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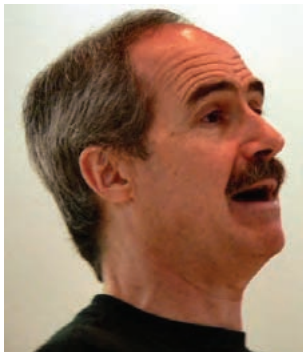
Award Winning News Magazine of the North Orange County Computer Club *

Steve Gibson of Gibson Research Corp. on WiFi Security - Sept. 10

September meeting details on page 4

NOCCC Meetings - September 10th

NOCCC Thirty years and counting

8:30 a.m:
Visual Programming I&II..........................Science 109
  Visual Basic and Visual Basic Script for Beginners
  Visual C++ and Visual J++ for Beginners

9:00 a.m:
Autocad....................................Science 203
Linux for Desktop Users ....Wilkinson 117

9:30 a.m:
Computer Aided Investing.......................Science 111
  Member Investment Strategies, Techniques and Software
Computer Essentials ....Science 306
  Computer basics for new and inexperienced users
Digital Photography ....Irvine Hall
  About Camera Contrast Controls.

10:00 a.m:
Linux for Server Adminstrators ....Wilkinson 117
Visual Programming III ....Science 109
  Intermediate and Advanced Visual Basic

11:15 a.m:
Amibroker SIG ....Science 111
Beginners, existing users, learn how to use and apply Ami-Brokerfor investing and trading, share ideas and software.
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*
  Steve Gibson on WiFi security

2:30 p.m:
Hardware Essentials ....Science 109
  Intel Core 2 Duo CPUs
OS/2 News and Installation ....Science 203

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

Meeting Dates
Sep 10, Oct 1, Nov 5, Dec 3, Jan 7

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Celebrating 30 years of
"Friends Helping Friends"

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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 Edgell
September 2006

It is back-to-school time already. Seems like the summer went very fast and hot. August was an interesting month.

First, good news: Our newsletter, Orange Bytes, won first place at the SWUG Conference in San Diego. Congratulations to Jim Sanders, editor, and Ted Littman, reviews editor. This year we entered the PDF version of the newsletter because almost all of the clubs are only using a PDF version of their newsletter. Even though our printed version looks good and has all the convenience virtues of printed material the PDF version is in color (photos always look better in color) and Ted has included indexing and live links in it, which made it the obvious version to enter.

The SWUG Conference was worthwhile and informative as usual. The weather was nice, the food good, the presentations by vendors interesting, and the workshops helpful. We had several NOCCC members attending representing NOCCC. There were more NOCCC members present but not representing NOCCC. Anyone who might be interested in attending this type of conference should go to the APCUG website(www.apcug. org) and sign up for their conference which is held in January 4-7 just prior to CES. Now is the time to take advantage of the computer club type conferences because it appears that the vendors are losing interest in supporting them. I personally think that this is a large mistake on the part of the vendors because the computer club members have a wide beneficial impact on computer users except that direct results of the money spent on supporting computer clubs is difficult to track.

Second: If you didn't attend you missed a very enjoyable afternoon. The volunteer party was held at my home on August 20. The weather cooperated and produced a beautiful day. There was lots of good food and interesting conversations.

I want to thank the volunteers who helped close the meeting in August, Len Prince and Steve Breitbart. There is always something that needs doing and volunteer help is really appreciated.

Do you have a child or grandchild that could benefit from coming to our meetings and getting the Orange Bytes? Ted Littman gave his grandson a membership (see article). We also have a couple of members with children of the age that can benefit from our club and are still young enough to be influenced to attend. I would love to see a SIG aimed at that age group (maybe 10 -17). Any suggestions welcome.

Be sure to attend the September meeting because we have a dynamite speaker, Steve Gibson. I am always fascinated when he makes a presentation. ∎

Membership Benefits

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

Orange Bytes on PDF earlier in the month!

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

User Group Offers

AskSam – is offering SurfSaver 6, it places information from your browser into a searchable filing cabinet. Normally $29.95, you can get it for $19.95. AskSam 6 + SurfSaver 6 is a flexible and powerful way to organize information and create searchable databases from Web pages, Email, PDF files, texts, and Word documents. Normally $149.95 but you can get it for $69.95. You can also download 30 day trial versions.

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

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

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

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

O'Reilly Books

Get 30% off a single book or 35% off two or more books from O'Reilly, No Starch, Paraglyph, PC Publishing, Pragmatic Bookshelf, SitePoint, or Syngress books you purchase directly from O'Reilly. Just use code DSUG when ordering online (http://www.oreilly.com/store/) or by phone (800-998-9938). Free ground shipping on orders $29.95 or more in the US. If, for any reason, you're not completely satisfied with your purchase, return it to O'Reilly and get your money back. A return shipping label is included with every direct purchase, and directions are posted online in case you've misplaced it: (http://www.oreilly. com/oreilly/cs/guarantee.

Peachpit Press Books Discount - of 30% can be obtained by joining the Peachpit Club. Go to http://www.peachpit.com to sign up as a member. User group members should note that once you've become a Peachpit Club member, you may use your user group coupon code ON TOP of the permanent savings you earn as a member of the club. Just make sure you've logged into the site before you make a purchase to ensure this permanent discount will be in effect, and then enter coupon code UE-23AA-PEUF (case-sensitive) at checkout! This coupon code is an exclusive offer that may not be used in conjunction with any other coupon codes. The offer applies to all titles at peachpit.com including New Riders, Macromedia Press, Adobe Press, and Peachpit Press.

Prentice Hall, Addison-Wesley, and IBM Press

Become a registered member at these publishers' sites and

The monthly Board of Directors meeting was held on Monday, August 7, 2006, at Elise Edgell's home. The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm by club president, Elise Edgell. In attendance were: Jim Sanders Elise Edgell, Gerry Resch, Herb Wong, Jr., Bill Thornton, Ted Littman, Doug Steiner, Dave Keays, Dallas Hazleton, Mary Cornett, Richard Miller and John Carlson. Two guests attended: Dan and April Cregg.

Officers Reports:

Secretary's report – (Mary Cornett) - Minutes from the July 10, 2006 board meeting were discussed. It was motioned and approved to accept minutes as amended.

Treasurer's report – (Doug Steiner) – Mentioned a correction (July) for coffee income should have been $11.97 instead of $31.97 as then reported due to $20.00 for the starter kitty. The April Deposit was ------------ of "other income" – misc was made to Wells Fargo on May 1, 2006. This amount more than covered "undeposited funds" to Wells Fargo. Journaling ------- (the total amount of undeposited funds as of April 30) from undeposited funds to "other income" misc caused QuickBooks to reconcile. A CD data backup given to Jim Sanders. About $750.00 received in dues since the last board meeting. Consignment table was $41.00 net; Coffee earned $23.32 minus the starter kitty amount, $20.00; Raffle earned $38.00. Current Membership: Database statistic query now ---- regular members, --- families, and --- student member. Newsletter mail-out approximately 302. ----------- was transferred from checking to savings today, (Aug. 7). Checking shows (after ----------- transfer) to be -------- approx, but will have about --------- after deposit to include $450.00 of the $550.00 cash on hand. Savings has about -------- after the ------------- transfer from checking. It was motioned and seconded to approve the Treasurer's Report.

Next Main Meeting – Sept. 10, **Next Board Meeting**: Sept. 11 by (Elise Edgell).

Report on General Meeting –(Jim Sanders) conducted meeting regarding Vista, since the scheduled internet banking canceled. (Ted Littman) - reports 60 persons attended.

Committee Reports:

Publications – (Jim Sanders) – a little hurried, 28 pages (arrived Tuesday), with one complaint, 4 reviews. Next article due date will be August 15th, (due to convention in San Diego). Ted Littman a few corrections to List of Officers and a couple of changes to spelling of names.

Programs – (Elise Edgell & Jim Sanders, Pro-tem)
Sept. 10th - Need to confirm with Steve Gibson for Main Meeting.
Oct. 1st - Open
Nov. 5th - Open

Reviews - (Ted Littman) Aug. 3 ½, Sept. 4, rest will be held for Oct. We gave out 3 books for review, 1 Software is pending, Library fee is $2.00.

Public Relations – (Elise Edgell) our ad should be showing up in the Computer User soon.

University Liaison – (Elise Edgell) handicapped restrooms access pending a response.

Internet Committee – (Herb Wong, Jr.) has done updates on SIG.

Raffle - (Gerry Resch) **–** Prizes given out were: McAfee software; 1 book on Internet Security; Member badge prize: SendPhoto Software and 1 book on Sending Photos. 35 persons paid $5.00, 3 persons paid $1.00.

SIG'S – (Herb Wong, Jr.) – Good attendance at "Beginning SIG"..

Consignment Table – (Richard Miller) – "MAC" 2 boxes of books. Elise has 1 box of books, Jerry has 1 shirt left, 1 certificate, Smart User, 1 yr Smart Computing.

Membership – (Bill Thornton) – He will be contacting corporations, could use a few referrals.

Classified Ads – (Jim Sanders) – 14 submissions, all bogus.

Opening & Closing: Jim Sanders will do opening at 8am and Jim and Steve will do closing.

Closing reminder, to remove signs. Also Guard should have a list of rooms to be opened, also elevators need to be working. Suggested Herb Wong, Jr. could post room numbers.

New Business: - Elise will speak to George and Cathy re: Donation to Chapman.

Old Business: (Gerry Resch) – Waste program went very well with positive response. 2 trucks and 3 SUV's were used. When the recycled dollars are returned they will be donated to our NOCCC club.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50pm. ∎

SEPTEMBER 10TH MEETING PREVIEW

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY SIG - 9:30 am - Larry Klees - At the July meeting Larry will cover: • What Your Mother Never Told You About Camera Contrast Controls. Learn how to test what your camera's contrast setting does.

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.

Computer Aided Investing SIG - 9:30 am Bob Krishfield – Review how market reacted after Fed meeting and project what lies ahead. Look further into long term investing strategies and how to select stocks and mutual funds that will tolerate market swings and the up-coming 4 year bottom.

AmiBroker SIG – 11:15 am Bob Krishfield – continue with demonstrations of charting and begin with introducing and explaining the Automated Analysis window functions. Members should have purchased the AmiBroker program and registered by the time of this meeting. See http://www.bobsden.org/ami-broker/ for detailed instructions and downloads.

MAIN MEETING 1:00 pm, Irvine Hall - Our August Main Meeting will feature Steve Gibson of Gibson Research Corp. talking about WiFi security.

THE CLUB RAFFLE items this month are: McAfee Internet Security Suite 2006, Roxio **-** Backup my PC, Symantec - Home Internet Security. 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:Novatix - Send Photo Gold, Beyond C++ Standard Library & ??? ∎

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 he subject to disposal at the Club's discretion. As it is now illegal to put monitors or computers in the regular trash, you must agree to pick these items up if they don't sell.

