



Award Winning News Magazine of the North Orange County Computer Club

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JANUARY 2004

NOCCC MEETINGS - January 4

9:30 AM Irvine Hall NEW TECHNOLOGIES

Herb Wong

Digital Cameras

See Page 4 for details

1:00 p.m. Irvine Hall MAIN MEETING

Don Baker

Demystifying Inkjet Printing

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 *Science 203*
Linux for Desktop Users *Wilkinson 111*
Visual Programming II *Science 109*
Visual C++ and Visual J++ for Beginners

9:30 a.m.

NEW TECHNOLOGIES *Irvine Hall*
Herb Wong
Computer Aided Investing *Science 306*
Member Investment Strategies, Techniques and Software
Hardware Essentials *Irvine Hall*
Linux (intermediate) *Wilkinson 111*

10:00 a.m.

Linux for Server Administrators *Wilkinson 111*
Visual Programming III *Science 109*
Intermediate and Advanced Visual Basic

11:15 a.m.

Computer Security *Science 203*
learning TCP/IP by sniffing a network

Linux Programming Concepts *Wilkinson 111*
Macintosh *Wilkinson 221*
Office Suites *Science 111*
Office suites applications
PC Q & A - Jim Sanders *Irvine Hall*
Most Qs A'd, some problems solved, assorted demos done
Understanding Operating Systems *Science 306*
Get Help with DOS, Windows 3.1, Windows 9x, OS/2, etc.
Visual Programming IV *Science 109*
Office 97 VB for Applications programming.

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.

Digital Photography *Irvine Hall*
All about taking, modifying, and printing digital photos
Genealogy *Science 111*
Discover your family history with modern tools
Hardware Essentials *Science 109*
Digital cameras
OS/2 News and Installation *Science 203*

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

Future Meetings
Jan 4, Feb 1, Mar 7, Apr 4, May 2

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“Friends Helping Friends”



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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

for the following positions:

Circulation — Oversees the mailing and distribution.

Commercial Swap Meets • Distributes Orange Bytes and NOCCC material at swap meets.

Commercial Advertising • Obtains ads from both national and local vendors for the Bytes; the success of this helps our club finances.

President's Message

By Cathy Margolin

I guess it pays to be a NOCCC member. We just received the 6 copies of Microsoft Office 2003 Professional (value \$479) that our members won at the November meeting. Congrats to John Carlson, Vicki Shanklin (who does the printing of our Orange Bytes – great job, Vicki!), Eric Saca (who does the main meeting report), Kevin Moser, Marvin Hoffman and Luann Whitmore for winning their new Office 2003.



In December we had a Christmas Card contest for computer generated cards - Best Card and Best original Photo was won by John Darling and Most Original was won by John Donan, our Digital Photo SIG leader. Thank you to all those who participated!

In January, John Johnson will tell us at 9:30 how to recycle our monitors, and other computer items such as cartridges, and old cell phones. If you want to bring an old cell phones (with chargers), NOCCC will give them to the Verizon Wireless HopeLine which collects wireless phones that are no longer being used. The used phones are either refurbished and recycled or sold. With the funds raised from the sale of the refurbished phones, Verizon Wireless will purchase wireless phones and donate airtime to victims of domestic violence through human services and law enforcement agencies.

Quite a number of our group made it to the APCUG (Association of PC User Groups) events at Comdex. Intel, AMD, Microsoft, Jasc (PaintShop Pro) and Adobe all made presentations to all of us from all over the world. Our Orange Bytes, with Jim Sanders as Editor, won the Best newsletter in the US, and 2nd in the World (after Melbourne User group with 14,000 members). That is awesome! Congrats to Jim and all who have helped to make this the best newsletter in the Nation.

Microsoft showed a new product called One Note which allows you to save notes with tabs to organize them. Comdex itself was very small, with quite a number of vendors moving to CES - Consumer Electronics Show in January.

Speaking of January, our New Technology group will be on Digital Cameras by Herb Wong, and our Main meeting will be Don Baker of Klassic Specialties on Demystifying Inkjet Printing. Don sells inkjet cartridges and tests many different printers to make certain they work, so he will tell us which printers are good, what to look for in paper and which types of papers are good for which purposes, more about printers and also about ink. If you got that new printer for Christmas or want to start printing your digital pictures, this is the meeting to check out!

Epson Printer as Raffle Prize! There will be an Epson C-82 printer given as the raffle prize at the main meeting! Buy a ticket to get in on it!

Membership Benefits

Member Discounts and Benefits

As a valued member, we bring you a section of discounts and offers as part of the entire "Benefit of Belonging." (Caveat - we are unable to endorse these companies, but make these offers available as a service to our members).

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!

CompuUSA Discount- Fountain Valley Only

One of our members, Joe Vezeau, Corporate Sales, has offered NOCCC members a discount. You have to call Joe and he will see if there is any discount available (some products are below cost and he cannot do anything) on the product you want. 714-965-4236 for Joe Vezeau).

McAfee Virus Scan

15% discount off all McAfee online products at:

<http://www.mcafee.com/usergroups/>

Aladdin Stuffit, Aladdin's best ZIP compression software, Stuffit 8, is now available. It has the strongest security and data protection technology for Windows. There is a special User Group discount of \$29.99. For more information go to: <http://www.aladdinsys.com/support/usergroups/index.html> and enter the code: PCUG 2002.

PowerQuest -- PartitionMagic v8 (List \$69.95) -\$35.00 -- Drive Image v7 (List \$69.95)-Full System Backup Utility, \$35.00. PartitionMagic, Drive Image, Both Educational CDs \$89. <http://www.ugr.com/order/> with group code UGAUGNOCCC. Phone 801-796-7370

VOPT XP – New Fast Defragmentation Program, 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 defragment your hard drive. Mention "Margolin" to get the \$30 user group discount or \$10 off the \$40 price.

O'Reilly Books

If you order directly from O'Reilly, <http://www.oreilly.com>, orders@oreilly.com, or 800-998-9938, you are entitled to a 20% discount (and possibly free shipping). User Group discount code is DSUG.

NewRiders Books Discount – Go to <http://www.newriders.com> and check out their Promo section for User Group member's discounts.

December Board Meeting Minutes



The Board Meeting Minutes are published in the printed version of the Orange Bytes, which is mailed to members

Herb Wong's New -Computer Essentials SIG - (for neophytes)

We're all born knowing nothing. Some remain that way by choice. For everyone else, taking the first steps to learn about computers is harder than learning to walk. Now, there is a solution.

The Computer Essentials SIG (special interest group) will introduce you to the world of computing. You'll learn to sit, crawl, stand, walk, and run a computer with confidence. You'll start at the beginning, continue until you reach the end, and, then, stop.

Each monthly session will introduce the essentials of using a computer. Over the course of our meetings, you'll learn the correct way to use a mouse and keyboard, text editing, word processing, file management, anti-virus scanners, spreadsheets, taking care of you computer, fonts, web browsing, newsgroups (UseNet), printing, scanning, file formats, and much more.

The first session on February 4, 2004 (9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in Science 111) will be crucial to understanding everything that follows. You learn to identify the objects and features that you see on the monitor, the correct way to use a mouse and keyboard, fundamentals of navigation and manipulation of objects (selecting, copying, deleting, inserting, etc.), editing text, and word processing fundamentals, fonts, and much more. Tell your friends, too!

Please e-mail computeressentialssig@noccc.org if you plan to attend. Please include a little information about yourself, such as your computer experience, what kind of computer you use, what operating system you use, and any other information that might be of interest to you. ■

Adjourned at 8:24 PM

January 4th Meeting Preview

MAIN MEETING 1:00 Irvine Hall

Don Baker of Klassic Specialties on Demystifying Inkjet Printing. Don sells inkjet cartridges and tests many different printers to make certain they work, so he will tell us which printers are good, what to look for in paper and which types of papers are good for which purposes, more about printers and also about ink.

New Technologies - Herb Wong will be talking about the hardware features of digital cameras.

The Club Raffle this month will have an Epson C82 color ink jet printer for the main prize.

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%.

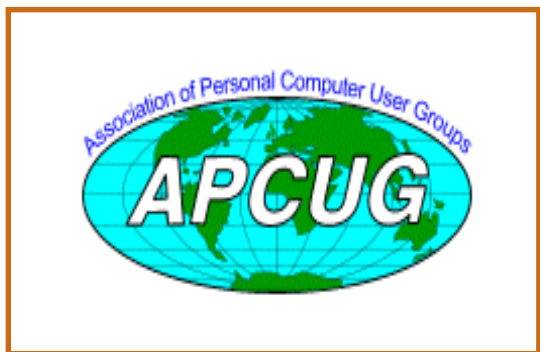
3. Fill out a tag on each item! It must contain: Seller's Name, NOCCC Membership Number, Item name, a short description and selling price.

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 be 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.



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Security Testing Online - Fraud or Not?

By Greg West, Editor of SCUG REPORT, Sarnia Computer User's Group (SCUG), Sarnia, Ontario, Canada, gjwest@sympatico.ca

Recently, while researching material I came across an article which discussed "Spring Cleanup" and computer maintenance. The first suggestion was to run your computer through an online test to see whether your system is secure or insecure. The current warnings of updating patches, Spam attacks, and overall computer safety, prompted me to say, "why not" as I clicked into "NanoProbe Technology Internet Security Testing for Windows Users" that uses a program called: Shields UP!! (<http://grc.com>). Suspecting a scam of some sort I figured I would attempt to trick this program. I would run the test twice, once with my firewall turned off and another test with it operating.

My curiosity peaked immediately after my first click when I received a message that I "was about to view pages over a secure connection", a more than familiar message indeed. So I continued on, yet still mostly skeptical that there was some sort of come-on to reach out and take my money. No sooner than I clicked the "ok" button, did I receive this strange message:

"Greetings Gregory! Without your knowledge or explicit permission, the Windows networking technology which connects your computer to the Internet may be offering some or all of your computer's data to the entire world at this very moment!

(For example . . . that's how I know your name!)"

Next I was given a choice of testing my "Shields" or "Ports" & I clicked on "Shields" became even more skeptical when I received this message:

"Preliminary Internet connection established! Your computer has accepted an anonymous connection from another machine it knows nothing about! (That's not good.) This ShieldsUP! web server has been permitted to connect to your computer's highly insecure NetBIOS File and Printer Sharing port (139). Subsequent tests conducted on this page, and elsewhere on this website, will probe more deeply to determine the extent of this system's vulnerability. But regardless of what more is determined, the presence and availability of some form of Internet Server HAS BEEN CONFIRMED within this machine . . . and it is accepting anonymous connections!"

