Orange Bytes

Award Winning Newsmagazine of the North Orange County Computer Club

NOCCC MEETINGS - May 4

9:30 a.m. *Irvine Hall*
NEW TECHNOLOGIES
Herbert Wong Jr

Basic PC Architecture

See Page 4 for details

1:00 p.m. *Irvine Hall*
MAIN MEETING
John Krill

How YOU can make WinXP work

See Page 4 for details

8:30 a.m.
Visual Programming I .... *Science 109*
Visual Basic and Visual Basic Script for Beginners

9:00 a.m.
Autocad .... *Wilkinson 111*
Linux for Desktop Users .... *Wilkinson 210*
Visual Programming II .... *Science 109*
Visual C++ and Visual J++ for Beginners
Windows .... *Science 111*
Windows Tips, Tricks, Q&A

9:30 a.m.
NEW TECHNOLOGIES .... *Irvine Hall*
  See box above
Computer Aided Investing .... *Wilkinson 221*
Member Investment Strategies, Techniques and Software
Hardware Essentials .... *Irvine Hall*
Basic PC Architecture.....

Intermediate Linux .... *Wilkinson 210*
Linux for administrators or programmers
Palms O/S PDA's .... *Science 203*

10:00 a.m.
Linux for Server Adminstrators .... *Wilkinson 210*
Vendors .... *Science 127*
Visual Programming III .... *Science 109*
Intermediate and Advanced Visual Basic

11:15 a.m.
Computer Security .... *Science 203*
domain names, and tracking-down URLs.

Linux Programming Concepts .... *Wilkinson 210*
Macintosh .... *Wilkinson 221*
Office Suites .... *Science 111*
PC Q & A .... *Irvine Hall*
Jim Sanders • Most questions answered, some problems
solved, assorted demos done
Understanding Operating Systems .... *Wilkinson 111*
Get Help with DOS, Windows 3.1, Windows 9x, OS/2, etc.
Visual Programming IV .... *Science 109*
Office program development using VB

12:00 Noon
PIG SIG .... *Argyros Hall Cafeteria*
A lunch get together and talk. See SIG Reports

1:00 p.m. Main Meeting, Irvine Hall
See box above

2:30 p.m.
PC/Mac Games .... *Wilkinson 221*
Exploring Mac/PC games. Bring your friends! :-)
Genealogy .... *Irvine Hall*
Discover your family history with modern tools
Hardware Essentials .... *Science 109*
Basic PC Architecture

OS/2 News and Installation .... *Science 203*

NOCCC web site:
http://www.noccc.org

Future Meetings
June 1, July 6, Aug. 10, Sept. 7.

Table of Contents

apcug Member of
The Association of
Personal Computer User Groups

ORANGE BYTES STAFF

Publication Chairman
Jim Sanders • 714-636-5523 .... jsanders@ligasmicro.com

Editor - *Oversees, edits, and makes final selections of the articles to be included in the* Bytes.
Jim Sanders .... editor@noccc.org

Associate Editor/Production - *Lays out and formats in* PageMaker *the articles received from the editor, prints, and submits camera-ready copy of the* Bytes *to the printer*.
Jim Sanders • 714-636-5523 .... jsanders@ligasmicro.com

Contributing Editor
Timothy B. Everingham .... teveringham@earthlink.net

Editor/Reviews • *Communicates with the vendors and the members who evaluate products and write the reviews. Rides herd on members to make sure deadlines are met. Also makes sure that a copy of the* Bytes *gets back to the vendor with the review that was done.*
Ted Littman • (714) 779-1936 .... tedlit@adelphia.net

Copy Editor • *Does final proofing of Bytes for typos and mispellings.* Ted Littman

Circulation — *Oversees the mailing and distribution.*
VOLUNTEER NEEDED!!!!!

Commercial Swap Meets • *Distributes* Orange Bytes *and* NOCCC *material at swap meets.*
VOLUNTEER NEEDED!!!!!

Commercial Advertising • *Obtains ads from both national and local vendors for the* Bytes*; the success of this helps our club finances*.
VOLUNTEER NEEDED for local ads!!!!!
D J Jennings, National Ads .... dj97@hal-pc.org

Classified Advertising • *Obtains members' computer- related non-commercial ads.*
Jim Sanders • 636-5523 .... jsanders@ligasmicro.com

Help Line • *Maintains the volunteer list, and the software and hardware subjects for which they are willing to answer questions.*
Ted Williams • 639-1009 .... TedWilliams@alum.mit.edu

HELP WANTED
User Group Web Page Reporter
To check other User Group's web pages for articles that could be reprinted in the *Orange Bytes*

Orange County Computer Club
North
Founded
April
1976

President's Message

At the last meeting, there was some apprehension from some members about giving us your email addresses. NOCCC has a long established policy regarding the information in the club database. For telephone numbers, the policy is that no one except the Club President or the Club Treasurer may call a member at home unless that member has agreed to release his phone number. Members may agree to release their phone number by volunteering for the help line. For your email or home address, nobody gets it. If a member needs another member's email address, the member is required to send the message to the president or the treasurer who will forward it to the other member. We send out email announcement only for club announcements. We do not give your information to any third party. If a vendor wants to send information to our membership, the vendor is required to give us the information, which we will send out. The vendor will need to pay for the postage and printing.

Our elections are coming up next month. We need volunteers to serve on the board next year. Please contact George Margolin if you're interested.

When you bring items for the consignment table, please make sure that the items are still useable. We don't need Windows 3.1 or MS-DOS programs. If an item has a problem, please state it on the item. Also, please make sure you read the rules carefully before placing items on the consignment table.

See you at the meeting!

Alan Pearlman
pearlmanA@aol.com

Membership Benefits

As a valued member, you receive discounts and offers, as part of the entire benefit of belonging. (Caveat - we are unable to endorse these companies and products but make these offers as a service to our members). If you have suggestions for items for this column, e-mail them to **Cathy Grammer-Margolin** *at:* cgmargolin@pobox.com.

Orange Bytes on PDF earlier in the month! Members ONLY - Watch your e-mail every month for the Password to get the award-winning Orange Bytes much earlier in the month via PDF file on the www.noccc.org website. Make certain you let us know any e-mail changes (membership@noccc.org) so you can get the jump on all the great reviews and articles

NaturePainter Digital Canvas version 1.1, NOCCC members are offered a special discounted price of $24.95 (current price is $39.95, regular price is $49.95) for the download version. This is a realistic painting program that makes it easy to learn how to paint with oils and acrylics before spending a bundle on supplies. You can take advantage of this pricing by going to:

http://www.naturepainter.net/products_secret.aspx

New Fast Defragmentation Program - VOPT XP—VOPT XP is now out and will work with Win 95, 98, ME, 2000, and XP. By Golden Bow software (www.goldenbow.com). Download a free 30-day trial to see how fast it will defrag your hard drive. Mention "Margolin" to get the user group discount of $30 or $10 off the $40 price.

PowerQuest- New Partition Magic 8
• PartitionMagic v8 (List $69.95) $35.00
• Drive Image v5 (List $69.95) Full System Backup Utility
    including DataKeeper $35.00

http://www.ugr.com/order/ with group code
UGNOVNOCCC. Phone 801-796-7370

Redmond Technology Press—20% discount to User Groups. To receive the discount, user group members need only to order directly from the Redmond Technology Press web site at www.redtechpress.com and identify themselves as a user group member when they give their name (for example, John Doe, NOCCC member).

NewRiders Book Discounts—Please visit www.newriders.com and check out thier Promotions section. You can see examples there of some of the UG discounts we have set up for our partners.

Microsoft Press Savings—Save 20% off Microsoft Press books. Visit http://www.microsoft.com/mindshare/offers/mspress/ and use the code: MCPC, to get your 20% discount. Call 1-800-MS-PRESS to order.

O'Reilly Books at 20% off. Include code: DSUG. Order via phone: 1-800-998-9938, email: order@oreilly.com or online at www.oreilly.com

AOL, Earthlink and Compuserve—If you are a member of AARP, you can get up to 10-20% off each month. Visit AARP at http://www.aarp.org/benefits-computers/ ∎

April Board Meeting Minutes

NOCCC

The board minutes are in the printed printed version of the Orange Bytes

May 4th Meeting Preview

MAIN MEETING 1:00 Irvine Hall
John Krill is a Windows Wizard!

He used to run one of our best Windows SIGS. John knows XP inside and out — its upsides and its downsides. And he's going to give us the scoop on how to take advantage of its many good qualities and how to avoid its mysterious problems. It's been years since we've been able to get him as a presenter.

DON'T MISS THIS MEETING IF YOU'RE AN XP USER OR ARE GOING TO BE!

NEW TECHNOLOGY 9:30 Irvine Hall
Herbert Wong will discuss current PC Architecture and the Chipsets, buses, memory, power supply, etc. that work together to make todays PCs function. Part 1

Consignment Table

1. The consignment table is for members only. Only current members can place items for sale, but non-members are welcome to purchase items from the table. This is a great place to get some money for your surplus computer items, and help your Club at the same time.

2. The consignment table operates on a 90/10% basis — with the owner getting 90%, and the Club treasury 10%.

3. Fill out a tag on each item! It must contain: Seller's Name, NOCCC Membership Number, Item name, a short description and selling price.

4. Also, fill out the USER LIST with Name, Address, Phone Number. and a complete list of items and their selling prices.

5. All items and/or money may be picked up by the owner at any time, but MUST be picked up no later than 2 PM on day of sale.

6. Any items and/or money not picked up by 2 PM, will become the property of NOCCC and will he subject to disposal at the Club's discretion.

7. NOCCC is NOT RESPONSIBLE in any way for items bought and/or sold at the Consignment Table. Each item is placed and sold on an AS-IS BASIS.
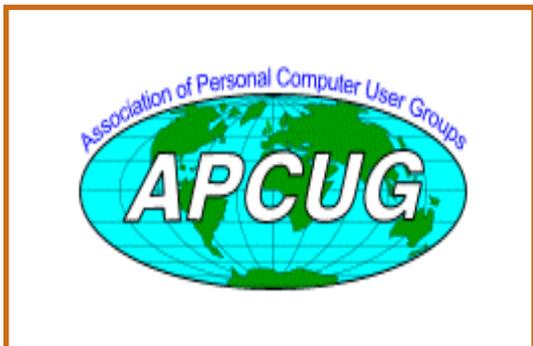
NOCCC Officers

President
Alan Pearlman .... 714-828-5242 .... pearlmana@aol.com
Vice President
James C. Smith .... 714-751-2922 .... jamescsmith@bigfoot.com
Secretary
John Johnson .... 714-991-3314 .... jrosjohnson@juno.com
Treasurer
Elise Edgell .... 714-544-3589 .... eliseme@aol.com
Directors
Ted Littman .... 714-779-1936 .... tedlit@adelphia.net
Cathy Grammer-Margolin . 949-645-5950 .... inventor00@pobox.com
George Margolin .... 949-645-5950 .... inventor@pobox.com
Else Olovsson .... 714-832-3155 .... eolovsson@msn.com
Gerry Resch .... 714-772-6667 .... gresch@hotmail.com
Jim Sanders .... 714-636-5523 .... jsanders@ligasmicro.com
Herb Wong .... 714-968-7264 ... ocug@singularitytechnology.com
Past President
Terry Warren .... 714-633-5467 twarren@alumni.caltech.edu
Editor .... Jim Sanders .... editor@noccc.org
Webmaster
Jim Peugh .... 909-948-5150 .... Webmaster@citivu.com

Volunteers, Committees, and Projects

Business Solicitations/Lecture Series
George Margolin .... 949-645-5950 .... inventor@pobox.com
Consignment Table
Cathy Shimozono .... 562-437-1463 .... shimca@charter.net
Classified Advertising (non-commercial, members only)
Jim Sanders .... 714-636-5523 .... jsanders@ligasmicro.com
Commercial Advertising
D J Jennings .... dj97@hal-pc.org
Help Line
Ted Williams .... 714-639-1009 TedWilliams@alum.MIT.edu
Membership Database
Elise Edgell .... 714-544-3589 .... eliseme@aol.com
Membership Chairman
James C. Smith .... 714-751-2932 ... jamescsmith@bigfoot.com
Programs
George Margolin .... 949-645-5950 .... inventor@pobox.com
SIG Coordinator
Herbert Wong, Jr. 714-968-7264
OCUG@SingularityTechnology.com
Public Relations
Open
University Liaison
Terry Warren .... 714-633-5467 twarren@alumni.caltech.edu

Hunting The Wild Computer

By Timothy Everingham, NOCCC

teveringham@acm.org

Recently I found an add in the back of a computer magazine that said, " Are you really upset with computers? Then why not hunt them and blow them away? Come out to our computer hunting grounds in the foothills of the beautiful Sierra Nevada Mountains in California." I was intrigued so I called them up and arranged a visit to their facilities.

