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## Agent 000 and Camera Clicks

By F. L. Ferreri

The platform I was on was slowly receding into the wall. My hands were tied behind my back and below me was a pool full of alligators that, by the looks of it, had not been fed in quite some time.

*So this was it! I'm destined to end my career in a spy thriller cliché.* I sighed as I watched one of the alligators tie a napkin around its neck. A second one was sharpening a knife on one of those things that looked like an iron rod stuck on a wooden handle. I shook my head. *I can't even go in a dignified manner, I thought. I have to go with cartoon overtones!*

The platform I was on was now half its original size and shrinking. I looked down at the pit one more time and saw the size 13 EEEEE shoes I was wearing. My shoes! Of course!! I clicked my heels three times and said out loud, "There's no place like home!" A ceramic blade, sharp as a razor, shot out of the heel. The combination of the sideways heel pressure and the tone of my voice activated the spring mechanism to eject the blade. Jamal, the engineer that designed the shoes, had a twisted sense of humor but he was good, I'll give him that.

I quickly squatted and cut the rope that held my hands and then used it to snag an overhead beam. I pulled myself up just as the platform neatly slid into the wall. "No Italian dinner tonight!" I said to the alligators as I worked my way along the beam to the window.

That Natasha had gone too far! Now it was gloves off! No more Mr. Nice Guy. She and her crew were going down. "Down!" I shouted with conviction as I crawled down the drain pipe of the warehouse in which I was held. Did the Virus Queen and her henchmen think they could prevent the message from getting out by doing away with me? "Ha!" I shouted as I ran down the alley and into a bunch of youths wearing leather jackets, baseball caps backwards, and Goth tans.

"Hey Mister, what's ya' hurry?" said one of the gang members who had an earring blinking in his right lobe.

"Whoa! Don't go in this warehouse. There's a pool of alligators that are really hungry. One is sharpening a knife and another is tying on a napkin, and..." I don't think they believed me. "Really..."

The boys looked at each other and black question marks appeared over their heads. *These comic overtones are ruining my style! I wonder how can I get rid of them?* Blinking Lobe came a little closer and said, "Never mind 'bout that, Big Foot. Ya' got any money?"

When I woke up my wallet was gone, as was my high school class ring. Darn, I thought as I slowly came to my senses. *I only had two more payments on that thing!* I pulled my hands through my mussed hair and tried to look dignified as I got up out of the gutter. A group of Japanese tourists gave me a wide berth. Several took pictures discretely. I hobbled back to my office and started writing this article for the newsletter. *This will fix her, I thought. Now people will know and she'll be neutralized! Spread*

*the word!!* I typed furiously...

To keep your computer healthy you have to approach security in a layered fashion. The best way to defeat the baddies out there is to become a knowledgeable computer user. Follow these steps:

Think First, Click Second: only open email attachments you're expecting, don't click on any ol' link you get in an email, look at where you're going (ebay.com is not the same as ebay-com.cn), and never divulge personal information unless you initiate the transaction.

Outside Computer Protection: have a hardware firewall or router at home that's enabled and blocks all incoming traffic. For the .05% of the population that runs mail, Web or other servers at home, only open the ports required for those services.

Inside Computer Protection: install good security software on your computer including anti-virus, anti-spyware, and a firewall and keep them all updated.

Enable Security Features: your operating system comes with a lot of security features that helps protect your computer; be sure you enable them.

Scan Your Computer: enable your anti-virus, anti-spyware software to scan your computer at least weekly.

There! With the message out I could finally go to the clinic to get my head bandaged. On the way there who did I run into but Blinking Lobe! "YOU!" I shouted and pointed. "Give me back my ring, NOW!" I started making karate moves and chopping the air. *This should frighten them,* I thought.

"Hey, Tiny," said B. Lobe over his shoulder, "Big Foot wants ta' dance." The group of youths parted and out stepped Tiny, all six foot seven inches and 350 pounds of him. When he smiled he showed two rows of steel teeth. "Uh oh, Mister," said the leader, "it's not good when Tiny smiles."

