

Orange Bytes

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

Vol 31 • No 11

NOVEMBER 2006

eWaste is being collected again this month, bring your old stuff!

Main Meeting - to be Announced by email

November meeting details on page 4

NOCCC Meetings - November 5th

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*
We will try to fix your bad photos

10:00 a.m:

Linux for Server Administrators *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-Broker for 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
To be announced

2:30 p.m:
Hardware Essentials *Science 109*
Printer technology
OS/2 News and Installation *Science 203*

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

Meeting Dates
Nov 5, Dec 3, Jan 7

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Borrow a computer book from our library, see page 19



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
November 2006

It's time to set clocks back again. This year our November meeting is not the going to be the day after the time change, so no excuse for being late to the meeting. An interesting piece of information, next year the time change will take place on the first Sunday of November. All kinds of interesting information is available on the Web by doing a Google search on "Daylight Saving Time." An interesting Web site is located at <http://www.webexhibits.org/daylightsaving/k.html>.

The holiday season is here. I am still not adjusted to Standard time. I hate to lose the hour and it always happens just when the rainy season starts. To keep my spirits up I start planning how I am going to decorate for the holidays.

Please put our Potluck Holiday Party on your calendar. It is going to be Saturday, December 9th starting at 4:00 P.M. till ????. It is pot luck and we will eat at 5:00 P.M. This party is open to all NOCCC members and their guests, not just volunteers. Note: Please RSVP to President@noccc.org for information concerning location and what you would like to bring. I'll plan to have a turkey, which Herb Wong has agreed to carve. His talent with carving is worth watching. This is your chance to relax and have a good time and get to know other club members. I am really looking forward to the party.

An idea for a Christmas gift for someone who is very difficult to buy for: Membership in NOCCC. You don't have to worry about size, color, or going to a mall. The membership can be purchased by mail, at the November or December meeting, or by going to www.noccc.org.

November is the time to bring your eWaste to the meeting for FREE, PROPER disposal of those broken TVs, printers, monitors, VCRs, and other electronic things that are taking up space. When you are going through your computer room, garage, or wherever you keep your old stuff, keep an eye out for those things that you are no longer using but someone else might enjoy. Bring those things to our consignment table. This is an excellent time to see if you can get a few bucks for the old monitor (or whatever) and if it doesn't sell, we can dispose of it. Usually there is a limit on what you can sell on the consignment table, such as an old printer, because if it doesn't sell, and you don't pick it up, then the club would have to dispose of it. Since we have the eWaste available in November we do not have to worry about storing or disposing of such hardware items. Please be aware that if you leave items on the consignment after the Main meeting is over, they will be thrown away.

This is also a painless way to make a contribution to NOCCC. Just donate the item to the club and let the club keep whatever it sells for. This is a win/win situation. The clubs makes some money, and you get rid of something that has been taking up space. This is also a good time to check the consignment table for older hardware that you may no longer be able to buy at the local electronics store.

I want to thank Dale Atwater for his help in the closing in October. ■

November 2006

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 - SurfSaver 6, normally \$29.95, you can get it for \$19.95. AskSam 6 Standard + 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 or the Pro version for \$99.95. You can also download 30 day trial versions. <http://www.asksam.com/usergroupspecial/>

Blue Squirrel - www.bluesquirrel.com/usergroup/ 50% off all products - call 800.403.0925 to order and mention user group special pricing. - till end of 2006

Corel - at the Feb 5, 06 presentation, Corel gave us the following link for special pricing to user group members. <http://www.corel.com/specialusergroups>

WordPerfect Office X3 for \$159, CorelDRAW Graphics Suite X3 for \$179, Corel Painter for \$229, Paint Shop Pro Photo XI for \$59, and Snap Fire Plus 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

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October Board Meeting Minutes

Oct. 2, 2006

The monthly Board of Directors meeting was held on Monday, October 2,



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, John Carlson and Else Olovsson.

Officers Reports:

Secretary's report – (Mary Cornett) - Minutes from the October 1, 2006 board meeting were approved as printed.

Treasurer's report – (Doug Steiner) – Collections during the October meeting include Consignment table of \$3.10, Raffle: \$70.00 and Coffee \$20.26.

Next NOCCC Main Meeting – Nov. 5. (Elise Edgell).

Next Board Meeting: Nov. 6.

Report on General Meeting – (Elise Edgell) Ivan Randall demonstrated ADS Corp hardware to convert Analog VHS tapes to DVD machine. (Herb Wong, Jr.) - reports 55 persons attended.

Committee Reports:

Publications – (Jim Sanders) – Good reviews. Ted Littman reported many compliments on our newsletter. Bill Thornton commented that the Bytes, "Dated Material" notice could be larger.

Programs – (Elise Edgell & Jim Sanders) New speakers to be contacted.

Nov. 5 - Open

Dec. 3 - Open

Jan. 7 - Open

Reviews - (Ted Littman) One Software program \$7.00, 2 books

= Library fee of \$4.00. We received 5 reviews for November and beyond. We have 3 delinquent reviews, balance held for Gerry's raffle.

Public Relations – (Elise Edgell) nothing new.

University Liaison – (Elise Edgell) not done, awaiting contact to return. Notices will be posted about bathroom locations and type by either: Doug, Herb or Ted. Parking will be reserved for our presenter with cones in our parking lot area.

Internet Committee – (Herb Wong, Jr.) no news.

Raffle - (Gerry Resch) – General Raffle went well = \$70.00.

SIG'S – (Herb Wong, Jr.) – We will move some SIG's. Herb will contact SIG leaders and set up a SIG Leader Meeting with some board members in attendance.

Consignment Table – (Richard Miller) – New keyboard donated. 2 books donated by Ted, T-shirts donated by Gerry. We will do better in November. Doug Steiner will be in charge of the cashbox.

Membership – (Bill Thornton) – Jim Sanders will give Bill some old copies of the Bytes.

Classified Ads – (Jim Sanders) –A handful of bogus ads.

Opening & Closing: Jim Sanders said, Eric did Opening. Jim, Eric and others helped with Closing.

Old Business: (Gerry Resch) – Jim will contact persons re: New Home Automation SIG. A note by Elise, please make a sign to label the freebee table.

New Business: - (Elise) Persons attending our Potluck Holiday Party, December 9th, please R.S.V.P. to president@noccc.org include intended dish to help coordinate food types. Party starts at 4:00pm, and food will be served at 5:00pm sharp, socializing till who knows.when.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10pm. ■

NOVEMBER 5TH MEETING PREVIEW

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY SIG - 9:30 am - Larry Klees - At the next meeting Larry will cover: Photo Restoration Part 2 and If time permits we will start to examine printer calibration on a budget.

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 – Review Market Performance and Indicators. Begin discussion on Trading System Backtesting and Optimization and the need for choosing the proper objectives, and testing out-of-sample.

AMIBROKER SIG: 11:15 am – Continue review of Charting using built-in charts and indicators. Introduce AFL coding and editing simple programs. Review various database setup ideas

for FastTrack and QuotesPlus supplied data. Extra time spend on Q&A at the end of the session.

MAIN MEETING 1:00 pm, Irvine Hall - Our October Main Meeting will be announced via email. There are several possibilities but we do not have confirmation at press time.

THE CLUB RAFFLE items this month are: Keyboard Organizer - PS2 keyboard with built-in storage, Roxio 8 Software Suite, The Art of Computer Programming #3. 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: Microsoft One Note program, Software Security book & ??? ■

Consignment Table

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

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

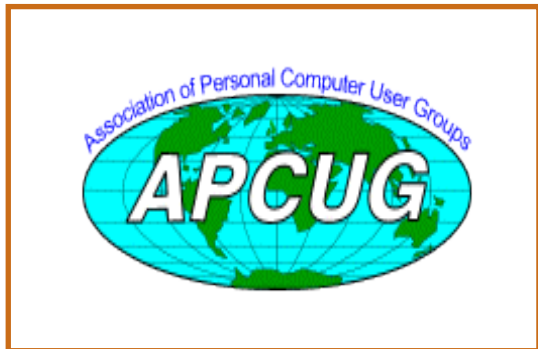
3. Fill out a tag on each item! It must contain: Seller's Name, NOCCC Membership Number, Item name, a short description and selling price.

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

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

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

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



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Volunteers, Committees, and Projects

Business Solicitations/Lecture Series

Open

Consignment Table

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University Liaison

Open

Ted's Stuff

By *Ted Littman*, NOCCC Reviews Editor and Board Member

This is the 5th issue of a new column for the Bytes. In it, I 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 include your gems or**



make comments, please email them to me at tedsstuff@adelphia.net for publication in this column, with appropriate attribution of course. To date, none of you good folks has responded. Is anyone listening? Do you want me to continue this column?

Free eMusic from Broderbund

Are you into downloading music? According to an e-mail from Broderbund, if you try their "eMusic" (free for 14 days), they will give you 50 free MP3 downloads free just for giving them a chance. "After your free trial, songs are \$.25 or less each. Best of all, there's no commitment and if you're not 100% satisfied just cancel before the free trial ends and keep the 50 downloads as our gift to you. You're sure to find something you like in their library of more than 1,000,000 tracks. From Power Pop to Bebop, Boogie Woogie to Baroque, Downtempo to Flamenco - eMusic has it all!" The deal is at <http://www.emusic.com/broderbund?fref=150473>.

Common Excel 2003 Formulas

Microsoft has published a handy list of formulas to quickly add things to your spreadsheet at <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/assistance/HP052001271033.aspx>.

Signatures for E-mail Messages

If you would like to give your e-mail messages professional polish or personal style (including graphics), and you use Outlook 2003, Microsoft will show you at <http://office.microsoft.com/training/training.aspx?AssetID=RC011891991033>.