In scenic surroundings I found an innocent looking hunting lodge. It was the headquarters of the Sierra Computer Hunt Club. There I met the owner and manager, James Smith. He explained to me that for many years he lived and worked in Silicon Valley. So many of the people express to him that they sometimes got so fed up with problem computers they wished to just hunt them down and shoot them. So he decided to give them the opportunity to do just that. The Hunt Club's computers are fitted with a form of locomotion and controlled via an artificial intelligence program or by remote control. He then took me then to the lodge's main gathering place in front of a roaring fire. There I found some network administrators who had been out hunting earlier in the day. They had maneuvered so that a dozen 286s in desktop AT cases on wheels were between then and a cliff. Then the hunters made a whole bunch of noise frightening the computers so badly that they ran off the cliff like lemmings. "Those 286s were so slow thinkers that by the time they realized there was a cliff there they had already gone over the edge", said one. They had placed a video camera near the base of the cliff; and showed me the video of the 286s being demolished on the rocks below on the room's large screen TV, to joyous applause.

Early the next morning I went out with a hunting party. It was a guide, two system administrators with rifles and three computer programmers with shotguns, and myself; all in camouflaged hunting clothing. From a distance we saw something large moving in the bushes. We took out the binoculars. It was a server on tracks. One of the guys with the rifles crept up on in from down wind. He got within 100 yards and squeezed off a shot. He hit it, but did not bring it down. It started running, but it was slow. The hunter stood up and put two more sots into it. It stopped and started to smoke. We all walked up to it. Sparks inside could be clearly seen. The sparks then stopped. It was dead.

We talked about for a while. The person who bagged the server was elated and pumped with adrenaline. It was a fantastic experience for him. Just as the conversation was ending, one of us neared a bush and

suddenly a laptop on wheels, lid open, flew out of the bush headed toward another group of bushes. No one had time to raise their guns, so all we could do was follow it. We got to the bushes where the laptop disappeared into, and shortly it sped away again. One of the guys with a shotgun fired, but missed. It raced toward a large pond and then tried to cross it. However, it did not make it. It started to short out with sparks coming from it, then a flame from the keyboard. I asked my guide why the computer thought it could cross the pond. I was told it was a Macintosh laptop, and knowing that some Mac users think their computers can walk on water; the computer's AI program lets the computer think sometimes it can too. On the display the Unhappy Mac screen appeared with its frowning Mac, then the computer tipped over and sank beneath the surface of the pond. One of the hunters said, "It at least went down without a Blue Screen of Death".

We left the pond in a somber mood, but then started to notice some unusual tracks. There was a set of four mechanical feet followed by another set 3-4 feet away and continued on. We were mystified. We followed the tracks until we saw something pop up above the bushes about 40 yards away. We crouched down. It popped up again. It was a commercial grade network router about 2 foot long, 18 inches wide, 6 inches tall, and brown in color. However, it had attached to the bottom legs like a jackrabbit. We designated one of the shotgun holders, and when it hopped out from behind a bush he fired. The router broke apart mid-hop. Then suddenly two others jumped up closely off to our left trying to jump away. The two other shotgunners took aim, and they were toast quickly too. Then another jumped out of the bush the first one had come from. The remaining rifleman who had not gotten a kill yet quickly said, " I have gone through too many router training courses and troubleshooting manuals to let this one get away". He hit it so it flipped over on its back helpless. He walked up to the wounded router, pointed his gun at it, said "Route This!" and finished it off.

The next day came. I was told we were going after really big game. We joined about a dozen people, both men and women, from a bank's IT department with rifles. We got to the edge of an open field, spread out 10 feet apart along the edge, and waited. I began to hear low-pitched sounds about 3 seconds apart. It grew louder, and was coming from off the right. Then the ground started to shake. From out from trees at the edge of the clearing it emerged. It was a Mainframe. It was the size of an elephant and 4 mechanical legs to match. It lumbered parallel to our position, pounding the grass beneath its feet into submission and LED lights blinking. When it got in front of our position, about 250 yards away, someone yelled, "Fire". All 12 rifles started shooting at the monstrosity. It turned

slowly, and with determination started advancing on our position. The hunters kept on firing. About 50 yards from us the beast stopped, shuttered, and then fell over. Everyone Cheered! The victors then started to stand in front or on top of the beast taking pictures of themselves. They were so happy. After things started to die down I noticed a hawk descending nearby. It grabbed something off the ground with it talons, then flew towards me. It then quickly dropped what it was carrying. I walked over to where the dropped object landed. It was a computer mouse with wheels on the bottom. My guide came over and explained to me that sometimes the local hawks mistake these mice for the real thing.

When I got back to the lodge I again had a chance to talk with the owner of the place. He told me that business is pretty good, especially on weekends. Even through his business with IT professionals is not growing due to the downturn in Silicon Valley, he increasingly gets a lot of bookings right after income taxes are due from those who are not computer professionals. He believes that with more and more people using computers for income tax preparation, they are increasingly associating computers with income taxes and their related paperwork and regulations. As such the average person increasingly wants to vent their anger on a computer too.

The practice of hunting computers in the outdoors is a bit unusual, but can serve a useful purpose by venting anger towards computers that are not critical to human welfare and productivity. It also gives one a chance to experience the great outdoors. Time will tell if this practice becomes popular.

Timothy Everingham, He is CEO of Timothy Everingham Consulting in Azusa, California and Associate Vice Chair of the Los Angeles Chapter of ACM SIGGRAPH, Further information can be found at http://home.earthlink.net/~teveringham. ■

Two Really Useful and Free Utilities

by Chuck Ritz, NOCCC

Windows comes with a defragmentation tool for the hard drives on your system. However, it isn't all that versatile and, many times, leaves files fragments even after several attempts to clean up my drives. I came across Diskeeper Lite from Executive Software International, Inc. They offer the lite version for free. The full version operates in the background and defragments whenever the program finds it necessary. If you can live without this feature, the Lite version offers very fast and efficient defragmentation. Twice a week, a window pops up telling me it is time to defrag a drive. I can live with this and so far have found this a great utility at a great price. Download it a www.diskeeper.com. The full version is $29.95 and is also downloadable.

Zone Alarm used to be my favorite firewall program. However, I had nothing but problems with it ever since I started using Windows XP Pro. After investigating the problem, I found I was not the only Windows XP user who had problems with Zone Alarm. Fortunately I was able to find another very good and free firewall program. The program is from Sygate Technologies and the free product is called Sygate Personal Firewall. I downloaded it from their website at www.sygate.com. The program is easy to install and uninstall and has numerous options which are explained either with the built-in help or the on-line help. There is a pro version available and is marketed to corporations and businesses with networked systems. ■

Hello, PR? Or, Back Door Tech Help

By Steve Bass, Pasadena IBM Users Group

BASS SHOWS YOU ALTERNATIVES WAYS TO GET HELP

Having trouble getting tech support for the troubling crashes because of your upgrade of SimpleCD Copier? What about the tech people who refuse to replace the failing hard drive in your Zornac notebook (which failed the day after the warranty expired)?

With tech support relying on $3 a day, third-world people, you may have to work harder and dig deeper in order to get the help you need. Fair warning, this is a convoluted process and full of dead-ends, and something only online researchers are going to enjoy.

Hello? Public Relations?

Here's the trick I use when I have a problem with a product and can't get the help I need from tech support. I find the PR person, briefly plead my case, and hope for the best. Most times I get service that's far superior than when calling the company's customer service or tech support line—and often miraculous. (And yes, I even do this anonymously using an e-mail alias, so they don't know about my writing background.)

Here's how I do it. I head for the company's Web site and dig around for the PR representative. If they're listed, it'll likely be either on the "Contact Us" or "About Us" page.

If you can't find that specific page or there's nothing about

☞

public relations, head for Google. Try it: In Google's search field, type everything in bold. site:www.microsoft.com press. Substitute another company name for Microsoft and see what happens.

Google Experiments

Unfortunately, some companies refer to PR as Corporate Communication, Media Contact, or PR. (Oddly enough, few companies use "PR flack" or "PR flak.") Well, kids, Google is a powerful tool and if you know the right syntax, it can help you find the PR people, no matter where they're hiding. Try these Google combinations exactly as you see them:

site:www.microsoft.com pr

site:www.microsoft.com media contact

site:www.microsoft.com corporate communication

site:www.microsoft.com press release

There's no way around that it—you'll need to experiment with Google's syntax.

If you use quotes around key words, Google's forced to look for that exact string of characters. In the last example above, wrapping press release in quotes may get you different results. Ditto if you change press release to press contact. Try it.

As you begin honing in on your target, add a few more words and make substitutions. For instance, say you're looking for a press person to help you with SharePoint, MS's online collaboration tool. If you tried site:www.microsoft.com "press release" sharepoint, you'd get lots of hits from MS's office in South Africa. Substitute press contact and you hit a few jackpots.

Become a Social Engineer

As you play around, be prepared to hit lots of dead ends. For instance, a buddy of mine was having trouble with his Toshiba notebook. I volunteered to help and used my Google tricks on Toshiba's site. I was quick to find a page full of Toshiba Press Releases. Unfortunately, it showed only old press releases. But down at the bottom was pay dirt: A link that said "Back To Main Press Release Page." I didn't find a PR person for notebooks but did find two contacts that might lead me to the right person. The first was a public relations contact for another Toshiba division, LCD screens; the other was a list of three people at Toshiba's outside PR firm.

My next step was to write to each person and ask if they could connect me with the right PR person, someone who deals with Toshiba notebooks and laptops. I didn't offer a reason why I was asking—I didn't want to let them know I was about to start kvetching. And I wrote them individual e-mails because if I wrote to them all in one e-mail, there's a chance one person might write back and say that they couldn't help; I didn't want everyone to see that.

My first dose of bad news bounced right back at me: none of the outside PR e-mail addresses were any good. But the Toshiba LCD screen guy was pleased as punch to supply the name, e-mail address, and phone number of the right PR person

at Toshiba.