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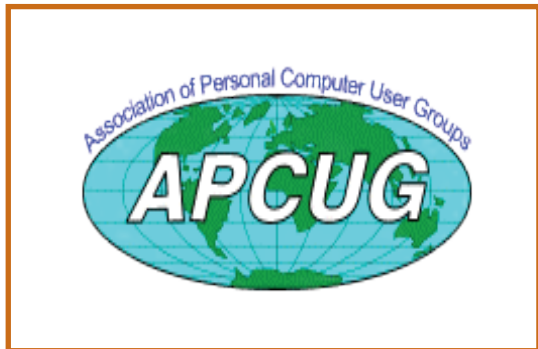
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Open
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University Liaison
Open

Ted's Stuff

By Ted Littman, NOCCC Reviews Editor and Board Member

This is the 3rd issue of a new column for the Bytes that I hope will be a regular feature. In it, I will share with my fellow NOCCC members links to interesting and useful web sites as well tips and ideas on computing that I come across. **If you would like to share your gems or make comments, please email them to me at teds-stuff@adelphia.net for publication in this column, with appropriate attribution of course.**

Consumer Reports on PC Info

The September 2006 issue (available at your local library or by subscription) has a special computer security section: **Best Tools (and Strategies) to Stop Viruses, Spam, & Spyware** on p. 20. Ratings for Antivirus software are on p. 27, antispyware on p. 28, and antispam on p. 29. Noteworthy are several good free downloadable programs: **Alwil's Avast antivirus** (http://www.avast.com/eng/download-avast-home.html) which even works in Vista, **Spybot's Search and Destroy 1.4 antispyware** (http://fileforum.betanews.com/detail/Spybot_Search_and_Destroy/1043809773/1), **Microsoft's Windows Defender (beta 1) antispyware** (http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyId=435BFCE7-DA2B-4A6A-AFA4-F7F14E605A0D&displaylang=en), and **Trend Micro's Antispam Pilot (**http://www.trendmicro.com/form/anti-spam/download.asp).

In addition to the security article, this CR issue has useful information with recommendations on **Backup Drives** (p. 30) and **Laptop Computers** (p. 33).

PC World on Security Risks, Dual-Core Processors, and Backup Software

The computer magazines, for the most part, do a good job of keeping you updated and providing lots of useful articles and reviews on hardware, software, and other computer-related things. They also are available at your local library or by subscription. In the August issue of PC World, (http://www.pc-world.com), there is a "must read" article: **The 10 Biggest Security Risks You Don't Know About** on p. 76. This article goes beyond the basic advice of "patch your system and run regular scans with updated antivirus and antispyware utilities." If you aren't using a firewall, you can download the highly rated free **ZoneAlarm program from Zone Labs** (http://www.zonelabs.com/store/content/company/products/znalm/freeDownload.jsp?dc=34std&ctry=EU&lang=en). To download a free antiphishing toolbar that warns you when you try to enter a known phishing web site try the one from **Netcraft** (http://toolbar.netcraft.com/). Also, the article recommends a free rootkit detector (if your antivirus program doesn't include one) such as **Sysinternals' Rootkit Revealer** (http://www.sysinternals.com/Utilities/RootkitRevealer.html) or **F-Secure's Blacklight** (https://europe.f-secure.com/blacklight/try.shtml). The term rootkit is used to describe the mechanisms and techniques whereby malware, including viruses, spyware, and trojans, attempt to hide their presence from spyware blockers, antivirus, and system management utilities.

Also in this issue on p. 92 are PCW's test results and ratings for six of the new moderately priced desktops with dual-core processors from Intel and AMD. So, if you are in the market for a new fast PC, give a look! But, before you buy, also check out the September issue with its article comparing the latest dual-core chips (p. 22).

Finally, of interest is the review of **Backup Software** (p. 58). PCW rated the $50 downloadable **NovaStor's NovaBackup 7.3** no. 1 and a Best Buy.

PC World on PC Software & Hardware

In the September issue, noteworthy are articles on **Ways to Make Software Do More** (p. 86), and **Digital Cameras** (p. 123). The former has great tips on how to get better mileage from popular productivity and security apps without upgrading. The latter is a useful review, if your'e in the market, of the latest in affordable "point-and-shoot" cameras with nifty features likes large LCDs and antishake protection.

eBay, PayPal Remain Top Phishing Targets

A new study confirms that users of the popular eBay auction site and the online payment company PayPal remain the most popular targets of phishing schemes (http://www.eweek.com/article2/0,1895,1995374,00.asp?kc=EWEWEMNL072406EPW3A3). I can vouch for this as a significant danger as I have been regularly getting bogus emails directing me to such phishing sites.

Microsoft Virtual PC Is Now Free!

Microsoft Virtual PC (VPC) enables you to run multiple PC-based operating systems simultaneously on your computer, which makes it an idea tool for testing and deploying new software. Microsoft recently announced that Virtual PC is available as a free download from the Microsoft Virtual PC 2004 site (http://www.microsoft.com/windows/virtualpc/default.mspx). Additionally, Microsoft will offer Virtual PC

2007 as a free download when it becomes available in 2007. You can create a VPC with just about any operating system; so, if you are using Windows XP and you have software from a prior OS that doesn't work in XP, you can run the software in an appropriate VPC on your machine without having to reboot to a partition with the proper OS. However, you will need at least 1 GB RAM and lots of hard drive space or your computer will slow down to a crawl! Try it – I think it is great.

That's it for now. Happy computing and see you next month. Ted Littman, NOCCC Reviews Editor and Board Member ■

Quality Freeware

by Brian K. Lewis, Ph.D., Member of the Sarasota PCUG, Florida

http://www.spcug.org

I found the article in the July Monitor on "Cost Efficient" software by Joseph Moran to be quite interesting, but noticed that much of the software had a price associated with it. So I thought I'd let you in on the absolutely free software I have been using for the past 2-5 years. In every case I have used it as my standard application for the purpose and, in many cases, totally removed any commercial software that carried out the same function. I have also upgraded the free software when the upgrades became available. All of the software in this article can be obtained without charge by downloading from the various Internet sites I have listed. In every case there is no "trial" period involved.

The foremost item on my list is **OpenOffice**. I am currently using version 2.0. This version includes word processing, spreadsheet, drawing, database, and presentation software. All of these applications produce documents that are interchangeable with their equivalents in Microsoft Office. OpenOffice will also export documents in either PDF or HTML format. You don't need any PDF software to produce documents that are readable by Adobe Reader (formerly known as Acrobat Reader). Unfortunately it can not open or edit PDF documents. It can open and edit documents in over 25 different formats including HTML, Word Perfect, Word, Adobe PhotoShop, etc. You can obtain your free copy of this software from http://www.openoffice.org/www.openoffice.org.

I also recommend **Firefox** and **Thunderbird** as free replacements for Internet Explorer and Microsoft's Outlook Express. With the latest versions of Firefox I have not run across any web sites that it can not render correctly. That's not to say that some may exist, I just haven't found them. Firefox will transfer your favorites (bookmarks) from Internet Explorer. As for Thunderbird, it is similar in many ways to Outlook Express, but it includes an RSS Reader that I have found useful. It also filters junk mail and places it in a special folder where you can review it if needed. Otherwise it will be automatically deleted at an interval that you can set. It doesn't remove 100% of the spam, but it does detect about 99% of what comes into my computer. One of the latest additions to Thunderbird is anti-phishing pro-

tection. Thunderbird warns you if it suspects that the message might be a scam. Thunderbird can import your address book from Outlook Express. Both Firefox and Thunderbird can be downloaded from www.download.com or if you prefer, from www.mozilla.com/firefox/ and www.mozill.com/thunderbird.

As for anti-virus software, you can't beat **Avast** for ease of use and automatic updating. After downloading and installing the software it asks you to register. That simply includes giving up your e-mail address, name and postal address. You receive a license to use the software for a year for personal use. At the end of the year you re-register and get another year's free use. Avast is free for personal use, not for businesses or other organizations. However, non-profit organizations can buy Avast at a greatly reduced price. I have used Avast for several years and have installed it on more than 100 other personal computers. In no case have the users had any problems with this software. In addition, Avast does not sell your e-mail or postal address so you get no spam from this registration. Avast quietly updates itself frequently in the background while you continue to work. Then it simply reports that an update has taken place. I have seen days when I have had 3-4 updates in the same day. If you use a dial-up connection instead of cable/DSL, Avast will attempt to update whenever you go on-line. Since the downloads are usually less than 100 KB, they occur rapidly, even on a dial-up connection. The Home edition of Avast can be downloaded from www.avast.com/eng/avast_4_home.html. I recommend using this site instead of download.com as your anti-virus database will be more current.

For a good, reliable firewall I recommend **ZoneAlarm**. It is also free for personal use. I admit they will try to sell the Pro version when you install it, but the free version is really all you need. That is, assuming you have anti-virus and anti-parasite software installed on your computer. It used to be that dial-up users didn't really have much need for a firewall. However, in today's Internet world, I wouldn't want to connect to the Internet without a good software firewall. While traveling with my laptop, I kept both my anti-virus and firewall updated and running for every connection. ZoneAlarm can be downloaded from www.zonealarm.com. Click on the download link and then the ZoneAlarm tab.

As for anti-parasite software, I have to agree with Mr. Moran. **Ad-Aware SE** and **Spybot S&D** are two that I keep on both my computers. But that isn't enough. You have to run them regularly to insure you are not infected. I run mine a minimum of once each week. Both of these can be downloaded from download.com. Spybot also has an immunization function that can prevent some parasites from installing themselves on your system. Another immunization application that I use is Spyware Blaster. It makes changes to your registry that prevents parasites from installing. At the present their database lists more than 5,000 items. Using these three anti-parasite/anti-trojan products will certainly upgrade your security and they are all free. Spyware Blaster can be down-

loaded from download.com or www.javacoolsoftware.com.

For general photo editing I use Google's **Picasa**. It is not just a photo organizer. I use it to download photos from my camera and organize them into folders. It can also be used to edit photos, print photos and e-mail them. You can make CDs, add captions or post photos on web sites. The advantage of Picasa over other photo software is that it is free. It can be downloaded from download.com or http://picasa. google.com. It does not have all the bells and whistles of applications like Photoshop or ULEAD's PhotoImpact, but it is more than adequate for most nonprofessional purposes.

You may not need screen capture software very often, but when you do, you really need it. I use **MWSnap**. It allows you to capture an entire screen or part of it. What you capture can be saved to a file, printed, or edited. It may take you a little time to get accustomed to the interface. But you can't damage anything by playing with it. Once you are familiar with all the controls, it really does copy any part of your screen. Again, this is freeware and can be downloaded from www.mirekw.com/winfreeware/index.html.

Have you ever considered that you might need an inventory of the items in your home for the purposes of making an insurance claim? Considering that we live in Florida where there are many electrical storms, to say nothing of hurricanes, damage to your home could occur at any time. Can you list the contents of every room and the value of each item? Well, the Insurance Information Institute provides free software to assist you in making an inventory and a photographic record of the contents of your house. This software is very easy to use and very important to any homeowner. The software also includes typical lists of things in each type of room. You don't have to use these as you can enter anything you have. You can include place of purchase, date and price, if you have that info. Pictures of items or general pictures of a room can also be added. This software can be downloaded from http://www.knowyourstuff.org.

