



range Bytes

Award Winning News Magazine of the North Orange County Computer Club *

Vol 29 • No 12

DECEMBER 2004



Microsoft Windows XP Christmas Edition

aka MicroSoft Windows XP Media Center Edition
Coming Dec. 5th, See page 4 for more details

NOCCC Meetings - December 5

8:30 a.m.

Visual Programming I *Science 109*
Visual Basic and Visual Basic Script for Beginners

9:00 a.m.

Autocad *Science 203*
Computer Essentials *Science 111*
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*
Gene Barlow, "Hard Drive Technology"
Computer Aided Investing *Wilkinson 221*
Member Investment Strategies, Techniques and Software
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*
Linux Programming Concepts *Wilkinson 111*

Macintosh *Wilkinson 221*
Office Suites *Science 111*

Office suites applications

PC Q & A - Jim Sanders - *Irvine Hall*

Most Q's 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.

1:00 p.m. Main Meeting, Irvine Hall

MicroSoft on WinXP Media Center Edition and much more!

2:30 p.m.

Assistive Technology SIG - *Science 306*

Learn how your computer can help you live better

Digital Imaging SIG - *Irvine Hall*

Speaker from Sammy's Cameras store

Genealogy *Science 111*

Discover your family history with modern tools

Hardware Essentials *Science 109*

OS/2 News and Installation *Science 203*

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

Meeting Dates
Dec 5, Jan 9, Feb 6, Mar 6, Apr 3

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“Friends Helping Friends”

FREE COMPUTER CLASS

The MarketPlace Education Center at 201 E. 4th St. in Santa Ana 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 Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 8 am till noon in room 211. **Jim Sanders** is the instructor. Call the **Centennial Education Center** at 241-5700. The class number is 64200.09

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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

A rainy November day had quite a few NOCCC members and guests come out to see Hard Disk Tips and Tricks and Hard Disk Utilities by Gene Barlow. We learned that Gene now represents Acropolis, which got a great review by PC World. Welcome to all our new members and guests!



AOL announced a new version 9.0 Security Edition, which I had downloaded last week, while waiting for my students to finish a test, and all of the sudden, I could not pull up any Word or Powerpoint files. Obviously this program is something you have to read up on before you download (which I did not). So to finish my presentation to my students, I had to uninstall AOL 9.0 SE. Motto - look before you leap.

By the time you read this you will have been through "Black Friday" which is what they call the day after Thanksgiving with all the specials. There are a number of sites on the net which list the specials beforehand. Look at <http://www.FatWallet.com>, then Forums, then Hot Deals, to get the latest specials. Another good site for daily tech specials is <http://www.Techbargains.com>. I like FatWallet because you can have it send you an email alert for a specific product or vendor. One of my students got a \$1500 Dell ultra thin laptop for \$750 when he found a \$750 off coupon on FatWallet. You never know!

The 9:30am New Technology meeting will be Chuck Fete showing us how to find and create Cheap Websites. Chuck helped unemployed people find cheap websites for themselves and aided them in making professional websites, which he will share with us in December.

Our December Main meeting will be Hot! Microsoft will show us how to experience more of the photos, music, television, movies, and games you want in your home with Microsoft® Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005, and how to keep your pc safe and secure with Microsoft® Windows® XP Service Pack 2. They always bring tons of good prizes! Should be a great presentation! Bring a friend and learn how to integrate everything with your PC. ■

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 <http://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!

Cheap Webhosting and domains

Matt McCann, who you know about from previously being at Intuit, makes inexpensive web hosting (\$3.95 /mo with free setup) and domain name service (\$7.85 /yr using GoDaddy.com) available. Stop by <http://www.ugpro.com> and follow the links. You'll be glad you did!

Peachpit Press Books Discount - of 25% can be obtained by joining the Peachpit Club. Go to <http://www.peachpit.com> to sign up as a member. User group members should note that once you've become a Peachpit Club member, you may use your user group coupon code ON TOP of the permanent savings you earn as a member of the club. Just make sure you've logged into the site before you make a purchase to ensure this permanent discount will be in effect, and then enter coupon code UE-23AA-PEUF (case-sensitive) at checkout! This coupon code is an exclusive offer that may not be used in conjunction with any other coupon codes. The offer applies to all titles at peachpit.com including New Riders, Macromedia Press, Adobe Press, and Peachpit Press.

Jasc Software - <http://www.jasc.com/usergroups.asp>

UG pricing is available by calling 800-622-2793 between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM Central Time and identifying yourself as a UG member. The Promo Code is UG.

Blue Squirrel - <http://www.bluesquirrel.com/>

50% off all products - call 800.403.0925 to order & mention user group special pricing.

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.

CuteFTPPro - APCUG member groups are approved for 20% off list price. This would be \$31.99 for CuteFTP Home (down from \$39.99) and \$47.99 for CuteFTP Pro (down from \$59.99). If you'd like a side-by-side comparison of the two, go here on the site:

<http://www.globalscape.com/cuteftp/homevspro.asp>

There's also an optional Support & Maintenance contract that gives tech support via phone & email, as well as free upgrades for one year. That contract is \$28 (down from \$35) for each license. If any multiple licenses are needed there will be additional discounts

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NOCCC member 0019, Jim Sanders



CONTINUED ON PAGE 32

November Board Meeting Minutes



The Board minutes are published in the printed version of the Bytes which is mailed to members.

DECEMBER 5TH MEETING PREVIEW

NEW TECHNOLOGIES - at 9:30AM Chuck Fete will show us how create our own website for little or no money using techniques that very few people know about.

MAIN MEETING 1:00PM, Irvine Hall - The main part of the Microsoft presentation will be on Windows XP Media Center Edition. You could think of this as the Christmas edition because of all the new computer toys it will give you a reason to run out and purchase for yourself.

DIGITAL IMAGING SIG - 2:30PM with Jim Morrison. The guest presenter will be Larry Klees on Plug-ins for graphics programs. What they are, what they do, and how they can help add pazazz to your images. See more on page 31

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SIG - 2:30PM This new SIG, with Leader Chuck Fete and Elise Edgell will be exploring the various ways that computer and related technology can assist people in thier daily lives. See more on page 30.

THE CLUB RAFFLE this month will feature some of the great prizes Microsoft always brings and more.

The **Member-only prize** (requires wearing badge to get a free ticket) Secure Clean disk security software. SRP\$59

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%.

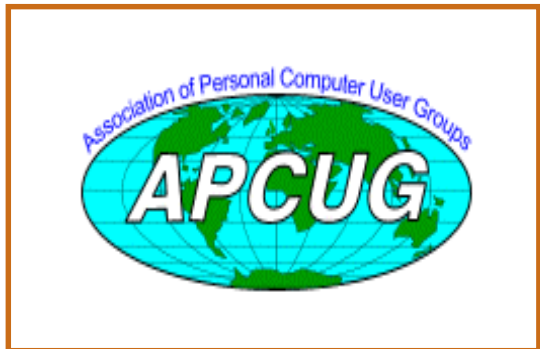
3. Fill out a tag on each item! It must contain: Seller's Name, NOCCC Membership Number, Item name, a short description and selling price.

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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Take Better Pictures of the Great Outdoors

Six tips that will make a difference

By Kevin T. Gilbert

You've mastered the point-and-shoot technique that makes it so easy to photograph all the big and little events of life--the first soccer practice, the ski trip, the family vacation.

Chances are that you've also taken a lot of pictures of the great outdoors whether in your own backyard or on those family vacations. Now you can turn those photos into exceptional works of photographic art with a little know-how and some tips from a professional. Award-winning photographer Kevin Gilbert shares some simple techniques you can use to take your outdoor photography to the next level.

TipRead your camera's manual. One thing that will help you take better pictures no matter where you're shooting is using your camera's built-in settings. The more you know about how to use your camera's features, the better your results will be.

Black and white



This image was taken close to Jackson Hole, Wyoming, at a spot in the Grand Tetons, where Ansel Adams created one of his famous pictures. The original image is in beautiful color, a sunrise taken at 5:51 A.M.

You can easily convert color photos to black and white by using your favorite image-editing program like Digital Image Pro. With some camera models you can even do this in the camera before downloading the image to your computer. Once the image is on your computer, you can use your image-editing program to adjust contrast and brightness to create a photograph that's reminiscent of an Ansel Adams.



Silhouettes look terrific in black and white, as do old buildings. The effect adds drama. But be sure to reserve this technique for landscapes or buildings. Photos of family members in black and white may not be as warm as you want them to be.

Fill the frame for dramatic effect

The below-left picture is pleasant, but it's rather boring. Sure, the sky is lovely and the beach is large and empty. But I really wanted to capture the texture of the beach. By tilting the camera down about a third of a frame I created a much different effect (below-right).



Look carefully at the picture you're framing before you click the button. Experiment by moving the camera up and down, side to side. Tilt the camera to various angles and see what it shows you. Fill the frame with the object that interests you most. If your digital camera has an LCD screen, you can use it to improve your sensitivity to the entire scene.

Get up close

Most people see a group of flowers, say, "Wow!" and snap a shot of the whole bunch. Don't settle for this canned shot; zoom in on the details. Almost every camera has a magnify or macro button that lets you get close and create a much more interesting photo.

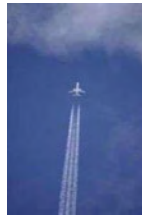


You can photograph an ant, a penny, a tiny shell--have some fun and get creative. Just remember to fill the frame with the beautiful lines and colors of the object you are capturing.

Look around you

When visiting a national monument, some people photograph what they've come to see. I always remind people that if there's beauty in front of you, there's prob-

ably beauty behind you. Look around, and you might find something unexpected to shoot.



For example, I took both of the above pictures while standing in one spot in Yellowstone National Park. Although I came to shoot mountains, I looked down and saw these contrasting flowers in the rocks. Then I looked up and saw a plane. The lines were interesting, so I snapped the shot. While I got my shots of the mountains, I also came away with a couple of nice surprises just by looking around.

Change your perspective

Most people stand up and shoot their photographs at a 45-degree angle. Try bending over, getting down on your knees, or standing above your subject.

If you're photographing a group of people, for example, why look at them straight on? Stand on a chair and have them look up at you.



When I captured images of a field of blue flowers (above) I was on my knees close to the ground so that I could look directly at the flowers. Changing perspective can turn an ordinary situation into an extraordinary photograph.

Plan for the time of day

Sometimes you can turn pretty images into terrific ones by shooting at different times of day or in different types of lighting.



Many people take pictures of things they see for the first time--a boat on a quiet lake, the boardwalk at an amusement park, the ocean, an interesting landscape. But in different light-

ing situations, your image might be much more effective. You might ask yourself, "What would the boardwalk look like this evening, when the sun is setting?"



The above photos show the same image captured at different times of day. The one on the left has harsh, midday, almost 'stormy-like' lighting. The other one, taken in the same place later in the day, is peaceful and moody. It's a dramatic difference that has an effect on the story you want to convey through the image.

Experiment

Take these six easy tips that all of the pros use too and add them to your own bag of tricks. They don't require complex camera settings or even an expensive camera. They require only that you look at the world around you a bit differently when viewing through the lens of your camera.

Kevin T. Gilbert is a 20-year veteran photojournalist based in the Washington, D.C. area, where he has covered super-power summits, professional sports, national political campaigns, and the news of Washington and the nation. He is currently the managing partner of Blue Pixel, one of the country's leading digital imaging consulting teams, and President of Arkhaven Group, a digital production company that shoots digital still imagery for corporations and television networks.

Kevin recently finished his fifth term as President of the White House News Photographers' Association (WHNPA), and he is the winner of over 35 photography awards from the 80-year-old WHNPA. The National Press Photographers Association and the Society of Newspaper Design have also honored him for outstanding photojournalism and design. Kevin spent 14 years at The Washington Times newspaper, including five years as chief photographer. ■

Google's New Toys

By Jim Sanders, NOCCC

In case you haven't noticed, Google has introduced some new features. I have found them to be very useful. I am talking about Picasa Photo Organizer, Desktop Search, Google Local Search, and and Key Hole. All of these can be accessed by clicking on "more" on the Google Home Page. Some people are leary about signing up for anything, including something called "Key Hole." If you want to see what you might be missing try going to <http://www.teraserver.microsoft.com>. ■

What Time Is It? Set Your PC Clock

By Ira Wilsker, APCUG Board of Directors and columnist for The Examiner, Beaumont, TX

I get a lot of emails that have an incorrect time stamp on them, placed there by their computers that have an incorrect time and date. I was asked on my radio show, “So what’s the big deal about having a wrong time and date on my computer?”

There are several reasons for having a correct time and date on your computer. One reason is that if your computer has an incorrect date and time, and you send email with that incorrect time, it may not be noticed by the recipient and remain unread, or it may be filtered out by some spam filters. I sort my incoming email by date so I will always see the newest messages first. If the sender has a clock that is set “slow”, then that email will not be near the top of my list, and if the clock is too slow, then I may not see the message at all because it may show up as an old, out of date message. Since many spammers purposely set the date and time either far in advance, or far in the past, so that their spam email always appears first or last on an email list, many of the spam filters delete emails that are extremely off in their dates and times.

Another reason to have a correct date and time is to better enable searches on your own computer. Almost all versions of Windows have had as a search function “date and time” to find files created, accessed, or modified in a specific time frame. If downloaded or shared files are received with a correct time, and the computer clock is significantly off, there may be discrepancies making some file searches difficult.

Many professionals bill their clients based on time, and those that use their computers to bill the time need an accurate time on their computers in order to bill accurately. There may also be legal ramifications in having a correct or incorrect time on the computer. I recently did a forensic analysis on a computer involved in a legal case, and there was a question explicitly about when certain things were done with the computer. The defendant in the case was a professional engineer, and billed clients for his computer time, using a utility expressly for that purpose. He used a program that frequently checked his computer clock against the official government time (www.time.gov), and logged any differences, which were slight. Since his computer clock was accurate, always within a second during the period in question, there was evidence so strong in his favor that the case was dropped. If his computer clock had been significantly off, there may have been a strong case against him, as a key piece of defense evidence would have been missing.