Case Pleading

The story ends pretty well. My buddy wrote to the public relations person. He pleaded his case and the PR person was able to get Toshiba to replace the hard drive. The key ingredients in his persuasive e-mail and phone call:

Don't threaten: Explain how you've tried your darndest to work with customer service and tech support. But they were adamant and refused your requests.

Show loyalty: In this economy, most companies will do their best to get a new customer—and keep an old one. Make sure you let the person know how much you want to remain a customer.

Try bargaining: If you're willing to help me make this right, you say, I'll do my very best to tell everyone I know how helpful and cooperative you've been. Of course they know the implication—you'll tell everyone what junky products the company produces. But don't say it. No matter how much clout you may have, bullying doesn't always do the trick.

Beseeching: The product is what I rely on to do my work, you can say, and I beseech you (okay, they won't understand that—use implore, or even beg) to help me get it fixed.

Move it Up a Notch: Often a PR person will tell you that their hands are tied. Ask if you can talk directly to the person who did the tying. Often you'll end up talking to a product manager who can make things right with a quick e-mail.

If you think about it, these methods will not only work with computing and software companies, but with practically any product. In the meantime, my dogs are snubbing their Science Diet kibble so I'm off to find a four-legged PR person. §

Steve Bass is a Contributing Editor with PC World and runs the Pasadena IBM Users Group. He's also a founding member of APCUG. Check his Home Office columns at http://snurl.com/homeoffice and sign up for the Steve Bass online newsletter at http://snurl.com/signup §■

Vote!

The annual NOCCC elections will be held at the June meeting. Well, technically it will be an election, but in name only. What that really means is that most of the same people that have been willing to give up a significant part of their life.... so.... that.... there.... **CAN**.... **BE**.... a.... **NOCCC**, have agreed to do it one more time.

I have actually heard people complain about the way

the club is run. Complaints about all kinds of things. How come THEY schedule two SIGs that I want to attend at the same time? Why don't THEY get more interesting speakers? Why can't THEY get the Bytes out before the day of the meeting. Why can't THEY have a SIG on XYZ? How come the coffee wasn't ready? Why can't THEY get the SIG room number right? Why can't THEY get a better room for our SIG. Why can't THEY etc. etc. etc.

I know, it wasn't YOU complaining about those things. But YOU have probably heard some of the talk, maybe even wondered about a couple of those things yourself. Well, I have a news flash for YOU and every member of the club. There are limits to how much time and effort the handful of people that currently make up the "THEY," are willing to give.

I know, a lot of activities require education, knowledge and skills that not everybody possesses. But, everybody has some education, knowledge and skills. Volunteering to give a helping hand could be satisfying to YOU. Else Olavsson learned about the club while attending the free computer class I teach at Santa Ana College. After joining the club, she learned that a number of things were not getting done for lack of people to do them. She volunteered to become a member of the board. She learned that club publicity was not as active as it needed to be, and volunteered to change that. As a result of her efforts, mention of upcoming club meetings have appeared in the website calendar section of a number the local broadcast companies. KCAL9.com and KFWB.com for instance. Due to her efforts, at times, notice of our meeting time and subject have been included in the Monday Calendar section of the Register newspaper.

Else Olavsson has made a difference in the welfare of the club. Her efforts have brought in several new members. She has told me that the icing on the cake was how she benefitted. She discovered that it was fun to have a good cause and a legitimate reason, to write, call, or visit organizations to promote the club.

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to run the raffle table

and sell tickets. The SIG coordinator is a useful function and doesn't require the managerial skills of the CEO of IBM. The opening function merely requires that a person be on the campus early, contact security to open the list of rooms, and make sure it happens. For years, Kathy Shimzono's husband, Richard, has been setting up the "Consignment Table" by carrying out the folding tables that it uses and puts them away at the end of the day, often by himself. It would be really nice if he could count on one or two volunteers that would be there on a regular basis to give a hand. The casual and intermittent offers of help are appreciated, but that doesn't always happen. There is a fair list of things in the same category that lots of people are capable of helping with.

Here's a revelation for YOU. YOU don't have to be a guru to start a SIG. One of the founding motos of the club is "Friends helping Friends." I have seen more than one instance where there was a group of people interested in one particular program. Everybody was having trouble using it. One person suggested that they start a SIG and share what they learned. That person didn't know more than any of the others, but he agreed to lead the group. The leader got various members to agree to study and practice a particular feature and share that at the next meeting, soon all were doing much better.

Calling a news conference to announce YOU are running for club President may be a bit much for a first foray into club management, but throwing your name into the hat for one of the Board of Directors positions isn't near as intimidating, and new blood is both welcome and desired. Surely several club members have both the time and skill to be the club's Secretary. If YOU have opinions about what the club should be doing and how, get involved!

And **that** is the opinion of a club founder and your editor, Jim Sanders.

The current un-apposed, in fact short, slate:

President: Cathy Margolin, VP: John Johnson,

Secretary: OPEN, Treasurer: Elise Edgell

Directors (need eight):
Ted Littman, George Margolin, Else Olavsson, Gerry Resch, Jim Sanders, Herb Wong, **OPEN, OPEN**

Share Your Expertise

We wish that all of the articles in the *Orange Bytes* were written by NOCCC members! Why don't you share some of your expertise with the rest of us by writing an article for our Computer Talk section?

Google Hacks

By Joe Mizer, NOCCC

Tara Calishain & Rael Dornfest are the authors of this addition to the O'Reilly publishing series of Hacks books. This is a book you will want to read in front of your computer with your Internet browser set to the Google web site. The first paragraph in the book has an error; it said Tara has authored or co-authored about a half a dozen books on the Internet. When I checked Amazon.com, I found she had written more than twice that number of books on using the Internet. Rael Dornfest has a full paragraph in the book listing his activities. I will repeat only three of them here: he is an author, editor and Program Chairman of the O'Reilly Emerging Technology Conference and O'Reilly Mac OS X Conference. The list of contributors to this book is nothing short of awesome. There are so many that have contributed to the book and it is interesting to read the short paragraphs, which are written about each one. After picking up the book and reading for a short time I had to start trying out some of the 100 hacks listed in the 8 chapters of the book.

Google, the web site was introduced to the world in 1998 and has become one of if not the most successful search engines on the Internet. Google is a database with somewhere between 2.5 and 3 billion indexed web pages just waiting for you to retrieve that one piece of information you can not live without. What you need is the best approach to finding that one web page containing the answer and this is the book that will get you there.

 In April of 2002 Google introduced the Google API that enables searches, which were not possible unless you had your own search engine. Use of the Google API is covered in chapters 5 and 6. If you want to use the power of the Google API be prepared to do some programming. The first thing you need is a developer's key, so go to http://www.google.com/apis/download.html and download the terms and conditions of using the API. Once you have entered a valid email address, selected a password, and agreed to the terms and conditions, Google will allow you to activate the account. From this point on when you send a request to the Google server in a program you will have to submit your own API key and if you have not exceeded your allotted usage for the day your request will be processed.

I have noticed some people avoid books that have the term "Hacker" in the title. The O'Reilly web page has a discussion on their new series of books and they said, "Written by experts for intelligent, advanced users, O'Reilly's new Hacks Series have begun to reclaim the term "hacking" for the good guys. In recent years the term "hacker" has come to be associated with those nefarious black hats who break into other people's computer to snoop, steal information, or disrupt Internet traffic. But the term originally had a much more benign meaning, and you'll still hear it used this way whenever developers get together. Our new Hacks Series is written in the spirit of true hackers—the people who drive innovation."

I have only mentioned a small amount of the material in the book. I hope It has been enough to convince you to get your own copy, because I have really enjoyed reading mine. This is also a book that can be read in any order you desire, since none of the 100 hacks rely on any of the others. The cost is only $24.95 in the US and 38.95 in Canada (User Group members get a 20% discount). It is available at most bookstores or online. The ISBN number is 0-596-00447-8. ∎

Autodesk Inventor 5.0/5.3, Basic Through Advanced

By Joe Mizer, NOCCC

This book was written by David P. Madsen and published by Pearson Education, Inc. just a few months ago. In order to get maximum use from this text you should have a copy of the program Inventor5.0/5.3 running and be able to work the examples on your computer. Autodesk introduced version 6.0 of Inventor almost simultaneously with this book hitting the bookstores. However, I am sure that, like myself, most of the audience for this book is still using the earlier version of the software. I am very impressed with how completely the subject is covered, as the title indicates it spans the subject fully from Basic to Advanced.

The size of the book at just under 800 pages is another indication of the attention to detail throughout the text. The list price is $62.00 and is available from a variety of online bookstores and is worth every bit of it. The primary audience for the book is for use in the classroom situation with an instructor-guided course. The only improvement I can suggest would be in addition to the Instructor's Resource Manual a similar resource is provided for

the student not working in a classroom environment. The student resource manual could be available as a CD or on-line from the publisher web page and would of course have different examples. The study of completed examples is an excellent way to learn part modeling by reviewing the order of construction of sample parts.

The titles of the chapters are as follows; Starting Autodesk Inventor, Introduction to Modeling and the Autodesk Inventor Interface, Initial Part Modeling Drafting Techniques, Developing Basic Part Model Features, Creating Placed Features, Patterning Features, Applying Work Features, Developing Advanced Part Model Features, Creating and Using Catalog Features, Developing Sheet Metal Parts, Working with Solids, Creating Part Drawings, Dimensioning Drawings, Working with Assemblies, Adapting Parts and Assemblies, Working with Presentations, Assembly and Multiple Sheet Drawings, Additional Modeling Tools and Techniques, Additional Data and File Management Tools and Techniques.

Create a new folder and save all of the Exercises you complete in a separate folder; you will reuse some of the exercises as a starting place for later exercises. The many exercises in the book make getting through take a lot longer, but it is by doing the exercises that you learn the meaning of what is being explained in the text.

The author with over one hundred listing to his credit has written and co-written many AutoCAD books and is certainly not a newcomer to this area. This book should appeal to students and professional in the fields of engineering, mechanical design and drafting. I can recommend this book as an excellent buy to anyone who really wants to learn Inventor 5.0/5.3. I hope there is a follow-up version of the book that does an equally good job of teaching Inventor 6.0 ■

Norton Internet Security 2003

By Richard Irwin, NOCCC

I decided to test this program from Symantec Corp. on my new Gateway 600x. I tested it under the Windows XP Pro operating system with 512K of ram, 30 GB hard drive, and 2.4 GHz processor. The program came with a CD and a written manual. I decided to wait the entire two month of testing before turning in my review. This was to ensure that any problems, flaws, or annoyances would become known. Another reason I decided to test it out on my laptop was because I have an 802 11b Wi-Fi card built in. This turned out to be handy, for I was able to test the software on several miscellaneous networks, including one at Cal State Fullerton where I am currently enrolled.

Norton Internet Security 2003 comes with an ad-blocker,

privacy controls, advanced firewall, spam filtering, and Norton's popular antivirus software of which I am already a great fan. The program was very easy to install. It seemed like it took forever to install, but no longer than it seems for most of Norton's programs. You can install on any drive you want, but I prefer to install it on a primary hard drive or where other Norton programs are currently installed.

After installing, there is a short question-and-registration process needed in order to obtain a year of free updates. Once I finished registering, Norton then recommended that I update virus definitions and programs usability, which I did.

