



SAHOA

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"SAHOA is a tax-exempt organization dedicated to supporting current and future small owner operated businesses in the SE CT area"

SAHOA VOICE

Newsletter of the Small and Home Office Association

March Meeting Recap

SAHOA member, **Mike Baker**, owner of DataThought Consulting, LLC, presented some handy tips on keeping unwanted pests from your computer. These include viruses, pop-ups, worms, and key logging programs that can maliciously invade your operating system, create a serious security risk, and generally wreak havoc. Mike discussed various precautions to take to prevent infestation, and the process for removal if you do become infected. He also talked briefly about thumb drives, and how to prevent data loss, damage, and other problems associated with them.



Mike Baker

We had three guests attend the meeting. Mary Soares, owner of Mary's Portuguese Sweet Bread has joined SAHOA. Mary brought samples of her delicious bread for members to sample. Mary's friend, Delores Carlo, also attended. Our third guest was Carol Precourt, owner of Carol's Helping Hands, a cleaning and landscape service in Ivoryton, CT.

April 12th Meeting Dillan's, Norwich

Our next meeting will be held on April 12th, 2006 at 6 p.m. at Dillan's in Norwich. Dillan's is located at 78 Franklin Street, downtown. From I-395 N, take exit 80E, turn right off the ramp onto route 82. Go to the end of route 82 (across from Dunkin' Donuts), and turn right onto Chelsea Harbor Drive. Go straight through the first two intersections, and turn right onto Main street at the third set of lights. Quickly move to the left lane, and make a quick jog left onto Franklin street. Dillan's is on your left, after you pass Bath street and The Norwich Bulletin. There is a parking lot across from Artspace, as well as on-street parking.

We will be ordering from the menu. Please call Kathy Pooler at (860) 889-2893 to RSVP for the next meeting.

Our guest speaker will be **Anthony Cronin**, business & financial editor of The Day. Mr. Cronin has covered the businesses and economy of eastern Connecticut for more than a decade. He will discuss the newly launched business quarterly publication called "Enterprise", and offer tips for writing press releases.



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Internet services; full internet access and
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and web mail.

Honorary Members

Tony Cronin
The New London Day

Hon. Rob Simmons
U.S. House of Representatives

Peter Pappas
CSBDC

Arlene Vogel
CT Procurement Tech. Asst. Prog.

Thomas Sheridan
Chamber of Commerce of SE CT

Hon. Edith Prague
Connecticut State Senate

Diana Urban
Representative

MERG Legislative Event

MERG will have a 19 table display stretching the length of the main concourse at the Capital from April 24th-26th, 2006. The concourse is the tunnel connecting the Legislative Office Building to the Capital Building, and is heavily traveled by many legislators every day. Last year's exhibit drew much attention, and served to educate lawmakers on the importance, accomplishments, and economic contributions of Connecticut's small and micro enterprise business owners. SAHOA members interested in volunteering to tend the exhibit for a few hours should contact Leslie for more details.

The highlight of the three-day event is a reception for legislators and micro business owners on Wednesday, April 26, 2006 from 4:30 to 7:00 PM in the Old Judiciary Room – 3rd Floor at the Connecticut State Capitol Building in Hartford. This event provides a rare opportunity for micro business owners to meet with elected officials to share concerns and ideas. It also offers a chance to display products made in Connecticut with purchase information, so please don't miss this excellent networking opportunity. Finally, if you are a food or beverage vendor located in CT, and wish to provide food or drinks for the reception, please contact Barbara Styrzcula at (860) 249-3800 ext. 301.

May 10th Meeting Speaker

Will Morrissey
Pier 76 Promotions

Connecticut Small & Minority Business Showcase

The Secretary of the State's Office, in association with the Eastern Connecticut Chamber of Commerce, will host the 13th Small and Minority Business Showcase at The Port N' Starboard Room at Ocean Beach on April 6th, 2006. This will be the second event in New London. SAHOA members have been invited to participate as exhibitors and attendees, and we have reserved a table for all our members. The event runs from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. A networking reception begins at 3:00 p.m. Throughout the day, there will be workshops, booth displays, product demos, and prizes.

Several SAHOA members have volunteered to greet visitors to our table for part of the event. If you cannot attend, but wish to display cards, brochures, or other information about your business, please make sure you get the materials to either Kathy or Leslie by April 5th.

SBA / IRS / DOL Small Business Forum

The Small Business Administration, the Internal Revenue Service, and U.S. Department of Labor are sponsoring a forum on Wednesday April 5, 2006 10:00 – 11:30 am at the MDC Training Center, 125 Maxim Road Hartford, CT.