The message continued to give the full details of its findings, or non-findings:

"The rest of this website explains the implications and dangers of your present configuration and provides com-

plete and thorough instruction for increasing the security of this system. At the moment, any passing high speed Internet scanner will quickly spot this computer as a target for attack. The phrase you must remember is: "My port 139 is wide OPEN!" Unable to connect with NetBIOS to your computer. The attempt to connect to your computer with NetBIOS protocol over the Internet (NetBIOS over TCP/IP) FAILED. But, as you can see below, significant personal information is still leaking out of your system and is readily available to curious intruders. Since you do not appear to be sharing files or printers over the TCP/IP protocol, this system is relatively secure. It is exposing its NetBIOS names (see below) over the Internet, but it is refusing to allow connections, so it is unlikely that anyone could gain casual entry into your system due to its connection to the Internet. Several of your private names are being served up to the Internet by the Windows networking system. (see below) While it's unlikely that this information can be exploited, you should know what anyone can learn about you and your system."

But the kicker was that my User Name, my Computer's Name, and my Workgroup was identified on screen & I knew I had to go to the next level and test my Ports. Here are the results of the Port testing:

It declared that my Port 80 (http) was open and that "having port 80 "open" as it is here causes intruders to wonder how much information you might be willing to give away."

The test program also found my Port 139 (Net BIOS) was open and I received this warning:

"As you probably know by now, the NetBIOS File Sharing port is the single largest security hole for networked Windows machines. The payoff from finding open Windows shares is so big that many scanners have been written just to find open ports like this one. Closing it should be a priority for you!"

Well, I must admit I was becoming a tad worried, but still I was skeptical towards the reality of these results. Next I wanted to run these test using my Zone Alarm Firewall operating. Here are the results of testing both my shields and ports:

On the Shield's test I got the same first "GREETINGS" message, only this time it did not contain my name. The results were amazingly secure. The Shield's UP test could not find my Port 139, nor was it able to connect with my NetBIOS to my computer. Here are the results of the Shield's test:

"Your Internet port 139 does not appear to exist! One or more ports on this system are operating in FULL STEALTH MODE! Standard Internet behavior requires port connection attempts to be answered with a success or refusal response. Therefore, only an attempt to connect to a nonexistent computer results in no response of either kind. But YOUR computer has DELIBERATELY



CHOSEN NOT TO RESPOND (that's very cool!) which represents advanced computer and port stealthing capabilities. A machine configured in this fashion is well hardened to Internet NetBIOS attack and intrusion. Unable to connect with NetBIOS to your computer. All attempts to get any information from your computer have FAILED. (This is very uncommon for a Windows networking-based PC.) Relative to vulnerabilities from Windows networking, this computer appears to be VERY SECURE since it is NOT exposing ANY of its internal NetBIOS networking protocol over the Internet."

My firewall came through with shining colours and with full security. Next was the Port test with the firewall operating. This test reported my Port 80 was open (http), however this is my connection to the net and my firewall blocks the incoming attacks as they are produced&giving me the choice whether to accept or reject, but nothing comes through without my acceptance. So this warning is ok. The next warning I received was again concerning Port 139, this time I got the same message that it could not get through to this port and furthermore, "There is NO EVIDENCE WHATSOEVER that a port (or even any computer) exists at this IP address!"

Not a fraud, only success! My confidence in firewalls stands firm, sound and free of worry. ■

To Upgrade Or Not To Upgrade

By Timothy Everingham, NOCCC,
teveringham@acm.org

To upgrade or not to upgrade, that is the question. Whether it is nobler to upgrade the computer you have or to put aside the invested fortune of your current computer and get a new one? Or yet do you even need to be putting your cash into computer hardware? Luckily, Shakespeare didn't have to deal with these questions, which in recent years have become even more complicated to answer.

Where you should start is by determining what your present and future needs and wants are going to be. Don't try to project over five years. I am not talking about what hardware you may drool over, but what you will want or need to do with your computer. Will it be word processing; web surfing; email; burn-

ing CD and DVDs; database or list management; software development; photo, graphics, video editing and creation; or something else? Then you look at the application software that will accomplish those tasks. Also look at how long will your current application software and operating system(s) be supported by the manufacturer (Windows 98 will no longer have support & patches available after December 31, 2003). Also if you have software that is known to be troublesome, like Windows ME; the need or desire to upgrade it should be considered. Then you look at the system requirements to run these applications: hardware, operating system, and other supporting software (software that is required to be installed on your system in order for your application to run). Remember that the companies want to sell you the software or hardware, resulting in the minimum software requirements listed being as low as possible and may not reflect real world conditions. If you have a system that is exactly listed as the minimum system requirements (it is the minimum system requirements if only one is listed) consider that this product will run extremely slowly and crash at times. Some manufactures list both minimum and recommended system requirement, and you do not want to be too far below the recommended requirements. Also some system requirements listed do not change the RAM requirements for different operating systems. They list as minimum RAM the one for the oldest operating system. A program may run on Windows 95, 98, 98 SE, ME, 2000, and XP; but the amount of RAM needed in reality is more for Windows 98, 98 SE, and ME than Windows 95 and more for Windows 2000 and XP than Windows 98, 98 SE, and ME.

There are some general guidelines. If you have a Pentium II computer, AMD equivalent or older and are doing anything else than word processing, simple web surfing and email you are looking at having too many things needed to upgrade for it to be worthwhile. With Macintosh or notebook computers upgrade options are more limited than desktop PCs, so unless it is fairly new you should more be looking at getting a new computer. Also you have to look at how many of your computers components are close to or past their expected lifetimes. If your computers components are five years or older, your computer is living on borrowed time. Where the upgrade option looks better is with Pentium 3, Pentium 4 or Athlon based desktop computers. However, software activation has made this more complicated. With activation the software takes a snapshot of

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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Computer Talk

your computers hardware configuration and if you try to run it after doing too many upgrades after activation the software decides that is its not the same computer it was originally; but a different one, violating the software license and shuts itself down. You then have to go to the software manufacturer and try to convince them that the computer you upgraded is not a new computer. The most famous of the programs that includes this feature is Windows XP, but there are a growing number of application software packages that have this feature too. Of course this has bred a lot of fear uncertainty and doubt (FUD) about upgrading computers, which the people who sell new computers are happy to take advantage of. If you do a combination motherboard (main circuit board) and processor replacement activation should be a problem for you.

If your current computer fits your systems requirements of your expected needs and wants, congratulations you are done without having to spend any money. However, if you still are considering upgrading, the next thing you want to do is get out your motherboard manual (may be contained in computer manual). It will tell you what components can be installed on it. If you can't find your manual, there is likely to be a PDF of it up on the manufacturer's website. While you are there check to see if there are any BIOS updates available that may give the motherboard new features that you may need. If the motherboard does not support the processor; type, speed or amount of RAM; or the type of plug-in card (AGP, PCI, EISA, ISA) you want to install, you will have to install a new motherboard that will. For drive (IDE, ATA, SATA, SCSI), IEEE 1394(Firewire), and USB interfaces you can get plug-in cards instead of getting a new motherboard. Upgrading your RAM is probably the thing that can be most effective in putting off the need to buy a new computer. The others would be a new video card and a new hard drive. Installing a CD or DVD R/RW drive is also a good option in order to backup things on you hard drives and being able to take data and media files off your drives that you use infrequently. Don't forget to calculate your power requirements and have the case be able to fit the motherboard. After that, make up a list of your proposed upgrade parts, and total the cost of them. Then compare this cost to the cost of a similar system to what your upgraded system would be. If you are doing a lot of upgrading you will find that the totally new computer will be close to or cost less than the cost of upgrading (there is a discount for buying an entirely new computer rather than just the parts of one). If you find yourself in this position you should lean toward buying a new computer. With this type of consideration you should also be looking at how you would transfer data and applications from your old computer to your new one (remember software activation issues).

With AMD releasing their Athlon 64 bit desktop processors, one of the issues in upgrading or buy a new computer is will I need a 64 bit processor. For most people the answer is not until the later part of this decade. First to get the most out of a 64 bit processor you need 64 bit applications running on top of a 64 bit operating system. Of course if you have a Mac G5 system running Panther (Mac OS 10.3) and some of the recent versions

of the high level Apple content creation applications you are already there, but for the PC world, the only 64 bit applications programs now are very high level server based or scientific applications. There is 64 bit Linux, but the Windows XP version is still in beta and won't be out until spring 2004. There will be 64 bit versions of some games in 2004, but do not look until 2005 for a significant amount of 64 bit software for Windows XP. Because there will be a lot of 32 bit computers around for a while there should be plenty of 32 bit software. The 64 bit Athlons and what rumors say Intel is developing as a 64 bit desktop processor will be able to run 32 bit applications well, which should also keep the 32 bit software market healthy for quite a while. So unless you are a high level gamer, run high-level scientific or content creation applications, or run Macs you should wait on getting a 64 bit processor computer.

Making the decision on whether to upgrade your current computer or buy a new computer have become more complex than it was a few years ago. A systematic step by step approach is appropriate. First determine your needs, then what will support filling those needs, and then weigh the costs of upgrading or buying new. May the wisdom of the Great Elizabethan Bard be upon you, resulting in a fruitful bounty of computer buying.

Timothy Everingham is CEO of Timothy Everingham Consulting in Azusa, California. He is a member of North Orange County Computer Club. Further information can be found at <http://home.earthlink.net/~teveringham> ■

Hunt for the Lost Font

By Mick Topping, Springfield, Missouri User Groups, mtopping@mchsi.com

Did you ever lose a font? A year or so ago I made up and printed a sheet of business cards that I was happy with. Last week, I gave away my last one. (I go through about one card a month.) When I opened the business card again (in Corel Draw-7), it complained that it could not find the font Andy Bold, and asked which font to substitute.

FREE COMPUTER CLASS

Santa Ana College (SAC) is offering a free PC computer workshop class. You can start attending at any time. The class covers just about all aspects of personal computing, software, hardware, building new machines, upgrading/fixing the machine you have. The class is held Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8 AM till noon in Hammond Hall room H201. Call the **Centennial Education Center** at 241-5700, class #64200.09

New class starts Jan 20, 2004

Let me mention that I am not much of a font person. I usually couldn't care less about which font to use. I am an engineer, more interested in the meaning of the words than in how they are drawn. Arial, Courier, and Times New Roman are about all I ever use. But for my business card, I wanted something to reflect my casual insouciance, and convey the fact that I have a passion for informality, and that I am really not looking for work. Since I had put a good 10-15 minutes into the original font selection, I was somewhat concerned, and more than somewhat irritated that it was no longer available. So, I decided to hunt the critter down.

