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The Weekly Ink Waster

Long time no see!

Sorry - no Ink Wasters for a while - I've been enjoying Christmas vacation for these 2 weeks, so I only wrote one Ink Waster. I hope it's a good one! My good news is that www.inkwaster.com is officially up on the Internet, and I'll try to do as much work on it as I can, but keep in mind I may only update it on weekends. Please visit and take a look around. In addition, email me about the new look of the newsletter. I think it's cool. Sorry if you miss the old font, but it wouldn't really fit in here, now would it? If anybody's curious, this newsletter was created completely in Word, and definitely not by following Word's idiotic template. Nope, I created it by myself. I made a logo too, email me if you want to see it.

Rantin n' ravin about computers

Yup, time for me to blab about computers. Today I'll talk about spyware. Spyware apps are programs get onto your computer secretly, track your personal information, and pop up big, ugly advertisements while you surf or while you work (and while you wait, depending on your patience level). They can install numerous ways. Sometimes, if your browser security level is low, they can install just by visiting a website! That's right, you can just cruise around and you wouldn't know it but some evil spyware is being installed on your computer. Another common source of spyware is through free programs, especially peer-to-peer (P2P: "Ooh...I learned a new acronym today!") programs like KaZaA and Grokster and probably dozens that I haven't heard of. When you install one of these P2P programs, you also install loads of spyware, sometimes masquerading under the disguise of various useful programs like a search bar for Internet Explorer or a form-filling application. Well, that's stupid, especially since there are FREE TOOLBARS from various sites that contain NO SPYWARE and usually work better anyway, not to mention that there is a perfectly good form-filler INCLUDED WITH WINDOWS!!! Jeesh, some people never learn. Worst yet, some of these spyware apps PRETEND TO BE PROGRAMS THAT GET RID OF SPYWARE, while the same stuff it scans for is getting dumped on your system. One particularly nasty company offers a free online scan, then installs an awful program during the scan called FavoriteMan that connects to its company's servers and DOWNLOADS EVEN MORE SPYWARE! A lot of these programs try to hide from you, pester you about uninstalling, etc. Sometimes, you'll be downloading a program, and you know, that license agreement thing comes up. Suppose you're a paranoid freak like me and you actually read it. You scroll through the usual yada yada and you happen upon this thing that says, in unreadable legalese, "We will dump spyware on your system if you choose to install the program." Now suppose that you thought, "No way!" I'm not lettin' no stoo-pid (flashback to 1st issue) on my computer!" You click the big button that says [NO] and the

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installer terminates. No program, no spyware, right? WRONG! The spyware actually installed WHEN YOU STARTED THE INSTALLER, and quitting that dang thing is not going to get you anywhere. Time to boot up that spyware remover, let it scan, blah blah, remove it, blah blah, do you want to do this, what about that, blah blah. What a waste of time. Keep yourself informed about spyware - visit www.spywareguide.com regularly. And visit security.kolla.de, where you'll locate my favorite full-featured spyware scanner, Spybot Search & Destroy. Stay paranoid.

To the Next Level

Here's Chris' column, a bit shorter this time:

Hello! Welcome to this time's To The Next Level - today I will talk about Final Fantasy X. First I will talk about how to easily defeat Seymour Natus. To easily defeat him, all you have to do is have Tidus cast Haste on everybody and have Yuna cast Reflect on everybody. Also, have Auron attack the Mortibody. Have Aeons in overdrive mode or do a powerful attack. Or you can have Yuna in overdrive. Use Bahamut and have him use Impulse or an Aga attack. Have Yuna use hi-potions. NOTE: Do not use any white magic cure attacks on the party because they will just bounce on to Seymour, also don't use Haste on the party when you have Reflect. Have Yuna cast Reflect on Seymour that way when Mortibody heals Seymour it will bounce off and hit you. Have Yuna Grand Summon Shiva when Seymour is at about 12,000 or so then she will use Diamond Dust on him and he will take 8500-9000 damage, then he'll use flare on you but it will be reflected onto him so don't worry he'll do tons of damage to himself which is really entertaining, and it takes the stress out of the battle. Flare tends to do about 2357 or something within that range every hit. He'll be dead in no time. NOTE: Mortibody will use Desperado doing about 1200 to all and undoing Reflect so recast it on the party or you're toast. Then, battle done! Well, that's all for this time this is Chris Motto saying catch you later.

