Camera Day This Meeting

Digital still and video camera have all but replaced film cameras.Samy's Camera will have three of their people at the March meeting to help you better use the camera you have or learn about the camera you want to purchase. Several of our Special Interest Groups are making this the topic of the day.

NOCCC Meetings - MARCH 4th

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*
    How to find photos on your computer.

Digital Photography .... *Irvine Hall*
    Q&A + How to improve your digital photos

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.
Portrait Photography .... *Science 109*
    Tips on portrait photography with your camera

12:00 Noon   *PIG SIG.*   *Argyros Hall Cafeteria*
    A lunch get-together and talk.

12:30 p.m:
Hardware Essentials .... *Science 109*
    Digital Camera Technology

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
Samy's Camera ....*Science 111*
    Special, bring your own camera help session

2:00 p.m: Main Meeting, Irvine Hall
    Camera Day with presentation by Samy's Camera

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

Meeting Dates
Mar 4, Apr 1, May 6

Table of Contents

Borrow a computer book from our library, see page 19

Celebrating 30 years of
"Friends Helping Friends"

ORANGE BYTES STAFF

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

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Jim Sanders .... editor@noccc.org
Associate Editor/Production - *Lays out and formats in* PageMaker *the articles received from the editor, prints, and submits camera-ready copy of the* Bytes *to the printer.*
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Open
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 Help Line • *Maintains the list of volunteers for software and hardware subjects for which they are willing to answer questions.*
Ted Littman • 714-779-1936................. reviews@noccc.org

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 Edgell

Our March meeting is a **Photo Day**. SIGs are encouraged to work the theme into each SIG.

Need some help with your digital camera? Bring it (along with the User Guide) to the meeting if you would like some help with using it, or finding out how to use some of the more esoteric features. Samy's Camera will send us some experts in digital photography and video.

Get your portrait taken. One of our members, John Hlavac, will be set up in a room to give tips on, and show how to take good portraits. You might also want to check out his setup and learn something about lighting.

I would like to thank Irene Chou of Ingram Micro for presenting a most interesting meeting in February. I thought that it was very interesting to listen to her criteria for selecting new gadgets that will make it in the marketplace. Her viewpoint on the subject is very different from mine. Of course, I just look at new gadgets as things that I would be interested in buying, not what would really have wide appeal and therefore be a good seller and of interest to a distributor or retailer. I bet that NOCCC members are more apt to be early adopters and therefore willing to buy the items that are considered too innovative and complicated for the general public.

Do you have some ideas about how NOCCC could be better, attract more members, have better SIGs, more interesting presentation for the Main Meeting, or any other creative ideas? Instead of griping about how the club is being run, stop and consider whether you can contribute some time to making next year the best yet for NOCCC. Elections are coming up. June is not that far away. One way to run for office is to let the nominating committee, chaired by Ted Littman, know that you are interested. The other way is to get nominated for the position you want and then run for office.

Even if you are not interested in running for an office or a place on the Board of Directors, we can always use volunteers at the meetings. In the morning, we need people to help setup the tables, be sure the SIG rooms are open, that the elevator is unlocked, that the restrooms are unlocked, and many other easy to do tasks. It is particularly important that we know who is able to help in the morning because there are not as many people around as in the afternoon.

We also need volunteers to help with the closing. This includes putting away the tables, packing up the video projector and other equipment used in Irvine Hall, making sure that all notices that may have been posted about our meeting are taken down and thrown away, trash picked up and disposed of, etc. Volunteers make the difference so that the few members who are currently helping do not get burned out.

Bring you camera and I'll see you at the March meeting. Remember to check the schedule to be sure that your have the new time and location for SIGs and the Main 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.

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

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

The monthly Board of Directors meeting was held on Monday, February 5, 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, Ted Littman, Doug Steiner, Richard Miller, & Mary Cornett.

Officers Reports:
Secretary's report – (Mary Cornett) - Minutes from the January 8, 2007 board meeting were accepted as printed.
Treasurer's report – (Doug Steiner) – Consignment $29.32, Raffle $29.00, Library $2.00 and Coffee/Other $22.75, Total $93.07.
Current Membership: (Bill Thornton, not present) No report.
Next Main Meeting – March 4, 2007, **Next Board Meeting** – March 5, 2007
Report on General Meeting – (Elise Edgell) Attendance of February, Main Meeting was 48 persons.