There are several reasons for computer clocks not having

the correct time. Some computer users never set their computer clock, similar to the flashing “12:00” on many VCRs. I have worked on computers that had the wrong time zone set, simply because the user never reset the time zone and clock after it was purchased, and still had the default time zone set by the manufacturer. Many computers lose time on their computer clocks due to a well documented interference with the clock from some “soft modems”, “controllerless” modems, or “WinModems” that sap processing power from the CPU chip while online. A symptom of this is sometimes a “jerky” cursor that does not move across the screen smoothly while online. Another reason for losing time on a computer clock is a weak battery in the computer. Most users are unaware that there is a small battery in their computers, often a watch or calculator battery, which powers the CMOS chip while the computer is turned off. While some newer computers use a small rechargeable battery, which has a longer but still limited life, the typical computer battery may only last for a few years until it must be replaced. One necessary proviso is that the user should use one of several utilities to back up the CMOS data before replacing the battery, or the system defaults will be used. After replacing the battery it is almost always necessary to reset the clock.

There are several utilities that will automatically reset the clock with little or no user intervention. These range from integral Windows XP utilities, to freeware, and commercial software. XP has a free built-in time check utility that can transparently reset the computer clock. It can be found by clicking on control panel – date and time – internet time. Additional information is available by clicking on start – help – and entering the search term “time synchronization”. I recommend using the nist.time.gov link which will set the time to “official” time. The XP time utility may not function properly or give an incorrect time if the utility is blocked by a firewall, or if it is set to a local network time, which may also be inaccurate. The clock can also be set manually by double clicking on the clock and entering the time; just be sure that the time zone and daylight savings time are set correctly from the “time zone” tab.

I also use an excellent free utility to check my computer clock, AboutTime 4.8. It is available for download at www.arachnoid.com/abouttime, along with detailed instructions and trouble shooting. Personally, I have it set to the U.S. Naval Observatory time at tick.usno.navy.mil. I have found the Navy time server to be the most reliable connection.

Now you have no excuse for an incorrect computer clock.

There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this article as long as it is kept in context with proper credit given the author. The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you. ■

Is There a Legal Remedy for Software Bugs

and Other Things That Go Bump in the Night?

By John Brewer, Computer Club of Oklahoma City

October 2004 eMonitor

How does one practice “safe computing” when one considers software bugs, adware and spyware, viruses, worms and other bits and bytes of malicious code? There is a concept in law called “product liability.” Product liability means that a manufacturer can incur liability for marketing a product with defects. Does this concept apply to software? Probably not ... due to the EULA. EULA is an acronym for “end user license agreement,” sometimes called the “shrink-wrap license.” The term shrink wrap is used because the license is usually contained within the shrink-wrapped box containing the software and is contained in a read-me type file within the software itself. When one installs software, there is generally a license that appears in a small window that one must “accept” before the software can be installed. The small window contains a small portion of the license agreement. In order to read the entire agreement, one must either scroll through the text or print it out. Very few people actually read the license agreement.

EULA license agreements generally contain very broad waivers as a condition to use the software and such agreements have been consistently upheld by the courts. In recent years, the trend has been to broaden protection to software companies. A new controversy is over the issue of embedded software. For example, if you purchase a new automobile, and it has software that controls certain of the automobile components, do different legal rules apply to the embedded software?

Everyone is familiar with the Microsoft patches that seek to plug holes in their operating systems and applications. Nefarious people stay awake nights searching for vulnerabilities to exploit. These attacks, in the form of malicious code, often cause damages of staggering proportions. Is Microsoft at fault or is this simply a price for “doing business”? Would software companies do a better job if they had less legal protection for vulnerabilities in their software? That is an interesting question. Perhaps broad EULAs are nothing more than protection for negligent work in many instances.

The opposite side of the issue is that software programs are difficult to finish in a manner that is completely error free and plugged from malicious exploitation. Programmers have more issues to contend with than security.

Richard Fromo, an author and security consultant, is very outspoken in his criticism of the protection that software companies possess. He said recently, “Unfortunately, the only way to effect change in the software makers’ philosophy of doing business is to hit them where it hurts, namely, in the pocketbook. All it takes is a few (large) customers to say ‘enough is enough’ and move to

an alternative operating environment, and it’ll be all the incentive Microsoft needs to revamp its products quickly and effectively.”

Recently there was a large and complicated law called the Uniform Computer Information Transaction Act (UCITA) that was considered by many State legislatures. UCITA is very pro-industry insofar as it gives a green light to shrink-wrap licenses and allows software manufacturers to virtually sell their products on an “as-is” basis and to disclaim liability for defects. Fortunately, UCITA has encountered a skeptical reception at the State level and only Virginia has enacted the law.

The following is extracted from the licensing agreement for a well known software application:

DISCLAIMER OF WARRANTY. The software (including without limitation, the related documentation()) is provided on an “as is” basis, without warranty of any kind, including without limitation the warranties that it is free of defects, merchantable, fit for a particular purpose or non-infringing. The entire risk as to the quality and performance of the software is borne by licensee. Should the software prove defective in any respect, licensee and not [name omitted] or its suppliers or resellers assumes the entire cost of any service and repair. This disclaimer of warranty constitutes an essential part of this agreement. No use of the software is authorized hereunder except under this disclaimer. Some jurisdictions do not allow the exclusion of implied warranties or limitations on how long an implied warranty may last, so the above limitations may not apply to you.

LIMITATION OF LIABILITY. To the maximum extent permitted by applicable law, in no event will [name omitted] or its suppliers or resellers be liable for any indirect, special, incidental or consequential damages arising out of the use of or inability to use the software, including, without limitation, damages for loss of goodwill, work stoppage, computer failure or malfunction, or any and all other commercial damages or losses, even if advised of the possibility thereof, and regardless of the legal or equitable theory (contract, tort or otherwise) upon which the claim is based. In any case, [name omitted] the entire liability under any provision of this agreement shall not exceed in the aggregate the sum of the fees licensee paid for this license (if any), with the exception or death or personal injury caused by the negligence of [name omitted] to the extent applicable law prohibits the limitation of damages in such cases. Some jurisdictions do not allow the exclusion or limitation of incidental or consequential damages, so this exclusion and limitation may not be applicable.

It might be prudent to read the licensing agreement the next time one installs software. It is doubtful if one can do anything about these one-sided terms but it is an issue worthy of notice.

John Brewer practices law in Oklahoma City, is a member of the Governor’s and Legislative Task Force for E-Commerce, and enjoys issues relating to eBusiness and cyberspace.

There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this article as long as it is kept in context with proper credit given the author. The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you. ■

Microsoft Office Professional Edition 2003

By Jack Littman, NOCCC

History In the mid 1980s I used Symphony, an integrated package of software that included the Lotus 1-2-3 spreadsheet, a word processor, data manager, and graphics generator and communications services. Some of my colleagues at the SCAQMD (South Coast Air Quality Management District) were using a similar program, called Framework. Fast forward ten years, and Microsoft began introducing their version of bundled software. First there was Office 95, which was subsequently followed by Office 97, Office 2000, Office XP, and today's latest issue, Office 2003.



Product The Microsoft Office Professional Edition 2003 is one of the most inclusive, and also one of the most expensive of the company's software family. This program includes Word 2003, Excel 2003, Outlook 2003, PowerPoint 2003, Access 2003, Publisher 2003 and Business Contact Manager for Outlook 2003. A 60-day trial version of OneNote 2003 is also included. The Professional Edition of Microsoft Office 2003 does not include FrontPage, Project, Visio or InfoPath. For a complete price listing of this product and other available options, you should checkout <http://www.costco.com> . If you qualify for the Student and Teacher Edition, which includes Word, Excel, Outlook and PowerPoint, the price is approximately \$125. The Professional Edition lists for \$499, but can be obtained for approximately \$430 at a number of software outlets. Other editions available include Small Business, Standard and their Upgrades. Most of these products, in addition to OEM versions, are available on EBay.

Individual components of the Office Suite are available in OEM, Academic, Upgrades and Full Product versions over a range of prices: Access (\$76-165), Excel (\$94-147), OneNote (\$48-110), Outlook (\$20-55), Word (\$83-126), PowerPoint (\$90-162) and Publisher (\$37-120).

The competition includes Corel's WordPerfect Office 12, <http://www.corel.com> (street price varies from \$85-\$230 depending on the version), Sun Microsystems' StarOffice Office Suite <http://www.staroffice.com> (\$50) and OpenOffice.org <http://www.openoffice.org> . OpenOffice.org is a free office suite, and is an active candidate for use by cash-strapped organizations, e.g. our

school systems.

If you are interested in downloading a free trial copy of Office Professional Edition, see <http://www.microsoft.com/office/trial/default.msp> . A demo CD will cost you \$7.95.

The Professional Edition requires Windows 2000 or Windows XP.

Ratings The Editors of ZDNet, in a review dated October 21, 2003, gave the Professional Edition 2003 a Very Good rating with a score of 8 out a possible 10. Their comment was "While Microsoft Office System is the most complete suite on the block, there's no compelling reason for everyone to upgrade." A recent review of this product, by W.D. Allen Sr., NOCCC, appeared in the March 2004 issue of Orange Bytes, <http://www.noccc.org>.

What's New

New for Office Professional Edition 2003 is:

- Business Contact Manager for Outlook 2003
- Extensible Markup Language and (XML) and
- Information Rights Management (IRM)

Business Contact Manager for Outlook 2003

The program, Business Contact Manager for Outlook, is new for Microsoft Office 2003 and is supplied on a separate installation CD. This software works seamlessly with Outlook 2003 and is advertised as an important tool to "manage business contacts, track customer information and manage your products and services." This product is currently available only in the Professional and Standard Office Editions.

Extensible Markup Language (XML)

Do you remember in the old days your choice for purchasing a new PC was between an IBM clone and one manufactured by a Proprietary company. Well XML could be considered the IBM clone for software language.

Office Professional Edition 2003 uses a data description language, which is a world standard used to minimize compatibility problems between individuals using various office products. Not only does this feature ensure compatibility between Microsoft products, e.g. Word 2003, Excel 2003, Access 2003 etc., but it also permits users of products other than Microsoft to communicate with each other.

For a more thorough understanding of XML, please visit <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/results.aspx?Scope=RC&Query=XML>

Information Rights Management (IRM)

"IRM allows an individual author to create a document, workbook, or presentation with restricted permission for specific people who will access the content" according to <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/assistance/HP062208591033.aspx> . This is an important tool for controlling access to sensitive financial documents, limiting access to legal documents and keeping employee performance reviews confidential.

Antitheft To discourage piracy, Microsoft requires that you “activate” this product, if you wish to use the software more than 60 days. They allow you to install your copy of Office on two computers. During my evaluation of the Office Suite, I had an opportunity to determine whether this feature would present any problems. I replaced my HP Pavilion model a365c with a model a475c. The activation process worked smoothly; however, I had to remove a 60-day trial version of Microsoft Office Student and Teacher Edition 2003, which came pre-installed on my new PC, before the Professional Edition could be successfully installed.

Help Getting help from Microsoft is at best a mixed bag. On several occasions, I found it necessary to contact Microsoft to fix problems that I was not able to resolve on my own. Microsoft offers a toll free phone number (1-800-936-4900) and a chat mode that are helpful for resolving nuisance issues that arise. In one instance, **Kathy Caldwell**, from Microsoft, deserves special mention, for her support in eliminating the occurrence of a trivial, but bothersome popup error that appeared on a favorite website. When I contacted the maker of my PC (HP), regarding a similar issue, their technician’s advice was for me to conduct a System Recovery, which didn’t solve the problem.

On another occasion, when I tried to contact Microsoft, I could barely understand the off-shore operator (Microsoft should address this problem). When I was informed I would have to wait over an hour for technical support, I requested that she return my call when a technician was available, and she did.

Security Warnings When I first attempted to open Microsoft Office Word, I received the following warning: “This file contains macros with an expired or revoked signature. Since you are running under High Security Level, these macros will be disabled.” By selecting a less restrictive security setting, I found the warning, which was caused by an expired Symantec Corporation issuer certificate, could be changed to a warning that permitted the macros to be manually enabled. Similar warnings appeared when I tried to open an earlier version of a Microsoft Office Access file. I received a warning that the file might not be safe if it contained code that was intended to harm my computer. The user has the option of eliminating or ignoring these warnings if he considers them to be a nuisance.

Word 2003 As a family genealogist, I’m always looking for new ways to summarize records requested, versus those on hand. Word has the capability to draw a Table, which satisfied this task rather nicely. The only precondition, is that the Columns, e.g. the Census Years, Vital Statistics, etc. should represent the Table short side, while the Rows represents the Table long side, i.e. the Family Members.

The Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar Tools were an excellent help in preparing this review. At times, I would notice spelling corrections automatically occurring as I typed.

Access 2003 I traditionally use the Access database for tracking my Bill Payment Schedule. Since I also use Quicken, it’s like having a double set of books. It was interesting to note the comment appearing on the Quicken 2005 software, i.e. “Easier export into Excel.” I would be grateful to hear from any-

one who has managed to export Quicken data into Access, thereby avoiding the job of manual data entry.

Outlook 2003 One of the benefits of making Outlook 2003 your default email program is its compatibility with each of the Office 2003 programs. As an example, when addressing envelopes in Word, it’s an easy task to insert an address from your Address Book. If you are using EarthLink for your email program, the task becomes a little more challenging.

For the past year, I have been using the EarthLink TotalAccess email program, supplied with my Cable Internet subscription. Since I was perfectly satisfied with the performance of my Earthlink email program, I was initially hesitant in evaluating Outlook 2003, in order to avoid the potential of serious program conflicts. After resolving some initial problems, I was able to save my EarthLink Address Book as an Excel CSV (comma separated value) file and successfully import it into Outlook. For me, the Map Custom Fields operation (establishing the Address Book table configuration) was somewhat difficult to set up; neither Microsoft nor EarthLink technical support were of any help, but I was able to resolve this issue on my own.

SendPhotos, a software program by Novatix, has been added to Outlook 2003 to enhance the way you send pictures to your acquaintances. You can easily add captions and stationary to your photos.

Although Microsoft claims that you can add sound “to jazz up your email messages,” there is one caveat. It does not work if you are using the current version of Windows XP Service Pack 2.

All things considered, I have become a convert, and enjoy using Outlook 2003 as my preferred email program.

Excel 2003 Those of you who are new to Excel, and wish to learn how to use the program, will find a free Microsoft training course, provided at the site, <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/training/default.aspx>. Similar free instruction courses are offered for Word, Outlook, PowerPoint, Access, Business Contact Manager for Outlook, Publisher, and OneNote

PowerPoint 2003 I remember using Harvard Graphics for producing slide show presentations in the 1990s. Today, PowerPoint is the standard presentation graphics program, which includes text, graphs and charts in one program. New for PowerPoint 2003 is the capability to package a presentation to a CD to allow wider distribution to the PowerPoint 2003 user.