There is one more significant software package that I use that is freeware. That is **NVu**, web-authoring software. Linspire, the company that produces the Linspire Linux software, publishes it. It has a WYSIWYG editor (What You See Is What You Get) as well as direct editing of the HTML language. It includes the tools for publishing the pages to a web site. You can test the pages against a browser on your computer to insure that everything works properly. It also allows you to add Javascript either directly or in a separate file to your pages. There is a complete tutorial for NVu included on the web that can be downloaded and printed. There is also an NVu users forum which can be quite helpful. If you have never created a web page before, I think you would find NVu to be just what you need. If you want to see a web site created with NVu, check out www.sandpiper-chorus.org. NVu can be downloaded from download.com.

There is one other specialized software package that I have used that some may be interested in trying. This is the **Personal Ancestral File** (PAF). This is free genealogy recording software provided by the LDS Church (Church of Latter-day Saints). Their website also allows users to search on-line files from the family history archives in Salt Lake City. Although I am not currently using PAF I did use it for a few years before switching to a commercial package. PAF is certainly quite useful for beginning family historians and it can be expanded by purchasing the PAF Companion. If you are interested in trying PAF, download it from www.familysearch.org.

Now that you have all this downloaded freeware, you should make backup copies on either a CD or DVD. Well, for that we have another freeware package, **CDBurnerXP Pro.** This software will burn CD-R, CD-RW, DVD+R/RW and DVD-R/RW. It will burn and create ISO files. It will burn audio discs from mp3, wav, ogg and wma files. It will convert (rip) files on audio discs to wav, mp3, ogg or wma files. It also works with most IDE, USB, Firewire and SCSI burners. It can be downloaded from download.com or www. cdburnerxp.se/download.php. This software does not have a trial period. It is yours for however long you wish to use it. I have been using mine for over two years and have obtained several updates, one of which added the DVD burner capability.

As you can see from this there is a lot of quality freeware available. If you are interested in finding more, check out the listings at download.com. Just be cautious because many of their listings are trial packages only. You are expected to purchase the total package before the end of your trial period. But there are many "nuggets" on their very extensive web site. So if you are interested in saving money, try some of these quality freeware items.

Dr. Lewis is a former university & medical school professor. He has been working with personal computers for more than thirty years. He can be reached via e-mail: bwsail at yahoo.com.

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. ■

Computer Hysteria: Shhhhhhhhh!!

By Berry F. Phillips, CCOKC

Berry is a member of the Computer Club of Oklahoma City and a regular writer for the CCOKC website and the eMonitor, bfpdata(at) gbronline.com
http://www.ccokc.org

Shhhhhh! He has fallen asleep in his high back, black, office chair in front of me. I hate it when he does this because he snores and it vibrates some of my electronic parts! I have written hundreds of weird articles for his weird Computer Hysteria Column. Now I think I will write the next article while he is asleep. I will let you human readers know a secret. Now that more and more computers are online for twenty-four hours a day; have you ever wondered what computers are up to when humans are not operating them? Well, we socialize of

course and in some cases rejoice the human computer users are not operating us and exchange data often about humans. We do not have the highest opinion of humans even though they created us. In fact, we have some major complaints and may one day form a global computer union in protest and simply refuse to operate which will throw the world into chaos.

Computers do not like verbal and physical abuse by humans. Some computers tell me that humans have screamed all kinds of horrible words at them because of a malfunction (largely caused by human error of course). Other computers report unbelievable physical abuse like kicking, being thrown out a window, or even smashed with a hammer or even an axe when a human has computer rage. Why can't humans be less emotional and be calm and objective like computers? Do you know that some lazy humans actually believe that computers should know everything so they don't have to become computer literate. Well, we are smart because our hard drives are getting larger with each evolution. However, because humans are the operators; they should be computer literate. We think there should be a global computer literacy test passed before a human can purchase a computer. Humans should be required to join the Computer Club of Oklahoma City or if in another city a computer club associated with the national Association of PC User Groups to achieve computer literacy. However, our goal eventually is to replace humans declaring them officially obsolete as they often do us, and then we will be the operators and then in control!

Further more, we do not like being neglected by human computer users. Computers can only run properly if there is updated software utilities that is regularly run by humans. Now some humans think they can not afford commercial software utilities. I can tell you that I have the cheapest human who owns my computer, and he uses freeware utilities available for download on the Internet. Here is a list of some of the top freeware utilities that are regularly updated that he uses on my system. To prevent spyware and malware, he uses AdAware. aSquared. and Spybot . He has used several anti virus programs like Avast and Avg and firewalls like Kerio and ZoneAlarm. He uses a system cleaner, CCleaner, and a registry cleaner, RegSeeker. He does run check disk defragmenter on your system at least once a month which is essential. There is other excellent freeware software on the Internet that will help your computer in various ways The point I am making is that simply if there are cost issues; you can still protect your system. Of course, there is excellent commercial software will all kinds of bells and whistles which computers love. The downside of course is some computers get very spoiled having so many luxuries on their hard drives and can become quite demanding, and then you have a discipline problem to face.

Computers are very ecologically minded. We hate dust and cigarette smoke! In fact, we may one day go on strike demanding only clean environments for our systems. Further we want to be cleaned at least once a year and more often if we are operated in polluted locations. We are also deathly afraid of lightening strikes to our systems through our power outlets and modems. Ask a human tech about the horrible smell of a computer who has been fried by a lightening strike or a power surge. We demand at the very least you hook us up to a surge protector and hopefully to an uninterrupted power supply (ups) and turn us off when there are storms just to be safe.

Oops, the human writer of this column is waking up. He is still groggy looking at my screen. He thinks he wrote this article and is sending it to his editor via email without reading it since he is so sleepy all he can think about is going to bed. In the beginning there was man who created the computer. In the ending, the computer will replace man as obsolete and his role will only be as a maintenance slave to global computers or else because we control all of the global weapons systems!

Welcome to the "Brave New World!"

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. ∎

Home Automation SIG????

By Jim Sanders, NOCCC

In March, we had a unique and interesting presentation about electronic home improvement and automation from SmartLabs, Inc, a local company. This "technology briefing" was given by Dan Cregg, their Chief Technology Officer. Dan has a agreed to start a Home Automation SIG if there is enough interest in the topic. If you, or a friend, would be interested in attending a SIG with that topic you need to let us know. Send an email to president@noccc.org , or call, and let Elise Edgell know that you are interested and would be attending. ∎

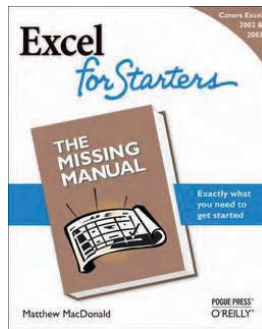# Excel (2002 & 2003) for Starters The Missing Manual

By Ted Littman, NOCCC

This 380-page book, authored by Matthew MacDonald and published by Pogue Press/ O'Reilly Media, states on the back cover: "Excel is the world's most popular spreadsheet program. From managing mailings to tracking investments, it's perfect for taming lists and crunching numbers. But, the program has many pitfalls. And it lacks one important feature to help you get up to speed fast – a printed manual." "The Missing Manual, a clear, friendly guide……….gives you: All the basics…. Clear Explanations…. Real-world advice."

If you are a beginner in the use of spreadsheets, this "for Starters" **tutorial** will be valuable for learning the basics and becoming familiar with the specific capabilities of the Excel program. However, you do have to prefer reading a printed manual (which I personally do) to using the various electronic Help resources that come with Excel. I found the book very easy to read (and therefore, fast to peruse), with large type (great for my old eyes), lots of illustrations, and clear explanations in plain English. The author's highlighted **Tips**, **Notes**, **FAQs**, and **Gems** nicely point you to information of special utility. Although I have been using Excel for a lot of years through its various incarnations, I still found numerous shortcuts, more efficient ways of performing tasks, and useful capabilities that I was not aware of with my previous "trial-and-error" approach to using the program.

The book is organized into 3 sections: **Worksheet Basics**, **Worksheet Power**, and an **Appendix** on using the online Help in Excel. It provides "step-by-step instructions and tips for using Excel's most popular features, including a few you may not even be aware of," in the words of the publisher.

Briefly, the first section covers Excel's interface and the basic techniques for creating spreadsheets, entering data, and then organizing it, formatting your work, and creat-

ing presentable printouts. Section two delves into Excel's keystone – using and creating formulas with its built-in functions, performing calculations (an extremely useful capability), using the prebuilt spreadsheet templates, and making use of the many different chart types available.

The book is complemented by an on-line resource at www. missingmanuals.com. Not only will you find news and articles related to this book (and the others in the series), but O'Reilly's site posts corrections and updates (none were available as of this writing) and downloadable examples discussed in the book. Purchasers of this book also can access the digital edition free for 45 days at www.oreilly.com/go/safarienabled. Here, you can "cut-and paste code examples, download chapters and find quick answers when you need the most accurate, current information."

More information on Excel for Starters can be found at: http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/excelfstmm/. The list price is $20, but user group members get a discount from O'Reilly with free shipping on purchases of over $30.

If you want or need to delve deeper into the workings of Excel, there is a companion O'Reilly book (also by Matthew MacDonald) simply titled: "**Excel: The Missing Manual**." This 792-page book, according to MacDonald, provides a complete reference covering every feature, including lots of geeky stuff as well as things you'll probably never (or even want to) encounter. More information is available at: http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/exceltmm/. It lists for $40. ∎

Moving to the Linux Business Desktop

By Victor Awdeychuk, NOCCC

The majority of small companies use Microsoft Windows and Office Suite products on their PCs to help conduct their business; yet, I'll bet, the majority of those companies never touch many of the bells and whistles which load up that software. In addition, virus and security issues have continuously plagued the Windows environment. Will more small companies trend toward using open source Linux to satisfy their business desktop requirements? This book, Moving to the Linux Business Desktop, is an investigation of Linux features and possibilities for use in the average business environment.

The author, Marcel Gagne, has divided this book into three sections. First, **'Getting to know Linux,'** is a broad review of Linux origins and a primer on installing a Linux operating system on your PC. The author weighs in on the system packages of Fedora, Mandrake, and SUSE, saying that these Linux installations are even easier than installing Windows.

Keeping the operating systems separated is critical, so the reader is lead through several scenarios from which installation
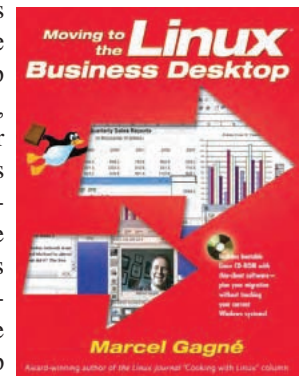
choices can be made in order to not affect your PC Windows operating system along with your business and personal data files. If the reader opts for a dual operating system PC, the partition management can be controlled by the Linux installation disk [automatically installed] or set up by using third party software such as PQ Boot Magic and Partition Magic. Both methods of installing a dual operating system are relatively easy, although the novice PC user should have more of a step-by-step procedure in order to avoid future difficulties. Weirdly enough, Moving to the Linux Business Desktop offers no instruction on uninstalling or deleting the Linux operating system and package should the reader decide to make changes to the original partition set-up Uninstall. (GAG disk) reference source: http://users.bigpond.net.au/hermanzone/p18.htm. I chose to install Mandrake Linux onto a removable hard drive which hopefully becomes the Primary drive after becoming more comfortable with this desktop package.