First, I looked for "Andy" in every font folder on 3 computers. (I couldn't remember which machine I had used to print the cards.) Nothing like Andy Bold anywhere. Then I remembered, Windows applications (for the most part) keep their fonts in the C:\Windows\Fonts folder, and most applications just reach into this folder to use a font. And applications rarely delete their fonts when they are uninstalled. So any font that was ever put on a computer is likely still there, unless major surgery has been done. This fact pointed to my laptop computer as the culprit, as I had recently done a clean-install of WindowsXP, whereas the other computers had been little changed over the year. Regular experimentation had caused numerous apps to be installed on the laptop, then when the new version of Windows was installed only those apps still needed were re-installed.

But which of those non-reinstalled applications came with the Andy Bold font? First a web-search on "lost font"—wow, I am not the only one who has lost a font. Over 300 web pages containing "lost font", none of which were very promising. Many of the links were inactive, and advertising overwhelmed others, and I was getting nowhere. Another search on "Andy Bold", only a few hits this time, and here was a "Bulkley Valley Christian" school web page, with a note that to appreciate the page you needed to have Andy Bold installed on your computer. And there was a link promising to let me download AndyB.ttf! Unfortunately, it was another broken link. Most likely, someone had remembered that the fonts are copyrighted, and shouldn't be downloaded.

In frustration, I finally gave-up, and printed 2 new sheets of business cards in Balloon... or Plump or Poster Boldoni, not sure which. Of course, the new cards were not out of the printer when I had another thought—maybe someone at Microsoft had considered this problem. Sure enough they had. It is not easy to find, but once you know where to look,

<http://www.microsoft.com/typography/fonts/default.asp> has a search engine that will allow you to find which applications came with which fonts.

A quick lookup, and there was what I needed. Andy Bold is distributed with Microsoft Home Publisher, part of the never used software that had come with my laptop. A quick dig through my stack of CD-ROMs, and there it was, in the MHP\Fonts folder, an icon labeled AndyB.ttf. I drag it over to my Windows\Fonts folder, and it automatically installs,

and I can now print my cards like I want them. Unfortunately, I have a 2-year supply of them done with the other font. Anyone want a card? Aw come on—please take a card. ■

Living in 2003

You know you are living in the year 2003 when:

Your reason for not staying in touch with some family and friends is because they do not have e-mail.

You have a list of 15 phone numbers to reach your family of three.

Your grandmother asks you to send her a JPEG file of your newborn so she can create a screen saver.

You pull up in your own driveway and use your cell phone to see if anyone is home.

Every commercial on television has a Web site address at the bottom of the screen.

You buy a computer and 3 months later it's out of date and sells for half the price, or less than you paid for it.

Leaving the house without your cell phone, which you didn't have the first 20 or 30 years of your life, is now a cause for panic and you turn around to go get it.

Using real money, instead of a credit or debit card, to make a purchase would be a hassle and take planning.

You just tried to enter your password on the microwave.

You consider second-day air delivery painfully slow.

Your dining room table is now your flat, filing cabinet.

Your idea of being organized is multiple-colored Post-it notes.

You hear most of your jokes via e-mail instead of in person.

You get an extra phone line so you can get phone calls.

You disconnect from the Internet and you get this awful feeling, as if you just pulled the plug on a loved one.

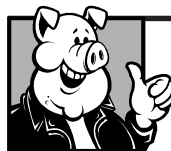
You get up in the morning and go online before getting your coffee.

You wake up at 2 a.m. to go to the bathroom and check your e-mail on your way back to bed.

You start tilting your head sideways to smile.

You're reading this and nodding and laughing.

Even worse, you know exactly who you are going to forward this to! ■



Pig SIG Open To ALL

Meet us in the Cafeteria in Argyros Hall around 11:30 am (until about 1pm). If you're hungry, there is a buffet lunch and snack bars open.

There are several sets of tables where NOCCC people gather, eat and chat. Just look for the badges, grab a chair, and join in! This is an informal group, so many different subjects are discussed. It's a great opportunity to mix, mingle and network. See ya there!

Moving to Linux

Kiss the Blue Screen of Death Goodbye!

By *Ken Ransom, NOCCC*

Hello Club Members, What a wonderful club we have here to get to sample, review these products, and get to keep them in return! I can also say that this is a first rate computer hobbyist club in the Orange County area, because of having been in 2 different clubs before.

Anyhow Linux is supposed to be the up and coming operating system that is free and could be installed just about everywhere you would like to try it: home desktop, work environment, laptop, or servers. But I guess that they have several different versions for that.

The one that I got to check out is the WFTL Edition Knoppix. Well, it's supposed to be an operating system on a CD. And it worked OK on my 300Mhz Celeron, 64 MB Nvidia video card, 192 MB of Ram, 60 and 20GB hard drives in it, that had a Windows XP problem on it and won't boot up at all until I put the Knoppix CD in. I'm thinking that I had forgotten the minimum requirements of XP. I'm in the process of getting that machine back to regular boot up, but will take some more time to reinstall 98 and/or dual booting a Linux onto the hard drive with Partition Magic is what they are recommending in the book. But have Windows on there first.

I can run programs in this old crashed Windows machine, but cannot install or run anything in the CD ROM. I tried it on my 1000Mhz Athlon KT-7 AMD, 128MB DDR Nvidia, 786MB Ram, 2/80GB hard drives and Windows XP as the OS, and my 733Mhz, 392MB Ram, 64MB mmx video card, 45 and 30GB hard drives, and with Windows XP as the operating system on both of these machines and the Knoppix CD did not work. I even tried to tweak the bios to dual boot and made sure that the CD Rom was the first order of boot, but I guess that Windows XP doesn't like another OS moving in and will have to find an update or program through the list of web sites that Marcel Gagne the author has in the manual there to get that working.

Being a first year member, I'm really glad to see that NOCCC has several different kinds of SIGS on Linux, which I will start attending to learn more about this free operating system. With experienced people that really know the ins and outs of these products.

Even though it didn't work in 2 out of 3 applications that I tried it on, I still recommend this book and with the CD that comes along with the book, and has a lot of information on running a lot of programs on the CD for the novice computerist (Which is downloadable if you have cable or dsl, but because it's a 694MB file and would take forever on a dial-up and you never know how the quality thru the net would be also) and because you never know when it might come in handy. Also, what is an extra plus for the Linux family, is there are open office, CD/

DVD burner programs, and lots of other goodies. Like beginning in Windows, it was a challenge and I think that we all were a little scared of learning/testing the first computer that we first invested in. I was.

Moving to Linux is written by Marcel Gagne, the award-winning author of the Linux Journal's "Cooking with Linux" column. It comes with a bootable CD-ROM to test-drive Linux without touching your Windows operating system. The book is published by Addison Wesley. MSRP=\$35. It is available at Amazon.com for \$21. ■

PC Annoyances

How to Fix the Most Annoying Things About Your PC

By *Ted Littman, NOCCC*

There are lots of books filled with tips and tricks for your PC, its Windows operating system, the Internet, email, and software – especially Microsoft Office. However, PC Annoyances, published by O'Reilly, offers 170 pages of fixes for a potpourri of annoyances in these categories, written with the quirky sense of humor and readability unique to Steve Bass, the self-styled Kvetch author of PC technology. (Did I get it right, Steve?)

Almost everyone in the computer world knows of Steve Bass (or should). He's been doing computers for over 20 years. Not only did he found the 2400-member Pasadena IBM Users Group, but in the late 1980s, he co-founded the nationwide Association of Personal Computer User Groups (of which NOCCC is a member). Steve also has applied his writing/humor skills as a Contributing Editor for PC World, with dozens of articles plus the regular Home Office column. There is more, but you'll have to read his book for the rest.

OK. So, let's jump to the bottom line: Should you spring for the \$20 (less a 20% discount for User Group members, if you order from O'Reilly via phone or Web site) and buy Steve's book? Well, here are some reasons to consider:

1. You don't attend computer club SIGs to get help from the experts when you have a PC problem or annoyance.
2. You "don't do" (paper or electronic) manuals/guidebooks/user guides.
3. You haven't read the "other" books: O'Reilly publishes a gaggle of "fix" series (Hacks, Missing Manuals, Pocket Guides, Nutshell, etc.)* And other publishers have similar offerings.
4. You are fed up with the glitches, bugs, and hiccups that interrupt the productive use of your PC.
5. You enjoy well illustrated books that offer a good

dose or humor along with suggestions that are (mostly) excellent for improving your PC experience.

Bass has been very liberal in providing links to some of the best free fixes for deficiencies and annoyances that plague our operating systems and software. In addition, he has posted more fixes at <http://www.oreilly.com/pcannoyances>, including over 100 free tools and utilities. This Web site affords you the opportunity to “try before you buy” the book which covers 200-plus annoyances.

I have read the book from cover-to-cover several time and then marked the individual fixes that I wanted to try. The ones that I have tried in the book and the ones posted on-line have been most useful.

PC Annoyances is available at the usual book stores and computer vendors locally and on-line as well as from publisher O'Reilly (<http://www.oreilly.com>, 800-998-9938). ISBN 0-596-00593-8. MSRP=\$20. It probably is a bargain at less than one cent per annoyance! Steve Bass can be emailed at kvetch@pcworld.com.

*A number of other O'Reilly books are reviewed in this issue of Orange Bytes as well as previous issues. ■

Linux in a Nutshell

A Desktop Quick Reference

By *Tommy Hugh Crenshaw, NOCCC*

Linux in a Nutshell, 4th Edition (June 2003), is a misnomer. It's not nutshell sized. Linux is a complete complex operating system. The book is approximately two inches thick and includes many commands, the boot process, several shells, searching, four specialty applications, version control, and four chapters on the Linux graphical interface. The authors, Ellen Siever, Stephen Figginis, and Aaron Weber, have packed the book with information on how to manage, write scripts, and work within the Linux operating system. O'Reilly, the publisher, <http://www.oreilly.com>, has provided a book that was a help as soon as I arrived at my home with it.

My first impression is, it is not a beginner's book, yet it's just a big book of not-so-complex instructions to which the computer will respond. Some basic programming skills are required to use it. I would recommend the book to everyone interested in acquiring serious Linux skills. You will use it sooner or later. The book does not provide an understanding of the overall relationship between the commands, but each individual command is well addressed including the parameters for each command. I find myself changing an existing script more often than writing scripts from scratch. So, I don't need an understanding of how the script fits in the overall picture, just what I wish to change.

