



Orange Bytes

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

Vol 32 • No 2

FEBRUARY 2007

NOCCC Electronic Waste Collection Day February 4, 2007

See page 9 for details

Irene Chow of Ingram Micro
Will be presenting the interesting products that she found at the 2007 Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas. Come see what is neat, new, or nifty in the world of electronics

Schedule Change

see page 8

February meeting details on page 4

NEW TIMES - NOCCC Meetings - February 4th - NEW ROOMS

NOCCC Thirty years and counting

9:00 a.m.:

Autocad..... **Science 203**

Computer Aided Investing.....**Wilkinson 221**

Member Investment Strategies, Techniques and Software

Home Automation SIG **Irvine Hall**

Using technology to automate your home.

Linux for Desktop Users **Wilkinson 117**

Visual Programming**Science 111**

Visual Basic and Visual Basic Script

Visual C++ and Visual J++ for Beginners

10:30 a.m.:

Amibroker SIG**Wilkinson 221**

Beginners, existing users, learn how to use and apply Ami-Broker for investing and trading, share ideas and software.

Computer Essentials **Science 306**

The January meeting is canceled

Digital Photography **Irvine Hall**
Q&A + What happened at the Epson Print Academy?

Linux for Advanced Users **Wilkinson 117**

Computer Security **Science 203**

Understanding Operating Systems**Science 111**

Get Help with DOS, Windows 3.1, Windows 9x, OS/2, etc.

12:00 Noon PIG SIG. **Argyros Hall Cafeteria**

A lunch get-together and talk.

12:30 p.m.:

Hardware Essentials **Science 109**

Best picks for the holidays

OS/2 News and Installation **Science 203**

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

Most Q's A'd, some problems solved, assorted demos done

2:00 p.m. Main Meeting, Irvine Hall

Review of new products at the 2007 CES show

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

**Meeting Dates
Feb 4, Mar 4, Apr 1, May 6**

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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:

Circulation — Oversees the mailing and distribution.

Commercial Swap Meets • Distributes Orange Bytes and NOCCC material at swap meets.

Commercial Advertising • Obtains ads from both national and local vendors for the Bytes; the success of this helps our club finances.

President's Message

By Elise M. Edgell

If you missed last month's Main Meeting, you missed an excellent presentation by Frank Van Nostrand about the Social Security Administration's massive computer system. His presentation on Social Security Myths was also enlightening.

Be sure to come to our February's Main Meeting which will be fascinating. Hear about the best gadgets from this year's Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas. I am always interested in what companies have revealed at CES. They may be the hot gift items for Father's Day or Mother's Day.

Please make an effort to attend the Main Meeting. Bring your spouse, kid, neighbor, etc. Remember, the more people who show up for the Main Meeting, the easier it is for us to get speakers that you want. It is also important for you to show that vendors are wise when they support our club by checking discounts available to club members and then using them. This is the main way that vendors use to track the results of supporting us.

Our February meeting is the first meeting under the new time schedule. Be sure to check our web site (www.noccc.org) to see where and when your favorite SIGs will meet. Also, please notice that our Main Meeting will be at 2:00 p.m. Please send me feedback (positive or negative) concerning the new time and room assignment schedule. My email address is president@noccc.org.

Did you get some new electronic gadgets for Christmas? Now you have a bunch of obsolete junk that you cannot give away at a garage sale. I have the solution for you. Bring it to the February club meeting and DONATE it to NOCCC. NOCCC is a 503(c)(3) corporation. You may be entitled to an income tax deduction, please consult your tax person. There will be a collection truck for eWaste at the meeting. This is an easy way to make room in your garage to park your car.

I would like to enable our club to refurbish donated computers and get them people who could really benefit from a usable computer, even if it isn't capable of running Windows VISTA. There is a surplus of such computers becoming available from large companies that are upgrading their computers. It makes me sad to think of good computers getting melted down instead of used. I know that we have club members who would enjoy the learning that happens with hands on experience in trouble shooting and refurbishing computers. The one thing that we need is a space to store the computers, parts, and miscellaneous equipment and to actually do the work. If you know of a company that has a spare room that it would be willing to let us use, please contact me. Or, if you have any other ideas about where such space could be used I would love to hear from you.

See you at the February meeting.

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/>

Corel - Use 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. The PCmover program, for moving all of your applications, settings, and data files from your old PC to your new PC. Get Laplink software for 30% off, use coupon code APCUG.

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Prentice Hall, Addison-Wesley, IBM Press, Sams Publishing, and Informit.com Get 35% off list price by purchasing directly from the publisher sites: www.awprofessional.com, www.prenhallprofessional.com, www.samspublishing.com and www.informit.com/shortcuts. Select your books and enter COUPON CODE: "USERGROUP" (must be all caps) at Checkout Step #3 (Payment Method).

Smart Computing - www.smartcomputing.com For each paid membership (subscription to either Smart Computing or Computer Power

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January Board Meeting Minutes

JAN. 8, 2007 Board Meeting Minutes



The monthly Board of Directors meeting was held on Monday, January 8, 2007, at Elise Edgell's home. The meeting was called to order at 7:35pm by club president, Elise Edgell. In attendance were: Jim Sanders Elise Edgell, Herb Wong, Jr., Bill Thornton, Ted Littman, Doug Steiner, Dave Keays, Mary Cornett, and Else Olovsson.

Officers Reports:

Secretary's report – (Mary Cornett) - Minutes from the December 4, 2006 board meeting were accepted as printed.

Treasurer's report – (Doug Steiner) – Dues collected: \$775.00. Consignment 0, Raffle: \$60.00, Library \$3.00 and Coffee/Other \$17.50. Total \$80.50.

Current Membership: (Doug Steiner) - Regular 255, Family 9, Student 1, Other 35, Total Membership is 300.

Next Main Meeting – Feb 4, (Elise Edgell).

Next Board Meeting – Feb 5, 2007

Report on General Meeting – (Elise Edgell) Attendance at January meeting 50 persons.

Committee Reports:

Publications – (Jim Sanders) Bytes were delivered early this

month

Programs – (Elise Edgell & Jim Sanders)

Feb. 4 – Irene Chow, Neat & New Gadgets from the Computer Electronics Show.

March 4 – Working for a Camera day

Reviews - (Ted Littman) 0 Products handed out for Reviews, 6 in cue. 2 library books = \$3.00.

Public Relations – (Else O.) Check the, "Business Section" Orange County Register for her articles.

University Liaison – (Elise Edgell) Trying to arrange a photo op with President Doti.

Raffle: Gerry Resch, not present, but will use January prizes for February's meeting.

SIG'S – (Herb Wong, Jr.) – Spoke with half of SIG leaders for time slots and rooms. Herb will call remaining SIG leaders and create new schedule

Consignment Table - None

Opening & Closing: Eric has done opening and closing. Jim Sanders and others helped with closing.

Old Business: Jim Sanders will try to purchase another projector by February meeting.

New Business:

Elise Edgell will be looking into Orange street fair to promote our NOCCC club.

Reminder that February meeting will be another ewaste day.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50pm. Submitted by: Mary Cornett.

FEBRUARY 4TH MEETING PREVIEW

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY SIG - 10:30 am - Larry Klees - The Epson Print Academy demonstrates excellent editing and printing techniques along with some of the latest digitizers, monitors, printers, inks, and papers. Come hear all about it. Also general Q&A.

COMPUTER ESSENTIALS SIG - 10:30 am - Elise Edgell, your club President, will be leading the SIG that is dedicated to helping new and inexperienced users conquer their computer challenges.

COMPUTERAIDED INVESTING SIG: 9:00 am Market Review will look back to evaluate how the technicals are behaving and what they may tell us about the near term. The discussion and presentation will look at stockpicking approaches from top down and bottoms up, and tools and techniques available. This is a large subject and we will continue it for a few meetings.

AMIBROKER SIG: 10:30 am This meeting we will review some important AFL programs that are very useful for charting, watchlists, screening & ranking, and data maintenance. Access to these programs for downloading will be made available at

the meeting.

MAIN MEETING 2:00 pm, Irvine Hall - Irene Chow is a Category Manager at Ingram Micro. The Gadgetress did a nice piece on Irene at http://www.ocregister.com/ocregister/money/yourcounty/article_935384.php. An excerpt: "Chow isn't just any Ingram Micro employee. She's the company's gadget guru and what she recommends can make or break your product."

THE CLUB RAFFLE items this month are: PowerQuest/Norton V2i Protector backup software, Logitech keyboard, Competing in the Global Productivity Race - book. 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: Home Networking the Missing Manual, Biometrics for Networking Security & ??? ■

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%.

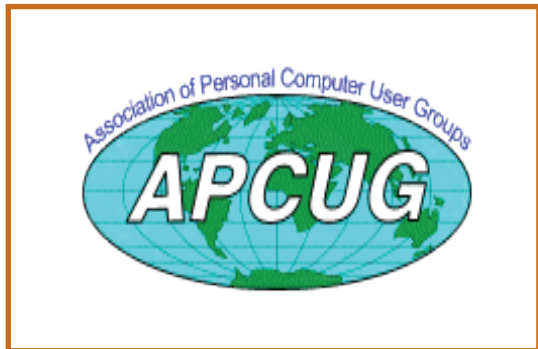
3. Fill out a tag on each item! It must contain: Seller's Name, NOCCC Membership Number, Item name, a short description and selling price.

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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Open

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Ted's Stuff

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

This is the 2nd issue of my column for the 2007 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.



Adobe Reader 8

This is the latest (and free) upgrade of the program for reading PDF files link this newsletter's online version. You can download it at <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>.

Uniblue's Process Scanner

This great software outfit has just added interactive functionality to its free online Process Library (see the Jan. column for info on the Library). If you go to its web site (www.processlibrary.com/processscan) and click on the scan button, the scanner will check your PC and provide a complete list of all processes, .dlls, and other items that open on startup, while the system is running, or even those programmed to run later. It color codes any threats and provides lots of information about all the files, not just the bad ones. You can then delete any files that are malicious.

GoodSync

According to Steve Bass (12/28/06 email newsletter), this free (there are some user restrictions) tool to synch files from the people who produced RoboForm (see our membership Benefits column) is more powerful than the one available in Explorer Plus. It is available at www.goodsync.com.

Keep Your Computer Dirt & Dust Free

Steve Bass has some useful suggestions in his PC World column at http://snipurl.com/HF_0207. It also can be read in the Feb. '07 issue of the magazine on p. 43.

