

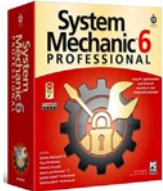


# Orange Bytes

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

Vol 31 • No 6

JUNE 2006



~~Mustek Inc.~~ IOLO will be the presenter on June 4th

At the 1PM Main Meeting

June meeting details on page 4

Elections are this meeting - be sure to vote!

## NOCCC Meetings - June 4th

### NOCCC Thirty years and counting

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 117  
*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  
Replacing backgrounds.

10:00 a.m.

*Linux for Server Administrators* ..... Wilkinson 117  
*Visual Programming III* ..... Science 109  
Intermediate and Advanced Visual Basic

11:15 a.m.

*Computer Security* ..... Science 203  
*Linux Programming Concepts* ..... Wilkinson 117  
*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**

Linspire Corp is the speaker, Linux is the topic

2:30 p.m.

*Genealogy*..... Science 111  
Tips, tricks and advice on doing your searches  
*Hardware Essentials* ..... Science 109  
Laptop Technology (new Microprocessors)  
*OS/2 News and Installation* ..... Science 203

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

Meeting Dates  
Jun 4, Jul 9, Aug 6

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Celebrating 30 years of  
“Friends Helping Friends”



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Open

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

**Classified Advertising** • Obtains members' computer-related non-commercial ads.

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

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

for the following positions:

**Help Line** • Maintains the volunteer list, and the software and hardware subjects for which they are willing to answer questions.

**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

**It is time to vote.** Be sure to come to the June meeting so you can have an input on who will be running NOCCC. I know that everyone has different ideas as to what we should be doing and how we should be doing it. I am looking forward to seeing some new faces with new ideas getting into positions where they will have a real impact.

If you think you might want to become a board member or an officer next year but first you would like to know more about what is involved attend the Southwest User Group Conference X3, August 11, 12 and 13, 2006, in San Diego. It will be held at the Town and Country Resort & Convention Center. Officers and members from computer clubs from many different states attend and exchange ideas. There are workshops covering many of the different aspects of computer club activities. Of course you get a T-shirt and a goodie bag and a chance to make new friends.

Last year there were over 350 attendees representing 62 user groups from as far away as Hawaii and Maryland. Sponsors enable the conference to take place. It is also an excellent time to see previews of new programs. It is also a time to talk to the sponsors and get some of your questions answered.

You don't need a special invitation to attend the conference. Just be sure to register (it is only \$50.00 before July 19. Until July 26 it is \$60. From July 27 to August 12 the registration fee is \$75. To get further information and fill out the registration form, go to [www.swugconf.org](http://www.swugconf.org).

Hotel reservations at Town & Country Resort are \$99 per night user group rate. Contact the hotel at 1-800-77-ATLAS by July 19.

I was a member of NOCCC for many years before I learned about the advantages of attending conferences such as the Southwest User Group Conference and APCUG. When I first heard about APCUG Conference, which was held at the same time as COMDEX, it was not clear as to what you had to do to qualify to attend. At that time you had to be an officer or board member. I finally became a board member. (This is no longer a requirement.) I attended both conferences for several years. I was unable to attend the last couple of APCUG conferences in Las Vegas. I have attended all the SWUG conferences since 2002. Not only are they easier to get to than Las Vegas, the workshops are excellent and the atmosphere very friendly. I highly recommend that if you have any interest in club activities that you attend the SWUG conference in August. ■

## 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](mailto: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>.

**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](http://www.bluesquirrel.com)/ 50% off all products - call 800.403.0925 to order and mention user group special pricing.

**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](http://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 LLE-4THRTY 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

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24

# May Board Meeting Minutes



1. Officers' Reports for Monday, May 8, 2006. The Board Meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM at Elise Edgell's home. Attendees were: Steve Carmeli, Elise Edgell, Ted Littman, Dave Keays, Richard Miller, Alan Pearlman, Cathy Margolin George Margolin Gerry Resch, Jim Sanders, Doug Steiner\*, Bill Thornton\*, and Herb Wong, Jr. \* Guest NOCCC members

**Secretary's report** – Steve Carmeli - Minutes from April 06 were accepted as printed. Moved to approve as printed.

**Treasurer's Report** – Alan Pearlman - Current Membership: Regular 288, Family 11, Newsletter 0, Vendors 9, Total 308.

We received two renewals, and sold three of the software packages that were left over from the Auction. Reducing our printing costs has saved us a lot of money. Membership renewal notices will go out this week.

**2. Next Main Meeting** - June 4,  
Next Board Meeting June 5

**3. Report on General Meeting:** Attendance was light, approx 60; speaker was happy. Presentation was good.

#### 4. Committee Reports

**Publications** - Jim Sanders - We had a 32-page issue with many additional photos of the anniversary festivities. Delivery was good; it was a smooth, problem free month.

**Programs** - George & Cathy

June 4 – Mustek, July 9 – TBA, Aug 6 – TBA

**Reviews**- Ted. - We had 5 reviews in May Bytes and 5 in the pipeline for June. Only 1 book taken out for review during meeting. Regarding auction leftover items, 3 will be sold by Wednesday we should recoup \$320.

**Public Relations**- Else O. - Else was not present. We are listed in Computer User. We are also in the OC Register. We plan to continue publicizing that this is our 30th anniversary year.

**University Liaison** —the refurbished bathrooms at Chapman U. were open in time for our 30th anniversary.

**Internet Committee**- Herb Wong - Nothing to report.

**Raffle** - Gerry Resch

We received \$88 in raffle ticket sales. Linspire gave us 2 books.

June General Raffle Prizes: 1. WinBackup 2 program; 2. Home Internet Security Book by Symantec; 3. The Art of Computer Programming, V3 Book.

Member Badge Prize: 1. Adobe PhotoShop CS2 One on One book  
**SIG's** - Herb Wong

We need someone to check every SIG room at the end of the day to see if they're in use, if people are attending, etc. A new volunteer would be appreciated.

**Consignment Table:** We did well. We have \$75-80 in income plus what Ted provided from the auction.

**Classified Ads** - Jim Sanders, No valid submissions.

**Opening & Closing** – Need volunteers! George & Cathy will open for June and Alan will open for June.

#### 5. Old Business

Election – Several members who are not currently officers agreed to run for office/BOD and their names will be added to the ballot that will be in the next issue of the Bytes.

#### 6. New Business

Adobe and Microsoft applications and registration for Main Meeting speakers - George will do both Adobe & Microsoft.

Cathy found a company to make golf shirts for our 30th anniversary. Shirts are \$18.50 each, but they'll be in a new color.

George is APCUG liaison and that should be transferred to Elise.

The Southwest User Group Conference is from August 11th through the 13th this year. It will be held at the San Diego at the Town and Country Resort and Convention Center. The URL for registration is <http://www.swugconf.org/> and more information. Members are welcome to sign up.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:11 PM.

## JUNE 4TH MEETING PREVIEW

**DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY SIG** - 9:30 am - Larry Klees - At the June meeting Larry will cover: • Replacing backgrounds. • Creating your own backgrounds. • Cutting and folding paper. • Eye dropper tools • Adding noise

**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 **iolo Technologies, LLC**. It seems Mustek had a layoff and choose not to honor

their commitment. **iolo**, long known for its System Mechanic diagnostic software, has expanded the product line with the Professional version. Learn about the new features at the June meeting.

**THE CLUB RAFFLE** items this month are Win-backup 2.0 software, Norton Internet Security software, The Art of Computer Programming 4 book by Knuth. 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 Adobe Photoshop CS2 book from O'Reilly Publishing \$40, + a second prize. ■

# Consignment Table

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

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

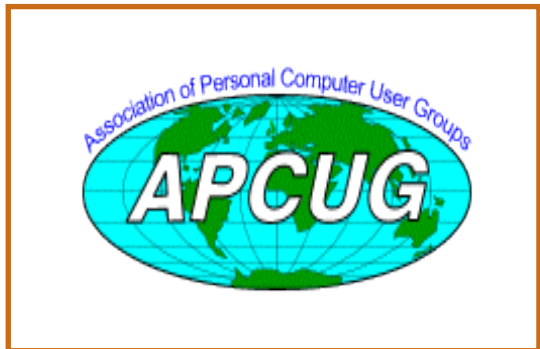
3. Fill out a tag on each item! It must contain: Seller's Name, NOCCC Membership Number, Item name, a short description and selling price.

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

5. All items and/or money may be picked up by the owner at any time, but MUST be picked up no later than 2 PM on day of sale. Because of the new disposal laws, if you have a display or computer that doesn't sell, you must pick it up. The club has no storage room available, and can not legally put it in the trash.

