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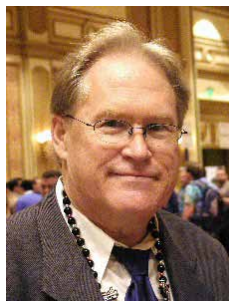
Award Winning News Magazine of the North Orange County Computer Club *

John C. Dvorak
award winning PC Magazine columnist and author will be our guest speaker.

At the 1PM Main Meeting

Fund Raising Auction

Details on page 6

Tracy Lenocker is our first Patron Member

April meeting details on page 4

NOCCC's 30th Aniversary Celebration This Month

NOCCC Meetings - April 2nd

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

9:00 a.m.
Autocad.. Science 203
Linux for Desktop Users .... Wilkinson 111
Visual Programming II .... Science 109
Visual C++ and Visual J++ for Beginners

9:30 a.m.
Computer Aided Investing...................Wilkinson 221
Member Investment Strategies, Techniques and Software
Computer Essentials ....Science 111
Computer basics for new and inexperienced users
Digital Photography .... Irvine Hall
Macro Photography: Learn about the amazing world of the small.

Linux (Intermediate) .... Wilkinson 111

10:00 a.m.
Linux for Server Adminstrators .... 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
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*
John Dvorak is the speaker

2:30 p.m.
Genealogy...Science 111
Canceled for 30th anniversary Main Meeting.
Hardware Essentials ....Science 109
Depends on length of Main Meeting, may not be held.
OS/2 News and Installation ....Science 203

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

Meeting Dates
Apr 2, May 7, Jun 4, Jul 9, Aug 6

Table of Contents

Big Silent Auction This Month

To raise money to help support the Club, we have approached a number of vendors for sponsorship. Quite a few have donated software or books for our Club to use to raise funds. Continuing in April, we will have a Silent Auction for these items. This month's items are listed on page 6. Enter a bargain-winning bid to help yourself and the club at the same time.

You must be present to participate. We will accept cash, check or credit card (MasterCard or Visa). See page six for details.

"Friends Helping Friends"

ORANGE BYTES STAFF

Publication Chairman
Jim Sanders • 714-636-5523 .... editor@noccc.org

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

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

Contributing Editor
Open

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

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

Classified Advertising • *Obtains members' computer- related non-commercial ads.*
Jim Sanders • 714-636-5523 .... editor@noccc.org

Help Line • *Maintains the volunteer list, and the software and hardware subjects for which they are willing to answer questions.*
 • Position is open. Ted Williams has moved away.

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 Elise M. Edgell

Happy 30th Anniversary to NOCCC. Thirty years is a long time. We have seen unbelievable changes in the world of computing. The power of a entry level computer today is so far beyond what was available ten years ago when we had our 20th Anniversary, even at the high end of the spectrum, that is hard to accept that all this power can be had for so little money.

When our club first started it was to give members a chance to share knowledge on how to build computers from a kit or from parts that were painstakingly collected and put together. There was no Internet available for help. Once a computer was operational, it needed software. Initially software was expensive, difficult to install, picky about what version of the operating system it was being installed on. For each program, you had to install the drivers for your monitor and printer. Of course, the monitor was small and the display was in monochrome.

Microcomputers slowly became available on the retail market. There was a limited amount of software available at much higher prices than we are used to today. Eventually the IBM PC became popular. Prices came down, software improved, color monitors made the scene, and there was a wider selection of programs available.

The computer club was very popular with members getting tips on how to use WordStar, Lotus 123, dBase, and even how to use a modem. NOCCC had a very popular Bulletin Board where members could connect with their 300 baud modems and download freeware.

Windows became the program which allowed you to install programs easily and not have to worry about telling each program on your computer about your monitor and printer and other peripherals. The driver for each device needed to be entered once into Windows and each program running under Windows would then know about what you had connected to your computer. Color monitors became common and improved in size and quality. Ink jet color printers became popular and so did laser printers for business use. The CRT display was not only colorful it now was a lot easier to figure out what to do because the graphical interface let a lot of useful information be displayed so that you no longer had to be a computer nerd to be able to install and figure out how to use a program. Hard disk drives also became affordable and this made it a lot easier to use your computer.

Today there is a tremendous selection of computers, monitors, printers, DVD/CD players/burners, scanners, and a variety of other devices that are available. There are also a selection of laptop/notebook computers and PDAs. Computers can be used as an interface for your entertainment center. Home computers can be networked with cables or wirelessly. The selection of software that will run on today's computers seems to be endless. There are programs for the standard computing tasks such as word processing and spreadsheets. But, there are also many other programs that are useful or fun or both.

With the popularity of digital cameras and digital camcorders your computer can replace a dark room or a film editing device. Banking, copies of documents and photos, genealogical records, lists of medications, eBooks, music, favorite Web sites, assistance for vision impaired or other disabilities, and games can all be on you computer.

Do you even know what your computer is capable of? Is it a good idea to replace your CRT (monitor) with a new LCD monitor? What could you do with a PDA? If you decided to buy one would it be a Palm type or a Pocket PC? What about going wireless? Is it a good idea? What about security and how do you do it? Is it necessary to buy a high quality, costly scanner? To transfer VHS tapes to digital format what do I need?

These are the types of questions that today's NOCCC members discuss. Our club is a place where you can get new ideas, learn about potential security problems before you lose data or give out sensitive information, become better informed before making the new computer purchase, and enjoy the company of others who are also interested in the world of personal computing. ■

Membership 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!

User Group Offers
Prentice Hall, Addison-Wesley, and IBM Press
Become a registered member at these publishers' sites and enjoy savings on books of 30%: go to http://www.phptr.com, http://www.awprofessional.com, and http://www.ibmpressbooks.com.

TaxACT, once again, 2nd Story is extending discounted pricing for TaxACT Deluxe and the Ultimate Bundle Software Download Editions to User Group members.

Members needing to prepare both a federal and state tax return can purchase the TaxACT's 2005 Ultimate Bundle Download for just $16.00 (regularly $19.95) by visiting: http://www.taxactsoftware.com/05email.asp?sc=0563001001&p=60

For those of your group members needing only to prepare a federal return may order the TaxACT 2005 Deluxe Download Edition for only $9.95 (regularly $12.95) by visiting: http://www.taxactsoftware.com/05email.asp?sc=0563001002&p=61

McGraw-Hill is happy to present you with a special offer just for User Groups on their SQLServer 2005 books! Please visit http://books.mcgraw-hill.com and enter promotion code AEUG511 to take advantage of the discount (valid until 4/1/06).
 Here's the list of titles you can order/preorder:
Microsoft SQL Server 2005: A Beginner's Guide Regular Price: $39.99. YOUR PRICE $21.99.
Microsoft SQL Server 2005: A Developer's Guide Regular Price: $49.99. YOUR PRICE $27.49.
Microsoft SQL Server 2005 Reporting Services Regular Price: $49.99. YOUR PRICE $27.49.
Delivering Business Intelligence with Microsoft SQL Server 2005 Regular Price: $49.99. YOUR PRICE $27.49.
Microsoft SQL Server 2005 Stored Procedure Programming in T-SQL and .NET Regular Price: $59.99. YOUR PRICE $32.99.
Microsoft SQL Server 2005: The Complete Reference Regular Price: $49.99. YOUR PRICE $27.49.
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AskSam – is offering SurfSaver 6, it places information from your browser into a searchable filing cabinet. Normally $29.95, you can get it for $19.95. AskSam 6 + SurfSaver 6 is a flexible and powerful way to organize information and create searchable databases from Web pages, Email, PDF files, texts, and Word documents. Normally $149.95 but you can get it for $69.95. You can also download 30 day trial versions.

Blue Squirrel - www.bluesquirrel.com/ 50% off all products - call 800.403.0925 to order and mention user group special pricing.

March Board Meeting Minutes

1. Officers' Report Monday, March 6, 2006, the Board Meeting was called to order at 7:34 PM at Elise Edgell's home. Attendees were: Steve Carmeli, Elise Edgell, John Johnson, Ted Littman, George Margolin, Gerry Resch, Jim Sanders, and Herb Wong, Jr.

Secretary's report: Minutes from February were accepted as printed. Moved to approve as printed.

2. Next Main Meeting — April 2, 2006 Next Board Meeting April 3, 2006 The Board meeting will be held at the home of Elise Edgell, NOCCC Board president, 17782 Rainer Drive, Santa Ana, CA 92705.

3. Report on General Meeting: Opinion of the general meeting was that it was well received; a lot of questions were asked by attendees, especially about the X10.

4. Committee Reports

Publications — Bytes got out on time. Jim had to request 3-day delivery. He also investigated delivery schedules at the post office to determine why some members received their issue late.

Programs — George. John Johnson agreed to confirm about 1,000 names that we want to send invitations to for the John Dvorak meeting. Expected Main Meeting speakers: Apr 2: John Dvorak, PC Magazine, May 7: Linspire, June 4: Mustek, July 9: TBA, August 6: TBA

Reviews — Ted. 6 products let for review including Mathematica 5.2. 6 reviews published. 2 delinquent reviews currently, 1 extended until the end of March, one extended by a few weeks. Book Library on hold until May because of auction. We received $3.00 from library fees. Ted has 51 books available in Library and 32 for reviews.

Fund raising: In February we sold 11 items and made over $300. In March we sold over 12 items and made over $980. For April we have another copy of Adobe CS2 Suite and will have a total of 37 items. We decided to not pursue advertising in the Bytes from national companies but will focus on local companies. It was decided that membership dues would be deducted from the donation. This would be entered into the membership table in the Bytes.

Public Relations — Else O. Else was not present.

University Liaison: George got the June, July and August dates confirmed. We're still having problems with tables and Cathy will continue checking with her Chapman U. contact to see how she is handling it. We're having some problems getting rooms in the Wilkinson building. Cathy's contact also will check on why bathrooms are not open. Cathy mentioned our 30th Anniversary and that it would be very good if we had tables, bathrooms were open and Wilkinson was open.

Internet Committee — Herb Wong. It turns out we have a very good deal. MySQL is improved and we have a lot more storage and transmission allowance than we used to have.

Raffle — Gerry. We took in approx $95-100. General Raffle Prizes: 1. Epson R200; 2. MS Works 3. FireTrust Security Suite from New Zealand, including Mail Washer Pro. Member Badge Prize: 1. FireTrust Security Suite from New Zealand, including Mail Washer Pro.

SIGs — **Herb**. George suggested that we have a meeting of all SIG leaders.

Consignment Table — Richard Miller was not present. He liked the traffic flow of having Alan take money.

Classified Ads — Jim Sanders: Nothing to report.

Opening & Closing — **Need volunteer!** Elise and Jim plan to close.

5. Old Business

Auction on Donated items

We decided to change the auction end time to 12:30PM so bidders can attend all of the main meeting and to give Alan time to collect all winning bids.

6. New Business

Special invitation to all charter members for anniversary meeting? No final decision was made on sending charter members postcards or email for anniversary meeting.

New SIG - Home Automation: Dan was not here.

Job description of each officer and director performs: Elise wants each officer and director to write a job description.

It was suggested that the job descriptions should be posted on the web site in advance of an election.

We discussed a membership management software program but it was decided that we should find one for free. Elise mentioned SWUG and local meetings where we might find membership management software, preferably for free.

Cathy will have 2 cakes, drinks, cups, etc. ready for the Anniversary celebration.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 pm.

APRIL 2ND MEETING PREVIEW

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY SIG - 9:30 am - Larry Klees - Macro Photography: Your junk drawer and your garden are full of interesting and beautiful objects that are overlooked because of their small size. Learn and be entertained by macro photography.

COMPUTER ESSENTIALS SIG - 9:30 am - Elise Edgell, your club President, will be leading the SIG that is dedicated to helping new and inexperienced users conquer their computer challenges.

MAIN MEETING 1:00 pm, Irvine Hall - Our April Main Meeting speaker will be John Dvorak. John got his start in computing the same year that NOCCC did - 1976. He went on to become a computer entrepreneur, award winning columnist and an author of several books. His column in PC Magazine is enjoyed by all that are not the target of his ire. For a real treat, check out his blog website - www.dvorak.org.