Seniors On-line

In Bob Rankin's 8-29-06 Tourbus newsletter, he has a link to his web article that includes some great links for the 60+ crowd (http://askbobrankin.com/senior_citizens_online.html). For those interested, he has links for seniors who want to network with other seniors, learn more about computers and the Internet, or access information especially helpful for older/retired folks. There are links to government sites like Social Security & Veterans' Health as well as stuff on estate planning, volunteering your time, consumer protection, and much more.

6 Tips for Better Online Searches

Do you seem to spend too much time looking for things on the Internet? Here are some tips on improving your search techniques: http://www.microsoft.com/smallbusiness/resources/technology/communications/6_tips_for_better_online_searches.mspx.

Investing

Bob Rankin also wrote a good article with lots of links for those interested in securities investing (http://askbobrankin.com/stock_investing.html). It can help get you up to speed or advance your skills if you want to participate in one of the NOCCC investing SIGs.

Linux for Beginners

In the 9-6-2006 issue of Bob Rankin's newsletter, he mentions his article that is worth reading if you want to "dip your toes" into the waters of an operating system with lots of variants that seems to be gaining on Windows (http://askbobrankin.com/linux_help.html).

PC Security

According to c|net (9-12-2006 issue of Download Dispatch), "careless friends and family members are one of the most reported reasons for accidentally installed malware." To read more about this, check out the article "How to Family-proof Your PC" at http://www.download.com/How-to-family-proof-your-PC/1200-2023_4-5165780.html?tag=nl.e415. In another good article, "5 Essential Steps to PC Security" (<http://www.informationweek.com/LP/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=177100010&pgno=1&queryText=>), Fred Langa provides some excellent advice on this critical issue and the need to have some overlapping tools.

Microsoft Research

Have you ever heard of this place? I hadn't until I read Fred Langa's newsletter of 9-20-06. According to Fred, "Most people have never heard of Microsoft's enormous R&D branch, "Microsoft Research." But it's huge, with three labs in the US, one in Europe and another in Asia." To read more about this enterprise and the exciting things that are being done, go to <http://research.microsoft.com/>. For a current list of available downloads, check out <http://research.microsoft.com/research/downloads/default.aspx>. Some are only demos, but others are real applets that you can use.

Try downloading Microsoft's "Continuous Flash" applet demo, for example, which starts with two photos of the same scene--- one lit with a flash, one unlit with the flash---and generate a third photo with any degree of lighting between the two real photos. In other words, with a dark non-flash shot and a bright full-flash shot of the same scene, Continuous Flash synthesizes a new digital image of that scene the way it would look with any intermediate degree of lighting you want--- 10% flash, or 50% flash, or 80% flash, or whatever makes it look best. Unfortunately, the applet isn't available - maybe Microsoft will include it in its photoeditor?

Also, try another interesting one, "Group Shot" at <http://research.microsoft.com/projects/GroupShot/>. This applet "helps you create a perfect group photo out of a series of group photos. With Group Shot you can select your favorite parts in each shot of the series and



Group Shot will automatically build a composite image.”

Resize Digital Images

In an article by Marc Salzman (<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/digitalphotography/learnmore/tips/eschelman2.mspx>), you can download a free utility to simply and quickly change the sizes of your images for e-mailing and other uses. It is one of the many handy tools that make up the Microsoft PowerToys for Windows XP.

That's it for now. Happy computing and see you next month. ■

Welcome To DirectX 10!

Graphics Cards Will Not Be The Same Again:

By *Timothy Everingham*, NOCCC Teveringham@acm.org

Are you looking at purchasing that fancy new video/graphics card? You might want to wait before forking out all that money. The reason why is, DirectX 10 is coming to town. DirectX is the language your software uses to talk to your video and sound cards. DirectX has been around for 11 years and has been going through an evolutionary process, with the current version being 9.0c. However, version 10 is a major rewrite of DirectX, which will have it operating very differently than before. That is one reason why Microsoft was going to call DirectX 10 “Windows Graphics Foundation,” but they have scraped that name and gone back to DirectX 10. The big changes are in graphics rather than sound. As such it will be especially important if you use 3D applications, including games. However, DirectX 10 will only be available for Windows Vista, which will be released to the public this January.

In previous and current versions of DirectX, vertex and pixel shaders created the visualization of 3D objects. The vertex shader first converts the graphics data into triangles. These are then passed on to the pixel shader to divide the triangles into fragments and process them. This can lead to a bottleneck of graphics processing at the vertex or pixel shader levels. DirectX 10 adds a geometry shader, which is placed between the vertex and pixel shaders. It uses the data from the vertex shaders to multiply the triangles or generate new points, lines and triangles or sprites, it effectively increases the efficiency of the entire graphics pipeline. It also allows graphics effects to be generated that were previously not possible. Before DirectX 10 a discrete shader model was used; one that more stringently defined the order of execution. DirectX 10 takes a more flexible approach and allows for a unified shader model where the shaders are working together, and video memory is better allocated and managed. This is an implementation of the next version of the shader model, version 4.0. However, DirectX 10 does not require a unified shader.

In previous versions assembling data to be sent to the video card took up a lot of computer system overhead, a lot of CPU cycles. This is a result of the so-called “Small Batch

Problem.” This problem also meant that there was a limitation of about 500 unique objects (a tree or blade of grass for example) being displayed on a screen. To fill the screen with objects, multiple copies of objects were created with slightly different coloring. This fools the viewer into perceiving a larger variety of objects on the screen than actually exist. Since in the real world, especially in nature, a particular object can have many variations, the resulting scenes have a diminished feeling of realism about them. With DirectX 10's unified shader model architecture, this problem has been eliminated. Thus reducing the load on your CPU and allowing thousands of unique 3D objects to be displayed at one time. This means more realistic and visually richer scenes on your computer. It also means that a computer can have a higher resolution output than ever before.

In the beginning, video cards were just hard-wired pieces of computer equipment. You had fixed drivers and could not change the way they operated once they were assembled. With DirectX version 8 and 9 video cards became somewhat programmable. Application programs could adjust how the video card operated to improve the way it processed the video/graphics for that application, providing a better video output for that program. In DirectX 10 the graphics processing units (GPUs) will be fully programmable. The result is that DirectX 10 video cards will act more like a computer within your computer. A computer will be talking to its own video card like it talks to another computer over a network. The video card GPU will be sent programs to run. Those programs will be fed data coming from the main computer's programs (full bi-directional communication between the computer and video/graphics card became available with the introduction of PCI Express). The GPU will then take that data and processes it under its own operating system and using its own memory to produce video output for a display. With DirectX 10 it is even possible to outsource a significant number of non-video/graphics processing tasks. This can speed up your computer for applications that do not have high graphical complexities. This is a very different way of getting video output from a computer, which changes the way programmers need to write computer applications to get the best results.

With the different way a 3D application has to be programmed for the best video output under DirectX 10, coupled with the fact that DirectX 10 video cards are not yet available,

continued on page 8

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NOCCC member 0019, Jim Sanders



you might believe that it will take a long time before programs will be coming out to take advantage of DirectX 10's features. However, there are programs that simulate how proposed or under development hardware behaves, through which the initial programming is developed for the new hardware before it is actually available. In addition, some hardware has been on the market for almost a year that contains a DirectX 10 rated GPU and on which DirectX 10 enabled applications now run. It is the graphics processing unit within Microsoft's Xbox 360. ATI and Microsoft jointly developed it. As such DirectX 10 enabled software, especially games, will be coming out sooner than one would expect. In fact Microsoft's Flight Simulator X, scheduled to be released this holiday season, will have some enhancements that will only be available for those running DirectX 10. However a large amount of DirectX 10 enabled applications probably will not be available until at least summer of 2007.

The first DirectX 10 video cards should be released on November 7, which will be the high-end cards based on Nvidia GPUs. Because ATI co-developed the graphics processing unit for the Xbox 360 with Microsoft using DirectX 10 architecture, it was initially believed that ATI would have better DirectX 10 products earlier than its rivals. However, they have run into some problems and DirectX 10 cards based on ATI GPUs are now not expected to appear at least until February. It is believed by many that the new DirectX 10 video cards will have higher power requirements than the current crop of video cards, and some may even have a separate power supply which you plug in the back of the card. The midlevel DirectX 10 cards are expected to arrive in March. You will be able to use your current DirectX 9 video cards with Windows Vista, but you will not be using DirectX 10. You will be using DirectX version 9.0L, which is embedded in DirectX 10. However, if you want to use the new Windows Vista Aero 3D interface (premium versions of Windows Vista) you will need at least a DirectX 9 capable card with 128 MB of RAM.

DirectX 10 is coming. The graphics/video cards based on it will be far more capable than the previous cards, but you will need to run Windows Vista to get the full capability out of them. The result of DirectX 10 coming should be a more graphically rich world on computer displays.

Timothy Everingham is a past Chair of the Los Angeles Chapter of ACM SIGGRAPH, the largest chapter of the Association for Computing Machinery's (ACM) Special Interest Group on Computer Graphics and Interactive Techniques. He has had articles published throughout the United States and Canada plus Australia, England, & Japan. He is a member of North Orange County Computer Club. Further information can be found at <http://home.earthlink.net/~teveringham>

Editors Note: *This is a very complex issue with lots of ramifications for the future of video displays on our PCs.*

More than a couple of websites are speculating that ATI's R600 DirectX 10 video card may use as much as 250 watts of power. Another shows what is purported to be a picture of NVIDIA's G80 DirectX 10 card that requires water cooling. The following websites contain a lot of additional information and graphics to help you better understand the topic.

http://www.elitebastards.com/cms/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=69&Itemid=29&limit=1&limitstart=0

<http://enthusiast.hardocp.com/article.html?art=MTA0NSwxLCxoZW50aHVzaWFzZA==>

For most users, a good DirectX 9 video card will work fine in Vista and if you are not planning to upgrade to Vista any time soon, you probably can care less about DirectX 10 other than as a FYI topic. ■

Over The Top Hot Chocolate

By Jim Sanders, NOCCC

By the time you read this, the dreaded Fall Back Monster has come and gone. In the middle of the night it crept in and stole an hour of daylight making the evening start way too early and last far too long. It is very depressing to have the black velvet of night settle on top of you before you even get home from work. Having to put the trash barrels out for collection in the dark seems like a far more arduous chore.