The forum is a roundtable meeting where issues impacting small businesses will be discussed. You are encouraged to provide topics and issues for discussion. The forum will also allow your group to establish relationships with local representatives of the Small Business Administration (SBA), the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the U.S. Department of Labor (U.S. DOL) as well as other business groups. The meeting is open to anyone from your organization who is interested in attending. Seating is limited! Please RSVP via e-mail to Joseph McCarthy at joseph.s.mccarthy@irs.gov or by calling (203)781-3135.

MERG Meeting

The next meeting of the Microenterprise Resource Group will be held at noon on April 5th, at CEDF in Hartford. We will be finalizing plans for the upcoming event at the Legislative Office Building on April 26th, 2006. If you wish to attend, please contact Leslie for directions or a ride. MERG is a statewide network uniting service providers and micro business owners with a mission to strengthen the resources for micro enterprise in the state of Connecticut through cooperation, advocacy, and education.

Express Yourself: An Introduction to Blogging

By Dianne M. Daniels, AICI



Blogging has taken the online world by storm – authors on subjects as diverse as clothing and professional image all the way to animals, marketing and much more have entered the world wide web and beyond.

What's a Blog? In its simplest form, a Blog (short for weblog) can be used as an online diary – a way to put your thoughts out for comment to literally the entire online world. Whether that's a good thing or not is a highly personal decision.

I started my journey through the world of the blog after hearing quite a bit through my online and offline marketing newsletters and colleagues. Blogging was the next best thing to having your own newspaper column, or, because of the potential reach, your own radio show.

I initially had an account with Blogger.com. Once you visit their website, you choose a username and password, decide on a display name to 'sign' your blog posts, and review the Terms of Service. Don't skip this step, because there is good information in the TOS regarding your rights and responsibilities as a blogger, and what the company's responsibilities are to you.

Next, you'll title your blog – this is where you should do some homework prior to setting up your weblog. The title of your blog should definitely relate to its subject matter,

but that's the rub: since your weblog can be used to discuss /rant/express your opinion on a multitude of subjects, the title should reflect that. If it's going to be purely personal, then naming your blog can be as easy as "Joe Blow's Rant". If you're going to blog for business (which could be the subject of an entirely separate article), then your blog title should be related to your business or your profession.

Once you've decided on a title, then you'll pick a color scheme / template for your blog, and away you'll go! You'll need to create a post in order to see the results of your work, so have a paragraph or two ready to go. It literally takes less than 10 minutes to set everything up once you've gotten prepared. I just created a new blog (for purposes of illustration) entitled 'Loving Your Old House'. It's a subject I feel qualified to write about, based on my personal experiences. And it's just that easy!

I have a business-related blog which was initially called Impressions with Style. This blog was created using BlogHarbor, a pay service that gives you a different alternative to the free services like Blogger. I chose BlogHarbor because it was being used in conjunction with an internet marketing course I took. The set up was fairly easy, and I liked the ability to post in the future (easy to post a month's worth of entries, then set up when they would go 'live') as well as posting to a past date (if you miss your self-imposed deadline).

Beyond the normal text posts, there are now services and software that will enable you to attach audio and video files to your blog, thereby giving your readers a more expanded multi-media experience. If you're blogging for business, and looking to generate an income from blogging, it's a great way to add value and therefore attract additional visitors who might be enticed to view your other offerings.

Blogging for income – Blogging guru Andy Wibbles says it's possible to earn a 6-figure income through blogging – is a different animal altogether than simply blogging to get your opinion out there. I began blogging to give myself an outlet for additional creativity and writing that related to my Image Consulting and Coaching business, but didn't quite fit into my newsletter. It was a lot of fun to compose my thoughts in a more free-form manner and put them out there for others to comment on.

One of the challenges of blogging is that unlike an ezine or newsletter, you're expected to post on a frequent basis. Otherwise, the readers and searchers will have a hard time finding your entries. The blog directories, Google among them, rank content based on 'freshness', and that's why blogs have become the new darling of internet marketers.

Do your homework, perhaps try a free blog service to get a look at what's involved, and decide if

continued...

Blogging continued

blogging is for you. Like with most things related to entrepreneurship, it's a very individual decision. I'll be launching my new blog in mid-April, directed specifically to full-figured women. It has a different focus, based on some changes I've made in my target market, and the beauty of blogging is that it's flexible enough to move with your business and with your market.