At the time, I was interested in setting up a Linux software raid array (two disks mirroring each other), and the book had commands listed for starting and stopping such an array. However, it fell short when I built my raid array. Other raid com-

mands were missing, e.g., how to sync the raid mirrors, how to create the raid device, how to add and/or remove one of the mirrored drives while the system was running. I had to use another source for scripting examples for the raid setup. Other commands in the book, not raid commands, include examples.

Having said the book was two inches thick, I must admit half the book was dedicated to command line use or to commands that could be used in scripts. And, that's a good thing. I prefer setting up Linux by writing or altering script files rather than using Windows-like wizards that are found in Red Hat, and Debian. I personally use the Slackware Linux distribution which is basically set up by script files and/or text windows, although if you use X windows in Slackware, you will find some “wizard like” setup files. I found this book useful to edit script files manually, and it should be equally useful even if a wizard wrote the scripts files.

The publisher probably has discretion on the size of the book, but more commands on raid and examples on raid usage would have been preferable even if the Red Hat and Debian chapter on package managers was eliminated.

There were two chapters that were interesting, but I had to read without knowing what they were about when I started reading. After reading, I had some idea of their use and made some assumptions.

Chapter 12 is about an editor with a specialty use. `sed`, its name is spelled with a small “s,” and it “is a noninteractive editor that interprets and performs the actions in a script.” The authors claim it will edit “one or more files automatically,” simplifies “repetitive edits to multiple files,” and for “writing conversion programs.” I'm not sure what I'd use it for, but, I understand something about what it will do now.

Chapter 13 is about “gawk” which seems more of a systems processing tool than an editor. It will change files like an editor, with layman's language maybe I can call it a system administrator's update tool, and it is much more than just an editor. Processing many files in a batch changing or updating looks possible. It is more of a tool than I need with my personal LAN of three Linux boxes, one windows laptop (wireless), and two windows workstations.

Maybe next month or next year I'll run across a use for `sed` and/or `gawk`. Sometimes, looking at a script for the first time and not understanding all there was to know about it isn't new for me, and it has been that first exposure that later helps explain how the script assists in using Linux. Eventually, somewhere or sometime, a similar script will appear and I'll reevaluate `sed` or `gawk` for its real application, and maybe at that time, I'll be able to use it for what it is intended. My assumption is, it's there for something, and I just don't know what it is used for yet.

Overall, I like the book; I've reached for it often since I got it. Check out the O'Reilly website for other Linux books. MSRP=\$40 (less a 20% discount for user group members). ISBN 0-596-00482-6. ■

Pinnacle Studio V. 8

Using Pinnacle Studio V. 8 for Creating Videos

By *Bill Trammell, NOCCC*

Pinnacle Systems (<http://www.pinnaclesys.com>) offers several packages of Studio v. 8 for home use in capturing, editing and making videos. These packages range in price from \$50 for the software alone to \$250 for the high-end software and hardware. This review is focused on the \$200 Studio Deluxe package that includes version 8 software, a capture card, a connector module for attaching analog video components, and advanced transition techniques. The same software and capture card only are also available in the Studio AV/DV package for \$130. Fry's and other electronic stores often sell the Studio v. 8 software alone for less, but the user must have a compatible video capture card.

Requirements:

Studio 8 requires Microsoft Windows (98 thru XP), a minimum Pentium or Athalon processor speed of 800 (1.5 is recommended) and 128 Mb (256 recommended) of RAM. While not a limit of Studio 8, videos require a lot of storage room (4 GB for every 20 minutes of capture). My Pentium 3 (866) processor had a difficult time, including slow execution and numerous lockups, with Studio 8. However, my new Pentium 4 (2.4 GB) has no difficulty with it. Users will also need a VHS tape unit and/or a CD or DVD recorder.

Installation:

Studio 8 installs easily. No difficulty was encountered. Full installation requires two CD's plus a third CD for the advanced Hollywood FX transitions. Full installation requires over 800 Mb of storage. The software is not copy protected, but does require input of a serial code. I have had no problem installing it on more than one computer. Registration of the software provides access to on-line tech service.

System Info:

I currently have Studio 8 installed on three computers. It runs best on my Pentium 4 (see above) under Windows XP. This computer has 60 GB of storage, but I have added an 80 GB Western Digital external Firewire hard drive, which I strongly recommend. I am capturing analog video from a VHS unit and from a Sony DCR-TRV30 digital video camera; both provide good input. The Sony camera provides either analog (component cables) or digital input via Firewire or USB 1. This camera also takes video still pictures and stills from this and other sources can be included in Studio 8 videos. I have created videos on VHS tape, Video CD (MPEG 1), and DVD (MPEG2). Output is also available as S-VHS and as AVI Windows Media, and RealVideo files.

Product Support:

Product support is limited. Registered users can access on line support, but I have been unable to make voice contact with anyone. A user's manual, which includes installation and operation trouble shooting advice, is provided with the software. The manual is adequate, but I have supplemented it with Jan

Ozer's book, Pinnacle Studio for Windows, which I strongly recommend. The software checks for Internet updates when loaded and updates can be downloaded at no charge.

My Thoughts:

I am very pleased with Studio 8. It has been easy to use in capturing, editing and creating videos. True, I have experienced some challenges, but with persistence and help from the manual and Ozer's book, I have been able to edit approx. 3 hours of tape into a comprehensive 33-minute video. This video has now been produced on DVD and VHS tape. I have no negative criticism of Studio 8 software or hardware and heartedly recommend it to anyone who wants to produce home videos.

Pinnacle Studios:

Pinnacle Studios is located at 280 N. Bernardo Avenue, Mountain View, CA 94043. Its phone number is 1-800-4Pinnacle or 650-526-1601. Studio 8 can be ordered from the web site shown at the start of this review. ■

ActivePDF Composer

By *Don Ogden, NOCCC*

ActivePDF Composer is an affordable desktop program. It enables quick conversion of electronic PostScript (.PS) or Encapsulated PostScript (.EPS) files to Portable Document Format (PDF) files. However, it does not allow you to create PDF files from paper documents.

The program was easy to load and came up on the program file as activePDF composer. When I first used the program, the PostScript to PDF Conversion box came up. I selected File > Open. An Open PostScript File box came up. I tried to select several of my electronic files many times. They were invisible in the PostScript selection box. Why? None of my electronic files are in PostScript. Also, there was no Select All to verify this.

The program seemed useless to me because I do not save my files in PostScript. I remembered that there was an old Adobe Acrobat Print method. Would it work? I brought up a document in Word. Selected File > Print > Properties. Then, selected activePDF Composer as my printer and clicked on OK. Presto, a PDF file was produced.

Documentation: None came with the CD that I received, except Help menu. Would a novice be able to figure out how to use the program without up front documentation?

Requirements: Microsoft Windows 98, Windows ME, Windows 2000, Windows NT4, or Windows XP. - A minimum of 10 MB of available disk space. - Additional disk space may be required, depending on the size and type of files being converted.

Support: All support from activePDF is free for both customers and pre-sales inquiries. Basic priority is on a first-come, first-serve basis. Email: support@activepdf.com

Price: Check the website <http://www.activepdf.com> for the exact current price. It has an MSRP=\$79.

If you only need to convert your electronic documents to PDF, the price is right. However, you can't convert paper docu-

ments to PDF. For corrections, you must change the original electronic document and convert it again to a PDF file.

What you should know about PDF.

Documents converted to Portable Document Format (PDF), preserve the exact look and content of the original, complete with fonts and graphics. They can be shared and stored on the web, a file system, or a CD-ROM. They can be viewed on Microsoft Windows, Mac OS, IBM OS2, Linux, and UNIX platforms.

Of course, just printing a disk file to a Portable Document Format isn't enough. People need to be able to open and read the PDF files, viewing them on their computer screens just as if they were looking at a sheet of paper. The software that lets you view PDF is called the Adobe Reader. Then any one can read them using Adobe Reader. You can download the Reader free from the Internet at <http://www.adobe.com>. ■

JavaScript by Example

By *Bill Crane, NOCCC*

With HTML, I could write programs to run on browsers, but those static programs never provided any excitement or interaction with the web site. Ellie Quigley's book provides the relevant information to learn how to create more impressive web sites in a logical, straight-forward sequence. While HTML can be used to create buttons, boxes and fillout forms, JavaScript can be used to detect and react to user-initiated events such as validating or cause a new image to appear when a mouse moves over a link or a button is pressed. It improves a web site with navigational aids, scrolling messages and rollovers, dialog boxes, dynamic images, shopping carts, etc. Without network transmission, it lets you validate the user's entry before submission to the server and control the page appearance as it is parsed. The string functions support regular expressions to check for valid e-mail addresses, social security numbers, credit card data, etc. A programming language, it describes basic constructs such as variables, data types, control loops, if/else statements, switch statements, functions and objects. It may be used for arithmetic calculations, setting the date and time, and works with arrays, strings and objects. It also reads and writes cookie values and dynamically creates HTML based on the cookie value.

JavaScript 1.5 was developed for and by Netscape, and is equivalent to Microsoft's Jscript. JavaScript can be used with Netscape Navigator 4.0 and Explorer 4.0 versions and above on the PC as well as on the Mac. The CD-ROM included with the book requires Explorer version 5 or higher, Netscape Navigator 7 or higher, or Mozilla version 1.0 or higher and an operating system supporting these browsers. My computer has a 2 GHz CPU with 256 KB RAM, 60 MG hard drive and Windows XP with Netscape 7.0 and Explorer 5.0. There is no on-line support for the CD-ROM portion; it has a readme file and contains the JavaScript program for each example in each chapter.

JavaScript is embedded in HTML. A basic understanding

of HTML is necessary to use this general purpose scripting language. The browsers mentioned above have the interpreters for both languages. JavaScript is not Java or HTML. It is object based but not strictly object oriented, and has its own syntax rules. Microsoft's VBScript is a similar language that can be embedded in applications. This book provides a client-side JavaScript language rather than a server-side language. Each chapter begins with a very lucid introduction to the subject covered and describes each item followed by an example with pictures of the browser and an explanation of the language as it is used. The CD-ROM includes the language for each example within each chapter.

