snailmail to return address on next page.

SPAM UPDATE

(by Lon Hosford)

Here is the October 8th report.

I received 14,268 spam messages as of September 13. The entire last year the count was 4,500. Basically over 50 per day this year so far and up over the 48 per day through September 13th.

BUY 6 BAGELS

GET 3 FREE!!

- Home made soups & Salads
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- Full line of smoked fish

BAGEL CLUB

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Flemington, NJ
908 806 6000

&

2100 Wescott Dr.
Hunterdon
Medical Center
908 237 5410

Guests Welcome – all ages all levels

Program: CD Recording Studio & CD Labeler

8:30 A.M. To Noon

Next Meeting Saturday, October 19, 2002
Hunterdon Medical Center
Rt. 31 Flemington NJ

Hunterdon Computer Club

HCC NEWSLETTER

HUNTERDON COMPUTER CLUB

Marlyn Reuter
267 Federal Twist Road
Stockton, New Jersey 08559

FIRST CLASS MAIL
Address Correction Requested