WinDirStat

This free program (it stands for Windows Directory Statistics) was noted by Steve Bass in his 12/8/06 email newsletter as a nifty way to check the makeup of your hard drives, especially the big files. It uses a "treemap" that shows each file as a colored rectangle that's proportional to the file's size and the program has built-in capabilities including Open, Show Properties, and Delete. Check it out at <http://windirstat.info/>.



How Do You Know Whether an E-mail Story is True?

Do you receive emails from friends, relatives, and others that sound too good to be true and sometimes are real tear-jerkers? ("Urban Legends" are stories that sound good, but aren't true! One tip-off may be the punch line that you must send the email to everyone you know or dire things will happen.) Well, Dan Butler in his 12/4/06 TNPC newsletter addressed this issue and provided several links where you can check on the veracity of such stories: www.snopes.com and www.TruthorFiction.com.

Automate Investment Tracking

For those of you who find it tedious to keep track of your investments and too time-consuming, there is a free (but limited registration unless you have an account at TD Ameritrade) program at www.QuoteTracker.com that can automatically update your portfolio using online data sources. The QuoteTracker data can also be imported into your spreadsheet program. I came across this financial recommendation (among others) in the Feb. 2007 issue of Consumer Reports (p. 16). It has more options than you can shake a stick at, but a bit complicated to set up. In the same CR article, there is an item to opt out of those so-called "pre-approved" credit cards and insurance offers that seem to be a daily arrival at mail boxes. Go to www.optoutprescreen.com or call 1-888-5-OPT-OUT.

Digital Cameras

Did you have a new digital camera on your Christmas wish list, but no one came through? Or were you thinking of buying one but didn't? Well, if you are still in the market, check out the 5-part article at www.creativepro.com/story/feature/24461.html?cprose=daily on camera buying tips before you go shopping. There also are recommendations on printers.

Ratings of 39 New Inkjet & Laser Printers

If you're in the market for a new printer, check out the Feb. '07 issue of Consumer Reports (p. 29) for recommendations and ratings. Canon inkjet printers fared the best while Brother models got top ratings in the "all-in-one laser" category and a Dell model was #1 in the dedicated laser category.

The Web's Most Useful Sites

In the Feb. '07 issue of PC World (p. 80), Ryan Singel discusses online sites in 16 categories including e-mail, utilities, shopping, maps, and suites, and picks 47 winners for your consideration.

Online Services

Have you ever tried a so-called free trial offer online and tried to cancel it before subscription charges to your credit card start, but were unsuccessful and aggravated? Well, take a look at the article by Tom Spring in PC World (Feb. '07, p. 119) and read about his trials and tribulations. He also includes information on over 30 outfits that he dealt with and offers some recommendation!

Microsoft Office 2007

For a review of this new suite of programs, check out PC World (Feb. 2007, p. 50). The reviewers called it "powerful and full featured" and wrote it "is easily the most compelling Office upgrade we've seen in recent years." How's that for a New Year's kudos to Microsoft? Furthermore, Microsoft is offering a free interactive, multimedia online course from Microsoft

Learning (www.microsoft.com/learning/office2007/default.mspx) at no charge, so you can become a pro at the 2007 Microsoft Office system.

Kruptos 2 for File Encryption

According to C|Net (1-5-07), “Kruptos 2 is a very easy-to-use and powerful 128 bit file encryption utility that allows you to secure any sensitive files stored on your PC or portable storage device. Kruptos 2 includes a powerful file shredding utility, and the ability to generate self-decrypting files.” And it’s free to download at www.download.com/3001-2092_410619512.html.

There also is an interesting article in the Windows Secrets newsletter of 1-4-07 on password encryption that I recommend you look at (<http://WindowsSecrets.com/comp/070104>).

Fight Global Warming from your Desktop with Local Cooling

This is another interesting one from Uniblue Systems. “The energy required to run the computers belonging to 660 million users worldwide, runs into millions of kilowatt hours each day. It is estimated that more than 30 billion kilowatt hours of energy are wasted each year because many people forget to shut down their computer when leaving the office. The CO₂ emissions from all those computers are huge, especially as the emissions from just 15 computers are equivalent in energy terms to the gas consumption used by one car!

Here’s something that every computer user worldwide can do from their desktop, right now, to reduce the output of CO₂ from their computer and it’s totally free. **LocalCooling.com** is a brand new project from the labs at Uniblue Systems. The new downloadable application (<http://www.localcooling.com>) will automatically optimize the power settings on a PC, by using a more efficient and effective power save mode. An easy-to-use interface allows users to change their default power settings, meaning savings on electricity bills for the users, and therefore a reduction in the amount of Greenhouse Gas that results from powering a computer.”

Roxio’s Media Ticker 2

Roxio has launched a new version of its popular application. It is free and can be downloaded at <http://www.roxio.com/mediaticker>. “Media Ticker 2 is a fun, scrolling ticker that delivers your local digital photos and remote RSS feeds directly onto your desktop. Unlike other newsreaders, it gives you a visual perspective on your RSS feeds by displaying content in both text and thumbnail image format. It is more than just a photo browser or newsreader - it’s the ultimate RSS media reader with a unique scrolling format that provides you with access to unlimited news headlines, photos, articles and forums while keeping it neatly out of the way.”

Making a 2007 Calendar

Here’s a great way to display and distribute all those wonderful photos you took of your grandkids, special family event, or vacation – Make and print a photo-illustrated calendar of the new year. Learn how at <http://go.microsoft.com/?linkid=5884136>. Although the directions specify using Microsoft’s Digital Image Suite 2006, just about any good photo imaging program should do.

Has Microsoft Gone Too Far With DRM In Windows Vista?

By *Elise Edgell, NOCCC*

Peter Gutmann, a security researcher from New Zealand, published a paper entitled “A Cost Analysis of Windows Vista Content Protection.” This paper has caused a lot of comment about how Windows Vista will protect DRM and the detrimental effect it will have on the user’s enjoyment and use of a PC running Windows VISTA operating system.

Are you confused about what DRM (Digital Rights Management) is and how it may affect you? Even though you assume it is something that you do not need to be concerned about because you do not copy protected media, it still may have a big impact on you future enjoyment of audio and video using you computer.

This is an important area. It takes some reading to understand the issues involved. I know that many people are confused about Windows Vista. There is a lot of misinformation circulating about many aspects of Vista. The outcome of your understanding of this issue may help you determine if you want to use Microsoft’s Windows Vista as your new operating system.

For an interesting discussion of the background of DRM and Peter Gutmann’s paper go to <http://www.grc.com/SecurityNow.htm#75>. This site will allow you to listen or read Episode #73 and #74 for Security Now. Security Now is a Podcast of Steve Gibson (a frequent Presenter at our meetings) and Leo Laporte (has a radio show on KFI Saturdays and Sundays plus many other activities). You might also want to check out Peter Gutmann’s home page at <http://www.cs.auckland.ac.nz/~pgut001>.

For a perspective from Microsoft visit Windows Vista Blog at <http://windowsvistablog.com/> then scroll down to “Windows Vista Content Protection – Twenty Questions (and Answers).” Microsoft had defended its position in an article in BBC News located at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/6286245.stm>. ■

LIGAS Microsystems
Custom Systems - Consulting - Service
Cable and DSL services configured
Routers installed
sick computers healed

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New Schedule

NOCCC Meeting Schedule

	9:00 A.M. - 10:30 A.M.	10:30 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.	12:00 P.M. - 12:30 P.M.	12:30 P.M. - 2:00 P.M.	2:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Irvine Hall	Home Automation	Digital Photography	LUNCH	P.C. Q&A	Main Meeting
Science 109			BREAK	Hardware Essentials	
Science 111	Visual Programming	Understanding Operating Systems			
Science 203	AutoCAD	Computer Security		OS/2	
Science 306	Computer Essentials				
Wilkinson 117	Linux	Linux			
Wilkinson 221	Computer Aided Investing	Amibroker			

For quite some time, years actually, a lot of members have complained about the SIG meeting times. Comments like “I want to attend the XYZ SIG and the ABC SIG, but “you” have them scheduled at the same time. Why don’t “you” re-arrange the schedule so that they are not at the same time and I can attend both.” Of course another member is quite happy because he wants to attend the XYZ SIG, and the DEF SIG which is after the XYZ SIG. The examples go on and on. Herb Wong, our SIG coordinator, was not happy because his Hardware Essentials SIG started at 2:30 pm. If the Main Meeting ran long his SIG members had to choose between leaving the Main Meeting before it ended or being late to the Hardware Essentials SIG, if they went at all.

So we have had a lot of years of complaints but with almost no solid suggestions on how to improve the situation. As SIG Coordinator, Herb Wong presented the above schedule concept to the Board of Directors and was tasked with first talking to the SIG leaders for input; then, putting together an initial new schedule. The above is the result of that effort.

An alternate arrangement puts most of the SIG meetings just before the Main Meeting by filling the 12:30 pm slot, then the 10:30 am slot, etc.. Ultimately, you, the member, must vote for the best arrangement. Talk to your SIG leaders and the Board.

We are trying to address several issues with the time changes:

1. The 2:30PM SIG slot is often impacted by a Main Meeting that runs long for any of several reasons that result in late and/or disrupting attendance or just skipping the 2:30 SIG completely. Makes that time slot less than sought after.
2. Most presenters like to have at least an hour for their presentation. Main Meeting club business, announcements, questions, random access, technical glitches, and the raffle make getting it all into 90 minutes tough.
3. In large part for the above reasons, we don’t have enough rooms for the number of SIGs we want to have.
4. It eliminates time overlaps from odd starting times and sets aside a real 30 minute lunch break time.
5. It provides more options in avoiding popular SIGs competing with each other by being able to shift times.
6. The best rooms go to the most popular SIGs if they want them.

Getting “high quality” presenters like Microsoft, Corel, Symantec, Adobe, etc., is a problem for all user groups in large part because most of those companies have cut back or eliminated money spent on user groups. It costs them too much to talk to a group unless you can guarantee a 75-100 member audience and they prefer more. Several times when the question “Other than Big Names, what would you like to see at the Main Meeting?” was asked, the response was a combination of deafening silence punctuated with a few isolated “I dunno’s.” Personally, I thought a presentation on electronic banking would be interesting. I spent several hours at both Washington Mutual and Wells Fargo local banks and was ultimately told they didn’t have anybody trained to do that kind of presentation. If you or any of your friends have an idea for the Main Meeting, or better yet, would do the leg work to get an interesting presenter, the Board would love to hear about it.