To make matters worse, the cold weather is upon us and you are reminded of last Winter's awful utility bills. To save a few bucks this year, you've programmed the thermostat to set the temperature back to 60 degrees at 9 PM even though you know the house is going to get uncomfortably cool before you go to bed.

As a result of all this, along about 10:30 PM, you are setting in front of your computer deleting the last of the plethora of email spam when, with a small shiver, you notice that you are chill. It is really too late for coffee or hot tea but something that would warm you up and cheer you up at the same time would be great. You think of hot chocolate but remember the last time you tried one of those packets of instant hot chocolate setting in the kitchen cupboard. The watery stuff that had two redeeming features, it was hot and it had enough of a chocolate flavor that it reminded you of what you really longed for. Then there is that canister of powder mix that the kids like but still comes out gritty tasting no matter how long you stir. What you really want is a big mug of insanely rich, sweet, creamy smooth hot chocolate with miniature marshmallows melting on top that you can sip and savor! In my opinion the following recipe fits that description to a T!

To a 12 ounce insulated plastic mug add a slightly rounded 1/3 cup measure of Chocolate Ovaltine.

Add a splash of hot water to liquefy and stir. Add 6 ounces of Carnation evaporated milk. Add 4 ounces of regular milk, stir. Place in microwave on high for 90 to 120+ seconds depending model – don't boil. Add miniature marshmallows to brim of mug. Microwave for another 15 seconds. Enjoy! Carefully, but Enjoy! ■

Surprising New Search Engine

By *Sandy Berger, Compu-KISS*

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sandy@compukiss.com

Google has been my search engine of choice for several years, but recent developments have made me change my alliance to a new search engine.

Perhaps you read about it. A few weeks ago, 20 million of AOL's customers Web search queries appeared on the Web. These included the user's ID, the query they typed into the search engine, and other information.

Newsmakers picked up on the story because of some of the dramatic Web searches performed. For instance, AOL user 2708 searched for "I hate my ex boyfriend," "how to humiliate someone," "free angry stuff to send to an ex lover," and "makehimpay.net". User 17556639 looked for even more vicious information with searches on "how to kill a wife", "photo of dead people," "decapitated photos," "wife killer," and "steak and cheese." (Guess they got hungry.)

After the sensationalism died down, many people realized that the true story was that search engines are keeping a collection of information that can lead to a personal dossier of an individual. AOL's information included user numbers that were identified by cookies, but users can also be identified by Internet addresses, bringing them closer to our true identities.

All of the big search engines keep such information. Recently Google, AOL, Microsoft, and Yahoo were subpoenaed to turn over information of this type to the Justice Department. Of the big four, only Google refused to release the information.

In response to this story, one search engine, Ixquick, immediately issued a press release stating that they are taking steps to provide privacy protection for their users. Ixquick stated that after a search, they will immedi-

ately and permanently delete all personal search details.

I was impressed by a company who thought that protecting our privacy was more important than gleaning information from our searches and selling data for marketing purposes. I had never heard of Ixquick, but I immediately surfed over to www.ixquick.com. I was impressed with what I found.

Ixquick, which is owned by a Dutch company, is a metasearch engine. That means that it searches several databases to get its search results. Ixquick uses Yahoo/Alta vista, Gigablast, Ask Jeeves/Teoma, Open Directory and 7 other search engines. It is available in 18 languages.

Ixquick marks the search results with stars, one star for every search engine that chooses that particular Web site as one of the ten best results for your search. This effectively gives you the relevancy of the search results. Also, the Ixquick interface is clean and easy to use. It allows you to quickly choose if you want your search to find only one of the words of your search phrase, all of the words, or the exact phrase. There is also a place where you can easily enter words that you may want to eliminate from your search. You don't need to fool around with pluses, minuses, or quotation marks as you do with some popular search engines.

I was extremely impressed with the Ixquick's International Phone Directory.

Just type in a name and city or state and you can actually find people. Ixquick's Reverse Directory can tell you who's calling when you enter a telephone number. With Bigfoot and most other people directories now charging for people searches, this is an extremely useful free search tool.

Ixquick also has a comparison shopping service and an image search feature. Like Google and others, Ixquick offers a search toolbar.

After using Ixquick for a few weeks, I can honestly say that I have been very happy with the results. Using it in conjunction with Google gives you a wonderfully wide selection of search results. If, however, you want to really keep your searches private, then you will want to use Ixquick exclusively. After the recent AOL debacle, I feel that Ixquick is providing a great service not only as a search engine, but also as a leader on privacy issues.

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. ■

Adobe Photoshop Elements 4 Classroom in a Book

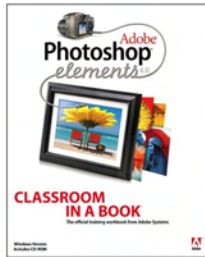
By *Ted Littman, NOCCC*

This 337-page book with a lessons CD is the “official training workbook” from Adobe Systems and is published by Peachpit/Adobe Press. Following a **Getting Started** section that covers requirements, copying the lesson files to your hard disk, and other pertinent introductory information, there are eight lessons ranging from **Elements Overview** to **Advanced Editing Techniques**. Each lesson has “a series of self-paced projects that gives you hands-on experience” using the software.

According to the publisher, “The book covers the basics of learning Adobe Photoshop Elements, and countless tips and techniques to help you become more productive with its new features, including the Magic Selection Brush; Magic Extractor; Auto Red Eye and Auto Skin tone tools; cool slideshow effects; using an online sharing service to make your photos available for friends and family; and more. You’ll learn how to correct photos like a darkroom pro, and then share them in slide shows, calendars, on the Web, and more. You can follow the book from start to finish or choose only those lessons that interest you.”

As a training tool, the book serves its purpose, but it is not intended to cover all features in PE4 or replace the documentation and support sources available to registered users. What it does is take you step-by-step through each subject in learning how to use the very good photoediting and organizing capabilities of the program. No single author is given attribution for the book and its lessons. Like other such works, its writing style is on the dry side and a bit boring – much like the 207-page PE4 User Guide that itself contains six tutorials. However, Classroom’s illustrations are all in color and I found that most helpful in doing the lessons.

If you’ve ever taken a live class on learning a software program, then it will be obvious that using a book alone for this purpose has its shortcomings. If you have a problem that is not addressed in the book, there is no teacher to ask questions of (and hopefully explain the solution) or interaction with other students. For example, some of



the “automatic and quick fix” tools in PE4 did not work well for me as advertised and neither the Classroom book nor the User Guide were of sufficient help so I had to resort to manual photoediting controls in the software. These are fine, but take a lot more practice to master, even with the lessons available. Overall, I found the book useful; but, then I like printed books vs. electronic help aids. If you are the kind of person who likes to or can dive into a new software program without learning the fundamentals or capabilities, than a book is not for you.

The book has an MSRP=\$35, but it can be ordered from Peachpit (<http://www.peachpit.com/bookstore/product.asp?isbn=0321384822&rl=1>) at a 30% discount if you sign in as a Peachpit Club member which is free. Currently, there is free FedEx shipping.

It should be noted that Adobe will be releasing Photoshop Elements 5 shortly (if it is not already available when you read this review.) Presumably, a Classroom in a Book for it will likewise be available. So, if you plan to purchase PE5, hold off on buying any complementary books. ■

eBay Hacks, 2nd Edition

Tips & Tools for Bidding, Buying, and Selling

By *Catherine Shimozone, NOCCC*

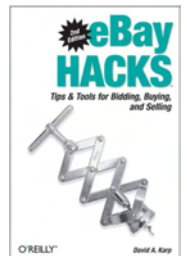
Do you eBay? This book is a must! Whether you are a “Newbie” or the most experienced eBay-er, this book is for you. I have never seen a book that handled both ends of that spectrum so effectively!

Author David A. Karp uses several techniques to help the newbie. He uses three icons - a pushpin (a tip, suggestion or general note), a screw (a warning note of caution), and a thermometer (showing, by temperature, beginner, moderate, or expert). He gives his name, address, and telephone numbers and encourages use of them. Also, he included many web sites. Since eBay is a living, always changing, entity, you will always be privy to the latest information available by utilizing his website.

You can read this 464-page book cover to cover. It is a fairly easy read. But the best way is to look at the table of contents (or index) and pick out what is most apropos to your needs. The chapters include: Diplomacy and Feedback, Searching, Bidding, Selling, Working with Photos, Completing Transactions, Running a business on eBay, and The eBay API. All chapters have numerous subtitles making it easy to find exactly the information you seek.

Chapter 1 covers everything from how to “Appraise an eBay-er’s Reputation” to “What to Do When Your E-mail Doesn’t Get Through.” It goes into considerable detail on feedback. It covers everything from its importance to how to use it to your best advantage. There are tips and tricks I never would have known.

Chapter 2 teaches all aspects of searching. My favorite is “Decipher Title Acronyms.” With this information I learned how to use title bars to get more information out to perspective buyers. I learned how to search internationally and by seller too.