Chapter 1 is a brief overview of JavaScript describing the events used, different versions and which browser is supported, EMCA standardization and dealing with old and disabled browsers such as cell phones and Palm handhelds. Script Setup in Chapter 2 describes the execution in HTML with syntactical details case sensitivity, free form and reserved words, statements, comments, script tags, generating HTML and printing output using strings and concatenation, the write and writeln methods and debugging. Chapter 3 introduces the basic building blocks of data types, literals and variables. Dialog boxes for interacting with the user are introduced in Chapter 4. Arithmetic, autoincrement and autodecrement, comparison, logical and certain special operators along with datatype conversion are covered in Chapter 5. Conditional constructs that control the flow of a program such as if/else and if/else/if are described in Chapter 6 along with the while, do while, for and for/in loops. Functions are defined in detail in Chapter 7. Chapter 8 deals with creating and manipulating objects. Core objects such as an array, date, math, wrapper, string, number, function and Boolean properties and methods of use are covered in Chapter 9. The browser objects of Navigator, Windows and Frames are covered in detail in Chapter 10, and document objects including forms, images and links are described in Chapter 11. Chapter 12 deals with event handlers; Chapter 13 with regular expressions and pattern matching and Chapter 14 covers cookies. Chapter 15 introduces dynamic HTML which consists of HTML4, DOM (Document Object Model), JavaScript and CSS (Cascading Style Sheets)

The book ends with three appendices: A: a listing of JavaScript Web Resources;

B: HTML Documents which is a basic description of the HTML language; and C: CGI and PERL. CGI (Common Gateway Interface) is a protocol allowing a Web or HTTP server to talk to a program or script; the author uses the computer language PERL as it is the most common language used for writing CGI scripts.

This book is a well written, clear and an easily read introduction to the use of JavaScript. It is highly recommended for this method of learning the language by the beginner and for review and refreshing for the more experienced programmer.

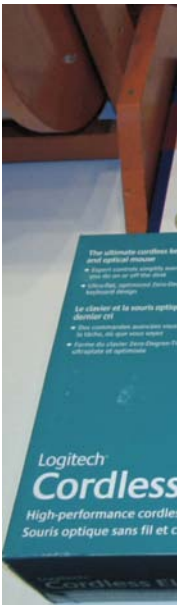
JavaScript by Example, by Ellie Quigley, Prentice-Hall, 15 chapters, 3 appendices, 730 pages, ISBN 0-13-140162-9. List price \$39.99 ■

December Meeting Photos

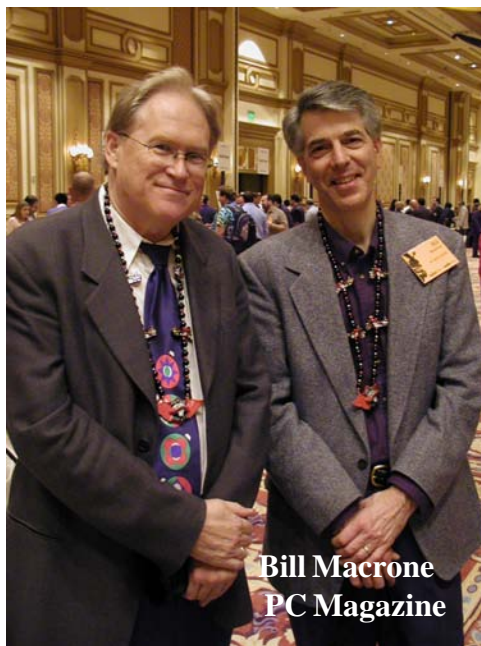
Gene Barlow not only talked about the Power Quest products, but gave a very interesting talk on hard disks. All this on his birthday. In appreciation, we got a birthday cake for him.



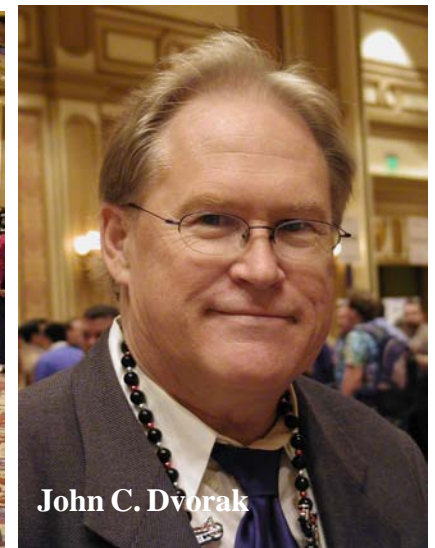
A nice selection of raffle prizes. Power Quest's Partition Magic, V2I and Drive Image, WipeDrive from WhiteCanyon, Windows XP from MS, and the Logitech cordless Elite



Gene's better half taking orders



Bill Macrone
PC Magazine



John C. Dvorak

A couple of notables dropped by the APCUG meeting in Las Vegas





A special Christmas treat at the consignment table.



Random Access at the main meeting



Photos by George Margolin and Jim Sanders



Connie and Terry Currier at the Christmas party



Herb Wong showed us how to carve a turkey

Windows XP for Dummies

All-in-One Desk Reference

By *Steven M. Breitbart, NOCCC*

I have recently upgraded to Windows XP Home from Windows ME, which, despite several reinstalls, continued to behave erratically. Since any version of Windows nowadays is extremely complicated, I thought a book like Windows XP All-in-One Desk Reference for Dummies would be useful. It's not only useful, it's very useful. It not only covers Windows XP, but also includes information about the basics of computers, use of multimedia on computers, NTFS vs. FAT32 hard disk formatting methods, networking, the Internet, the World Wide Web, America Online, Microsoft Network and additions of printers, scanners, and digital cameras. Actually, the list could be a page long - there is a lot of information in this book.

The author and publisher deserve our thanks for the cheat sheet inside the front cover which tells us about how to show file name extensions, that we are not required to divulge personal information to Microsoft when you register a product or use one of their services, and to get an anti-virus package for your computer.

If you can put up with an author that is writing as if he is talking to you, and has opinions about features that are part of XP, this book is full of useful information. For example when describing a file, the author writes "A file is a, uh, thing. Yeah, that's it. A thing. A thing that has stuff inside of it." It is a style that may comfort the novice and annoy the power user; but the target for this book is not power users.

Product activation and its relation to registering Windows XP is covered, but he recommends not registering. The book also covers the new features for searching your computer or the Internet and the new way to see the Table of Contents in Windows XP help, where you must first search for a topic in the index. After using Windows XP for a few weeks, I tried to use the book to fix some of the problems that cropped up. I was successful in getting the list of recent documents to show up in the start menu which is turned off by default, getting the system tray to stay open and modifying the appearance and settings of Windows XP.

I was not successful in fixing some other problems. For example, I now have to manually hold down the power button to shut off the PC, the way we did it before Windows 98. Norton AntiVirus 2003 has stopped working, and the section on the Program Compatibility Wizard did not help. I could not figure out how to add the floppy drive (A:) to the list of "Send To" items. Screen capture, a useful tool to capture obscure error messages, still works but I couldn't find it in the book. The on-screen keyboard, part of the accessibility features of Windows XP is not described either.

A few minor complaints are that the book is divided into nine

Books, each with its own index, but they need to be flagged better. There is a master index at the end, but most of the things I looked for were not listed. Perhaps if the index were on CD-ROM or on the web it could be more complete. Another issue is that there are many pictures of Windows dialogue boxes. They are useful to know you are at the correct window in a procedure, but if you want to actually read them, you may want to have a magnifying glass handy.

Overall, this is an excellent resource for personal computers in general, not just Windows XP. The computer I used for this review is a generic Pentium III PC, running at 800 MHz, with a 40 GB hard disk and 256 MB of memory.

Windows XP All-in-One Desk Reference for Dummies, copyright 2002, by Woody Leonhard; Hungry Minds, Inc., New York, 742 pages; \$29.99; ISBN 0-7645-1548-9. ■

Fundamentals of Programmable Logic

Controllers Sensors and Communications

By *Joe Mizer, NOCCC*

Written by Jon Stenerson, this book is unlike any manual you get when you purchase a PLC. This book is generic since it covers Allen Bradley, Gould Modicom, Omron, and PLC Direct by Koyo (which I used to practice programming.)

You can purchase a small PLC and a 24-volt power supply from PLC Direct for less than \$200.00. All you need in addition are some switches, relays, and indicator lights to have a lot of fun. In order to get a thorough understanding and verify the concepts presented you can reproduce the examples given in the programming section. This book is written for those who desire to work on or design systems with intelligent controls. If you need to build an industrial control system you need this book. With this book in hand and after thorough study you will be able to design and program a control system. Every book I have seen about PLCs covers how to program design and how to connect a system. This is where Jon Stenerson just starts; first he teaches you how to program a PLC, then in chapter 5 he gives a very complete discussion of the sensors which interface to the hardware.

The section on sensors is the best presentation I have seen. This is followed by examples of how sensors are employed in various manufacturing applications. Seldom mentioned is the similarity between PLC systems and PC-based systems in industry today. The PLC, which initially was a replacement for relay logic, is becoming very powerful and the PC which required a lot of programming expertise is becoming easier to place into operation, thanks to the new software and specialty control boards which are available. The cost advantage will go to the PLC only on simple systems which do not require a graphi-

cal interface. A graphical interface is a dedicated computer with a touch screen display and sometimes keypads which can be programmed. These graphical interfaces also have a high price tag. This is why a large number of systems are now being designed using a standard computer and display with touch screen or keyboard entry and connecting it to a PLC to interface with the hardware. This type of system can be less expensive and more powerful than just a PLC and a graphical user interface.

IEC 1131-3 is a structured programming language (covered in chapter 9) to bring the programming from all manufacturers into a common ground. Programs written to the IEC 1131-3 standard have a good chance of being reused on a different PLC. Chapter 10 investigates the use of industrial field bus solutions using a communications protocol to increase data rate and reduce the wiring complexity of a factory or machine. Individual devices attached to a field bus network are more expensive; they communicate digitally at high rate, rather than passing analog signals over great distance with the possibility of picking up noise and distortion. The increased cost is justified because of the reduced wiring cost and ease of trouble shooting the system. Safety is stressed throughout the book, in making sure the design is correct, and while troubleshooting a system the proper lockout and tag procedures are used. Maintenance and service personnel are killed each year when proper precautions are not followed. Chapter 16 details a set of standards which when followed would eliminate needless accidents.