Don't be afraid to try something new – check out what other entrepreneurs are doing with blogging and have fun!

SAHOA Dues are Due

Annual dues for many members are due by the May meeting. This year, there will be no increase in dues, which are \$45. Dues may be paid at the April meeting. Please make checks payable to SAHOA. If you cannot attend the meeting, you may mail your check to 598 West Main St., Suite #7 Norwich, CT 06360. SAHOA members may also renew their membership dues by simply clicking a PayPal button on the home page of our website, www.sahoa.org. You do not need to have a PayPal account to use this feature, you can use a credit card as well. Annual dues cover the cost of guest speakers dinners, brochures and business cards for the group, office supplies, and miscellaneous operating expenses.

How I Removed the “Melted Crayola” Look From XP

By Leslie Olding

One of the true joys of working from home is the near-constant companionship of my cats. The newest arrival is a kitten, and thus, capable of mass destruction. So when he casually tipped over a cup of water onto my keyboard in January, he watched with amusement as Laurin dove under my desk to disconnect the keyboard, and I began furiously mopping up. Things seemed okay with a new keyboard in place, but my computer was suddenly making a new noise. A bad noise. A noise that worried me.

The new computer arrived in less than a week. As the kitten moved into the box to destroy all the excess packaging, we quickly got down to the unhappy job of migrating all of my work to the new system, which to my horror, was Windows XP. I'd been using Windows 2000 for several years, and I hesitated to make the switch, knowing what I do of the evils of XP.

But no evil is as offensive as the sickening look of XP. I've heard it described as looking like a box of Crayolas melted on your screen. It was bright blue and green, and it simply wouldn't do. I had to change this before I could do any serious work on this machine.

The first step to ridding my system of factory pre-sets was to replace the background image and screen saver to something more soothing than a Vaio logo. I spend a lot of time at my computer, much of it doing graphic design and color selection, so colors

and images have a huge impact on me. A right-mouse on the desktop reveals a menu with the final

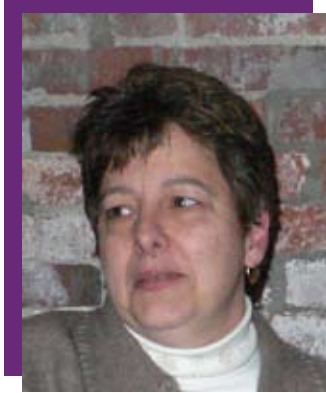


option, “properties”. I selected the “desktop” tab, and choose from a long list of fine art images I've collected from Second Nature (<http://www.secondnaturecd.com>). Things have improved drastically already.

And now for the really wonderful transformation: From that same “properties” menu, I selected the “appearance” tab. Next, I selected “Windows classic”, which returned all the toolbars to a nice, sane shade of gray. I modified it further by selecting the colors for my background workspace, my active and inactive toolbars. I'm a fan of warm tones, so I've replaced those chilly blues with a pale pink for active, and a warm green for inactive, and a darker green for workspace backgrounds. Combined with an impressionists painting as a background, I now have a soothing, respectable-looking XP interface that doesn't look like it was designed by first-graders.

The moral is - don't be afraid to customize your computer. You don't need to live with the manufacturers' bad color choices, and you should choose a look that stimulates your creativity. Oh, and only drink water in the kitchen until the kitten is fully grown.

MEMBER NEWS



Denise Adamik, owner of *Maid in America*, recently landed a one-year contract with the Mashantucket Pequot tribe to provide janitorial services at their construction sites.



Dr. Ken & Noreen Lankin met Governor Jodi Rell at the Connecticut Food Association's Annual Dinner Meeting at the Aqua Turf in Southington, CT on January 27th. Governor Rell is a strong supporter of healthy snacking for CT schools which is in line with the philosophy at Dr. Lankin's Specialty Foods, LLC. Donated Awesome Almonds® were placed on each of the tables of this elegant affair by CT Specialty Food Association officials.



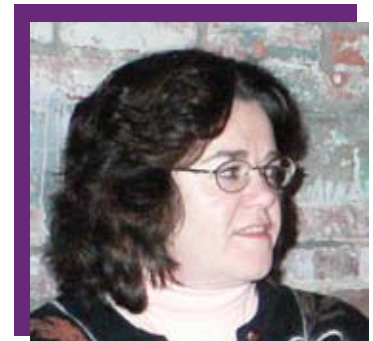
Liz Farrell, founder of *Gone By Noon LLC*, a professional organizing company, attended two national professional organizing conferences in Boston, March 21-24. She attended seminars including 'Current Techniques in the Treatment of Compulsive Hoarding,' and 'Compulsive Shopping and Acquisition,' and 'Records Management and Retention Schedule Creation.' *Gone By Noon* specializes in business organizing, chronic disorganization, and elderly relocations. More information can be found at www.gonebynoon.com.