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

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## Editor

Jim Sanders ..... 714-544-3589 ..... editor@noccc.org

## Webmaster

Herb Wong ..... 714-968-7264 .... ocug@singularitytechnology.com

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### Business Solicitations/Lecture Series

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### Consignment Table

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### Classified Advertising (non-commercial, members only)

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### Commercial Advertising

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### Help Line

Need volunteer to fill this spot

### Membership Database

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### Membership Chairman

Open

### Programs

George Margolin .949-645-5950 .... inventor@pobox.com

## RSS Explained

*By Phil Shapiro, member of the Capital PC User Group, Virginia Macintosh Users Group, Washington Apple Pi, Young Hackers and Scholars Libre Users Group pshapiro@his.com*

RSS - really simple syndication -- is a labor-saving tool that allows people to tune into information sources that interest them. The information source could be a blog, a podcast, a videocast or any web site that includes RSS feeds.

The value of RSS accrues when you subscribe to multiple RSS feeds. You can then monitor multiple information streams with a minimum of effort.

There are many different software tools for subscribing to RSS feeds. One of the most popular is a web site named Bloglines. Some web browsers let you subscribe to RSS feeds. Safari 2.x and Firefox are two browsers that do. Firefox lets you to subscribe to RSS feeds using something called Live Bookmarks. You can also use a Firefox extension named Sage to subscribe to RSS feeds.

RSS's primary value is that it brings information to you without you having to visit multiple web sites. In a knowledge economy, anything that streamlines the flow of information from producer to consumer gives benefit to both producer and consumer. You tune into the information you do want, and tune out the information you don't want.

### Some Examples of How RSS Simplifies Peoples' Lives

I asked some technology consultants to explain how RSS brings value to peoples' lives. Curtis Brown at MissionMovers.org, in Seattle, is a strong believer in RSS. He explains, "RSS has invaded every part of our life, but we just don't know it. RSS is an information delivery method that gives added convenience to both senders and receivers of the information."

As an example, RSS feeds can be used by a nonprofit organization to distribute different kinds of information to different people. One RSS feed could be the organization's calendar of events or classes. Another could be a call for volunteers. A third feed might be information for funders. The more feeds an organization offers, the more narrowly tailored the information delivered to people served by that organization or supporting that organization.

Here are some other examples of RSS feeds. A used car dealer can have an RSS feed that details newly arrived used cars. A public library could have an RSS feed of newly purchased books. A police department



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## June Elections

At this time we have the following candidate slate. As you can see, there is not enough people to fill the positions mandated in the club bylaws. If there is not enough people volunteering to place their name on the ballot for these positions by voting time, the club has a real problem!

President	Elise Edgell
Vice President	<b>OPEN</b>
Treasurer	Doug Steiner
Secretary.	<b>OPEN</b>
Board 1	<b>OPEN</b>
Board 2	<b>OPEN</b>
Board 3	Bill Thornton
Board 4	John Carlson
Board 5	Ted Littman
Board 6	Richard Miller
Board 7	Else Olavsson
Board 8	Gerry Resch

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. Just want to be on the Board and have a say in how things are run, get your name on the ballot!

But there is a long list of other tasks that should be done so that the club can function well. As it is, some are not done at all, some are hit or miss, and most of the "must do" tasks fall on just a few shoulders. The club needs people for morning setup to make sure the rooms are open, the tables are setup, the elevator is working, to make coffee, to get the donuts, to post the schedules, to setup the projector, the loud speakers and amp, to man the help desk, and the list goes on. If you want to continue to have a club, maybe a better club, I strongly suggest you figure out a way to participate. --- your editor ■

## Tech News

*By Sue Crane, Editor, Big Bear Computer Club,  
California Scrane5@charter.net www.bigbearcc.org*

Cosmeo is bringing Discovery's online encyclopedia into homes via its Web site. The site resembles the screen of a hand-held game device and features video clips and interactive games. Content providers, including Scholastic Corp. and the Public Broadcasting Service, are customized to meet the curriculum standards of different states. The service is available for \$9.95/month.

Microsoft announced that it has delayed the mainstream launch of Vista until next year. Steve Sinofsky, the head of the Office unit, has been tapped to lead Windows development. Following its push back of Windows Vista, Microsoft confirms the Office 2007 release will move to next year as well. It's been reported on a number of blog sites that Microsoft will release Windows Vista with 8 different versions, but no pricing information is available yet . . .

Microsoft is also building in a tool, Windows Performance Rating, that will rate a PC based on how well it is running and on how much it can take advantage of Vista's capabilities to help average consumers easily understand their Windows Vista PC's overall performance. As for systems slowing down over time, that's another issue that Microsoft is trying to tackle. Meanwhile, Vista is being designed to shut the door on spyware. It will introduce important changes at the heart of the operating system, as well as to Internet Explorer, and include Windows Defender, an anti-spyware tool.

An error in McAfee's virus definition file released mid-March caused consumer and enterprise antivirus products to flag Microsoft Excel, AdobeUpdateManager and other applications on users PCs as a virus called W95/CTX". Files were deleted or quarantined, depending on the user's settings.

When Microsoft first talked about Windows Live in November, most of the "Live" products were MSN services that had been rebranded. Since then Microsoft has added more than a dozen new products under the Windows Live umbrella. MSN executive David Cole explains, "Microsoft's goal is to continuously update and launch products". Over the next 3-6 months, Microsoft expects to ship more Windows Live technology into the marketplace than during their entire 10-year OS history. Microsoft's new ad-serving engine, AdCenter, is at the heart of Windows Live. AdCenter draws on user demographic information to help drive more targeted marketing. Microsoft has even talked about using advertising as a way to pay for traditional desktop software. Meanwhile, the list of Windows Live services continues expanding to include all the basic portal services.

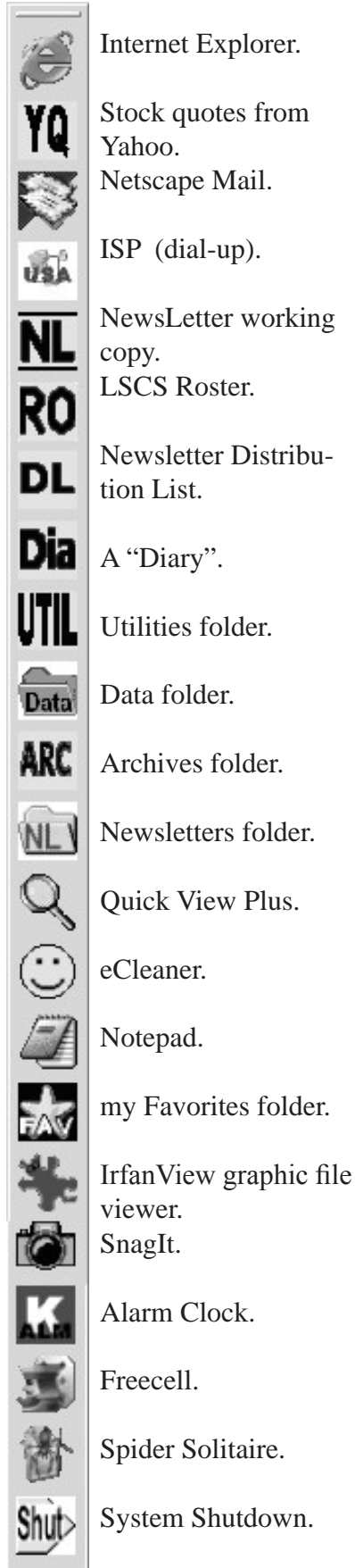
Take a look at the Ice Weasels, Space Cookies and Cheesy Poofs, high school teams competing for top merit in the 15th annual robotics contest sponsored by FIRST (For the Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology). With about \$10,000 worth of donated hardware and software, high school students are given 6 weeks to assemble a functioning robot that

can move around a court and shoot Nerf basketballs for points. Part of the challenge is for teens to find and work with mentors who are experts in technology and science. Once registered, the teams are given 3 boxes of hardware and software and a programming language called Easy C that allows them to write a program for the robot's onboard computer. Also included is Autodesk's 3D Max Studio animation software so they can create a 30-second animation. The game itself is roughly 2 minutes long, with robots that are 2 feet wide by 4 feet high. For the first 10 seconds, the robots must make as many baskets as possible; the robot with the most points from the first 10 seconds then gets to play offense. Winning bots will go on to compete at Atlanta's Georgia Dome at the international finals.

Neurofeedback, a form of conditioning that rewards people for producing specific brain waves, taps youths' fascination with animation and electronics to sweeten frightening medical treatments. While this form of treatment has been around for decades, incorporating video games marks a new frontier that taps young people's fascination with animation and electronics to sweeten often frightening, lengthy and tedious medical treatments. Video games are being used, for instance, to help sick children manage pain and anxiety during hospital stays. A young leukemia patient inspired "Ben's Game," which let him fight the cancer cells invading his body. A private island called Brigadoon in Linden Lab's "Second Life" virtual world is open only to people with Asperger's syndrome and autism. West Virginia's public schools are battling obesity by making "Dance Dance Revolution"--a step-to-the-beat video game--part of their curriculum, while Nintendo has made a splash with its new "Brain Age" mind-exercising game. CyberLearning's Smart BrainGames system targets symptoms arising from brain injuries, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and learning disabilities. Priced at \$584, the system is built on NASA technology that used video games and neurofeedback to train pilots. Traditional treatments, such as prescribing the stimulant Ritalin, behavioral therapy and education, are often covered by health insurance, while neurofeedback usually is not. Despite such hurdles, some medical practitioners are advocating the new approach.