I fully recommend this book as necessary reading for anyone designing or maintaining automated machinery. The MSRP is \$130.00 and the book is published by Prentice Hall. The ISBN # is 0-13-746124-0. This is a standard text used in industrial training programs and is excellent. The cost is trivial if you avoid making just one mistake on a project which could save you many thousands of dollars. ■

Using Autodesk Inventor 6

By Joe Mizer, NOCCC

Written by Ron K. Cheng, Autodesk Inventor is a program for design and drawing just about everything mechanical you can imagine and then desire to manufacture. Autodesk Inventor uses three types of drawing files, IPT files are standard and sheet metal parts. Files with IAM extensions are assembly drawings, and the IDW extension is for actual part drawings. Project files are directories used to keep all associated project files in the same location, and allow design collaboration among the project design team members and covered in chapter 8.

The best way to make a representation of a part is to model it full size in three dimensions in a program which allows you to rotate, section and then use it in assemblies with other parts. Autodesk Inventor does all of that and much more and this book teaches you how. If you need to know the center of gravity, weight, area, perimeter, volume and other such information,

Inventor will do it for you. After reading the 670 pages cover to cover, I recommend this book to anyone willing to take the time to read and then work the exercises. This book also covers a lot of special features I had never imagined I would need, however I have found a number of them very useful.

If the part you are designing is just one of a family of parts, such as a flange in which the parts are all shaped the same but have different dimensions, a spreadsheet can be made to control the common dimensions. IParts are parts which have a common shape and allow the size parameters to be specified after being inserted into an assembly. IFeatures are great when you have to add or remove the same geometry detail frequently while building a part. I have used the IFeatures as punches for punching holes for D-sub connectors in sheetmetal.

Included with the book is a CD which has all of the data files for the tutorials in the book. These data files can also be reviewed to see how the authors made their models. If additions to the book occur after publication, AutoDesk maintains an update section on its web site which can be visited. The first 300 pages and four chapters detail part modeling from the very basic concepts to the point where you are making advanced features. Chapter 5 is devoted to sheet metal design. Sheet metal parts are a special case of part modeling with some new tools on the tool bar and some special setup pages to set parameters. One of the special sheet metal features is the ability to create flat panel drawings from a finished punched and bent part. The Flat Pattern is what the part will look like just before bending.

The sheet metal tools also have corner and bend allowances built in so the finished part correctly shows the style of corner desired and that the bend reliefs required are accurately made and depicted in the flat pattern detail. Chapters 6 and 7 cover assembly modeling from simple insert, mate, and flush commands to motion of multiple parts and interference analysis. Advanced part modeling in chapter 8 includes adaptive technology, which is simply making the features of one part adjust automatically to match the dimensions of a mating part. Chapter 9 shows how to make and animate presentation drawings. Presentation drawings take an assembled part and slowly explode the part to show how it is disassembled, and then reverses to show the order in which parts are assembled. Chapter 10 is the final step in the design process and that is actually making shop drawings which add the specifications and other annotation details needed by the shop to make the final part. A lot of effort is given to understanding projections and other technical details. Adding annotation from geometric dimensioning, and feature identification, and welding and surface finish is very easy with the tools which are available.

This book is published by Autodesk Press / Delmar Learning / a division of Thompson Publishing. The ISBN # is 1-4018-2713-6. This book, published in April of 2003, has a list price of \$76.00, but can be had from Amazon Books for \$53.87; they give the book a 5 Star rating. This book goes well beyond the standard handbook which comes with the program. ■

Reviews Editor's Corner

If you are an NOCCC member and 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) not listed here, please let me know and I will try to obtain it. If you are interested, please contact me:

Ted Littman

NOCCC Reviews Editor

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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:

Boxed Programs and CDs

Microsoft's Digital Image Pro 9 – The latest version of this powerful image editing program. MSRP=\$100.

Phone Works Pro 2002 – The “ultimate” Windows Personal Assistant software for telephone, voice mail, fax, & e-mail. Integrates with Outlook & Outlook Express. From Ring Central. MSRP=\$120.

Go Back 3 - Roxio's disaster-recovery program for all Windows' users.

Second Chance 2.0 – PowerQuest's program to restore your system back to an earlier point in time after a crash for users of Windows 95/98/ME.

Backup for Workgroups 1.0 – A new backup & disaster-recovery program from Lockstep Systems for small & mid-size businesses using a disk-based backup program with Windows for 3 cli-

ents. MSRP=\$299/3 Clients.

QuickKeys Pro X2 – The “best, most powerful” macro utility for Mac OS X to automate your daily computing tasks with hot keys, powerful toolbars, & timers. From C.E. Software. MSRP=\$80.

Easy Uninstall 2.0 – Aladdin System's easiest & most complete program uninstaller for Windows operating systems.

NotePager Pro 3 – Sends SMS and text messages to mobile phones, pagers, and handhelds. For Windows operating systems. Messages can be sent through a modem or the Internet.

DVD PictureShow for Mac – Ulead's new digital image creation software to easily & quickly transform digital photos into entertaining slide shows. MSRP=\$30 to download.

Explorer Plus 6.0 – Novatix's great file management software. The powerful yet easy to use suite of integrated tools provides all you need to quickly and easily organize and manage all your system files and folders. From digital photos to MP3 music files, or web files to Word files, ExplorerPlus lets you tackle even the most demanding file management tasks like a pro! MSRP=\$45.

Programs to Download from Vendor's Web Site

RedBox Organizer 5.0 – Award-winning Personal Information Manager for Windows from Incline Global with a comprehensive set of simple-to-use utilities. MSRP=\$40.

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

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

Red Earth Software's Policy Patrol 2.5 - Protect yourself against e-mail security threats with virus scanning, spam blocking, and other tools. MSRP=\$350 for 10 users.

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, wherever they are.

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

PicaLoader 1.1.8 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. MSRP=\$39.

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. MSRP=\$30.

Currently available are the following books:

The Glitter Guru on Photoshop – A really “cool” book from New Riders by Suzette Troche-Stapp for all levels of Photoshop users. MSRP=\$40.

Leo Laporte's 2004 Technology Almanac – The co-host of TechTV's hit show, The Screen Savers, this book offers advice, tips, and secrets for your computer, one for each day of the year.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26

Preparing a Review Article for the Bytes

By *Ted Littman, NOCCC Reviews Editor*

The following suggestions for preparing a review article for the Orange Bytes were extracted from an ORCOPUG article authored by Alan Jarrett 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 pur-

pose 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?

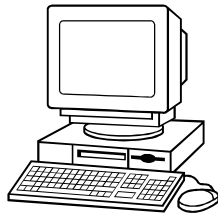
7. What don't you like about it?

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 Cathy Margolin (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 look forward to seeing your review in print and on the Web site. ■

Main Meeting

By Eric Saca

Gene Barlow, AKA User Group Relations, returned in December to present the latest PowerQuest and White Canyon products.

The meeting was opened by President Cathy Margolin. She announced the Volunteer Christmas Party on December 14th that she and George were hosting at their home.

January's meeting will have a recycling theme. Everyone was asked to bring old cell phones they were no longer using. These would be recycled for a good cause, probably a battered women's shelter. Information would also be provided about where to recycle used monitors (although everyone was asked NOT to bring any monitors for recycling).

During Random Access, a member mentioned that he saw an ad for an HP Picture Scanner, which can be mounted on a picture on a wall, to scan its image into a computer! The stated price was only \$200.00.

George Margolin introduced Gene Barlow, who has made numerous presentations to NOCCC in the past. Gene travels across the country, selling the products that he presents, dealing with around 100 user groups a year and traveling about two weeks of every month.

Gene mentioned that unfortunately, the current presentation could be his last. Gene's main client company was PowerQuest. They produced most of the software he presents and sells. Symantec just bought PowerQuest in a \$150 million dollar cash deal. What Symantec does with Gene's contract was hard to guess. There was a danger that they might cancel it. However, if they continued to use Gene for sales, then he would have many more products to present on his next visit to NOCCC.

Gene decided to demonstrate his White Canyon products first. He explained the origin of the company. It was established by a group of Harvard students who performed research on used

hard drives for a class project. They went out and purchased, or otherwise acquired, 100 used hard drives for an experiment. Many of the drives were considered to be wiped by formatting or partition deletion. However, those two processes DO NOT actually erase existing hard drive data. They just make the data inaccessible to the Windows operating system. With special tools, the data can still be accessed. The Harvard students accessed the data on these used drives that were supposedly erased and found a great deal of private information on them, such as credit card, social security and bank account numbers.

From that experience, the students realized the need for utilities that could wipe out data from hard drives completely. They developed products for this purpose and established White Canyon Software.

Gene was selling their latest offerings: WipeDrive and SecureClean. WipeDrive completely eliminates all data on a hard disk, changing it to ASCII zeroes. This is good for preparing a hard drive for selling or disposal. By contrast, SecureClean does not erase existing data, but just gets rid of data that should already be erased from a drive from previous deletion operations. It turns all that data to ASCII zeroes as well. Both tools can be essential for ensuring the security of your information.

Next, Gene covered backup solutions. He advised everyone to backup their data files on a daily basis and their full system monthly. There are several possible solutions for performing backups, including removable and non-removable media solutions. Removable media include CD and DVD burners and cartridge tape drives. Non-removable media basically means hard drives. There are three different types of hard drive backup solutions to internal drives, external drives and network volumes.

Gene sells an inexpensive tutorial CD that contains hours of helpful instruction, covering the full range of backup possibilities. It is called Backing Up Your Hard Drive.

For home and small office/home office users, Gene recommended a simple and inexpensive solution that he uses himself. He suggested backing up to large hard drives regularly. This allows you to avoid worrying about media management on a daily basis. To make daily backups even easier, he advised using external USB2 hard drives. They are not very expensive and they offer advantages of both removable and non-removable media. Then once a quarter, he suggested backing up to CD-RW (or other reliable removable media). (This also means backing up hard drives where your daily backups reside.) After quarterly backups, the CD-RW media should be sent off-site for better protection and security.

Gene recommended using PowerQuest's advanced and flexible hard drive utilities for performing your backups, as described above. These include Partition Magic v8, DriveImage v7 and V2i Protector Desktop Edition v2. Partition Magic should be used to partition your drives for efficient backup and data redundancy. It is certified to work on external drives. (The reliable version 8 is over a year old and he had already presented it to NOCCC in July 2002.)

DriveImage v7, also certified for external drives, should be used to backup all partitions in a cross-backup formation (described below) or to a large external drive. The new version 7 works only on Windows XP and 2000 platforms, but it also includes an earlier DriveImage version that runs on older platforms.