Committee Reports:
Publications – (Jim Sanders) Orange Bytes was delivered on time.
Programs – (Elise Edgell & Jim Sanders)
  March 4: "Samy's Camera" will provide speaker.
  April 1: Open

May 6: Open
Reviews - (Ted Littman) Software Programs and 3 books, Library books = $3.00. Several reviews are pending for future report. Ted donated a McAfee Program to the raffle.
Public Relations – Else O, on vacation, please check the, "Business Section" Orange County Register for her articles. The Register publishes articles as space allows.
University Liaison – (Elise Edgell) – Elise will respond to Dr. Doty's letter.
Internet Committee: Ted Littman said he will update, "How to do a review".
Raffle: Gerry Resch, not present at meeting.. Member raffle was 2 books, General Raffle prizes were: 1 keyboard, books and disks. Please see Jim Sanders photos in Bytes for prize winners.
SIG'S – (Herb Wong, Jr.) – Jim Sanders suggested allocating a room for computer problems.
Consignment Table – (Richard Miller) - Went well, took in $39.32. Cathy helped to promote sales.
Opening & Closing: Eric did opening. Dennis Martin, Jim Sanders and others helped with closing.
Jim will open the March, Main Meeting.

Old Business:
Digital Projector: AMENDMENT TO (Original) MO-

FEBRUARY 4TH MEETING PREVIEW

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY SIG - 10:30 am - Larry Klees - will devote most the Digital Photography SIG to answering questions on how to improve your digital photography images

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. The March meeting will be on how to find photos on your computer. I will go over the different file extensions that are used by digital images.

COMPUTER AIDED INVESTING SIG: 9:00 am we will look how make use of a screen's results, making the final selection, timing and buy decisions. What are the compatibility issues for various screening strategies and timing methods? See CAI SIG minutes on page 21 for more meeting's topics.

AMIBROKER SIG: 10:30 am we will look at some program to generate some popular signals and how to apply the signals for trading. See Amibroker SIG minutes on page 22 for more meeting's topics.

MAIN MEETING 2:00 pm, Irvine Hall - Bob Wilde of Samy's Camera, amongst other topics, will discuss the top picks today for the entry level, midrange, and pro-consumer cameras. What level of user is appropriate for each of those and the features and quality attributes behind those choices. See page 8 for mor on Camera Day.

THE CLUB RAFFLE items this month are: Norton Internet Security 2007 - virus, firewall, spyware, phishing - three user licence. Logitec keyboard, Adobe Acrobat 7.0 Classroom in a book, and more. Hedge your bet, wear your current membership badge and get a free ticket for the member only raffle.

THE MEMBER-ONLY PRIZES (requires wearing badge to get a free ticket) will be: Adobe Acrobat 7 in the Office - book. 64MB USB thumb drive & ??? ∎

Consignment Table

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

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

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

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

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

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

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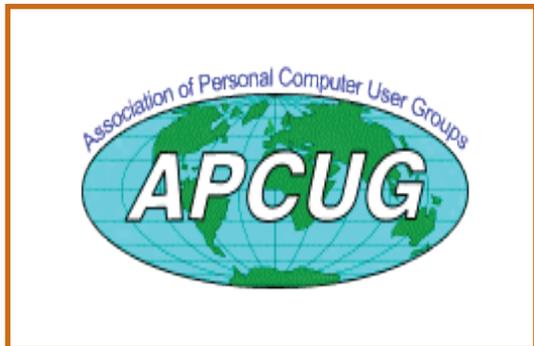
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Volunteers, Committees, and Projects

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University Liaison
Open

Ted's Stuff

By Ted Littman, NOCCC Reviews Editor and Board Member

This is the 3rd issue of 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 mailto: tedsstuff@adelphia.net for publication in this column, with appropriate attribution of course.

HP On-Line Classes

The current free classes include "Touch up digital photos with Adobe Photoshop Elements," "Beyond point-and-shoot photo techniques," "Creating digital scrapbooks," and "Disaster preparedness: creating a home inventory," and more - all available at: http://h30240.www3.hp.com/?mcID=email.