Microsoft Wireless Laser 6000 Keyboard and Mouse Set

By Steve Carmeli, NOCCC

Recently, my 18-month old niece, with her golden touch, played with my Kensington wireless mouse and mysteriously killed it. I bought it at Best Buy for around \$20 and was hoping to duplicate my find. Alas, no such luck. All decent mice were in the \$40 plus range. Well, there was one very nice Microsoft mouse, the 6000 but it was \$55. I thought to myself “Am I crazy enough to pay that for a mouse?” Then I saw that Best Buy had the matching keyboard in a pair for \$75 on sale. That seemed like a good deal to me. I asked the salesman if the programmable keys could be used to turn on iTunes, but he said, even after going to some online site that people had tried and it wasn’t possible. Nevertheless, I didn’t believe him, so I purchased the set. When I got home, programming the My Favorites keys to start iTunes was the first thing I tested and it was easy.



The major features of the set are that as follows: It has a modified ergonomic keyboard. It is not as radical a design as the original Microsoft keyboard was but has a gentler curve, no split in the middle and only a few keys are larger than normal.

All they keys are a translucent white, not black like the original.

It has a counter-intuitive F-Lock key to provide a double function to the function keys. The function keys have labels on top and the F# on their fronts, yet the F-Lock label, which is on top of the key, when activated, activates the F# functions, which as I said are on the front, not top of the keys. It’s backwards. Moreover, that key doesn’t light up. The Caps Lock, Num Lock and F-Lock have LED indicators on the wireless receiver. Additionally, when one of these functions is activated, a small image indicating so appears on the lower right of your monitor for a short period. Since Caps Lock and Num Lock are usually off, they’re not a problem, but I often have to look at the wireless receiver or tap the F-Lock button once or twice to determine the Function key

Continued on page 12

Chapter 3 is a tell-all chapter. It tells how to place and protect your bids. It also has sections on three different ways to “snipe.” If you don’t know what “snipe” is, read the book. For this alone it is worth the money. This chapter also clarifies PayPal, dealing with disappointment: getting refunds, and the best, easiest and most effective way to file a dispute.

Chapter 4 deals with selling. This chapter gives good information on how to decide what your item is worth, how to choose a starting bid, and how to get what you want from your auction. It also goes into considerable detail on writing and setting up your auction site. There is even a section titled “Diplomacy 101 - Answer Dumb Questions.” You must read this section!

Chapter 5 is everything you always wanted to know about using photos but were afraid to ask. It explains things I hadn’t thought I could do, for example: “Doctor Your Photos,” “Show a 360° view of your item,” and “Create a Good Gallery Photo.”

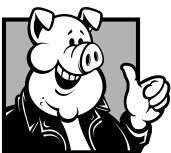
Chapter 6 starts with “Keep Track of Items You’ve Sold” and ends with “Issue a Refund.” In between is a wealth of useful knowledge that is mind-boggling in its complexity but simple enough for the newest “Newbie” to understand and use. If you sell or are planning to sell on eBay, please read the sections titled “Sell and Ship Internationally,” “Damage Control Before and After You Shop,” and “Issue a refund.” These sections are worth gold!

Chapter 7 gives a step-by-step plan to open your eBay business. It starts with “Open an eBay Store” takes the reader through “Streamline Listings with Turbo Lister” and Boost Sales with Rebates, Incentives, and Discounts” and ends with two sections on PayPal. If you plan to be big (or bigger) on eBay, you really need to read this chapter!

Chapter 8 is devoted to the eBay API (Application Programming Interface). API allows you to communicate directly with eBay. This section is more advanced and requires some programming knowledge.

I strongly recommend this book published by O’Reilly for its ease of use and mountain of knowledge presented in the most usable and useful way I have seen in a very long time. I also found it clarifying to be able to go to the website www.ebayhacks.com for all updates. This book is available through <http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/ebayhks2/> for \$24.95. User Group members can get a 30% discount.

I found an online readable version you might want to check out before you buy. The website is: <http://safari.oreilly.com/059610068X/ebayhks2-PREF-2>. ■



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! ■

MS 6000 Keyboard from page 11

status. It's a bit of a nuisance and takes some getting used to.

It has a zoom slider. It doesn't really modulate. Rather, you just push it to either extreme and your program zooms either in or out in its increments. When you let the slider go, it jumps back to center. The rate of response is programmable.

It has twelve pre-programmed keys:

- o Web/Home launches your default web browser. It was smart enough to launch my sbcglobal.net service. I don't know how it knew this.
- o Calendar launches Outlook in calendar mode
- o Mail launched Internet Explorer with my sbcglobal mail list in view
- o Messenger launches MS Messenger
- o A My Documents button
- o Volume up, down, and mute
- o Four buttons to control your current CD/DVD player. More on these later. If you have two optical drives, it's smart enough to sense the active one and control it.

It has a Calculator, Log Off and Sleep key. I've taken to using the sleep button and find it quite useful.

When you first get the set you have to install drivers, IntelliType for the keyboard and IntelliPoint for the mouse, from a CD. Then, after connecting the receiver base into a USB port (1.1 is OK) you have to radio-link the keyboard and mouse with the receiver. You do that by pushing a button on the receiver base and keyboard, then the receiver and mouse, and you're good to go.

The receiver would often complain that signal level was very low, often right while I was in the middle of working. Since I was typing, I would space bar which would accidentally trigger the wizard/help for exploring why signal level was so poor. Yet when I double-checked, signal level was very good. The problem was just the fact that the receiver is between a monitor and a speaker, and I figure interference fooled it.

The programmability of the keyboard is legendary Microsoft, with too many options to list here. The mouse is interesting. Naturally it is a scroll mouse, but the scroll wheel can toggle sideways thus scrolling your window sideways, which is great for spreadsheets. It also has two buttons, small and big, on the left/thumb side. Now all five "buttons" (the wheel is a button) are very programmable. Why you'd want the scroll wheel to not scroll is beyond me, but that's not even its default setting! The small button triggers a magnification feature. When triggered, a movable, borderless window which provides 5 x magnifications appears, great for desktop publishing. The big button is, IMO also useful for graphic applications, as I've programmed it, which is to reduce mouse acceleration. Note that motion is amplified under magnification. So if you had a desktop application at 1600x magnification and you wanted to move an object only slightly, you could depress this button to improve precision while moving the object because movement would be decelerated. You would do this by depressing both the left mouse button and the large left programmable button while dragging your object.

It's possible to program the My Favorites buttons to launch

any application that is accessible from My Programs. That means that, for example, a CD player that is part of a suite that came with you CD burner or DVD burner cannot be launched.

Another glitch I had with Real One player. When it installed, it hijacked my CD control keys. I didn't like the player so I uninstalled it. It was the only way to be able to choose which music player I wanted to use at the moment. But now when I install a CD iTunes automatically loads which wasn't the way things originally worked. I'm tempted to reset the keyboard settings.

Overall I'm happy with the set. When I have to move them out of my way I just pick them up and move them. The keyboard and mouse buttons have a great feel, just right for me. I like their programmability. I'm only disappointed with the design of the F-Lock key and the fact that the CD/DVD player keys aren't consistent, but those are really minor glitches. On a scale of 0 to 7 I give the set a 5.

Microsoft Wireless Laser 6000 Keyboard and Mouse Set – view more details at <http://www.microsoft.com/hardware/mouseandkeyboard/ProductDetails.aspx?pid=082> and <http://www.microsoft.com/hardware/mouseandkeyboard/productdetails.aspx?pid=086>. Price is: \$75 at Best Buy; \$80 at Costco; \$68 at www.provantage.com. ■

Open Source Licensing:

Software Freedom and Intellectual Property Law

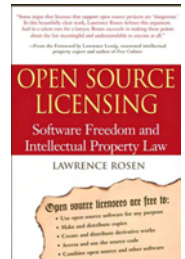
By Bill Thornton, NOCCC

If you are going to create, distribute and protect your open source [free] software, then this is the book for you. Author Lawrence Rosen, General Counsel and Secretary of Open Source Initiative (OSI), translates the legalese of open source licensing into English the rest of us understand.

However, paraphrasing Euclid's answer to King Ptolemy, "There is no royal road to Intellectual Property Law." Like geometry, the subject must be studied to be fully understood. For the nonlawyer, this is a book to study, not a fast-reading novel. Don't skip any pages.

Rosen begins by quoting the four goals of software freedom listed by the Free Software Foundation: freedom (1) to run the software for any purpose; (2) to study how the software works and adapt it to your needs; (3) to redistribute copies; and (4) to improve the software and distribute the improvements to the public. Open source, he explains, is the means to those goals.

Legal phrases such as "reciprocal license," "academic license," "copyright," and "patent" are explained in lay terms. "Open Source" is contrasted with "Open Standards" or "Open Specifications." Also, the book draws your attention to words that seem ordinary, but have special legal significance: "package," "standard version," "reciprocity," and "connect."



The author explains that disclaimers that renounce all possible liabilities are not allowed by the law. Promises of perpetuity cannot be perpetual because nothing lasts forever. Many examples are drawn from existing licenses such as Apache License, MIT License, General Public License (GPL), Berkeley Software Distribution license (BSD), Lesser

General Public License (LGPL), Common Public License (CPL), and Mozilla Public License (MPL); for each of which there is a complete copy in the Appendix.

What I particularly like about the book is the qualitative explanations that helped give one perspective. An entire chapter is devoted to choosing an open source license. Comparisons are made between licenses such as Open Software License (OSL) vs. Academic Free License (AFL); AFL is the same as OSL except that there is no reciprocity. Other licensing models are also considered, as well as combining those models. This book helps one to intelligently decide which of the several varieties of license to use.

“What about litigation?” 30 pages go from ownership of the suit, to damages, injunctions, standing to sue, patent infringement, and enforcement of terms.

Although the table of contents covers five and a half pages, it made sense and I easily homed in on various topics.

There are very few references to other sources such as web sites and supporting legal cases and laws. There are no graphics. Otherwise the book seems to be complete enough.