The last thing I remember was the amused looks of the Japanese tourists and the *clicks* of their cameras.

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## Do I Really Need Administrator Access to My Computer?

By P. Phillips

No, most people on campus do not need administrator access to their computers. Administrator access to your computer provides your user account with elevated privileges to your computer which allow you to install programs and alter configuration settings. While this may seem like a good thing, it provides a standard computer user with too many privileges. After your computer is initially set up, there is very little need for these elevated privileges.

In today's environment, where emails and web sites can install malware on your computer without your knowledge, having elevated privileges is a distinct disadvantage allowing these programs free reign on your computer.

## Administrative Access? (cont.)

If you install programs on a regular basis, experiment with configuration settings, or use a notebook computer, having administrator access is necessary to effectively use your computer. If you just browse the web, use Microsoft Office tools, or Adobe tools, chances are you would get along fine without it.

IS&T is experiencing a flurry of repeat calls for help from people whose computers have become infected with various malware – viruses, spyware, and nuisance ware. On the third repeat call, IS&T may elect to remove your administrator privileges to help protect you from these threats. This will be done in consultation with you and your manager and will ensure that you can continue to do your job.

If you do not have administrator privileges and do need to have programs installed or configurations changed, a call to the IS&T Call Center (x5050) will get your issue resolved within a few days.

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## Word Tip of the Month

### Turning Off Word Options

Sometimes Word does too much in trying to be helpful and anticipating your needs. Here are some default options you might want to change:

- 'Straight quotes' with "smart quotes"
- Fractions (1/2) with fraction character (½)
- \*Bold\* and *italic* with real formatting
- Internet and network paths with hyperlinks
- Ordinals (1st) with superscripts (1<sup>st</sup>)
- Hyphens (--) with dash (–)
- Automatic bulleted lists
- Automatic numbered lists
- Set left-and First-indent with tabs and backspaces
- Border lines
- ... and there are more

It's easy to turn off these options if you know where to go. For Word 2007, click on the Office button in the upper left-hand corner of the Word screen, then click on the Word Options button at the bottom of the next screen, click on Proofing on the left side of the next screen, AutoCorrect Options... button, AutoFormat As You Type tab, and uncheck those options you do not want. Also be sure to click on the AutoFormat tab and click off similar options there, too.

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## Excel Tip of the Month

### Bar Graphs in a Cell

Cell bar graphs are built using the Excel REPT function, which lets you repeat one character a variable number of times. Using =REPT("Hi ", 5) will give you "Hi Hi Hi Hi Hi". And using =REPT("|", C2) will give you a nice graph. Note that I'm using the up/down bar between the quotes.

1	Year	Bottles	
2	Port	1956	7 =REPT(" ", C2)
3	Claret	1999	15
4	Chablis	2007	45
5	Cabernet	2005	30

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## 50 Tips and Random Thoughts About Email: Part 15 (continued from past months)

49. Don't give out your email address unless asked by a friend or business colleague. If you go shopping and the clerk at the counter asks you for your email address politely decline. After all, what do they want to do, keep in contact with the monkey wrench you just bought?
50. Use the most recent version of your favorite Web browser when accessing Web email. Newer browsers offer enhanced security protection.
51. If you're using a public terminal, at an internet café for example or library, for goodness sakes do not say 'yes' when it asks you if you want to save the password you just entered.
52. (Here's an extra tip!) If you're using a public terminal, close the browser when you end your Internet session. If you're really paranoid, you can clear cache, too.

Do you have some favorite tips you would like to share with the University? Forward them on to the editor. He's always desperate for newsletter filler.

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## Quote of the Month

To put the world right in order, we must first put the nation in order; to put the nation in order, we must first put the family in order; to put the family in order, we must first cultivate our personal life; we must first set our hearts right.

-Confucius

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