

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF
PERSONAL COMPUTER USERS
WHO FREQUENT THE INTERNET,
WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON GIST
SUPPORT GROUP MEMBERS.

safe surfing

- ◆ HEALTH-RELATED WEB SITES
- ◆ MISCELLANEOUS NEW FINDS
- ◆ STUMPER CONTEST

Health Help Online

Are you seeing a trend in these newsletters? Basically I'm trying to make the point that we can do virtually (please excuse the pun) anything online. On my way to proving that, here's another example: you can stay healthy, or at least better educated about your health, with information you can find online. Of course, as in any other field, you have to be very careful about the information you elect to believe and act upon by comparing and validating sources.



If you need some convincing that you could use a little help, start with a visit here:



http://preventdisease.com/healthtools/articles/health_age.html. Unless you're VERY healthy and knowledgeable already, not to mention genetically lucky, this stop should convince you there are still some things you need to know about keeping or getting healthy. And here's just another good example of the need to discriminate between sometimes conflicting information providers. PreventDisease.com offers one of several similar "Real Age" calculators. But it also one of the simplest to access and one of the few that also suggests a specific life span based on your responses. No registration required, quiz answers are usually easy to provide and most (though not all) of the assumptions the quiz seems to make are

supported elsewhere. Competing sites include RealAge.com (where you have to register and they are obviously trying to sell you goodies), and current features on Oprah.com and Reader's Digest of Canada at the following link (referring to Dr. Michael Roizen, the same physician as Oprah does, but with a far simpler test!): http://www.readersdigest.ca/mag/2000/04/living_age.html

WebMD

Better information. Better health. One of my favorite sites in general has always been WebMD. It was one of the first sites in the world to offer truly valuable information for free. And the site seems to me to be staffed by very knowledgeable and conscientious people.

Another site I am very impressed with for not only its health-

AARP

The power to make it better.

related content but for its useful content in general, especially for those of us over 50, is AARP.com. What a super collection of useful articles!! And you do not have to be a paying member to get most of the content. That is very generous of the association, but I'll bet pas off for them in the long run. I know I'm considering joining myself, and that's saying a lot for me!



Medicare

If you have questions regarding health insurance and Medicare/Medicaid coverage, don't forget to consult Medicare.gov. The site not only has some very useful information regarding government programs, but offers physician search and hospital comparison features that are quite good.

Miscellaneous New Finds



ScamBusters.org is a site I've been aware of for some time but have not fully appreciated until a friend pointed out its full capabilities. This site has information on virtually every major scam you're likely to encounter. Not only can you browse the site (very educational if you have the time), but you can also search for information on any scam you might suspect. Best of all is the newsletter you can subscribe to

for free. This will bring alerts to your email box regarding the latest scams being attempted.

ZipSkinny.com is a super new (to me at least) resource! Visit the site, enter your zip code and see factual (geographic, etc.) and demographic information you never thought was collected.

Better yet, you can enter up to 20 zip codes to compare or ask to see the top 100 zip codes in the US based upon ten attributes. It's fun and fascinating to review the statistics and compare neighborhoods. Personally I'll be aiming to move to 94027 as soon as possible!

Enter your ZIP code
to see U.S. Census data
and comparisons
with neighboring ZIPs.

Huffington Post's FUNDRACE 2008



Ever wonder if those show-offy celebrities actually put their money where their really big mouths are? Well here's a site that can help you determine that. If you have time, visit <http://fundrace.huffingtonpost.com/neighbors.php> to see, as the web site authors put it themselves, "if a celebrity is playing both sides of the fence? Whether that new guy you're seeing is actually a Republican or just dresses like one? If your

boss maxed out at that fundraiser or got comped? Whether your neighbor's political involvement stops at that hideous lawn sign?" It's extremely interesting and a little scary how much information is available in a very public forum such as this!



PaperBackSwap.com is a new site that offers exactly what the titles suggests PLUS an opportunity to list, seek and trade hardback and audio books as well. I really like the concept and the fact that you can search nationwide (unlike Craigslist.org, my otherwise

favorite "buy/sell/swap" site) and that you can search by genre or keyword. I do have problem with the site though: apparently you cannot search by audio book category (CD and/or tape) nor restrict your search of wanted or for sale to that category. Maybe they'll overcome that problem in the future. Right now the site is free, but they warn that they may start charging in the future. Get it while it's free! The company has already started a similar CD swap site (SwapaCD.com) and has a DVD swap site in the mill.



Stumper Contest

Oddly, or maybe not so odd, I got no replies to my stumper question last month. The issue was apparently not very compelling or attractive. But I think it's an

important issue that needs to be addressed:

What's a good, free way to share video clips, notoriously large files, with everyone on your email list without significantly impacting their own webmail or hard drive storage space and everyone's bandwidth?

There are numerous free file hosting sites around that will allow you to post or store your large files and share them with others. Examples (and reviews) of such sites can be found at the following URL (I'd ignore the sites listed with very few reviews and low storage limits):

<http://www.filehostingreview.com/>

However, I noticed a couple of my favorite locations were missing from the list above:

SnapFish.com or KodakGallery.com for still photos and MotionBox.com for video clips. All three are free,



offer generous storage limits and are free of obnoxious pop-up ads and nags to subscribe.

This kind of site is especially useful for storing your files and serving as an off-site backup for critical files. And, although the sites can be used for sharing, you will often want to refer people to an item or file like a video clip that someone else sent you, and you won't necessarily want to save the file on your computer. The best way to pass along virtually any video clip you receive is to find the clip on YouTube and simply email the URL for that particular clip. In other words,

1. go to youtube.com,
2. enter something in the "Search" block that describes the clip (very often the name of the clip as it was passed to you),
3. find the correct clip from hundreds of thousands there,
4. click on and watch the clip to make sure it's the right one,
5. copy the address (URL) you will see in the navigation box and
6. add it to your email to your friends.

You can find video, photos, music and virtually any other kind of document or file by simply searching for it using the venerable Google. Once you've located exactly the item you wanted, navigate to it, copy the url from the address block and paste it into your email to friends for sharing without taking up your or their storage media.

For next month's Stumper question, try this on for size:
What is a RootKit and do I need to worry about it?

Online Travel Follow-up

Here's a quick update to last month's travel issue. A new site, Momondo.com, seems to be finding some very good deals. It is highly rated by at least one expert (Arthur Frommer), and I found the site to be interesting and useful at the very least. I can't say it blew me away and stole me away from Kayak, my favorite, but it certainly should be in your online travel toolbox!



I received one absolute pearl in response to my newsletter last month focusing on online travel arrangements. You may not find it particularly useful in your travels, but

I think you may enjoy hearing it, even if you're NOT still in high school. This is from someone who travels for a living and who remains anonymous for reasons that will become obvious as soon as you read this:

If you want, I can tell you how to beat the mini-bar charges for your next issue. I can beat the electronic ones also. I can also tell you how to get free movies at the hotel if you bring your own programmable remote. I can tell you how to get free room service and free breakfast coupons. I can also tell you how to get a free late checkout and a free bottle of wine at most good hotels. I will tell you not to try and heat up your chicken strips in the pants ironing machine. (I'm afraid the next guy's pants are going to smell like "the colonel.") But you can use the iron, face up, between the cushions, to grill a sandwich.



Happy Halloween!!!!

<http://youtube.com/watch?v=Gj1I1GH8ADw>

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