What I did not like was the author’s tendency to use the word “rights” for “privileges.” Sometimes he would stray from his area of expertise and incorrectly explain other areas of law (e.g., when explaining licenses (page 51) he says that, “You are required to obey the traffic laws and the laws regulating businesses, although the license you bought has nothing to do with those obligations.”

That explanation is contradicted by California Vehicle Code Section 17460 which contractually connects the driver’s license to enforcement of driving obligations.) But, there’s no question he authoritatively writes about open source licensing. I intend to keep this book on my desk as a prime reference.

“Open Source Licensing: Software Freedom and Intellectual Property Law”, by Lawrence Rosen 395pp, List=\$39.99, Prentice Hall website price=\$35.99. User Group (registered) members can get a 30 % discount from List.

Prentice Hall, Professional Technical Reference Upper Saddle River, New Jersey 07458

<http://www.phptr.com/bookstore/product.asp?isbn=0131487876&rl=1>. ■

Design to Sell

By Dr. John Hanson, NOCCC

What a marvelous book and it’s only \$30 list! If you have anything to sell, just applying one chapter can make the book a bargain. It doesn’t deal with resumes but many of the design principles will help you sell yourself better if you ever need to get another job. This book does an excellent job promoting and

showing how to get the best results with Microsoft’s Publisher but it does much more in showing you how to really look good in print and get better results.

Many years ago I invented a better way to teach speed reading to technical people for whom understanding is critical. I would always encourage my students to read lots of different books. With practice they could easily separate

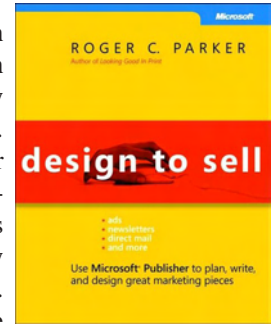
the good books from the poor ones. Some publishers see a “hole” in their line of books and assign someone to write a book on that subject even though they may not know much on the subject. In this case Microsoft Press has done an excellent job in picking someone who really knows his stuff. Even highly respected magazines like National Geographic make stupid design errors that make their stories uninviting to read. (Smart Computing was making the same type of errors but when I pointed this out to the president he immediately made corrections. Every club member should be reading Smart Computing as it has such valuable information in every issue and marvelous free support.)

When my students run into a poor book, they should still read it but very fast, as even the poorest books could have a golden nugget or two hidden inside. This “Design to Sell” book can be read fast to understand the whole book but it has so many golden nuggets on every page the reader will want to go back and really absorb the parts that most interest him or her.

Naturally, Microsoft wants to promote Publisher but even if you don’t use any publishing program you can get a lot of benefit from this book, even “selling yourself” to your children or grandchildren. If you do use Publisher you will become much better after reading this book and following the step by step examples. It is even quite useful to help with other publishing programs as well but this book will give you the best results with Publisher. The author has a marvelous web site <http://DesignToSellOnline.com> with lots of free goodies. You can download free the first two chapters of this book. Subscribe to his free monthly newsletter and register for a free one hour webinar.

The book focuses on how to get the best results with Publisher and on three main points for getting your message across at all economic levels. These are: Post Cards, Newsletters, and Small Print Ads. In the beginning he gives lots of practical tips on design principles in detail and lots of examples of poor design and how to fix them. The book is very inviting to read and you can benefit by going to any part that interests you without reading the preliminaries, even though that could be very useful.

My company sells self-teaching educational products and ultra-short-term psychology and tutoring services all over the world so we use a lot of small ads for parents, schools, therapists and eye doctors; so let me discuss in detail this book’s excellent chapter on the power of small ads. Just this one chapter with 12 pages of power packed ideas will dramati-



continued on page 16

October Meeting Photos



Ivan Randall demonstrating the ADS Technology product line



Ivan's portable studio

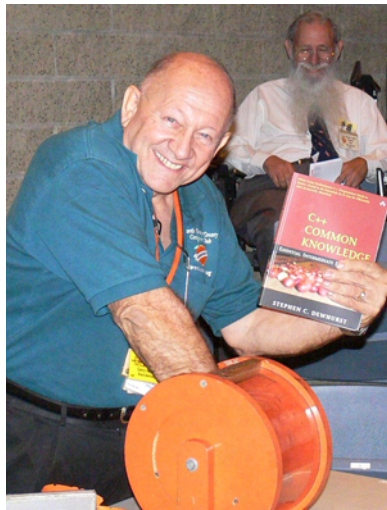


NOCCC members were impressed with Ivan's products and lined up with wallet in hand.

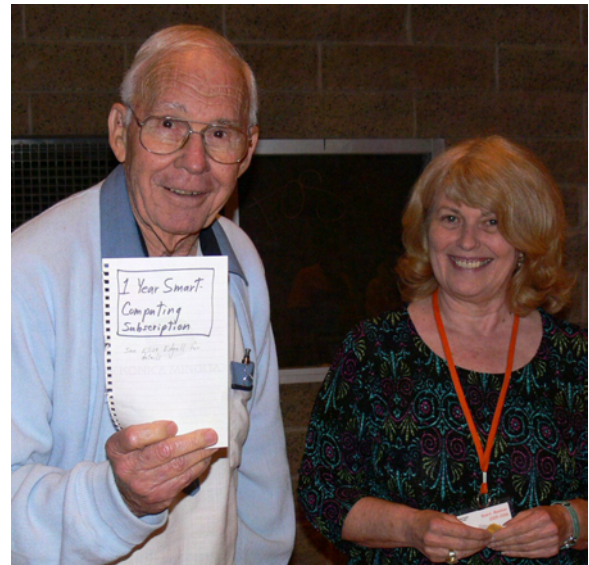
Photography by Jim Sanders



John Johnson



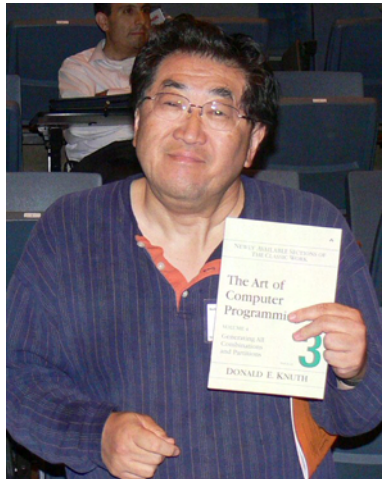
Gerry Resch



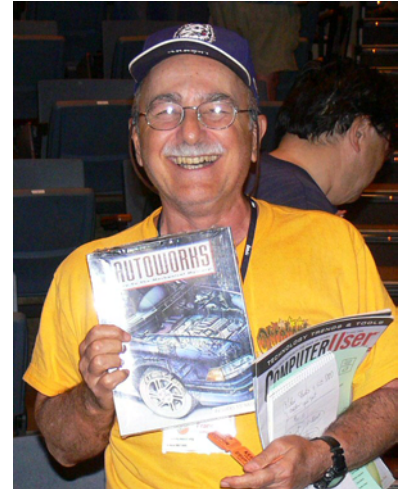
Dale Atwater displays the high class certificate for a one year subscription to Smart Computing presented by club President Elise Edgell



Bill Richards



Richard Shimozono



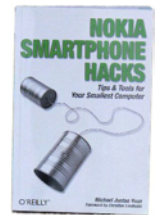
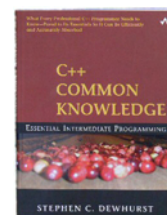
Francis Emanuel



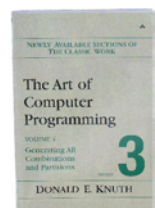
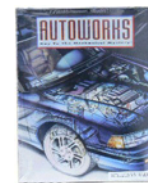
Elise Edgell



Phyllis Murray-Perry



The Raffle Prizes



cally improve my small ads by removing some of my dumb errors. Even with dumb errors my one inch ad in the Daily Variety, a Hollywood news paper, brought in thousands of hits to my web site. Imagine the results possible when I improve the ad using this marvelous, practical advice by offering an incentive such as “Tips for Parents” that they can download.

Since not a lot of space is available in a small ad, the choice of the right words is essential and the book gives specific examples. Your ad needs to be inviting to read and stand out from the other competing ads. It is important to have lots of white space and still get your message across. Very subtle changes in fonts, size and line spacing are very important and excellent examples are given. One of the most important things mentioned is that your ad does better if you promote your expertise in every product and service you sell rather than just one product. In the past my company has focused our ads, small and large, on specific products or services but because of this very useful book I am going to make some dramatic changes.

Another section of 20 feature-packed pages is on the value of Post Cards. The author points out the tremendous benefits of Post Cards and then gives “Twelve Ways to Profit from Post Cards.” He mentions how you can print them yourself and include the mailing addresses from your database. It is amazing at all the things you can do with Publisher.

In the very front are several pages of how to use color effectively in your marketing with lots of great examples, some of which I don’t agree with but he is the expert.

As mentioned before the book lists for \$30. However, it is available at Barnes & Noble for \$29.99 and Amazon.com for \$19.79 (with free shipping if you spend over \$25). This paperback book “Design to Sell” is authored by Roger C. Parker and contains 267 pages laid out in a very inviting, easy-to-read format. For more details, go to: <http://www.microsoft.com/MSPress/books/6524.asp>. The ISBN number is 13-0-7356-2260-9 and it is printed by Microsoft Press. (The publisher’s editors should have read the book themselves and not put the page numbers in the middle of the page where they are hard to find.) Roger C. Parker is so good, I want to read his many other books on selling and marketing such as “Looking Good in Print.” ■

Drafting and Design for Architecture 8th Ed.

By Joe Mizer, NOCCC.

