

## Outline for October 4, 2005

**Reading:** P. Festa, "The Root of the Problem: Bad Software," CNet News.com (Nov. 28, 2001)

1. Puzzle of the day
2. Bad programming
  - a. Fragile code (*qlib* example)
  - b. Failing to (re)initialize (*ftp root* bug)
  - c. Buffer overflows (*fingerd* bug, *ident* bug in *sendmail*)
  - d. Numeric overflows (*sendmail* large integer flaw)

## Puzzle of the Day

Many web sites, and other institutions, give you (or let you choose) a password or phrase to authenticate yourself. In case you forget that word or phrase, they ask you a question, usually one of “What is your mother’s maiden name,” “what are the last four digits of your social security number,” or “what is your address/zip code/phone number”. If you answer correctly, you can reset your password. If you don’t, the authentication fails.

1. What are the good points about using questions as an alternate scheme for users who forget their passwords?
2. What are the bad points?