Microsoft Office Online is a good source for downloading a number of interesting templates. Those of you, who may be budding entrepreneurs, will need to prepare a Business Plan before you start your own business. A 12-chart template to help get you started can be found at: <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/templates/TC010175101033.aspx?CategoryID=CT010957761033>.

Publisher 2003 Microsoft lists approximately 35 new or improved features for Publisher 2003; from new and improved ways to create CD/DVD labels to professionally designed greeting cards and invitations. Publisher has approximately 40 different Banner template designs to fit a variety of events. The Bon Voyage

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Microsoft's Money 2004 Deluxe

By Ted Littman, NOCCC

Microsoft and Intuit have been playing “hopscotch” for some time now with their financial management software. At least for the past few years, neither company has been able to gain a significant lead over the other. And each program now has its devoted users. In the Orange Bytes issue of Feb. 2003, I reviewed Money 2002 Suite and said: “If you are new to the use of personal finance software, Money is a fine choice.” This review covers Money 2004 Deluxe, and again it is a fine choice and pretty much on a par with Quicken, its major competitor.

In October 2004, Microsoft released Money 2005; it has gotten excellent reviews, including the one from Kathy Yakal in the Aug. 13, 2004 issue of PC Magazine. She said that Money's upgrade (over 2004) with its sweeping changes (including a new two-tiered approach to personal fiscal management), makes it the top financial software program and earned it an Editor's Choice award. By comparison, Quicken opted for numerous small improvements, allowing Money to get a leg up in 2005. (Incidentally, PC Magazine used the Premium versions of Money and Quicken in their review. To read a detailed comparison, see the Sept. 21, 2004 issue of PC Magazine, p. 32.) According to Kathy: “Its new depth options, better on-line connections, and closer attention to spending and categorization make an already capable sophisticated and highly usable finance program even better.” Wow!

So, has Microsoft reached Nirvana in financial software and is about to deep-six Intuit? Well, on the Internet, I discovered a number of very unhappy Money 2005 users who castigated Microsoft for “problems” with the latest update (check out postings on the amazon.com web site) and suggested people go back to Money 2004, in spite of the rave review by Kathy Yakal. Since, I have not tried Money 2005, I can't comment on the veracity of the review or the user comments. Hopefully, by now, Microsoft has corrected any glitches and provided users with patches.

OK, now on to my review of Money 2004.

Installation

The program installed quickly from the CD and without problems after it removed my Money 2002 Suite software. (I guess I am on a two-year cycle with Microsoft.) Furthermore, its “Converter Wizard” imported my data file from Quicken 2003 Premier and converted it correctly. Then I used its “On-line Services” capability to download/update data from my brokerage, banking, mortgage, and credit card accounts. (More on this later.) After finishing these tasks, I was truly amazed to see the information contained within Money and the many ways that it could

be displayed, analyzed, and projected to assist in managing my personal finances.

System Requirements

The program requires a multimedia PC with Pentium 166 or higher, Windows (98, 2000, Me, or XP) operating system, 32 MB RAM (min.), 75 MB free hard disk space plus 50MB for Internet Explorer 6 use plus 68 MB for instructional videos and audio help, access to the Internet, and capabilities for viewing video graphics, hearing audios, and inputting information and directions (i.e., the ubiquitous mouse).

Basic Features

You can organize your personal finances; manage financial goals; budget and reduce debt; track your checkbook and spending, and pay bills on-line; manage investments and taxes (this includes estimating tax withholding, finding “hidden” deductions, and exporting the relevant tax information to a tax-preparation software program); and convert your data file from Quicken.

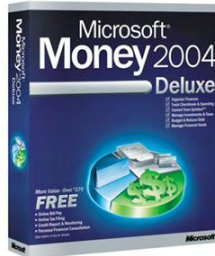
Free Additional Features

There are over \$ 170 worth of free financial services that Microsoft provides – well beyond the cost of the program. You can avail yourself of on-line bill paying or fund transfers for 12 months (up to 15 bills per month), use H & R Block's on-line tax service and e-file once (it's extra to file your state return), get one in-person financial consultation with an American Express Financial Advisor, get a one-year subscription to Money magazine, and download your credit report plus monitoring for one year from Experian with e-mail notification of important changes to your credit file!

Comments

The program is easy to set up and use, even if you are switching from Quicken. Money can display your finances in a multiplicity of ways, including tabular and graphical displays. Its Home Page is customizable to provide quick and easy access to the information you want, including top stories and breaking news from the MSN web site. Particularly noteworthy, you can download your financial information automatically from over 1100 institutions. For those that are not yet on autopilot, you can download the data manually. I have to do this for my bank accounts and mortgage company. However, my brokerage and credit card accounts worked automatically on my set schedule. And for some reason, Money had a problem distinguishing recurring bank check payments to the same payee, even though the check numbers are different. I'm trying to figure out if I am doing something wrong in my settings or if there is a program flaw.

Finally, there is an excellent electronic help system to supplement the brief paper manual. The Help window is available on the right side of the screen no matter where you are working in the program. And there is an audio guide that plays automatically the first time you visit a help page. In addition, the demo videos show you how to perform key tasks – a great feature for newcomers to financial management. If you have a problem that you can't resolve using the built-in user's guide and Help system, you can find the latest troubleshooting information at



the Money web site: <http://moneycentral.msn.com/articles/data/deluxe/webmenu.asp>. Free problem resolution also is available via e-mail exchange. However, if you really need to talk to a Microsoft support person, it will cost you.

Conclusions

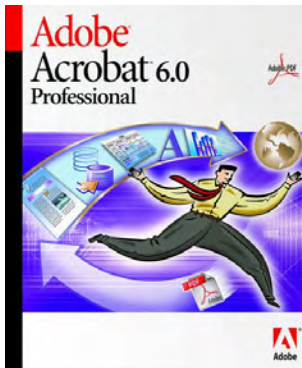
The bottom line: Money is a great program and a worthy competitor of Quicken. Use the freebies that come with the Deluxe (and higher) software and you get much more than your money's worth! I would also like to note that PC Magazine gave Editor's Choice awards to both Money 2004 and Quicken Premier 2004, but added that "Microsoft had added a raft of new and enhanced features as well as added services."

If you want to buy one of the 2005 versions, check the Internet to make sure that any glitches are fixed. The costs for the 2005 versions are: Money Small Business (list is \$ 90), Money Premium (list is \$ 80), Money Deluxe (list is \$ 60), Money Standard (list is \$ 30); Money 2004 Deluxe is available for less than \$40. There may be rebates on to 2005 software and discounts are available at your favorite computer store or on-line vendor. ■

Adobe Acrobat 6.0 Professional

By Ted Littman, NOCCC

The Adobe Acrobat 6 software family provides different levels of capability for creating and manipulating files in the Adobe-invented PDF format. (In case you were wondering, PDF stands for "Portable Document Format.") An electronic document created in the PDF format preserves the exact look and content of the original, including layout, fonts, and graphics. Furthermore, it can be printed, distributed via e-mail, and shared on the Web. And, it is operating system insensitive, being viewable in Microsoft Windows, Mac OS, or UNIX.



The PDF format has revolutionized the way we work with and access electronic documents. In fact, PDF has become the de facto standard in document creation, review, transfer, and printing for most business, engineering, and creative arts professionals as well as print service providers.

Acrobat comes in "three flavors," with a wide range of capabilities as summarized in the chart below which is from the Adobe website (<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/matrix.html>). In addition, there is the ubiquitous **Adobe Reader** which is available [free](#) to download from the Adobe Web site and can be used to view and print PDF documents. **Acrobat 6 Standard** was reviewed in the August 2003 issue of *Orange Bytes*, p. 10.

As the chart below shows, the top-of-the-line **Acrobat 6 Professional (Pro)** has significant capabilities beyond the other members of the family. This review is primarily oriented towards the special capabilities of Pro and significant improvements over prior versions.

One of my volunteer jobs for NOCCC is to add the navigational aids to our monthly newsletter before it is posted on our web site (<http://www.noccc.org>) in PDF format. These aids include Bookmarks, Web & e-mail address hyperlinks, Table of Contents links, and Article Threads. (An article on navigating in PDF documents is in the June 2004 issue of *Orange Bytes*, p. 6.) The capabilities of Acrobat 6 Pro (and Standard) make doing this job a reasonable one in terms of time and labor savings.

A nifty ability of Acrobat 6 is to globally convert all web addresses to links in a flash. Since we have 20-30 such addresses in each newsletter issue, this is a great timesaver versus doing the task manually for each address. Unfortunately, Acrobat requires the "full" web address starting with <http://>. If the address is abbreviated to www., the link must be created manually. Hopefully, Adobe will correct this deficiency in a subsequent version.

Choose the right Adobe Acrobat product	Adobe Reader	Acrobat Elements 6.0	Acrobat 6.0 Standard	Acrobat 6.0 Professional
Ability to view and print Adobe PDF files	✓	✓	✓	✓
One-button Adobe PDF file creation from Microsoft® Office applications		✓	✓	✓
128-bit encryption and password protection for increased document security		✓	✓	✓
Review management and commenting tools			✓	✓
Ability to combine document types from various applications into one Adobe PDF file			✓	✓
One-button Adobe PDF file creation from AutoCAD®, Microsoft Visio®, and Microsoft Project (Windows® only)				✓
Electronic forms creation				✓
Support for document layers in technical drawings				✓
Enhanced tools for printing, viewing, and navigating of large-format documents				✓
Built-in preflighting tools for print production				✓

New Features in Acrobat 6 Pro

This version has made some significant improvements over prior ones, including a new task-based user interface for greater ease in performing common tasks. Workgroups involved in reviewing documents will find the task easier through the increased automation of review features and an expanded set of commenting tools. Converting files from other formats is easier than ever before with closer integration between Acrobat and Microsoft Office applications, and one-button conversion from

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Acrobat 6

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

Visio, MS Project, Internet Explorer for Windows, and Autodesk AutoCAD.

Creating PDF documents from other applications has been expanded and improved. For example, you can use the mouse right-click function on most files (including text and graphics) that are displayed on your desktop or in Windows Explorer; then you have the options of converting the file to PDF or converting and e-mailing it.

Acrobat places a button on the toolbar of Internet Explorer (5.0 or later) that allows you to convert the currently displayed Web page to a PDF file and print it if you want. Similarly, in M/S Outlook, there is a button on the toolbar to convert files to PDF and attach them to your e-mail message. Unfortunately, there is no such shortcut (yet) for Outlook Express.

If you use Visio or AutoCAD (I don't), the files from these programs can be converted to PDF format while preserving layers and bookmarks. Shortcut conversion buttons also are placed in the M/S Project toolbar.

There are a number of other PDF creation tools that I tried that are quite useful. For example, you can convert a screen-captured image to PDF from the Clipboard. In addition to the conversion capability that has been available within M/S Office software (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), now you can convert these Office files from within Acrobat 6. Also, you can combine files from various applications into one PDF document; this can be very useful if you need to create a training manual or other complex document with text, graphics, schedules, and tables from different sources.

Acrobat 6 Pro has the capability to generate the most compact PDF file without compromising document integrity by recompressing images and removing unnecessary fonts. This is an important consideration if your PDFs (like NOCCC's electronic Orange Bytes) have to be sent via e-mail or downloaded from a Web site. After you have finalized your PDF document, you invoke the *File>Save As* command (instead of *File>Save*). Then Acrobat Pro rewrites the entire document as efficiently as possible and optimizes it for Web viewing which allows you to download whole pages at a time from your Web server or network.

There also is a built-in "PDF Optimizer" that audits the space usage of each element of your document. This nifty capability will show you how much space is taken by images, fonts, bookmarks, etc. The information provided gives you valuable guidance in determining the most effective way to reduce file size. And you can create a high resolution document for print and a lower one for Web viewing. (If you want further details on this, I refer you to the Tutorial section on <http://www.adobe.com/epaper/tips/acr6optimize/main.html>.)

As you can see from the Space Audit tables below, the biggest contributor space-wise to our September 2004 newsletter is images (left table is after compacting). Before Adobe did its optimization thing (right table), the total file size was 3.7 MB and images took up about 2.9 MB. When I used Acrobat's side-

by-side comparison of the two newsletter versions, only 14 pages (out of 28) were affected graphically by compression and

Space Audit

Results			Results		
Percentage	Bytes	Description	Percentage	Bytes	Description
0 %	0	Thumbnails	0 %	0	Thumbnails
71.59 %	868619	Images	77.86 %	2895057	Images
0.43 %	5248	Bookmarks	0.06 %	2416	Bookmarks
12.95 %	157112	Content Streams	4.25 %	157900	Content Streams
4.17 %	50575	Fonts	9.33 %	346798	Fonts
5.79 %	70242	Structure Info	3.36 %	124783	Structure Info
0 %	0	Acro Forms	0 %	0	Acro Forms
1.62 %	19671	Link Annotations	0.07 %	2470	Link Annotations
0 %	0	Comments	0 %	0	Comments
0 %	0	Named Destinations	0 %	0	Named Destinations
0 %	0	Web Capture Information	0 %	0	Web Capture Information
2.37 %	28791	Document Overhead	0.65 %	24335	Document Overhead
0.02 %	226	Color Spaces	0.01 %	226	Color Spaces
0 %	0	X Object Forms	0 %	0	X Object Forms
0 %	0	Pattern Information	0 %	0	Pattern Information
0.08 %	929	Shading Information	0.02 %	929	Shading Information
0.03 %	351	Extended Graphics States	1.31 %	48779	Extended Graphics States
0 %	0	Piece Information	0 %	0	Piece Information
0 %	0	Piece Information	1.30 %	48320	Cross Reference Table
0.95 %	11519	Unknown	1.79 %	66466	Unknown
100 %	1213283	Total	100 %	3718479	Total

the differences were barely noticeable on my computer screen.

Adobe has greatly expanded Acrobat's support for the entire document review cycle. We first got involved with this process when we started using Acrobat 6 Standard last year for the electronic version of the Orange Bytes. With the Pro version, Reviewers of a PDF report now have improved and expanded commenting tools that are a pleasure to work with. In addition, Reviewers can e-mail only their comment/corrections to the originator (rather than the whole report which can be lengthy) and these comments are then automatically imported into the original PDF and organized.

