

Intruder Alert: Safe Computing Practices - Internet Antivirus Pro Scam

By **Burt Tschache**

Happy New Year, Dear Readers. Just when I thought I was going to be branching out into other areas of computing, a cretinous little vermin called Internet Antivirus Pro or IAP has reared its pointy little head. Many computer owners have been infected with this ingenious piece of malware lately that masquerades about as an antivirus program. Do not be fooled.

It seems to hitchhike onto downloads or as a part of under-secure websites and does a quiet install of itself. That will be the last moment of computing quietude you will have until you remove it, and removing it is not particularly easy. What happens next can best be described as "All hell breaking loose." Messages from Windows Security Center begin popping up, warning you that your virus protection is off and your virus definitions are out of date.

IAP will then run itself auto-

matically and warn you that you have numerous infections, could lose important documents, your firstborn child and worse unless you register the software. Do NOT register the software under any conditions, as that will only make it worse and you will likely lose any money you have paid to these shysters. It will also install other malware on your system, some of which could make a longshoreman blush.

If you are already infected at this point, the best advice I can give is to shut down your computer before it does anything worse and take several slow deep breaths. Please do not hyperventilate. If you feel you want to do battle with this unmentionable piece of software, I can provide you the tools to do it. Best of all, they are free.

I am not in the habit of recommending software; however, this is the best tool I have found for removing said malware. Restart your computer and

start slowly tapping the [F8] key until a menu of start options appears. Choose *Safe Mode with Networking*, press [Enter] and wait for the start. If you are not comfortable with using Safe Mode, stop reading, call me and I will do battle in your stead.

For those brave souls that want to vanquish the virus yourself, open your browser, go to www.malwarebytes.org/mbam.php, download the free version or go to downloadcnet.com and enter malwarebytes in the search bar at the top of the page. The free version is there, also. There are over 30 million downloads of Malwarebytes Anti-Malware as of December 28, 2009, at CNet alone.

Download the file to your desktop and then right-click on the file and choose "Run as Administrator" to install Malwarebytes. Use the default settings for the program and then your sword is ready to slay the slobbering troglodyte. While remaining in Safe Mode, run the

program (you may need to "Run as Administrator") and use the Full Scan option. Once Malwarebytes is complete, quarantine any viruses found, reboot your computer and resume computing as usual. Run Malwarebytes on a regular basis.

As a computer security wonk, I must admit that IAP is one of the best-written pieces of malware I have ever seen. That does not mean that it has endeared itself to me. However, Malwarebytes Anti-Malware has endeared itself to me and I have purchased the full-featured version for a one-time fee of \$24.95. It allows you to run it in the background, schedule updates and scans at set times. It is well worth it. Be safe out there.

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Dance Into Shape This New Year at Vernonia Jazzercise

Traditionally, the #1 New Year's resolution goal is to lose weight and get in shape. As we begin a new decade, people from around the world will attend Jazzercise classes as part of their plan to get fit. These folks will have just as much fun burning off the "holiday calories" as they did enjoying their favorite festive foods.

Each 60-minute Jazzercise class offers a fusion of jazz dance, resistance training, Pilates, yoga, and kickboxing movements set to popular music. The Jazzercise fitness program has benefited people of all ages and fitness levels for more than 40 years. Founded by fitness pioneer and Jazzercise CEO Judi Shepard Missett, Jazzercise is more popular than ever with 7,500 instructors teaching more than 32,000 classes weekly in all 50 states and 32 countries.

At Vernonia Jazzercise, we offer 10 classes weekly to fit your busy schedule. The following is the current Winter schedule: 5:30 AM and 9:45 AM on Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays; 7:15 PM Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday and Saturday's at 8:30 AM. For more information about Jazzercise, contact Costley at (503)429-0196 or at pcostley@agalis.net. For class information, go to jazzercise.com, and click on "find a class" or call (800) FIT-IS-IT.

Holiday Bucks Results

The Vernonia Chamber of Commerce wishes to thank everyone who participated in the Holiday Bucks Program.

In one month's time \$150,000 was spent locally at Vernonia businesses-- just by the customers who participated in the Holiday Bucks Program. I bet a person could quadruple that number to have an accurate count of the monies spent here locally in one month. That is truly amazing. Let's shoot for a higher number next year!

The following are the winners of Holiday Bucks gift certificates: Sharon Gibson, Rauna Johnson, John Brewer, Roxana Sherman-Heath, Scott Benzel and Danielle Fife.



Marilyn Nicks from the Vernonia Area Chamber of Commerce draws final winners in this year's "Holiday Bucks" which encourages shoppers to spend money locally during the holiday season.

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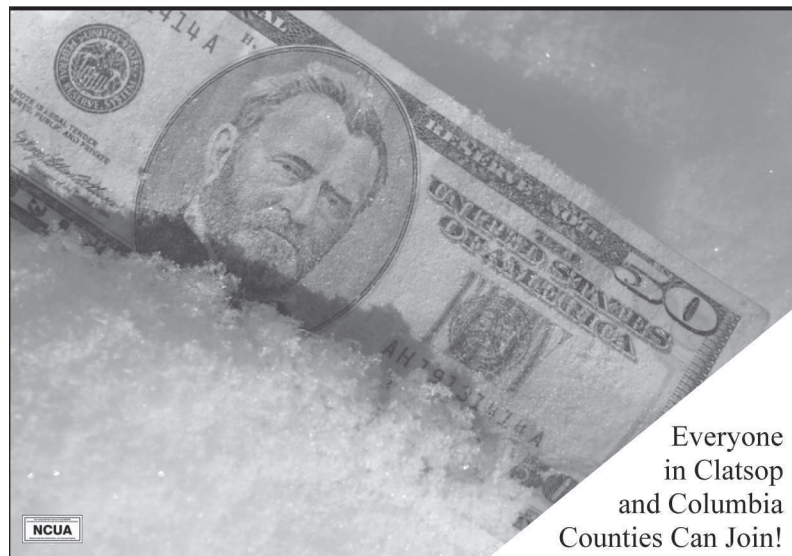
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