Kyle MacDonald is on the verge of successfully completing a project that sounds absurd: Trading--with the help of a blog--a single red paper clip for a house. Since embarking on his house hunt last year, MacDonald has traded with people from across Canada and the United States and is now sitting on a year's free rent for an apartment in Phoenix. MacDonald is confident he's going to succeed, and hopes it can happen by the July 12 anniversary of the project's launch. And his goal is getting tantalizingly close. The project has allowed him to initiate a Net cult following that's hoping he'll succeed, too. Popular blogs such as boingboing have been tracking his progress.

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. ■



## One-click Access to Frequently-Used Programs, Files and Folders

*By Glenn Richards, Emeritus Member of the Lake-Sumter Computer Society, Leesburg, FL grich32(at)yahoo.com www.lscs.us*

There are certain files, folders, programs, and websites I access frequently during the day. To make this easy I create shortcuts to them in my Quick Launch toolbar that I keep normally hidden on the left side of my Desktop. Moving the mouse cursor to the left side of the screen unhides the toolbar, and a single left-click opens the shortcut.

Every entry in the list at the left is a shortcut, so any can be deleted without loss of the underlying program or file. However, Internet shortcuts like YQ will be deleted if the icon is deleted (but I keep a copy of it in my Favorites folder).

The one thing that takes getting used to is that sweeping the mouse cursor to the left edge of the screen may unhide the toolbar, thereby obscuring icons on the Desktop or menu choices on a window. This is just a matter of not letting the sharp point of the cursor get too close to the edge of the Desktop window.

Since this toolbar auto-hides, it does not take up any Desktop space. When unhidden, by moving the mouse cursor to its position, it moves out over icons at the left edge of the screen, and does not force those icons to shift over.

To start the QL Toolbar right-click an empty spot on the Taskbar, Toolbars, Quick Launch. Make sure the Taskbar is not locked (right-click the Taskbar to see). Move the mouse cursor to the "Handle" at the left end of the QL toolbar to result in the double-pointed arrow), press and hold the left mouse button, drag to the left edge of the screen, and release the mouse button. Drag the edges of the resulting toolbar to the shape shown. Right-click an empty spot on the toolbar and click "Always on top" and "Auto-Hide". Other right-clicks on this toolbar can lead to other options (I am using large icons and no text).

I have created my own icons for many of the choices so I can identify the functions from just the icon – but that is another story.

To add a shortcut to this QL toolbar, right-click the toolbar, uncheck Auto-Hide. Then right-drag a program, file, or other choice to the toolbar so a dark horizontal bar appears, release the mouse button, click "Create Shortcut Here." The icon can be dragged up or down the toolbar to whatever position you like. Once added, right-click the toolbar again and hide it.

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can have separate RSS feeds for different neighborhoods, giving up-to-date information on safety concerns in each neighborhood.

Curtis Brown explains that information received in an RSS feed can be filtered by keyword and colorized in text. So you have control over the RSS feed. You decide the ways in which that stream of information is going to serve your needs.

Curtis explains that RSS feeds become immensely useful when people work collaboratively in a wiki. (A wiki is a web page that different people can edit.) Changes to the web page can be monitored via an RSS feed. This allows anyone participating in the wiki to have a clear idea of who is adding the most value to the wiki. RSS allows for better monitoring and gives added transparency to the collaborative process.

Curtis goes on to explain that there are two kinds of RSS feeds -- static feeds and dynamic feeds. A static feed might be sports scores or the feed from a single blog. A dynamic feed is a stream of information where there is searching going on to pull out specific pieces of information to add to the stream.

It's also possible to combine several RSS feeds into a single new feed. One web site that let's you do that is [rssmix.com](http://rssmix.com). Why would you want to do that? Suppose you live in a metropolitan area with several different library systems spanning several counties. Each library system provides an RSS feed of the events happening within their library system. You'd like to keep track of library events in multiple counties. [rssmix.com](http://rssmix.com) would let you combine RSS feeds in that way.

Another RSS enthusiast, Bruce Roy, in Sydney, Australia explains - "I have found the RSS facility in The Next Generation of Genealogy Sitebuilding (TNG) very useful for the family tree site. It enables people interested in following the family tree to get information about changes to the tree without having to check the website's "What's New?" or wade through the data."

One other advantage of RSS is that it lets you tune out mainstream media and tune into alternative media and personal media. If you find the CBS Evening News a touch thin in how it covers the news, with RSS you have an alternative source of news where news stories don't need to be squeezed into 45 second slots.

Another RSS enthusiast, Winthrop Morgan, in the Washington DC-area had this to add:

"Regarding your request for examples of how RSS brings benefits into peoples' lives, I highly recommend you consider including Join Together Online as a great Win- Win- Win model.

Join Together Online (JTO) (<http://www.jointogether.org>) has long been a pioneer in using the Internet to support people working on substance abuse and gun violence issues. Every month,

one million JTO web pages are viewed by over 350,000 people.

JTO uses RSS feeds to not only help their web presence spread, but also to provide vital to support state, municipal, and nonprofit drug treatment and prevention program managers and their audiences. While these programs' web masters might have a modest web presence, they lack the wherewithal to continuously produce new content, or even gather and republish it. Without new content, their audiences lack a reason to come back to their Web site. The JTO RSS service enormously increases both the return visit value of these sites and the presence of authoritative information in this highly charged information space.

To keep the RSS feeds fresh and riveting, JTO employs a small editorial staff who aggregates both online and offline news on substance abuse funding, policies, and more from authoritative sources. They edit this news down to its essential content, and then republish it via RSS, as well as to users of their site and subscribers to their e-mail news services."

### **RSS Relieves Cluttered Email Inboxes**

If you have traditionally received a lot of your information via email, RSS can provide some relief to your inbox. Would you like to follow a particular email list, but can't stomach subscribing to one more email list? If that list is on Yahoogroups, you can follow the list via the list's RSS feed. An excellent free tool for reading RSS feeds is Bloglines. (<http://www.bloglines.com>)

RSS feeds are almost always spam-free. The provider of the RSS feed doesn't want you to unsubscribe from the feed -- so they treat you with respect.

Ben Sheldon, in Lowell, Massachusetts, passes along this RSS tip: "Google still only offers email news alerts, but this utility lets you use create an RSS feed out of any Google News search term. [<http://www.justinpfister.com/gnewsfeed.cfm>] I aggregate my name, my projects (DigitalBicycle, ServiceSpeak), and my street and city so that if something happens I should know about, I will."

If you're still with me, I'll pass along a few small tips of my own. I use RSS, Bloglines and my Digg.com account to keep track of what Digg stories my friends are digging (i.e. voting for.) I just copy the RSS feed from the bottom left of <http://digg.com/users/pshapiro/friends> and then paste it into Add Feed in Bloglines.

Between Katie Couric and the 50 friends I have on Digg, which do you think provides the richer quality of information to me? Right. Just for kicks I subscribe to the Associated Press RSS feed, so I'm in the loop with whatever Katie knows.

I also use the free service at Squeet.com to send me an email whenever one of my friends submits a story to Digg.com, so they don't have to let me know about their submissions. That email alert capability might well come to Digg sometime.

I use RSS to keep me posted on new items of interest to me that are posted to Del.icio.us. For example, if anyone submits an item to Del.icio.us with the tag digitalstorytelling, I find out about that really easily in my Bloglines account.

That puts me in touch with anyone doing digital storytelling anywhere on the planet. And I don't even have to subscribe to another email list to be in touch with them. I like that.

Phil Shapiro The author is a former president of Virginia

continued on page 23

## **LIGAS Microsystems**

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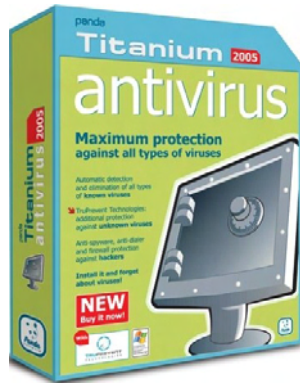
# Panda Titanium 2005 Security Suite

By Steve Carmeli, NOCCC

This year has been the year I redid my PC. Among other things, I installed 2 optical drives, one which was a DVD, got rid of the original optical drive, I got rid of the Norton Security Suite, and even did a Wipe Drive (that's another review).

While shopping at Staples for this year's Norton Security Suite, the salesman pointed out the Staples branded Panda Titanium 2005 Security Suite. It included anti-virus (including protection against worms and Trojan horses), anti-spyware, a firewall and, get this: a \$1,500 insurance package (more in a moment). It excluded all the tools that Norton includes which I never used. It came in two versions: Basic and Advanced, the latter having an advanced firewall, spam screener, and parental controls. The insurance package covered me in case some malware attacked my PC, their software failed to protect me, and the malware destroyed my PC. It was good for the replacement value of my PC or \$1,500, the lower of the two. Well, I'm not a parent so I didn't need parental controls, and felt the basic firewall would do, so I saved \$20.00 and purchased the \$45.00 Panda Titanium 2005 Security Suite.