Drafting and Design for Architecture is a comprehensive text for use in a first semester course in architecture or construction drafting. The book is divided into nine parts and thirty seven chapters, allowing the material to be split into small sized

pieces. The first chapter begins with the importance of architectural history and style. The second chapter on design shows the importance of design and how the exterior reflects the region the house is built. Chapter three introduces the student to the tools of the trade and their use. The drawing conventions for architecture which are presented in chapter four should be read by those new to drafting and wanting to draw a set of plans, and even more for those who have a lot of experience in drawing mechanical parts and assemblies because the rules are not the same. AutoCAD books teach the fundamentals of how to draw a line and editing; however this book cannot devote 800 pages to teach you how to draw, it does something more important - it presents to you what you should be drawing and gives a lot of examples which are very well done. This book also gives a lot of tips on how to use AutoCAD for an architectural project.

Design must consider the location, climate, elevation, and orientation to the sun and wind. Once these factors are known along with the needs and desires of the family, a home can be designed which will satisfy all of these requirements. A custom design must take into account the angle of the sun in summer and winter, the direction of prevailing winds and the amount of snowfall expected, if any, during an average winter. At other times, the house will be repeated many times with random orientation. The design factors of each room or area of a home is considered along with the materials to be used during construction. The authors provide charts showing the size of standard furniture and appliances and the space you will need for a room based on the intended use and the equipment and furniture in each area. After the number of rooms and their size is finalized, it is possible to finish the floor plan and the elevations. The same floor plan can be used to make homes with different exterior style to match the neighborhood and the wishes of the owner. The floor plan design requirements are covered in detail in chapter thirteen covering everything from fitting the plan on the lot, flow of traffic inside the home, special requirements for handicap usage, and privacy and on and on. At this stage, only single line drawings are made which are easy to change. Once the single line drawing is accepted by the owner, the final drawings can be made. Chapter fourteen is devoted to the actual drawings required for the floor plan. It is now that you must specify doors, windows, and other items

in the tables with identifying tags. The authors again have provided lots of information on the standard size of the materials which go into a home. The “Architectural Graphical Standards” book provides more standard dimensions and for about \$250.00 you can get yourself a copy. I really like all of the details provided in this book, since, for a standard residence, you will probably find everything you need.



Chapter 14 spends a lot of time on presenting excellent

examples of how to dimension, and on how to present all of the information. Complete details cannot be shown in a floor plan because the 1/4 in. = 1 foot scale just will not allow it. Sections and details must be drawn at a larger scale to display the information in an understandable fashion. I get the impression that the authors are not impressed with the completeness of information provided by the standard set of residential architectural plans most homes are built from today. In addition to giving a large number of standard details showing construction principles, the authors recommend the use of whole-wall views and also the use of 3D drawings and exploded views. These types of drawings require a lot of time to create using standard AutoCAD, but using a 3D modeler, these views could be created quickly with mechanical desktop, Inventor and Solid Works. There is also shown wall framing drawings and roof framing drawings which go into more detail than any other architectural drafting book I have read so far, and I really like what they have done with this book. We all know (and have been told many times) that professional carpenters and framers can build a home just from the floor plan; however, there are multiple ways to rough in a door or window and the detail drawings in a set of plans will show most of the information required. If I am working on a custom home and know I will have an experienced crew and foreman doing the work there is little to worry about. However, if I am working a home which will be built multiple times with less experienced crews, it is a different story. I might be called a control freak, but I want to fully specify where every stud is placed in a wall and where and how many trimmers are used in framing a window. I also want to know that the interpretation of the roof framing drawings I make will look like the roof actually made at the job site.

Chapter 31 provides a good introduction into electrical wiring and, when used with the applicable electrical code and local requirements, gives you all you will need to get the drawings done. Additional chapters on HVAC, plumbing, schedules and specification, cost estimating, and a final chapter on codes and legal documents completes the book. However, some of the best (my opinion) are the appendices where more tables are presented and a well-presented section on the loads which are found in a building and calculation of material size.

I have learned a lot from reading this book (published by Thompson Delmar Learning) and recommend it to everyone. The authors, Dana Hepler, Paul Wallach & Donald Hepler, have raised the bar with the excellent descriptions and tables and drawings in the book. The ISBN number is 1-4018-7995-0. The list price is \$98.95, but can be had for \$76.76 from Amazon .com. Another indication of the quality of this book is there aren't any used books listed at a very low price; the current price of a used copy of this book from Amazon.com is from \$74.00 to \$139.00. A last reminder - this is a text book not an approved practice or code book - there will be changes required by local building organizations. ■

DIGITAL PHOTO SIG

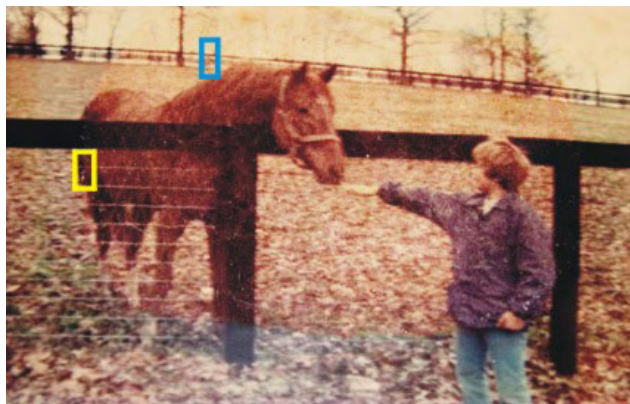
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when you started. Now you can scan / photograph the print again. Discard the safety file from the first step if you want to.

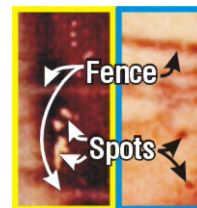
Negatives or slides can be washed with film cleaner. Fullerton Cameras (714) 441-2443 has 8 Oz. bottles of film cleaner for \$7.49. This will clean a lot of pictures. Calumet (714) 285-0143 undoubtedly carries film cleaner also.

We skipped the physical cleaning at the SIG and photographed the print. The lens distortion and perspective were corrected in a photo editing program. This led to a discussion of several program tools and plug-ins for this purpose.

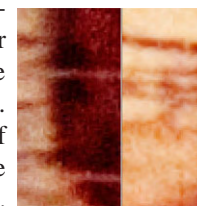
After a preliminary cropping, the most obvious requirement was to remove dirt spots & emulsion flakes. This is usually necessary, even after a physical cleaning.



Note the two areas of extreme close-ups to the right. The yellow one has fence wires and spots where the photo's emulsion flaked off. The Cyan one has fence rails and dirt spots.



The highest quality way to remove these spots is with a combination of PhotoShop's healing and cloning tools or their equivalents in the program you are using. This can be very time consuming. 1-3 hours per photo is typical. Details of the de-spotted photo are to the right. The spots are gone and the fences are intact.



Many editing programs have a much faster way to remove dust and scratches. On another copy of the original image, I used PhotoShop's [Filter, Noise, Dust & Scratches] with a radius of 7 pixels and a threshold of 35. These settings remove about 95% of the spots and will vary with each image. Time required to treat

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Reviews Editor's Corner



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

Dragon Naturally Speaking 9 Pro – Nuance's (formerly ScanSoft) latest and greatest speech recognition software can help you create documents and emails, write reports and complete forms, all by voice without having to type (much)! It is up to 99% accurate according to Nuance and comes with a quality speaker/headset. MSRP=\$900.

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 re-

store 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.

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

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 pre-

sentations, generate project plans, draw pro-quality flowcharts and many more. MSRP=\$199.

Books

The following new Prentice-Hall/A-W/Sams books have recently been received:

Ubuntu Unleashed – This 880-page book for the intermediate-advanced user is from Sams Publishing and presents comprehensive coverage of the popular Ubuntu Linux distribution, a user-friendly, easy-to-use operating system. The DVD has the full Ubuntu 6.06 LTS distribution for Intel x86 computers, the complete OpenOffice.org office suite, plus hundreds of additional programs and utilities. MSRP=\$50.

Moving to Ubuntu Linux – A 460-page book by well-known Linux author, Marcel Gagne, from Addison-Wesley, teaches you how to do virtually anything with Ununtu. The DVD includes the up-to-date, bootable Ubuntu Live-DVD without touching your current Windows system plus thousands of additional programs. MSRP=\$35.

Understanding AJAX – If you are already an experienced Web developer, this book by Joshua Eichorn, senior architect for Uversa, will show you exactly how to create rich, useable, Internet applications using AJAX. MSRP=\$40.

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Preparing a Review Article for the Orange Bytes

by Ted Littman, NOCCC Reviews Editor

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

BOOKS AVAILABLE IN THE LIBRARY

NOCCC has a 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 full list of 57 available books is posted at <http://www.noccc.org/members/library/index.html>. A partial listing is as follows:

Windows XP Hacks, 1st Edition

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

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

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

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

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

Linux Programming by Example

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

UNIX Shells by Example, 4th Ed.

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

Understanding the Linux Virtual Memory Manager

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

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

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

The Official Samba-3 How to & Reference Guide, 1st Ed. – This book is part of the Bruce Perens' Open Source series. Authored by Terpstra & Vernooij, it is a practical, authoritative, step-by-step guide to cutting IT costs with Samba-3. From Prentice Hall PTR. MSRP=\$50.

Open Source Network Administration – Author James Kretchmar from MIT presents an extraordinary collection of open source tools for streamlining and improving virtually every facet of network administration.

Publisher is Prentice Hall. MSRP=\$45.

Succeeding with Open Source

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

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

The Symantec Guide to Home Internet Security – Published by Addison-Wesley. MSRP=\$20.

Know Your Enemy - Learning About Security Threats, 2nd Ed.

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

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

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

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

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

Will Wheaton: Just a Geek

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

Main Meeting Report



By Eric Saca, NOCCC

In October, Ivan Randall from ADS Technologies gave us a presentation on their latest products.