THE CLUB RAFFLE items this month are 1. Epson R200; 2. MS Works 3. FireTrust Security Suite from New Zealand, including Mail Washer Pro. 3., 4., and 5 are potluck. Hedge your bet, wear your current membership badge and get a free ticket for the member only raffle.

THE MEMBER-ONLY PRIZES (requires wearing badge to get a free ticket) will be FireTrust Security Suite from New Zealand, including Mail Washer Pro.

■

Consignment Table

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

2. The consignment table operates on a 90/10% basis — with the owner getting 90%, and the Club treasury 10%.
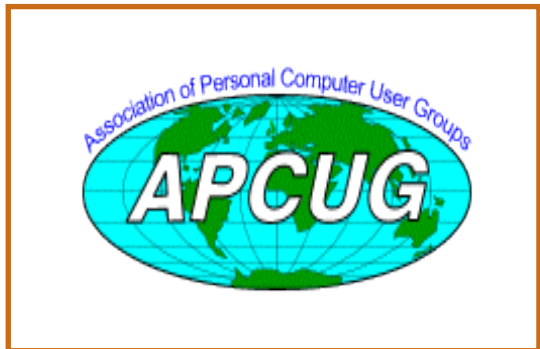
3. Fill out a tag on each item! It must contain: Seller's Name, NOCCC Membership Number, Item name, a short description and selling price.

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

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

6. Any items and/or money not picked up by 2 PM, will become the property of NOCCC and will he subject to disposal at the Club's discretion. As it is now illegal to put monitors or computers in the regular trash, you must agree to pick these items up if they don't sell.

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

NOCCC Officers

President
Elise Edgell .... 714-544-3589 .... president@noccc.org
Vice President
Herb Wong.................... 714-968-7264 ... ocug@singularitytechnology.com
Secretary
Steve Carmeli .... 951-808-8391 .... jn316sc@sbcglobal.net
Treasurer
Alan Pearlman .... 714-828-5242 ....pearlmana@aol.com
Directors
John Carlson .... 714-588-5980 .... jdc@pcnetlinking.com
Dave Keays .... 714-821-4792 .... rdksoft@sbcglobal.net
Ted Littman .... 714-779-1936 .... tedlit@adelphia.net
George Margolin .... 949-645-5950 ....inventor@pobox.com
Richard Miller .... 714-309-1504 ....rrrmil@yahoo.com
Else Olovsson .... 714-832-3155 .... eolovsson@msn.com
Gerry Resch .... 714-772-6667 ....gerry@gerryresch.com
Jim Sanders .... 714-636-5523 ..... jsanders@ligasmicro.com

Past President
Cathy Margolin .... 949-645-5950 ....inventor00@pobox.com
Editor
Jim Sanders .... 714-544-3589 .... editor@noccc.org
Webmaster
Herb Wong.................... 714-968-7264 ... ocug@singularitytechnology.com

Volunteers, Committees, and Projects

Business Solicitations/Lecture Series
George Margolin .... 949-645-5950 ....inventor@pobox.com
Consignment Table
Cathy Shimozono .... 562-437-1463 .... chatty.cathy@charter.net
Classified Advertising (non-commercial, members only)
Jim Sanders .... 714-636-5523 ..... jsanders@ligasmicro.com
Commercial Advertising
Editor ....editor@noccc.org
Help Line
This position is now open. Would you like to volunteer?
Membership Database
Alan Pearlman .... 714-828-5242 ....pearlmana@aol.com
Membership Chairman
Open
Programs
George Margolin .... 949-645-5950 ....inventor@pobox.com
SIG Coordinator
Herb Wong.................... 714-968-7264 ... ocug@singularitytechnology.com
Public Relations
Else Olovsson .... 714-832-3155 .... eolovsson@msn.com
University Liaison

Club Fund Raising Auction

To help bolster the club's treasury, we are continuing our auction this month. For April, we have the below list of products which is even larger than March. The premier item for April is **Adobe Creative Suite 2 Premium** for Windows with an MSRP of $1200. Most items will have a starting minimum bid of about one-half the MSRP or less. Each item will have its own bid sheet with an item description, starting bid, and minmum bid increment. This will be followed by multiple lines for your signature and bid. **The bidding will close at 12:30PM.** The last and highest bid on the list claims the item. The bidding is open to the public. We will accept cash, check, or credit card (MasterCard or Visa). You can help your club by spreading the word to your friends, co-workers, favorite chat room, anyone you meet anywhere!.

PRODUCT	TYPE	VENDOR	MSRP $	MIN. BID $
Adobe Creative Suite 2 Premium for Windows	Software Box	Adobe	1200	475
Mathematica CalcCenter 3	Software Box	Wolfram Research	595	275
Office 2003 Pro	Software Box	Microsoft	500	200
OmniPage 15 Professional	Software Box	ScanSoft (Nuance)	500	200
PaperPort 10 Professional	Software Box	ScanSoft (Nuance)	200	75
eDVD 4	CD	Sonic	200	75
pcAnywhere 11.5	Software Box	Symantec	200	50
pcAnywhere 11.5	Software Box	Symantec	200	50
My DVD Studio Deluxe Suite 6	CD	Sonic	150	40
The Art of Computer Programming, Vol. 1-3	Books - 3 BxdSet	Addison-Wesley	180	50
Norton System Works 2006 Premier	Software Box	Symantec	100	27
Norton Internet Security 2006	Software Box	Symantec	70	26
Beyond the C++ Standard Library: An Intro to Boost	Book	Addison-Wesley	50	23
Diskeeper 10 Pro	CD	Diskeeper	50	22
Phishing Exposed	Book	O'Reilly/Syngress	50	20
Beyond the C++ Standard Library: An Intro to Boost	Book	Addison-Wesley	50	23
Beyond the C++ Standard Library: An Intro to Boost	Book	Addison-Wesley	50	23
Effective C++, 3rd Edition	Book	Addison-Wesley	45	18
Effective C++, 3rd Edition	Book	Addison-Wesley	45	18
Adobe Photoshop CS2 one-on-one	Book/DVD	O'Reilly	40	17
Secure Coding in C and C++	Book	Addison-Wesley	40	16
Secure Coding in C and C++	Book	Addison-Wesley	40	16
C++ Common Knowledge Essential Intermediate Prog.	Book	Addison-Wesley	30	14
Screen Shot 8	Software Box	Broderbund	30	14
Point & Click OpenOffice.org!	Software Box	Pren Hall PTR	30	14
C++ Common Knowledge Essential Intermediate Prog.	Book	Addison-Wesley	30	14
Nokia S-Phone Hacks Tips & Tools 4 Your Smlest Comp.	Book	O'Reilly	25	12
C++ Without Fear	Book + CD	Pren Hall PTR	25	12
C++ Without Fear	Book + CD	Pren Hall PTR	25	12
The Art of Computer Programming, Vol. 4	Book	Addison-Wesley	20	5
The Art of Computer Programming, Vol. 4	Book	Addison-Wesley	20	8
The Symantec Guide to Home Internet Security	Book	Symantec	20	3
The Symantec Guide to Home Internet Security	Book	Symantec	20	3
The Symantec Guide to Home Internet Security	Book	Symantec	20	3
The Symantec Guide to Home Internet Security	Book	Symantec	20	3
Click Art 250,000	Software Box	Broderbund	10	3
Scooby Doo Jinx at the Sphinx	Software Box	Broderbund	10	3

John C. Dvorak

Columnist, Author, Editor

Current PC Magazine Columnist writing Inside Track, an essay and a weekly online column. These articles are licensed around the world. Also a weekly columnist for Dow-Jones Marketwatch, Info! (Brazil) and BUG Magazine (Croatia). Previously a columnist for Forbes, Forbes Digital, PC World, MacUser, PC/Computing, Barrons, Smart Business and other magazines and newspapers. Former editor and consulting editor for Infoworld. Has appeared in the New York Times, LA Times, SF Examiner, Vancouver Sun. Was on the start-up team for CNet TV as well as ZDTV. At ZDTV (and TechTV) was host of Silicon Spin for four years doing 1000 live and live-to-tape TV shows. Also was on public radio for 8 years. Written over 4000 articles and columns as well as authoring or co-authoring 14 books.

2004 Award winner of the American Business Editors Association's national gold award for best online column of 2003. That was followed up by an unprecedented second national gold award from the ABEA in 2005, again for the best online column (for 2004). ∎

Elections

That yearly event that comes around all too often is about to come around one more time. This year is going to require that a few members of the club step up to the plate and participate in running your club. Between personal goals and just plain burn-out, there is not going to be enough of the same old crowd to play musical chairs this time. You can nominate yourself for an office or if you are too modest, get someone to do it for you. Think you can do a better job as President, Vice President, Treasurer, or Secretary? Or just want the thrill, throw your name in the hat. If you want to be on the Board and have a say in how things are run, get your name on the ballot! ∎

Improving PC Performance Without Upgrading Your Hardware

By Kevin J. Vella
    Public Relations Manager
    Uniblue Systems Ltd
    kevinjv@uniblue.net
    http://www.uniblue.com/

Boosting up the performance of your PC doesn't have to be difficult or expensive. Here's a step-by-step guide on how to do it.

Nine things that Chip Manufacturers and PC retailers don't tell you!

The most common reasons for PC slowdowns are viruses, spyware, too many temporary files, software conflicts, residues from unwanted (and uninstalled) trial downloads and other applications, and, sometimes, just too many applications running at the same time hogging all or most of your computer resources.

The following are nine things that Chip Manufacturers and PC Retailers don't want you to know or how to perform. Following this advice will drastically increase your PC performance and help you regain your sanity while saving loads of money. And, if your PC is three years old and can't afford to upgrade yet, you will be able to squeeze out some more juice out of the old thing!

1. Know What You Are Running:

Sometimes slow downs occur because you have too many programs open at the same time. Shutting down those programs that you are not using will immediately boost performance.

2. Monitor Windows Processes:

If you press CTRL+AL+DEL you will call up Tasks Manager which lists most of the processes that you are actually running.

Although limited, Task Manager will give you a reasonably good overview of what's running. But before ending processes to increase your performance please exercise extreme caution and learn what the processes do. Look at the article Maximizing PC Security to get a good overview of how you can do this.

You will find that either there is too much running or there is something hogging your CPU and memory. With certain Windows Utilities you can even set-up your computer to run certain system configurations depending upon the type of application/s you are running at the moment. These utilities also give you an insight on resource allocation and, with the help of graphs, can help you identify which application and/or process is most likely to slow or crash your computer.

3. Have a Clean System:

One of the most common reason (probably the most common) for slow downs is viruses and/or spyware. Sometimes even spy-

Improving PC   from page 6

ware residuals that have escaped your anti-spyware products can plague you for months. I had a problem with MSAA.EXE which was not caught by three spyware scanners - I eventually figured out what I had running because of point #2 above!

Virus and spyware authors just love creating menaces that hog your system resources and the only protection you have is to have everything up-to-date.

Make sure your antivirus software is up to date with current virus definitions. Then scan your computer for viruses. Make sure your Spyware software is up to date with current definitions - because of the way spyware works you should try and use at least two different programs to scan your system (scanners are usually free of charge and Microsoft have a free Anti-Spyware product which you should use). Firewalls are also an important security tool but beware as having an active firewall may slow performance.

What you may do once you are 100% sure that your system is clean is turn off your security only when not connected to the Internet. This should help you increase your performance too. But remember to switch everything on before going online. Otherwise, you will be immediately at risk.

4. Update Your Operating System

Having the latest updates of Windows may not generally increase system performance. However, Microsoft are continually patching up any security loop holes or performance related glitches. So in the long run, your system will be better off with the latest OS updates.

5. Disk Clean-ups

Defragging and disc repairs are also extremely important. Defragging is the process of locating and consolidating your files and folders sitting on your hard drives. This can be done automatically by Windows and as a result your system can access these files and folders (and new ones) more efficiently and quickly. Regular defrags and disk repairs will keep your computer running at optimum levels.