Show me the latkes!

(a column by Matt Caplan)

Hey, this is Matt. What's up with all the Christmas cheer? Whatever happened to Hanukkah cheer? I mean, next holiday season, go to a store and take a look around. Count all the Hanukkah things and then count all the Christmas things. When was the last time a cashier said, "Happy Hanukkah?" And what about the radio? When was the last time you heard "Driedel, Driedel, Driedel?" Even as I type this, the computer doesn't recognize the word "Driedel." Stupid Micro\$oft. And when was the time you saw a store with a menorah in the window, instead of Christmas lights? I've heard people say that Santa is not religious. St. Nick is, but not Santa. Aren't they the same person? Hmmm. Go on a diet, Santa. Not that I'm opposing Christmas, but where's the Hanukkah spirit?

Things that really, really, really bug me

I've been itching for a long time to get this two things out. I know you're going to think I'm really crazy to even bring these titchy little minor annoyances up, but it's my newsletter, so deal with it.

Countdowns at sports games. When people count down, they look at the scoreboard. The problem? When they say "5!", they

actually just see 5.99 on the scoreboard, see the 5, miss the .99, and just say 5 when 6 would work better. This usually results in an annoying "5...4...3...2...1...pause...0!" Even worse is that I'm the only person who's counting correctly and everybody else is a second ahead of me. And nobody will ever hear me, no matter how loud I scream it over the entire stadium. It makes me think: Maybe everybody is actually a second ahead of me. They might what I'll put on my hot dog before I even order it. Now there's something that could be used for evil. Of course, everybody's stupid because they're counting wrong anyway, so we've got the smart people with no powers and dumb people with loads of powers. I'm sure some Waterbury citizens can relate to that.

Waiters and waitresses. How old do you have to be before they realize that you DON'T want crayons? I show up at Friendly's, and the server has to be told that I don't want crayons, and no kid's menu and picture to color in for me either. I'm eleven and I'm pretty tall for my age. They don't ask 50-year-old men for ID when they order a drink, do they? So why give eleven-year-old children crayons? They think we'd have some use for these low-quality crayons with labels that little Tommy has ripped off so we can get little blue marks all over our hands that we just dutifully washed. Not so.

What's wrong with a Mac?

This article is dedicated to all the Mac haters out there. I'll make this brief, but I own a Mac and I know some people (hint hint, nudge nudge) that seem to think that the Mac is inferior to Windows. Here are just a few of the ways that Mac OS X 10.3 Panther, the latest version of the Mac operating system, is better than any version of Windows you could name:

--- There are so few viruses written for the Mac, it's not even worth buying anti-virus software. Of course, since software manufacturers know that there are almost zero viruses for the Mac, anti-virus software is pretty cheap.

--- Macs are more visually appealing than Windows. Mac OS X comes with a new 2D graphics engine named Quartz that renders the many special graphics effects in the OS. The Mac can always handle it all.

---Macs come with the Safari web browser, which has more features and is faster than Internet Explorer. They also come with the iApps: iChat AV, iCal, iTunes, iPhoto, iMovie, and iDVD. Not to mention Stickies, Sherlock, and an updated Finder. None of which, except for Finder, have equivalent pre-included replacements in Windows.

---Mac OS X crashes so little, you'd want to call your friends over to see it happening. Mac programs are as vulnerable as Windows programs to crashing, but unlike in Windows, when a program crashes, it just closes and you can get on with life without any problems. Always.

If that isn't enough to make you want to ditch your Windows computer right now, email me and I'll send you a few more.

Ending my useless train of thought

Okey-dokey, goodbye. I'll see you next week. Hopefully on time.

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