As for the firewall, I would have to say it works very well. Of course, when you first start the program, it is annoying, but it eventually mellows out after about a week to a "normal" condition. There is even a log and program to allow choosing the ports and sites to come through. The spam filtering is also a great tool. I was able to disable emails I never wanted to see again and it was able to either stop them or hide them. I don't care that I did not see them again.

The pop up filter was pretty good. It did what most pop up filters does with about the same amount of pop up accuracy. For me, the best part of Norton Internet Security is the antivirus program that has developed a great name for itself. It scans email, quarantine unknowns, and prevents a mass amount of viruses. Many months ago when a bad virus came out that was all over the news, Norton had an update on its web site within hours! Norton is a great name in preventive protection.

Now let's talk about an important consideration which is pricing. At a nominal $70, you have to start thinking, is it worth it? I mean you also have a $30 call-in support fee that drives up the cost, and a subscription fee for updates beyond the first year's use. As far as the subscription fee goes, there is a way around that, but since the average Norton user buys a software update every year, the fee is not a great concern. However, I think that the $30 per call for tech support is outrageous, so I recommend emailing them if the problem is not serious or time constraining. And finally, the $70 list price is also not life threatening since Symantec usually gives a mail-in rebate of up to $30 to knock the price down to about half.

As far as recommending the program, I would say if you want an all-in-one Internet Security protection, go for it. If you don't mind installing the many different freeware programs, and pay their price that is fine with me. I personally would buy Internet Security 2003, not just for the firewall or the ad-blockers, but also for the antivirus software.

I congratulate Norton on the development of all of their great software. Don't just take my word for it. Here is quote from a review by Zdnet (http://reviews.zdnet.co.uk/review/44/1/2059.html), a popular source for all your review needs: "If you're willing to spend a few pounds, however, NIS 2003 will make it worth your while. Now with intelligent intrusion detection that sniffs out suspect data transmissions (the

sneaky hack popularised by Nimda and Code Red), NIS 2003 protects you from backdoor break-ins. It has also added several other security and privacy tools, which let you, for instance, map the locale of hack attacks and stop pop-up ads. For £42.54 (ex. VAT; £49.98 inc. VAT), this firewall/virus-killer combo is the best deal around."■

Tell A Phone

By Ted Littman, NOCCC

Simply put, the intent of this "voice-dialing" product is to save you time and effort when making telephone calls and to increase your telecommunication management efficiency. For a home or small office system with multiple phones on a single line and a Tell A Phone (TAP) system hookup, you simply pick up any of the phones, speak the name of the person (or organization) to call, and TAP dials the number for you! It works no matter if you are making an inter-office call or an international call using a charge card. Tell A Phone also can be used with multi-line service.

Of course, you do have to have your computer on and the TAP software program running during the time you are making or receiving calls. And if you make most of your calls using a cell phone, TAP can't help you!

Here's how it works. You attach one end of a small "blue box," the Voice Dial Manager (VDM), to your telephone jack using a supplied cable. (A "Y" adapter is provided so that you can use the same jack that one of your phones is connected to.) A cable at the other end is plugged into a USB 1 or 2 port on your PC (or a USB hub connected to the PC).

If you have multiple telephone lines and you want to use TAP on these, you will need to purchase extra VDMs available from the vendor's web site, www.parliant.com/store or by phoning your order to 1-866-VOICE-DIAL.

The versions of Windows, 98,ME, 2000, and XP should detect the VDM and run the New Hardware Wizard after the blue box connections are made. You then follow the Wizard's instructions and it installs the program's drivers and software from the TAP CD. It should be noted that the product comes with excellent step-by-step pictorial guides for each version of Windows and a 20-page written User's Guide that is well illustrated. The program also has an electronic User's Guide in PDF format as well as an extensive Help system.

Tell A Phone is a product from Parliant Corp. of Ottawa, ON, Canada. Their technical support is most impressive. Not only is there no charge for support, but also you can call a technician on a toll-free number. I made numerous calls and never had to wait for a Tech to answer the phone! If my question required further "research," like trying to duplicate a problem with their setup, a telephone or email response was forthcoming within 24 hours. Additional technical resources (FAQs, telephony and USB information, etc.) are available at the Parliant web site.

Tell A Phone logs all incoming and outgoing calls in a Call Log. The information can include name, number, date, start time, and call duration. If your telephone service has "Caller ID," TAP keeps a record of all incoming calls (caller name, number, date, start time, and call duration). In fact, TAP will recognize and announce incoming callers through your PC speakers, a nifty feature that helps you decide which calls should be answered and by whom. These two capabilities, over time, can become most important and useful in a home or small business system.

If you don't have Caller ID, you can manually edit the Call Log to add the caller's name and any comments you want to make.

I installed the program using both Windows 98 and Windows XP Pro partitions on my Dell XPS T500 system. The Windows 98 installation worked fine after a few suggestions from Tech Support. However, the Windows XP installation gave me fits. I had problems getting my operating system to recognize TAP drivers, then to open the program, and finally to add names to the phonebook. (TAP allows you to import your existing electronic phonebooks from a variety of sources. I chose Outlook Express and the import worked fine.)

Needless to say, with perseverance on my part as well as that of Tech Support and one of Parliant's software developers, all problems with Windows XP were solved and the program now works like a charm. Parliant's engineers had the good sense to add diagnostic tools to their program that made problem solving tractable.

The final problem that I encountered turned out to be an incorrect setting in the Windows XP Control Panel's Phone & Modem Options where Telephony Services (TAPI) was somehow set to "disabled"! Once this was corrected by switching to a setting of "automatic," TAP was up and running. It turned out that the software used by Parliant uses Windows dialing service to dial certain phone numbers, such as long distance, and when using a calling card. Since the service was disabled on my computer, TAP couldn't run!

Tell A Phone requires a computer with a minimum configuration of 300 MHz processor, 32 MB of RAM, 40 MB of available hard drive space, a USB connection, sound card and speakers, CD-ROM drive, and a standard video adapter/ monitor with 256 colors; plus a touch-tone telephone service with an outlet near the computer.

Finally, a word about Tell A Phone's voice recognition system. I found it to be surprisingly capable. The TAP "Operator" pronounced most names in my phonebook correctly. (You have a choice of a female or male voice.) The few names that weren't were corrected by the built-in "Sounds Like" capability. This allows you to "teach" the program to correctly pronounce the names. The feature is particularly useful for users who speak with accents. TAP also has "a Partial Name Recognition" feature that allows dialing correctly even if you speak only part a name rather than the full name listed in the phonebook.

☞

Tell A Phone can be purchased directly from Parliant for an "introductory price" of $99.95 plus S&H. Additional VDMs are available at $79.95 each (plus S&H) each for use with multiple phone lines. There is a 30-day money-back guarantee, if the product doesn't meet your needs. Free "updates and improvements" are available from their web site. If you download subsequent versions that include whole new feature sets, there will be an upgrade charge. The program has a built-in system to check for updates automatically over the Internet.■

Jasc Quick View Plus 7

by Jim Sanders NOCCC

Recognized as one of, if not the best, file viewers available, Quick View Plus 7 (QVP7) is a tool that most computer users are going to need sooner or later. Many times I have had people ask, "How do I open a 'somename.xxx' file.

One answer, that is often not a very good answer, is to start the application that creates that type file and open the file. That is great if you happen to own all of the programs that create the 225+ file types that QVP7 knows how to open. Even then you can have a major problem. A number of these "legacy" file types were created by programs that only run on older operating systems. This means that not only do you have to own the application, but, for instance, still possess a computer that will boot into Window 3.1!

A second, and often better answer, have QVP7 installed on your computer and use any one of the several ways that QVP7 offers to open and view those 225+ file types. QVP7 divides those files into several categories: Word processing files, Spreadsheet, Presentation, and Database files, Bitmap files, Drawing files, Archive files, Embedded object files, Internet files, and Third-party plug-in files like Acrobat Reader. A number of these categories have a number of control options that are very useful.

The program says it will install on any version of MS Windows from 95 to XP Pro, and installed on my XP Pro system with no problems. It appears to consume about 27 MegaBytes of hard disk space when all elements, including sample files, are installed. The custom install option lets you chose what modules are installed and where. If you don't get it right at install time, the configuration of the program can be modified after the program is installed.

I tried to find program documentation on the CD-ROM, but none was visible. When I decided to check if the Setup.exe was a self-extracting Zip file, I had some success. WinZip revealed a number of files contained within Setup.exe I would suggest to JASC that renaming the "User's Guide" to "userguide.pdf" from the somewhat obtuse "qvp32sng.pdf," would be useful. The "User's Guide" is 102 pages long and contains quite a bit of info on some of the more complex viewing options and actions, such as extracting from, adding to, and creating Zip files, or viewing multi-page spreadsheets.

This program is a very useful tool and I would recommend adding it to your available resources. The fine print on the box indicates the program is copyrighted by Stellent Corporation and republished under license. When I went to the JASC website to check on some details about the program, I was greeted with the following message: "We'd like to announce that beginning January 1, 2003, Avantstar, Inc. will begin handling all North American sales and support of quick view plus. We are working closely with Avantstar in this transition to ensure uninterrupted service." Avantstar, Inc,.18986 Lake Drive East, Chanhassen, MN 55317, 952-646-0840, http://www.avantstar.com

It has a list price of $39.00 for the CD version and $35.00 for the download version. ■

Windows XP Annoyances

By Vic Awdeychuk, NOCCC

As we become more experienced PC users, we often develop a 'love – hate' relationship with our PC operating system. For several years now, David A. Karp has been sharing his ideas on reducing the mysteries of Windows operating systems (from Win95, 98, ME, XP, or 2000) and making them more comprehensible, flexible, and user friendly. His book, 'Windows XP Annoyances,' offers the intermediate or advanced user practical solutions and specific tools for handling a lot of Windows quirks.

I found this book helpful in changing some of my PC habits. I decreased my Boot process time by restricting the loading of programs when Windows goes through Startup and by eliminating programs designed to run in the background in Windows XP. There are several different ways to disable Autoplay which controls your CD or DVD. Disabling the Autoplay is helpful if you want to insert a disk for browsing (or any other reason) without having to wait for the application to load. Often the author offers several possible solutions to a problem. He also offers some good troubleshooting tips as related to software, hardware, and data recovery.

This book has an entire chapter devoted to understanding the Registry file and the Registry Editor. This is the best description and guide that I have seen on this subject. I think this chapter is a 'must read' for anyone who would want to tinker with any of the Windows series of operating systems. For those advanced PC users inclined to customize Win XP, here is an excellent description of what one could do and the areas where one should probably stay clear. Familiarization with editing the Registry is necessary to customize some of Win XP's features as outlined in some of the following chapters, most notably in those chapters devoted to

I didn't know!

Ide

What is it?

CA Penal Code 530.