With the increased concern for document security, Adobe has added improvements ranging from a redesigned interface to improved digital signing to encryption and document certification. You even can set restrictions on printing, copying text and graphics, and editing copy. Fortunately, we do not (yet) have a need for these measures.

If you use your PDF document to create a high-quality print output, you will find one or more of Acrobat's print production features of value. These include Preflight (which analyzes your document to determine its validity for press printing using some 400 predefined checks for common output errors) and Color Separation (which allows you to preview the separation plates on screen to ensure that the print document meets your requirements).

I would like to mention several other new features of interest. You can search your PDF files for a word or phrase whether they are in folders on your computer, on a network, or even on the Internet. I exercised this option to search the Orange Bytes files (located in several folders on one hard drive) for the phrase *Ted Littman, NOCCC*. It took about ten minutes on my slow computer to search two drives and 5 partitions and identify over 50 articles and columns with this notation. And, each one was hyperlinked so that the original item could be opened in-

stantly!

Another feature is the “Read Out Loud” one that enables you to have an item, page, or whole document read to you through your PC speakers. This is a great idea for helping visually-impaired folks; but the Acrobat capability is too elementary to be of real value in my view. The robot reader is artificial (and masculine) and I found it difficult to understand him (it?). Certainly, there are better programs available to do this now.

Installation and System Requirements

Acrobat 6 Pro installed from the CD with one minor problem on my Dell 500 MHz Pentium III with Windows XP. If you are trying to “upgrade” from Acrobat 6 Standard as I was doing, you may need to first uninstall it using Windows’ Control Panel capability. I kept getting a message from the Pro software that a more recent version of Acrobat (6.0.1) was on my system. However, after removing Standard, the Pro installed without incident, albeit slowly. It took about 8 minutes for the full installation of about 350 MB from the CD. (Note that Adobe Reader requires only 44 MB.) You should be aware that you have to “activate” the program after installation ala Microsoft software, an understandable annoyance due to piracy concerns. I subsequently updated Pro to v. 6.0.1.

For a PC-based system, you need a Pentium processor, Windows operating system (NT Workstation 4.0 with Service Pack 6 or 2000 with Service Pack 2 or XP (Home Ed., Pro, or Tablet), Internet Explorer 5.0 or later, 64 MB of RAM (min.), 245 MB (min.) free hard-disk space, 1024 x 768 screen resolution, and a CD-ROM drive. For Mac users, you need the PowerPC G3 processor, Mac OS X v. 10.2.2, and 405 MB hard-disk space.

The Bottom Line

Acrobat 6 Pro has an MSRP=\$449 (full version) or \$149 if you are upgrading. The boxed copy can be bought for about \$310 or downloaded for about \$100 from online vendors. By comparison, Acrobat 6 Standard has an MSRP=\$299 or \$99 if you are upgrading. The boxed copy runs about \$240 and a download is about \$70. Documentation-wise, the boxed programs come with well-written, but brief (25-pages) “Getting Started” manuals. Further details on installing and using Acrobat are available in the extensive built-in Help system as well as online at the Adobe Web site with its numerous Tutorials and other information.

For my use in working with NOCCC newsletters, I prefer the Pro version. I believe the difference in cost is well worth the added capability that you get even if you don’t need all of the available specialized capabilities oriented toward professional users. Of course, if your needs are limited to viewing and printing PDF documents, Adobe Reader 6 is free to download – a “price” that can’t be beat! Go to <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>. ■

SpamCatcher 3.0

By Ken Ransom, NOCCC

“Are you annoyed, harassed, or just plain fed up with SPAM? Do you wish you’d never see a chain letter email, a virus hoax, or a weight loss opportunity - and hope you never will again? If so, we’ve got good news for you! SpamCatcher blocks 99% of your unwanted emails, making sure you get only the email you want.” This quote is from the web site of Allume Systems (formerly Aladdin Systems) (<http://www.allume.com>) in regard to their SpamCatcher software.



Also, the vendor states that SpamCatcher 3.0

- Blocks 99% of unwanted email
- Sets up in 5 minutes
- Totally integrates with Outlook & Outlook Express
- Works with HotMail and Eudora
- Uses five powerful Anti-Spam Engines to keep your inbox clean
- All email clients using either POP or Microsoft Exchange are supported
- HotMail is supported through your email client
- Yahoo is supported through your email client with paid Yahoo POP access.

The program requires Windows 98/ME/NT/2000/XP and 15 MB of disk space.

As the software box indicates, there is an Outlook version which adds a toolbar button in Microsoft’s Outlook program and a general option for basically a couple of other POP mail programs (e.g. Eudora, Netscape, Pegasus, etc.). But the basic Yahoo (The side of the box mentions Yahoo) does not allow a spam program outside of their upgrade plan. They are not pop accounts.

There is a slight initial delay every time to check emails (2-10 sec). One of the most interesting, and potentially the most powerful tool of the program might be the SpamCatcher Network (over 1 million strong according to the box). This network works by having people report spam that isn’t filtered. This is entered into their database so that other users will now have that spam filtered. One-year of spam filter updates is included with your purchase. If you use Outlook, you can report spam emails that didn’t get caught to the SpamCatcher network, but if you aren’t using Outlook, you can still check your emails against the network.

SpamCatcher has two options. You can either tag the email with a subject tag, ex. [SpamCatcher] or have the program add a tag in the header. Then, you can have your email program sort

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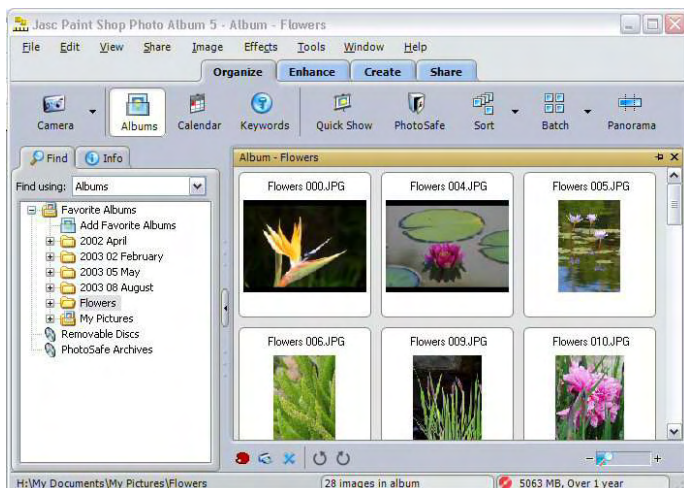
Jasc's Photo Album 5

By John Donan, NOCCC



The new Photo Album has an easier-than-ever interface which is workflow organized with new ways to view images. It has archiving (referred to as backup) which is integrated with the data base and new ways to make use of one's photographs. Many of the functions are now more easily accessed. It now has tabs above the main toolbar which set up unique desk top configurations for each. They are

used for Organizing, Enhancing, Creating, or Sharing. Each has toolbar selections matched to the workflow of its tasks. These toolbars now have single click access to effects (for example Black and White, Sepia, Frames etc.) which had previously been sub-tier menu items.



Paint Shop Photo Album has become a program I use daily for nuts-and-bolts operations of storing and retrieving. I have seldom used features related to family-event photo collections, such as making slide shows. This changed as I was performing this review for a family situation required me to delve into a 52 year record of family photos and on a crash basis. I soon became familiar with and appreciative of features I hadn't been using.

Photo Album 5's Organize Tab extends beyond version 4's easily navigable interface. It allows excellent control over moving, renaming, and previewing your pictures. You can add keywords to your pictures so that you can easily find them afterwards, and you can also view them by the date you captured them from your camera. From this tab you can also archive your photos, join together various to make a **panorama**, and set up editing to be performed on groups of photos at the same time.

My raw collections of images sometimes run into the thousands and the visual perusing I do in my culling process will now be greatly aided by the new thumbnail features. The assignment of thumbnail size can now be made by means of a slider below the thumbnail array. The selection range has been



expanded from three to seven choices, providing larger and smaller sizes than before. On my 19 inch screen I can now place 324 small thumbnails (four times as many as before) and when greater detail is desired to better identify an image, zip, they can be changed to an array of four, three-inch enlargements.

“Paint Shop Photo Album 5 Has Changed To Better Accommodate The Family Photographer.”

For the Share Tab, there are eight basic ways Photo Album lets you share your photos, including emailing, CDs, screen savers, wall papers, and custom-ordered prints or books. These allow you to both share your photos and preserve them for the future. The CDs can be used with DVD players that are VCD enabled.

The Create Tab provides easy-to-follow procedures for greeting cards, e-mailable e-cards and CD/DVD labels. There are extremely tasteful designs and artworks available to provide professional looking effects. The CD labels can be organized for the four popular layouts of Avery, Stomper, Fellowes, or Memorex. The labels may hold theme or image with text or they may hold just text alone. A calendar showing one enlarged image for each month can also be created.

The Enhance Tab takes you to where minimal photo editing can be done. You can do a “Quick Fix” computer performed adjustment, use the “Adjust wizard” where you choose from three zoomable previews, or there is an adjustment mode which is completely manual. You can also crop and resize your picture, adjust its proportions, and add a variety of effects like text, sepia, black & white, audio captions, and add edge effects or a frame to your picture. In version 5, the red eye feature has been enhanced. The “Quick Fix” has always amazed those who use it. It beats the results of curves and levels of high level editing programs most of the time.

There are two types of CDs which can be burned directly from the program. One is structured to the data base (PhotoSafe) and is intended to archive the images as they are added to one's system. It will consist of a single set of CDs such that the non-archived images, as they accumulate, will be placed on the next

Continued on page 34

Murach's C#, .Net Developer's Guide

By *Leo E. Dieriex, NOCCC*

This book is authored by Joel Murach and Dough Lowe and published by Mike Murach & Associates, Inc. This is the first edition, and was printed in 2004. The C# language has some major improvements over C / C++. It would seem to be the next major language generation.

It is 750 pages and the list price is \$49.50. The price at Amazon.com is \$34.65, with free shipping. There is no



CD included; however all the examples and sample lessons are downloaded from <http://www.murach.com>. By ordering on their web site, you save 30% on non-mainframe program books and 20% on their mainframe books; plus, they ship free. The first 7 chapters of this book can be downloaded free!

Murach uses "Paired Pages," where a subject is discussed on one page, and on the facing page is a detailed sample program, or example, with discussion. This approach is great. I have not seen this paired pages approach used in other programming books. It really works for me, as I like lots of examples.

The book is divided into 5 sections, with 23 chapters. The first section is "Introduction to C# programming." The authors spend 3 chapters on this, and go into great detail on the Visual Studio IDE (Integrated Development Environment). Forms design (user interface) is introduced in the first section. Some books skip the IDE details. I had not worked in the Visual Studio IDE, so this section was very useful.

Section 2, "The C# language essentials," in 8 chapters, covers the details of the language. I could easily skim this section to learn the differences between C / C++ and C#. I have programmed in C/C++ for several years.

Section 3, "Object-oriented programming with C#," is covered in 4 chapters. Murach uses a more business application approach. This should make OOP (object oriented programming) easier as my group gets more into C# and WEB programming.

Section 4, "Database programming with C#," is covered in 5 chapters. It covers SQL and ADO.NET. By the end of this section, the book has presented 12 complete, non-trivial applications culminating in an Order Entry database application. More and more there is the need to tie database information to programming.

Section 5, "Specialized skills for C# developers," is covered in 3 chapters. One chapter discusses reading and writing both binary and text files to a disk. Another chapter is on XML, which is a hot topic in WEB development. The last chapter goes into some details on improving the user interface.

Appendix A, "How to install and use the software and files

for this book," is the last section.

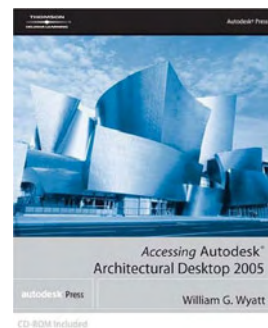
Murach ties all elements together, from IDE to OOP to database programming. Other programming books leave out the IDE, and database applications. I have been a developer for 30 years and have about 40 program-related books. I have never found another programming book that I was more satisfied with.

This book should help any developer new to C#. It would be a good book for even the serious beginning programmer. Most online reviews are very positive. ■

Accessing Autodesk Architectural Desktop 2004

By *Joe Mizer, NOCCC*

This book, written by William Wyatt and from Autodesk Press, is primarily for the architectural designer experienced in AutoCAD but needs to learn to use Architectural Desktop. Architectural Desktop is an object-based CAD program for designing homes and commercial buildings. When you select the wall tool you will be asked to specify the starting and end point as if you are drawing a line. However, you have just created



a complete wall that has length, thickness, height, and will interface with other walls, doors, and windows. The program is so complex it requires experience in an AutoCAD program, more for the mental thought process you go through than for the actual use of the editing tools from a previous program.

I did not find any of the available Architectural Desktop books that cover AutoCAD basics so you will have a giant step if you are attempting this book without the required background. This is not one of the many books available that are written as a tutorial. The author has used the 900 + pages very well and presents the material in what I call classic style where you are told what will be presented, followed by the presentation of the instructional material, and then you are presented exercises which are expected to be done to reinforce the material.

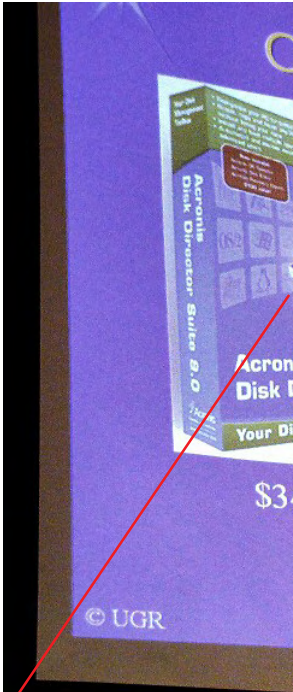
The difficulty the student is going to encounter in learning Architectural Desktop is a lot like learning 3D modeling in standard AutoCAD was before Mechanical Desktop and Inventor were both available. There are new concepts to learn and strange new methods to be mastered. Not only are the files and project structures different but the interaction with the intelligent objects that need to be tweaked to interact properly with other objects to work properly. One feature I like is in addition to making the various sheets required is a drawing set you can

Continued on page 20

November Photos



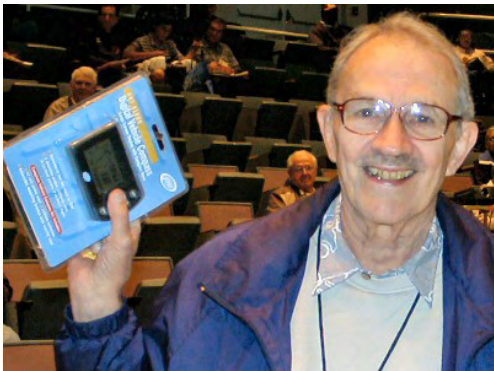
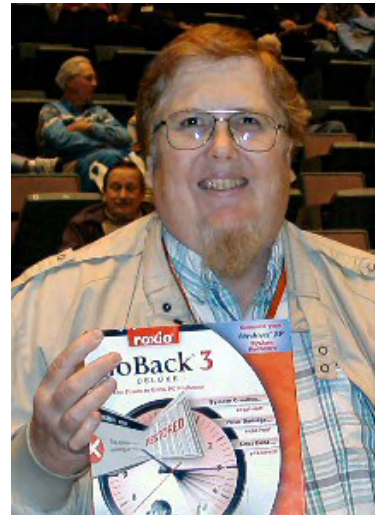
Jim Morrison, the SIG leader for the Digital Imaging SIG, introducing guest speaker Roger Newsham from Samy's Camera Store



Gene Barlow gave a presentation on how to save our stuff by backing it up..