Installation was interesting. It detected that I had another A/V system working and wouldn't proceed until it was disabled. It turns out that my ISP's integrated browser/e-mail client from SBC included a pretty nice anti-virus program. But I had to turn it off, so I did. This actually took several tries till I got it right to find where in the program's configuration the A/V feature was turned on and that I had to reboot to turn it off and unload it from memory. Next, after installation was completed, Panda provided a Client License number, User ID and Password. You must write those down because if you re-install the system, it will request those identifiers from you or the system will be disabled. Next the system gave me



## I'm not a parent so I didn't need parental controls

the option of running a spyware and virus check on just memory, the hard drive or both. I selected both. This process took only about 30 minutes if I remember correctly, which is very fast compared to other programs I've run, notably Webroot's SpySweeper. Finally, it updated its database of virus traces.

But the first two days I had some shocking disappointments with the product. First, since I purchased the product in 2006 and this was the 2005 product, I was getting pop-ups trying to sell me the 2006 product! Can you imagine my shock getting ad pop-ups from a product that's supposed to prevent them? After two days, the pop-ups stopped. Moreover, when I started using my usual browser, I was getting ads in the middle of news pages. My original browser, the one that had an A/V built in, always had ugly but effective messages saying that ads were blocked. My browser is actually an implementation of Internet Explorer, so the messages were from IE. Last problem I've noticed is this: I use Microsoft Plus! One of its features is one of various sounds, such as crickets, rocket blasts, etc. These are cut short at boot time but not reboots.

Other than those issues, Panda Titanium 2005 Security Suite is pretty nice and I've had no problems to report since it has been installed and reinstalled. The system updates its database of traces daily and automatically, as opposed to Norton. Norton makes you manually update, and its database of signatures is only available weekly. The firewall is included and is not a separate purchase, compared to Norton.

Like ZoneLabs' firewall, it comes up with a warning whenever a program has been modified and suggests whether or not to you should allow it to be executed. (I have to admit I almost invariably ignore these warnings and permit execution.)

Finally, it has heuristic technology built in, like Norton, that it calls TruPrevent. This technology is designed to work when a new malware emerges for which preventative traces have yet to be written. This technology examines any agent that is behaving like a virus, worm, Trojan horse, etc. based on apparent intent and prevents it from executing.

On the customer service side, Panda beats Symantec (the makers of Norton) again. Included in the purchase price is one year of unlimited voice technical support, in addition to email support. I've only used it once or twice, but it was in English and real. Norton charges you something like \$49 per incident.

Overall, my judgment is that Panda is technologically equal to Norton in security features, which is the primary reason most people buy it, not for its Undelete and Speed Disk features. It is a better value because it includes just what you need, a complete security suite of anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall, includes real tech support and an insurance policy if their product fails which will cover the price of a decent PC. It's a great product.

(Note only the more expensive Virus Defense Internet System is available online @ \$64.98)

Staples Virus Defense System 2.0 is powered by Panda Titanium 2005, \$44.99 at Staples: [www.staples.com](http://www.staples.com). **(Review Editor's note:** The 2006 versions of Panda software

are available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) and other web sites.) ■

**Editor's Note:** Norton AV does have an automatic LiveUpdate feature and does **not** require you to manually update the virus signatures. Although it is true that the automatic virus updates are posted weekly, NAV LiveUpdate checks for updates daily. It not only updates the virus signatures, it updates the virus software and other installed Symantec software. LiveUpdate even updates LiveUpdate. On my personal system, there is a list of 15 items that LiveUpdate checks. If you want the updates as soon as they are released, you can manually download them anytime you choose. It is a fact that if you choose to buy Norton AntiVirus as a standalone package, you do not get a firewall with it. If you choose to buy a Norton suite (like this Panda suite) you get the antivirus and the firewall. That is titled Norton Internet Security and includes NAV and the Norton Firewall and more. Personally, I buy the standalone NAV and run my preferred firewall; Zonealarm. Symantec does offer free online keyboard chat support and free email support, both of which can lead to free live voice support for unusual problems. If you call for live voice support, the fee is \$29.95 per incident, not \$49.00.

## The Symantec Guide to Home Internet Security

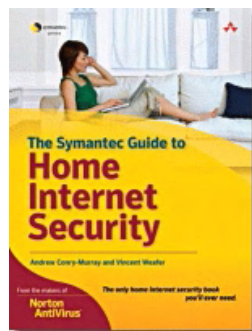
By Bill Trammell, NOCCC

<http://www.booksamillion.com/bam/covers/0/32/135/641/0321356411.jpg>

After being traumatized by Kraig Lane at the October 2005 NOCCC meeting, I requested Symantec's Internet Security software package for Christmas, received it and started the New Year with greater confidence. Noticing that the subject book was available for review, I thought it might provide some information on tweaking this software, which is pretty intuitive anyway.

Wrong! The book does not give any information about using Symantec's security. It is a well-written, broad discussion of what Internet threats are out there and what to do about them. The authors, Andrew Conry-Murray and Vincent Weafer, sum up the goal of their book as, "... not to make your computer invulnerable; that's impossible. However, the Internet is full of easy targets. Our goal is to make you a harder target."

This book provides an overview of firewalls; viruses and worms; and spyware, adware, and Trojan Horses along with software (free and for purchase) for testing and controlling your Internet security. Each chapter is ended with a checklist of Do's and Don'ts as well as helpful resources for further information. Primary focus is on Microsoft XP and Internet Explorer, which the authors point out are more at risk not because Microsoft



is necessarily poor at protection, but because the bad guys are spending their efforts penetrating the most-used Internet targets.

Their recommendations can be summed up as:

1. Install a firewall (by the way, XP SP2 comes with a firewall which should be disabled if you're using another firewall).
2. Whatever security software you are using should be updated at least weekly.
3. Switch to alternative browsers such as Firefox and Opera, which have less malware attacks due to lower numbers of users. And, consider alternate operating systems for the same reason.
4. Either disable ActiveX or adjust its to minimize security risks (detailed instructions with illustrations are provided for adjusting security risks for all elements of XP SP2's Windows Security Center as well as other Microsoft features and other software including Spam filters and WIFI usage).

This book lists for \$20 and is easy to read. It was published in September 2005 by Addison-Wesley and should be available at most bookstores selling computer related publications. On-line it can be found for about \$14.

I found it very informative about the details of how malware works and how to fight it. I used a number of the free recommended security check websites and discovered I had at least one Trojan Horse or other malware on each of my computers despite previous checks by my installed security.

Would I recommend this book? If you know a hawk from a handsaw and a phish from a Trojan Horse save the 20 bucks and buy a good security suite with a firewall included, keep it up-to-date, and run deep checks at least weekly. ■

## Linux Patch

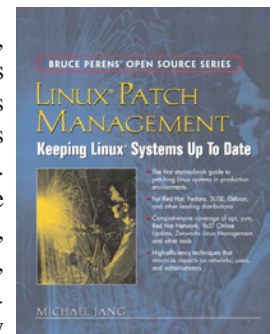
### Management:

Keeping Linux Systems Up To Date

By Jim DuWaldt, NOCCC

Michael Jang, the book's author, holds several Linux certifications and is a full-time writer focusing on networks and operating systems. His latest book is Mastering Red Hat Enterprise Linux 3.

The need for upgrading software is obvious: new features are created, defective software needs to be replaced, and security flaws have to be mended. Setting up Windows Update is very convenient: this relatively small book (288 pages) wants you to have a similar experience with Linux by examining tools and strategies for automatically updating software for Linux distributions ("distros"). An additional goal is to show how administrators can create local repositories to



Continued on page 12

## Product Reviews

### Linux

from page 11

speed updating (you would need a very big pipe to update a large number of systems that all go out to the Internet every evening).

It accomplishes this by focusing on a small set of tools supported by a wide range of distributions. **Apt** is used by Debian and virtually all other distributions; **yum** is utilized by the Fedora distros and also works with Red Hat; and enterprise-level tools offered by the two largest distros, Red Hat (RHEL Update Agent, Proxy and Satellite Servers) and SuSE (YaST and ZenWorks). An interesting note: the horsepower required for the RHEL servers rivals that of a small database server and was much greater than for others.

I was able to test the updating capabilities with our SuSE systems at work. The instructions for manually updating with **YaST** worked well, and the book correctly points out how useful it is to run upgrades manually before setting it to perform automatically.

The most interesting part of the book teaches you how to set up repositories on a LAN that can be used by the remaining workstations in your local network to upgrade themselves at LAN speed. The general trick for all distros, (even RHEL, which likes to stand alone), is to get the workstation-level tools (apt, yum, and YaST) to treat that local repository as a source, and then use utilities like rsync (one of many available, but apparently the most popular, and the focus of the book) to maintain the repository. Rsync's main purpose is to replace only those files that have actually been updated, thereby cutting down on the bandwidth necessary to retrieve them. The first step is a doozy: rsync must begin by downloading everything! You can cut that initial load by filling the repository with the files you used to build the system itself - if the files are not too far out of date.