6. Temporary File Management:

Cleansing your temporary files including your Internet history including cookies gives you a larger amount of hard disk space to work with. This, in turn, gives more space for Windows virtual files (Page File memory). I go as far as limiting how much space Windows uses to create temporary files. For example, my setting is 1 Mb. In other words, at any point in time Windows is only allowed 1 Mb of space to store cookies, activeX controls etc..

7. Start-up Management

Next time you start up your PC just time how long it takes to boot and let you start using your applications. If you are lucky, start-up times should be no longer than seconds. In most cases, however, it takes minutes.

The Windows Startup Folder tells you most of the more visible processes that are running in your system. However this is not enough - many installed applications start up processes at boot up that you don't even know about. Not that these are harmful, they're probably useful and required. However, by monitoring what is starting up, you have a good chance of finding out what

should and what should not be started. Such utilities as performance optimizers (see #9 below) will automatically identify your start-up files and allow you to disable some or all of them. Again, exercise caution here. Be sure to disable only those start-up processes that are superfluous.

My start-up times (and as a result my CPU and MEM Usage) were very short until I installed a particular program which I needed. However I made the mistake of setting up the server version when I don't really need it - I confess, it wasn't a mistake it was a program that impressed me so much that I decided to install the server version because I thought that I would have more visible functionality. However I was wrong. To cut a long story short, I had some system files installed on my system which were needed if my PC were actually a server (and not a client). One particular process hogged my system and used a constant 10,820 K of my memory when working in the background. Reinstalling the version I needed improved my performance without my having to spend as much as one penny.

8. Caution: Download in Progress

Be honest, whatever they tell you about security (although very true and serious), you just can't resist downloading and trying out new products and utilities. It's fun! I just love scouring the Internet looking for some new utility to try out.

A few weeks back I needed software that lets me sort out the myriad of documents I have on my PC. Thing is I didn't want to spend too much money so I started looking at Open Source products that are free of charge. Well, I must have downloaded and installed at least 10 different programs. I liked none so in a second round I found the one I wanted. However, when uninstalling all the programs I tried, I had to be very careful. The uninstall operation of most applications or programs almost always leaves residual files or folders in your system. No uninstall operation will leave your system the way it was - dlls, processes such as schedulers that kick in at start-ups, and other legitimate processes that, with the main program being uninstalled have no specific function except to hog your system unnecessarily.

What I usually do after I uninstall and reboot my machine is use a Windows Utility (WinTasks) to help me identify the processes which are unnecessary and just block or delete them. Again exercise caution when doing this - make sure that you have all the program and its sub components uninstalled, then reboot, then try the manual clean up. If you are unsure, it is better to leave them in your system but making sure that they are blocked.

9. Use Performance Optimizers

Finally, if either you don't want to perform many of these things manually or you have exhausted all possible avenues, you may want to consider a Performance Optimizer.

Even the more experienced users cannot manage to fully control and monitor all that is happening within their system without a small toolkit of software utilities that generally includes a sturdy performance optimizer.

If anything these utilities do the work automatically. I use performance optimizers because they can do the job better and in as little time as possible. When I use a computer I am either working or playing some game - I just don't want to hassle myself

tweaking and looking under the hood of my PC. Performance optimizers have been designed to inch their way into the system and help you boost your PC performance drastically. These utilities usually don't cost more than $25 to $30 and give you much more value than investing in RAM simply because they seek and solve slowdown problems rather than mask it.

Sometimes RAM is necessary. But, I believe that following these nine steps and principles you can get much more out of your PC. Plus, performance optimizers go the extra mile because they improve your system's overall operation beyond any level that you can manage on your own steam; simply because operating systems are getting more complex by the upgrade and it is almost humanly impossible to keep track of all that goes on in your computer.

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 ∎.

Security SIG

program does the same thing I blamed the designers/analysts.

One option is to just log off a LUA and log on as the administer. It is time consuming and you end-up with a bunch of folders/files/registry-keys that are owned by the administer so your limited account can't access them.

The command RUNAS and the "fast user switching" option (FUS) are supposed to help but they are a real pain to work with. RUNAS has the same problems locking users-out of files as logging off/on, and doesn't play well with the Internet Explorer. FUS overcomes that problem but it is not available all the time.

Michael Howard (an employee at MS) wrote a program, DropMyRights, that lets you run as an administer to do specific tasks with limited rights.

Mark Russinovich (remember the SONY rootkit?) from SysInternals has put that same capabilities in his process explorer or PsExplorer. He mentions that this is not the best of solutions and that running as a limited account is much better. But there are situations that you need these abilities.

Aaron Margosis (another employee at MS) has come-up with a batch file that goes through the complicated log on/off process for you and it doesn't cause the problems with objects ownership. His BLOG explains this process well.

On my own computers I always use a LUA for daily tasks like browsing the Internet or read email/newsgroups. If I need to do some administrative task I use MakeMeAdmin. Then I have a sandbox (covered the last month) for the times I'm in the administer account and want to browse the Internet.

Links: www.blogs.msdn.com/aaron_margosis (author of MakeMeAdmin) www.sysinternals.com/Blog/ (author of PsExec)

www.blogs.msdn.com/michael_howard (author of DropMyRights)

Next month we'll talk about the Process Explorer in more details. If you have any security related questions or want to see the details of Process Explorer, come to Science 203 at 11:15 ∎.

New NOCCC Membership Fee Schedule

As part of our efforts to increase club membership and provide additional resources, your Board of Directors has created an expanded fee schedule. We are particularly desirous of attracting young people involved or having an interest in computing. In order to do that, we have created several membership levels with reduced dues as indicated in the table below.

Additionally, we have an effort ongoing to attract local computer-related businesses to place ads in the Orange Bytes with or without becoming NOCCC members. And, we are offering members the opportunity to help our club financially by making donations that should be income-tax deductible since we are chartered as a non-profit 501(c) 3 organization. Membership level will be designated on the Membership Badge and Donators will be acknowledged in an issue of the Bytes. ∎

Membership Level	Fee ($) 1 Year	3 Years
Individual Member	$35	90
Each Additional Family Member	15	45
College Student	20	
High School Student	15	
Business Member + Ad (Business Card)	180	
Business Member + Ad (1/4 Page)	465	
Business Member + Ad (1/2 Page)	800	
Business Member + Ad (Full Page)	1,475	
Membership Donations ($)		
Contributing Member	75	
Supporting Member	100	
Advocate Member	250	
Patron Member	500	

Symantec Norton SystemWorks 2006 Premier

By Herbert Wong, Jr., NOCCC

Norton System-Works™ has been around a long time, so instead of a feature list, I will relate my "customer experiences" and offer a few suggestions that, I hope, will be useful to potential buyers. More importantly, I hope Symantec will take note of some of my observations.

This package defies description because of its vast assortment of features. In addition to the major titles (*Norton AntiVirus*™, *Norton Utilities*™, *Norton GoBack*™, *Norton Ghost*™, *CheckIt® Diagnostics*, *System Optimizer*), many little add-ins include unexpected functions such as dynamically changing the focus under the mouse.

Speed Disk

Most disk utilities work by defragmenting individual files. The operating system fragments a file because it is stored as multiple parts (i.e. - fragments) separated by other files or free (unassigned) disk space. As files are modified (by the user or an application), additional clusters (disk-drive units of allocation) are inserted into available free spaces, potentially fragmenting the file. A fragmented file takes longer to read or write because the drive's mechanical read/write head makes extra movements that are relatively slow. Disk drives with minimal free space quickly become greatly fragmented.

A file written as continuous sequence of clusters on adjacent tracks is not fragmented (i.e. – in pieces or segments). The result is minimal hard disk drive head movement (to access segments) and optimal performance.

A few years back, the **Southern California IT Pro Association** (formerly named the Windows NT User Group) held a *Noggin Fest* at the Westin Hotel. I described to a Symantec technical staffer an ancient product named *FastTrax* (circa 1987 by Bridgeway Publishing Corporation, San Rafael, California). It optimized overall drive performance by relocating files in different zones. He seemed very interest and promised to take it to the Symantec developers.

That brings us to the latest version of *Speed Disk*. Under Drive Options there are four major categories of file placement. They are Files First (at the beginning of the disk, before all other non-system files), Files Last (after all other files, with the exception of the files in the Files at End list), Files at End (at the end of the disk; after all other files), and free space. Files that are not modified, and infrequently accessed may cause less fragmentation if placed in this list), and Unmovable Files (will not be moved by Speed Disk).

These are almost the exact features of *FastTrax*! Therefore, it appears as though talking to a company representative about a product enhancement can produce results!

Speed Disk behaves very differently from other disk defragmenters. Instead of defragmenting one file at a time, it optimizes many files all at once. I tested Speed Disk on a drive that I have defragmented a few hundred times (with **Diskeeper Corporation** *Diskeeper*, formerly **Executive Software** *Diskeeper*). Diskeeper is able to analyze this drive in two to three minutes; and defragment it in a matter of minutes. There were about 200 fragmented files and about 27 thousand excess fragments (as reported by Diskeeper). The drive capacity is 250 gigabytes; initial free space was five gigabytes.

After about 17 hours (30 gigabytes free space), there were about 100 thousand fragmented files and 940 thousand excess fragments (as per Diskeeper). Obviously, there was not enough free space for Speed Disk to perform its initial optimization effectively and many more hours will be required. The only way to do this is to set up a "Schedule Options," "Enable Schedule" "Once," and a maximum duration.
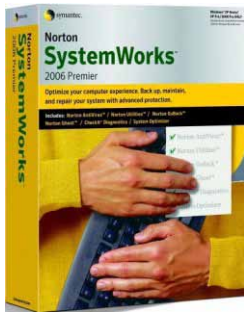
Speed Disk must completely finish its initial optimization of each disk drive to achieve the expected results. Its sophisticated defragmentation algorithms will degrade performance if only partially completed. I am confident that after a complete optimization, the hard disk drive would be less subject to defragmentation, faster to routinely optimize, and result in faster disk drive operation than defragmenters. I found this the case on three other hard disk drives that I optimized.

I have recommendations for Speed Disk. The Speed Disk interface is unclear and shows little to no indication of progress or action. For example, the Optimizing Legend does not show any "fragmented files." That is the whole point of the program! Another example, the Analysis screen's Optimization statistics are baffling. For example, Total Files = 246212, Fragmented Files = 108573, Percent Fragmented = 79.2%. My calculator yields 44.09 Percent Fragmented.

The "Start Optimizing/Stop Optimizing" button should be changed to two buttons. During optimization, clicking on "Stop Optimizing" frequently does nothing for several minutes. The user's impulse will be to click again so that the result is the optimizing can start again! This is a Windows event-driven interface problem, but every program must deal with it.

SystemWorks™ 2006 Premier Installation

Pop-in your SystemWorks™ 2006 CD-ROM. A dialog box appears. Select "Install Norton SystemWorks Premier." A number of "modal" dialog boxes appear to indicate different functions or options available. A "modal" dialog box requires action before further processing can occur. Usually this is convenient because a task is short and you can sit and monitor the process. However, during a long installation process, curiosity

overcomes the software's requirements to be the sole focus of attention. Clicking on a dialog box can cause a new one to pop-up beneath visibility, and you wait until you figure it out. Try moving the boxes out of the middle of the screen.

After the initial installation of SystemWorks, the Windows desktop appeared, a few more files loaded, and the computer froze. If you cannot uninstall to normality, desperation sets in. Restart the computer in Safe-Mode and uninstall if you can. If you cannot, simply rename the subdirectories (folders) that contain SystemWorks. Reboot and uninstall under a normal Windows session.

What's the solution? If you are lucky, you will find a support message with instructions for using SymNRT. It will remove a bunch of things (files and registry entries). Exercise caution, Symantec recommends this as a last resort. If you use Symantec's web site search, you will get the following "Search Results for: SymNRT produced zero results."