The landscaping for the new Chapman University Library is looking good.



One of several products that Gene talked about and made available for purchase at a discounted price for the club members that were at the meeting.

The prizes and the winners

Product Reviews

Autodesk

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

rotate your model to any position you want to emphasize and show off and then export the screen image to a JPG file and save it just like any other photograph in your computer. You can then print it or insert it into a document just like any other .JPG.

The book is composed of 13 chapters, starting with chapter 1, an introduction into Architectural Desktop. Chapter 2 introduces wall objects and making of floor plans. Chapter 3 presents advanced material on wall features, and chapter 4 introduces adding doors and windows. Chapter 5 introduces doors and windows as assemblies that may have multiple windows and door, and side panel combinations. This section also describes creating special window and door shapes and combinations that can be saved and reused.

Chapter 6 teaches making roofs with the roof tool and then how to convert them to slabs using the slab tool so dormers and other details can be added. Chapter 7 creating slabs for floors and ceilings is almost the same as the slab tool in the previous chapter and chapter 8 introduces the tool that will make generating stairs easier than you can climb them. Chapters 9 and 10 are both the annotation chapters. You can add notes to the drawing or a schedule, which is generated automatically from the information on the doors and windows in the project and imported into the schedule. You can add dimensions automatically to a section of the drawing or constructions notes and other documentation to your drawings. Chapter 11 is about making the sectional drawings, which display building details, which are hard to display otherwise so you can look at the interior features of the building. Elevations can be added so you can see frontal, side and interior views. It is hard to tell what the kitchen will actually look like if you are only looking straight down from a plan view. Chapter 12 covers creating mass models, spaces and boundaries. Mass elements can be used to simulate building elements such as columns, floors, fireplaces. Space and boundaries can be used to define restrictions, simulate walls and other items. Chapter 13 is about the special problems encountered while drawing commercial structures.

One important question everyone wants to know is whether or not he or she can learn using this book. The answer is a definite maybe, this book does what it should, it presents the information in a clear and easy-to-understand manner, but the subject is very complex and it takes a lot of work to get through 900 pages. The order the material is presented in is excellent because most of the time the material is presented in the order it is used in the tutorials, and on only a few situations you are referred to chapter later in the book. I recommend this book as a good first text. The difficulty level is rated from the beginning to advanced. I wish this had been my first Architectural Desktop book. This is also the book of choice in assorted college courses including Spokane Community College and others.

The book comes with a CD that contains four appendices and drawing files to complete the tutorials in the book, as well as completed tutorials for reference when assistance is needed. That is great because there is nothing worse than trying to

work out a problem or answer a question in a book and there is no easy way to know if you have answered the question correctly or worked the tutorial correctly.

William G. Wyatt Sr. is a professor at John Tyler Community College in Chester, Virginia. He is a certified Engineering Technician, as well as an active member of the Institute for Certification of Engineering Technicians and the American Society for Engineering Education.

Thompson Delmar Learning publishes this book, which is available on line as well as many bookstores. You can visit <http://www.delmarlearning.com> and find this book and all of the other AutoCAD books they publish. Delmar seems to have the largest selection of AutoCAD books because of their association with AutoDesk Press. The ISBN # is 1-4018-5015-4. The list price is \$75.95 USD and is available with a street price of about \$55.00 at some locations. The author has just released his latest version for Architectural Desktop 2005. ■

Samba 3 By Example

Practical Exercises for Successful Deployment

By Jim DuWaldt, NOCCC

Author John H. Terpstra is a long-time member of the Samba Team, a loose-knit group of about 30 people who contribute regularly to Samba. He co-authored "The Official Samba-3 HOWTO and Reference Guide."

The stated goal is to provide exercises that "reflect the problems and challenges businesses face," within the context of using Samba to support Windows clients, and ultimately to cooperate with other systems.

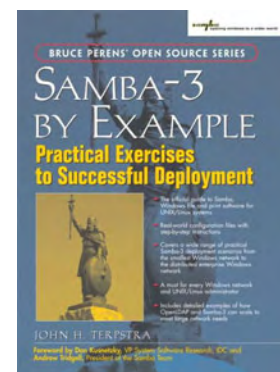
The entire book will be most useful to dedicated IT pros, but most chapters will also be useful for a boss investigating Samba as an option..

It begins with a Windows networking primer, whose purpose is to grant familiarity with the demands Windows clients make on their servers.

The second chapter starts with the simple problem of managing a small network of desktops and customer laptops. This leads the author to show Samba to implement the two main Windows security models, Share Mode Security and User Mode Security, and he adds Samba's support for WINS resolution and for supporting printer queues.

Succeeding chapters increase the complexity of the problems through the growth of the hypothetical company from a small office, to a campus, to nationwide to worldwide.

The entertaining background on the examples show how much work went into the book. The hypothetical company is



Continued on page 24

Flip Album Suite 5

By Dr. John Hanson, NOCCC

Editors note: As Dr. Hanson's review of this product was rather negative, we gave the [E-Book Systems] company a chance to respond. I have not personally looked at this package, but it sounds like a number of the problems are caused by the combination of a not very well read and not very well written manual, exacerbated by program options that either are not well implemented, or not selected in a main-stream fashion.

Two of his complaints are marginal. I always harp on my students to use the custom install so that they can see what things are going to be installed and where the proposed installation is going to be located. Most installation programs do this. Still, the manual shouldn't assume that this is common knowledge, although by now it should be.

He is simply wrong about the serial number thing. A lot of programs do that. A kind of (this is the PC version) "Ha Ha pirate, thought you would steal our software and instead we caused you to waste some of your time trying to be a thief."

This program comes in a very attractive box and retails for about \$50 which is way too much for what you get. I have an earlier version which seemed impressive during a demo but I was disappointed when I used it so never used again. I tested this version on a Win 98se system running at 900 MHz with 512 mb of Ram. They have added a lot of features, but the actual program isn't much better than before. The box says it will run on any OS from 95 to XP and only needs 64 mb of Ram which sounds good.

The installation was straight forward but you are not allowed to pick where you want it to go so it goes on C; and it doesn't tell you how big it is or if you have enough room. On the box it says you need 80 mb of hard disk space. The installation doesn't say if you need to install the file viewer separately. This part of the program does allow you to put it in another place but doesn't say how big it is. In general I would say it is a rather poor installation program compared to many others.

[E-Book Systems] Yes, this can be changed - but it is not specifically mentioned in the manual.

The default installation directory can be changed. To install FlipAlbum on another directory,

1. Run the installation or setup file.
2. When you reach the 'Choose Setup Type' section, choose 'Custom' option and click on the 'Next' button.
3. Click on the 'Change' button on the next screen.
4. On the 'Folder Name:' dialogue box, either use the drop-down arrow or key in the drive/location you wish to install FlipAlbum to and click 'OK'.
5. Click on the 'Next' button to proceed with the installation.



During the installation there was no request for the serial number so if you don't have the serial number you waste a lot of time and disk space as it is already on your hard drive. It is when you go to use it that you need the serial number. I have never seen one like that before which I consider very poor.

Installing a folder of pictures was fairly easy using the "copy to" function and then you can click on auto flip to see the complete album as it flips the pages. You can set the speed but it is much more complicated than it needs to be. You should just be able to press a number button to go faster or slower like other good programs.

The printing function was terrible. It not only prints the picture but also the top and bottom margins of the page in a dull cast. If you switch to landscape mode you get the exact same size picture as in the portrait mode and more dull casts on the side. So I recommend not using the print function of this program.

[E-Book Systems] On page 31 (Section 4.14) of the FA Suite v5.0 manual it explains how to print just an image. To print an image, right-click on the image and select Print... menu.

There is a nice printed manual of 72 pages included and it is written by someone who is reasonably good in English. There are inconsistencies such as the book says go to Flip To and then Redo or Undo to go forward or back but there are no such commands in the Flip To menu. You can go forward or backward just by clicking on a picture but you have to discover this on your own. It would have been so easy to put a little box at the bottom. In the index on the back you can go to a specific page and perhaps from the thumbnail in the front.

The info menu does include some meta data from your camera but not as much as the camera has so it's not very useful.

I tried annotating a picture and you can select a font and its size which appears over the picture. You can drag the box around but can't change the size of the box or get it completely off the picture. What's worse is that it becomes part of the picture and can't be removed, so be careful and have a backup of original. When you print the page with the annotation the text is omitted so it's a fairly useless feature.

[E-Book Systems] Yes, the annotation resize instructions are mentioned in Page 18 (Section 3.4) of the manual.

The 2 printing options (printing a page vs an image) are mentioned in Page 31 (Section 4.14) of the FA 5 Suite v5.0 manual.

The Set Page Margin instructions are mentioned in Page 65 (Section 8.5) of the FA 5 Suite v5.0 manual.

You can rearrange the pictures using the thumbnail section, but only if they appear on the left or right side of the book. If on another page you need to use the clipboard. There is no way to show more thumbnails on a page even though there is a lot of empty space. When you drag and drop, it puts the dragged picture in the space before the place you clicked on and I could not tell where the other picture went. Now I remember some of the things I was disappointed with on my earlier version.

Continued on page 24

all emails with that tag in a spam folder.

One word of caution: I noticed that SpamCatcher does ‘not’ catch emails sent by viruses. There is no program that gets all the spam on the net. Remember to ‘never’ open an attachment from someone you don’t know or from an email you suspect contains a virus.

The program has other useful features such as an approved and blocked list of emails/web-sites, and the ability to “bounce” an email back to the sender (Outlook only).

I was also pleasantly surprised by the lack of false positives. I estimate that SpamCatcher marked only about 10 legit emails as spam out of 1000. To prevent this from happening in the future, I added the email addresses/sites to my approved list. Hint: One easy way to look for any valid emails in your spam folder is to sort the emails by subject. It is amazing at the number of similar or identical spam subjects you get.

I get a lot of spam everyday (100 on an average day with 3 mail accounts), and this program brings order to my inbox. While SpamCatcher is fairly basic in terms of options, it works just as good as any other spam program. According to PC Magazine (Feb. 25, 2003): “SpamCatcher does a very good job of making sure that the only mail that shows up in your junk mail folder is spam.”

So if you need a spam program along with a years worth of updates (just as virus scan programs do), then SpamCatcher might be the one for you at around the \$30 price range. ■

PC Hardware in a Nutshell:

A Desktop Quick Reference

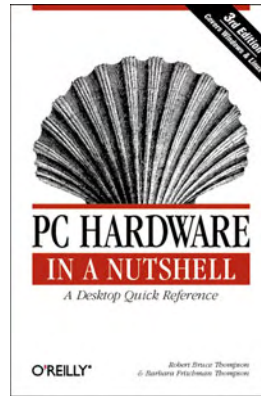
By Leonard Prince NOCCC

Authored by: Robert Bruce Thompson and Barbara Fritchman Thompson.

Third Edition. Published by: O’Reilly

This 874 page reference book contains impressive technical data on PC Hardware. After thirty-four years of building and using computers, I respect the work writing this reference. The authors should be awarded for not cramming this excellent book with nonessential fluff.

The third edition covers seven generations of Intel processors and motherboards. Frank discussion of the pros and cons of the new 32 and 64 bit processors is necessary raw meat for those that want to brag about what is under their hood. For most of us keeping up with necessary technology, the Thompson’s preface comment that the book is packed with useful rather than interesting information is very true. Another



key quote: “This book is intended for anyone who buys, builds, upgrades or repairs PCs in a corporate, small business or home setting.” The twenty eight chapters cover: motherboards, processors, memory, drives (Floppy, HD, tapes, CDs (ROM, RW, and DVD), Interfaces), Video, Sound, Mice, Interfaces (Serial, Parallel, and USB), Case and power supplies. What don’t they cover? Windows or Linux operating systems and applications. The early chapters reference hardware diagnostic

software useful to get you pass the surprises. This book is a keeper.

For example, Joe Mizer (NOCCC) and I were discussing AGP cards. Chapter fifteen has thirty pages on AGP cards, AGP1.0 to AGP3.0. AGP Pro raises the card power from 25 watts to 110 watts and expands the AGP connector from 132 pins to 180 pins. The next generation of motherboards and PCI express will replace the AGP. Table 15-1 lists thirty types of AGPs with various adapters, interfaces and operating voltages. A wrong selection may destroy the AGP or the motherboard, so this chapter is very useful. You should read this book before you select that new AGP card.

Another example of the excellent depth of description of a hardware headache is the 42-page chapter on the USB saga. The availability of devices in the past year using the USB serial interface has exploded. The scarcity of IRQ’s was a problem solved by the USB 1.0 in 1997. Operating system, hardware design and cables became a nightmare until new motherboards, new devices, Windows 2000, XP and Linux 2.4.20 began to support USB 2.0 by 2000. This chapter discusses these problems and how to avoid them. Quote: “Don’t buy any new system or motherboard that does not provide native USB 2.0 ports.”

I designed power supplies using heavy iron and copper in the early days out of college fifty years ago. The IBM computer using a switching power supply solved a lot of problems due to temperature changes, ripples and weight. Power supplies became a utility to be purchased at the lowest price and usually of little concern. Well, the Thompson’s explain the problems of selecting the power supply in the 33-page chapter on power

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Samba

from page 20

a small accounting firm that grows like Kudzu, rationalizing more and more complex scenarios.