"Every person who
information of an
information for an

Johan La
explains
ways that
used to c
and how t
self
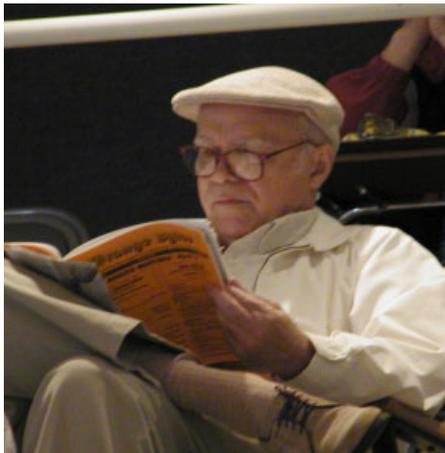
Reading the Bytes

Some serious computer talk

ntity Theft

5

obtains personal identifying
other person and uses that
y unlawful purpose"

ai

s a number of

computers are

commit crimes

to protect your-
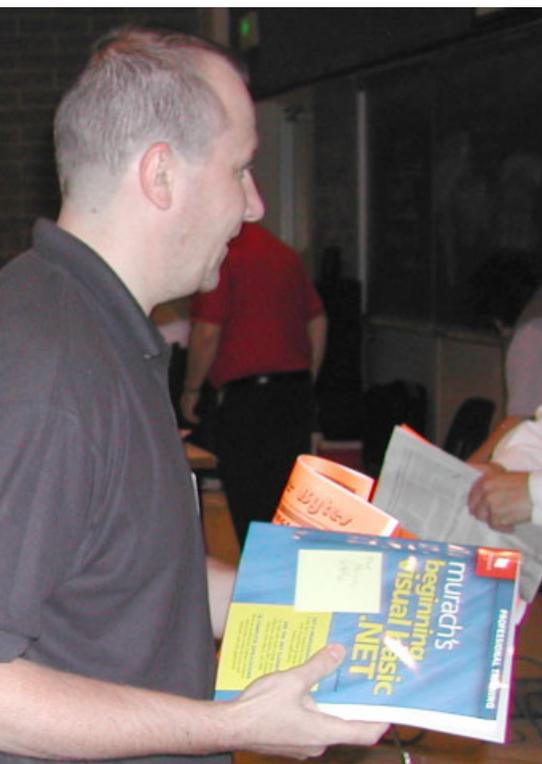
T h e R a f f l e
prizes and the
winners

Photos by
George Margolin
Jim Sanders

Product Reviews

automation and scripting of Networks and Network Administration.

PC security is a concern for all users connected to the Internet or a network. Karp states that Windows XP is not configured for optimal security by default. Windows XP users should read the detailed section devoted to setting up proper security controls between users and setting up a firewall protecting from intrusions (in or out) over any network or internet connection. The reader is taken through step-by-step instructions for optimizing Win XP protection as far as it will go, and for setting up a program to scan your system for vulnerable open ports. Apparently there is always a real question of how genuine is one's PC security. Security for individual users is a lot different than that required for networks handling highly confidential data. Unfortunately, Win XP's Internet firewall cannot allow access file sharing for one computer and simultaneously restrict access by others. By enabling one computer, one enables all others, so Win XP may not protect you from viruses and Trojan horses. Thus a third party firewall system may be necessary to provide higher levels of security. A list of current software is provided for this purpose.

This book is easy to understand and quite specific in its recommendations; the reader is guided step by step. When customizing a Win XP feature the necessary and specific programming language is spelled out. When the program tends to be long, one is referred to the support web site where program language can be downloaded.

Additional support (and programming language) for this book is available free of charge at:

www.annoyances.org or

www.oreilly.com/catalog/winxpannoy/

If you are an intermediate or advanced PC user and love to tinker or are just curious, Windows XP Annoyances is an excellent addition to your library.

Windows XP Annoyances – by David A. Karp,

Publisher – O'Reilly & Associates (2003), 564 pgs.

ISBN: 0-596-00416-8. Cost: $ 30. http://www.oreilly.com. (NOCCC members are eligible for a 20% discount).

(800) 998-9938 (in the USA or Canada). ■

Alpha Five version five relational database

by Ronald Rose, NOCCC

The advertising on the box says: The Easy Powerful Database, Dozens of Helpful Wizards, Perfect for Programmers and Nonprogrammers, Over 40 Predefined Templates, and Includes powerful Xbasic programming language. There was a problem with an incorrect license number, one digit was wrong, which was handled thru e-mails. The book included with the Alpha Five CD is Application Programming in Alpha Five Version 5 by Dr. Peter Wayne. This is a work book on learning the Xbasic language object code which is used to interface the forms (where keyboard information is entered) to the database tables and the tables to the reports. The example program that one creates is for keeping track of your checkbook items. The book consists mostly of screen images showing and describing how to do the fill ins of the predefined templates used in building the code. Although the book was written using a non final version of Alpha Five, most things track fairly well.

There is at present no errata for this book which could help nonprogrammers over come some empty spots. I have included one of my own:

Page 57. "After you save the script, run it [using the code editor or the lightning icon].

Page 88. changes "Script 5-1" to Script 11-1.

Page 118. "The variable will contain""whatever . . . "

Page 130. "Move to the Forms [Layout] tab."

Page 132. "Right-click on the [Data Entry] of [Checkbook] and . . . "

Page 132. Click on the Browse Object from the Tool Box; move the cursor to near the bottom and to the side of the form and press the left button and drag to the other side forming a rectangle and release, which will create the browse object on the form. The Browse Object form comes up. Continue the fill in.

Page 133. To gain access to the fields in the browse, left click on Comment in the Drag Drop list, drag it onto or near the comment of the browse object, then "Adjust the widths . . . " Tab to the extra Comment and click on its heading, then delete.

Page 229 and 233: "report preview("Ledger Report",flter)

Page 232. At the end of the first paragraph: hint: Use 'Radio buttons for [all transactions], and [only reconciled ones].

Page 238. Before adding R&econciliation, click on &Reports to move from the submenu.

End errata.

Alpha Five contains many wizards which they call Genies that are used to write some of the interfacing in table, form, and report creation.

Forms are made using Design which can be made up of a vast number of objects. Under this mode, by selecting View one can see and make fine changes to the objects revealed by the Object Explorer. The objects and sub-objects are displayed in the usual MS Explorer fashion. Also, there is Code Explorer which menus the different sections of code being used. When one writes some of the code, a code list pops up under what you start typing and then you can down arrow to your item, hit

enter, and your item is completed with no spelling errors. It would be nice if the variables from the Dimension declarations could also be included. There is a spell checker button which catches the major misspellings. If the quotes are unbalanced, the color aid makes it easier to spot that problem.

For the more experienced programer, in a drop down, there is a Xbasic Explorer from which one can drag and drop code objects to help in writing the code. In the same drop down is the OLE Automation Browser with a large selection of objects available. Under the Help menu is Contents which contains the following: The User Guide, Action Scripting, Action Script: Actions Reference. One of the more use full buttons under the Contents button is the Show which has Contents, Index, Favorites (where you can add favorite keywords), and a Search on a keyword [a small string also works]. A List Topics is found; select from the list and Display. The text shown has the keywords high lighted for easy scanning. One thing I miss with these electronic books is the ability to write in the margins.

Also under Help are Books which are PDF formats. They are: What's New in V5 123 pages, What's New in Xbasic 36 pages, Expression Function Reference 137 pages, Xbasic Reference Manuel 530 pages, Introduction to Action Scripting 173 pages, Learning Xbasic 126 pages, and Learning Xdialog at 184 pages. As you can see, there are more than 1300 pages of documentation included on the CD.

The web site is Alphasoftware.com with many sections. It has a down loadable tutorial and additional educational material. Product support is generally handled over the internet. Thru this site is a message board where the users answer each others questions, a technical support directory, and fee-based phone and fax support. Down loadable updates are available from the web site. There is a menu item in Alpha's Control Panel that will check to see if your Alpha software is current. After the trial period, an activation key required which confines the program to that one machine name. If that machine dies, it is supposed to work on another machine with the same name.

This is a Microsoft based Windows product which runs on 95/98/2000/NT and XP.

There are many add on products for sale. If you are a QuickBooks user and need special input, calculations or reports, there is a linker that "allows you to quickly and easily move data back and forth between QuickBooks and Alpha", price $99. The applications included with Alpha 5 on a 30-day trial period are A5v5Doc (for printing, searching and editing objects), Contract Manager, Time & Billing and Order Entry. For $49 each they can be fully unlocked to be used in production. The cost of Alpha Five version 5, with create and edit is $349 for a single user, 3 users $849, and 5 users $1249. For the network runtime: 3 users at a time $399, 10 users at a time $899 and many other combinations are available. ■

The Process of network security

by Dave Keays

author: Thomas A. Wadlow
publisher: Addison Wesley
copyright 2000, ISBN: 0-201-43317-6

While this book is loaded with ideas, it assumes that they are only useful to large organizations. I have to disagree here. While it's true that many of the details of those ideas are only relevant to large organizations, that doesn't mean that it won't help us little guys. So when it says in the introduction not read this book if you're just a small five person Real Estate office, read it anyway.

There definitely are some pieces of information that I cannot use. For example, I didn't get anything of value from the Chapter on "personnel security." However, "monitoring your network" and "log analysis" were of immediate concern. (Especially since I plan to do that very thing in a few months- in a "small" office of about a half dozen people.) The chapter on "building a security team" helped me see what I need to learn and be prepared for. I do think it was helpful to see things from the employers eyes when he spoke of what to look for when hiring.

So this book is useful even to those of us in the small arena. Just be aware that this book is written for the big guys and much of its advice may not make sense to others. It will probably take a little extra work on your part to figure-out what is useful and rearrange what isn't, but it's well worth it.

While the book seems to claim that having daily security concerns implies a large organization, even those of us in small Real Estate office's needs to be concerned about security also. The book details exactly what needs to be done very well.

The book covers portions of an attack that I wish didn't exist. (No, I'm not saying I like attacks, just that they can be an exciting prospect.) While the forensics investigation sounds exciting, appearing before a judge and jury doesn't. However, it is part of the security world and a list of what to do what not to do could be very helpful.

One of the items on its list of what not to do is occasionally debated on various security newsgroups: whether or not to counter attack. While he didn't ignore the philosophical points, he gave a very to-the-point argument about why it shouldn't be done.

If you need something that is going to hit you between the eyes, a "for dummies" or "idiots guide" would do you better. (No, that's not an insult. But those books tend to be more focused than this one is.)

However, if you need to understand the details of being

Reviews Editor's Corner

If you write a review for the *Orange Bytes*, you may keep the item. If you would like to review a specific product (software, hardware, or book), please let me know and I will try to obtain it. If you are interested, please contact me:

Ted Littman
NOCCC Reviews Editor
- **(714) 779-1936**
- **reviews@noccc.org**
- **TedLit@Adelphia.net**

PRODUCTS AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW

A number of products have been obtained from vendors for review by qualified NOCCC members. If you are interested in doing a review (which will be published in Orange Bytes), please call or send an e-mail to me and provide your membership number, phone number, and e-mail address.

Remember, YOU GET TO KEEP THE HARDWARE, SOFTWARE, OR BOOK!

Currently available are the following products:

Hardware

Logitech's Cordless Elite Duo – A high-performance, cordless matched keyboard & optical mouse. Keyboard is ultra-flat, optimized zero-degree tilt design.

Boxed Programs and CDs

Windows XP Professional – The latest and most stable of Microsoft's operating systems.

BackupTime 1.3 for Windows – Another backup utility with a nice interface, dynamic folders, and a built-in scheduler.

CrazyTalk Standard Edition 2.5 – The "Talking Heads" program. Make your own still images look like they are talking!

Combat Flight Simulator 3, The Battle for Europe – From Microsoft, a leader in flight Sims.

SendPhotos – The easiest and fastest way to e-mail pictures for all skills level.