Try using Google. Look for Document ID:2005102015114113 (http://www.symantec.com/techsupp/asa/ss/sa/exit.jsp?url=http://service1.symantec.com/SUPPORT/nip.nsf/docid/2005031718164436?Open&src=con_asa_us.) That will lead to Document ID:2005033108162039 (http://www.symantec.com/techsupp/asa/ss/sa/exit.jsp?url=http://service1.symantec.com/SUPPORT/nip.nsf/docid/2005031718164436?Open&src=con_asa_us.)

Now, after following the above document and reinstalling, freezes have totally disappeared. Of course, I had to repeat as needed (about six times) before it finally took hold. It is a good thing that I had more than one computer to use for the past few weeks... Note that installation on two other computers went perfectly.

Norton Protection Center

This utility runs some basic tests that will inform you that certain SystemWorks applications should be run (ex. - a full virus scan). The notifications appear in the form of sliding message boxes that appear every time you boot. You will be tempted to click on the "okay" button to close them. Some people will find them more annoying than useful.

Norton AntiVirus 2006

The results of my first complete scan contained 5 Resolved Risks and 15 Remaining Risks. I expect there will be an assortment of compromised files that I must evaluate to determine the extent of damage done to the operating system, applications, multimedia files, and, most importantly, my personally created data.

After completing a full system scan in previous versions, a dialog box appeared that readily identified problematic files in a scrollable list. However, in *NAV2006*, a dialog box appears (with two tabs labeled "Remaining Risks" and "Resolved Risks") that presents almost no useful information.

The new scrollable list now has columns labeled Name, Risk, Warning, Details, and Action. Name is the detected threat (ex. - Trojan.Goldun, Trojan.Dropper, W32.Blackmal.E@mm!enc, Adware.Multidropper, etc.). Risk is the danger (High, Medium, or Low) presented by the threat. Warning is notification that NAV2006 could not resolve the danger and manual (human) intervention is required. Details is the threat type (ex. - Virus).

Action is the function that you choose for NAV2006 to perform (Repair, Quarantine, Remove, Exclude, Ignore, or Review).

What are the results of the scan? The Risk column says "High" for everything. Why? Clicking on "High" launches the *Symantec Help Center* with the entire text stating that "Viruses and other security threats are high-risk items with the potential to cause damage to a computer by destruction, disclosure, modification of data, or denial of service. It is recommended that you remove these programs from your computer."

Therefore, by definition, practically everything that I expect NAV2006 to find ("Viruses and other security threats") is a "high-risk item." I'm glad I looked at that definition!

Go to the Details column. Double-click the Details column entry (ex. - Virus, Spyware, Adware, etc.) to view more details about the threat. This launches the "Risk Properties Dialog". The "Details" tab shows Risk Name, Risk Type, Risk Level, Dependencies, a very generic definition of the threat (ex. - "A program or code that replicates itself onto other files with which it comes in contact."), Affected Areas listbox (ex. - "1 File"), Details listbox of the file location (ex. - "taxes.exe within C:\Eurora Pro\attach\The_reporting_of_Taxes.rar"). Finally, the only useful information that I really need!

All I need to know (for the vast majority of threats) is what file is compromised. I can instantly assess most circumstances. I know that all unsolicited files in my e-mail attachment subdirectory (folder for Windoze users) that have file extensions of ".SCR", ".PIF" or ".txt   .exe" are going to be deleted (REGARDLESS of the infection type). Compromises to my personal spreadsheets, document files, or "C:\WINDOWS\system32\taskmgr.exe" require personal intervention.

I now click the button and I assume I am removing the twenty "Viruses, spyware, and other security risks" since the NAV2006 recommendation is to "Remove." However, five are "Resolved" but I now find out that the fifteen "Remaining" are now labeled with "The following risks require manual removal. For more information, visit the Symantec website." The view more information link now lists the threat and "Visit Symantec website". It no longer tells me which file I need to delete manually. I click the "Finish" button.

After searching around the main SystemWorks interface, I don't find a clear list of the fifteen files that NAV2006 detected. This is certainly not satisfying, not simple, and definitely not sufficient. I was predisposed to thinking that SystemWorks was overly automated and didn't give me any options. Now I don't think it did enough.

Let's recap. Move to "Virus," double-click, move to "Details", drag column header width far outside the right edge of the dialog box, drag the horizontal scroll-bar to view the file name and extension, drag it back and forth until it all sinks in, move to and click the "Close" button. Repeat as needed.

Repeat twenty times today. Repeat one hundred times next week, three hundred times in a few months... Is this painful to read about? It's not nearly as painful as it is to use this dialog box.

No usability testing seems to be done anymore. If it is, it does not show. This is a problem with dialog boxes throughout this suite and in products by almost every other computer company

(especially THAT OTHER computer company).

The solution to dialog box usability is to allow dialog boxes to be resized (including maximized to full screen), have list boxes dynamically maximized to the dialog box, allow user selectable font sizes (in list boxes, title bars, buttons, labels, etc.), retain user interface changes (also allow reset to default), and, especially, provide the important information not useless technical data.

With a better interface, I could maximize (full-screen) the dialog box and see a listbox containing every file with its name shown in its entirety. Now I could simply drag a vertical scroll-bar through a list of hundreds of files in a few seconds. I just eliminated a few thousand moves, clicks, drags, and minutes of tedium. Multiply that by a few million users to see what poor interface design costs the population.

Norton Ghost 2006

Ghost is an application that allows the creation of hard disk drive images (useable as a backup). The images could be of an entire logical drive or of incremental changes.

A few versions back, Ghost was generally run as a floppy-disk based bootable DOS utility. The interface was simple text boxes and windows (i.e. - dialog boxes) with basic mouse support. Underlying the simple facade was the ability to write compressed image files to another hard disk drive or internal optical disk drive. The somewhat ambiguous listing of physical and logical drives could be problematic if you had more than one identical physical drives.

Ghost 10 is radically different from the Ghosts of your past. There is no floppy-disk option. It must be installed and run from within Windows when creating a backup image. Image files from prior versions of Ghost can be restored from the included Symantec Recovery Disk.

Ghost's Copy Drive function recreates the current boot drive (C:) on another physical drive. The key feature being the files on the destination drive will work exactly like the original disk. This eliminates hours of installation from scratch.

As luck would have it, I purchased a large hard disk drive and decided to transfer my operating system to the new drive. The duplication was relatively fast. I shut down Windows and reset the CMOS to boot from the new drive. The Windows startup logo appeared; I selected the logon user, and reached the Windows desktop.

There was only one problem as the result of the Copy Drive operation. The installation on the new hard disk drive would not run 32-bit applications (i.e. - Windows is rendered totally useless). It's the perfect Windows solution! Do not allow anything to run, so nothing can go wrong! No Trojan, virus, bug, pop-up, instant message, etc. can breach this system!

The relevant recommendation for curing the Copy Drive operation problem is shutting any virtual memory managers, etc. before running Copy Drive. This requires reconfiguring your current Windows configuration and subsequently restoring those particular functions in the existing configuration. And, at the time of restoring your new Ghost image, those same configuration changes must be reversed. Remember to do that weeks or months down the road, during a crisis in the middle of the night.

Of course, if the problem is caused by running a virtual memory manager today, you won't know it for six months until after your Ghost image restoration fails miserably. Your Ghost image is worthless and your precious system no longer exists.

These common scenarios are totally avoided by the use of the floppy disk option. I reported the lack of a floppy disk option to over ten user group members and every one immediately expressed disbelief. I report to Symantec that offline floppy disk operation is critical to future sales to technically savvy people.

Conclusion

I have only touched the surface of my experiences with *Norton SystemWorks 2006 Premier*. In my testing, I ran into many problems. I found workarounds for most of them.

The inelegance of the user interfaces and the lack of separate detailed instruction manuals (in a .PDF format, not a .CHM format) for each individual product betrays the underlying functionality and features that the menus hide. Each application's help is really one help system for all installed Symantec products. Searches often returned nothing but extraneous results. I could not locate the meaning of several terms (including the headings on the Speed Disk Analysis screen).

There are many useful major applications included (and numerous Windows interface tweaks and utilities). If you require a few of the bundled applications, this package offers a lot of value for the money.

This reminds me how skewed our tolerance is for computer functionality. Do you have a different level of expectations for a new television, camera, automobile, or microwave oven?

Symantec Norton SystemWorks 2006 Premier List Price = US $99. (http://www.symantec.com). It is available at a discount from the usual web sites and discount stores.

This review first appeared in the North Orange County Computer Club's Orange Bytes for April 2006. You can contact Herbert Wong Jr. at NOCCCReview@SingularityTechnology.com.

Editors Note: *As you may have noticed, Herb Wong was not real pleased with this software suite. In fairness to the product, I thought I would check other reviews on the internet. On site after site that sold the product, I found glowing reviews. I then started looking for sites that did not sell the product and I found http://reviews.cnet.com/Norton_SystemWorks_2005_Premier/4852-8033_7-30993158.html?tag=uolst . On the Cnet site the average rating was 4.2 out of 10 for 23 reviews. The best solution before installing any software to your main computer is 1: have a back-up image, 2: try it on a clone of your boot hard disk. Disks are cheap enough today, buy a couple of spares! Unfortunately, in order to do that, you need an older, floppy bootable, version of Ghost or another disk image/clone program that allows you to boot from floppy or CD. There are a couple out there.* ∎

MOVING TO LINUX, 2nd Edition

By William Allen, NOCCC

Marcel Gagne's new book, Moving to Linux, is a must for anyone new to the Linux operating system. The book includes the latest Knoppix version of Linux on a run-from-CD player disk so you can use Knoppix Linux without making any changes to your current Windows configuration. Knoppix includes many programs such as Konqueror (a combo file manager and Internet browser), KDE (a system desk top program), Konsole (a DOS-like window for controlling Linux and programs from the command line), Kmail or email, FireFox (another browser), RPM (for downloading and installing new software), and many others.

The book is chock full of detailed guidance on everything from initial installation of a number of Linux versions such as Mandriva, Debian, Fedora/Red Hat, etc., to using all the features a new Linux user needs to know. It relieves the anxiety of hard disk partitioning to install a second operating system and working through a number of unfamiliar programs. That said, once in Linux, a new user will be pleasantly surprised as how similar today's Linux versions are to Windows. The learning curve is relatively flat for Windows users with all the new graphic user interfaces.

Mr. Gagne's 480 page book has nineteen chapters and four appendices. In the first three chapters he does a good job of handholding in getting you started with Knoppix Linux. The first chapter explains what you gain and what you lose by migrating to the Linux operating system. Incidentally, installing the Fedora Core Release 2 version of Linux results in a pre-selection window on boot up wherein the computer user is then allowed to select either his Fedora or Windows operating system.

Chapter two of Mr. Gagne's book explains what you should expect when using the included Knoppix disk. The disk requires your computer be able to boot from your CD/DVD player, which may require a BIOS change that can be done from within your computer. He goes into the various ways to get your copy of whatever version of Linux you decide on beyond Knoppix. With a broadband Internet connection, many versions can be downloaded for free. That approach does require first downloading a free Windows program for handling ISO formatted files. Alternatively, you can order CDs for practically all Linux versions for not much more than shipping and handling. Or you can pick up a book such as Moving To Linux what include installable disks. Finally, you can purchase a boxed set of disks and handbook which cost a bit more.

Chapters four through eight cover learning your way around the Linux desktop (KDE in the case of Mr. Gagne's book), how to use the desktop controls, how to open multiple desktops, setting the root level file system password, introducing the Linux command line editor Konsole [shades of DOS], how to use Konqueror to manage the Linux file tree, and learning that it is even possible to run Windows programs on Linux. There are plenty of customizable features that the desktop user has access to: selecting themes and styles, adding desktop icons, choosing screen savers, etc.

Chapter seven is devoted to locating and installing new programs. Incidentally, the Knoppix disk includes Open Office 2, a Microsoft Office act-a-like which includes a document writer, spreadsheet, presentation generator, plus drawing and database programs. Open Office can handle Microsoft Office documents including both uploading and generating changes to existing Microsoft Office documents as well as generating new Microsoft Office compatible documents.

Chapter eight covers connecting with peripherals such as printers, scanners, fax machines, etc., while chapter nine addresses connecting to the Internet. Once the disk Knoppix system is running on your computer you are already on the Internet if you have a broadband connection. Instant messaging is provided by the included Kopete program which even has an encryption capability.