The purpose of this change is to try and reinvigorate interest and participation in the club as a whole. If Chapman University didn’t waive the fees, the wonderful facilities we enjoy would cost nearly \$8000 a year. It has been a club policy for years that we make a yearly scholarship donation to Chapman University as a way of acknowledging and thanking them for their generosity. This year the board voted to make a \$2000 donation. I am sure you can appreciate the need for income to make that donation and pay for other things, like the over \$900 yearly insurance fee. Membership fees are the majority of the clubs finances and the raffle to a lesser degree. The Main Meeting is the heart of the club’s monthly gathering. Meeting everyone, club news and announcements, random access, the speaker, and last but not least, the raffle bring us together. A smaller number of attendees at the Main Meeting makes it harder to get “quality speakers who are interesting.” If we have a smaller number of “quality speakers who are interesting,” it makes it harder to attract new members and keep the members we have. If we have a smaller number of quality SIGs, it makes it harder to attract new members and keep the members we have. The smaller the membership count, the tougher it is to find volunteers. Not a good spiral. The obvious, ultimate extension is no club. Please attend the Main Meeting.

If you have any ideas on how to deal with these problems let the board know. Better yet, volunteer to be on the board. ■
 Jim Sanders, Editor, Orange Bytes

NOCCC Electronic Waste Collection Day

February 4, 2007

The widespread use of personal computers has created a tremendous problem. How is computer equipment to be properly disposed of so that the hazardous substances (such as lead, nickel, mercury, beryllium, cadmium, chromium, and zinc) do not contaminate the environment?

NOCCC has the win, win, win solution!

Bring it to the February club meeting and DONATE it to NOCCC. NOCCC is a 503(c)(3) corporation so:

- a. You unload e-waste in a green way.
- b. You may be entitled to an income tax deduction, please consult your tax person
- c. NOCCC gets a commission on the recycle value of the e-waste material.

For one day, we will give members an opportunity to safely recycle their useless equipment.

Products may include televisions, monitors (CRT, LCD, and plasma), laptop computers, PDAs, VCRs, printers, cell phones, desktop computers, calculators, and audio-video equipment. Each item must be in a safe to handle condition (no broken glass, no foreign toxic chemicals, no dangerous conditions).

Bring these items to the Sunday, February 4, 2006 meeting. Go to the Chapman University Hashinger Science Center parking lot at the corner of E. Palm Ave. and N. Center St. in Orange.

Not all items are acceptable. If you have doubts, call the number below. Talk to the NOCCC volunteers about what items will be taken. Do not leave any items in the parking lot that have not been accepted.

NOCCC reserves the right to refuse any and all items.

Recycling courtesy of:
Omni Technics, Inc.
www.ca-recycle.com
3401 Cerritos Avenue
Los Alamitos, California 90720
(562)627-1910



Dragon Nat. Spk. from page 17

recognize the word "Tooties" which is the name of my product. It would be easier just to type the word. The book might have been written using Dragon Speak and not corrected as it has some glaring errors. For example, it says you cannot use an advanced feature when you are in "cling" mode. I could not find any reference to cling mode. (*Editor's Note: It took me less than 60 seconds to switch to my Google window, type in > Dragon Naturally Speaking "cling mode"< and find this reference in an online copy of the DNS User's Guide PDF - "Cling mode - make the DragonBar appear just above the window into which you are dictating."*). Another weakness is it may have been written by a person who hasn't used a notebook computer which doesn't have a numeric key pad. Thus, it is a hassle to use the numeric + and - keys. It does say you can change such hot keys, but I didn't bother to try to find out as there was no listing of hot keys in the index. The index didn't show where you find a list of commands.

Reviews Editor's Comments:

Nuance provides free technical support via e-mail. If you call them, it is a toll call for area codes other than 407 and a charge of \$19.95 for each "technical incident" after the 1st one (<http://support.nuance.com/phone/default.asp>) for registered users. In addition to the user's guide, Nuance offers an on-line Knowledge Base and a Discussion Forum (<http://support.lhsl.com/databases/dragon/sitereg.nsf>) where technical questions may be offered and answered.

*If you want to use DNS with Word or other Office programs, you must first disable Microsoft Office XP's built in speech recognition (<http://knowledgebase.nuance.com/view.asp?tnID=3282&sQuery=>).

**A table comparing the features of the various DNS versions can be viewed at <http://www.nuance.com/naturallyspeaking/matrix/> and detailed datasheets are at <http://www.nuance.com/naturallyspeaking/datasheets/>.

***DNS 9 can be purchased from a number of on-line vendors at a discount. One site has the \$900 Pro version for \$770 with an upgrade going for \$299 (<http://froogle.google.com/froogle?q=Dragon+NaturallySpeaking+9+Pro.&hl=en&lr=&rls=GGLG,GGLG:2006-16,GGLG:en&sa=X&oi=froogle&ct=title>).

If you are a user of a prior version of DNS and are wondering whether to upgrade, check out the new and improved features list at <http://www.nuance.com/naturallyspeaking/professional/features.asp>.

Testimonials from users may be viewed at <http://www.nuance.com/naturallyspeaking/testimonials/>. DNS 9 has received a number of awards in 2006, notably from PC World and C|Net (<http://www.nuance.com/naturallyspeaking/awards/#2006>) and prior years from PC Magazine, Smart Computing and others. ■

Macromedia Dreamweaver 8

Reviewed by Herbert Wong, Jr., NOCCC

Dreamweaver 8 is a powerful web development environment (for many coding languages and server technologies) that shows maturity and extensive support from Macromedia (now owned by Adobe).

You can find a lot of Dreamweaver-centered web development articles on Adobe's web site (www.dreamweaver.com). The many tutorials will help improve your productivity and knowledge of Dreamweaver. In addition, a trial-version of Dreamweaver is available for downloading. Also, there are Usenet (newsgroups) groups devoted to Dreamweaver (such as www.macromedia.dreamweaver.com).

The Manual

Unlike most software packages, Dreamweaver 8 includes a bona fide instruction manual that is truly useful. It would be a mistake to avoid reading this documentation. It clearly explains Dreamweaver's techniques for accomplishing major tasks and the many minor but useful tools that will help you derive the maximum benefit from your development time and purchase.

Getting Started with Dreamweaver is divided into two sections. The first thirty pages are geared to orienting the new user to documentation (Learning Dreamweaver) and Dreamweaver's layout (Dreamweaver Basics). The next two hundred pages are tutorials (Setting up Your Site and Project Files, Creating a Table-based Page Layout, Adding Content to Pages, Formatting Your Page With CSS, Publishing Your Site, Working with Code, Creating a CSS-based Layout, Displaying XML Data, and Developing a Web Application).

The tutorials are extensively delineated with text and graphics (screen shots of the many dialogs, lists, checks, etc.). Users of all knowledge levels will be able to get started with the most sophisticated tools. Knowing that a tool exists makes reading these tutorials worthwhile, even if you currently won't use the tool.

Startup Dialog

Upon startup, Dreamweaver (optionally) shows a dialog box with many choices. These determine the configuration that you will take when you start working. Old work can be opened or new templates can be created.

Open a Recent Items contains a chronologi-



cally-sorted list of the past several edited files and an Open (file dialog box) option.

Create New lists various language oriented options that, when selected, raise an appropriate dialog box. Choices include HTML, ColdFusion, PHP, ASP VBScript, ASP .NET C#, JavaScript, XML, XSLT (Entire page), CSS, Dreamweaver Site, and More. These are rudimentary generic templates.

Finally, **Create from Samples** lists options for sample document types (CSS Style Sheets, Framesets, Page Designs (CSS), Starter Pages, and Page Designs). Some of these are also listed under the previously described Create New More option. Some of these are elaborate templates that can be used to quickly and easily create web pages that have the professional look of having been stolen off of a web site, but without the hassles of stripping useless code.

The Startup Dialog disappears after you make your decision and reappears when you close your last open file. If you prefer, you can disable the Startup Dialog.

Manage Sites

The first step in creating your masterpiece web site is to use Dreamweaver to create a site. A simple wizard guides you, in the creation of a site name, URL, server technology (ColdFusion, ASP.NET, ASP, JSA, or PHP), a location where you'll edit your source files (usually on your local machine), and site collaboration (check-in and check-out with email notification).

The Advanced tab will let you refine your site. Local Info, Remote Info, Testing Server, Cloaking, Design Notes, Site Map Layout, File View Columns, and Contribute are subheadings that let you change the previous choices or add more details.

For hardcore coders, site management might not be used. Web files would have to be managed manually. If so, a good FTP program and a thorough understanding of the site's structure is critical. This is common, especially for smaller projects.

For beginning coders, site management is almost essential. It will save hours in maintenance and development. As files are changed from within Dreamweaver, Dreamweaver will know which ones need to be posted to the web server. The files on the local machine can be manually (or, optionally, automatically) posted to the web server.

The critical benefit of using a managed site is the assistance that Dreamweaver gives in creating relative file-references. Many hours can be saved for a beginner who has trouble figuring out the relative file paths required to correctly find a file on a production site's server when the same code worked on the local development machine. I have seen people switch to development on the live production site because they were lost in transition between local machine and server (don't try that at work!).

HTML Development

Dreamweaver conforms to the common development environment format of displaying a large Code pane, a large Design pane or a combination of the two (Code and Design). Of course, there are many tool bars and optional menu bars everywhere; almost all of them can be collapsed and restored (usually from the main menu).

The Design view is the output from your HTML. It is WYSIWYG and your edits create the appropriate HTML that

is shown in the Code window (when visible). Edits in the Code window require a refresh (F5) before they appear in the Design view. In the past, saving the file (<Ctrl><s>) also updated the WYSIWYG view, but that no longer appears to be the case (this is one of my few complaints about changes in behavior between revisions of Dreamweaver).

In Design view, you get the benefits of rulers, grids, guides (layout to single pixel accuracy), zoom (the selection tool still works under magnified view!), a code toolbar (for one button Open, Collapse of Selection or Collapse of Tag, Select Parent Tag, Highlight Invalid Code, Apply Comment, Remove Comment, Indent Code, Wrap Tag, Format Source Code), etc.

A Properties panel can also be shown (at the bottom by default) within Dreamweaver. It will give you many options to modify the current object of the focus. For example, text that is being edited will cause the Properties panel items to be standard word processing options (ex. - bold, italic, left-justify, font, format (Heading 1), text color, - style, indent, Ordered List, Unordered List, etc.). Edited properties panel entries will instantly change in the design view.