Scopeware Vision – An index utility that simplifies the way you access & use information stored on your computer & shared network drives.

Encarta Reference Library 2003 – Microsoft's great encyclopedia.

Xplay - Enables Windows users to use Apple's i-Pod. It brings to you the power of the ultimate portable MP3 player.

Programs to Download from Vendor's Web Site

WinPatrol Plus 4.0 – A popular program from BillP Studios that monitors & detects changes on your computer system. Alerts you when any new programs are added without your permission.

Watznew 1.9.5 – Award-winning software that regularly checks your favorite web sites & mailboxes & notifies you of changes.

Essential Net Tools 3.1 for Windows - A suite of network tools.

Apycom Java Menu Applets 3.0 - Create cross-browser drop down menus, bars, buttons, etc. for your Website.

Sygate's Home Network 4.2 for 6 Users – The top-notch firewall to protect your home network.

Red Earth Software's Policy Patrol 2 - Protect yourself against e-mail security threats with virus scanning, spam blocking, and other tools.

ViraLock – The first software that prevents the spread of e-mail-borne viruses by preventing them from escaping an infected computer. It is complementary to current anti-virus programs.

Kaspersky Labs Anti-Hacker 1.0 – A personal firewall from Russia. Designed to ensure reliable defense of home computers from Internet hackers, whrever they are.

IconLover 1.11 - A great solution for extracting, cataloging, and managing PC computer icons.

NoLimits Rollercoaster – A thrill-filled roller coaster simulator with 9 different track styles, 40 premade tracks, 3-D sound.

PicaLoader 1.1 for Windows – A fully automated, multi-threaded, link-following, picture-retrieving robot that will retrieve all the pictures you want from any part of the Internet.

Vicman's Photo Editor Pro 7.0 – A powerful, easy-to-use photo editor from Russia with an intuitive, skin-based interface & lots of powerful features.

PrintMagic 1.1 for Windows – A powerful & flexible utility that lets users print anything from a single character to multiple pages in any application and adds a virtual printer to users' desktops.

Currently available are the following books:

Windows XP in a Nutshell – One of the David Karp series to serve as a comprehensive but compact desk reference for XP users.

Windows XP Pocket Reference – A handy, portable guide to the most commonly used features of this operating system by David Karp.

To view the most recent list of available Products, email to www.items@noccc.org. The list will autorespond to you

Preparing a Review Article for the Orange Bytes

by Ted Littman, NOCCC Reviews Editor

The following suggestions for preparing a review article for the Orange Bytes were extracted from an OCIPUG article and are intended as a guide only. As a reviewer, your audience wants to know your opinion (as an end user) of the product (hardware, software, book) you are reviewing. Please fully identify the product and its cost so that interested club members may be able to purchase it. After you have tested the product consider these questions:

1. What is the product's stated purpose and does it meet it?

2. Within its category of software (i.e., word processor, spreadsheet, database, etc.), does it stand out?

3. What are its major features?

4. Is it easy to use, even for a novice?

5. Can you quote or reference articles/reviews in the computer magazines?

The following list contains more specific questions that apply to either software or hardware:

1. Requirements:

1. Operating systems?
2. Windows?
3. Memory?
4. Disk space?
5. Is a Mouse supported?

2. Installation (do not overemphasize details):

1. Was it difficult?
2. Copy or write protected?
3. Does it allow drive and directory selection?
4. Does it automatically configure system? Can you control it?

3. Information about your system:

1. Hardware?
2. Operating system? Version?
3. Memory?
4. Video display?

4. Documentation:

1. What is supplied? Manuals (paperback, electronic) Tutorial? Templates? Table of Contents? Index?
2. Was it clear, concise, helpful?
3. Is there a troubleshooting section?

5. Product Support:

1. How is the vendor's tech support?
2. Does it cost anything?
3. Is it a toll call?
4. Does the vendor provide Internet support?

6. About the product:

1. What comes with the product?
2. What is the cost? (list & street)
3. Version number? Release date?
4. How difficult is the learning curve?
5. Would you buy/use the product?
6. Do you recommend it?
7. What don't you like about it?

8. What improvements or changes would you like to see?

9. Can the software be downloaded from the vendor's Web site; is there a free trial period before buying?

10. What warranty is there on hardware?

7. What are the Name, Address, Phone number (including 800#), and WEB address (e-mail & URL) of the vendor?

After you have answered all these questions you should have enough information to write your review. Please be precise but do not make it so technical that only a few people can understand. Please advise the Orange Bytes Editor if you need graphics, pictures, or illustrations to get your point across. ∎

Guidelines for Submittal

Important! Please limit the length of your submittals. We request you limit general articles and software reviews to a maximum of 1300 words, SIG reports to 700 words, book reviews to 600 words, low cost CD-ROM titles to 600 words, and more sophisticated CD-ROMs to 1000 words. As far as the minimum is concerned, we'd just like to see you do justice to any general article or to any product that's reviewed. An expensive software package ($300-700) deserves at least 1,300 words. An inexpensive program ($50 or less) might have 500 words. Reviews must be completed within 2 months so that the Reviews Editor (Ted Littman) can, in a timely manner, send a copy to the vendor. If you change your mind about doing the review, please call him (714)779-1936 ASAP to make arrangements for returning the product for reassignment. We hope you enjoy writing your review.

You can now e-mail articles directly to the Editor through the North Orange County Computer Club's Web Site:

editor@noccc.org or just give the file on disk and printout directly to Alan Pearlman (President), Jim Sanders (Publications Chm.), or Ted Littman on the next meeting day. If you e-mail your review, please send a copy to TedLit@Adelphia.net.

To transfer your article from your Windows word processor, click at the beginning of the article with your mouse, shift down arrow to the end of the article, then Edit Cut (^C), open your e-mail program, and Edit Paste (^V). This will convert the file to ASCII. If your article is too long to include in an e-mail, please save as ASCII file with a .TXT extension. Then zip the article and attach it to your e-mail.

All documents should have flush left margins, and double carriage returns (skip a line) between paragraphs. The editors will bold your paragraph headings, etc., in order to obtain consistent formatting throughout the Bytes.

Don't use CAPS for emphasis; that's like shouting at someone! We usually have to delete and retype them, which can be a lot of work. CAPS are reserved for computer commands or file names, like AUTOEXEC.BAT or KNOW.TXT. For titles of books and software, capitalize the first letter of each word. We will add the underlining in PageMaker.

Also please spell check your article, and try to follow the ordinary rules of grammar. Don't use columns, tabs, indents, justification, hyphenation or formatting codes. (If columns or tables are absolutely needed, send us a hard copy to guide us.)

We will look forward to seeing your review in print and on the Web site. ∎

apcug
Best Magazine
2nd Place
1999

General Meeting Report

By Eric Saca

Sgt. Johan Lai from the Orange County Sheriffs Department joined us in April to discuss computer crime and some actions we can take to prevent it.

The meeting was opened by President Alan Pearlman. Announcements were made.

Alan suggested making sure that NOCCC has your e-mail address to send e-mail reminders and passwords for the latest Bytes. He reminded everyone that we do not send your e-mail address out to anyone.

He also announced that club elections were coming up at the end of June. If anyone was interested in becoming a director, see him or another officer after the meeting.

George Margolin then introduced Johan Lai.

Johan started off telling us a little about himself. He was born in Hong Kong. He started out his computer career in Unix. He is actually a computer engineer. He works for a firm in Orange County. He is a reserve officer for the OC Sheriff's Department and occasionally makes public awareness presentations like this one. His boss in the OCSD is Sheriff Michael S. Carona. (He displayed Sheriff Carona's picture on the screen.)

He then announced his topic for this presentation and its main subdivisions, as follows:

Internet Safety - Surviving in the Digital World
    Check Fraud
    Credit Card Fraud
    Telemarketing Fraud
    ID Theft

Q/A
Check Fraud
Johan listed the following ways that criminals have written checks from other people:
    From lost checks
    From stolen checks
    From discarded checks
    Through counterfeit

He recommended the following precautions to safeguard your checks:

Account for all your checkbooks, especially when first purchased.

Use Sharpie (or similar) fine tip permanent ink pens to write your checks (because Sharpie ink cannot be taken off with the usual methods).

Do not print your driver's license number on your checks. (A great deal of information can be obtained from your license number.)

Take all your mail directly to the post office (instead of relying on mailboxes).

Johan displayed two checks on the screen and asked which one the audience thought was real. It turned out that the check that looked more authentic was fake. He also showed a slide of a blank check that had all its writing dissolved away.

A member asked him how we can be sure that our ink is not erasable. Johan suggested writing a check with it, then immersing that check in brake fluid (a typical method). If the brake fluid does not dissolve the ink, then it is worth using.

Credit Card Fraud
Johan mentioned that there are an enormous number of E-Bay credit card fraud cases. Following are some of the ways that criminals commit this type of fraud:
    Credit card theft
    Unauthorized card usage
    Credit card alteration
    Counterfeit cards
    Fraudulently opened accounts
Johan suggested the following to guard against credit card fraud:

Limit open accounts to just a few cards.

Never leave credit card receipts where other people can see them.

Write Ask for ID or See Photo ID on the back of credit cards.

Do not keep evidence of your social security number in your wallet/purse.

Periodically check your credit report for discrepancies (every 6 months to a year).

Gerry Resch commented that your social security number can appear on your healthcare card, which people need to carry around for emergencies. For that case, Johan suggested that you call the healthcare company and request that they send a replacement card with a different number. Another member concurred that that can be done.

Identity Theft
California Penal Code 530.5 defines identity thieves as "Every person who obtains personal identifying information of another person and uses that information for any unlawful purpose"

These thieves seek the following information from victims:
    Name
    Address
    Social security number
    Telephone number
    Drivers license number
    Work ID number
    Place of employment
    Mother's maiden name
    Bank account number
    Credit card number

The social security number is the most critical item to protect from criminals because it is the most difficult to change, according to Johan. When other information is compromised, like your telephone or credit card numbers, you can change it fairly easily to restore your security. However, that is not the case for social security numbers. Johan suggested that people do everything to protect their social security numbers.

☞

He listed the following methods or items used to commit identity theft:

Checks

Driver's licenses

Credit cards

Credit applications

Internet purchases

Telemarketing

Credit card applications

To protect yourself from identity theft from telemarketers, Johan listed the following suggestions:

Never give personal information over the phone.

Check the solicitor through the Better Business Bureau (BBB).

Do not talk to telemarketers at all.

If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is - do not accept it.

He also listed the following precautions to prevent ID theft in general:

Report a lost or stolen driver's license to the DMV immediately.

File police reports when items like driver's licenses and credit cards are stolen.

Never submit credit card information on the web unless the given site is SSL encrypted.

Obtain a low limit credit card just for Internet purchases.

Avoid using check cards (debit cards with charge card logos).

He also listed the following extra precautions to protect yourself from computer crime in general:

Secure an alternate delivery address just for Internet purchases.

Again, do not keep evidence of your social security number in your wallet/purse.

Avoid letting websites automatically remember your credit card numbers.

Shred, shred, shred obsolete documents. (They may contain important information that you do not want to get into criminal hands, like your SSN.)

A member asked Johan what type of shredder he recommends. He suggested cross-cut shredders (to turn the documents into confetti).