The last nine chapters covers using the installed the Kmail email client, Korganizer for meeting planning and making calendars for future activites, handling digital photography with digiKam, scanning with Kooka, and even doing OCR conversion of text documents. Chapter seventeen is devoted to generating digital artwork with GIMP while chapter eighteen addresses CD burning with K3b and playing CDs with KsCD. A wide variety of games included with the disk are covered in chapter nineteen.

Of the four appendices, the second one, B, is perhaps the most important. It provides detailed procedures to install four versions of Linux: Mandrake (now Mandriva); SuSE; Fedora; and Xandros. Appendix C gets into Linux operating system level commands such as for piping (more shades of DOS), as well as listing, renaming, downloading, finding and reading installed files. Appendix D covers using a variety of text editors while the A appendix covers the GNU General Public license which allows us to use all that free software but with no warranties, implied or otherwise.
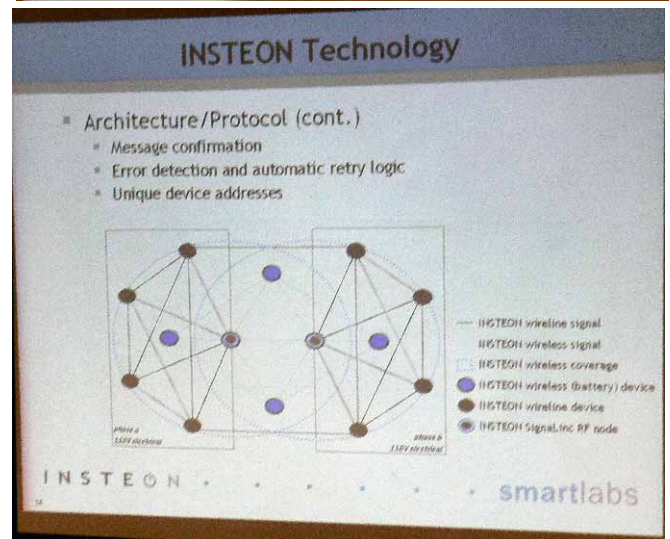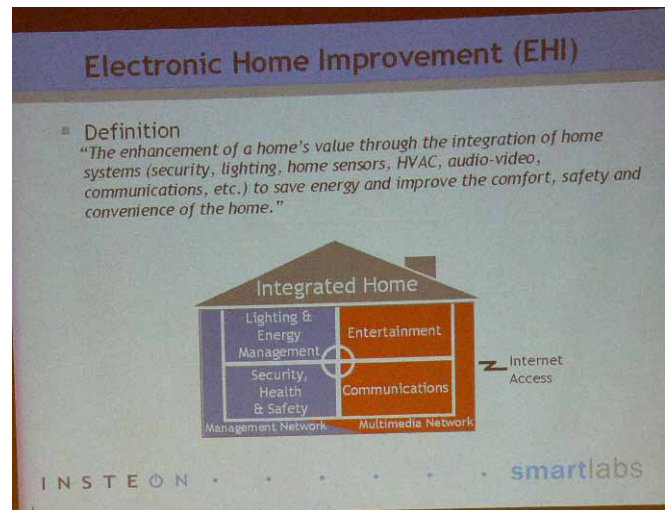
In summary, Marcel Gagne has certainly done Linux newcomers a real service with his book. I highly recommend anyone considering moving to Linux get his book before installing any of the popular versions of Linux. The book is available from the publisher, Addison Wesley, for $39.99, or from Amazon for $25.19. This report was generated with a 2.5 GHz CPU and 512 Mbytes RAM, a 120 GBytes HD, and a broadband Internet connection.

(Review Editor's Note: User Group members can get a nice discount and free shipping by ordering from A-W directly, http://www.awprofessional.com/bookstore/product.asp?isbn=0321356403&rl=1.) ∎
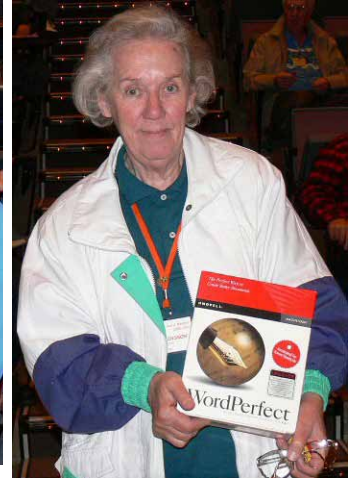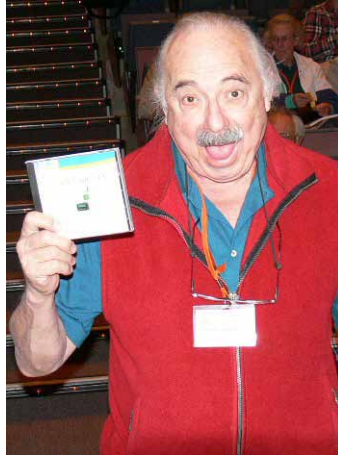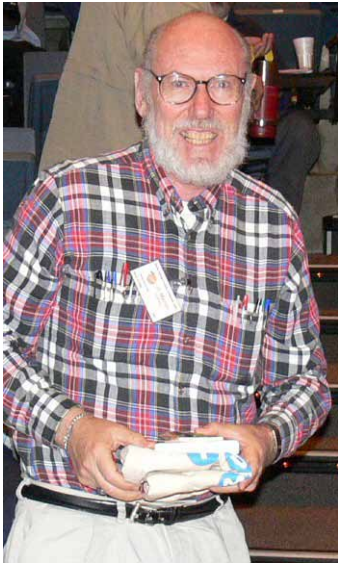
March Meeting Photos

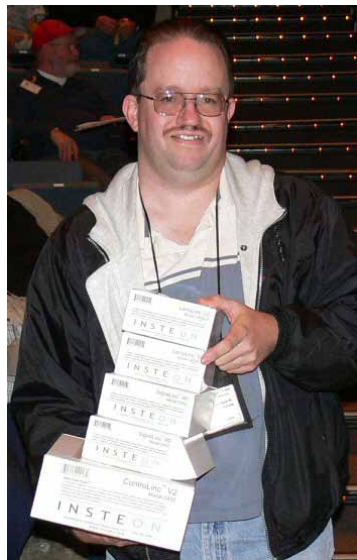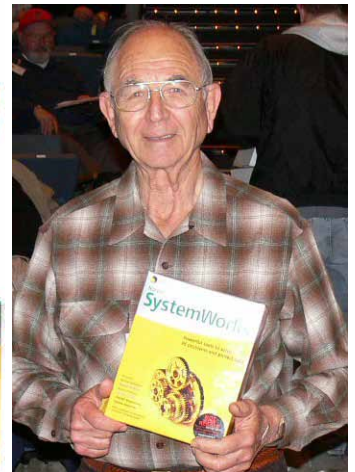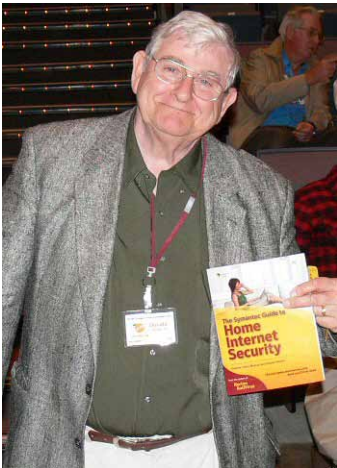Dan Cregg of Smartlabs gave a great presentation on home automation.
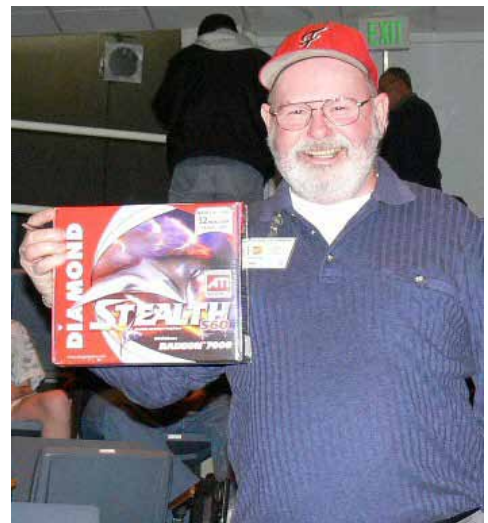
Checking out the consignment table.

Photography by Jim Sanders and George Margolin

Some winners were happier than others, I think.

The Smartlabs grand prize.

The members only prize.

Diskeeper 10 Professional Premier

By Ted Littman, NOCCC

The utility program, Diskeeper, was created about 20 years ago by Executive Software to deal with the age-old problem of hard disk fragmentation. Fragmentation in turn causes reduced PC speed, reliability, and potential disk health problems. While the folks at Executive make other nifty software too, Diskeeper was so successful that the company recently changed its name to Diskeeper Corp.! It is one of the most widely used and recognized defragmentation utilities in the world.
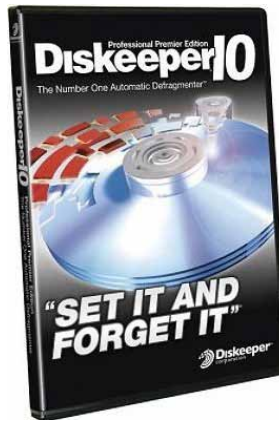
If you use the Windows XP operating system, you may be aware that it has a built-in defragmenter. This utility is actually an old version of a standard Diskeeper that can only be run manually.

Fragmentation is a "natural" process that occurs when your operating system writes programs, files, and folders to your PC's hard disks. Simply put, hard drives use rapidly spinning disks that are magnetically coated on both sides with read-write heads that move over the disks and store/retrieve bytes of information in concentric rings (tracks). These are subdivided into discrete segments or clusters of a fixed size (from 512 bytes to 8 KB), depending on your operating system and some other factors.

If operating systems were "smarter" today than they actually are (Microsoft, are you listening?), all of each file's clusters would be written contiguously in unbroken chains. In that way, accessing a multi-cluster file or a collection of files (as when running a program) could be done most efficiently and quickly since the hard disk's read-write heads wouldn't need to move as much (to load files into memory so that you can work with them) as when the clusters are scattered. While you may not be interested in how things work in your PC, you do need to be aware of the consequences of issues like fragmentation and what you need to do, or you will suffer the consequences.

When you start out with a new computer and sequentially add an operating system, some programs, and data files, for the most part the files and folders will be written efficiently on your hard disk. When I bought my Dell Dimension 8400 "screamer" a year ago with its 3.2 GHz Pentium 4 processor, 1 GB dual-channel SDRAM, Windows XP, and 160 GB Hard Drive, it only had Windows and a few programs pre-installed. Then I added most of the programs and data files from my "old" 500 MHz Dell. Well, the PC's operating speed slowed down some, but not to the point of real annoyance. However, between then and now, more programs were added, updated, deleted, and modified, and lots more data files ditto to the point where my new PC was running more like my old PC! Sound familiar? Well, this ordinary usage of your computer results in hard disk "fragmentitis." Not only are the pieces of your files scattered, but even the free space on the hard drive is non contiguous.

So, I decided to try the new #10 version of Diskeeper and I was given the Pro Premier top-of-the-line program to review.

I must admit that I had used a prior Pro version on my old computer and was impressed by its capabilities and performance. In addition, Diskeeper provides an extensive manual in PDF format as well as a variety of on-line aids.

The software was easily installed from a CD in the partition of my choice on my PC. It has a user-friendly graphical interface that is easy to understand, even if you are a novice. Whenever your mouse cursor moves over an item, you see a pop-up balloon that tells you what it is. A particularly useful capability is the "Set it and Forget it" SmartScheduling™. There is a wide range of settings to choose from and you can even have Diskeeper run transparently in the background without interference while you are using the PC. This feature allows Diskeeper to automatically determine the optimum defragmentation schedule for each partition individually, and adjust that schedule as disk usage changes.