Right clicking inside the code pane and choosing Select from the menu raises another submenu. The selections here make life much easier for the coder. The options begin with Collapse Selection, Collapse Outside Selection, Expand Selection, Collapse Full Tag, Collapse Outside Full Tag, and Expand All.

When pages get long and cluttered with tags, these first six options help by collapsing the code to show only what you need to work on. Multiple sections of code can be collapsed as needed. This is a trivial feature with the biggest impact on productivity (especially at 3 a.m.). A close second would be Select Parent Tag (<Ctrl><[>) which highlights the tag in the code pane.

Collapse Code can also be easily be done with the mouse. Select a section of code (or a tag) and a marker will appear next to the code pane's line numbers. The marker consists of two small squares connected by a line. The squares contain minus signs to indicate that a click will collapse the marker into a single square with a plus sign inside. The first half-dozen letters of the selection and an ellipsis (i.e. - ...) are shown (highlighted in a box of a new gray color).

The remaining Select options include: Apply HTML Comment, Apply /* */ Comment, Apply // Comment, Apply ' Comment, Apply Backslash-comment Hack, Apply Ciao Hack, Remove Comment, Remove Backslash-comment Hack, Remove Ciao Hack, Convert Tabs To Spaces, Convert Spaces To Tabs, Indent, Outdent, Remove All Tags, Convert Lines To Table, Add Line Breaks
, Convert To Uppercase, Convert To Lowercase, Convert Tags To Uppercase, Convert Tags To Lowercase, etc.

Endless Other Features

Web page design has gotten out of hand lately. Far too many sites are oriented to sales and promotion. Page layouts include far too many columns, animations, and images (instead of resizable text) for easy readability. Unlimited combinations of video display formats and resolutions also adversely affect legibility.

Conscientious designers take into consideration the needs of

the visually impaired. Dreamweaver's Accessibility Checkpoint Testing examines code to show compliance for Section 508 and WCAG Priority 1 and 2 checkpoints. It will also find all of those missing accessibility text messages that you promised to fill in later.

Macromedia Flash video can easily be inserted. Dreamweaver knows all about it! The advertisements say it only takes five clicks. Flash video layout is shown in the design view pane. Dimensions (in pixels) are shown with a layout box.

Dreamweaver is the helpmate of the Macromedia ColdFusion database. Since the end of Homesite, Dreamweaver has integrated ColdFusion technology to become the editor of choice of many developers.

CSS (Cascading Style Sheets) support is extensive. Just a few examples... You can easily change from table based to CSS based code. CSS layout color-coding (highlighting) in design view shows margins, padding, borders, etc. The CSS panel helps in maintaining All Rules or showing the current view of properties. Setting the CSS media types changes the design view for various targets (such as hand held device or print).

I ran out of allowed space long ago and I didn't get to mention features for PHP 5, ASP, JSP, RSS feeds, XML, XML data, XSLT, Xpath, etc.

The biggest problem with Dreamweaver also is its biggest asset. Dreamweaver does not impose itself upon you. Less is more; more or less. It won't pack your source code with trash every time you save the file. It won't rewrite your customized code. You can install Dreamweaver and develop with it like you would with Notepad (after you disable a few things like code completion). That is the problem. There are countless features that will go undiscovered until you read the tutorials or go exploring through the menus.

For example, I just discovered (by experimentation) that there are at least seven ways to bold text. Pressing <Ctrl> will create appropriate code () for the selected text from either the Code view or the Design view pane. Clicking the B (bold) button will do the same. Of course, you can always go through the menus (Text, Style, Bold).

Conclusion

Everyone should use Dreamweaver. Unfortunately, it is marketed as a specialty product. According to SEC filings, Macromedia's total sales (2004) were around eighty percent for Designers and Developers, eleven percent for Business Users and eight percent for Consumers. This is borne out by looking at the class of (non-Adobe) products that are shown in the corporate/enterprise catalogs. Those products bear prices in the thousands of dollars. So, Dreamweaver is priced accordingly.

I wasn't able to find actual sales figures, but Adobe claims Dreamweaver has 3 million active users. Even so, I think that if Dreamweaver were street-priced at \$100, sales could increase ten-fold. Then, I could tell everyone to Buy it! You'll like it!

For now, I'll have to say something different. Dreamweaver is a great product. If you are only developing in HTML and on a tight budget, there are alternatives. If you are developing in

Continued on page 24

Diskeeper 2007 Professional Premier

Review by Ted Littman, NOCCC

In the April 2006 Orange Bytes (p. 16), I reviewed the previous issue (Diskeeper 10 Pro Premier) of this outstanding defragmentation program. One has to wonder how the Diskeeper programmers can continue to produce new releases with improvements worth upgrading to for current users. In version 10 there was “Set it and Forget it” Smart Scheduling and “I-FAAST.” Well, the latest upgrade has added “InvisiTasking” (to enhance multitasking and avoid resource use conflicts between Diskeeper and other running programs), Real-Time Defragmentation (that **automatically** handles fragmentation as it occurs – this is a biggie), and “FragShield” (to dynamically prevent fragmentation of critical system files, thereby maintaining system stability and reliability); in addition, “I-FAAST” has been improved (to boost access speed for the most commonly used files). According to Diskeeper, users of applications such as CAD/CAM, database applications, and graphic- and video-intensive applications will experience an astonishing increase in speed and response. Diskeeper 2007 also supports 64-bit operating systems and works on Windows XP and most older versions. It also is supposed to work with VISTA. There is more; if you want to know “the whole nine yards,” check out the Diskeeper web site: www.diskeeper.com.

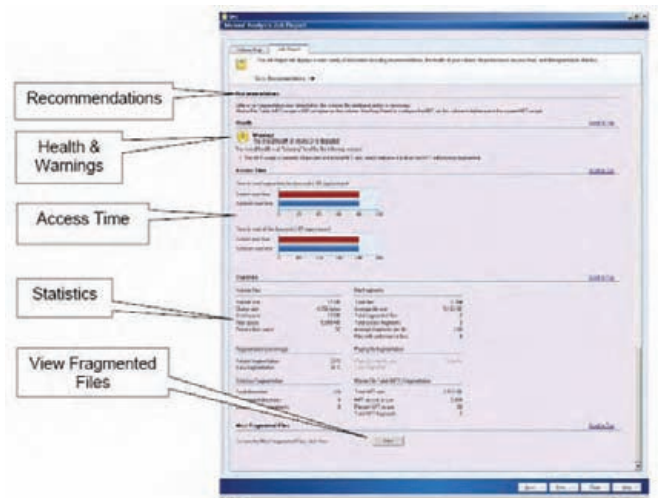
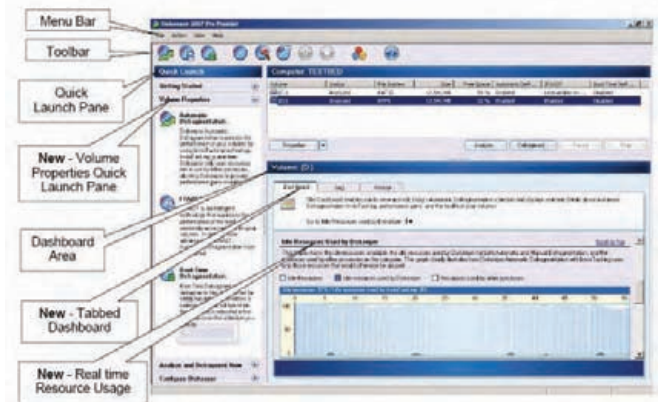


If you currently are not using Diskeeper, I highly recommend it over Windows’ built-in manual defragger (which is basically an older version of Diskeeper). If you are using Diskeeper 10 or older, I believe that you will find the 2007 programs worth upgrading to, especially the Pro and Pro Premier versions. Although you are unlikely to need it, Diskeeper provides 90 days of free technical support (phone support is via an 818 area code). And the software comes with an 87-page electronic User Guide that gives more detail than most of will need.

Fragmentation of PC hard drives is a serious problem that gets worse with time and can impact the performance of your computer or worse. “Disk fragmentation occurs when a file is broken up into pieces to fit on the disk. Because files are constantly being written, deleted and resized, fragmentation is a natural occurrence. When a file is spread out over several locations, it takes longer to read and write. But, the effects of fragmentation are far more widespread: Slow performance, long boot-times, random crashes and freeze-ups — even a complete inability to boot up at all. Many users blame these problems on the operating systems, when disk fragmentation is often the real culprit.”

I won’t go into more details here, but refer you to my previous review. Diskeeper not only is highly automated now, but works in the background with minimal effect on PC resources

and keeps fragmentation of files (including the critical Master File Table and Paging File) and free space to the lowest possible levels. It is easy to install and use, even for the novice, has a nifty graphical interface (which you really only use in initial set up or if you have occasion to manually defragment), and provides lots of analytical data for viewing for those disposed to details (health of disks & performance, frag results, etc.).



As before, Diskeeper is available in seven versions. A comparison of features for the programs of most interest to us is shown in the table.

Feature	Diskeeper 10 Pro Premier	Diskeeper 10 Pro	Diskeeper 10 Home	Diskeeper 10 Standard	Diskeeper 10 Basic	Diskeeper 10 Free
InvisiTasking™	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Real Time Defragmentation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
I-FAAST™ 2.0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
New Inhibitor Control Panel	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
High Speed Defragmentation Engine	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Automatic Directory Consolidation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
FragShield™	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Start Time Meter	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
64 bit operating system support	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Intelligent Reporting	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Power Management for laptops	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Maximum single volume size supported	160	160 GB	160 GB	160 GB	160 GB	160 GB

Diskeeper Pro Premier provides unparalleled peak performance for power users and high powered workstation computing, delivering the ultimate high performance to those who need it most. Diskeeper 2007 Professional is designed for the typical office PC user and includes advanced protection against performance problems for PCs and Laptops. Diskeeper

2007 Home provides automatic defragmentation the “pros” use and is designed for home-computing needs to keep non-networked PCs healthy and running at top speed.

The list prices for the various versions are as follows:

Home - \$30

Professional - \$50

Professional Premier - \$100

Server Standard - \$300

Server Enterprise - \$1000

Administrator - \$200

For more details on pricing, including upgrading, go to <http://www.diskeeper.com/diskeeper/home/purchase.asp?RID=1&SID=1&CID=22&Aeid=0&Apid=0&pass=212578890>. You can download a “try before you buy” version or buy the software with a 30-day money-back guarantee. Discounts may be available from the usual online vendors. ■

How to Do Everything with Dreamweaver 8

Review by *Herbert Wong, Jr., NOCCC*

How to Do Everything with Dreamweaver 8 is a comprehensive book that covers the most commonly used web publishing techniques. It not only thoroughly explains basic Dreamweaver 8 operation, it also details basic web programming techniques.

