

Computer Bits by Mark Eggert of Raad One Network Solutions, Inc.

Welcome to Computer Bits, a series of articles on computers and network information. I had a great experience from last month's article. A TDMAW member contacting me both via phone call and an email to tell me about a program they use to search for and remove spyware like the one I was talking about. So for this month's article I thought I'd revisit spyware search and removal programs since it has been over a year since I last touched on the topic.

As can be seen by last month's article, spyware creators are getting more aggressive and annoying. Not only are they spying on what you're doing on your computer and where you're going on the internet, they're installing programs on your computer and then trying to have you pay them to remove these programs. Now there are a number of programs available that search for and remove spyware from your computer. Of these, three of them are always trading places as the best pick of various sources as they include more functionality. They are: Lavasoft's Ad-aware, Spy-Bot's Spy-Bot Search & Destroy, and InfoWorks SpyRemover. All of this type of program needs to be updated as new spyware programs are created and all three of the leaders have a monthly update schedule. Also, all of these programs run in a reactive mode when installed. This means that you have to manually run them periodically to search and remove spyware. I personally like this mode of operation as I have control of it. Of the top three, Spy-Bot S&D can be configured to scan automatically. While this is great for users who don't want to bother with manually running the program, you need to remember that this process is resource intensive and your computer may slow down while the program is running. If you're concerned about spyware on your computer, I would recommend that you install one of these three programs and use it.

If you have a computer or network question you'd like answered and you think others would like to know the answer to, please forward them to me. My email address is meggert@wi.rr.com, my phone number is 262-679-7704 and my fax number is 262-679-7664.