Updating kernels is also discussed but it lacked details without being clear as to why the details were absent. Hopefully, [www.kernel.org](http://www.kernel.org), recommended by the author, will help. We get tantalizing tips: patches must be applied consecutively; a machine can have two kernels, the incumbent and the new kernel, to allow testing before the final switch. But why didn't the author adhere to his usual pattern and provide at least an example for RHEL, SuSE, Debian, and Fedora? Disclaimers and hedges would have been fine because anyone smart enough to understand the rest of the book would understand the unique implications (and dangers!) of upgrading a kernel.

Sources of updates themselves are covered generically (the distro provider, developers of applications, and packages meant for similar but different distributions) and in detail for each of the main distros. The issue of these patch sources is revealed as the driving force behind apt and yum, which were meant to be more accessible (and therefore flexible) than tools unique to RHEL and SuSE (YaST/Zenworks).

Risks and methods for mitigating them are given. The author correctly advises a separate test system, similar in original configuration to production systems because "each problem you see [on the test system] is one less problem that you will hear about from each of your users" (author's italics).

This is a very good book for system administrators with anything larger than a few Linux workstations

and I'm glad it's on my shelf. But I wish there had been more explicit information on updating kernels, arguably the most important and dangerous upgrade of all.

ISBN: 0132366754; Published: Jan 9, 2006; Retail: \$44.99; Amazon: \$28.34. A 30% discount and free shipping is available from publisher Prentice Hall: <http://www.phptr.com/title/0132366754>. ■

## 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 re-



quire 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 activities, 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>.) ■

## 802.11n Not

*By Jim Sanders, NOCCC*

A lot of us remember the modem wars from a few years ago. The first big step for the dial-up telephone modem was 110 bits per second compared to a common 48,000 bits per second today. Technology advanced over time and new standards were established to insure interoperability. A big word that means when you buy a 56K modem from company X, that it will work correctly with a 56K modem from company Y. The problem back then was technology was moving faster than the standards committee. This resulted in companies releasing proprietary technology with names like Turbo This and Fast That. If you needed the speed and could afford to buy one of those modems for each end of your connection, they worked. But if you wanted to communicate with anyone else at that speed, if they didn't have the same brand of modem, you were out of luck.

The standards we use for wireless LANs are established by the IEEE. The full name of the IEEE is the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc., although the organization is referred to by the letters I-E-E-E and pronounced Eye-triple-E. Wireless networking for home use really took off with the finalization of the IEEE 802.11B standard with a nominal transfer rate of 11 Mega bits per second. The 802.11g IEEE standard bumped the speed to 54 Mega bits per second. Unfortunately, we are seeing a repeat of the dial-up modem scenario. 802.11n has not been released! So when you see terms like Pre-n, SRX, MIMO and others, you are buying something that may not work with the real standard when it is released and probably won't work with company X's version. Until the box says 802.11n compliant, think twice about buying it. See this article: <http://www.eetimes.com/news/latest/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=187001817> ■

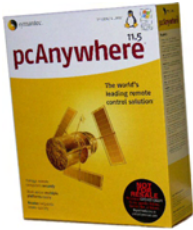
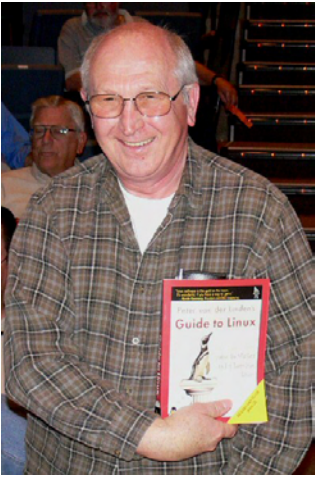
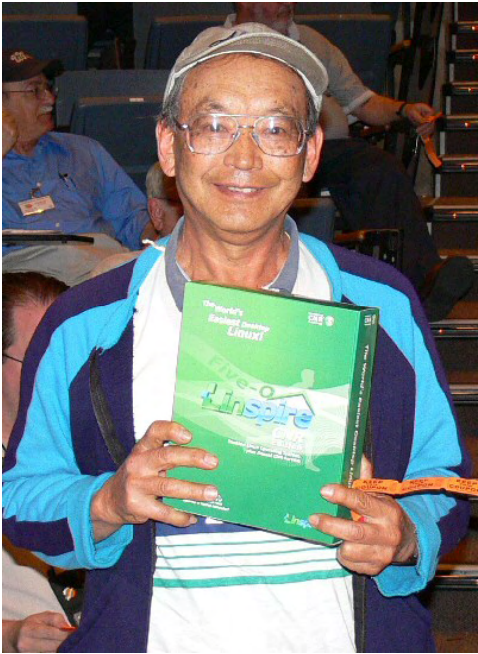
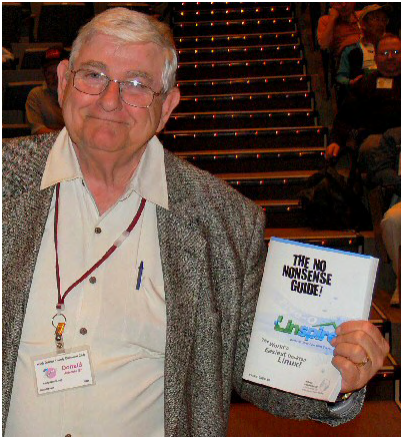


### Pig SIG Open To ALL

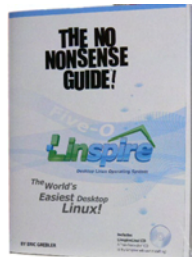
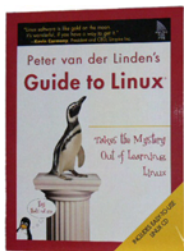
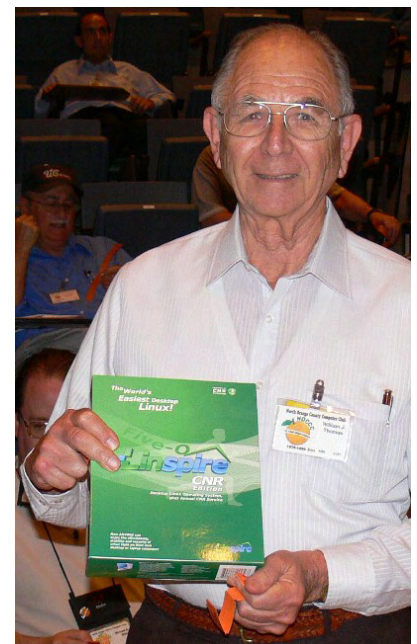
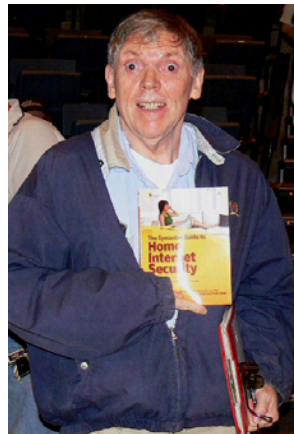
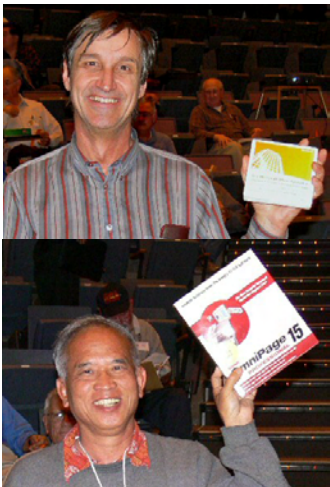
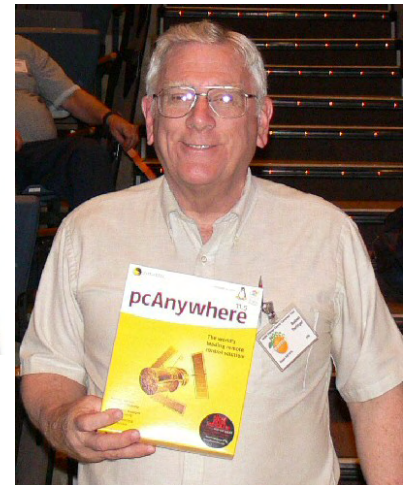
Meet us in the Cafeteria in Argyros Hall around 11:30 am (until about 1pm). If you're hungry, there is a buffet lunch and snack bars open.

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! ■

# May Meeting Photos



# Kendall Dawson gave us a great presentation on Linspire Linux





## 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

**Printshop Deluxe 21** – This is the newest version of Broderbund's great program and affords users a complete and easy way to create impressive print projects of all sorts with over 320,000 premium images, 17,500+ professionally designed projects, and 600+ fonts. MSRP=\$50.