The author conveys his knowledge of web standards throughout the book as his insights delineate the persona of Dreamweaver 8. For example, he describes in depth the reasons that a Dreamweaver feature will generate a particular tag instead of the depreciated older style tag. Therefore, he is able to instill a fundamental understanding of proper coding style while pointing out a lowly button on a toolbar.

Additionally, as each Dreamweaver feature is described, various Tip, Note, Caution, “How to...,” “Did You Know...,” etc. entries overtly highlight important information where appropriate.

The book is divided into six parts that contain a total of nineteen chapters and 460 pages. The parts are “Get To Know Dreamweaver,” “Create Basic Web Pages,” “Build Page Layouts,” “Go Beyond The Basics,” “Expand Your Horizons,” and “Manage Your Site With Dreamweaver.”

After basic interface orientation, the book starts out with a key feature of Dreamweaver – Defining a Site (chapter 02) and followed up with Publish Your Site (chapter 17). Author Meadhra recognizes the benefits that an early introduction to site management will give to the user.



The introduction to web pages is as basic as possible. Explanations of regular text, paragraphs, line-breaks, special characters, importing files, etc. are not oriented to the advanced coder.

Much of the CSS (cascading style sheets) that Meadhra writes about contrasts older HTML pages with modern CSS-oriented coding. His thoroughness in explaining Dreamweaver’s CSS features is enough to help a neophyte’s entry into basic CSS. However, the book is explicitly not intended to be a tutorial on site design.

Back to basics again there are a few chapters on Dreamweaver’s methods for adding images, hyperlinks, tables, HTML, etc; a few chapters on page layout with CSS, tables, frames, etc.

More sophisticated techniques follow, starting with the implementation of HTML forms and form elements. The creation of web page templates and web pages from templates help the user to quickly create impressive web pages. For the greatest impact, the addition of Macromedia Flash, sound, interactive elements (such as rollovers), and dynamic web pages are covered.

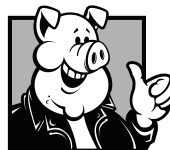
Finally, since Dreamweaver 8 is an enterprise-oriented tool, collaboration is given two chapters (including using Macromedia Contribute).

Obviously, not everything is covered in this book. Consider the addition of database functionality to web pages. Any discussion of anything this complex would require extensive sample code and step-by-step instructions. This is the exact type of thing that is *not* covered in this book.

This is an excellent book for the right type of reader. This is not a reference book for the hacker mentality. There is no project to type in and no CD-ROM. There is plenty to read and a wealth of information to be absorbed. It is instructional but it is not a tutorial.

If you are new to web programming and want to start using Dreamweaver 8, this book was written for you. It will show you what to do and you will understand why you are doing it.

How To Do Everything With Dreamweaver 8 by Michael Meadhra. 2006; ISBN: 0-07-226238-9; McGraw-Hill/Osborne publisher; US\$24.99 at www.mhprofessional.com/product.php?cat=112&isbn=0072262389. ■



Pig SIG Open To ALL

Meet us in the Cafeteria in Argyros Hall around noon (until about 12:30pm). 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! ■

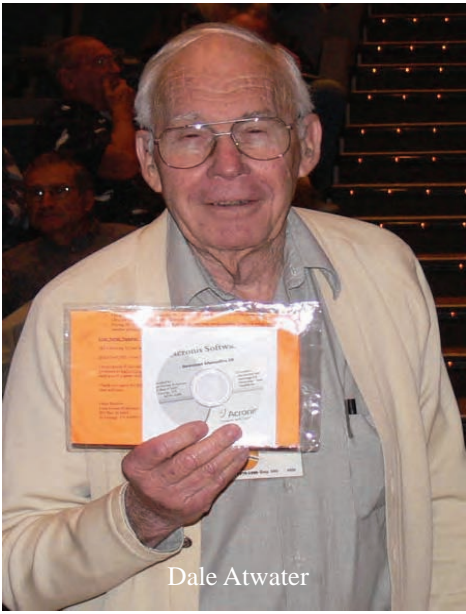
January Meeting Photos



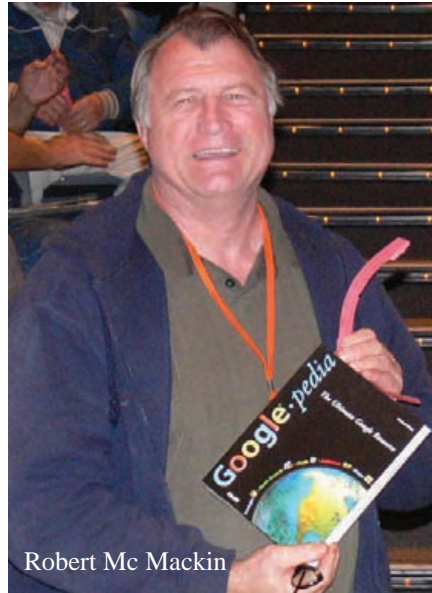
Frank Van Nostrand of the Social Security Administration gave us a well received education on Social Security.



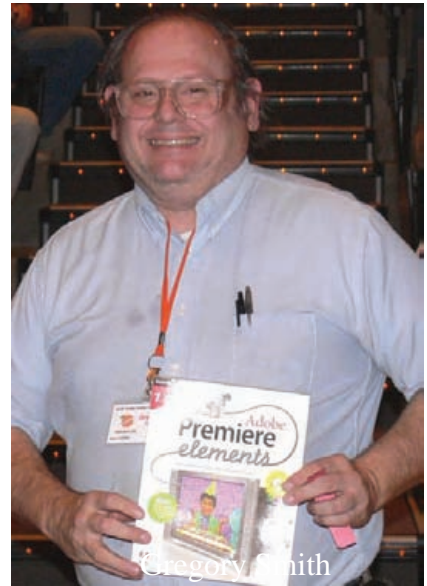
Photography by Jim Sanders



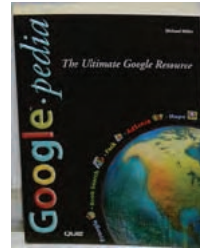
Dale Atwater



Robert Mc Mackin



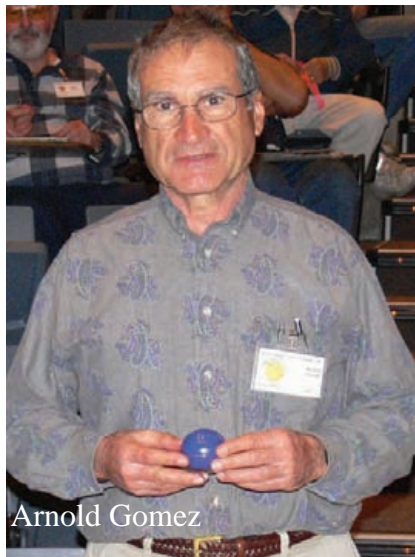
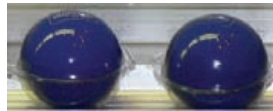
Gregory Smith



The winners.



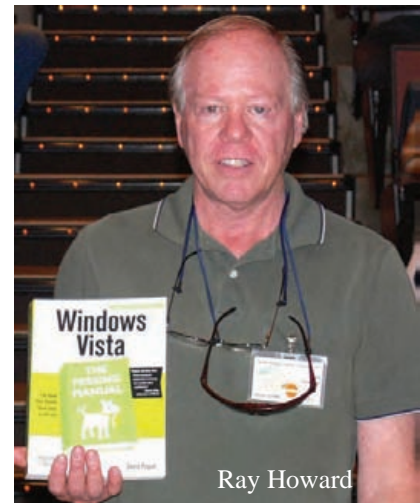
Robert Mc Mackin



Arnold Gomez



Jerry Pilawski



Ray Howard

Dragon Naturally Speaking 9 Pro

Review by Dr. John Hanson, NOCCC

This program claims to be able to record your dictation and transform it into print at a normal speaking rate of about 150 words per minute and with up to 99% accuracy. This is about four times faster than a 40 words per minute typist. If true, it can be one of the most useful computer programs. If you are the impatient type you can skip to the end and read the results paragraph to see if it is as good as it claims.

It has been my dream to be able to dictate details about my patients and other procedures. I do touch type quite well but when I am driving back from a client or have thoughts while I was sleeping, I can dictate into a recorder and have the computer transcribe them automatically into print. When I used to travel all over Europe helping improve people, my assistant would drive while I typed notes into my DOS notebook computer. Dictating would have been much easier as it is important to get my thoughts recorded before I forget the important details and start on another patient. I wondered if the fidelity of my many hours of recorded tapes about patients and students is enough to be recognized by this program. I was one of the first early adopters and had purchased several prior versions of Dragon Naturally Speaking (DNS) hoping they would work for me, but no luck with so many errors, and I don't even have an accent. John Dvorak said a year or two ago that speech processing isn't here yet but I haven't given up and will let you know how this version works.

The box says you need at least a one GHz CPU and mine is 1.6 GHz but in the enclosed manual it suggests 2.4 GHz. You also need a version of XP with SP2 or Windows 2000 plus some other goodies that I think my Toshiba notebook has. I bought mine after I saw the wonderful Toshiba that our president, Elise, got last year. I use Office 97 which the book says is acceptable. It says you need 512mb of Ram and I have 768mb; so my Toshiba should be entirely adequate. The typical installation which takes only 13 minutes takes up 1.3 gb on your hard disk. So far I can see no offer of support except their web site: www.Nuance.com/help/contact or www.Nuance.com/NaturallySpeaking/Support/. They suggest you get your support from the dealer and we all know how useless that is. The list price is \$900*** with no guarantee or offer of support, so you are on your own, but if it works, it is worth the cost. The web site lists two other versions with the better one called "Preferred" for \$200 and a lower cost one called "Standard" for only \$100. The description** on the "Preferred" version claims the same features as on the "Professional" version I am evaluating. The printed manual has no troubleshooting section.



The program even comes with a 116-page printed manual which has a good table of contents and index and is quite readable and well done, except for a few glaring errors. This professional version comes with two CDs and a headset with microphone, as did my earlier versions, so that users can get the best results right away. You can use the program only five times unless you activate it on the Internet. You can only update from versions 7 and 8 providing it is the same language, etc. All the updating really does is save your vocabulary and some training so I think it is better to start from scratch. The book says you only need about five minutes of training, but that is hard to believe. Then, it suggests you analyze your writing style by looking over some of your earlier documents which might take a half hour more. This sounds very useful but how they can implement it sounds like a gimmick.