Along the way nearly everything needs to be implemented more than once. Samba's standard password mechanism is replaced by faster, more powerful tdbsam which in turn is replaced by OpenLDAP, whose abilities are supplemented by another mechanism that supports replication. Finally, Kerberos is added to the mix to better secure the system.

Expedient decisions are deliberately made in deploying a single Domain Controller and LDAP. The next chapter grows the network beyond the capacity of that architecture and describes how you can shoehorn in Backup Domain Controllers and Master and Slave LDAP servers. Roaming Profiles and Local Group Profiles are introduced when the network is smaller. Later, issues on where to locate these profiles in world-spanning networks are considered. Ditto for DHCP.

The difficulties of integrating systems that need NetBIOS services with IP-based services are also covered. WINS and Dynamic DNS are introduced early and the topic crops up again and again as the system grows.

These re-visitations are a powerful teaching tool that forces you to recall earlier knowledge, strengthening it.

Mr. T is not just a cheerleader: he focuses on Samba's weak areas: printing support and NetBIOS to IP resolution. He passes on a chance to bash Active Directory, noting that it is an LDAP implementation optimized for a certain set of tasks.

Early on Samba controls everything; in the final chapters Samba is required peer with an Active Directory peer network, and later to be subordinate in a large, well-established heterogeneous network.

Chapter 12 is a catch-all on performance and reliability - unfortunately a light 7 pages. The only other weak point of the book is its very short glossary and its index. It is missing several things, like 'valid uses.' NSS is listed under its full name, Name Switching Service, which is fine if you know what NSS stands for in the first place.

On the other hand you have the repetition and each exercise includes at its end a validation section; these are significantly better than anything I have seen before. I suspect O'Reilly and Associates have taken notice.

This book is not a reference, but you should probably read this first, even without a network to practice on. It is excellent, and I am very very glad that I chose to review it. It is published by Prentice Hall Professional Technical Reference; ISBN 0-13-147221-6; \$45 list, \$31 at Amazon.com.

Jim DuWaldt is a system administrator at Freight Management, Inc. in Anaheim, CA, where he manages Windows XP systems and a single Samba 2.2.8 file server. ■

Flip Album 5

from page 21

[E-Book Systems] The Overview page (where thumbnails are located) is auto-generated, and each thumbnail represents a page in the FlipBook. You may only customize the thumbnail size of the Overview Page via the View - Thumbnail Size menu.

For your information,

1. dragging and dropping an image onto an empty space of the Overview page will append the image at the end of the FlipBook.

2. dragging and dropping an image on one of the thumbnail (the thumbnail will have highlighted in pink) of the Overview page will insert the image on a new page just before the selected thumbnail page.

3. dragging and dropping an image on a page will add the image on the same page.

This latest version has oodles of features such as putting your album on a CD or DVD to send to a friend who does not need to have the program to see the pictures. You can also have it so it shows up on the TV, but the main program is just as clutzy as before. Adding lots of features sells the program but it looks like they have done little to the basic program. I would recommend that you not waste your money on this program. The idea is good but it is poorly implemented. The software is a product of E-book Systems, <http://www.flipalbum.com>. ■

Office 2003

from page 11

and Happy Birthday designs that I constructed, were particularly well received by my friends.

OneNote 2003 OneNote 2003 is a new program from Microsoft Office and was supplied on a CD as a trial version. The program allows you to use a Tablet PC, to make note-taking more productive. The product lists for \$100. The academic version is available for \$49. The current cost of a Tablet PC ranges from \$633-\$2700. See <http://www.pricegrabber.com>. Upon researching the subject, I learned that a Tablet PC, with a Windows XP Tablet PC Edition operating system, will allow handwriting recognition and conversion to text (using digital ink technology). If you don't use a Tablet PC, your handwritten notes are saved as images and not as handwritten digital ink. For further information see <http://www.microsoft.com/office/onenote/prodinfo/faq.mspx#EBAAA>. Dan Bricklin, a co-developer of the VisiCalc spreadsheet program, writes "Microsoft's pushing of the new Tablet PCs will bring renewed innovation" (<http://www.bricklin.com/tabletcomputing.htm>). An excellent interactive Tablet PC Overview Demo, containing video and audio appears on the following site: <http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/tablet/evaluation/tours/default.msp>.

Office Training O.K., so now that you have your copy of Office Professional 2003, where do you go for training? A number of free audio courses may be found at: <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/assistance/HA011216991033.aspx>. Two of the best audio-visual programs that I have found are Chris Bertelson's Demo: Microsoft Office System tips and tricks <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/assistance/HA011423051033.aspx> (it's free) and PCHOWTO's PC Show and Tell

<http://www.pcshowandtell.com/microsoft/officemarketplace.asp> (a free 24 hour trial and \$30 for an annual subscription).

My Computer System My HP Pavilion computer contains a 3.2 GHz Intel Pentium 4 Processor, with 512 MB SDRAM memory, a 160 GB hard drive, an 8x DVD+RW/CD-RW combo drive. I use a 19" flat screen monitor, an Epson 1660 Photo Scanner and an HP Deskjet 5550 Printer.

Overall Rating On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being best, Microsoft Office professional Edition 2003 rates an 8+. ■

PC Hardware

from page 22

supplies. The physical form required to fit eleven different case designs including the NLX and WTX lists nine power supplies. This information is unavailable else where. The Thompson's advise "Avoid cheap power supplies." (Been there, done that!) "Avoid replacing proprietary power supplies." (Use a new case and power supply.)

CD's, CD-ROM's, DVD and DVD+RW have added knowledge required to build or select features in a new computer. Chapters 10 through 12 present 107 pages of guidance in the application and selection of these modern miracles of storage. Most books I have on these devices are out of date before the ink dries. DVD technology is still in the sorting out phase. The best guess by the Thompson's in the last page of chapter 12 asserts that Plextor's selection of the DVD+RW for their new models maybe a breakthrough in the "+" or "-" camps. They escaped by allowing the book owner to see their current specific recommendations by make and model at:

<http://www.hardware.com/picks/dvd.html>.

This book is excellent. I intend to keep my copy. You can get your copy directly from O'Reilly at: http://www.o'reilly.com/order_new or order by calling (800) 998-9838. List price: \$39.95. (Don't forget your NOCCC discount.) ■

Available Products

from page 26

ers. MSRP=\$45.

Adobe InDesign CS one-on-one – Digital publishing guru, Deke McClelland, authored this 472-page "personal training" book with its 12 information-packed lessons and over 600 full-color images/diagrams/screenshots, and 50 lessons. The accompanying CD has over 2 hours of video instruction. From O'Reilly. MSRP=\$45.

Adobe Photoshop CS one-on-one – Deke McClelland authored this book too – same style, size and accompaniment. From O'Reilly. MSRP=\$40.

Digital Photography Hacks – Another one of O'Reilly's "Hacks" series, this book by Derrick Story has 100 industrial-strength tips & tools. MSRP=\$30.

Hardware Hacking Projects for Geeks – This O'Reilly book is authored by Scott Fullam who has been "hacking" hardware since

he was ten years old. It contains 15 amazing projects that range from the truly useful to the legendary and wacky. MSRP=\$30.

Building the Perfect PC – This book by Robert Bruce & Barbara Thompson delivers end-to-end instructions, simple enough for even the most inexperienced computerist, for creating your ideal machine. Five different classes of machines are covered with full descriptions of all items and options. From O'Reilly. MSRP=\$30.

PC Hacks – 100 Industrial-Strength Tips & Tools by Jim Aspinwall from O'Reilly shows you how to get the most out of your hardware and software. MSRP=\$25.

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.

Windows XP Power Hound – This book by Preston Gralla from O'Reilly shows you more than 400 ways to improve your Windows experience and boost your computing skills from every angle. MSRP=\$25.

Absolute Beginner's Guide to Creating Web Pages, 2nd Ed. – This book authored by Todd Stauffer from Que Publishing teaches you how to design & build your own Web sites by showing you the fundamentals first and then building on that foundation with a hands-on tutorial approach. MSRP=\$19.

3D Game-Based Filmmaking: The Art of Machinima – The complete hands-on guide to creating animated real-time 3D films on your PC. Authored by Paul Marino, an award-winning Machinima and animated film director and designer, this book/CD is published by Paraglyph Press. MSRP=\$40.

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.

C++ GUI Programming with Qt 3 – The first official Troll tech guide to Qt programming by Jasmine Blanchette & Mark Summerfield from Prentice Hall. MSRP=\$45.

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.

Advanced UNIX Programming, 2nd Ed. – The classic guide to UNIX programming is authored by Marc Rochkind & published by Addison-Wesley. MSRP=\$45.

UNIX Shells by Example, 4th Ed. – Author Ellie Quigley has thoroughly updated her classic book and delivers the information today's shell programmers need most – including comprehensive coverage of Linux shell programming with bash! The accompanying CD has a comprehensive shell programming code library with all source code & data files necessary for this book's hundreds of example programs. From Prentice Hall. MSRP=\$50.

Moving to the Linux Business Desktop – This book is the complete technical resource for migrating to Linux, administering efficiently, and using it to drive cost savings throughout your organization. Respected Linux Journal columnist Marcel Gagne walks you step-by-step through planning and managing the transition, getting users up and running, and keeping them happy. The accompany-

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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

PaperPort Pro 10 – The world's best-selling PC document managing software from ScanSoft. Instantly organize, find, & share all your paper & digital documents. It provides easy-to-use high-speed scanning, pdf document creation, and all-in-one search capability. MSRP=\$200.

PDF Converter 2 Pro – Everything you need to convert & create PDF files! This ScanSoft application turns PDF files into fully formatted Word documents and forms. And it creates PDF files from Word and all of your other PC applications. MSRP=\$100.

Publisher 2003 with Digital Imaging

Pro – Microsoft's bundle helps you create impressive marketing materials for print, Web, and e-mail. Powerful design and photo-editing tools make it easy to create, design, and publish with impact. Requires PC with Pentium 500 MHz and Windows 200 or XP. MSRP=\$209.

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.

Norton Internet Security 2005 – Symantec's award-winning security software includes Antivirus, Personal Firewall, Antispam, Privacy Control, and Parental Control! MSRP=\$70.

Norton SystemWorks Premier 2005 – Symantec's great software includes Antivirus, Utilities, GoBack, Ghost, Checkit Diagnostics, and System Optimizer. MSRP=\$100.

V2i Protector 2.0 – From PowerQuest/Symantec, this program provides desktop backup & disaster recovery by capturing and protecting real-time working states of systems & data partitions. MSRP=\$39.

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 clients. MSRP=\$299/3 Clients.

Spring Cleaning – One-click cleanup of old unwanted or unnecessary files; uninstall/backup/restore/archive/transport programs; and fix registry errors. This is the sequel to Aladdin Systems' Easy Uninstall and works with Windows XP and older operating systems. MSRP=\$30.

Stuffit Deluxe 8.5 – The only complete compression solution with wizards for archiving, compressing, emailing, opening archives, etc. You can schedule back-

ups, automate everyday tasks, search & browse, and more. MSRP=\$40.

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. MSRP=\$30.

NeuDesk Productivity Suite – A search engine for your hard drives, this program maps & characterizes every file so you can find it simply and easily by typing a few words into a single simple interface. From NeuTrino Technologies. MSRP=\$60.

Calendar Creator 10 Deluxe – Broderbund's popular software for creating custom calendars with over 150,000 premium images. MSRP=\$50.

Currently Available are the Following Books

Inside AutoCAD 2005 – This book/CD takes a hands-on, in-depth approach to everything from the most common tasks and functions to advanced concepts with step-by-step tutorials showing you how to effectively use and apply AutoCAD 2005 to meet your needs. From New Rid-

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Preparing a Review Article for the Orange Bytes

by Ted Littman, NOCCC Reviews Editor

The following suggestions for preparing a review article for the Orange Bytes 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, its vendor, and its cost (list, vendor discounts, & street) so that interested club members may be able to purchase it. Be objective, but balanced in your review in so far as plaudits and criticisms are concerned. Remember, you are reviewing for your colleagues and not for the vendor.

After you have tested the product or read the book, consider these questions:

- I. What is the product's stated purpose and does it meet it?
- II. Does it stand out compared to similar products?
- III. What are its major features?
- IV. Is it easy to use? Can a novice use it?
- V. Is it worth the money? Do you recommend it?
- VI. 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:

I. Requirements:

- a. Operating systems?
- b. Processor/speed?
- c. Memory, Disk space, Video & Audio?

II. Installation (do not overemphasize details):

- a. Was it difficult?
- b. Copy or write protected?
- c. Does it allow drive and directory selection?
- d. Does it automatically configure system? Can you control it?

III. Information about your system:

- a. Hardware?
- b. Operating system? Version?
- c. Memory?, Video display?

IV. Documentation:

- a. What is supplied? Manuals (paperback, electronic) Tutorial? Templates? Table of Contents? Index?
- b. Was it clear, concise and helpful?
- c. Is there a troubleshooting section?

V. Product Support:

- a. How is the vendor's tech support?
- b. Does it cost anything?
- c. Is it a toll call?
- d. Does the vendor provide free Internet support?

VI. About the product:

- a. What comes with the product?
- b. What is the cost (list & street)? Any special deals for user group members?
- c. Version number and release date?
- d. How difficult is the learning curve?
- e. Would you buy/use the product?
- f. Do you recommend it?
- g. What don't you like about it?
- h. What improvements or changes would you like to see?
- i. Can the software be downloaded from the vendor's Web site; is there a free trial period before buying?
- j. What warranty is there on hardware?

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

The following list of questions applies to books:

- a. What is the subject matter?
- b. Does the book meet its stated purpose?
- c. Is it timely? If it is a revised edition, what is new in the current edition?
- d. Is the title an accurate reflection of the content?
- e. What level of reader capability is required? Who will find it useful?
- f. Is it easy to read and technically accurate?
- g. Is it well illustrated and are the illustrations easy to view?
- h. Are there any major omissions and why are they important?
- i. How are the key points highlighted?
- j. Does the book have to be read in chronological order?
- k. Are there any accompanying extras (like CDs)?
- l. What do you like and dislike about the book?
- m. Is the author well known in this field? Does he/she have a web site for errata/updates?
- n. Finally, do you recommend it?

After you have answered 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.

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 with a 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: reviews@noccc.org.