**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.

**SendPhotos Gold** – “If you would like to e-mail photos without hassle, SendPhotos, from Novatix, is easy and fun to use.” - PC Maga-

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

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

### Books

**InDesign Type** – This new book, authored by Nigel French, will teach you professional typography for Adobe InDesign CS2, today's premier page layout tool. It provides users with a comprehensive overview of the application's vast array of type capabilities. Published by Peachpit/Adobe Press, the MSRP=\$40.

**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, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition** – David Karp's 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, 4<sup>th</sup> 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

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## 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 in good condition, the deposit is refunded. **No review is required.**

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

**Windows XPHacks, 1<sup>st</sup> 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 Fulham 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, 2<sup>nd</sup> 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, 2<sup>nd</sup> 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, 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 Samba – 3 How to & Reference Guide, 1<sup>st</sup> 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; au-

thored 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, 2<sup>nd</sup> 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, & Andrei 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-follow 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



Linspire joined us in May to talk about their desktop operating system -- a viable, cost effective alternative to Windows XP. Our sharp and informative speaker was Kendall Dawson.

President Elise Edgell ran the meeting. She announced that two copies of Linspire were being given away in the raffle. The badge-wearing member prize was PC Anywhere.

Elise gave a plea for volunteers to run for office. We are short officers this year and without officers, the club simply can't function. We need help in the form of a Secretary, Treasurer, coffee person, website maintenance, and programming.

Cathy Margolin mentioned a settlement in a class action lawsuit against Epson. It affects people who purchased certain Epson printers between April 8, 1999, and May 8, 2006. Class members can receive money from Epson or discounted purchases. Details are at [www.epsonsettlement.com](http://www.epsonsettlement.com).

Elise mentioned that some people who signed up for a free trial of Smart Computing received a renewal notice before getting a single issue. She explained that the free trial lasts three months -- and renewal notices are sent in the third-to-last month of membership. Thus, it is possible to get the renewal notice before receiving an issue. You will still get three free issues before being required to pay for renewal.

For those subscribing to Smart Computing, Elise asked them to GIVENOCCC CREDIT for the referral. This way, the club will be reimbursed with free subscriptions that it can give away at raffles.

George Margolin introduced Ken-

dall Dawson. Kendall mentioned that his company and its product used to be called LINDOWS. However, they got sued by Microsoft because that sounded too much like "Windows." That's why the name changed to Linspire. (The lawsuit was eventually dropped.)

The company was started in 2001 by Michael Robertson, Chairman and former CEO. It is located in San Diego, right by UCSD. The Linspire operating system is based on Linux.

What is Linux? It is a technology known as a Kernel. This is the heart of an operating system and it is what runs a computer. Linux was developed in 1991 by a Finnish computer student named Linus Torvalds. (Kendall displayed a picture of him on the screen.) To this day, Linus is still involved in its evolution.

There are many different distributions of Linux -- or Distros, as they are commonly called. There is Linspire, Red Hat, Suse (Novell's version), and several other commercially available packages -- as well as thousands of free ones you can download off the Web.

All Linux distros have one thing in common -- the Kernel (the bottom layer of the Linux architecture). How do the distros differ? The rest of the architecture is unique in each of them. This includes two layers -- the Shell, which is above the kernel, and the User layer, above the Shell.

This means that distros differ on look, feel, and purpose. They typically include different feature sets, like applications and utilities. Their scopes also tend to differ. Some distros allow you to build Linux servers, others allow desktops, and others even allow both.

Linspire is strictly an end-user desktop operating system. The company claims it to be "The World's Easiest Desktop Linux."

Since Linus Torvalds developed Linux, its special quality has been that it's an Open Source operating system. What does that mean? Mr. Torvalds made its source code readily available to everyone. He literally uploaded it to an FTP server when he finished it -- so it could be accessed and downloaded.

He didn't hide it or protect it by copyrights. Anyone is free to use it, change it, and sell it in his or her own distro.

The only condition is that it must remain open source. In other words, whenever people make changes to Linux, they must also make their changes readily available to everyone else.

This also means that ongoing development and evolution of the operating system is being done by an entire community rather than a single person or company. People around the world are making changes to it all the time, then uploading and sharing those changes with everyone else.

A member asked how they know that someone's not going to make malicious code changes. Kendall replied that someone definitely could do that, just like they do with Windows. However, anyone in the Linux community can patch up the problem, unlike Windows, where only Microsoft can patch it up and all customers need to wait on them for a fix.

Experience has shown that problems tend to be fixed fast when a whole community is involved in a system. Once, when a destructive worm was released for Windows, a company other than Microsoft actually developed a patch for themselves faster than Microsoft could release the official patch.

Another member asked who decides the final output for the operating system, if so many hands are involved in developing it. Kendall said there is a committee. The code for the kernel is maintained on a controlled source server. People cannot just change or delete source code at random without going through the committee.

Next, Kendall discussed the penguin. What is that picture of a penguin always associated with Linux? Its name is Tux and since 1996, it's been the official mascot of Linux. (Linus Torvalds once mentioned he loves penguins, so someone was inspired to create Tux as the mascot.)

He then discussed software installation with Linspire. It is greatly simplified. The method is called CNR or Click 'N Run. That's literally all it takes. You just find the product you

want on the Linspire website, click it and it will automatically install itself.

This underscores the philosophy difference between getting application software for Windows vs. Linspire. Kendall said that getting applications for Windows was like buying software “a la carte” -- you have to buy each product separately after paying for the operating system. For instance, Microsoft Office alone costs \$300.00.

By contrast, he said that for software acquisition, Linspire was like “an all-you-can-eat buffet.” All applications COME WITH the operating system. Once you buy and install Linspire, you can freely download any application you want from the Linspire website. It’s included in the price and you can continue to download software for one year after purchase. Then it costs only \$20.00 a year after that to retain the privilege. (Some commercial products are not included in the deal, though. They are sold separately at various prices.)

A member asked if uninstalling a product was easy. Kendall said it’s just a matter of right-clicking the product and choosing “uninstall.”

Another member asked if there are good descriptions of the applications on the Linspire website. Kendall said that the descriptions are good -- and you get product ratings as well. (The quality of a product depends on the number of penguins it gets.)

He said that some applications come pre-installed with the operating system. These include OpenOffice (word processing, spreadsheet, presentation), Lsongs (CD ripping, MP3 creation, Internet radio, music management), Lphoto (photo editing), Instant Messenger (compatible with most systems), Nvu (web publishing), and various utilities (movie player, CD/DVD burner, e-mail, web browser, and other basic items).

A member asked what the default browser is for Linspire. Kendall said it was Mozilla but it’s changing to Firefox.

Kendall then covered the advantages of using Linspire over Windows. First, as mentioned previously, there’s a lower cost to purchase and maintain the

operating system and associated applications. Second, it has “family-friendly” licensing. If you purchase Linspire for home use, you can install it on all computers in your home for free. (Business use is licensed differently, though.)

Third, Linspire does not have as many viruses, worms, and spyware attacking it as Windows does. (Windows is obviously a more desirable target, as it still controls 93% of the market.)

Fourth, Linspire offers rock-solid stability. Due to its architecture, you do not need to reboot it constantly to fix problems or defragment the hard drive for performance. Kendall leaves his Linspire systems up for months at a time, with no performance degradation.

Kendall covered pricing. If you download Linspire, it is \$89.95 with a one-year subscription for CNR applications. For a boxed package, it’s \$99.95. After that, there are two possible CNR annual renewal rates. The regular CNR Service is \$20.00 a year. The CNR Gold Service is \$50.00 per year. The Gold service offers several benefits, including considerable discounts on commercial software products. Details are on the Linspire website: [www.linspire.com](http://www.linspire.com).

Kendall mentioned that the operating system can be purchased for \$49.95 without the CNR subscription.

A member asked what type of support is provided for Linspire. Kendall said it is all web-based, but it’s totally free -- at least for now.

Another member asked what the system requirements are for Linspire. Kendall said the minimum requirements are:

PC with 800MHz or higher processor  
128 MB of RAM (256 MB or higher recommended for best performance)

Hard drive with 4 GB free space  
800x600 SVGA or higher resolution and monitor (3-D graphics accelerator card for some games, screen savers, etc.)

C D - R O M or D V D drive, Keyboard & Mouse

Linspire-compatible sound card and speakers or headphones

Linspire-compatible 56 Kbps hardware modem, cable modem, or DSL modem

Ethernet card for Internet/LAN connectivity

Someone asked what printers are supported by Linspire. Kendall said it depends on which printer manufacturers offer drivers for Linux in general. HP and Epson are great at that. Others not so good. To find out if a specific printer is supported, there’s a website with supported printer listings: [www.linuxprinting.org](http://www.linuxprinting.org).

Someone asked if a manual comes with Linspire. He said that one comes in the boxed package. If you download Linspire, you can purchase a manual and other books online at [www.linspire.com](http://www.linspire.com). Just click the Products tab, then Books.

Someone asked if Linspire has a partitioning utility to let you install it on the same machine as Windows. Kendall said no, it doesn’t. He recommended using either Partition Magic -- or hot-swappable system drives, as those are now affordable.