Another new feature in the Premier version, called I-FAAST™ (that stands for Intelligent File Access Acceleration Sequencing Technology), boosts access speed for the most commonly accessed files. There are numerous other worthwhile features that are clearly described on the vendor's web site. In fact, I highly recommend the multi-media "tour" at: http://www.diskeeper.com/diskeeper/tour/index.asp.

One situation that can impair the performance and reliability of your computer is fragmentation of the MFT or Master File Table (the "roadmap" of every single directory and file on your hard drive) on NTFS volumes and your paging files. Since the operating system relies heavily on the MFT and paging file, the effect of fragmentation is often much greater than when a normal file is fragmented. Special measures must be taken to defragment these files, so it is better to prevent their fragmentation in the first place. The Frag Shield feature helps you configure these critical system files optimally, to help keep them contiguous from the start. You also can schedule Diskeeper to regularly defrag these files.

After using Diskeeper for a short while, the level of file fragmentation on my PC was practically nil and stayed that way. In addition, the program can be scheduled (or run manually) to do boot-time defrags to safely perform Microsoft®-recommended defragmentation of critical system files and files that may be in use when Diskeeper normally works its magic. If you like to view the results of Diskeeper's work, the program provides enough written and graphical data to keep the most detail PCers (like me) happy.

Diskeeper is available in 6 editions: Home (MSRP=$30), Professional ($50), Professional Premier ($100), Server Standard, Server Enterprise, and Administrator. Discounts are available on-line at the usual web sites. For most home PC users, the Home edition will do nicely. For gurus, gamers, and small business users, the Pro or Pro Premier should be used. You can "try before you buy" by downloading a trial edition

from the Diskeeper Corp. or buy it with a 30-day money-back guarantee.

According to the recommendations of the vendor:

· Diskeeper 10 Home Edition—for novice and casual home computer users, it can defragment volumes up to 768 GB each.

· Diskeeper 10 Professional Edition—with Boot-Time Defragmentation, Frag Shield, power management for laptops, and a new option for effectively defragmenting large files, it is designed for more advanced computer users and PCs in network environments. With the ability to defrag up to 4 768-GB volumes simultaneously and support for 64-bit operating systems, Pro can also be administered remotely with Diskeeper Administrator.

· Diskeeper 10 Professional Premier Edition—with the feature-set of Diskeeper 10 Professional Edition plus the ability to simultaneously defrag as many as 8 volumes up to 2 Tera-bytes each, all-new I-FAAST technology, and 64-bit operating system support, Professional Premier is the new flagship desktop addition to the Diskeeper product line aimed at users of hi-performance game rigs and high-end desktops.

I highly recommend Diskeeper for your use. In addition to my own experience, there are numerous great reviews on-line from the computer magazines, other organizations, and individual users. Here are the links to a few of the better ones that I found:

http://www.barrys-rigs-n-reviews.com/reviews/2006/utilities/dk10/dk10_1.htm

http://techgage.com/review.php?id=4182&page=3

http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,1759,1811993,00.asp

If you want to learn more about fragmentation and how hard disks work, here are some useful links with good illustrations:

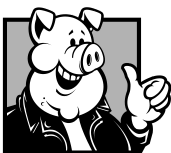http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fragmentation_%28computer%29

http://www.ntfs.com/hard-disk-basics.htm

http://www.dewassoc.com/kbase/hard_drives/hard_disk_sector_structures.htm

http://www.storagereview.com/map/lm.cgi/tcs

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer_storage

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hard_disk

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Disk_storage ∎

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! ∎

Adobe FrameMaker 7.0 Classroom in a Book

By Steve Carmeli, NOCCC

I'd been looking forward to working with FrameMaker for many years. I first saw it at a Mac fair in Los Angeles in 1992. While that's not pre-Windows, the product wasn't out on Windows at the time since Windows 3.1 was king then and you needed more memory for FrameMaker than Win 3.1 could handle. How ironic that after releasing FrameMaker 7.0, Adobe stopped releasing or supporting FrameMaker on the Mac and only supports it on Windows XP and Solaris (Sun's UNIX).
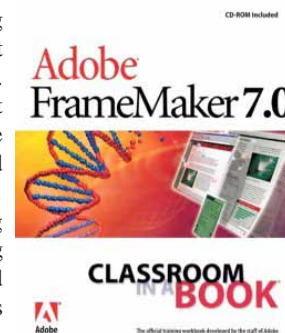
The Amazon.com user reviews said that this book was full of errors but I thought that publisher Peachpit Press must have its act together by now so let's give it a try. Well, my first encounter with errors was when the author said that I'd need the fonts included on the book's CD to complete the exercise. So what, right? Well, the author said (actually, the "author" is identified as the "Adobe Creative Team."), "copy the fonts to the C:\Program Files\Common Files\Adobe\Fonts directory." Well, it'd been so long since I installed fonts that I didn't remember how to do it, so I did what the author said. After doing so, FrameMaker kept telling me it wasn't finding the fonts it needed. Now, to this author's credit, he did say that the XP font manager could use both Type 1 and PostScript fonts. Finally the thought occurred to me "Doesn't control panel have a fonts applet?" To shorten this story, I installed the fonts using the applet. But how basic an error can you make?

Adobe FrameMaker 7.0 Classroom in a Book is comprised of eighteen chapters, of which the first fifteen are about FrameMaker mode and the last three are about FrameMaker Structured mode. I won't discuss Structured mode in this article.

Now for the book review. Lesson 1 was just a scurry around the user-interface and a few documents, it didn't teach any useful techniques. Lesson 2 was entitled "Defining Paragraph Formats." One nice technique I learned was called "Creating a Side-Head Area." The side-head is the left column you see so often in documentation nowadays that is mostly blank but that may include section headings. Originally, my test document didn't have a side-head. But just a few clicks and the entire document was restructured with a side-head. Then a few more clicks and (a) major headings spanned across the side-head and into the text column while (b) subordinate headings moved into the side-head, even wrapping where necessary. Pretty cool!

But the power, and complexity, of FrameMaker was quickly evident when it came to paragraph numbering. In Word, you number a set of paragraphs by clicking a button on the button bar. In FrameMaker, you first define a numbering format that sets the value of the first number in the series. Then, you define a numbering format that defines the remainder of the series; it looks like this: S:<n+>\t. (Refer to the dialog box graphic at the end of the article, please.)

By chapter four, the book introduced techniques to manipulate headers and footers. Running headers and footers pulls text from headings and includes it in headers and footers. You can have up to 12 running headers and footers, more than necessary. It also discussed custom and

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 SOFTWARE OR BOOK!** Currently available are the following **products**:

Boxed Programs and CDs

Digital Image Pro 10 – Complete photo editing made easy from Microsoft. Edit, create, & share your digital photos. Toolsets contain fast Auto Fix and powerful correctional tools in one location. Requires a multimedia PC with 700 MHz processor. MSRP=$90.

Sonic's DVD Studio v.6 - Create, share and preserve digital media on DVD and CD. Make movie or slideshow DVDs, burn audio CDs and back up data with an easy-to-use streamlined process. Protect your videos, music, photos and critical data by effortlessly backing up media to a CD or DVD. MSRP=$150.

SendPhotos Gold – "If you would like to e-mail photos without hassle, Send-Photos, from Novatix, is easy and fun to use." - PC Magazine, April 22, 2003.

MSRP=$20.

Norton Internet Security 2006 – This highly-rated suite from Symantec contains AntiVirus, Personal Firewall, Privacy Control, AntiSpam, & Parental Control security programs. MSRP=$70.

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

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.

Undelete 5 Pro – Worry-free data protection with instant recovery—faster than going to backup. From Executive Software. MSRP=$40.

Books

Word Hacks – This new book from O'Reilly, authored by Andrew Savikas, offers tips and tools for customizing, programming, and automating Microsoft Word. This book explicitly covers only Word 2000, 2002, and 2003 although many of the "Hacks" will work with older versions. MSRP=$25.

Excel for Starters – The Missing Manual – Everything you need to create and use spreadsheets, this book is authored by Matthew MacDonald and published by Pogue Press/O'Reilly. MSRP=$20.

QuickBooks 2005 – The Missing Manual – This thorough guide by Bonnie Biafore, examines the many features of the popular QuickBooks accounting software. Through dozens of insightful tips and tricks and a friendly writing style, it enables financial managers to quickly understand how to use the program's tools to implement and maintain critical accounting processes. Ideal for QuickBooks users of all levels. Published by O'Reilly. MSRP=$30.

eBay Hacks, 2nd Edition – David Karps latest edition of tips & tools for bidding, buying, & selling. Published by

O'Reilly. MSRP=$25.

eBay: The Missing Manual – Another good book on eBay from O'Reilly/Pogue Press, authored by Nancy Conner and issued Aug. 2005. MSRP=$25.

Blackberry Hacks - The versatile and flexible BlackBerry handheld computing device allows you to stay in touch and in-the-know--no matter where you are or where you go. For both corporate and consumer users, *BlackBerry Hacks* delivers tips, tools, and innovative ways to most effectively use the all-in-one phone, inbox, organizer, and browser for phone calls, instant messaging, email, organizing, web browsing, receiving RSS feeds, and much more. From O'Reilly, MSRP=$25.

How to Do Everything with Your Digital Camera, 4th Edition - Written by award-winning photographer Dave Johnson, this book is loaded with clear explanations and step-by-step details, and explains the different components of a variety of digital cameras and how to use them. Coverage includes flash and lighting tips, action and outdoor photography, various image-editing packages, and finally, organizing, storing, sharing, and printing digital images. The fourth edition of this best-seller has been updated to include details on removable storage devices and the latest utilities and photo-sharing facilities. Published by Osborne/McGraw Hill,

Preparing a Review Article for the Orange Bytes

by Ted Littman, NOCCC Reviews Editor

The article at the following link provides suggestions for preparing a review article for the Orange Bytes and for submittal. Please read both. http://www.noccc.org/bytes/info/index.html **Important!** Please follow the below link to the NOCCC website and read the article on submittal. http://www.noccc.org/bytes/info/index.html ∎

BOOKS AVAILABLE IN THE LIBRARY

NOCCC has a new benefit program for members – the **Club Library**. Members may check out books at the Reviews & Library Desk at the monthly meeting for a period of one or two months for a nominal fee of $2 for one month or $3 for two months. A security deposit (equal to the list price of the book) must be posted. When the book is returned is good condition, the deposit is refunded. **No review is required**.

A **partial list** of available books is as follows:

Windows XP Hacks, 1st Edition – 100 smart, time-saving and useful tips and tricks for virtually every feature in Windows XP Home & Pro editions. From O'Reilly. MSRP=$25.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Building Applications with the Linux Standard Base – An initiative of the Free Standing Group, the LSB is a set of standards designed to increase compatibility among Linux distributions and enable applications to run on any LSB-compliant system. This book (plus CD) shows developers how to create, test, and certify software for LSB-2 compliance. MSRP=$45.

The Official Sambra – 3 How to & Reference Guide, 1st Ed. – From Prentice Hall PTR. MSRP=$50.

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.

Succeeding with Open Source – 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.

PHP-Nuke Garage – This book shows you how to master the most powerful open source Web content system ever created, then use it to build whatever your heart desires, hands-on, step-by-step. Authored by Don Jones, from publisher Pren Hall PTR. MSRP=$25.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Outsource: Competing in the Global Productivity Race – This hardcover book by Edward Yourdon presents a balanced view of why outsourcing is occurring, how it is likely to impact people's lives, and how best to prepare career-wise for the new realities it introduces. From Prentice Hall. MSRP=$28.

Project 2003 Personal Trainer – You can become the Project Superhero in your office with this easy-to-foll0w training manual with an interactive simulation CD. Published by O'Reilly. MSRP=$30.

Will Wheaton: Just a Geek – Will Wheaton, a regular on the Star Trek series, tell all in this book from O'Reilly. MSRP=$25. ∎

Main Meeting

By Eric Saca, NOCCC

In March, we had a unique and interesting presentation about electronic home improvement and automation from SmartLabs, Inc, a local company. This "technology briefing" was given by Dan Cregg, their Chief Technology Officer.

