

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Cable Internet Transition Tips

At the latest count, over 400, of about 1500 who have signed up for Cable Internet, have now been connected. I hope all of you are enjoying the faster service. For those who signed up before March 16th, the installation schedule is posted on the LW website. You can reach this information by accessing our website <http://www.lwpcug.com> and clicking on the "**HIGH-SPEED INTERNET NEWS AND SIGN-UP**" link. Since the schedule is by Node (a geographic area of the cable system), look to see what Node your manor is in, and then check the installation sequence. Those who signed up in the second group (after March 16th) will be scheduled after the first group is completed.

We are aware that computer viruses or other (unwanted) computer programs like the recent Sasser worm, can get into our computers and cause mild or severe damage. Typically, these unwanted programs enter through our Internet connection via an email attachment or through an unprotected port on the computer. As home users, these viruses, worms, or whatever are an intrusion and can be an expensive nuisance. With slow, short duration, dial-up connections, these intrusions were generally managed with an anti-virus program. Now, with a high-speed cable connection to the Internet, your computer is "on-line" whenever it is turned on, and it is more vulnerable to these types of problems.

Businesses, who have high-speed connections and sensitive information on their computers, are more often the target of these attacks. Typically, they protect themselves with a combination of routers which are configured to direct selected traffic to certain computers, and "software firewalls" (special security programs) that are configured to filter and restrict what may enter their computers. These same tools can be applied to your home computer. A Linksys router costs about \$50 and can be installed between your cable modem and cable connection. Norm Salzberg also notes the "**Norton Internet Security 2004**" product (about \$40 after rebate at Cosco) includes a software firewall and anti-virus protection.

Additionally, it is important to keep your anti-virus software subscription current, and visit the Microsoft site, <http://www.windowsupdate.com>, to check that all of the critical updates (normally security related) for your computer have been installed. (Those with the XP Operating System can configure your computer to have the updates downloaded and installed automatically.)

For a better understanding of all of these things, talk to the Supervisors in the Workshop, attend Norm Salzberg's Internet / Email class, or his SIG on Internet and Email on the 4th Friday of each month, and read Norm's column on the Joy of Computing. The site <http://www.howstuffworks.com> can also be helpful in understating these various networking and security terms.

Roger

