

JANUARY 2003

WELCOME TO THE JANUARY EDITION OF FAMILY COMPUTER NEWS  
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Welcome to the New Year. I hope your holidays were pleasant and that this year goes well for you.

### XP PRO OR HOME?

Did you know that there are two different versions of Windows XP? This adds to the confusion about upgrading or buying a new computer. Windows XP is the latest and most current edition of Windows, but it comes in two "flavors", PRO and HOME.

Beyond the retail cost difference (\$199 for HOME and \$299 for PRO) there are a few features in PRO that don't come with HOME.

PRO has Remote Desktop, a built-in software that allows another operator, either across the network or Internet, to control your computer remotely. This can be handy as a help tool to assist with a problem or as a way to connect to the computer at work while at home. If you are familiar with PCAnywhere then you will be familiar with Remote Desktop.

PRO is self-configuring to a network, whether connecting to a home network or a large installation at work or school. HOME can work with either, but requires the normal amount of fiddling with the settings to get it to work right.

PRO has an optional Encrypting File System that protect sensitive material. It also has Restricted File Access, yet another layer of access protection.

Finally, PRO was an excellent Restore option when the inevitable blunder occurs that wipes out some or all of your work.

But which version is better for you? The decision should be based on how valuable any of these extra features are for you. All of the features can be duplicated with third-party software, but that usually requires a level of expertise beyond an average user. If you do not have need for remote access, are not connected to a network, and have little use for high-security file protection, then HOME is a better choice. If any of these features are needed for your setup, then consider PRO. Almost all new computers are sold with Windows XP, but check to make sure which version you are buying and that you get the one that is right for you.

### HOW ARE THE VIRUSES IN YOUR COMPUTER?

In many recent newsletters, I've warned about the hazards of computer viruses. They are still a huge threat and everyone should be proactive in trying to prevent their damage. I've posted links

to free online virus scanners, but they have shortcomings in that they can't prevent you from getting a virus.

Here is a link to download a free anti-virus product that is updateable and provides real-time prevention. As with all FREE software, there is usually advertising to contend with, but then again, we contend with that with our free TV and radio, don't we?

This software is from Grisoft, a well-known name in the anti-virus industry. From this link you can download either free version. A permanent version with limited features, or a 30-trial full-featured version. Either one is a vast improvement over no anti-virus or an out-dated anti-virus product. <http://tinyurl.com/3vng>

### COLDS ARE VIRUSES, TOO

There seems to be a rash of the common cold & flu going around now. I am just getting over a particularly bad one myself. With all the remedies and rumors about colds, how many are based in truth? You can find out that and many other facts about colds and their prevention at <http://www.commoncold.org/>

And believe your dentist when he says to wash your hands and keep your fingers away from your face!

### DID YOU KNOW THAT YOUR COMPUTER CAN HELP FIND A CURE FOR CANCER?

United Devices has been running a program for several years that allows calculations to be done by remote computers when they are idle. This type of work distribution, known as distributed computing, is a way to incorporate thousands of personal computers to do the work in minutes that would take years of conventional computing resources. This is exciting technology and is being used in a way that we may all benefit, trying new combinations of chemicals to combat cancer.

I've had several of my shop computers running these calculations during their idle time for the last couple of years. So far I've donated more than 3 years worth of computer time by just allowing my computers to work for the cause while I'm not actively using them. I've started a team at United Devices to track these accrued hours and activities.

If you would like to join Team Family Computer USA, just use this link to find out more. You will need to download and install the background application that does the work before you can join the team.

Here is a link to download the United Devices application.

<http://members.ud.com/download/gold/>

And here is a link to join the team. <http://tinyurl.com/3wev>

### REINDEER TRAINING SCHOOL

In case you didn't have enough to do, here's a free online game so you or the grandchildren can help train reindeer for Santa's run next year. Enjoy!

<http://christmas.dialmediagroup.com/reindeer.html>

Remember, you can read any of our previous newsletters from our website's News section. See the link to our site below. Thanks for reading. Now you're one of the Family!

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