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 (if lengthy) 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! 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 NOCCC Web site

Guidelines for Submittal

Important! Please limit the length of your submittals, **but length should be secondary to content sufficiency.** However, we request you limit general articles and software reviews to 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

Main Meeting

By Eric Saca, NOCCC



In November, we were joined by long-time friend and presenter **Gene Barlow**. His company, **User Group Relations**, sells a variety of essential software products to user groups across the country. He has presented for NOCCC many times in the past, most recently last December.

President Cathy Margolin ran the meeting and noted the nice raffle prizes we had this month — a Canon color printer, an FM radio mouse, a digital auto compass and more!

She noted a couple of useful websites for computer shopping —

<http://www.techbargains.com> and <http://www.fatwallet.com>. Both of them list specials posted by computer retailers, like Fry's, Best Buy, CompUSA and many more. At the time of the meeting, she said that FatWallet already posted specials for "Black Friday" — the Friday after Thanksgiving.

Cathy introduced Gene Barlow. He and his company, User Group Relations, are based in St. George, UT. George Margolin noted that Gene's been "a HUGE friend of user groups for years!"

Gene's most popular software products for many years were from PowerQuest Corporation (Partition Magic and Drive Image). Our members consistently bought the latest versions of those products from Gene every time he presented them.

Gene had announced last December that Symantec bought PowerQuest and he wasn't sure of his future selling its products. Unfortunately, as it turned out, Symantec did in fact cancel Gene's contract. Per Gene's understanding, "They

don't believe in user groups." (They still maintain Partition Magic but not DriveImage. It provides the same functionality as Symantec's Ghost.)

The good news is that another software firm asked Gene to market their products: Acronis, Inc. from San Francisco (<http://www.acronis.com>). They produce software comparable to PowerQuest's and apparently, they DO believe in user groups!

Gene and User Group Relations just set up a new website to sell their products: <http://www.usergroupstore.com>. On this site, user group members (including NOCCC) can find the full range of products Gene sells — from Acronis and all other vendors he represents. At any given time, most products are sold at discounts on that site — compared to what you would pay in stores. It's an excellent resource for all user group members.

Following are summaries of the products Gene presented at the meeting:

- **Spearit Associates' Move Me 2.5**

This helps with PC hardware/operating system upgrades by enabling you to transfer information from your old PC to your new one. It transfers all applications, settings and data — even registry settings! Move Me allows many choices for media between the PCs. You can use LAN, USB, LapLink, and even printer cables to connect them. (Printer and serial cables provide slow transfer rates, though.) If you cannot provide a cable connection, Move Me can also use most forms of computer media — CDs, Iomega Zip and Jazz media, USB thumb drives, even floppies.

- **Spearit Associates' This**

This locks down your Windows file associations so applications cannot change them without your approval. File associations are the connections between applications and file extensions, e.g., Word uses .DOC, Excel uses .XLS, Notepad uses .TXT, WinZip uses .ZIP, etc.

- **WhiteCanyon's WipeDrive 3.0**

This is a security product that erases data from your hard drive. It is like a "bulldozer" — it completely wipes out your entire hard drive, changing all its

data to binary zeroes. To do so, it boots from a CD or floppy so it's not dependent on the target hard drive. It is always a good idea to erase your drive before selling it or giving it to someone else. It may contain your private data, like social security and credit card numbers. For serious security applications, companies run products like this multiple times on a given drive. The Department of Defense (DoD) standard is to "wipe" drives three times, to ensure all possible traces of data are erased. (Other agencies with greater risks will require more "wipes." Some drives with top secret data are even destroyed and ground up for security reasons!)

- **WhiteCanyon's MediaWiper**

This is a security product that erases data from external media. It's equivalent to a "dust mop" — it enables you to completely wipe external media before passing it on to other people. It can wipe most forms of external media — floppies, hard drives, Iomega Zip and Jazz media, USB thumb drives, and more. CDs and DVDs are not included because they're read-only. (It should be able to wipe CD- and DVD-RWs, however.) MediaWiper also can't erase the Windows system disk because it runs in Windows. (WipeDrive is required for that.)

- **WhiteCanyon's SecureClean 4.0**

This is also a security product that erases hard drive data. It's like a "vacuum cleaner" — it just wipes data that was already deleted in Windows. It "cleans around" your active files and ensures that the files you deleted will never be accessed by anyone using your system. This product comes with a special utility called **SecureScan** that lets you actually see deleted files on your system.

- **Acronis' Privacy Expert Suite 7.0**

This security product offers most of the same features as the WhiteCanyon products. It also offers some features they do not have. Still, it's not as robust a solution for drive erasure as you would have with all three WhiteCanyon products; they each offer features that the Privacy Expert Suite doesn't.

- **Acronis' Disk Director Suite 9.0**

This is a drive partitioning/organizing product, similar to Partition Magic (formerly of PowerQuest, now Symantec). Gene didn't discuss it in depth.

· **“Discovering Your Hard Drive” and “Backing Up Your Hard Drive” CDs**

These are educational CDs that Gene developed himself to explain key hard drive concepts. They are very helpful for beginners and very inexpensive. Gene created them several years ago, so they still reference the PowerQuest products (Partition Magic, DriveImage) to demonstrate how to work with your drive. However, their principles can be applied with any similar software, like Acronis's Disk Director and True Image.

· **Acronis' True Image 8.0**

This is a hard drive partition-imaging utility, similar to Symantec's Ghost and PowerQuest's DriveImage. However, this product recently won PC Magazine's Editor's Choice Award — beating out its competitors. It provides an excellent PC backup solution. It also contains an INCREMENTAL feature, which is a relatively new concept in drive imaging technology.

Gene completed the last part of his presentation by describing an ideal backup solution for the average user. This includes the best (most recommended) type of hardware, the best type of software, and the best approach for implementing a complete backup strategy. This solution is described in detail on Gene's website, <http://www.ugr.com/nl0804.html>.

Of course, partition-imaging software is Gene's most recommended type of backup software — and Acronis' True Image 8.0 is a fine sample of it.

Next Meeting – MICROSOFT WILL BE at NOCCC! This is the meeting that many of our members look forward to every year – the one meeting that shouldn't be missed. It brings us the latest information on Microsoft's products and plans for the future. AND – it usually brings us GREAT raffle prizes. You can consider it a “straight from the horse's mouth” meeting where you'll get information you can't get anywhere else. **DON'T MISS IT!** ■

Computer Aided Investing (CAI) SIG



By Bob Krishfield, NOCCC

Market Review

The Markets looked good this month. Some may call it just a Bush Bounce from the elections, but the major indices have broken through their upper channel lines and are in rally mode, heading for new highs of the year. Our membership vote on the market has been correct for the last 5 meetings and the vote is Up 100 for December. The charts don't disagree. The price of oil may be a factor, but its chart had topped and turned. Gold was continuing on its uptrend as the dollar continued to weaken. The SOX index, a leading technology indicator was beginning to rise – a good sign for a rally to be strong.

Discussion

This month we took time to discuss some of our regular investing activities, how we spend our time, things we've learned, and things where we may need some help. Awards were given to the initial participants. Ken started the process reviewing some of the many technical analysis programs he had tried out which didn't help a lot for investing, but took a lot of time away from investing. He is now using the IBD and looking at some of its featured stocks and bold-faced stocks in the listings. It seems that the computer can become a hindrance to investing when it becomes an end in itself.

Vic discussed how he used some of the gallery charts on StockCharts.com for watching stocks and making buy decisions using the percentage price oscillator. This is defined at <http://stockcharts.com/education/IndicatorAnalysis/>

http://stockcharts.com/education/IndicatorAnalysis/indic_priceOscillator.html. He explained how to watch for rising patterns that indicated a buy condition. The gallery charts are free and provide a daily and weekly chart for each symbol entered, showing significant price points in candlestick format. He also discussed the need to keep track of the conditions of the market and factors that affect them. Oil and energy are two areas that are not only driving the market, but offering investing opportunities. We looked at some of the sector rankings from the Quotes Plus database and Oil exploration, drilling, services, etc. occupied 8 out of the top 15 spots.

Walt presented how he has several strategies in play for investing, including a set of mutual funds that he has held for years, an account with a broker/money manager that buys and sells options for a limited set of securities, and some special strategies where he is in developing some new ideas yet to be tested. (I hope we hear more about them.)

The individual presentations were short and informal, and found very informative by the membership, so the Member Investing Activities will become a regular part of our meeting.

AmiBroker

With some time left, we continued to cover some of AmiBroker's capabilities. The Automatic Analysis window includes functions for scanning, exploring, backtesting, optimization, and reporting. We demonstrated how to create a Cheese chart using explore. This colored chart shows momentum figures for the past 20 days or weeks for a given security, each security in a row, and with many rows, it shows how the momentum is changing across many securities. The cheese chart is helpful to sort out the fast moving securities within a group, seeing patterns of how fast they change.

Next meeting we will hear about some more capabilities of AmiBroker and ideas about where the market is going and what the members are doing about it. ■

Assistive Technology SIG

By Chuck Fete, NOCCC

Have you ever wondered what you would do if you could not do what you do every day? Take, sight for instance. If you couldn't see, how would you use your computer? Or hearing! If you couldn't hear, that may be useful around the house when the wife has errands to do, but it might make your TIVO a little less useful.

These "disaster" scenarios aside, what do you do less of now than you did when you were younger? When you had younger eyes, younger ears, younger legs and back? You've invested a lot of money, time and energy into your computer and software AND especially, the LEARNING CURVE it took to acquire all of the knowledge. But what about people who haven't invested the time to get to know these little machines? Can those people still be helped by the machines and software advances of this day?

That is the question we will be exploring in the Assistive Technology SIG. Assistive Technology is EVERYONE'S business. Because none of us are getting any younger. Every one of us has the potential (not to mention the HOPE) of living a much longer life than our parents did. Now, given THAT scenario, wouldn't you rather live that long life ASSISTED by these little machines, rather than having them "just out of reach" because of minor disabilities?

I say "minor" with much reservation. I'm affected by reduced vision now. I also lose my balance on stairways and I am missing much of the flexibility and strength of my left leg. I don't think of myself as disabled. I don't have one of those DISABLED placards on my rear view mirror of my car. But I do notice that I am missing some of the things I used to like to do because of these nag-

ging persistent problems.

I want to change that. Maybe you do too. My parents are gone now, but maybe you have a loved one who could use these "aids" if only they had spent time learning them when they were younger. But perhaps, they don't need the same learning curve that you went through. Perhaps there IS an answer to improving the quality of life for seniors. Just try to imagine how much harder it would be to drive your car safely without the many microprocessors embedded within it! You have no idea where they are assisting you. They do their job quietly with no fanfare. But they make driving a lot safer and more enjoyable. How much did you have to learn to use them? Nothing!!

That is the promise of assistive technology. Join us for the opening episode of this fascinating Special Interest Group. We will have a special speaker from Orange County Goodwill, Assistive Technology Exchange Center. She will bring some hardware and software "toys" on loan from ATEC Goodwill. This promises to be a fun and informative SIG. Elise Edgell is the Co-SIG leader and will share some of her insights on these helpful technologies. Join us at 2:30 PM in Science 306. ■

Genealogy SIG

By John Johnson, NOCCC

The meeting started with information from Barton about HR10, a bill to try to halt identify theft. It will restrict access to Birth Certificates. A consequence of this (as currently written) will be to make genealogy research more difficult.

We next discussed a problem with historical dates. The calendar was changed in 1852. Eleven days were skipped in September. This was done to correct the 11 day error that was in the old calendar at that time. The error had occurred because there was no Leap Year prior to 1852. It is important to know which calendar was used by the people recording information at that time.

We also talked about Leap Year as it applies to centuries. I found information at a web site that reminded us that there is no Leap Day every one hundred years, unless the year is divisible by 400. Thus, we had a Leap Day in 2000. ■

Computer Security SIG

By Dave Keays, NOCCC

October report - printed late - Ed.

This month we looked at different recovery disks that are available for free on the Internet. While there are several disks out there, I choose the best three that I know of. Let me know if you've had a good experience with something I didn't mention.

The criteria I used were simple: it had to be free, it can't alter the working disk without your explicit efforts to do so, and the tools it uses cannot require any installation. I don't want it to change the hard disk because the system may not be trustworthy. Some malicious software will alter an OS command to give you false information. For example, the DIR command may not show the file used, NETSTAT could ignore the port that is being used by a hacker, and the taskbar may not show a bad program running.

In all the disks that booted into Linux, Windows can be read but not written to. However, by running the CAPTURE option the NTFS file system will be writable. (NTFS is the file system that NT, 2000, and XP use.)

BARTS PE

This was the only CD I could find that was Windows oriented. It boots into its own OS, navigated through the Windows files, and has software to test a computer. BARTS PE has several tools for recovering a Windows system or analyzing a system before an installation. I know they work because one day I was experimenting with Linux on my laptop (something I won't do again - I hope) and ended up not being able to boot XP. Then when I booted BARTS PE and ran its checkdisk, everything started working. If you want to check a system's hard-

ware before an installation, BARTS STUFF will do the job. It all came about when Bart was working with a MS technician who had the Microsoft pre-installation edition (PE) which is only available to MS technicians. So he learned how to create one himself. His web site is full of information about making a bootable CD.

KNOPPIX

KNOPPIX is very good at hardware identification and has a lot of applications. In all the Linux distributions I tested, this is the only one that correctly identified my USB mouse in a hot swappable manner. The other Linux disks required me to have the USB mouse already plugged in.

FIRE

FIRE is both a Linux boot disk and it has Windows tools. It will give you all the information you need with stable/trustable commands. If your Windows computer is running funny, put FIRE in the CD and run the IR command. You will get a complete snapshot of the computer. Other disks such as TRINUX, SELINUX, and INSERT (to name a few) were either ignored because I didn't see them as useful or I haven't tried them at all.

Next month we'll look at the GDI problem - how to detect an exploitable situation and what to do about it. ■

Digital Imaging SIG

By *Jim Morrison NOCCC*

Roger Newsham — not exactly a household word, but should be - spoke with authority on technical camera issues to a very receptive audience. The greatest compliment he could have received was obviously tendered: the intense attention from the entire audience for the entire time. Roger was loaned to us for the afternoon from Samy's Camera on Bristol Avenue near South Coast Plaza. He's been taking pictures since age 11, and it showed. Certainly not the common misconception of a stereotypical

geek, he once decked a wife-beating Marine who then treated his woman with a great deal more respect.