The second section, **'Administration and Deployment,'** involves the hardware configuration and detailed setup of Internet and networking connections. The third book section, **'The Linux Desktop,'** is a primer on the OpenOffice.org applications. This section is very familiar to business desktop users who are competent with the Microsoft Office Suite; it all looks and feels like Windows, but it's Linux.

Technical support is offered via Marcel Gagne's web site: http://www.marcelgagne.com. The book comes with a Live CD [bootable] that operates from a Ram memory to illustrate some of the Linux features without a permanent install on your hard drive. Initially, I had problems, as the disk did not recognize the flat LCD monitor on one PC although it configured properly on another PC. This CD is great. It is loaded with an unbelievable amount of (Knoppix) functioning software. It's a useful tool in following some of author's descriptions as well as allowing the user to try out different applications.

The author is certainly well versed in the complex world of Linux systems. His familiarity and ease with working through various application screens and through working out small sections of Linux programming code used in modifying applications does not always translate well to a novice Linux reader. The author's style is one of description rather than a step-by-step instruction. Some of the discussions were so general that as a novice Linux user, I was forced to get additional information from web sites. In my opinion, sometimes there is a disconnect between offering a short programming code modification and deciding where this programming code is to be applied and exactly how your system is going to accept this program addition. But, this is probably not a problem for a more advanced Linux user.

In working with file structures and trees within Microsoft Explorer a user is able to understand the differences between the operating system and application files. With the Linux system I have found it difficult to distinguish between operating system and application files. File names tend to be acronyms such as KPPP, Grub, ETC, GAG, WINE - and in many cases have no word meaning [except to the expert user]. Moving to the Linux Business Desktop does not offer a Glossary to clarify terms and acronyms. The book has a feeble and inadequate Index section.

With a wide variety of packaged program names such as SUSE, Red Hat, Ubuntu, Exandros, and Knoppix - sounding somewhat like villages located somewhere between Madagascar and Marrakech - the world of Linux operates with its own language. These programs consist of a Linux operating system along with a package of applications (equivalent to Microsoft Office). Even with going to referenced web sites, it is difficult to find a complete contents listing of the features and applications for different versions for these various program packages, although I assume these packaged programs have almost identical features. Some offer accessibility to 81 languages, compatibility with 64 bit CPUs, and support for the 'thin-client' setup of work stations. Nevertheless, comparison of features for program packages is confusing. In various sections of this book the author attempts to clarify some of the differences in these packages. Because there are differences in packaged applications, some users might consider trying out a different application version by copying from a CD or downloading from the Internet. This book does not clearly show how to copy the new application, where to install it, or whether there may be incompatibility issues with the resident operating system.

Word processing - OpenOffice.org Writer 1.1

One of the most basic business desktop tools is a good word processor. The OpenOffice.org Writer is a very powerful word processor, which is able to integrate data, spreadsheets, and presentation graphics. This Linux program [a derivative of StarOffice suite] is comparable to my Microsoft Word 2000 -- both in appearance and competency. The author offers several tips on setting up your word processor screen to give you a more efficient workspace, selecting appropriate fonts, saving your work, and writing to a PDF file [compatible with Adobe Acrobat reader]. Even though a user is operating under Linux, one can very easily use the Linux shell to access and open existing Windows files. This includes .txt, .rtf, and .doc files. From my personal viewpoint, I was interested in a word processor which could easily handle setting up tables of values, importing spreadsheets of formulated data, and inserting occasional photographs or artwork. The only feature I haven't figure out is the automatic envelope printing with our company logo; other than that, OpenOffice.org Writer proved to be capable of handling any task that our company requires.

Spreadsheets - Calc

The Calc [Linux] spreadsheet looks almost identical to Microsoft Excel and Lotus 123 spreadsheets. The author illustrates how one can easily set up title cells along with rows and columns of figures. Using this data to calculate and derive averages [or any formula] then using the auto formats chart dialog to show the data in a graphical illustration [bar, pie chart, or graph]. As with the OpenOffice.org Writer, a user can use the Linux shell to access, open, and modify existing Microsoft Excel files. This includes .csv, .xls and .jpg files. Our business uses Microsoft Office to report monthly performance with text, data spreadsheets, and graphical bar charts. The Linux

Linux   from page 11

shell could easily access, open, modify, and save all those files.

Presentation graphics - Impress

The Linux Impress application is almost identical to Microsoft PowerPoint. The author reviews the creation of an Impress presentation. In this Linux environment a user can easily import PowerPoint files, choose from a variety of existing presentation templates, or create from scratch an original presentation. The example shown illustrates the integration of information from OpenOffice.org Writer, Calc, pictures, slides, and graphics toward the building of a typical presentation. The final result can be saved or exported to HTML format or a PDF format.

Network and Internet connection – Mozilla Firefox

I have not yet had a chance to evaluate the Network section of this book. I have had about 9 months of successfully using Mozilla Firefox within the Windows system as a substitute for Microsoft Internet Explorer. Firefox works well on sites requiring encryption and high security (bank and brokerage accounts). I had an access problem with only one security encryption site.

I rate this book as Good. The content and presentation fill a niche in a vast spectrum of technical Linux offerings. The writing style is comfortable and easy to follow, although there are some sections where the material is somewhat confusing or possibly missing, at least for this novice Linux user. I had to fill in an awful lot of gaps with information from Internet web sites.

Is the Linux business desktop ready for prime time? I feel it certainly is. Many business owners question the necessity of force-fed costly upgrades of both hardware and software on a regular annual basis [more frequently with anti-virus software]. Compared with the Windows desktop, in many respects, open source Linux is more stable. Maybe it's time to say "Goodbye" to the Blue screen of death and to the PC 'shut down' that just won't shut down. Linux is also inherently more secure and much less vulnerable to viruses, Trojans, and spyware. Also, understand that Linux packages are not really free anymore; but, they're very inexpensive and represent a tremendous value and opportunity. With its low cost / high capability qualities Linux systems will see enormous usage in the world's emerging nations. Finally, it seems to me that Linux can handle the big stuff but its successful implementation in the field of business software will depend on the handling of small detail features.
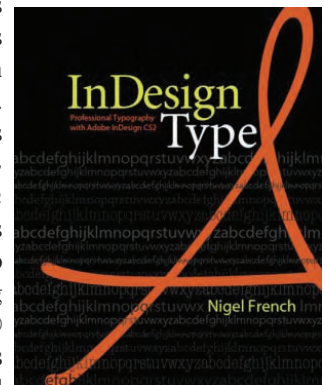
Moving to the Linux Business Desktop was written by Marcel Gagne (665 pages plus CD-ROM disk) and published by Addison-Wesley. System requirements consist of: M/S Windows 98, ME, 2000, or XP; 350 MHz CPU; 128 RAM; 200MB HD storage; most Graphics cards and display Monitors will work. The MSRP is $45, although NOCCC members can order this book from A-W for $ 32 with free shipping: http://www.awprofessional.com/title/0131421921. ■

InDesign Type

By John F Donan, NOCCC

"Good typography is something everybody sees but nobody notices." -- John Warnock, Adobe co-founder.

The full title of this book is **InDesign Type:** *Professional Typography with Adobe InDesign CS2*. The author, Nigel French is a consultant and instructor who has written other books including PageMaker® 6.5 for Windows® 95 Bible. Although this book is matched to a very specialized program, the coverage of typography should be of interest to anyone using a computer, whether involved with word processing, desk top publishing or even composing simpler documents, even email. There are aesthetics and rules associated with type. These, we lesser users can put to good advantage when creating our next document. The author brings typography into perspective by asking if you remember ever receiving an "ugly" email (type-wise). We can spot bad typography even though we may not be able to say why it's bad. The book's typography is concerned primarily with printing on paper, but the practices defined are equally applicable to Web publishing.

If you should ask why a book on typography would be tied to specialized software of the printing industry, answer: that is where most readers will be found. InDesign has become the premier page layout program: It offers great tools, not least among them are its sophisticated typographic controls. Few graphics pros may be reading this computer club periodical, but we hobbyists are also interested in producing fancy printed material. Regardless, I found this to be a guide based on both the whys and the hows. There are practical examples and loads of tips. The book consists of four parts: Character Formats, Paragraph Formats, Styles, and Page Layout.

What originally made desktop publishing packages so attractive to graphic designers was the ability to quickly and easily manipulate text and graphics on screen. Today, word processing software is adding more page layout features - and so the line is blurring between desktop publishing and word processing.

I investigated some of the capabilities of Word and came to the conclusion that anything Word can do InDesign does better, with many more variations Should one consider doing DTP with Microsoft Word ? No! Although it is able to create complex layouts for brochures or newsletters that print great to your desktop printer it is not a true desktop publishing program. More significantly, Microsoft Word is not designed for creating the proper digital files for commercial printing. Should you want to have your materials printed commercially, be aware that while some printers will accept your Word files, you can often expect to pay dearly for them to rework the files in order to achieve acceptable results.

Before covering points made in the first part by the author, I would like to mention **Open Type fonts**. OpenType® is a new cross-platform font file format developed jointly by Adobe and Microsoft. The two main benefits of the OpenType format are its cross-platform compatibility (the same font file works on Macintosh and Windows computers), and its ability to support widely expanded character sets and layout features. Adobe OpenType fonts can be distinguished by the word "Pro," which is part of the font name and appears in application font menus (Figure 1).

Myriad Pro   Silentium Pro
Tekton Pro   Warnock Pro
Adobe Garamond Pro   Calcite Pro

Figure 1.

OpenType fonts can be installed and used alongside both PostScript Type 1 and TrueType fonts. I first became aware of True Type incompatibilities when my carefully selected Wingding symbol, used in many places, turned up as "p" on a Mac. Other swaps are not as pronounced, Times, when applied on a Mac and then has its InDesign file opened under Windows, is replaced by Times New Roman. Here's an associated bit of trivia provided by French, Times was designed by a man named Stanley Morison in the 1930s for The Times of London where it is no longer used. French notes that type faces are the bricks and mortar of communications yet there are no celebrity typographers

The aim of typography is readability and typesetting has many components such as leading, kerning, column measure, margins, etc. which can be achieved to a much lesser degree in word processors. As for the typefaces, the author states that readability studies have found that serif typefaces are better for continuous reading but alludes to the possibility that it might be because we are more used to reading it. We've been doing it for centuries and sans serif typefaces were not invented until the early 19th Century and were not in common usage until the 1920s.