Another member mentioned that he believed a company took advantage of him by withdrawing money from his bank account after he had cancelled a perpetual billing agreement. Johan suggested avoiding such agreements. There's really no way to prove that the company was not authorized to make the charge.

Johan listed the following resources for further information:

Orange County Sheriff Department, www.ocsd.org

Better Business Bureau, www.bbb.org

Federal Trade Commission, www.ftc.gov

National Alliance Against Fraud, www.fraud.org

National Check Fraud Center, www.ckfraud.org

U.S. Postal Service, www.usps.gov/websites/depart/inspect

U.S. Social Security Administration, www.ssa.gov ∎

Macintosh SIG

by John Willner
willner@earthlink.net

This was an unusual day, because the Los Angeles area Macintosh user groups were meeting at the Queen Mary (covered by Claire), the APC swap meet just happened to be on at the same time, and then Alan Pearlman came around with a signup list for the purpose of proving to Chapman University that we actually occupied the room. Apparently the university has been asking questions. Needless to say attendance was down a bit, although not unusually so.

Bob Krishfield had his laptop computer still connected to the projector, and he showed a new brouser that he likes. The biggest advantage of these recent brousers is that they are very fast, permit organization of messages and some, such as Apple's Safari, have spam suppression. Problems with Internet Explorer and Netscape were reviewed. We attempted to tell one member how to get her brouser working by demonstrating the Internet and Network settings that had to be entered.

We entertained ourselves with a lively discussion about rumors that Apple is now investigating use of Intel Microprocessors, as well as IBM's, while working on the next generation operating system. The question arose as to whether or not pressure was being applied to Motorola, who is not winning speed races against Intel and AMD. Else, is Apple serious about having to do a total rewrite of the OS in addition to probably dropping all OS 9 capabilities? What is great about the present OS 10.2.4 version that brings up OS 9.2 in classic mode is the ability to run those hundreds of applications accumulated over the years. In many cases there is no good reason to abandon them, because performance is more than satisfactory. Most users would prefer not being forced into changes or upgrades unless absolutely necessary. Besides, Motorola's technical expertise is recognized by many users.

David Pogue has a new book out that introduces Windows people to the Macintosh. Since Microsoft has copied so many Macintosh features in the latest 2000 and XP operating systems, the comparisons become meaningful. Greater system stability is being realized on both sides. While Windows still has not caught up with many useful features on the Macintosh, the gap appears to be narrowing at this time.

Keynote was discussed versus Power Point. After putting in all of the time necessary to encode Power Point, a user becomes accustomed to the Microsoft methodology. Keynote puts most similar functions in different places. Therefore, where to find things

become a bit distracting. However, personal progress is being made on a presentation scheduled for a future month this summer. It is coming together more easily than anticipated. Apple's new Keynote appears to be a very good product right out of the box, and it is recommended.

No DVDs were received from Apple during the past month. Either Apple is not sending them any more, or we got taken off the list along with the recent flap over eligibility. This matter will be investigated and reported at the next meeting.

Some thoughts were expressed about running Unix programs on the Macintosh, Mac Addict has a good article on this subject, and Apple has prepared interface software that can be downloaded. Most Unix programs are debugged and solid performers. The only real question is, "Does a person want to make the effort to search for those possible software packages not readily available already on the Mac and then do the implementation?".

Next month refined, or updated, rumors will be discussed and aid provided to members as warranted. ∎

Computer Security SIG

by Dave Keays, NOCCC

The April meeting went well with 10 people in attendance.

Most of the time was spent on the "hosts" file and how it can be used to keep spyware and adware from getting on the Internet. We also mentioned a good lists on the internet, and whether or not SSL is still a viable security protocol. Since e-Commerce is based on it, when a hole was found in March, several people wondered if that meant that anything (like credit cards numbers or bank records) is now at risk.

The main topic (the "hosts" file) is a carry-over from old network technology (10 years?). This is a case where obsolete doesn't mean useless! The "hosts" file does basically what DNS does (figures-out the IP address that computers need from a URL people use. For example: GOOGLE.COM is at IP address 216.239.33.100).

However, the "hosts" file is on your machine and you control it. To stop adware, just tell the computer that the URL that holds advertisements is on your computer (127.0.0.1). By the way, this is basically what programs like ad-aware do. There are web sites that keep a copy of a host file with the technique used above for all known sites that host any undesirable. A good one is at "Gorilla design" (Gorilla.com). It has both tutorials on the "hosts" file as well as a good up-to-date "hosts" file. Just download the file, unzip it (it will create a file called "hosts.txt"), copy it to where-ever your operating system says it should be (see below), and rename it "hosts" (remove the ".txt"). Something they don't mention is that many programs (like Norton Anti Virus) may have already put entries in the "hosts" file, so just overwriting the file might stop a program from running. So before you do the above; look into the "hosts" file you already have, make note of any entries that you didn't enter yourself, and put those lines into the "hosts.txt" file before you rename it. (Cut-And-Paste those lines to avoid little mistakes.) (Norton makes things easy here by putting a comment at the end of any line it uses.)

A couple of people voiced concerns about how that could hurt the internet and that they wanted advertising. (The first argument went something like this; if ads are no longer effective because of people blocking them, places that depend on them might go away.) My comment is to read Steve Gibson's take on it in his OPTOUT page (at GRC.COM). A good

resource for information about Internet technologies is the "Lists of Lists" (at lists.gpick.com). It was written by several people who frequent the GRC newsgroups who wanted to share useful links with each other. It has lists of tutorials, tools, online tests, and on and on . . .

We finished-up by talking about SSL (Secure Socket Layer). This secure networking method recently was broken. But according to the people that did it, the problem is not SSL itself, but how SSL is used. So basically, we are back to square one- only do business with people you trust (to treat you and your private information well- which includes the proper use of security technologies like SSL).

Host file locations on various OSs

Window 95/98/ME
c:\windows\hosts\

Windows NT/2000/XP pro
c:\winnt\system32\drivers\etc\

Windows XP home
c:\windows\system32\drivers\etc\

Linux / Unix   /etc/hosts

BeOS   /boot/beos/etc/hosts

Netware   System\etc\hosts

Mac (pre OSX)   system folder or preferences folder

OS/2   %ETC%\HOSTS (see rules!!!)

hosts file entry examples

to block a site: 127.0.0.1 doubleclick.com #can't get adverts or spy on you   to have quick access to site: 216.239.33.100 g #google.com is accessable with "g"

rules for hosts file entries

don't use "http:" at the beginning of a URL

don't use "\" at end of a URL

to ignore an entry, put a "#" at the beginning of the line

before using a host file off the internet, add anything that is already in your host file   (some AV programs use the host file, eliminating their entries will stop AV)   for OS/2, be sure CONFIG.SYS has the following line: SET USE_HOSTS_FIRST=1 ∎

CAI SIG Meeting Minutes

By Bob Krishfield, NOCCC

We have been waiting for a market rally once the Iraq War began, and we finally saw the Dow achieve the strongest weekly gain in over two decades. This rally was up 12% and you needed to be prepared for it, since half of the gain was given back the following week. After the dust settled, March was an up month by 382 points. The charts contained several positive indicators that the market would continue to improve – rising bottoms, and the 9 month and 4 year cycle bottoms past. However, the long term 3 year down trend has not yet been broken. For the technical optimist, there is a triangle pattern forming that may signal a breakout by June.

This month we focused on systems and methods used in the development of trading systems, how software tools are used, and what functions are required of these tools to support the process of trading. The PowerPoint briefing (available on home.socal.rr.com/bobkrish/cainvestor.html) used charts to identify key technical analysis and trading system functions, and identified common software packages available to meet these needs. Next is the issue of dealing with of how the market characteristics have changed, requiring users and their trading systems to adapt to changes (e.g. from bull to bear conditions). This directly leads to needs for customizable systems – making improvements and incorporating ideas from other sources to revise a trading system and maintain its effectiveness. Meetings, such as this SIG are essential for gaining new ideas and discussing shortcomings of established methods.

As an example, we discussed the details of the seasonal trading system.

This is a simple system where one buys the Dow or SP100 in Oct and sells it the end of April. Statistics of this concept were presented that showed averages of the corresponding months for 10 years to confirm the existence of a pattern - justifying the trading rules. Next, it was a matter of programming the rules into ProTA and running the system to identify profits of the results. For trading SPX over 8 years, an average 18% per year was achieved, but for the Dow DIA the results were 14%, still a respectable result for a simple trading system.

Mutual Funds were discussed as alternative to stock trading. Top ranked listings were obtained from Morningstar.com, and the major finding was that Large Cap Growth as a category has overtaken Small Cap Value. This was evident for the last 3 months, and it is consistent with the direction of market indices that show growth stocks are outperforming other categories. The only sector with notable funds was the health and biotech area.

For short term traders, we reviewed MarketVolume.com, a subscription site that provides intraday charting of market index price and volume data. The subscription fee is $29.85 per mo., (30 day free trial available). The unique aspect of this site is the intraday "realtime" plots of price and volume, with moving averages of volume that are "useful" in indicating trend continuations, or reversals. A few charts were reviewed with trend lines, but we failed to see how these would give us signals for trading. Maybe more time is needed to train the eye to see the patterns, or need the eye of a short term trader.

Next month we plan to discuss individual stock picks and collectively evaluate them. Please bring in one or two of your favorites and participate in this exchange to see what you can learn about your favored picks. ∎

PC/MAC Games SIG

by C. Lemire, MA

Good news — I received my replacement CD for a well-used computer game no longer made. Bad news — I had to pay 10 dollars more than the retail for shipping. So the lesson was learned, make copies of the original CDs to use instead of damaging the original from use. It is getting harder and harder to find older games on Amazon and eBay so make your move now if there is a favorite game you want to preserve.

Computer game playing shows noticeable improvement in speed with simple changes. Of course RAM and hard drive space make the most observable speed improvements for all around benefit to the computer as a whole. PCs rely heavily on clean and intelligent code, shear chip speed, and well designed peripherals. It helps to have an OS that supplies games with optimum rendering support such as XP. Macs can use L cache to overcome Bus limitations. In OS X, non-native 3rd party applications can fight the OS so be sure to download carbonizing patches from the game maker or from versiontracker.com.

Anytime a game requires a CD in the drive to play, it slows at the worst times while referencing the CD. Fully load games whenever possible. Macs can use DiskCopy to make a disk image of the CD on the desktop which allows the game to run without the CD. The speed improvement is enormous. Unfortunately, that gives the artificial intelligence speedier opponent abilities so be prepared to lose more often.