People asked if Microsoft Office and WordPerfect documents can be open with OpenOffice. Kendall said yes, basic documents can be opened.

However, OpenOffice may not recognize some advanced formatting. If people are interested in using OpenOffice, he recommended finding a local Linux user group to consult on a regular basis.

Someone asked if Windows software can run on Linspire. Kendall said it cannot run on Linspire by itself. However, there are commercially-available packages that allow some Windows programs to run.

Someone asked if there is a 64-bit version of Linspire. He said there currently is not. They are developing it, though. Meanwhile, the 32-bit version can run on some 64-bit machines.

Someone asked if Linspire features a graphical user interface. Kendall said it definitely does.

In fact, Kendall’s slideshow presentation was running on Linspire, using the OpenOffice presentation application. He showed us the Linspire GUI desktop, which is similar to Windows.

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## Meeting Reports

# Computer essentials SIG Report

*By Elise Edgell, NOCCC*

Several subjects were discussed during the meeting. The first topic related to sending an email so that the receiver will want to read it. Because different email programs handle email differently I suggest that it is the best practice to make the subject line of the email as informative as possible so that you let the reader know why you are writing. Microsoft Outlook downloads the email and not only displays the subject line but also shows the content. AOL only shows the sender and the subject line. So, what may be sufficient for Outlook does not work well in AOL. There is also the issue of filters that you may want to consider. If the email program is sorting the email before the reader sees it you may want to put a designation in the subject line that will allow the email to be sent to the right mailbox or if sorted will be grouped with the correct group of email. When I send an email concerning NOCCC I always put [NOCCC] in the subject line.

Another topic of discussion was Clear Type. Many users are not even aware that Clear Type is available or its purpose. With the popularity of LCD screens, both in laptop computers and desktop, the appearance of type may be a disappointment. The way to turn on the Clear Type feature is to right click on your desktop, then click on "Properties." Select the "Appearance" tab then click on "Effects." Then click on the drop down menu that is beside the "Use the following method to smooth edges of screen fonts.: There are two options, "Standard" and "Clear Type." Click on "Clear Type" then click on "OK." If you do not like the appearance of your fonts using Clear Type you can always go through the procedure again and select "Standard."

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# Computer Aided Investing (CAI) SIG



*By Bob Krishfield, NOCCC*

Market Review: The markets continued upward in April reaching new highs. We looked at charts of the Dow and the Advance/Decline line, which measures the breadth, and strength of the market. The AD line showed signs of diverging which would be a serious bearish sign that the Dow is at a top and ready to reverse. An updated chart showed that the AD line turned up and was not diverging. Looking at the McClellan Oscillator and Summation Index for confirmation, these indicators showed no reason for a market reversal. The NASDAQ does not fit the same pattern, and is weaker, crossing the 50 day MA, turning down. It has broken the trend line established back in Oct 05, and has an AD line that is negative and trending down. The S&P500 and Russell 2000 are showing continued strength and confirm the primary market trend is still bullish. Weakness appears to be limited to the NASDAQ large tech stock leaders. Most of the domestic gains have been in the energy and natural resource sectors, and big gains in the international stocks due to a lower dollar and world demand for minerals. Higher prices for oil, gold, copper, silver are shifting investments from stocks into commodities. The top ETFs over the last 6 months are gold (GLD), various international funds and emerging market funds, and the Asian countries that are suppliers to China. Looking at the top mutual funds, the same areas of investment showed up: precious metals and mining, Latin America, international and emerging market funds. But the returns from the managed funds are 25% larger than from similar ETFs. All of the funds showed over 50% annualized gains for the last 6 months.

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# Security SIG

*By Dave Keays, NOCCC*

May 2006

This time we did mostly a round table discussion. But I did mention a new spyware test site.

Someone was setting-up a new ecommerce site and was nervous about security. While he was definitely wise to learn what needs to be done before he did anything, it sounded like he was trying to do too much and would just end up overwhelmed by all the details. I tried to switch his focus to securing his personal network and leaving the enterprise network for others.

After getting through the idea of what routers, firewalls, and IDS to use we discovered that he would be using another site's resources and didn't even have to worry about all those mundane things.

This just illustrates how a shared web hosting can help security. Let them worry about security. While he does need to make sure the hosting site is on its toes and doing things properly, let them do their job. Make sure backups are properly done, any important sections (logon, credit card numbers, etc) are encrypted by using SSL, and that the ability to change the site is secured also.

Since whoever hosts the site also provides the application he doesn't even have to worry about securing the application either. They have written the site and have complete control of it. They are there to make sure vulnerabilities like SQL injections don't let someone subvert the site itself. He can now focus on the business side and how to maximize his profits.

Then we looked at a Spyware testing site that was just put up last Thursday. I found out about it on the SANS diary/blog. It is immature and still has some rough spots. Considering the reputation of the programmers (Tom Lisper, Ed Souko, and Michael Price) I'm confident that it will improve over time.

I want to mention that I would not go to this site (CARSPY.COM) unless it was referred to me by someone I

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# Digital Photo SIG



By Larry Klees,  
NOCCC

## June meeting.

- Replacing backgrounds.
- Creating your own backgrounds.
- Cutting and folding paper.
- Eye dropper tools
- Adding noise

After Show and tell we will discuss how to make place cards like the one shown below. This place card was created as a thank you for a friend who helped me with props for a photo project I was working on. When the project shots were finished she showed me an orchid in her garden. The orchid was quite attractive but the background was not suitable for a place card. I used the eye dropper tool to sample light and dark shades of green from the orchid's stem. These shades were used to create a totally new and simple background that matches the orchid and allows writing names on the card. Backgrounds such as this one are often improved by adding noise. The end result allows type setting names that match the color of the orchid's petals as shown, or cards can be pre-printed with no names. The background is light, allowing the names to be added later with a marking pen.



4" x 6" prints are cut and folded to make the place cards.

To get those orchid petals to stick up a shown, a pro would use a several thousand dollar die cutter and a folder costing several thousand dollars

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## PRODUCTS FOR REVIEW

FROM PAGE 16

and photo-sharing facilities. Published by Osborne/McGraw Hill, 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.

**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 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, 4<sup>th</sup> 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 Debugging 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

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## Meeting Reports

### CAI SIG

FROM PAGE 20

These charts are posted on my website.

Discussion: We looked into the theme Sell in May and go away. This refers to a seasonal trading strategy that market performance during the summer months is poor in comparison to the rest of the year. Statistics compiled by the Stock Traders Almanac show that the average performance for May Oct for the last 55 years is 0.3%, while the performance for Nov Apr averages 7.9%. The worst months for market performance based on the last 15 years of S&P500 are August and September, down 19.6% and 16.5 respectively. The highest months are: October 34.6%, November 32.9% and December 32.9%. These variations are the basis of many seasonal trading systems that take advantage of the seasonal variations. Using AmiBroker, we took a look at a six months switching strategy, going long in the Dow during Nov April, and selling on May 1st and staying in cash until Nov 1st. The results were not spectacular. The average annualized return was 5.8% with a max drawdown of 20%. By adding a timing routine to stay longer if the market was rising, or sell sooner if the market was dropping, the return increased to 6.3% and drawdown was reduced to 15%. Using this system with DFSCX, the timed results were 10.9% with a 15% drawdown. Clearly, the seasonal variation has an effect, but this simple system was not that robust to make a living from it.

Using Amibroker as a screening and ranking tool, we looked at how the top sector and fund charts were made. Amibroker produces lists in the form of spreadsheets from simple AFL exploration programs that compute statistics for each security, selects securities that pass the filters, and list the securities and customized columns of data for that security. The listing can then be sorted on multiple columns to produce a ranked listing to obtain the top ranked securities using many different criteria. The AFL exploration program can run against the entire database or a selected list of securities defined as a group, sector,

or watchlist. The results of these runs are posted on my website. Next month we will demonstrate other explorations useful for selection and hedging. ■

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### SECURITY SIG

FROM PAGE 20

trusted and was authored by people with a good reputation. Just because the site claims they won't do bad things doesn't mean much. But I explicitly decided to trust them. I have the same feeling for Steve Gibson and GRC.COM. I would not let a site do to my computer/network what it does if it wasn't for his presentations at the computer club.

The idea of trust being important was stated thousands of years ago by Sun Tsu in THE ART OF WAR: "If you know neither the enemy ... , you will succumb in every battle." I want to add that knowing your enemies implies that you know who your friends are also. Who can you trust and who are you skeptical about?

Next month we'll look into some new developments in the spam frontier. ■

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### PHOTO SIG

FROM PAGE 21

more. There will be a demo of how to use inexpensive cutting and folding tools to get professional results.

#### HELPFUL HINTS :

At past meetings I have shown how to make and use a five cent color calibration card (shown below) to get very accurate colors and do 90% of the work you could do with a Macbeth Color Chart costing \$80 or more. I usually make these cards of a size to fit in my shirt pocket and keep a supply of them in my camera bag. As I was preparing to photograph an auto show I knew that I would need one of these cards. However, I didn't want to bring my camera bag and I was expecting my shirt pocket to get sweaty. What to do? I made the card 2.3" square. This allows me to store the card in one of my HAKUBA pouches. Folding the black, gray, and white swatches on the inside keeps them pristine in the pouch. Then when the card is needed I simply fold it right side out.