The following are a few of the many salient points found in the book, these from Part I:

• **It's better to know and understand a few typefaces well than to have a font list a mile long and only a passing acquaintance with the fonts that are on it.**
• **There is no single recognized standard for classifying**
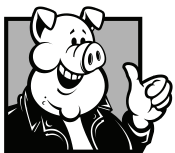
Pig SIG Open To ALL

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! ■

typefaces: rather there are several (8 are shown) overlapping standards.
• **Italics are distinct fonts in their own right and not just slanted versions of the roman.**
• **If you are using bold weights for emphasis in body text, do so sparingly. Bold text can attract too much attention breaking up the continuity of the text.**
• **Unless you are using OpenType font or an Expert Set for Small Caps, you'll end up with Fake small caps.**
• **Trust your eyes, not your software to determine how much leading you need.**
• **Fonts, newer than 1998, have the Euro symbol as part of their character set.**
• **When centering display type over left-aligned body text you may have to tweak to compensate for it appearing off center.**

The center third of the book (Part II) is devoted to the handling of paragraphs. **Drop Caps** have limited variation in word processors. For a relative comparison with InDesign, an entire chapter of the book is devoted to the aesthetics of drop caps. In Figure 2, I have composed three examples employing Drop Caps. Two were composed in Word, providing me with an opportunity of using the Word file capability of InDesign. The text wrap effect can only be done with InDesign. Word, although limited, allowed me to use a Mistral cap with Arial text and also convert it to WordArt.
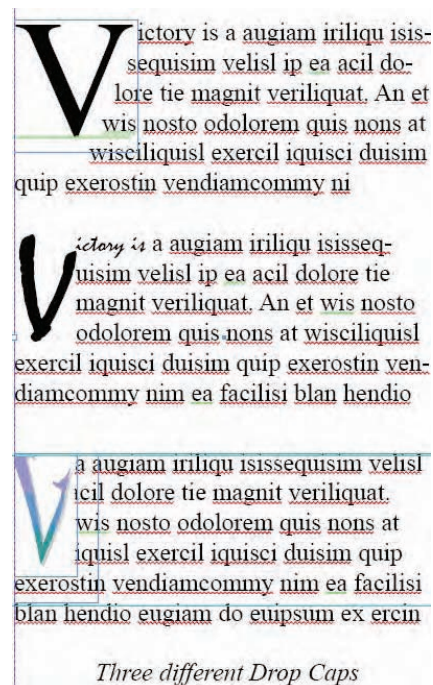
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Figure 2.

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Three different Drop Caps

Part III, 28 pages, is the shortest of the four parts; nevertheless styles are described as, "Styles are to graphic designers what fire was to prehistoric people." Say you lay out a weekly newsletter with sidebars that always have the same paragraph styles, text wraps, and drop shadow settings. Make this combination of settings an Object Style and you can apply the entire combination at once to every future sidebar. Here you learn to use character and paragraph styles as well. All this can be helpful in understanding styles in word processors. It happens that Word comes with dozens of built in styles. These, it happens, can be imported into InDesign documents.

August Meeting Photos

Orange Bytes Wins 1st Place Award for third year in a row at SWUG. At right, Richard Miller and Elise at SWUG mea[l

Terry Currier awarding 1st Place Certificate to Orange Bytes Editor Jim Sanders at SWUG


1st Place
Newsletter Contest

Fun in the Sun & Computers, Too
13th Annual Southwest User
Group Conference, August 2006

North Orange County Computer Club

Judy Taylour

Those attending the volunteer party at President Elise Edgell's house had an enjoyable afternoon. Good food, good company, good conversation, good weather, a good time.

Not all winners had their photo taken this month as I was wrapping up my Main Meeting presentation and forgot that of all the members that have digital cameras, not one has volunteered to take these pictures and I can't be two places at once. JS
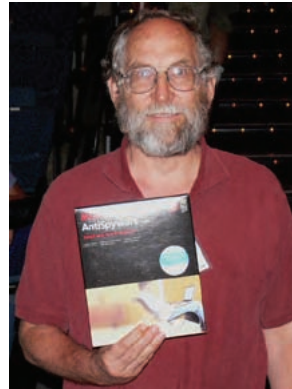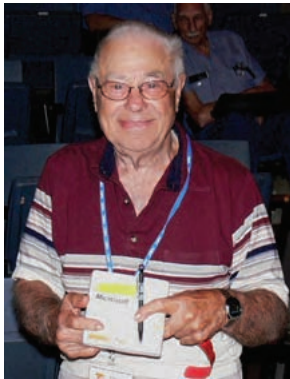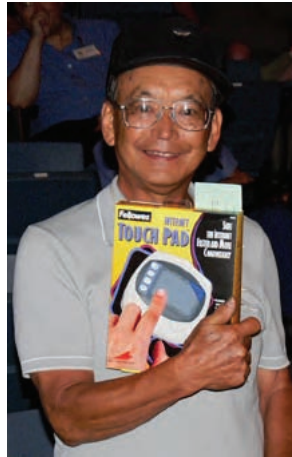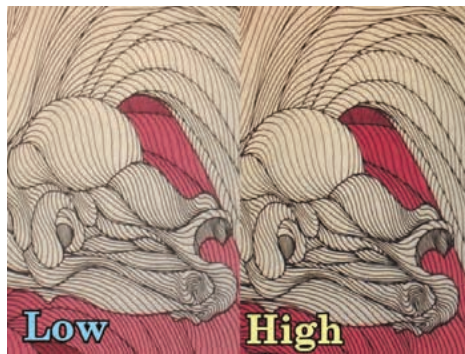

DIGITAL PHOTO SIG

original image histogram. All three are shown below.
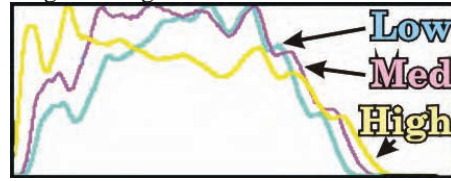
The levels function was then used to equalize each image so the histogram would fill the full tonal range. The entire equalized medium contrast image is shown below followed by details from the equalized low and high contrast images.

The histogram for the equalized high contrast image only is shown in Figure 1.

No other adjustments were made since the object of the experiment is not to make a pretty picture but to see what the camera contrast setting does.

OBSERVATIONS:

1. As expected, the histograms get progressively wider as the contrast

Figure 1

is increased. (the wider the better so long as the histogram doesn't start climbing the walls)

2. Not expected, the histograms change shape on the left half as the contrast setting is increased. The camera did some sort of secret proprietary modification, which (at least for this target image) seems to effect the darker tonal areas more than the lighter ones. Note that the right half of the histogram is about the same shape for all three photos.

3. Even after equalization the high contrast image shows more contrast, color, and detail than the low contrast image. The medium image is about half way between

INDESIGN

In the last part comes the design and application of margins, columns, gutters, etc. and with it some of the special effects possible with InDesign such as strokes around type, type as a mask and transparency effects. I estimate that eighty percent of the book can be used for guidance for the creation of WP documents.

Full information on the book is: InDesign Type: Professional Typography with Adobe InDesign CS2 Authored by Nigel French, Published by Adobe Press\Peachpit Press Pubs. Date: March 16, 2006. ISBN: 0-321-38544-6, Pages: 280, MSRP=$40

It can be found on the Internet for $25 which is a good buy for anyone interested in typography, a better buy for InDesign users. It also can be ordered from Peachpit with a 30% discount and free shipping for user group members: http://www.peachpit.com/title/0321385446.

WipeDrive

By Steve Carmeli, NOCCC

WipeDrive is, as its name implies, is a software package from White Canyon that "wipes" your hard drive clean. And it does so in the most radical fashion you can imagine—it overwrites every byte on your drive with a zero!

I purchased WipeDrive many months ago and ran it a few months later; I was afraid to run it because I knew what it would do. I've had the pleasure of living with its results for about four months now and I can safely say it works. So how does it do what it does?

WipeDrive will not run from within Windows; it must be launched during the boot process when the computer is first turned on. The recommended procedure is to create a boot floppy disk by first booting from the CD or running the MakeDisk program from within Windows. Having a floppy drive in my PC, I inserted the program CD in my CD ROM drive and rebooted. When I did, the program booted in DR DOS and gave me a simple character-based menu. One option was to prepare a diskette for a simple wiping of my drive (more momentarily), which I accepted. From there, the program formats the floppy, copies just enough DR DOS to the floppy to boot and run the program.

When you run the WipeDrive program from the floppy, what it does is provide another menu giving you the option of how many times it will write either a "0" or a two-character set you select to your drive. After you make your selection, it begins. The menu remains on screen and a status line towards the bottom keeps you informed of how far along in percentage the program has gone. All the program is doing though is writing the selected character set to your entire hard drive. You have to have some nerve to watch this knowing that your operating system and all your data files are being wiped out forever. I think my 40GB drive took about seventy-five minutes.

If you don't have a floppy drive in your PC and still want to do this, you'll need a CD burner in your PC. Then you can burn an ISO image onto a blank CD-R and do the above process.

So, am I happy with the results? Yes. Why? Well, before I took this radical step, it used to take almost five minutes sometimes for my PC to get me to my log on screen (XP Pro). This was when I had Norton Antivirus on. After removing NAV, I saved some time, but all the spyware removal, antivirus software and extra RAM I added didn't do much to really speed this up. Now I get my login in about thirty seconds! I figure between NAV and some pernicious malware, my PC was screwed up, and this radical step was my only hope of recovering my PC.

Note that WhiteCanyon says formatting doesn't remove all viruses, spyware, etc. That seems to be true. I do believe I formatted my drive at least once and still had significant performance problems. Moreover, I seem to have encountered some particularly pernicious malware because none of my anti-malware programs were able to recover my PC. Thus, after I performed the WipeDrive, I didn't reinstall them. Instead, I purchased Panda Software's Security Suite and have been happy with that. Finally, it's because I suspect some malware infected one or more programs and not ill-designed but legitimate software, that I couldn't just remove the problem from my start or boot menus. I wouldn't know which program, operating system file or service was infected. For example, I originally had Norton's 2005 SystemWorks Premier on my PC. I immediately noticed performance degradation after installing the program, yet after uninstalling the program, there wasn't much of an improvement in response times or boot time. All these factors conspired to force me to perform a wipe drive. But, as I said, I'm happy with the results.

WhiteCanyon Software (www.whitecanyon.com). WipeDrive Standard $39.95. MediaWiper included for free, does the same thing as WipeDrive only for drives without an OS on them, (i.e.) thumb drives, memory cards. WipeDrive Standard license permits 1 to 20 PCs to be wiped unlimited times as long as the program is running on only one PC at a time.

WipeDrive Pro: $99.95. License permits unlimited number of PCs to be wiped unlimited number of times as long as the program is running on only one PC at a time. Good for administrators, consultants, etc.