There is also a version of the User's Guide on the CD which it says is more complete with important topics such as: "Improving Recognition Accuracy," etc. It does admit that there are a number of things that are easier with the keyboard or mouse. When dictation doesn't work in an application window they have a dictation box which hopefully solves the problem. Be careful that you get the "Professional" or higher versions as the lower versions may have omitted a number of useful features, such as transcribing from a portable recorder even though the web site says the "Preferred" will do that. When one finds dumb errors in their printed manual you can imagine what kind of errors you might find in the program. Hopefully, not many. The book makes a big deal out of using your voice to activate commands, but I suggest you save yourself troubles and use your keyboard and mouse. Throughout the book there are useful tips such as repeating the phrase, but with the corrected word, etc. instead of saying just the individual word. I suggest that the book be rewritten and leave out all the garbage like how to move the mouse with your voice. That information would be better on the disk help file. The book should use that space for more practical ideas like how to get the printed version of your dictation into applications like Word or Excel. Even Photoshop or ACDSee could benefit such as when you are reviewing a thousand pictures. As each picture comes up you can dictate the number and your comments about the picture and have them quickly printed out or inserted into the associated notes that can accompany a picture.

There is one interesting feature that I am anxious to try. When you are dictating, the program records what you have said so if you find something weird in the text that you don't recognize you can playback what you said so you can figure it out. This sounds very useful but be careful not to close the document as the recording is then erased. There is another hitch you need to be aware of. Your dictation is not recorded in Word* even though the box implies that. You must use Dragon Pad first and then, when perfect, you can move the data to Word. You can still make corrections but won't have the recording of your dictation. Before you close Dragon Pad (similar to Word Pad), you need to save the dictation part if you want to have it for later editing. Only about 30 minutes of dictation is recorded but you have the option of making it longer by devoting more

than the default 40mb of memory. Recorded dictation takes up a lot of space, about 1.3 mb per minute with the extension .dra, so be sure to erase when no longer needed.

You can also correct someone else's work but only if done on the same computer unless you pay more. In order to enhance the other person's recognition accuracy you must make all corrections via the keyboard and mouse and by using the author's user file. Remember that this has to be done in Dragon Pad.

There is another wonderful feature I want to try. You can have the computer read any text using a computer voice in Word, Word Perfect, or Dragon Pad, even email. You can even adjust the speed, pitch, and volume. This sounds very useful as I can take my extensive Word Star files, convert to Word and have them read out loud while I am going to sleep or waking up. I can even record them on tape or CD and play them when I am driving. It all sounds too good to be true.

Installation: I was delighted on how well the installation went. It only took about 15 minutes total for the two disks and didn't ask too many dumb questions as some other programs do. It tells you up front that a typical installation is 1.3 gb and it gives you a choice as to where to install it. I didn't try to put it on another drive so don't know how big a chunk of the total it would put on the C: drive anyway. Some programs are terrible at putting so much on the C: drive it is hardly worth telling it to install on another drive.

Because I didn't choose "Quick Start" during the set up, it didn't add an icon on my desktop but that is easy to fix. Quick Start would just add another burden on my system by starting the program every time I turned on the computer.

Tutorial: The tutorial consists of 14 short steps where a lady's voice demonstrates the various features of the program. After each step it suggests you click on the "Try It" button but that was a bust and totally useless because it says click on the Dragon Pad and there is no response. Other than that, the tutorial is well done but you can benefit by doing it twice and taking notes as the "Try It" doesn't work.

Another serious weakness in the tutorial part of the program is that they give you a very small window in the middle of your screen and there is no way to enlarge it. You should be able to stretch it to the size you want as you can with normal windows. Even the regular program has those miserably small windows.

Before the tutorial it goes through a brief volume check of your voice and a quality check and everything was OK. This is a good feature.

Results: I could hardly believe my eyes on how accurate my first test was. They finally have a program that works. How marvelous! I read a paragraph of some of my work fairly fast and expected to find lots of errors as in past versions but I had to look hard to find a few mistakes like typing "to" when I was expecting the number 2. The manual tells how to correct that, but I had forgotten. I also needed to remember to add punctuation such as periods and commas, etc. All these minor errors are easy to fix with keyboard and mouse but you could use voice commands if you wanted to expend the effort of learning the commands. For handicapped people who have difficulty using a keyboard or mouse, this voice command feature could be very useful and lots

of fun for young children to see their words typed out. Hopefully, the manufacturer will read this report and fix the two minor problems I mentioned earlier. Another improvement they could make is to provide a way to access their dictionary and add the many new words specific to my business. I am anxious to get in some more practice and do some useful work with this great program. I even tried having the program read back my voice to check my work and it worked fine. The book is vague about the different versions**. I suspect "preferred" is less than "professional," but it doesn't say what anything higher is called. As stated earlier there is a "Standard" version for only \$100. I know nothing about those other current versions but I highly recommend this "Professional" version if you have the need and can afford the expense. Maybe they will come out with an inexpensive "Elements" version as Adobe has done with PhotoShop, etc.

Here are the results of my test of the text to speech feature. It was amazingly good and even pronounced Tooties correctly but text had to be copied to Dragon Pad as it would not read anything in Word 97. For reading you might want to use other programs that are readily available such as in Acrobat Reader.

Exploring the Possibilities: This program is so fantastic it opens a world of possibilities, too many to discuss here. Here are a few of my own possibilities. I am an inventor and among my various inventions are various electronic circuits, so this program could help many inventors. You have worked all day on a project and are exhausted so you lie down to rest. Your mind is still very active thinking of what you have done. Press a button on a portable recorder and record your ideas, then go to sleep. Later, you wake up in the dark with more ideas so you record some more. In the morning the Dragon program transcribes your notes into a printed version.

Many years ago I invented a new form of psychology, which I call "Ultra Short Term Therapy" where the patient can usually be cured in 5 to 15 days. It is very intensive for both the patient and the therapist so at the end of the day the therapist is not in the mood for writing notes, so the notes tend to get delayed and may not get written at all. Now the therapist can relax, dictate his or her ideas and have them in print the next day, if not sooner. Most of my work is improving students dramatically in a few days, from average to good and from poor to good. The techniques work for all ages but can be very different for each student. Again, the therapy is very intensive so recording the ideas right away while relaxing is a great way not to lose important details. But, recordings tend to get lost so it is important to get these ideas into print as soon as possible. The new flash memory recorders are so small and handy they are a pleasure to use. Imagine about three hours of recording on a 256 mb memory card. You need to be careful to use a recorder with enough fidelity or the program may not recognize your words.

Weaknesses: There are many, so avoid them and just use the good features as it does transcribe simple text quite well, even at about 150 words per minute which is quite normal. Don't try to correct errors by spelling as it was a disaster trying to get it to

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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

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

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

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

ConceptDraw 5.5, Pro Edition

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

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

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

Books

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

Live Linux CDs – In this book + DVD, author Christopher Negus guides you through the free software tools and toys you need to try out and create specialized Linux Live CDs for security, presentations, gaming, multimedia, firewalls, and clustering. MSRP=\$40.

The Official Ubuntu Book – Ubuntu, a free operating system, is “Linux for human beings.” This 400-page book from Pren-Hall shows you how to

seamlessly install and customize it for home or small business use. It covers every standard desktop application from word processing, spreadsheets, Web browsing, e-mail, music, video etc. to software development. The accompanying DVD has a version of Ubuntu that can be run from the DVD as well as the complete set of supporting packages. MSRP=\$35.

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.

Linux Administration Handbook, 2nd Edition – This book is the definitive resource for Linux system administra-

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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 available books is as follows:

Hardware Hacking Projects for Geeks – This O'Reilly book is authored by Scott Fulham who has been "hacking" hardware since he was ten years old. It contains 15 amazing projects that range from the truly useful to the legendary and wacky. MSRP=\$30.

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

Upgrading Your PC, 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.

Moving to Linux, 2nd Edition Draft – \$20
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.

Interprocess Communications in Linux – The definitive guide to Linux processes and IPF for programmers and system administrators by John S. Gray from Prentice Hall. MSRP=\$50.

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

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

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

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

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

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

Next Generation Application Integration – From simple information to Web services, this book by David Linticum from Addison-Wesley is an indispensable resource for those responsible for managing or implementing application-integration middleware. MSRP=\$40.

Open Source Network Administration – Author James Kretchmar from MIT presents an extraordinary collection of open source tools for streamlining and improving virtually every facet of network administration. Publisher is Prentice Hall. MSRP=\$45.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Main Meeting Report



By Eric Saca, NOCCC

Frank Van Nostrand from the Social Security Administration presented to us in January. He spoke about their huge computer system, which is the largest in the Federal government, outside of the Defense Department. Besides processing all the claims received by Social Security, their system maintains earnings information on every American worker.

President Elise Edgell ran the meeting. Her big announcement this month was the NOCCC time change beginning in February. All SIG starting times were changing, including the Main Meeting, moving from 1 PM to 2 PM. These changes would allow the club to have more -- and more usable -- room time slots for SIGs.

Frank Van Nostrand started out with the basic computing history of the Social Security Administration. In 1935, Social Security was enacted. From 1937 to 1950, all Social Security records were kept manually. In 1951, the computer age began for Social Security. Today, they have the largest Federal civilian computer system.

Next, he covered some monumental statistics about that computer system. Their mainframe stores approximately 190 terabytes of data. Open client-server systems store an additional 109 terabytes. There are 48 million average daily transactions. Transactions peaked at 58 million in one day. Average daily transactions are growing at about 6 million per year.

This computer system helps the Administration issue Social Security num-

bers and cards to every person eligible to work in this country. 17 million cards were issued last year. They keep wage information on every American worker. They pay retirement benefits to 33.4 million retirees and their dependents. They pay disability benefits to 8.3 million disabled individuals and their dependents. They pay survivor benefits to 6.6 million individuals. They pay SSI benefits to 7.2 million individuals. They send benefits statements every year to every worker age 25 and older.

They provide service delivery support to the following programs: Medicare, Medicaid, Food Stamps, and the Railroad Retirement Board. They are the Federal agency designated to coordinate death information. Last year, they processed 9 million new claims for benefits, 94 million post-entitlement actions, and 264 million W-2s. They would send out about 48 million 1099s in the current month.

Paperless processing is used now for almost everything. Even for disability claims, medical evidence is stored electronically and hearings are recorded electronically. Wet signatures are no longer required.