The new V2i Protector is very similar to DriveImage. It works only on Windows XP and 2000 platforms. Its advantage is that it can perform incremental backups, allowing your daily backups to consume less time and hard drive space. The ability to do incremental backups makes it more feasible to keep many days worth of backups on a single large hard disk. (By contrast, DriveImage can only be used for full image backups.) Both V2i and DriveImage allow data compression during backups, so they occupy minimal space on your drives.

Gene then showed a diagram of his suggested cross-backup approach. It involves using two hard drives on your system and creating separate partitions on those drives for your operating systems, applications and data. Both drives should also have a large backup partition. With this method, he suggested keeping operating systems on one drive and applications and data on the second drive. The operating system should be backed up on the second drive, in its backup partition. The applications and data should be backed up on the first drive. This way, if one drive fails, then data can be restored from the backup partition on the other drive.

Gene provided a short demonstration of the latest PowerQuest product, V2i Protector Desktop Edition v2. He performed an incremental backup of his system partition, which took a total of three minutes. He demonstrated the product's search facility, which makes it easy to retrieve a single file from an incremental backup from a given date. He also demonstrated a remarkable file restore feature backup sets can be mounted like individual disk drives then using Windows Explorer, files can be copied from the backup set drives to regular drives, causing those files to be instantly restored!

A member asked Gene about backup size limits and Gene confirmed that DriveImage v7 and V2i can backup partitions up to 160 gigabytes in size. (However, you can have as many 160 gigabyte partitions as you need on a single large hard disk.)

Gene finally presented current PowerQuest and White Canyon software bundles and specials that he was offering to NOCCC and other user groups. These can be accessed on his website: www.ugr.com.

Next Meeting :

January 4th, our Main meeting will be Don Baker of Klassic Specialties on Demystifying Inkjet Printing.

Our New Technology group will be on Digital Cameras by Herb Wong.

Computer Aided Investing SIG



By Bob Krishfield, NOCCC

Market Review: In the first week of December, each of the three major market indexes hit 18 month highs, which made November a good month for most, but made it unclear if this was the end of the up trend, or a confirmation that suggested more money could be made. A review of the chart did not reveal any telltale indicators for a market top, such as heavy volume patterns. The vote of the members for next month was evenly split among going higher, lower, and staying in the 100 point range. A review of some favorite trade signals showed 2 of 3 of them indicating time to sell. It would appear that some profits could be reaped in and stocks at their stop levels liquidated.

Group Discussion: We discussed the use of stops and how to make them work for after hours when prices would likely change due to earnings news. There was no resolution. Most brokerages don't provide such a service outside normal trading hours. Use of stops as a brokerage order is not highly recommended, since these orders are visible to traders and there are ways for dropping the price to trigger the stop and flush out the sale during light volume, etc. Mental stops are more commonly used where a target sell price is established, and the trader puts in the order when the price hits the target neighborhood, avoiding tipping his hand for intended a sell at a given price.

The long term market profile was presented in a review of the last secular bear and bull markets since 1900, the last 100+ years, there have been 3 secular bear markets, each followed by secular bull market. The bear markets range 16 to 21 years each. Since we entered the bear market in 2000, it means we have until

2015 or longer before the next secular bull market. During this time, the down trends will overcome the up trends. Cyclical up trends (cyclical bull markets) can provide good returns – such as the gains achieved since March this year, but the trends do not last beyond one year or so. One of the major cycles is the 4 year cycle (which has 2 up legs under a year each). This corresponds to the presidential cycle and the best performance is in the 3rd year (current year).

System Review: The main presentation covered the subject of the Investor's Business Daily (IBD) Technical Analysis course obtained at the AAI Investors Expo in Las Vegas this past month. A set of notes was provided that contained most of the key points from the 4 hour course, covering the philosophy, rules for screening using the CANSLIM method, buying using chart patterns, market top and bottoms, and selling rules. The methods involve use of the IBD paper and the website www.investors.com. Many of the tools on the website depend upon having a subscription to IBD or paying a fee. Using the CANSLIM methods have been tested by AAI using their Stock Investor program, resulting in one of the highest returns of over 50 strategies tested. The IBD buy/sell rules go beyond the scope of the AAI screening tests. Results that an individual achieves will depend upon specific criteria used for screening and individual interpretation of chart patterns for buys and sells – a subjective application of rules that is outside the scope of a mechanized system. As a result, this method leaves a lot to the individual and one's experience level. This requires a lot of practice and training, and taking expensive training classes.

HDTV Seminar

Everything you need to – or might want to – know about the rapidly evolving DTV/HDTV scene. To learn more, go to the SID-LA Chapter website <http://www.sidchapters.org/la/>

Office Suites

11/2/03

*By John Heenan, NOCCC,
jc_heenan@a-wares.com*

Continuing with our discussion at October's meeting regarding grouping and ungrouping of objects within a graphic: The purpose this month was to show how a graphic could be animated in making a presentation in PowerPoint. In this case, we used a graphic of a lighthouse and made the light beam from the lighthouse flash. The lighthouse is selected with the command Insert | Picture | Clip Art in Word, and can be found in the Buildings category.



Use the method described in October's meeting to show all the objects within the picture. Select those objects, like the lighthouse beam, that are to be animated in PowerPoint and move them to the white space of the Picture Editor. Select and group the remaining objects of the picture. At this point, add any other object from other pictures, from the drawing toolbar, or from WordArt text, and then group the completed picture.

Now, move the animated objects to the picture and place them into position. The beam can be copied and rotated so that the beam will flash on both sides of the tower. Make a copy of each of these 2 beams for each time the beam is to flash, and lay them atop each other within the picture. Select the all objects within the picture and use the Copy command to make a copy for the Clipboard.

Open PowerPoint and paste your new picture into a slide. Choose the Slide Show | Custom Animation command. The dialog box lists all the objects on the slide. The word Group indicates a grouped object, like the picture with the lighthouse tower. Others in the list are named Freeforms; one for each time the beam had been copied in the Word Picture Editor. A check mark to the left indicates that the object is to be animated and if the Order & Timing tab is selected the

object appears in the Animation Order list as well. On the right side of the dialog under Start Animation, the appropriate choice for the beam Freeforms is Automatically with a 1 second interval after the previous event. Under the Effects tab there are a number of choices for the manner in which the object is displayed. The best Choice for our beams is "Flash once" at a slow speed.

Punch the Preview button to get an idea of how the animated graphic will display. Then check it out by running the slide show with the command Slide Show | View Show or F5 key.

We finally got to try to add orders to our Access Order Entry application with success. We continued to add orders to different customers so to get a better feel for this operation. One member of the group recommended putting the customer name on the Order Detail form, even though to get to this form it was necessary to choose the customer first.

This is a simple process, although it may seem long as it is described here. With the Database window open, select Forms from the Objects list open the Orders form in Design mode. It may be helpful to maximize the Design window, because the form needs to be expanded in order to add the Customer name field. Move the mouse pointer down to the top of the Form Footer bar and drag down about the width of a form field. Point the cursor to the upper left corner, and drag the selection box to the lower right selection all the objects on the form, including the Shipping Options button. As the cursor is run through the selected items, the cursor changes to the form of a hand. Drag the Hand down about the width of a field.

Open the File List by clicking on its icon in the Design Tool Bar. Find the company Name in the list and Drag it to the forms upper left hand corner, aligning it with the left edge of the Employee ID label. Some sizing or alignment adjust may be needed to match other fields. Select the Customer Name and Employee Id labels, and right-click to open a menu of options. See Align and Size. Do the same for the Customer Name and Employee Id fields. Done. Close and Save

the form.

You'd have to see it to believe it.

Next Month, by request from a member of the group, we will add a ship Tracking ID and on exit of this field, the date and time will be stamped on the form. Allow the invoice to be e-mailed or faxed to the customer.

Office Suites

12/7/03

*By John Heenan, NOCCC,
jc_heenan@a-wares.com*

This month's modification to our Access Order Entry application is to add a ship Tracking ID and on exit of this field, the date and time will be stamped on the form. Allow the invoice to be e-mailed or faxed to the customer.

To satisfy the first requirement, it is necessary to modify the Orders table. Open the Orders Table in Design mode. Select the ShipDate and change the Format from Short Date to General Date. Now the ship date and time will display together as one field on the Order form. Add a field ShipTrackingId as Text with a Field Size of 20. Close the table.

Open the Orders form in Design mode. Add the Ship Tracking Id in the same fashion as the Customer Name was added last month. Rearrange the Shipping Method, Ship Tracking Id, and the Ship Date so that they appear in that sequence on the Order form.

In order to get the current date and time of the shipment posted to the form, a macro is created at the time the Tracking Id is entered. Right click on the ShipTrackingId and select Properties at the bottom of the menu. Under the Event tab is a list of possible events that can occur while activating this type of object. Cursor down to "On Change" and notice 2 icons to the right, a down arrow and "...". Pick the "...". Pick the "..." to open a Choose Builder dialog. Select Macro Builder and name the macro Shipping. Select the command View | Macro Names and enter Tracking in this column. Tab to the Action column and choose SetValue from the list. In the lower half of the Macro form, there are 2 Action Arguments. For

Item, click on the “...” to open the Expression Builder. Double click the “+” to the left of Forms, Loaded Forms and Orders. Select <Field List> in the middle column to display a list of Order form fields in the right column. Double click on ShipDate, which will post [Forms]![Orders]![ShipDate] into the Expression Builder and click OK. For Expression, it is just as easy to type “Now()”, which is an function for the current date and time. Close and Save the macro and the macro Shipping.Tracking appears on the “On Change” line. Next month, we will add to this macro automatic print preview of the invoice.

Lastly, the length of the ShipDate was increased to include the time.

Also next month: Add the Tracking Id and Date shipped to the printed invoice and make field size changes to the invoice. Modify properties of the ShipDate to include TabsStop, Eneabled, Locked, and Input Mask. We also want to add a pricing scheme based on quantity breaks and sales specials. ■

Security SIG

By Dave Keays NOCCC

Considering the weather, we had a good meeting this month. While five people showed-up, one person emailed me saying he couldn't make it because he was studying for his Security+ exam (from COMPTIA). If others are interested, we might start a special SIG group to study for it- let me know!

In the meeting we went over a list of things to do to when securing Windows XP and the attack of the month was a SYN flood. (A type of Denial Of Service attack.)

The list we went over is just the following:

- 1) Install Windows critical update notifier from Microsoft.
- 2) Install MBSA (MS Baseline Security Analyzer) from MS.
- 3) Disable the remote assistance set-

ting:

control panel / system / remote / settings /

disable “allow this computer to be remotely controlled”

4) Create a user account to normally use and rarely use administrator.