Dan started out with a quick overview of his company. In 1992, it was founded as Home Automation Systems. In 1995, their online catalog website, www.Smarthome.com was launched. In 1997, SmartLabs Design, their proprietary product development arm was launched, and in 2000, they began development of their flagship product, INSTEON. In 2003, they opened their SmartHome Factory Store and in 2005, shipments of INSTEON-enabled products began. Also that year, the INSTEON Alliance Community was announced.

Next, Dan defined the term Electronic Home Improvement (EHI) as "The enhancement of a home's value through the integration of home systems (security, lighting, home sensors, HVAC, audio-video, communications, etc. -- to save energy and improve the comfort, safety, and convenience of the home." He also showed a diagram that separated EHI into two major categories. One was the Multimedia Network, which included entertainment, communications, and Internet access. The other was the Management Network, including lighting and energy management, as well as security, health, and safety.

He also showed a diagram indicating the prevalent market landscape for EHI products, which is mostly divided into two parts; at one end are the "rich and fa-mous," who can afford these products, as they've traditionally been too expensive for the average homeowner. At the other end, are what he termed, the "gadgetologists," But, because these products have traditionally been so complicated, SmartLabs intends to bridge this market gap with INSTEON, a simpler and more integrated approach.

Dan next listed the four main factors driving EHI market growth. First, there is the new Home Improvement craze, with TV shows generating enthusiasm for remodeling and upgrading. Second, the Multimedia Home revolution is under way, as more and more consumers acquire broadband Internet, IP networked computers, and media servers. Third, Intelligent Products are increasingly hitting the market, including smart appliances (microwaves, washers, dryers, etc.), smart systems (HVAC, security, etc.), and smart devices (lighting controls, etc.). Finally, Reliable Network Technology (cabling, hubs, routers, wireless, etc.) is the new market standard.

Dan then introduced INSTEON, a new industry standard. It is a wireless, dual mesh home-control networking technology. It simply, affordably, and reliably enables integration and management of home systems.

Getting more technical, Dan displayed a diagram of INSTEON's architecture and listed its major points. Its integrated, dual mesh network technology connects devices with both electrical wiring and wireless radio signals. In fact, it leverages a home's existing electrical wiring. It involves a peer-to-peer network with no network controller or complicated setup. Devices communicate by simulcasting. Like TCP/IP computer networks, INSTEON's architecture involves unique device addresses, message confirmation, error detection, and automatic retry logic. However, INSTEON requires just a simple "plug and tap" setup. Legacy X10 support is built in, for people currently using X10 home automation products.

Next, Dan covered how INSTEON enables new EHI applications, starting with home lighting systems. All lights can be turned off at once from any room. Lighting scenes can be set to match any mood. Lighting configurations can also be used to enhance home security.

In terms of access control -- when you arrive home, the thermostat automatically adjusts, doors unlock, and lights come on. For home entertainment, a TV can automatically turn on the surround sound amplifier.

Powerful security, safety, and climate control options are possible. A thermostat can automatically change to its energy-saving setting when the security system is enabled. On a hot day, blinds can automatically close and house fans can cool the home before the air conditioner activates, reducing energy costs.

Remote home management possibilities are limitless. For instance, a motion sensor can send a text message to your phone, reporting motion at your front door. With a web browser, you can view a video camera to see that a package has been delivered. If delayed getting home, you can use a browser to turn down your home's thermostat to save energy. An e-mail alert can go out when there is water in the basement.

On the exterior, for your pool, spa, or pond, you can monitor conditions, manage an automatic fill and remotely adjust the temperature.

On the interior, there are more appliance and device possibilities. For instance, a smart microwave oven can download new cooking recipes. Bathroom floors and towel racks can heat up when the bath runs.

Dan then briefly introduced the INSTEON Alliance Community. It is a group of people with the objective to accelerate the development of the next generation of electronic home improvement products and solutions. SmartLabs has also made the INSTEON command set an open standard. There is a Development Program available, with Developers Kits ($99.00) and other packages available for people interested in programming and customizing IN-STEON.

SmartLabs offers some basic timer software for free -- and Dan brought that along. He launched it for an actual INSTEON demonstration.

Dan provided just a simple demonstration involving a table lamp and an INSTEON controller, both connected to his laptop. He configured the basic timer software with simple selection screens and menu systems. (It could also simplify the process further with user-friendly step-by-step instructions.) He just set up the controller to power the light on and off. When the configuration was complete, the software blinked the light twice to acknowledge readiness. Then at the push of a button on the controller, Dan was able to turn the light on and off. (Of course, this suggested that all lighting in a house -- and many other systems -- could be centrally managed from such a controller.)

After that, Dan showed that the light could also be powered on and off through the software itself, bypassing the special controller. Then delving further into the menu system, he showed how a schedule could be set up to turn the light on and off automatically.

Dan ended his presentation by answering questions from the audience (which were mostly technical and application-specific). He also provided a free INSTEON Starter Kit for the raffle. This included several devices, such as tabletop controllers and lamp modules (which he had used for the demonstration).

Dan listed three helpful Electronic Home Improvement web links: www.smarthome.com, www.insteon.net, and www.smarthome.com/2814ub.html.
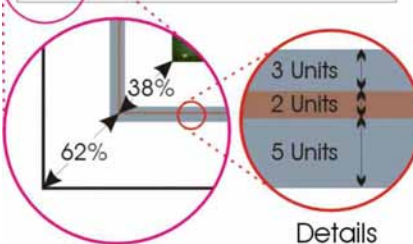
Our next meeting is a BIG ONE!!! We're celebrating our 30th anniversary on April 2nd, 2006, and we'll have a very famous and BIG speaker – John C. Dvorak – long time columnist for the computer industry leader, PC Magazine. And bring your friends. There'll be cake and camaraderie with some of our FOUNDING members. This is a "once every 30 year happening" – don't even think about missing it. ∎

Digital Photo SIG

By Larry Klees, NOCCC

At the last meeting we talked about composition. We were barely able to cover a fourth of the topic so from time to time I will be including some of the remainder as individual helpful hints. One topic discussed was Fibonacci numbers. They pop up in nature all the time and therefor have an impact on composition. One use for smaller numbers (1 1 2 3 5 8 13) is for putting borders around photos.

38%
62%

3 Units
2 Units
5 Units

Details

Please insert Photo1 here

To make such a border, pick three consecutive Fibonacci numbers. In the detail you can see that I used 2, 3, & 5 to set the proportions of the widths of the three lines. You can arrange them in any order you think looks good. I useually make the 1st & 3rd lines a color from the photograph. In this case the color (bluish gray) was taken from the spider's head. The brownish color for the 2nd line was taken from the spider's knee. Such a border looks very nice in a frame and can be a pleasant change from the

usual 1/4" white border or no border at

Next Month Macro & Micro Photography

all. Next month after show & tell we will talk about macro and micro photography. Every day life is full of interesting or beautiful things that go unnoticed because they are small. Modern cameras make photographing many of these things a breeze. Better still, macro shots are still unusual enough that your photos will automatically be exciting and interesting!

Come see

A slide show of sample macro shots Closeup attachments Bellows Focusing rails Lens reversing rings Two microscopes Macro flash attachments Klees ultra-deluxe flash adjuster

Learn what these items can do and what the differences are between them. Be fascinated by the world of the small.

4 mega-pixel CCD, penny, micro SD adapter w/ micro SD memory chip. Used just the camera lens and ultra-deluxe flash adjuster

$15 microscope (left) used to take

PHOTO SIG

micro photo of core memory (right). Wires are thickness of human hair.

Flower smaller than a dime. Used closeup attachment and ultra-deluxe flash adjuster

Honey bee – Used camera lens w/ closeup attachment, focusing rail, & ultra-deluxe flash adjuster

Hope to see you at the next meeting ∎.

Mac SIG Report

By C. Lemire, NOCCC

In the last article I mentioned the new-found associations Apple has now with Disney. Just saw a TV ad for Disney offering a video iPod as a gift. A March 1st article in the OC Times by T. Jones says the iPod now holds 78 percent of the digital player market and in an accompanying photo CEO Jobs is seen promoting a high-quality video and speaker system for in-home iPod use. The Mac Mini is also discussed as now being single or dual-core Intel-based with 5x more speed than previous models. Included is the software Bonjour which accesses AV content on any network, Mac and/or PC. Odd that another article by the same author foreshadowed the self-same downfall.

Front page of the March 5th business section of the OC Times showed a huge blue Apple with several bites taken out and the title "How Long Can the iPod Stay On Top?", again by T. Jones. Further reading actually supports Apple's history of success, then claiming Samsung, Sony, and Toshiba are following closely not unlike the early days of the Mac computer. Please! the iPod is cheaper to produce and the writer admits the creative turnaround time is faster on Apple's end then the time it takes the big corporates. A group photo of iPod lovers demonstrates the dedication the users already have for the product. More telling is the last testimony of the article wherein the iPod user admits switching to Mac computers to better use her iPod. There it is!

See you all next meeting, 11:15 am NOCCC Sunday at 221 Wilkinson Hall. I can't stay long as I have a UC Davis event in Long Beach at 1 pm. Contact me at clemire@ucdavis-alumni.com as needed. ∎

Computer Aided Investor (CAI) SIG

By Bob Krishfield, NOCCC

Market Review

The market has been difficult to read for the last few months, changing direction several times and making large dips in 3 or 4 days that wipe out gains made. In February, the Dow went down for 4 days approaching the low of Dec 30th, but then turned around and rose 485 points, making new 5 year highs above 11,000. As March began, we went below 11,000 and now are hovering around it. The NASDAQ hasn't done any better, retreating from the new high made in January and oscillating sideways. In the big picture, the NASDAQ is continuing in a bullish trend began in 2002, but that trend could be broken if more dips and sideways action comes before some rises. We looked at 6 mo charts of the major indexes and the Russell 2000 was the only one continuing with a strong trend. Other indices were mixed - the McClellan Summation bearish, NYSE the dominant market and short term oscillators overbought. The opinions from the gurus included comments about oil about to correct downward and positive actions by the Fed that will keep the primary trend bullish, so be fully invested. Allocate across core funds, internationals and strong sectors. Other experts feel the market is due for a large correction and it's time to stay out of the market until the rally that is due in October when the 9 month and 4 year cycles bottom. Fear of inflation has resulted in higher Japan and European interest rates which will impact the dollar, foreign investments in US, and our interest rates and the price of gold.

Presentation

The main topic was about Tango5 – a system for investing and trading mutual funds that is easy to use and follow, requires little time to administer and makes 15 – 22% average annualized returns with only a 7 – 13% drawdown. This system uses a market scoring system developed by Don Beasley who was successful in identifying indicators of market movements and separating the good from the bad. Don Wilson who developed Tango5 has implemented the ideas into a set of trade programs that uses Beasley's market score and the rutvol signal to compute buy/don't buy intervals. Other trade programs screen, filter and rank mutual funds from the FastTrack database and give the user a list to choose from. When the buy signal is on, funds are picked from the top of the list until the portfolio is complete (usually 4 or 5 funds, depending on the amount involved.) The funds are held until it fails a trailing stop of 6 – 8% or the RSIStoch value falls below 30. Sell on either condition, and replace the fund with another on the ranked list unless the timing is on a don't buy signal. This sys-

tem is run daily on the web (donsfunds.com) and you could just follow the web to implement it. A full implementation requires FastTrack and AmiBroker, some freeware (trade and tradefr) and the programs on the free website. The presentation is on my website (bobsden.org/cainvest.html).

I have found the system is robust and useful. But I also found uses for some of its components. In Amibroker, Tango5 uses the charting capability to monitor the daily status of the market score and the status of each fund, watching for sell conditions. The program for plotting a trailing stop is generally applicable to my stocks and funds in other portfolios, so I've setup charts to review my portfolio positions and use trailing stop plots to protect my profits. In this volatile market, there are a lot of fast quick moves and this provides a great tool to manage your positions. We discussed the need for a more adaptive way of setting the value of the stop, so stocks having greater volatility would have wider stops, and work continues on that. ∎

Security SIG

By Dave Keays, NOCCC

We revisited the issue of running as an Administer (admin). An issue that most if not all in the security world agrees is a no-no. At least getting on a network like the Internet as an administer is frowned upon. You should be using an account with lower privileges-- aka Limited User Account (LUA).