President Elise Edgell started the meeting with announcements and Random Access. Gerry Resch announced that the people from the e-Waste collection program would return in November. He also mentioned that if anyone was interested in recycling a great deal of equipment -- requiring a pickup from his/her location -- to contact him by e-mail.

Gerry asked if anyone knew how to get the cursor into the Address field in Internet Explorer -- if using only the keyboard. Ivan said the key combination was Alt-D.

Ivan began the presentation speaking about his company. ADS Technologies has been around for about 15 years (started in 1992). It is based out of Cerritos, CA.

Ivan said the title of his presentation was "Media Conversion Made Easy." The latest products from ADS Technologies allowed conversion of both video and audio to digital. He would mainly concentrate on video but would briefly cover audio as well.

He started with DVD Xpress DX2, a video conversion device bundled with two nice pieces of software -- Capture Wizard (or CapWiz) and Ulead Video Studio 9 SE DVD. [Author's note: We were introduced to Ulead Video Studio in a past NOCCC presentation.]

Capture Wizard is the simpler software item. It makes basic video conversion very easy. It takes you through a step by step process, asking basic questions like a typical Windows wizard.

Ivan explained that you can capture video from just about any source -- VCR, old camcorder, new camcorder, set top box, DVD player, and more. You can convert the video -- via hardware compression -- to MPEG-1 (for posting on the Web or putting on VCD), MPEG-2 (for DVD), MPEG-4 or DivX (for playback in more recent DVD players and portable media players), Sony PSP (for portable playstation, a popular video device), Apple iPod, and more. (Ivan explained that MPEG-3 is not a commercially used format. DivX is not synonymous with MPEG-4; it's just one type of MPEG-4. The ADS video products offer DivX certified hardware compression.)

He described the simple hardware setup. First, typical video cables link your source with DVD Xpress DX2. He showed us the back of the device. It had the left and right RCA stereo jacks, plus composite RCA and S-video input jacks, giving you a choice of video quality for the transfer. Then a special cable links DVD Xpress to your computer via USB 2.0 or 1.1. (Of course, 2.0 allows faster conversions.)

Ivan mentioned that DVD Xpress handles video in both NTSC and PAL formats. Different countries broadcast TV using different formats. For example, the U.S. broadcasts in NTSC and many European countries broadcast in PAL. (In fact, he provided lists of all countries using each format. A few countries use completely different formats, like SECAM.) He briefly covered the differences between the formats. NTSC provides a resolution of 720x480, while PAL's resolution is larger -- 720x576. PAL sends video at 25 frames per second, while NTSC is at 30 per second. Thus, NTSC provides a more temporal experience; PAL provides a more spatial experience. (For those who haven't watched TV in Europe recently, Ivan said that PAL provides a softer, slightly more cinematic quality to the video, while NTSC provides a sharper, more realistic quality.)

Ivan explained important features of Capture Wizard. It allows you to record the video either to hard drive or direct

to disc. It has simple VCR-like controls. It allows scheduled recordings [suggesting that it can directly convert TV broadcasts]. Finally, it handles the compression for you, i.e., you specify which format to convert to (MPEG-2, DivX, Sony PSP, or Apple iPod, for example) and it automatically uses the compression required for that format. Compression type is handled in the background and you don't worry about it.

Ivan also briefly described the powerful features of Ulead Video Studio 9. It provides for both video capture/conversion and editing. The Multi-Trim feature allows quick, easy removal of portions you don't want (like commercials). It also lets you add a soundtrack and create compelling titles.

A member asked for the price of DVD Xpress DX2. Ivan said it typically retails for \$99.00 but at the meeting, he was offering it at \$79.00. Another member asked if it works on Windows 98 SE. He said no, it requires either Windows 2000 or XP.

He then began his demonstrations. First, he installed DVD Xpress, showing its ease of installation. He launched it from CD. It ran some preliminary configuration, then asked him to plug in the device. It used plug and play to install the driver and in seconds, DVD Xpress was ready to run.

Next, he demonstrated simple video capture from a standard DVD player to his hard drive. He made the required cable connections and then launched the Capture Wizard. It walked him through some basic questions. First, it asked if the captured video should be saved to hard drive or directly to disc. He specified hard drive. Second, it asked for a filename and location (which folder). He entered that. Third, it asked which format to capture the video to. He specified MPEG-2 (DVD format). Finally, it told him to "Press Play"

He pressed Play on the DVD player, then clicked Next in the Capture Wizard to begin the capture. After a few minutes, he stopped it and played back the video from the hard drive. Its quality seemed to match the

source that came from the DVD player.

Ivan mentioned that DVD Xpress will always capture 720x480 resolution from an NTSC source. It will also capture 720x576 from a PAL source. Thus, there was extra black space at the bottom of the screen when he played the video just captured. This would have been used if the video came from a PAL source.

Ivan pointed out that you can adjust the brightness, contrast, saturation, sharpness, and hue as the video is being captured.

He then did a quick audio capture demo using another powerful product: Instant Music. He brought his vinyl records for this demonstration. He took out an old Herb Alpert record and put it in a record player he also brought along. (He bought the player from the nearby Circuit City in Orange.) He connected cables from the record player to the Instant Music device, then from there to his laptop (via USB 2.0).

He launched the software that came with Instant Music, turned on the record player, and started the capture. As the music played, he showed how Instant Music provides good noise reduction features to eliminate the snap, crackle, and pop of old records. He said it also provides automatic track separation. (This doesn't work in certain cases, though, like on live albums. You have to enter track titles after the capture, of course.)

Instant Music comes with both LP-to-CD and Tape-to-CD wizards. It captures each piece as raw wave files with no compression. (You can then provide compression by converting the WAVs into MP3s or any other appropriate format.)

Ivan said that Instant Music retails for about \$45.00. (He didn't mention a club discount.)

For help, he mentioned that DVD Xpress DX2, Instant Music, and many other ADS products come with printed "roadmaps" to make installation and initial use easier. There are also several free tutorial videos for download off their website (www.adstech.com).

Next Meeting topic-- will be announced by email, a good reason to make sure the club has your current email address. ■

Computer Aided Investing SIG



By Bob Krishfield, NOCCC

Market Review. The markets soared upwards in September, defying the opinions of the gurus and technical analysts that it was time for a reversal. We looked again at the various technical indicators, breadth and sentiment and found no technical reason for the market to stop rising – and punch through its all-time high. But many of us emotionally felt that it was time for things to turn downward. Our vote (which has been wrong for predicting the Dow for 6 times in a row) favored the bears 3 to 1. The NASDAQ and Russell 2000 have not kept up with the Dow and S&P500, an indication of weakness that this rally will continue. Large cap stocks are getting bought up by the institutions as the end of the quarter rebalancing activities seek to dress up their portfolios. The two factors driving the market up are lower prices for crude oil and the up-coming elections in November. History shows us that the government affects fiscal and monetary controls to drive up the market prior to elections, which can be seen as our dollar has strengthened in since August, attracting foreign buyers of stocks to drive up market prices and buyers of bonds to drive down interest rates. So how long will it last? Is it too late to get in the market and make some money?

This is where we see the difference between trading and investing. Traders see an unbroken up-trend. That usually means buy, trade with the trend – it's your friend. Investors are looking out 3-5 years and saying prices will be higher then than now, but let's wait for a better time to get in the market, especially if there is a downturn ahead.

Presentation – Systems Testing and Optimization. We viewed a presentation of Fred Tonetti discussing issues of optimizing systems with multiple

parameters that would take billions of years to do an exhaustive evaluation of all combinations to find the best combination. Fortunately, technology has provided some help by using solutions developed in the Artificial Intelligence field that directed search techniques of particle swarm searches and genetic differential evolution methods. Fred developed a shareware program, Intelligent Optimizer (IO) that links to AmiBroker and drives the AB Optimization process using these AI techniques. This approach extends the capabilities of AmiBroker's Optimization (which is an exhaustive search for the best solution), by breaking up all the combinations of all the parameters to be optimized into small packets of 30-40 iterations, running them in AB, scoring the results, and repeating the process while looking for improvements in the scores. This method of a directed search eliminates testing value combinations that would not improve results and allows testing of complex systems in minutes – that are beyond the practical limits of AmiBroker's built-in capabilities. IO is a major breakthrough for evaluating the performance of trading systems. With its effective speed and power, more thorough testing can be done within practical time limits. This capability now allows:

1. More attention to system testing by making it easier and faster.
2. Testing of more complex systems than what had been previously possible.
3. Refinement in optimization methods, applying sensitivity directives to the process to obtain better system performance over a wider set of conditions.
4. More complete testing by repeating tests over varying market conditions.
5. More statistically robust results by using in-sample, out-of-sample results. (Walk Forward Analysis)

Results of tests compared how performance normally was degraded for the out of sample results, but by applying proper sensitivity measures to the optimization process during the walk-forward process, out-of-

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Meeting Reports

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sample results improved significantly.

The IO program has now undergone a major revision to refine its interface with AB and make things work faster, make the testing process easier for the user, and add a distributed computing capability so it can run in parallel on multiple computers, using the extra compute power to further speed up the optimization process. Charts show that by adding one parallel processor/server, run times decrease by almost 50%.

Next month we will review some systems tests, results from their optimizations, and look at which are likely to do well in the current markets. ■

AmiBroker SIG

By Bob Krishfield, NOCCC

We dug into charting this session and spent time with AmiBroker's AFL editor, making changes to a few charts, and getting into the user manual and help screens to see what information was available for the functions we were using. Going into preferences, we could change the colors used by the editor to help differentiate parts of the code, by making the comments stand out using a bright pink or purple, and using a bold dark color for keywords and functions. This makes reviewing AFL code much easier, and you can spot problems such as text strings without delineators when the color extends beyond where it's intended. The tutorials in the manuals provide a good breakout of many subjects that are a good beginning for learning AB, and gaining familiarity with AB's menus, screens, popup menus, tool tips, and prompting. The AFL editor is a smart editor that changes the color and fonts when a keyword or function word is entered – much like the autocorrection capabilities in MS Word, although it doesn't correct the spelling, but it lets you know if you entered it correctly. Automatic prompts are available for functions when you enter the left parenthesis

– it gives you a syntax prompt of the variables and parameters to be used which saves many trips to the user manual.