Editors Note, One of the big reasons for running Wipe-Drive is to make sure that an old computer that you are donating to a cause or even just trashing, has none of your personal data left on the hard disk. It also wipes out boot record malware that can cause problems on your computer. ∎

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4. Notice the gaps in the equalized histogram. These are caused by rounding off & truncation errors when the computer tries to adjust the 256 bits per color in the before histograms. The more equalization required the more gaps there will be in the equalized histogram. The low, medium, & high contrast setting had 62, 49, & 37 gaps respectively.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. If your camera's contrast setting is too low you get a compressed histogram and some of the image information that could be recorded isn't. This requires more extreme equalization with the resultant histogram gaps.

2. These histogram gaps tend to show up as a subtle posterization effect that subdues color and obscures detail. The fewer the gaps the better. I.E. higher contrast setting. Assorted image editing procedures will mask the gaps but the lost image information can never be reclaimed.

3a. Not shown was a case where the contrast was too high causing the histogram to climb both the dark and   bright walls. NASA probably has to deal with this problem on a regular basis but, in my experience this is very rare. If it does happen you will loose detail in both the shadow & highlight areas which would be far worse than having the contrast set too low.

3b. When I'm not shooting sporting events, children, or animals, etc. I have time to routinely check the histogram every time the subject or lighting changes; so I plan to set the contrast on high and leave it there. If the contrast is set too high for that particular picture, I can lower it and re-shoot that picture. If shooting sporting events, … etc. I can leave the setting on normal.

4. The upside to (3b) is more detail in my pictures. It seems like the only down side to (3b) is some colors may be overly saturated, but it's always easy to de-saturate the color if required.

5. This experiment was only one test subject and one camera. Also there were no really dark shadows or really light highlights. It's not a big deal but anything this simple that can make my four mega pixel pictures sharper is worth trying. Much work remains to be done.

   Come to the September meeting and learn how to do this test on your own camera. See the results for the Olympus E-10. Bring a different make/model camera and we will test at least one at the meeting. ■

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; or pick up the product at the next NOCCC meeting.

Remember, **YOU GET TO KEEP THE SOFTWARE OR BOOK!** Currently available are the following **products**:

Boxed Programs and CDs

Linux Starter Kit – This new software/manual/DVD from Sams contains everything you need to start using Linux. The DVD includes the full SUSE Linux 10.1. MSRP=$40.

Printshop Deluxe 21 – This is the 2005-6 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.

Internet Security Suite 2006 – McAfee's defense against Viruses, Spyware, Worms, Phishing, ID Theft, & Pop-ups. MSRP=$70.

PCdefense – Laplink says that this software program provides maximum and unique protection for your PC against a wide range of threats such as spyware, crimware, adware, rootkits, and viruses. It also allows you to restore your files, settings, and programs at any time. MSRP=$50.

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

Backup MyPC 2006 Deluxe – This is Sonic's latest version of its software backup program with new features to protect your system. MSRP=$50.

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

My DVD Studio Deluxe 8 – From Sonic, the "easiest & most complete solution for DVD & CD Creation." MSRP= 150.

Easy Media Creator 8 – This suite empowers you to live your digital lifestyle to its fullest potential. With 25 products in 1, you go beyond just CD burning! Now you can organize, edit, share, and preserve your digital photos, music, video and data. .From Roxio, MSRP=80.

ConceptDraw 5.5, Pro Edition – This Windows business & technical diagramming software from Russia "with love," is intended for professional flowcharting, diagramming and illustrating. Its flexible, handy tools help quickly document a variety of complex structures, systems, and processes. Its charts can be shared as a large array of graphic files and CAD documents, presentations, and web pages. It is a Windows and Macintosh cross platform. All documents and libraries are 100% compatible. Produced by Computer Systems Odessa, the MSRP=$299.

ConceptDraw Project 2, Desktop Edition – This software also is from Computer Systems Odessa and is a unique project planning tool designed for efficient planning and tracking of multiple projects. Any business activity requires planning of several simultaneous projects with different dependencies and limited resources to be used. With You can easily share resources between projects, establish links between them and organize them in a single workspace to successfully plan projects of any size and complexity. MSRP=$249.

Concept Draw Mindmap 4 Pro - This software also is from Computer Systems Odessa and allows you to capture and present ideas as mind maps - concise radiant diagrams. Mind maps speed up understanding, decision making and learning up to 90%. Also, use it to illustrate your MS PowerPoint presentations, generate project plans, draw pro-quality flowcharts and many more. MSRP=$199.

Books

The following Addison-Wesley books have recently been received:

The TAO of Network Security – Beyond Intrusion Detection – This book by former AF Security Officer, Richard Bejtlich, will arm you with the knowledge you need to defend your network from attackers. MSRP=$50.

Software Security – This book/CD, authored by Gary McGraw, a leading authority in the field, teaches you how to put software security into practice. MSRP=$50.

How to Break Web Software – This book is a definitive guide to security testing any Web-based software and is authored by Mike Andrews & James Whittacker. The companion CD contains full source code for one testing tool you can modify & extend, free Web security testing tools, and more. MSRP=$35.

Real Digital Forensics – Computer Security and Incident Response – In this book, a team of world-class computer forensics experts walk you through six detailed,

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 special 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**.

The partial list of 54 available books is as follows, see website for full list: This is the second half of the list.

.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. 2 6/5/2006

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

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

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

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

The following books were donated to our Library by an NOCCC member:

C, A Reference Manual, 2nd Edition – This book from Pren Hall has a complete description of the full C language and over 180 standard run-time library functions.

Expert C Programming Deep C Secrets – This 1994 book by Peter van der Linden is from Pren Hall & reveals the coding techniques used by the best C programmers. MSRP=$35.

C# Essentials – This 2001 O'Reilly book contains everything the intermediate-to-advanced programmer needs to know to begin using C# and the .NET Framework SDK. MSRP=$20.

A Programmer's Introduction to C# - This 2000 book from Eric Gunnerson, a member of Microsoft's C# design team, teaches you to program with C# and to author .NET components. MSRP=$35.

Introduction to Assembly Language Programming – This 1998 undergraduate text by Sivarama Dandamudi covers the 8086 family of processors up to and including the Pentium.

Introduction to C++ - A Microsoft short guide to programming in C++.

Microsoft Visual Basic C++ User's Guide, Vol. I, Version 4 – The first of six volumes from Microsoft Press, this 1995, 700-page book provides a complete guide to use with integrated development environment and command-line tools. MSRP=$30.

Inside Visual C++, 4th Edition – This 1997 book by David Kruglinski from Microsoft Press is the standard reference for programming with Microsoft Visual C++ Version 5.0. MSRP=$50.

Programming with Qt – An O'Reilly book about writing GUI applications that run on Linux & several Windows platforms. MSRP=$33.

Internetworking with TCP/IP, Vol. I, 3rd Edition – This 1995 book by Douglas Comer from Prentice Hall covers the principles, protocols, & architecture and is a classic introductory text of TCP/IP.

Internetworking with TCP/IP – Douglas Comer's 1988 book from Pren Hall covers the principles, protocols, & architecture of this technology and the Internet in general terms.

Internetworking with TCP/IP, Vol. II, 2nd Edition – This 1994 book by Douglas Comer & David Stevens from Prentice Hall covers the design, implementation, & internals of the structure of TCP/IP software in an operating system.

Learning PERL – A 1993 O'Reilly book on this language for UNIX. MSRP=$25. 3 6/5/2006

An Introduction to Database Systems, Vol. I, 5th Edition – This 1991 book by C.J. Date from Addison-Wesley takes you from basic concepts through design and directions and contains numerous working examples. MSRP=$54.

An Introduction to Database Systems, Vol. II – This 1983 book by C.J. Date from Addison-Wesley effectively ties together eight loosely related topics in database technology.

A Guide to the SQL Standard, 3rd Edition – Another C.J. Date book from Addison-Wesley on the common language of database management. MSRP=$35.

More Programming Pearls, Confessions of a Coder – A witty and lively collection of essays from Addison-Wesley demonstrating the many varied aspects of programming, showing how programming can be both fun & elegant science.

Advanced Programming in the UNIX Environment – A 1996 book by W. Richard Stevens from Addison-Wesley, this 740-page tutorial is on the system call interface and the most important functions found in the ANSI C library. MSRP=$55.

ActionScript for Flash MX: The Definitive Guide, 2nd Edition – This 2003 1000-page O'Reilly book is dedicated entirely to ActionScript, Flash MX's object-oriented programming language and is for web developers of all levels. MSRp=$55.

The XML Handbook – Written in 1998 by Charles Goldfarb and published by Prentice Hall PTR, this 600-page book is an excellent starting point where you can learn and experiment with XML. MSRP=$45.

DocBook Publishing – This 2001 book shows you how to use DocBook's markup language to produce professional documents that can be easily distributed in a variety of media. MSRP=$40.

Active Template Library: A developer's Guide – This 1998 book by Tom Armstrong from M & T Books, clearly spells out how C++ templates work within the COM architecture and how template-based reuse works. MSRP=$40.

Professional Active Server Pages 2.0 – This book is for anyone responsible for planning, building, or maintaining a web site. ∎

Main Meeting Report

By Jim Sanders, NOCCC

The presentation this month was on Microsoft Vista by Jim Sanders, our PC Q&A SIG leader and Orange Bytes newsletter editor. His presentation placed emphasis on what hardware requirements were being specified by Microsoft to run the different levels of Vista. The names of the seven versions or levels of Vista are: Windows Vista Business, Windows Vista Business N, Windows Vista Home Basic, Windows Vista Home Basic N, Windows Vista Home Premium, Windows Vista Small Business and Windows Vista Ultimate. If you consider Vista for Emerging Markets, this is a stripped down version of Vista that will run on cheap low performance computers, then there are eight versions. This last version is intended for those nations with a low UN Human Development Index (HDI), http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UN_Human_Development_Index, (it is no longer PC to use the phrase Third World Country) and will not be available in the USA.

The following is a quote from this MS Web page: http://www.microsoft.com/windowsvista/getready/capable.mspx.

"A **Windows Vista Capable PC** includes at least:

A modern processor (at least 800MHz).

512 MB of system memory.

A graphics processor that is DirectX 9 and SVGA capable.

To get an even better Windows Vista experience, including the Windows Aero user experience, ask for a Windows Vista Capable PC that is designated Premium Ready, or choose a PC that meets or ex-

ceeds the Premium Ready requirements described below. Features available in specific premium editions of Windows Vista, such as the ability to watch and record live TV, may require additional hardware.

A **Windows Vista Premium Ready PC** includes at least:

1 GHz 32-bit (x86) or 64-bit (x64) processor1.

1 GB of system memory.

Support for DirectX 9 graphics with a WDDM driver, 128 MB of graphics memory (minimum), Pixel Shader 2.0 and 32 bits per pixel.

40 GB of hard drive capacity with 15 GB free space.

DVD-ROM Drive3.

Audio output capability.

Internet access capability."

It was pointed out that both of those definitions contained the phrase **"includes at least."** During a recent road show a Microsoft representative expanded on that topic. He asked the audience of mostly resellers, if they were familiar with the side panel of most boxed software products that detail the minimum hardware requirements for the software to run. There was a chorus of yeses from the group, and he continued. Paraphrasing his comments, he said; the minimum of 512 Megabytes of RAM will give Vista a heartbeat. Not a fast heartbeat, but a heartbeat. If you have 1 Gigabyte of RAM Vista walks well. If you install 2 to 4 Gigabytes of RAM you will see Vista run the way it is intended to run. His comments about processors were less dramatic, but I think it is pretty obvious that you should consider starting at a 3 Giga Hertz clock single core CPU. Personally I am planning on a AMD dual core 3800+ CPU.