The administer account has very few limits about what it can do. If you get a virus when you are an administrator, the virus will have no limits to your computer. In fact, most malware today would not be able to install or do the damage they can without the admin account. However, tomorrow may be a different story.

It is much more difficult in Windows (r) because some older programs and stupid new ones force you to run as an administer. Older OSs (9x) didn't have the capabilities NT/2k/XP does so they needed the extra power. But when a new

MSRP=$25.

Home Networking: The Missing Manual – This book, authored by Scott Lowe, from O'Reilly/Pogue Press shows you how to do everything you need to set up a home network. MSRP=$25.

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.

Windows XP for Starters: The Missing Manual – This new book by David Pogue from O'Reilly provides everything you need to know to set up Windows XP, whatever your knowledge level. The step-by-step tutorials save you time and frustration, and prevent you from making common mistakes. MSRP=$20.

Murach's ASP.NET 2.0 Upgrader's Guide C# Edition - It's written for the experienced ASP.NET developer who uses C#. Instead of teaching ASP.NET 2.0 development from scratch, this book builds on the developer's prior experience to focus exclusively on "what's new and how to use it" and fulfill inside the cover. This book is going to be an invaluable companion for the developer upgrading from ASP.NET 1.x to Microsoft's new ASP.NET 2.O. MSRP=$39.50.

Data Binding with Windows Forms 2.0 – A new book by Brian Noyes on programming smart client data applications with .Net. Published by Addison-Wesley, MSRP=$50.

Murach's ASP.NET 2.0 Upgrader's Guide VB Edition – Mike Murach has just published this VB edition of of their ASP.NET book for experienced developers. MSRP=$39.50.

iPod & iTunes Garage – Author Kirk McElhearn shows you how to get more music and way more magic from your iPod & iTunes. From Prentice Hall PTR. MSRP=$25.

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.

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.

Classic Shell Scripting – The key to unlocking the real potential of Unix. A How To book by Arnold Robbins & Nelson Beebe from O'Reilly. MSRP=$35.

Guide to Linux – This new book by Peter van der Linden from Prentice Hall takes the mystery out of learning Linux. It comes with the Linspire 5.0 CD. MSRP=$40.

Spring into Linux – One of a fast-paced new series of tutorials from Addison-Wesley designed to bring you up to speed quickly. MSRP=$30.

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.

Linux Desktop Garage – This book/CD by Susan Matteson from Prentice Hall PTR is full of tools and info to do practically everything with Linux. MSRP=$30.

Self-Service Linux – This new book from Prentice Hall PTR is authored by Mark Wilding & Dan Behman and offers a definitive overview of practical hints and tips for Linux users. MSRP=$40.

Linux Debuggung and Performance Tuning Tips & Techniques – This is the definitive Guide to Linux software debugging & performance optimization at both the kernel and application levels. Author Steve Best systematically introduces open source tools & best-practice techniques for delivering bug-free, well-tuned code. Published by Pren Hall PTR, the MSRP=$50.

The Symantec Guide to Home Internet Security - This easy-

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	Irvine Hall	—–	2:30	Chuck Fete	cjfete@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 Photography	Irvine Hall	—–	9:30	Larry Klees	lklees@dslextreme.com	714-546-6677
Genealogy	Science	111	2:30	John Johnson	jrosjohnson@juno.com	714-991-3314
Computer Essentials	Science	111	9:30	Elise Edgell	EliseEdgell@aol.com	714-544-3589
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
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	aeccrcss@hotmail.com	909-860-9515
Visual Programming II	Science	109	9:00	Anson Chapman	aeccrcss@hotmail.com	909-860-9515
Visual Programming III	Science	109	10:00	Anson Chapman	aeccrcss@hotmail.com	909-860-9515
Visual Programming IV	Science	109	11:15	Anson Chapman	aeccrcss@hotmail.com	909-860-9515

Please report SIG changes to Herbert Wong, Jr. ocug@singularitytechnology.com

Membership Benefits
FROM PAGE 3

Corel - at the Feb 5 presentation, Corel gave us the following link for special pricing to user group members. http://www.corel.com/specialusergroups

WordPerfect Office X3 for $159, CorelDRAW Graphics Suite X3 for $179, Corel Painter for $229, Paint Shop Pro X for $59, and Paint Shop Photo Album 5 for $29.

Laplink – www.laplink.com - Laplink Everywhere 4 is a great remote computer control and access program. An annual 3 PC license normally sells for $129.95. Use coupon code LLE4THRTY at checkout and get it for $30. Their PCmover program, for moving all of your applications, settings, and data files from your old PC to your new PC while keeping all the new software intact, is normally $39.95. Use coupon code PCMVRTEN and get it for $10.

Peachpit Press Books Discount - of 30% 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.

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Smart Computing - www.smartcomputing.com For each paid membership (subscription to either Smart Computing or Computer Power User) via personalized membership forms or by telephone, our group will receive one credit. When the group has accumulated 5 credits (subscriptions), Smart Computing will donate one subscription to the group (great to use as a raffle prize or a "thank you" to a member, etc.). Call customer service at 1-800-733-3809 and tell them you are with the North Orange County Computer Club. If you go to their website to subscribe, click on User Groups and there is a drop down menu with our group's name on it.

Techsmith www.techsmith.com/store/order/bundle.asp using promotion code PRESBN05 you can get SnagIt (screen capture program) and Camtasia Studio (quickly record, edit and publish multimedia demos and presentations) Bundle for $269, a $50 savings. ■

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
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 Help Line list is published in the printed version of the Orange Bytes which is mailed to the members.

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

to-understand book helps protect you against Internet threats. Written specifically for nontechnical computer users, you'll learn simple ways to keep you and your family safe and secure while online. From Addison-Wesley, MSRP=$20.

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 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.

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.

Core Web Application Development with PHP and MySQL – This book from Prentice Hall PTR by Marc Wandschneider has everything developers need to know to build robust web database applications from upfront design and planning through testing & deployment. Three start-to-finish application case studies with code are provided on CD-Rom. MSRP=$50.

PHP 5 Power Programming – In this book from Prentice Hall, PHP 5's co-creator and two leading PHP developers show you how to make the most of its industrial-strength enhancements in any project. MSRP=$40.

Apache Derby – Off to the Races – This book tells you how to master Apache Derby, the only open source, pure Java, fully transactional, small-footprint RDBMS. Authored by Paul Zikopoulos, Dan Scott, & George Baklarz, the hardcover book is published by IBM Press/Pearson plc and has an MSRP=$40.

Web Design Garage – This book has everything you need to help design your web site. From author Marc Campbell and publisher Pren Hall PTR. MSRP=$30.

How to Do Everything with Dreamweaver 8 - Covering the latest version of this Web design tool, this step-by-step guide shows beginning to intermediate users how to create and maintain striking Web sites with Dreamweaver. Readers will learn to use all the components, including the visual layout tools, application development features, and code editing capabilities. The clearly defined chapters work equally well for readers who prefer to learn sequentially in a tutorial fashion, and those who need a quick reference to a specific task or feature. Published by Osborne/McGraw Hill, MSRP=$25.

Ted Littman, NOCCC Reviews Editor   (714) 779-1936
mailto:tedlit@adelphia.netreviews@noccc.org. ■

system variables. You create custom variables so that if you want to reuse a document, you just change the value of the custom variable and all the instances of the variable change. For example, if you're writing about dogs, a custom variable could be DogName. Assign "Labrador" to it and wherever you inserted DogName, "Labrador" would appear. Later on, when you want to reuse the document, just change the definition of DogName to (i.e.) "Poodle" and now Poodle will appear where Labrador was. Another powerful feature demonstrated in the chapter was Find and Replace. If you thought Word's Find and Replace was extensive, FrameMaker's has 22 types of objects it will search for. Note also, that FrameMaker can think in books. Books are multiple files that are treated as a set or a unit. It can search through books for any search object, such as a cross-reference, conditional text, anchored frame, or variable.

Tables were treated in chapters seven and eight. FrameMaker is not as intuitive as Word (i.e.) you cannot drag an entire table. But it has a TableDesigner which remembers entire tables, including table formats. You can select Insert Table from a menu and select a tag (an alternative term for "style") and an entire table, completely formatted and with a predetermined number of rows and columns, will be inserted. I learned that a table has an anchor. If the anchor is positioned in a side-head, the table will stay anchored in the side-head and span into the text column. But if the anchor is in the text column and the table can fit strictly in the text column, it will, otherwise it will automatically span both side-head and text column. It was nice to learn about the 'Continued' system variable. Creating a professional table with just a shaded column, two merged cells (called "straddling") for a column title and two rules was a touch arduous. But FrameMaker automatically carried its table title, something Word doesn't have, to the next page and added "(Continued)" when the table had to extend to the next page. After I shrunk the text so that the table all fit on one page, the extra title and "Continued" disappeared.

Lesson nine was about Anchored Frames and Graphics. Frames are objects that contain other objects and may be moved within a document. Anchored frames are attached, or anchored, to text, in a programmed fashion. For example, you may import a graphic into an anchored frame and then specify that the frame stay anchored outside the text column but always next to some specific text in a two column page. So, if the text that references the anchored frame is in the left text column, the anchored graphic will stay on the same line as the text in the left column. But, if the text moves to the right column, the anchored graphic will shift to the right column.

FrameMaker is not for beginners. Though Adobe says you can create memos with FrameMaker, and you can, would you pay $800 for a software package just to create one page memos? FrameMaker is for creating books, magazines, .PDFs documents, CD ROMs, and other hypertext media. Like so much of what Adobe makes, it is a professional's software program.

In the end, as far as Classroom in a Book is concerned, using it was a pleasure. The book exercised enough of the features to give me a taste of the program's features and power without either overwhelming me or dumbing down the program. Granted, it was still an introduction, but by now you know how I feel about FrameMaker—it's not for casual users. The book has a lit price of $45, but you can get it from Peachpit at a 30 % discount and free shipping: http://www.peachpit.com/bookstore/product.asp?isbn=0321131681&rl=1.

The FrameMaker 7.2 software is available for both Windows XP and Sun Solaris. Pricing varies tremendously. Retail at Adobe is $799. Some mail order prices are over $800, some below $400. If the price is too good to be true, it is. You won't get tech support and you won't qualify for upgrades either. ■

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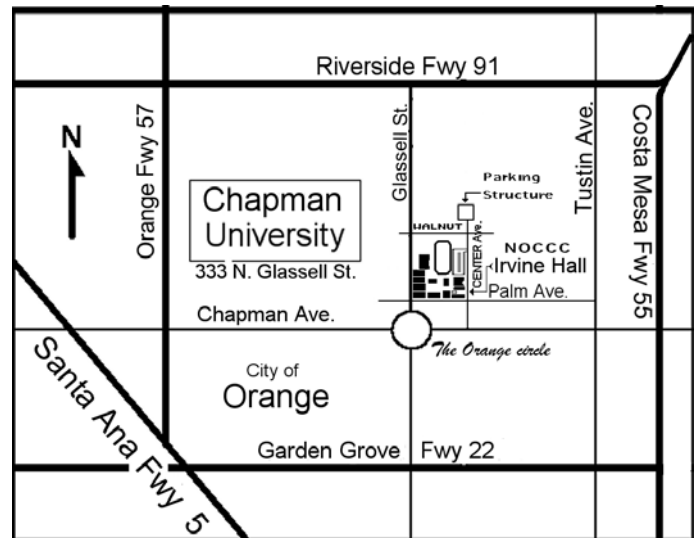**Consider all that you get with membership and Join Now**

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- **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 newletter.
- **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 commitee, and more.

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

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

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

Become an NOCCC member by signing up at the Membership Desk on our general meeting day, usually the first Sunday of the month. Or simply fill out the form on the reverse side of this page and send it in!

For current meeting information, please call
(714) 998-8080 for a recorded message.

North Orange County Computer Club
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