These HAKUBA pouches are well worth the five dollars or so they cost. I keep three of them marked with colored pens (red shown) to tell them apart. Each one holds four AA batteries, a memory card, and (from now on) a color calibration card. The belt loop hook fits inside or outside of the pouch. I place fresh batteries positive end up as shown. When depleted batteries are removed from the camera, they are placed positive end down.

See you at the meeting. ■

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## Hardware SIG Report

By Herbert Wong, Jr., SIG Leader

The topic for the April Hardware SIG was "Preparing For Disaster." The media focus has long been on Internet borne attacks (ex. – virus, Trojan, spam, etc.). However, every computer is vulnerable to hardware failure. Most of the time, hardware failure is easily repairable.

Catastrophic hardware failure is another matter. It can arise from many causes. Pervasive electronic circuit failure can be caused by power corruption from lightning strikes, external machinery (refrigerators, vacuum cleaners, etc.), electrical shorts, etc. Overly stressed electronic components can fail from heat.

The most common catastrophic failure is caused by hard disk drive failure. Do not presume that any hard disk drive will last for more than a few years. About half of my hard disk drives failed by about four years.

Usage is not an indicator of imminent failure. I had two identical hard disk drives in two computers.

One drive was in a dormant computer on a shelf. The second drive still runs my Usenet application and has been heavily abused. The first drive failed with only a few hundred hours of use.

That occasional clicking sound that you hear coming from your computer is not natural. It is the sound of failure. Your hard disk drive cannot read something and is resetting. The end is near. Immediately make backups of your data and prepare to replace your drive!

Prepare For Disaster! Start now. Start when you buy each new computer. Make life easier by taking simple steps that will alleviate the panic that could ensue catastrophic failure.

The simplest step to take is to buy a large storage box with a lid. This will contain everything needed to revive your computer (buy one box for each computer). It should include all parts that came with your new computer (extra cables, brackets, etc.), all original software (operating system, applications, drivers, etc.), warranty cards, manuals, log book, etc.

The log book is your best friend. A three ring loose-leaf binder is best. You will need to document all the steps, applications, adjustments, settings, etc. that you make to your computer to get it to work. The more you document the easier recovery will be.

This book should contain all of your vital data. Keep it in a secure location (even under lock and key if necessary). Document exact URLs, usernames, passwords, dates, requirements (ex. - Windows Explorer required, login every 30 days, etc.) as needed. The book should be divided into sections for hardware configuration (physical and device drivers), application software (update instructions, passwords, etc.), Internet site information, etc.

Document everything! Give each of your computers a name. Using an optical-disk safe marker, label all your software disks with serial numbers, computer name, installation date, etc. This info also goes in the log book. Put a copy of your operating system disk in the box and tape another one inside your computer case for extreme emergencies (I sometimes don't

put things back in the storage box).

Buy a UPS (uninterruptible power supply)! This will reduce the effects of household appliances on your computer's lifeblood electricity, protect against blackouts, and, possibly, even help protect from lightning strikes. A bigger UPS is much better than an adequate UPS. Twice as big can last four times as long when the power goes out.

Use a second logical disk for all your data. Do not allow all of your critical data (tax records, important email, documents, etc.) to become mixed in with all of that other detritus on your C: drive. Remember, all of your applications can be reinstalled from optical disk. Your personal data can be irreplaceable. If you cannot find it, it will not be easy to backup, and there will not be backups made. If you do not have a second logical disk drive, make a folder (directory) with your name as the label and stick everything under that.

Make A Backup Today! After disaster strikes, everyone will ask you if you made a backup. Disaster will happen. It's only a matter of time.

The Hardware SIG topic for June will be Laptop Technology. Finally, there are exciting things happening to microprocessor technology and we must revisit Laptops, once again.

You can contact me at [OCUG@SingularityTechnology.com](mailto:OCUG@SingularityTechnology.com) ■

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## MAIN MEETING FROM PAGE 19

(Instead of Start, it has a Launch button.)

For the rest of his presentation, Kendall demonstrated operating system usage, including the easy process of downloading and installing a CNR application. He also fielded several questions.

Just before the raffle, Elise gave one final plea for people to get involved. She mentioned that the monthly Board Meeting occurs at her house on the Monday after the Main Meeting. It only lasts 1 to 2 hours and she always provides brownies! They are VERY GOOD Brownies!

Next Meeting: Mustek Inc. Long known for the Mustek scanner line, the company has expanded into several other lines including digital cameras, camcorders, DVD recorders and players, and Blue Tooth devices. ■

## ESSENTIAL SIG FROM PAGE 20

I also demonstrated my method for answering questions. It is simple. For most questions I use a Google search. I also use the Help files that come with programs. I have found that I can look up answers to questions that I have no idea how I would find the answers without using a computer.

We also looked at the type of tutorials that are available on the Microsoft web site. This is a feature that I really appreciate. I use Microsoft Office 2003. When I want to use a new feature or learn more about one that I already use I go to Microsoft's On-Line help. The tutorials are very useful. This feature alone makes the Office suite worthwhile.

For our June meeting please bring any PDA's or other peripherals (along with installation disks and instructions) that you can't get to work and we will see if we can solve your problem. Also please bring your questions. See you in June. ■

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## RSS EXPLAINED FROM PAGE 9

Macintosh Users Group and worked as the Washington DC Regional Coordinator for Community Technology Centers' Network, an international network of more than 1000 organizations bringing technology and technology training to underserved communities.

He can be reached at <http://www.digitaldivide.net/profile/pshapiro> and at [pshapiro@his.com](mailto:pshapiro@his.com) His blog is at <http://philsrssfeed.blogspot.com>

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# SIG List

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

SIG	Bldg	Room	Time	Leader	E-mail	Phone
Autocad	Wilkinson	111	9:00	Joe Mizer	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	117	9:00	Bob C. Ray	bobcray@pacbell.net	714-634-7520
Linux for Server Administrat	Wilkinson	117	10:00	Bob C. Ray	bobcray@pacbell.net	714-634-7520
Linux Programming Concepts	Wilkinson	117	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/II	Science	109	8:30	Anson Chapman	aecrcrss@hotmail.com	909-860-9515
Visual Programming III	Science	109	10:00	Anson Chapman	aecrcrss@hotmail.com	909-860-9515
Visual Programming IV	Science	109	11:15	Anson Chapman	aecrcrss@hotmail.com	909-860-9515

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

## Membership Benefits

FROM PAGE 3

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**Techsmith** [www.techsmith.com/store/order/bundle.asp](http://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](mailto: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 numbers are published in the printed version of the Orange Bytes which is mailed to the membership.

## FREE AD SPACE

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

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

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



## Products for Review

FROM PAGE 21

code. Published by Pren Hall PTR, the MSRP=\$50.

**The Symantec Guide to Home Internet Security** - This easy-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 reviews@noccc.org. ■

## 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. ■

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

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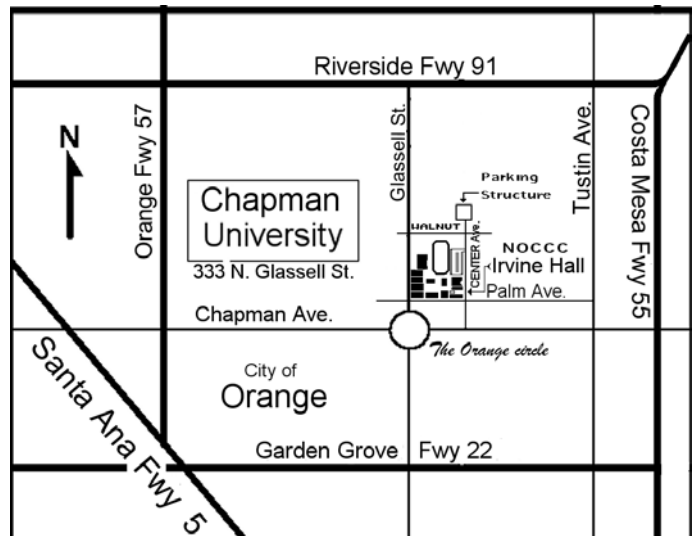
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- **Get help with your current computer problems.** In the Random Access portions of the Irvine Hall meetings, you ask your question of the entire assemblage, and more than likely someone will have the answer.
- **The NOCCC HelpLine.** Some 20 NOCCC 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 newsletter.
- **Consignment Table.** We have a thriving consignment table on our regular meeting day in which we assist members to sell or buy all kinds of computer items.
- **Volunteer Work.** You are given opportunities to help our activities with interesting assignments. *An all-volunteer organization*, you can join with other members in a variety of activities, write articles for our newsletter, conduct a seminar, run a SIG, man the help desk, show new members around, help the membership committee, and more.

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

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

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

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



For current meeting information, please call  
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