The other area we covered was in setting up and saving watchlists. These lists of tickers are very useful when working with charts and analyses. A watchlist can be created using any of the tools you use to create a comma separated values list (e.g. Excel) and imported as a watchlist. Saving the CSV files in a user directory called watchlists is a good practice to keep the source files handy and updated for later use. Since there are only 64 slots for watchlists, and some projects may require 10 or more, it is easy to run out of space. This requires saving the watchlists back to its CSV file, and then emptying the watchlist so its slot can be reused and renamed. To help remember what watchlists you had setup, a simple AFL program is available to report the names and ticker counts of the current watchlists, and this text can be saved with your project. This code will be posted on AFL-Tidbits for Sig members to access.

Next month we will demonstrate some of the Automated Analysis capabilities and programs that are helpful for building signals and composites, scanning for buy and sell signals, building spreadsheet reports, and screening and ranking of securities. ■

Computer Essentials

By Elise Edgell, NOCCC

If you are new to computers or if you have a guest with you who is unsure of what SIG to attend or if you just want to get some new ideas, the Computer Essentials SIG is where you want to attend. The aim of the SIG is to review some of the basics on how to run your computer, answer questions in easy to understand English (not computerese), and to discuss some of the useful and interesting things that you can do with your computer.

We discussed the option that AOL now has of letting you keep your screen names and address book and many other features without a monthly charge.

Again we covered the concept of an "Internet Provider." If you are not using AOL as your Internet Provider then the FREE option may be for you. The main difference that I determined is that the free version does not give Help. Because I use AT&T DSL as my provider and I never call Help anyway (I have had very few problems with AOL), I decided to go with the Free option. I'll report later if I have any problems with the free version.

Last month we went over some of the less used features of Google. I demonstrated how to look up a term like: Qigong. Since only one of us had heard of the term before it was interesting to see how fast we could find out what it meant. Just by entering that one word we were able to locate Web sites (over 2,000,000 hits) about Qigong. Of course if we had been looking for a more specific topic those hits would have been reduced by either excluding sites that include certain terms or requiring sites to include a certain term. This is the type of search that most of us are familiar with.

Then I did a "Books" search. This is a new and controversial feature of Google. The controversial part is the copyright issues. I personally think that it is really useful because it is very easy to find books that either have "Qigong" in the title or in the TEXT. This is a very fast way to locate books that you might not be able to locate using traditional research methods. Google lets you see enough of the text of the book for you to make a determination if it is a book that you would like to read. If so, there are links provided to buy the book (or you can then go to your favorite bookstore and purchase it there or get it from your library).

There is another feature that is located under "even more" called "Scholar." This lets you do a similar search of scholarly papers. This feature gives the information about how to locate the actual document and possibly how much it costs to purchase. It also lists other documents that reference it, related Web sites, etc. If you are doing research, this is a Google feature that could be invaluable and save you lots of time.

I then did a Video search. There were 36 videos located. We ran one of

them which was informative and gave a rundown of Qigong in 2 minutes.

The other features that we discussed briefly were the “Images,” “Finance,” and “News.”

For November we will again cover some of the other lesser known features of Google. Bring your questions. See you in Science Room 306 at 9:30. ■

Digital Photo SIG



By Larry Klees, NOCCC

RESTORING OLD PHOTOGRAPHS

Many of us, or our relatives, have boxes of old photos or tattered albums stuffed away out of sight. At the October meeting Mary Cornett brought us a photographic print, of her son with a young Secretariate. What follows is a streamlined description of the restoration process.

First scan the print or photograph it to get a safety file into the computer. Scanning is preferred to avoid lens and perspective distortion. This image will be saved in case anything goes wrong with the next step.

Next if the print is dirty or stained, clean it. First use canned or low pressure (up to 20 PSI) air and/or a soft brush to dust the print. More stubborn dirt will require washing. (DO NOT wash ink jet prints unless you know that the ink won't run!) Actual photographic prints can tolerate immersion in plain water for several minutes. Very gently rub away dirt & stains that weren't removed by dusting. Give the print a final rinse with distilled water if it's available. Then carefully blot the print dry with a soft well washed cotton cloth. (100% cotton is preferred but a cotton/synthetic mix will do. An old T-shirt works fine.) You should now have a print in much better condition than

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PRODUCTS FOR REVIEW

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SELinux by Example – This book is the first complete, hands-on guide to using SELinux in production environments. It illuminates every facet of working with this operating system from its architecture and security model to its policy language. MSRP=\$45.

AJAX – Creating Web Pages with Asynchronous JavaScript and XML – One of the Bruce Perens' Open source Series, this book will help you build AJAX Web applications from the ground up, one step at a time. And, you can do it using standards and open source software. MSRP=\$45.

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 Whittaker. The companion CD contains full source code for one testing tool you can modify & extend, free Web security testing tools, and more. MSRP=\$35.

Preventing Web Attacks with Apache – This book by Ryan Barnett is the only end-to-end guide to securing Apache Web servers and web applications. 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.

ATL Internals, 2nd Ed. Working with ATL8 – Four leading Windows programming experts systematically reveal ATLs inner workings. MSRP=\$60.

Additional books available for review:

Photoshop Masking & Compositing

– Masking and compositing are two of the most fascinating aspects of creative imagemaking 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.

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.

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 brows-

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SIG List

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

SIG	Bldg	Room	Time	Leader	E-mail	Phone
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	aecrcrss@hotmail.com	909-860-9515
Visual Programming III	Science	109	10:00	Anson Chapman	aecrcrss@hotmail.com	909-860-9515
Visual Programming IV	Science	109	11:15	Anson Chapman	aecrcrss@hotmail.com	909-860-9515
Please report SIG changes to	Herbert Wong, Jr.				ocug@singularitytechnology.com	714-968-7264

Membership Benefits

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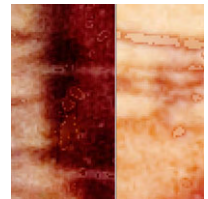
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Techsmith www.techsmith.com/store/order/bundle.asp using promotion code PRESBN05 you can get SnagIt (screen capture program) and Camtasia Studio (quickly record, edit and publish multimedia demos and presentations) Bundle for \$269, a \$50 savings.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

Digital Photo SIG

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the entire photo was one minute. As, you can see most of the spots are gone, but so are some sharpness and details (like the fences).



For a good compromise use the Dust & Scratches filter with milder settings to remove many of the smaller spots, while maintaining the sharpness and details. Then use the Healing and Clone tools to remove the large remaining spots. This takes 10-15 minutes.

Corel's PhotoPaint has a Dust & Scratches tool and I strongly suspect that Paintshop Pro has also. The GIMP does not have a Dust & Scratches tool but it does have other ways to get similar results.

By this point the meeting time had expired. Next month we will pick up where we left off. ■

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
Quicken Home &
Business 2000, 2001
Powerpoint
Realtime Control
Robotics
Tcl/Tk
Unix
Windows 9X
Windows 9X
Windows 2000
Word
Word
WordPerfect

The names and contact info of the helpline members is published in the printed version of the Orange Bytes which is mailed to members.

FREE AD SPACE

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

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



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

Products for Review

FROM PAGE 23

ing, 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.

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

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

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

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.

UNIX to Linux Porting – This new book is a definitive guide to porting applications from today's most widely used UNIX platforms to Linux. Published by Prentice Hall, it has an MSRP=\$65.

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.

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

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

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.

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
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Each Additional Family Member	15	45
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Business Member + Ad (1/4 Page)	465	
Business Member + Ad (1/2 Page)	800	
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- **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 newsletter.
- **Consignment Table.** We have a thriving consignment table on our regular meeting day in which we assist members to sell or buy all kinds of computer items.
- **Volunteer Work.** You are given opportunities to help our activities with interesting assignments. *An all-volunteer organization*, you can join with other members in a variety of activities, write articles for our newsletter, conduct a seminar, run a SIG, man the help desk, show new members around, help the membership committee, and more.

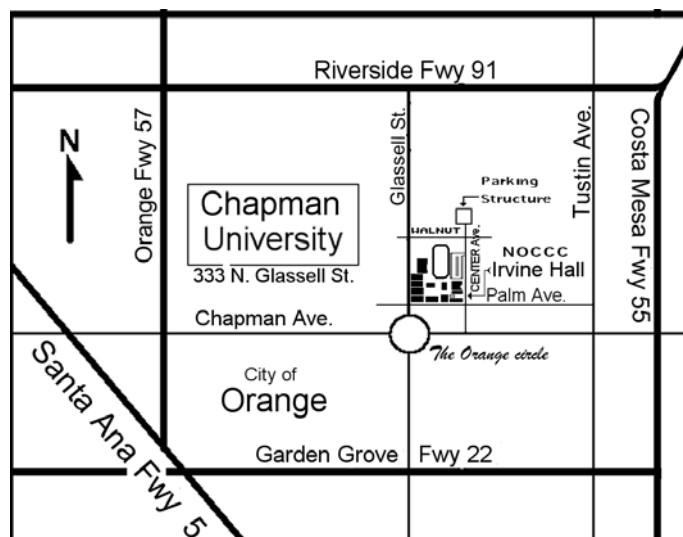
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lot (P6) is on the north side of the campus (enter from Glassell & University Dr.) and lot P3 (N Center St. & E Sycamore Ave) is free of charge for NOCCC's meetings on Sunday. Please feel free to park in the parking lots.

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!



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