Earlier in October, I spoke to the manager twice in confirming their promise to tender a speaker, but a funny thing happened on the way to our forum: At 11:00 a. m. when I volunteered to drive Roger to NOCCC to present his talk, he responded with a "deer in the headlights" expression (his own words). He had no idea at all what I was talking about. You gotta give the man credit. After a short time to pack some sample cameras, and with no other preparation whatsoever, he clearly informed us technophiles about how lens construction was necessarily different for digital cameras compared to film cameras; why the angle at which light strikes digital receptors is vital for maintaining even lighting over the whole sensor; that light which is closer to the subject is softer; why (get this) shallow depth of field prized in photos of bugs and flowers is more easily obtained in a film camera than a digital one; what is the advantage and design of special film coating on lenses; why there are as many as 20 different elements in some lenses; why the Canon D20 is hotter than the D10 for sports photography; etCETera, etCETera.

How does one get that kind of audience attention without even touching a projector? By extensive knowledge impressing even the Knowledgeable George. George told him as much.

You also gotta give credit to the Samy's manager for giving Roger a whole half day off including time for lunch. Samy's was a bit shorthanded as it was, but fortunately, there were two sages in the pro section, so we got one of them.

Editorial policy permitting, a plug for Samy's might be well in order here. Wife Joy and I hunted all over the web for image stabilizing binoculars. After being turned off at first over prices bouncing above \$1,000, we found a Canon for \$360 at an obscure website. Samy's had it for \$300. Check'em out, kids. Samy's Camera, 3309 S Bristol Blvd, Santa Ana, CA 92704, (714) 557-9400

At the December meeting of the Digi-

tal Imaging SIG, Larry Klees will be our presenter. The topic of his presentation is plug-ins. For those of you that are wondering what a plug-in is, you will just have to come to the meeting to find out. No, not really, they are program add-ons that add new features to your graphic program. Below are a few examples. Come to the meeting and learn more!



The title sampler shows use of the Fur, Fire, Little Fluffy Clouds, Bevel Boss, Chrome, and Shadow Lab plug ins. Although this combination should probably never be used together it does show what a variety of plug ins can do in seventeen minutes. These were on text, but they work on all manner of images.

Bring a Memory card or CD with one or two of your photos to the meeting and we can try some plug-ins on them.

Plug-ins aren't just for Photoshop. Plug-ins were originally started in Adobe Photoshop. But Adobe published the standard and now many other graphics programs can use the same plug-ins. At the next meeting see how to install plug ins so that they can be used by multiple programs to save a great deal of time or do some things that can't be done any other way. See how the very simple star plug in can spruce up a crystal unicorn; or how a dream plug in can salvage an other wise unusable photo of a super-sonic butterfly; or how plain gradient can be combined with a picture of super veggy by using the water drop, perspective, & corona plug ins. A whole assortment plug-ins can make a photo of a broken window nearly unrecognizable. Plug-ins can even be used to turn a blank screen into an image that looks photographic. Brilliance, Polarizer, and Sunshine plug-ins can improve almost any image. ■

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
Assistive Technology	Science	306	2:30	Chuck Fete/Elise Edgell	cfete@cox.net	
Autocad	Wilkinson	111	9:00	Joe Mizer	joem@pvateplaamerica.com	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 Imaging	Irvine Hall		2:30	Jim Morrison	jimless@adelphia.net	714-546-6677
Genealogy	Science	111	2:30	John Johnson	jrosjohnson@juno.com	714-991-3314
Computer Essentials	Science	111	9:00	Herbert Wong	CESIG@singularitytechnology.com	714-968-7264
Hardware Essentials	Science	109	2:30	Herbert Wong	ocug@singularitytechnology.com	714-968-7264
Linux for Desktop Users	Wilkinson	111	9:00	Bob C. Ray	bobcray@pacbell.net	714-634-7520
Linux for Server Administrat	Wilkinson	111	10:00	Bob C. Ray	bobcray@pacbell.net	714-634-7520
Linux Programming Concepts	Wilkinson	111	11:15	Bob C. Ray	bobcray@pacbell.net	714-634-7520
Macintosh	Wilkinson	221	11:15	Claire Lemire	clemire@ucdavis-alumni.com	714-292-9772
New Technology	Irvine Hall	---	9:30	George Margolin	Inventor@pobox.com	949-645-5950
Office Suites	Wilkinson	210	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	aecrcrss@hotmail.com	909-860-9515
Visual Programming II	Science	109	9:00	Anson Chapman	aecrcrss@hotmail.com	909-860-9515
Visual Programming III	Science	109	10:00	Anson Chapman	aecrcrss@hotmail.com	909-860-9515
Visual Programming IV	Science	109	11:15	Anson Chapman	aecrcrss@hotmail.com	909-860-9515
Please report SIG changes to Herbert Wong, Jr.....						ocug@singularitytechnology.com 714-968-7264

Benefits

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

available as well. Please order your software from Beth Sautter. She can be contacted at: Beth Sautter bsautter@globalscape.com ~ Business Development Manager, GlobalSCAPE, 800.290.5054 x114

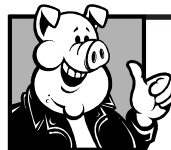
VOPT XP – New Fast Defragmentation Program, is now out and will work with Win 95, 98, Me, 2000, and XP by Golden Bow software (<http://www.goldenbow.com>). Download a free 30 day trial to see how fast it will defragment your hard drive. Mention “Margolin” to get the \$30 user group discount or \$10 off the \$40 price.

Klassic Specialties – Don Baker offers NOCCC members a 5% discount on ink cartridges, etc on his website, <http://www.klassicspecialties.com>. Just put in the code NOCCC for the discount. Also 5% will be donated to the Club from your purchase.

Novatix Corporation

ExplorerPlusT – The ultimate file management program. ExplorerPlus™ provides a complete solution to all your file man-

agement needs. Tackle even the most demanding file management tasks like a pro! See UG pricing at: <http://www.novatix.com/purchase?P4774C> ■



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!

NOCCC Help Line

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



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

The Helpline numbers are published in the printed version of the Bytes which is mailed to members.

FREE AD SPACE

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: <http://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.



New volunteers for the Help Line would be appreciated!
If you have an area of expertise to share, let us know.

Products

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ing CD is a bootable Linux “Knoppix” with thin-client software. From Addison-Wesley. MSRP=\$45.

Linux Programming by Example – This book teaches Linux programming by showing & explaining well-written programs drawing from both V7 UNIX and GNU source codes. Authored by Arnold Robbins (who wrote UNIX in a Nutshell), the book is from Prentice Hall. MSRP=\$40.

Linux Pocket Guide – This book by Daniel Barrett covers the most useful and important parts of day-to-day Linux in a concise & friendly style for beginners as well as experience users. From O’Reilly. MSRP=\$10.

Understanding the Linux Virtual Memory Manager – This book/CD, authored by Mel Gorman, presents both theoretical foundations & a line-by-line commentary in unprecedented detail. It covers everything from physical memory description to out-of-memory management. Published by Prentice Hall, MSRP=\$60.

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.

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.

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.

Biometrics for Network Security – Authored by expert Paul Reid, this book covers options ranging from fingerprint identification to voice verification to hand, face, & eye scanning from a practitioner’s viewpoint. From Prentice Hall. MSRP=\$45.

Know Your Enemy - Learning About Security Threats, 2nd Ed. – Max Kilger & Rob Lee provide an unrivaled “intelligence report” on those who use the Internet for destructive purposes plus an in-depth guide to honeynets—high-interaction honeypots designed to capture extensive information on exactly how your enemies operate so you can protect your systems from them. Book + CD from Addison-Wesley. MSRP=\$50.

DEFEND I.T. – Security by Example – Aimed at information-security professionals and network administrators, this book shows you how to tap the best computer-security practices and industry standards to deter attacks and better defend networks. Written by Ajay Gupta & Scott Laliberte and published by Addison-Wesley. MSRP=\$35.

Secure Architectures with OpenBSD – Written by Brandon Palmer & Jose Nazario, this book is the insider’s guide to building secure systems using OpenBSD. It is a how-to for system and network administrators who need to move to a more secure operating system as well as a reference for those users who want to fully exploit every feature of the system. From Addison-Wesley. MSRP=\$35.

Essential Check Point FireWall-1 NG – An installation, configuration, and troubleshooting Guide authored by Dameon Welch-Abernathy (aka “PhoneBoy”) from Addison-Wesley/Pearson Education. MSRP=\$55.

WI-FOO The Secrets of Wireless Hacking – This hands-on, practical guide covers everything you need to attack or protect any wireless network. Authored by Andrew Vladimirov, Konstantin Gavrilenko, & Adrei Mikhailovsky, the book is published by Addison-Wesley. MSRP=\$35.

Real 802.11 Security, Wi-Fi Protected Access & 802.11i – An Addison-Wesley book by Jon Edney & William Arbaugh provides what you need to know on wireless LAN security. MSRP=\$45.

.Net Security & Cryptography – A book from Addison-Wesley by Peter Thorsteinson & G. Ganesh provides practical & comprehensive coverage on implementing cryptography and security in the Microsoft .Net platform. MSRP=\$50.

Dreamweaver MX 2004 The Missing Manual – This 836-page book offers a rich environment for building professional web sites. Armed with this book, both first-time and experienced Web designers can build stunning, interactive web sites to life. Authored by David Sawyer McFarland who has been designing web sites since 1995 and David Pogue, tech columnists for the NY Times. MSRP=\$35.

The Official Samba-3 How To and Reference Guide – This book is part of Bruce Perens’ “Open Source” series. Authored by John Terpstra & Jelmer Vernooij, this is the practical, authoritative, step-by-step guide to cutting IT costs with Samba-3. From Prentice Hall. MSRP=\$50.

We the media – This hard-cover book is authored by nationally known columnist and blogger Dan Gillmor of the San Jose Mercury Press. It discusses how modern communications technology and the Internet are transforming journalism. Published by O’Reilly. MSRP=\$25.

Succeeding with Open Source – This book, authored by Bernard Golden and published by Addison-Wesley, is the first how-to book on the subject based on a product’s characteristics such as quality, support, & longevity. MSRP=\$40.

Open Source Licensing – Software Freedom & Intellectual Property Law – This is a complete guide to the law of open source for developers, managers, & lawyers; authored by attorney Lawrence Rosen, the book is published by Prentice Hall. MSRP=\$40.

Open Source Security Tools – A Practical Guide to Security Applications – This book/CD is a practical hands-on introduction to the subject by Tony Howlett from Prentice Hall. MSRP=\$50.

The Design & Implementation of the FreeBSD Operating System – This hard-cover book by Kirk McKusick & George Neville-Neil from Addison-Wesley is the most comprehensive, up-to-date, and authoritative technical information on the internal structure of this open source operating system. MSRP=\$60.

High-Tech Crimes Revealed – Being on the inside of several high-tech busts has given author Steven Branigan the ability to make this book exciting reading for those interested in real cases. Published by Addison-Wesley. MSRP=\$30.

Web Search Garage – Book is by Tara Calishain from Prentice Hall. MSRP=\$20.

If you would like me to try to obtain a specific product (software, hardware, or book) to review, please contact me by phone or e-mail:

Ted Littman, NOCCC Reviews Editor (714) 779-1936

reviews@noccc.org. 11/20/2004 ■

Photo Album 5

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

CD or CDs. There will be no repeats with one backup set of that which has previously been stored on the hard drive. Each CD will be closed .The Video CD and the new QuickCD can be filled with a sequence of open-ended burnings and can be organized in any manner. Both of these will provide a slide show.

Three of the new features which most impress me are, the flexibility using thumbnails, CD labels, and the QuickCD which allows me to bypass using a burner program. I did have difficulty adapting to the change of size and location of the close icon for enhanced images. Also, the “backup” is restricted to CDs and cannot be used with even an alternate hard drive. Paint Shop Photo Album 5 requires Pentium II or higher running Windows 98se/2000/Me/XP; 128 MB RAM, and 45 MB disk space. I have used it with both Windows 2000 and XP. Its MSRP price, posted on the Jasc website, <http://www.jasc.com>, is \$45 download and \$49 boxed. Persons, with whom I have contact with at Jasc, have told me that the acquisition by Corel will not affect existing Jasc products. ■

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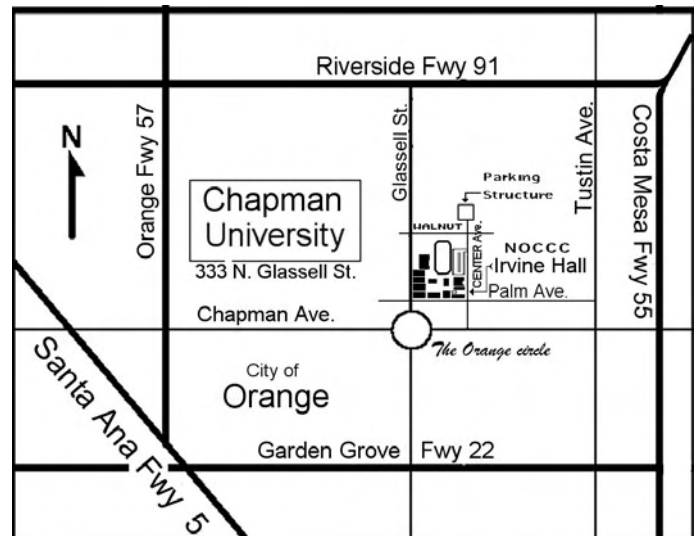
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- **Special Interest Groups.** Our 20 SIGs cover a broad spectrum of user interest; they invite you, whether you rank as beginner or seasoned computerist, to the lectures and demonstrations they sponsor, and to share computer knowledge.
- **Get help with your current computer problems.** In the Random Access portions of the Irvine Hall meetings, you ask your question of the entire assemblage, and more than likely someone will have the answer.
- **The NOCCC HelpLine.** Some 20 NOCCC volunteers, experts in their fields, are ready to assist with your problems, and are as close as your telephone.
- **The Orange Bytes Newsmagazine.** Our Award Winning newsmagazine mailed monthly to your address reports on current activities and gives you articles and reviews geared toward your needs.
- **Raffles.** We have distributed thousands of dollars worth of hardware and software raffle prizes at our New Technologies and General meetings.
- **Product Review.** Write a review for this newsletter and keep the software, hardware, book or CD. Members reviews are published in this newsletter.
- **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, conduct a seminar, run a SIG, man the help desk, show 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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