5) Control incoming traffic with a hardware router/firewall that has

Statefull Packet Inspection (SPI) enabled- if possible.

But if a hardware router is not an option, then use the software firewall (ICF) that comes with Windows.

6) Control outgoing traffic with a third-party software firewall.

Opinions vary tremendously about which is better.

7) Set the policies listed below (some names have been shortened)

Account Policies / Password Policies / Maximum Password Age: 15

Account Policies / Password Policies / Minimum Password Length: 8

Account Policies / Password Policies / Passw complexity: enabled

Account Policies / Account Lockout / Lockout threshold: / 15+

Account Policies / Account Lockout / Lockout duration: / 5+

Account Policies / Audit Policies / Logon Events: / Success & Failure

Local Policies / User rights / Access computer from network: /

uncheck all

Local Policies / User rights / change computer time / add everyone

Local Policies / Security Options interactive login / do not req.

ctrl+alt+del: disable

microsoft network client / send unencrypted password / disable

network access / do not allow anon. enum. of SAM accts / enable

network access / do not allow anon. enum of SAM accts &

shares / enable

Clear virtual memory pagefile when system shuts down

8) Turn-off services you don't need.

rt Click My computer / services / services /startup (stop it if it's running - if it's manual you can ignore it).

One person in the group was having

problems with an “unknown process” trying to get access to the Internet. My gut feeling was this might be a trojan horse so access should be denied until the application that controlled the process was identified and then an intelligent decision could be made in the future.

This kind of situation is where a software firewall really shines. It lets you know what is trying to get access to the Internet. Then (depending on the software itself) handling the situation could be as simple as clicking a button.

Next, you need to figure-out what application is using the process. But that depends upon the OS you are running and whether you want to use a third-party utilities or not. If you are using MS Windows without any other utilities, start with the TASK MANAGER and then do something about as easy as peeling grapes. If you want other utilities to take care of the details for you, try PMON or TCPVIEW from System Internals (sysinternals.com). Or from Foundstone (foundstone.com) try FPORT or VISION. (The folks at Foundstone are authors of the bestseller “Hacking Exposed”). Of all of them, VISION would be my choice. It is a nice GUI based application that lets you see just what is running on your machine. What is going in and out of network “ports”, what applications are running, what processes are running, and ties them all together so they make sense. (It cuts the pasta so you don't get the spaghetti sauce all over your shirt or blouse.)

After the main meeting, I spoke with the clubs' guest speaker (Gene Barlow from PowerQuest) about computer forensics. He said that the company “Access Data” at ACCESSDATA.COM had some products that would be useful. When I went to their site, I found their product, Forensic Toolkit, to be currently out of my range- \$795. However I'll remember it in the future when I'm ready. They have a good selection both of products for data recovery/investigation and training classes in forensics. Also, the next time I find \$895 of change in my pocket, I'll take their classes in forensic foundations.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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
Digital Photography	Irvine Hall		2:30	Jack Donan	jfdonan@sbcglobal.net	714-633-4084
Genealogy	Science	111	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 Technology	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
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	aeccrccs@hotmail.com	909-860-9515
Visual Programming II	Science	109	9:00	Anson Chapman	aeccrccs@hotmail.com	909-860-9515
Visual Programming III	Science	109	10:00	Anson Chapman	aeccrccs@hotmail.com	909-860-9515
Visual Programming IV	Science	109	11:15	Anson Chapman	aeccrccs@hotmail.com	909-860-9515
	Please report SIG changes to			Herbert Wong, Jr.	OCUG@SingularityTechnology.com	714-968-7264

Security SIG from page 23

For more information about the Security SIG and a copy of this month's notes, Go to Dave Keay's home web page at RDKSOFTWARE.COM and follow the links for the "security SIG".

Next month the main topic will be about Ethereum and how it can be used to understand the TCP/IP stack. The attack of the month will be ARP spoofing.

Macintosh SIG

By John Willner, NOCCC, willner@earthlink.net

The main topic of discussion was the new OS X Panther operating system and installation experiences. Bob probably has the greatest experience, because he installed recently. His input was that there were very few problems. While various email sites would have us believe there were major catastrophes, the truth of the matter is that he didn't really encounter anything to speak of. One might expect printer drivers to lag behind, especially for more obscure printers. However, his printers are evidently operating as they should. Scanners are another potential problem area. It is reasonable to expect some

adjustments might have to be made with any new operating system before "normal" operations can be resumed. On the bright side, older applications ran fine in Classic Mode. Furthermore, new features greatly facilitate connections between a desktop and laptop computer using the latest firewire. Bob told us how he was able to transfer investment data very quickly and without the steps usually taken when ethernet is used.

Users of older computers that cannot be upgraded wanted to know why users should bother with a new operating system, especially since all of the computing they want to do is accommodated very well at the present time. That is always a good question considering the economics involved. But, some of the reasons are: 1. The world of computers is constantly advancing, and one must upgrade to take advantage of these enhanced capabilities. 2. New input/output techniques are being incorporated rapidly. If one buys a new peripheral, for example, it is not likely to match the older connections. Witness the move from series and parallel cables, to SCSI, to UPS, to Firewire and now the second versions of some of these—most at much higher speeds. 3. Virtually all new software will not run on the older operating systems, and older software is not being supported. For the Mac that means operating sys-

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NOCCC Help Line



The Help Line phone numbers are published in the printed version of the Orange Bytes which is mailed to members.

If you are an NOCCC member, and have a computer-related, non-commercial ad that you would like to have placed on the Internet, visit the *Classified Ads* section of our website at: **www.noccc.org** or contact Jim Sanders at **jsanders@ligasmicro.com**

Club members are also welcome to post **“Wanted”** or **“For Sale”** notices on the kiosk, but please do not tape them on doors, windows, or walls.



Macintosh SIG from page 24

tems before 9 and 10. Reliable systems don't have a problem with that until, or unless, support is actually needed.

Some discussion continued on possible improvements to the club, the folly of continuing to do the same old things, and what might spark new interests.

"So-called" folding programs were mentioned. Interested participants can make their computers available during quiet periods. For example, Stanford University has been taking advantage of individual processing power networked to solve massive problems such as investigations of DNA. The algorithms are downloaded to each individual's computer and processing is automatically coordinated whenever the keyboard is not being accessed. Participation means leaving your computer on for longer periods of time than usual for maximum assistance. The reward is knowledge that difficult medical problems are being solved with your help. At our meeting, however, there was not much interest.

MacWorld will take place the week after our next NOCCC meeting. Now it turns out that more of our members might attend, and more "goodies" might be brought back. A User's Group lounge is provided each year, and we can take advantage. It can be used as a meeting place if desired. ■

Products from page 17

MSRP=\$25.

Interprocess Communications in Linux – The definitive guide to Linux processes and IPF for programmers and system administrators by John S. Gray from Prentice Hall. MSRP=\$50.

Managing Linux Systems with Webmin – System Administration & Module Development by Jamie Cameron from Prentice Hall. MSRP=\$45.

PC Hardware in a Nutshell, 3rd Ed. – O'Reilly's comprehensive guide to buying, building, upgrading, and repairing PCs. A desktop quick reference. MSRP=\$40.

Upgrading Your PC, 2nd Ed. – New Riders book + DVD authored by Mark Soper. A good reference if you are planning to enhance your PC. MSRP=\$25.

Modern Cryptography Theory & Practice – From Prentice Hall & authored by Wenbo Mao, an indispensable book for tech pros who implement strong security in real-world apps. Hardcover. MSRP=\$55.

Implementing CIFS, the Common Internet File System – An authoritative guide to the inner workings of Microsoft's Internet/intranet file sharing system from Prentice Hall authored by Christopher Hertel. MSRP=\$45.

Amazon Hacks – A good collection of tips & tools for getting the most from Amazon.com shopping by Paul Bausch from O'Reilly. MSRP=\$25.

Online! The Book – A Prentice Hall book by authors John C. Dvorak (PC Magazine) & Chris Pirillo (Lockergnome technology newsletters) includes a complete primer for beginners. Fascinating, fun, & delightfully written. MSRP=\$30.

Absolute Beginner's Guide to Creating Web Pages, 2nd Ed. – This book by Todd Stauffer from Que Publishing will teach you how to design & build your own Web & build your own Web sites. MSRP=\$19.

TiVo Hacks – Another O'Reilly Hacks book. This one is on getting the most from your TiVo personal video recorder. MSRP=\$25.

The Art of UNIX Programming – Authored by Eric Raymond from Addison-Wesley, this book bring together philosophy, design patterns, tools, culture, and traditions for this best & most innovative software. MSRP=\$40.

Next Generation Application Integration – From simple information to Web services, this book by David Linthicum from Addison-Wesley is an indispensable resource for those responsible for managing or implementing application-integration middleware. MSRP=\$40.

Open Source Network Administration – Author James Kretchmar from MIT presents an extraordinary collection of open source tools for streamlining and improving virtually every facet of network administration. Publisher is Prentice Hall. MSRP=\$45.

J2EE Security for Servlets, EJBs, and Web Services – This book by Pankaj Kumar from Prentice Hall is the definitive guide to securing server-side Java and covers every significant J2SE and J2EE security mechanism. MSRP=\$50.

Effective XML – Elliotte Harold's book from Addison-Wesley on 50 specific ways for developers to improve XML. MSRP=\$45.

The Effective Incident Response Team – An Addison-Wesley book by Julie Lucas & Brian Moeller. A complete guide for network administrators & managers on dealing with computer attacks by intruders, worms, & viruses. MSRP=\$40.




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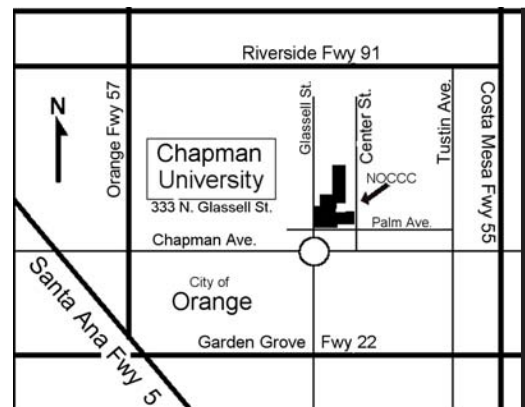
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- **Get help with your current computer problems.** In the Random Access portions of the meetings, you ask your question of the entire assemblage, and more than likely someone will have the answer.
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- **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. 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, manning the help desk, showing new members around, help the membership committee, 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!



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