Fine art photographer **Peter J. Crowley** was featured in a front page story in the March 3rd issue of *The Reminder*. Peter will also be having a show in September at ArtSpace with Sculptor Joey Jablonski featuring his figure photos and Jablonski's clay sculptures.



Mary Soares, owner of Mary's Portuguese Sweet Bread, has recently teamed with 1-800-bakery.com to begin selling her bread online. 1-800-bakery.com is a well-known site offering a variety of specialty baked goods.



Kathy Pooler, owner of Publications Plus is celebrating the company's 15 year anniversary. Many upgrades have occurred over the years including enlarging the office floor space. The newest addition (Kathy's toy) is a G5 Mac computer with a 20" flat screen. This addition makes work very enjoyable.

**-----SAHOA Meetings are Open to the Public-----
Please Join Us**

MEMBER NEWS

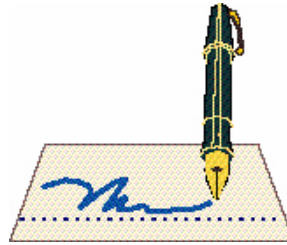


U.S. Navy Photo

Brian F Kobylarz, of Tele-Cine Productions, is shown videotaping Navy Captain Dave DiOrio, director of the SSGN Program Office as he describes the battle management center aboard USS Ohio (SSGN726) while underway off the Washington coast in January.

Ohio is the first of four submarines being converted from a ballistic missile platform to a guided missile and Special Operations Forces (SOF) platform.

The high definition footage was down-converted, edited and provided to the Navy for release to broadcast media.



Geoff McLean of McLean Research Associates is pleased to announce the release of their newest software add-on package for Microsoft's Flight Simulator 9. The add-on allows real-time naval and air warfare to be simulated while allowing pilots of aircraft, ships, and submarines, as well as land-based batteries to interact with each other virtually. Over 100 different platforms are modeled and currently the add-on features F-14, F/A-18, P-3C, SH-60, and S-3 aircraft interfaces. Visit <http://mclean-research.com> for more information on Underway! (the add-on) and Naval Engagement! the Linux-based simulation.

Lottie Scott, owner of LBS Human Resource Consultants, was one of 17 people statewide to receive a Diversity Award from the University of Connecticut's Vice Provost for Multicultural and International Affairs. Lottie received the Presidential Humanitarian Award for Diversity at a ceremony in Storrs on March 29th, 2006. The award was given to those who have been active in combating prejudice, ethnic discrimination and racial bigotry in the community or workplace.

Steve Ingle, of WordCo Indexing Services recently created an S-corporation, WordCo Indexing Services, Inc. While this has caused some headaches such as obtaining a new TIN, ordering new checks, etc. it should provide some beneficial tax advantages to the business.

Trade Show Workshop

On Tuesday, March 14th, **Dennis Brown** of CTCIC held a lunchtime workshop on trade shows for SAHOA members at the offices of WordCo in Norwich. The lively discussion covered many interesting topics related to effective marketing of small businesses. The topic was chosen for its relevancy in light of the

two upcoming trade show/expo events in which SAHOA members will participate. We hope to run more of these lunchtime seminars/workshops in the future. We would like to thank **Steven Ingle**, owner of WordCo, for allowing our group to meet at his office on short notice.

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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Send us your news!

SAHOA Voice editors want to hear from you!

Send us your news, updates, promotional information, sale notices, or anything else you think would be of interest to SAHOA members.

MEMBER MEETINGS

2nd Wednesday of every month
meeting places are
announced monthly
6:00 - 6:30 Network
6:30 - 7:30 Dinner
7:30 - 9:00 Speaker/Meeting
Please RSVP to Kathy, 889-2893
Kathy@Publicationsplus.com

MEMBERSHIP POLICY

Annual dues of \$45 made payable to SAHOA. The fee for non-members attending meetings is \$5.

NETWORKING

We will have a table set aside for members to leave business cards or brochures about their businesses. The table will be available at future meetings so don't forget to bring your brochures, literature, business cards, etc.

Next Meeting
APRIL 12TH
See You
There!