Local game developers are still considering using our SIG for meetings. Meanwhile, we continue to share and consult with fellow NOCCC members about games and game development. Write me at NOCCCGamingSIG@earthlink.net anytime. :-) ∎

SIG List

Those who have listed an e-mail address would prefer to be contacted by e-mail rather than by phone whenever possible

SIG	Bldg	Room	Time	Leader	E-mail	Phone
Autocad	Wilkinson	111	9:00	Joe Mizer	jmizer@earthlink.net	909-688-9848
Computer Aided Investing	Wilkinson	211	9:30	Bob Krishfield	bobkrish@socal.rr.com	714-532-3096
Computer Security	Science	203	11:15	Dave Keays	rdksoft@sbcglobal.net	714-821-4792
PC/Mac Games	Wilkinson	221	2:30	Claire Lemire	NOCCCGamingSIG@earthlink.net	714-740-1058
Genealogy	Irvine Hall	—	2:30	John Johnson	jrosjohnson@juno.com	714-991-3314
Hardware Essentials	Science	306	9:30	Herbert Wong	ocug@singularitytechnology.com	714-968-7264
Hardware Essentials	Science	109	2:30	Herbert Wong	ocug@singularitytechnology.com	714-968-7264
Linux for Desktop Users	Wilkinson	210	9:00	Bob C. Ray	bobcray@pacbell.net	714-634-7520
Linux for Server Administrators	Wilkinson	210	10:00	Bob C. Ray	bobcray@pacbell.net	714-634-7520
Linux Programming Concepts	Wilkinson	210	11:15	Bob C. Ray	bobcray@pacbell.net	714-634-7520
Macintosh	Wilkinson	221	11:15	John Willner	Willner@earthlink.net	714-838-1434
New Technolgy	Irvine Hall	—	9:30	George Margolin	Inventor@pobox.com	949-645-5950
Office Suites	Science	111	11:15	John Heenan	jc_heenan@csi.com	714-998-7660
PALM SIG	Science	203	9:30	Vance Jochim	vjochim@webworks66.com	714-771-6564
PC Q&A	Irvine Hall	—	11:15	Jim Sanders	jsanders@ligasmicro.com	714-636-5523
Understanding OS's	Wilkinson	111	11:15	Charlie Moore	mooreca@adelphia.net	714-529-9071
Visual Programming I	Science	109	8:30	Anson Chapman	aeccrc@hotmail.com	909-860-9515
Visual Programming Ii	Science	109	9:00	Anson Chapman	aeccrc@hotmail.com	909-860-9515
Visual Programming Iii	Science	109	10:00	Anson Chapman	aeccrc@hotmail.com	909-860-9515
Visual Programming Iv	Science	109	11:15	Anson Chapman	aeccrc@hotmail.com	909-860-9515
Windows	Science	111	9:00	James Smith	jamescsmith@bigfoot.com	714-751-2922

Please report SIG changes to .... Herbert Wong, Jr. OCUG@SingularityTechnology.com   714-968-7264

AutoCAD SIG

by Joe Mizer, NOCCC

This Special Interest Group is dedicated to learning to use AutoCAD drafting packages. We center our meetings on the use of mechanical desktop and Inventor. Whether you are an expert and willing to share your knowledge or a novice and just getting started you are welcome to join our group. The last meeting we experimented with adding dimensions and constraints to sketches, which were then extruded into 3D models. Roger Hartman also gave a presentation on how to start a new part and basic sketching and model creation. The next several meetings will focus on, sheet metal design using Autodesk Inventor. I hope to see some new faces at the next meeting. The meeting schedule can always be found on the Club web page www.noccc.org. ∎

Special, one-time photo sig on Sunday, May 4 at 3:30 to 5:00 [p.m., natch]

The SIG will be led by Jim Morrison

Santa Ana College is co-sponsoring this event and has made available the 20-station classroom, A224, on the campus of Santa Ana College at 17th and Bristol in Santa Ana. The building is in the NE most corner of the campus. The classroom is on the 2nd floor, and entered via the south balcony walkway. Parking lots are open to all at that time, so just go into the NE lot under the lifted guard gate. This one time SIG is part of an effort by John Donan to start a Digital Photo SIG.

If we should do so, what would such a SIG intail? Answer: All aspects of digital images, including, acquisition, creation, modification, improving, correcting and reproducing in various media and formats. At the April 6th NOCCC meeting we will present some examples of what can be done using your computer; a sign up sheet for those interested in starting such a SIG and a survey of individual graphics interests of our members. ∎

NOCCC Help Line

The Help Line is in the true spirit of NOCCC, which is to help others to learn more about computers. The following is a list of Help Line Volunteers. The list is organized by the topic that each volunteer is willing to help you with. Please help us to keep this list current. Call or e-mail editor@noccc.org with additions, deletions, or corrections.

AI
Amiga
Apple
Apple II
Apple/Educator
C/C++
Computer Boards
Corel Draw
Excel(IBM)
Excel(Mac)
MacIntosh
MacIntosh
Memory/Interrupts
Modem Hardware
Modem Software
Neural Networks
OS/2
Pagemaker 6.0/6.5
PC, Beginners
PC Hardware
Quicken 6.0
Quickbooks 5.0
Quicken 2000,2001
Quickbooks
Quicken Home &
Business 2000, 2001
Powerpoint
Realtime Control
Robotics
Tcl/Tk
Unix
Windows 9X
Windows 9X
Windows 2000
Word
Word
WordPerfect

Help line info is in the printed version of the Orange Bytes

New volunteers for the Help Line would be appreciated!
Macromedia volunteers needed.

secure and you're willing to go the extra mile and do a little research work, then this is a book for you.

The book lists for $34.95 US, but you can get a discount by buying large quantities from the publisher (Addison-Wesley: www.aw.com/cseng).

Amazon.com $39.99 (free delivery)

abebooks.com $16.00

textbookx.com$18.69 ∎

Photoshop Elements 2.0

By John Donan

This is a review of Photoshop Elements 2.0 trial version, which will be a topic of discussion at this months Digital Photo SIG

My system consisting of Windows 2000 operating system with a 1.3 GHz Athlon , 512MB of RAM, two hard drives with approximately 17MB free, two Zip drives, Two CD drives (one a burner) an Epson 670 printer and an old HP 4c scanner exceed those requirements stated by the manufacturer. They are: a Pentium processor or equivalent, any Windows from 98 and beyond, 150MB of hard drive space, 128 MB of RAM, 256 color 800x600 resolution monitor. The hard drive and RAM requirements are considerably greater than competitive software such as Paint Shop Pro and Photo Impact both of which have a broader selection of features (at the same price.) The greater requirements for Elements may be due to its' paint engine coming from Photoshop 7.0's sophisticated engine. I have DSL, for the ease of interfacing with the Internet, which also made the 111 MB download from Adobe a breeze.

For those who already know how to use Photoshop, Elements is a cheaper program that is less complex. Its' subset of Photoshop tools provides all the necessary image retouching, selection, and output tools that most nonprofessionals need. It has been appraised to include about 90 percent of the features found in Photoshop.

Elements' watered down capabilities for things like Text, Save As, etc and rearrangement of Menu Bar functions can be disadvantageous for the accomplished Photoshop user. There may be other diminished capabilities I have yet to find. Elements, however, does have some unique tools. One can create panoramas with the Photomerge tool. This feature automatically resizes, skews, and blends multiple images together to create a seamless result. The tool which made a big hit with me is the Selection Brush tool which lets you drag with a variety of soft-edged or hard-edged brushes to define, add to, or subtract from selected areas. You can drag to either define a broad area or pick around creating one brush imprint at a time to define a complex boundary. Like its competitors Elements has red-eye removal. Elements' file browser, with its'

thumbnail identification of files, has been improved with batch operations. You can now rename, rotate, or relocate a group of selected images

To test drive Elements 2, I took a recently acquired family group photo and made four excellent portraits from it. Elements did for me, all the things I do in Photoshop, the way I do them in Photoshop. The tools I would have used for more extensive work were there as well.

Elements does not provide a full range of Web graphics tools found in competing products (notably Jasc Software's Paint Shop Pro and Ulead's PhotoImpact.) It doesn't match some of the features of Paint Shop Pro with which I am familiar such as tubes, frames or its scratch removal tool.

This program has easy to use features, making it simple for the casual user. As an example there are Auto Levels, Auto Contrast, and Auto Color. A Quick Fix command which provides access to many correction tools in a single dialog with helpful tips, and the crop and straighten tool. It provides fingertip assists with a Quick Start screen, also the Hints palette, and How To palettes provide tips and guided help for the benefit of new users.

The program is a product of Adobe Systems Incorporated, 345 Park Avenue, San Jose, CA, 95110. It sells for $100 and there are a variety of rebates around. A statement most heard about Adobe products is, they are the best software but with customer relations missing for the little guy. The User Guide is quality, equivalent to a technical book selling for $30 or more.

Many are hoping other Adobe products will be compressed in the future, similar to Elements, making them available to the little guy. ∎

Membership Renewal

When you turn in your Membership Renewal check, PLEASE fill out a Membership Renewal Application.

Memberships may also be re-newed on our Website noccc.org

Are You an NOCCC Member?

**Consider all that you get with membership and Join Now**

- **Meetings**. Keep up with what's going on in the computer world. Hear outstanding industry representatives make presentations of the latest and greatest in computer products.
- **Special Interest Groups**. Our 20 SIGs cover a broad spectrum of user interest; they invite you, whether you rank as beginner or seasoned computerist, to the lectures and demonstrations they sponsor, and to share computer knowledge.
- **Get help with your current computer problems**. In the Random Access portions of the meetings you ask your question of the entire assemblage, and more than likely someone will have the answer.
- **The NOCCC HelpLine**. Some 20 NOCCC volunteers, experts in their fields, stand ready to assist with your problems, as close as your telephone.
- **The *Orange Bytes* Newsmagazine**. Our Award Winning newsmagazine mailed monthly to your address reports on current activities and gives you articles and reviews geared toward your needs.
- **Raffles**. We have distributed thousands of dollars worth of hardware and software raffle prizes at our New Technologies and General meetings.
- **Product Review.** Write a review for this newsletter and keep the software, hardware, book or CD-ROM. Members review several products a month
- **Consignment Table**. We have a thriving consignment table on our regular meeting day in which we assist members to sell or buy all kinds of computer items.
- **Volunteer Work**. You are given opportunities to help our activities with interesting assignments. An all-volunteer organization, you can join with other members in a variety of activities, write articles for our newsletter, conducting a seminar, running a SIG, maning the help desk, showing new members around, help the membership commitee, and more.

Parking Information — Chapman University's main parking lot is on the north side of the campus (enter from Walnut) and is free of charge for NOCCC's meetings on Sunday. Please feel free to park in the parking lots.

Parking is also free on the **campus-side** of the surface streets. The city of Orange's parking laws prohibit parking in front of residential housing which is across the street from Chapman University. **Expensive parking tickets will be issued to violators.**

The NOCCC Information Desk, Membership Desk, Reviews Desk, Consignment Table, and most of the meeting rooms are in Irvine/Hashinger Hall and the Science Center on the east side of the campus (near Center Street).

Become an NOCCC member by signing up at the Membership Desk on our general meeting day, usually the first Sunday of the month. Or simply fill out the form on the reverse side of this page and send it in!
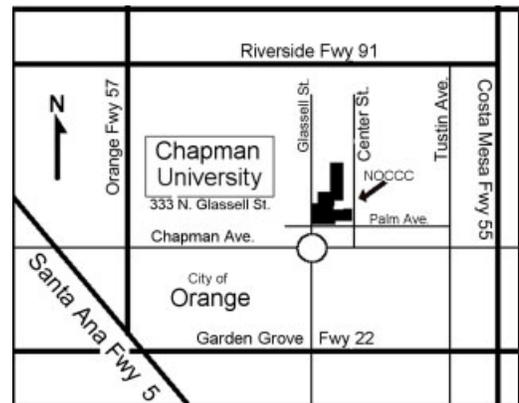
For current meeting information, please call **(714) 998-8080** for a recorded message.

North Orange County Computer Club
PO Box 3616
Orange CA 92857

Address Service Requested

Members:
Your expiration month and year
appear on your mailing label.
Please renew promptly, using
the application inside.

Dated Material - Please Expedite