Frank then covered Social Security's powerful and helpful website at <http://www.ssa.gov>. It is organized into main sections: Retirement; Medicare; Disability and SSI; and Widows, Widowers & other survivors, and other sections. The main page has a link that shows you what you can do online. It provides all the forms and instructions anyone would ever need to work with Social Security programs online and offline. You can apply for benefits online. You can file a W-2 online. It includes a whole section with advice on retirement planning. The site has won several awards for its ease of use and volumes of useful information.

He then covered his Top Ten Myths about Social Security (What people really don't know, but think they do!). They were as follows:

1. Social Security is only a retirement program.

Only 70% of checks go to retirees.

The remaining funds go to disability claims, life insurance claims, and other programs.

2. Social Security won't be there when I need it.

The system will not have a problem until the year 2040. Any coming changes to account for that should not impact anyone over 40. Thus, Social Security will be there for everyone over 40 just as it has been for everyone using the program until now.

3. Social Security wouldn't have financial problems if Congress had kept it as a retirement program the way it was originally intended.

The system is running the way it was originally intended. New programs, set up after the initial retirement program, are managed by totally separate funding mechanisms. Other programs created since the inception of Social Security include the Survivors (1939), Disability (1956), and Medicare (1965) programs.

Frank explained the problem with the system that will have a big impact in 2040 if changes aren't made. The big problem is demographics. The baby boom generation will be retiring, with a great number of people using the Social Security system. They will have to be supported by the baby bust generation, which has much fewer people contributing funds. Added to that, people generally have a greater longevity thanks to improved medical technology and quality of life. They will be drawing retirement funds much longer than in the past. Over time, the funds contributed to the system will drain and run out by approximately 2040, according to the latest statistics.

4. Social Security trust funds are nothing but worthless IOUs. The entire trust fund is invested in government bonds -- the safest security there is. Many people own government bonds, including people in foreign countries. Congress spends the money with a promise to repay -- and the Federal government has an obligation to pay them back. At its peak, the bonds for Social Security represented less than

20% of the National Debt. Also, the trust funds are earning interest, with \$94 billion earned in 2005.

5. As a personal investment plan, Social Security is a raw deal!

It is not a personal investment plan. It is simply a plan to ensure seniors don't live in poverty. The more you pay into it, the more you take out. As a poverty prevention plan, Social Security is the most effective program of its kind in history.

6. I don't have to plan for my retirement; Social Security will take care of me.

Social Security is not enough to live on! It should only supplement a person's well-planned retirement. It is merely intended to replace 40% of the average workers income.

7. They raised my retirement age to 67 and now I have to wait longer to retire and get Medicare.

Medicare eligibility still begins at age 65. Early retirement remains at age 62, even if the Full retirement age is going up. (You will just need to consider that if you retire early, you will get less money per pay period.)

8. I can go to work and still collect my full Social Security benefits.

Yes you can -- at Full retirement age! Under that age, if you make more than \$12,960 for the year, you will lose \$1 of Social Security for every \$2 made. If you make more than \$34,440, you will lose \$1 for every \$3.

9. Someone told me that its always best to take your Social Security at the earliest possible date.

You get the same amount of money no matter when you start pulling it out. The earlier you begin taking it out, the sooner you will exhaust it -- or the less you can remove for each pay period. This question really depends on how long you expect to live. It would only be good to start drawing Social Security early if you did not expect to live long.

10. When my 2 ex-wives get through collecting my Social Security, there will be nothing left for me.

Divorced spouses CAN get benefits -- under three conditions: 1) They were

married for at least 10 years; 2) They were legally divorced; and 3) They are currently unmarried. The worker must first be eligible to get the benefits before they will start going to his/her spouse. Even if one or more ex-spouses get full benefits, the worker and his/her current spouse will both get full benefits as well.

Next Meeting -- Irene Chow is a Category Manager at Ingram Micro. "Chow isn't just any Ingram Micro employee. She's the company's gadget guru and what she recommends can make or break your product." ■

Computer Aided Investing SIG



By Bob Krishfield, NOCCC

Market Review: This time of year investors have a lot to think about as we look at last year's market performance and measure of how well our portfolios performed in comparison. It was an up year for the markets, with the Dow gaining 16%, the Russell 2000 up by 18%, and NASDAQ the weakest at 9%. Gold and Oil were 25% and 23% higher. One did well if your portfolio made comparable gains. The big dip mid-year forced many investors to cash out, and if they followed a lot of "advice" to be cautious about getting back in, they would have missed most of the year's gains. Looking back, it was the last 6 months that produces most of the gains for the major markets, and very little for Gold and Oil. These trends are continuing into the New Year, still making new highs on the Dow and a stellar performance on the NASDAQ as it sees new 6-year highs. The first 5 days of January are supposed to be an indicator for what will happen for the rest of the year. This year those days did not result in a gain, but we don't have to worry about that ruining the year, because the statistics show

this indicator is less dependable than the January Barometer. The Barometer uses the S&P performance for the whole month of January to determine if this will be an up or down year. While there have been a few down days recently, no major trends have been broken or support lines violated. So should we expect the markets to continue to rise? We took a look at the factors for an up market and those driving it down, and there are uncertainties on both sides. One strange phenomenon is the drop in Oil and commodity prices that are making the market rise. The big unknowns near term are how well 4th quarter earnings reporting will go, and what the Fed will do next with interest rates. We have played in this game before and if we follow the advice of the gurus -- it's time to be cautious and careful. Our membership is optimistic with a strong vote for the Dow to continue up for another month.

Presentation: New ETFs and their Index Weightings. This sounds like a boring topic that might be presented at a meeting of financial advisors after dinner when most of the crowd will have a good snooze. The significance of what follows is hardly boring when it has the potential for doubling your returns. This is a review of some new ETFs and families. ETFs have several advantages over mutual funds since they are traded like stocks; have few restrictions and low management fees. ETFs are not managed like mutual funds, but instead follow an index. So, performance does not depend on the fund manager's stock picking ability, but the effectiveness of the index to perform in the market. Most indexes are capitalization weighted -- by the market capitalization of each stock in the index. This forces the index to change with the few largest stocks, and gives little weight to small cap issues that offer higher percentage increases. To improve on this, alternative weighting schemes are used to improve the performance of the index.

In 2003, Rydex came out with RSP, an equal weighted S&P ETF. Charting the RSP versus the SPX (an S&P cap

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Meeting Reports

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weighted ETF) the equal weighted ETF gained 30% more over its lifespan of 3.5 years. Since April 2006, Rydex has 15 equal weighted ETFs covering the various S&P sectors and styles, with performance up to 150% over the SPY ETF.

PowerShare's PWC performance matches that of Rydex's RSP over the same timeframe. It differs in that it uses a proprietary weighting formula based on fundamentals, growth, stock valuation, timeliness and risk factors. PowerShares issued many new ETFs in December 2006, so there is little data available to evaluate performance of these new funds, and whether or not their weighting scheme is superior.

WisdomTree came out with dividend weighted ETFs in June 2006. While their weighting formula is proprietary, they publish the screening methods and rationale of their methods on their website and apply the screens to domestic and international sectors. Looking at their performance for the last 7 months, all equity ETFs performed better than SPX, with two international funds about 200% the return of SPX. This family looks like it has a lot of potential.

Next month we plan to move the meeting back to Wilkinson 221, and will begin at 9:00AM. Check NOCCC.org for any changes. ■

AmiBroker SIG

By Bob Krishfield, NOCCC

The SIG is focusing on the internals of AmiBroker, how to work some of its features and how to use AFL to incorporate ideas into formulas for charting, screening or trading. This past meeting we used some AFL programs in the BackTest Training folder (downloaded from prior instructions) and reviewed some of the important AFL functions that include: Foreign, Buy/Sell, Exrem, Flip, and AddToComposite. Rather than just looking at the syntax, we opened up

the programs and looked at how these functions were used and what results were produced. The common thread among these functions is they're used in trading programs and so we demonstrated the backtester and the optimizer to make improvements. The programs reviewed included trading models for a single EMA crossover system, a double EMA crossover system, a trendfollowing system and a buy&hold system. These systems are only for tutorial purposes and won't make you rich. Some of the better FastTrack / Trade systems are available in AFL such as Headsup, Pairs Switching and Hedging, and some of the common FastTrack signals such as Ruttr, Fubar5, MicroC2x, NSADV, etc. I think we will move on to review what is in these codes which have value, rather than the simpler codes that are easier to understand but have no value.

There are some good charting and trading programs available from the Yahoo Groups-AmiBroker discussion board and the FT-Talk Forums board, but you have to spend time digging through the non-relevant postings and have some idea of what you're looking for. No one is going to hand you all his or her best trading systems just for asking. Recently I downloaded a trading system developed in 2004 that was setup to trade ProFunds and Rydex funds and combine several features of AmiBroker's Backtester in one model. This became the foundation for adapting it to trading sector funds with performance ranking and minimum hold periods.

There are some companies now offering their expertise (for a price) and will generate AFL code if you provide the formulas and program specifications. Formula Research offers a subscription to high performance trading strategies including the models and formulas used. The strategies are published in the form of one model report a month that includes ideas of some famous traders and industry leaders.

Next month we plan to move the meeting back to Wilkinson 221, and will begin at 10:30 AM. Check NOCCC.org for any changes. ■

Security SIG

By Dave Keays, NOCCC

Two big subjects in the security world today are segmentation and virtualization. While we spent a while talking about segmentation, we only touched on virtualization so I'll save that for the future. We also looked at an article about the overall safety of IE (Internet Explorer) in 2006 and a new security tool from Secunia.

SEGMENTATION

Segmentation is known as DEP (Data Execution Prevention) on today's PCs. It can protect a computer from buffer-overflow attacks which execute data. DEP separates data from executable memory so that most buffer-overflows are no longer effective.

There are two kinds of segmentation used, hardware and software based.

The hardware-based DEP uses the processor to keep track of which bytes in memory are executable and which are not. But to do this you need some of the newer hardware and software to enable it. By hardware I mean CPU, BIOS, and RAM.

The software-based DEP tries to emulate the hardware solution in the OS (Operating System) but it only goes so far. Since the OS is relied on to enforce the no-execution rule here, a flaw in the OS itself could cause problems. Also, the OS only protects a running app. and some-- but not all-- parts of the OS.

In Windows, XP-SP2 (Service Pack 2) or later is needed to enforce DEP rules.