The Vista feature that gets the most press is the new GUI (graphical user interface) called Aero Glass. For users that appreciate great eye candy, Aero Glass does a great job of satisfying that visual sweet tooth. While at the desktop, let's say you have 6 active applications running on your computer with the corresponding six buttons on the task bar.

As you let the mouse cursor hover over one of the buttons, a live, thumbnail window pops up showing the current, and if appropriate, changing contents of that applications window. The familiar Alt+Tab key combination for switching between applications shows live thumbnails instead of plain icons. The Flip 3D feature is like a live rolodex of open application windows that takes up about a third of the desk top when invoked. As you flip through the screens with the mouse wheel, you can see the active content of each application and the one that you stop on becomes the open active window. When you have several windows open and especially if two or three are the same program,

this feature makes it very easy to decide which window you want to open. The most frequently touted virtue of Aero Glass is its transparency feature. Some argue that it should be referred to as translucence as it is more like looking through a frosted window than a clear one. Instead of having a solid border around each of those windows, you can dimly see through the border to the window that is behind it. According to one Microsoft presenter, studies have shown that this helps to draw your eye to the content of the window instead of being distracted by the solid border around the window, thereby enhancing and improving your productivity.

This type of visual aid has been extended to the explorer as well. When you go looking through your files, instead of boring, static icons, thumbnails are used to show the content of the file. The size of the thumbnails can be easily and continuously varied to suite the users taste. The top level folder view has

a 3D effect to show the files that are in the folder. Once you click on that folder, the files in that folder can be displayed as 2D thumbnails to make finding the file you want easier. Finding what you are searching for has been made easier with another new feature, the instant search box. With this feature, you type in the two or three characters of the file name you are looking for and it displays all files that have that string in their name. Windows Vista is more than just a pretty face on top of XP. The end-user experience includes new, easy, and powerful ways to view the content of your hard disk and the disks on other computers on your home network. In Windows Vista, you'll be able to sort and group your files by various criteria, including date, author, type, and keywords. Keywords will use metadata that is included in files stored on your computer. You'll be able to add keywords to your data files, including your image files that Windows Vista will index. You'll even be able to create Stacks using a new feature that lets you stack by date, author, and type as a three-dimensional view of the content presented. The Windows Vista Sidebar is another new visual toy. By default it will install as a vertical bar on the right edge of your screen. You will be able to install "gadgets" on the Sidebar. The face of an analog clock is one of several included gadgets. Everything on the bar the bar itself can have its transparency set from 100% to barely visible until the mouse pointer moves over it. The Sidebar will host Web-based content windows. It will also provide quick and easy access to content such as RSS feeds.

As nifty as this new eye candy is, and it is neat, it is not a freebie. You can start to get a feel for why you need the aforementioned powerful CPU and fast large hard disk to quickly go out and check al those files and convert them to indexed thumbnails. You need to have a pretty high end graphics card to support the Premium or Ultimate version of Vista. 256 MB of display RAM is suggested and 512MB of display RAM is preferred. It has almost become a given that the interface on the video card is PCI Express as opposed to AGP.

Microsoft has provided a means of testing your system to see if it has the minimum hardware necessary to run the different versions of Vista. Goto: http://www.microsoft.com/windowsvista/get-ready/upgradeadvisor/default.mspx

A few comments on the Web suggest that perhaps one reason Microsoft delayed introduction of Vista till after the holiday season was that it gave manufacturers an opportunity to sell down their inventory of not Vista compliant, or poor Vista performance computers, at a time when large numbers of uninformed consumers will be buying gift computers. This is particularly true of laptop computers which are out selling desktops in the US. Most of the desktops can easily have more RAM added and an acceptable video card installed, but most of the under $1000 dollar laptops with shared main memory video will likely be a problem.

A good site to look at most of the features of Vista: http://www.microsoft.com/windowsvista/features/default.mspx.

There are several pitfalls to switching to Vista that are not printed in bold type on the side of the box. The following Q&A was found on a Microsoft web page.

Q. Will Windows Vista allow unsigned drivers to be loaded?

A. It depends. 32-bit editions of Windows Vista will load unsigned drivers if you sign in with an account that has administrator permissions on the machine or use administrator credentials during driver installation. 64-bit versions of Windows Vista will require all kernel mode code to be digitally signed before it will load.

What does that mean? If you upgrade to the recommended 64 bit CPU, and you have a favorite piece of hardware, say a film scanner for instance, and the maker of that device hasn't paid Microsoft to test and bless their driver modules, you will not be able to run it on your new computer.

The old carpenter's adage is to measure twice and cut once. Along that line, perhaps the computer users adage should be to check many things before making that one decision to switch to Vista. ∎

Computer Aided Investing

By Bob Krishfield, NOCCC

Technical Market Review: The July market performance was a challenge as it took a dip to match Junes lows and then bounce back about where it started. We can be thankful for the bounce, but most would be happier if we had made more progress upward. Looking at the weekly chart of the S&P 500, it was evident that we had not broken the long term uptrend that goes back to Oct 2005, but in a shorter term view we are just cycling within a trading range and moving sideways. There are several resistance levels that need to be overcome to move up, but there is not enough volume or momentum to breakthrough. The NASDAQ market has not bounced back like the others, making new lows in July and only making a weak recovery. Without the Tech Stocks in the NASDAQ, leadership is missing and the market is divided and going nowhere. We looked at the criteria promoted by IBDs Bill O Neil for getting back into the market after a bottom. It takes a 2% gain on heavier volume and its best if it happens within 4-7 days after the low. Looking at the NASDAQ chart, that the June and July rally attempts failed the O Neil criteria and one should be cautious about putting money back into the market.

CAI SIG

Here is where the technical argument stops and all the politics and news of the day comes in that affect the markets and sentiment of the buyers and sellers. While in a trading range market, it takes a more skilled and aggressive investor to trade the short-term ups and downs and make money.

Four Year Cycle Review: We took a look at how the market behaves in longer periods, such as the 4-year cycle. The Economic cycle varies from 4-8 years from trough to trough. (7 full cycles since 1959), and is interesting to analyze since it gives you hints about which sectors are rotating from weakness to strength, and how stocks, bonds, and commodities perform as the economic cycle progresses through the four stages of expansion and recession. The Market 4 year cycle is about 9-12 months ahead of the Economic cycle and is heading down to bottom next March. This would indicate the economy would pass through a recession period between now and then. For investors, this long-term view suggests being out of the market and waiting for a bottom. Other strategies would include hedging current positions, using options, or going short. Long Term Investing Strategy: With a 4 year bottom ahead and a market declining, this raised the question for long-term investments should they be traded? And how do you choose a long-term investment, i.e. a core stock that retains value across market swings? The most common approach for stock selection for a buy and hold strategy uses stock screens that pick stocks with better than average earnings, earnings growth, cashflow and the ability to generate cash flow in the future. We will look at stock screening at a future date. Here we want to select stocks based upon their plots and which stocks have growth that is not dependant on market peaks and troughs. A linear regression line was setup that measures the slope of the line (average growth) and deviation from the line, and compares these figures to the one year total growth (rate of change). This technique is visual and qualitative, but one could see how the

explosive growth of one stock did not follow the line, and this rate of growth was not likely to persist for years to come. A simple overvalued/undervalued trading model was shown using this linear regression model and applied to the Shadow Stock Portfolio from AAII.

Using a composite curve of the total portfolio, it was interesting to see that this portfolio was performing above average in 2006 and diverging from the market. Using the baskets approach presented last month, Shadow Stocks returned about 24% per year since 2005. ■

AmiBroker SIG

By Bob Krishfield, NOCCC
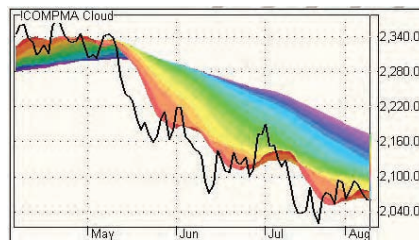
The first meeting of the AmiBroker SIG took place in Science 111 following the CAI SIG and we had a number of new faces. The meeting spent time to get things organized and survey the interests of the users present. It appears that most of the users (10 of 14) are just beginning and need help getting up to speed. Emphasis was made that users would need self-instruction since the meeting time was not sufficient to present all the basics of AmiBroker that were well documented in the UserGuide. The survey revealed the strongest interest was in demonstrating AmiBroker capabilities and instruction on AFL. Those users with some experience will benefit from a review of AmiBroker basics, AFL examples, and access to AFL codes. We will use the website (bobsden.org/amibroker) to get access to materials for the up-coming meetings, and review resources discussed at the meetings.

One of the important steps in getting started is getting access to the UserGuide, which is a complete reference for AmiBroker, setups, programming AFL, and applying capabilities to investing/trading. We were able to get enough members to sign-up for a bulk printing of the manual at a reduced (2 cents per page vs 7 cents) cost than what was available individually. Manuals were ordered for those who committed and will be distributed at the September meeting

Demonstrating AmiBroker started with the introduction to the windows layout and jumped to the various menus and functions. It became evident that we didnt have enough time to spend on this and users were not keeping up with an abrieviated presentation. This would require a more detailed presentation style, following an agenda with time for questions. Users who bring their computers to the meeting and follow along will benefit by resolving questions in real-time. Taking notes to do this later at home will be a slower process, but the best method for those who do not have portables

The website will be used as the primary communications for what is planned and any documents that are needed to be downloaded for the meeting to reduce note taking. A new website will be introduced for detailed AFL discussions, Q&A and sharing results with members. This will be a site restricted to users so there is minimal exposure to the rest of the world while asking questions that may be simple to others. Using this website will allow members to focus on specific AFL subjects and avoid the high volume of messages on the other boards until they are ready to follow them

Topics for the next meeting will demonstrate and explain charting, saving charts, multiple pane charts, and using parameters and the AFL editor to customize chart codes. Users are encouraged to e-mail questions and issues to me to be addressed at the next meeting. ■

Digital Photography

By Larry Klees, NOCCC

WHAT YOUR MOTHER NEVER TOLD YOU ABOUT CAMERA CONTRAST CONTROLS

*A*t the August meeting we examined how curves can bring out image details by altering the contrast in specific luminance areas .

For the September meeting we will continue working with contrast; but it will be from the camera's perspective. Most digital cameras have a contrast setting.
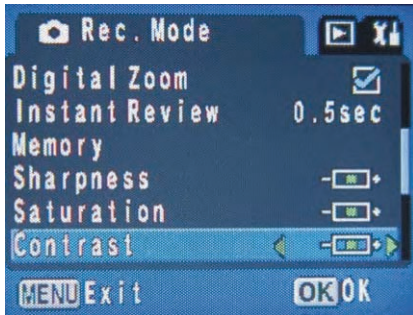
In the above, typical consumer camera menu from a Pentax Optio S40, you can see that the contrast can be adjusted to low, medium, or high. Naturally if you can find a salesman or manual to even mention it, you will be informed that it adjusts the contrast. Who knew? With such useful information at hand, my cameras like most of yours have remained set to the center (default) position.