A good illustration of DEP and its limits happened just a little over a year ago. It was called the GDI+ or WMF exploit which was a buffer overflow that affected all graphic images/pictures. You could create a picture with a specially crafted header so the header would be executed like a program. So you could get a viral infection by displaying a picture.

There was a big debate about whether SP2 would protect people or not. It turns out that SP2 with hardware-based DEP turned on was effective some of the time while software-based was never

effective. The hardware-based DEP only worked with newer computers.

Now that a year has passed, more computers would be protected today because of newer processors and BIOSes. Another case where SP2 has shown itself to be helpful but not flawless.

Each manufacture has their own "DEP" solution. Intel calls theirs "ED" (Execution Disabled) and in AMD it's called "NX" (No Execution). If you are planning on buying a computer for XP, be sure it has those capabilities.

ARTICLE ON IE

The article on Internet Explorer documents the days that IE had an open vulnerability that they hadn't closed yet. Windows was unpatched and vulnerable = 81 days in 2006. So IE was secure only 82% of the time.

While Microsoft does have a huge and complex program with an insanely large amounts of code, don't they have some kind of ethical responsibility to their customers? Maybe it is time we start exercising our rights and responsibilities and migrate to Linux, BSD, or others.

SOFTWARE INSPECTOR

The Software Inspector is a new tool from Secunia (secunia.com) that checks to make sure you have all the latest patches in Windows and certain applications. Most applications are Microsoft (Windows, Word, MultiMediaPlayer, etc.), but there are some exceptions like Acrobat reader, Flash, Sun's Java machine, and Zone Alarm. ■

Digital Photo SIG

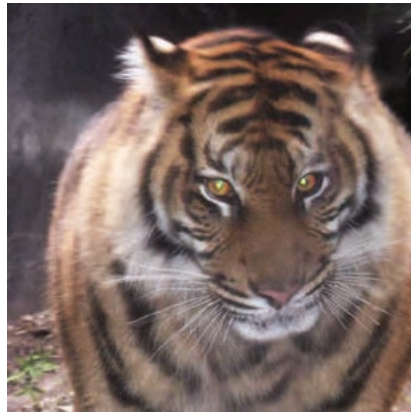
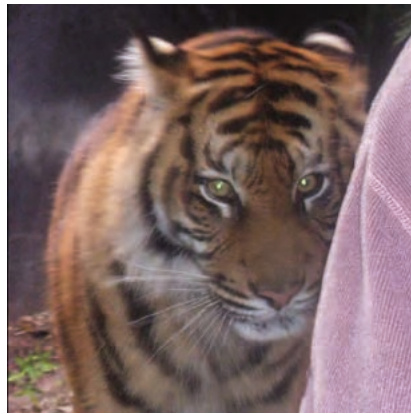


By Larry Klees, NOCCC

The January Meeting Was GRRREAT!

At the January meeting we investigated different methods of removing unwanted objects from our photos. Jerry Schmiedeke supplied this exceptional picture of a tiger. Unfortunately somebody's arm is in the way.

We had a good time removing the arm.



Since tigers are more or less symmetrical, the basic method of removing the arm was to copy part of the face and body from the tiger's right and flip them over to replace the obscured parts on the tiger's left.

The body was simple because the breast bone is nearly vertical and a simple mirror image is all that was required.

The Tiger's face was the same process except that the entire photograph was first rotated until the imaginary line down the middle of the tiger's forehead was vertical. Then the mirror image of the missing parts was created. Since the tiger is not looking directly at the camera lens, the perspective of the tiger's new face was altered slightly to foreshorten it. Also the lighting on that side of the face is just a little bit darker, requiring the mirror image to be darkened about 5%. Then the entire photo was rotated back to its original angle.

For the final touch a few of the whiskers were moved and a couple of the stripes were altered to destroy the dis-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24

PRODUCTS FOR REVIEW

FROM PAGE 18

tors who must efficiently solve technical problems and maximize the reliability and performance of a production environment. MSRP=#50.

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.

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.

Ajax for Web Application Developers – This book by Kris Hadlock from Sams Publishing shows how to create an Ajax-driven web application from an object-oriented perspective, and it includes several useful Ajax design patterns. MSRP=\$35.

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.

The Art of Software Security Assessment – This A-W book is one of the most sophisticated and useful books ever written for software security auditing. MSRP=\$55.

How to Break Web Software – This book is a definitive guide to security testing any Web-based software and is

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26

SIG List

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

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Computer Security	Science20310:30Dave Keaysrdksoft@sbcglobal.net	714-821-4792
Digital Photography	Irvine Hall—10:30Larry Kleeslklees@dslextreme.com	714-879-6405
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Linux for Advanced Users	Wilkinson11710:30Bob C. Raybobcray@pacbell.net	714-634-7520
PC Q&A	Irvine Hall—12:30Jim Sandersjsanders@ligasmicro.com	714-544-3589
Understanding OS's	Science11110:30Charlie Mooremooreca@adelphia.net	714-529-9071
Visual Programming I - IV	Science1119:00Anson Chapmanaeccrcss@hotmail.com	909-860-9515

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

Membership Benefits

FROM PAGE 3

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

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

Dreamweaver

from page 11

a few of technologies that Dreamweaver supports well, test it out. You’ll probably buy it.

Dreamweaver is an excellent product that will please most users. It won’t do the work for you, but it will work for you.

Adobe/Macromedia Dreamweaver 8 (www.adobe.com or www.dreamweaver.com), Windows 2000/XP (650 MB disk space) or Macintosh OS X 10.3 (300 MB disk space). Full version purchased from Adobe: US \$399, upgrade US \$199.

(Reviews Editor’s notes: The software can be purchased online from a number of vendors at a reduced price; e.g., <http://store.tradesoft.us/madr8.html>. For another perspective on Dreamweaver, check out www.sitepoint.com/article/dreamweaver-8-review.) ■

Digital Photo SIG

FROM PAGE 23

traction of a perfect mirror image. A couple of minor touchups to the background and not even Tony’s hair dresser would know for sure that this photo has been edited.

That preceding was the short version. Actually for the very best results, the nose, eyes, whiskers, cheeks, and body all ended up on separate layers. This extensive use of layers caused a lengthy discussion about layers and the relative merits of different programs.

Also extensive discussion ensued about blending areas with hard and soft edges.

We also used other techniques to remove several objects from different photos.

Note that starting in February the meeting time will be changed to 10:30 – 11:50.

Next month we will have Q&A sections interspersed with a report on what happened at the Epson Print Academy. Several NOCCC members will have stories to tell. I have attended two of these meetings in the past and learned many good things to improve my digital photos. I’m really looking forward to this one. I thought I was going to miss this one for lack of a ticket. Fortunately all it took was an e-mail and the people at Epson quickly and cheerfully supplied NOCCC with two complementary passes to this year’s print academy, and then added two more. Thank you Epson. Come hear about it at the February NOCCC meeting – You will like it. ■

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)
Computer Aid. Invest.
MacIntosh
Memory/Interrupts
Modem Hardware
Modem Software
Neural Networks
OS/2
PC, Beginners
PC Hardware
Quicken 6.0
Quickbooks 5.0
Quicken 2000,2001
Quicken Home &
Business 2000, 2001
Powerpoint
Realtime Control
Robotics
Tcl/Tk
Unix
Windows 9X
Windows 9X
Windows 2000
Word
Word
WordPerfect

The phone numbers and email addresses of the Help Line are published in the printed version of the Orange Bytes which is mailed to the 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

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.

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.

The Art of Software Security Testing – This Symantec Press/Addison-Wesley book delivers in-depth, timely, battle-tested techniques for anticipating and identifying software security problems before the “bad guys” do. MSRP=\$50.

Practical PHP and MySQL – Author Jono Bacon teaches you the core skills to build virtually any Web application usin free and open source applications in this book + CD. MSRP=\$40.

Additional books available for review:

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.

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 browsing, receiving RSS feeds, and much more. From O’Reilly, MSRP=\$25.

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 bt 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.

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.

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

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

Ted Littman, NOCCC Reviews Editor (714) 779-1936
reviews@noccc.org. ■

NOCCC Membership Fee Schedule

In an effort to increase club membership and provide additional resources, attract young people involved or having an interest in computing, to attract local computer-related businesses to place ads in the Orange Bytes with or without becoming NOCCC members, the schedule has been revised. And, we are offering members the opportunity to help our club financially by making donations that should be income-tax deductible since we are chartered as a non-profit 501(c) 3 organization. Membership level will be designated on the Membership Badge and Donators will be acknowledged in an issue of the Bytes. ■

	Fee (\$)	
Membership Level	1 Year	3 Years
Individual Member	\$35	90
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High School Student	15	
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Business Member + Ad (1/4 Page)	465	
Business Member + Ad (1/2 Page)	800	
Business Member + Ad (Full Page)	1,475	
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- **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.
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- **Product Review.** Write a review for this newsletter and keep the software, hardware, book or CD. Members reviews are published in this newsletter.
- **Consignment Table.** We have a thriving consignment table on our regular meeting day in which we assist members to sell or buy all kinds of computer items.
- **Volunteer Work.** You are given opportunities to help our activities with interesting assignments. *An all-volunteer organization*, you can join with other members in a variety of activities, write articles for our newsletter, conduct a seminar, run a SIG, man the help desk, show new members around, help the membership committee, and more.

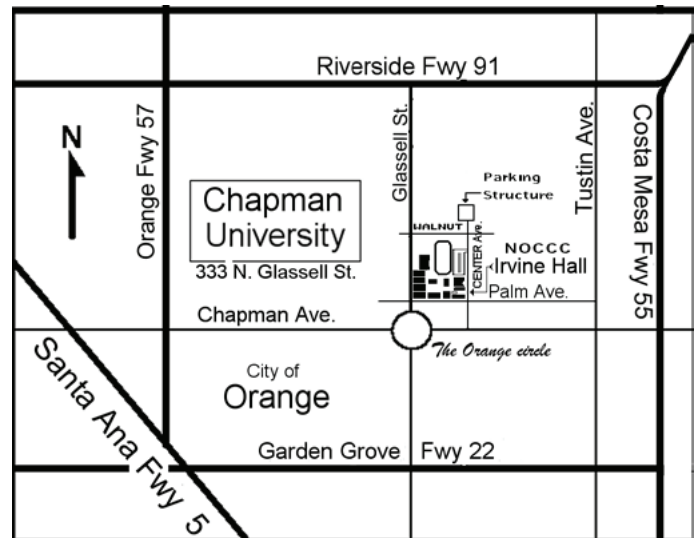
Parking Information — Chapman University's main parking

lot (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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