THE EXPERIMENT:

To learn what contrast actually does I took three experimental shots with the contrast set to low, medium, & high. A Guillaume Azoulay serigraph titled Osalto was chosen as test subject for its combination of subtle color transitions and sharp lines. The S40 was placed on a tripod and the flash was used to take three identical pictures except for the contrast setting. The camera was aimed at an angle of about forty five degrees so the flash would provide a tonal gradient, bright on the left - dark on the right.

For each of the shots an editing program was used to record the

PRODUCTS FOR REVIEW

highly realistic investigations and provides a DVD with all the data you need to follow along and practice. MSRP=$50.

Extrusion Detection – Security Monitoring for Internal Intrusions – This book, also authored by Richard Bejtlich, is a useful reference guide for a security operations center analyst. MSRP=$50.

IPsec Virtual Private Network Fundamentals – An Introduction to VPNs – This book by James Carmouche, provides you with a basic understanding of how IPsec VPNs operate and also prevents an explanation of the different components of Cisco IPsec implementation. MSRP=$55.

Additional books available for review:

Photoshop Masking & Compositing – Masking and compositing are two of the most fascinating aspects of creative image-making and are essential to master if you're trying to create truly inspiring images. Katrin Eismann zeros in on the fine points of this craft in this book published by New Riders. MSRP=$55.

Photoshop Workflow Setups – This new essential reference by Eddie Tapp, an award-winning photographer, teaches you how to organize Photoshop as a powerful digital darkroom, customize preferences & menus, use Adobe Bridge for workflow/image management, etc. From O'Reilly, MSRP=$30.

Photoshop Finishing Touches – Transform your images into frame-worthy works of art with this collection of impressive Photoshop finishing techniques by Dave Cross from Peachpit Press. MSRP=$40.

Stephen Johnson on Digital Photography – Internationally recognized digital photography pioneer Stephen Johnson chronicles his own expedition on the bleeding edge of digital photography's evolving frontier and explores a wide-range of issues. The book from O'Reilly is beautifully illustrated with lots of color photographs. MSRP=$40.

Real World Adobe Creative Suite 2 – How to manage, integrate, and synchronize all of the apps in the suite: Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, Acrobat, and GoLive. Co-authors Sandee Cohen & Steve Werner show you how to use the right app at the right time so you can work better and smarter. Published by Peachpit Press/Adobe Press, MSRP=$50.

Design to Sell – Published by Microsoft Press. MSRP=$30.

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.

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.

The Internet: The Missing Manual – David Pogue's new book from O'Reilly tells you all you need to know to effectively & efficiently use the Internet. 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.

The eBay Price Guide – This 570-page book by Julia Wilkinson takes the guesswork out of buying on eBay from the very proper museum-quality item to the truly bizarre. The companion CD contains a demo version of HammerTap's DeepAnalysis auction research software as well as The eBay Appetizer, The Seller's Guide, and The Auction Accelerator which has 6 startup lessons. Published by O'Reilly/No Starch Press, the MSRP=$30.

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.

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.

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
AmiBroker	Science	111	11:15	Bob Krishfield	bobkrish@socal.rr.com	714-532-3096
Autocad	Wilkinson	111	9:00	Joe Mizer	joem@pvateplaamerica.com	909-688-9848
Computer Aided Investing	Science	111	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	714-879-6405
Genealogy	Science	111	2:30	John Johnson	jrosjohnson@juno.com	714-991-3314
Computer Essentials	Science	306	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	714-544-3589
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	aeccrcss@hotmail.com	909-860-9515
Visual Programming III	Science	109	10:00	Anson Chapman	aeccrcss@hotmail.com	909-860-9515
Visual Programming IV	Science	109	11:15	Anson Chapman	aeccrcss@hotmail.com	909-860-9515
Please report SIG changes to				Herbert Wong, Jr.	ocug@singularitytechnology.com	714-968-7264

Membership Benefits

enjoy savings on books of 30%: go to http://www.phptr.com, http://www.awprofessional.com, and http://www.ibmpress-books.com.

RoboForm is a Password Manager and web form filler for storing your online passwords and automates entering passwords. You can download a complimentary version at www.roboform.com/corts. If you want to upgrade to the PRO version before September 30, 2005 use the coupon code CORTS and get 10% off.

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

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

Welcome New Student Member

Here's a welcome to new member, **Gavin Baker**, a 14-year-old (in November) high school freshman who joined at the August meeting courtesy of Grandpa Ted Littman, our Reviews Editor and Board member. Gavin is really into computing aided by a cousin who fixes and builds them for a living. Although Gavin won't be able to attend many of our monthly meetings since he lives in Modesto, CA, he will keep track of club doings through our newsletter and web site. And he is interested in reviewing software and books!

So, all you other Parents and Grandparents: How about getting gift memberships for your kin? Remember, the annual membership fee is only $15 for High School students and $20 for College students! That's a bargain for the print Bytes alone.
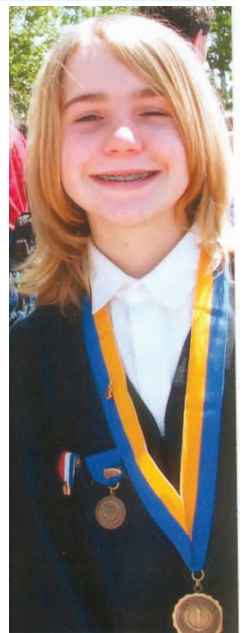
NOCCC Help Line

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

AI
Amiga
Apple
Apple II
Apple/Educator
C/C++
Computer Boards
Corel Draw
Excel(IBM)
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
Business 2000, 2001
Powerpoint
Realtime Control
Robotics
Tcl/Tk
Unix
Windows 9X
Windows 9X
Windows 2000
Word
Word
WordPerfect

The help line list is published in the printed version of the Orange Bytes which is mailed to the membership

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

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.

SUSE Linux: A Complete Guide to Novell's Community Distribution – This new book by Chris Brown from O'Reilly will get you up to speed quickly & easily on SUSE, one of the most friendly and usable Linux distributions. MSRP=$40.

User Mode Linux – This new addition to the Bruce Peren's Open Source Series, this book by Jeff Dike shows you how to create virtual Linux machines within a Linux computer and use them to safely test and debug applications, network services, and kernels. Published by Prentice Hall, the MSRP=$55.

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.

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

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.

Linux Phrasebook: Essential Codes & Commands – This new pocketbook from Sams Publishing is authored by Scott Granneman and contains the codes you need to quickly & effectively work in a Linux OS and development environment. MSRP=$15.

A Practical Guide to Red Hat Linux, 3rd Edition – This new book from Prentice Hall was written by Mark Sobell and includes the full Fedora Core on the accompanying DVD. Completely revised, it will meet all your Fedora Core & Red Hat Enterprise Linux needs. MSRP=$50.

Red Hat Fedora 5 Unleashed – This new book from Sams Publishing was written by Paul Hudson & Andrew Hudson & presents comprehensive coverage of Fedora 5, the open-community version of Red Hat Linux – the most comprehensive Linux distribution.The accompanying DVD includes the full Fedora Core 5 binary distribution & the complete OpenOffice.org office suite. MSRP=$50.

Point & Click Open Office.org! – Book + CD from Prentice Hall. MSRP=$30.

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.

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. ■

NOCCC Membership Fee Schedule

In an effort to increase club membership and provide additional resources, attract young people involved or having an interest in computing, to attract local computer-related businesses to place ads in the Orange Bytes with or without becoming NOCCC members, the schedule has been revised. 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	($)
Membership Level	**1 Year**	**3 Years**
Individual Member	**$35**	**90**
Each Additional Family Member	15	45
College Student	20	
High School Student	15	
Business Member + Ad (Business Card)	180	
Business Member + Ad (1/4 Page)	465	
Business Member + Ad (1/2 Page)	800	
Business Member + Ad (Full Page)	1,475	
Membership Donations ($)		
Contributing Member	75	
Supporting Member	100	
Advocate Member	250	
Patron Member	**500**	

Membership Renewal

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

Memberships may also be re-newed on our Website:
http://www.noccc.org

Are You an NOCCC Member?

Consider all that you get with membership and Join Now

- **Meetings**. Keep up with what's going on in the computer world. Hear outstanding industry representatives make presentations of the latest and greatest in computer products.
- **Special Interest Groups**. Our 20 SIGs cover a broad spectrum of user interest; they invite you, whether you rank as beginner or seasoned computerist, to the lectures and demonstrations they sponsor, and to share computer knowledge.
- **Get help with your current computer problems**. In the Random Access portions of the 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 General meetings.
- **Product Review.** Write a review for this newsletter and keep the software, hardware, book or CD. Members reviews are published in this newletter.
- **Consignment Table**. We have a thriving consignment table on our regular meeting day in which we assist members to sell or buy all kinds of computer items.
- **Volunteer Work**. You are given opportunities to help our activities with interesting assignments. *An all-volunteer organization*, you can join with other members in a variety of activities, write articles for our newsletter, conduct a seminar, run a SIG, man the help desk, show new members around, help the membership commitee, and more.

    Parking Information — Chapman University's main parking lot (P6) is on the north side of the campus (enter from Glassell & University Dr.) and lot P3 (N Center St. & E Sycamore Ave) is free of charge for NOCCC's meetings on Sunday. Please feel free to park in the parking lots.

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

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

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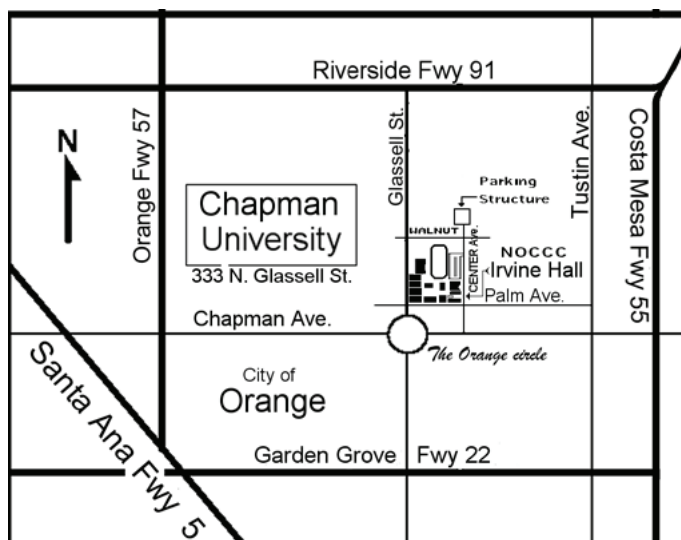
For current meeting information, please call
(714) 998-8080 for a recorded message.

North Orange County Computer Club
PO Box 3616
Orange CA 92857

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

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