Converting Vinyl Records to CD

For an illustrated step-by-step guide, go to: http://snipurl.com/1adjo.

Tips to Protect Your Identity and Money

According to the folks at PayPal (and they ought to know), "Scams work because people fall for them. Protect yourself from identity theft – and from thieves stealing your money." Read all about it at: http://snipurl.com/1a2bw.

File Box eXtender

Steve Bass highlighted this nifty free utility for use with Windows XP. It adds several buttons to file-open and file-save dialog boxes (among other things) that show you the most recent folders accessed and make dialog boxes "work your way." You can download it at: http://snipurl.com/1adjv

Getting Started with Linux – Some Handy Tips

For those of you who have started fooling around with Linux, here's a helpful article by Bob Rankin: http://askbobrankin.com/linux_help.html.

Learn How Much Your House (or Your Neighbor's) is Worth

This is a nifty new free site that I discovered from one of the Bob Rankin e-mail newsletters. Go to: http://www.zillow.com/, enter the address and see a satellite close-up view of the houses on your street along with some specs and the values of the houses! If you want to sell your house, you can post it for free Wow!!

Microsoft's Office 2007 Backward Compatibility

According to a 1/24/07 newsletter from Steve Bass, Microsoft offers a free compatibility pack for Word, Excel, and PowerPoint that let's you open, edit, and save Office 2007 files in Office 2000, XP, and 2003. You can download it at: http://snipurl.com/136yq.

Microsoft Vista

If you have questions about the new Microsoft operating system, you may be able to find answers at the Windows Vista TechCenter (http://go.microsoft.com/?linkid=6108526) where you will find a number of step-by-step guides as well as webcasts and workplace scenarios. Windows Anytime Upgrade (http://go.microsoft.com/?linkid=6108527) enables users to easily determine which version of Windows Vista offers the features they want and then upgrade to another version in an easy-to-follow online transaction. Windows Vista Family Discounts (http://go.microsoft.com/?linkid=6108528) offers families with multiple home PCs a limited-time discount (January 30, 2007 through June 30, 2007) to upgrade to Windows Vista at a discounted price.

Upgrading to Vista

According to a recent issue of "Windows Secrets," you can buy the "upgrade" version of Vista and clean-install it to any hard drive with or without a preexisting version of Windows XP or 2000. This makes buying the more costly full version unnecessary and it appears to be legal! Read all about it at: http://windowssecrets.com/comp/070201#story1. Apparently, a similar "trick" works with the new Office 2007 suite (according to the 2/8/07 newsletter) wherein you can pay the upgrade price without having a previous version on your PC. In another issue of Windows Secrets (http://WindowsSecretscom/comp/070215), Brian Livingston describes how you can use Vista for 120 days (the "normal" period is 30 days) without activating the software using a built-in capability and supposedly without violating the Microsoft EULA

How to Find a "Lost" Web Page

If you inadvertently deleted of lost a web page that you had saved, you may be able to find it at the free Internet Archive: http://snipurl.com/1710h. You can use the **WayBackMachine** feature to find a web page that no longer exists, research changes to a page over time, and find links on older pages that are not on newer pages. If you use Mozilla Firefox as your web browser, there is an add-on called Cache View that puts an item in your Context menu to call the Internet Archive and other cached copies of web pages directly from the page you are currently viewing. This tip came from one of Dan Butler's e-mail newsletters.

Replacing Missing or Corrupted .dll files

If you've ever gotten a missing or bad file error message on booting your PC, this is something for you to check out. In a recent Windows Secret & LangaList newsletter (http://windowssecrets.com/comp/061214/), Fred Langa tells you what you can do to save the day. There are a few other tips there worth reading too.

On a related subject, "What to do when missing NTLDR and Hal.dll," Fred offers advice, Fred offers advice at http://windowssecrets.com/comp/061207. If you would like to peruse other issues of Fred's newsletter for useful advice and tips, go to: http://windowssecrets.com/.

Fixing the Master Boot Record

In a similar vein, if you tried starting your PC and got an error

NOCCC
June Elections

message like "MBR Corrupt" or "Error loading operating system," according to Bob Rankin here's how to fix a computer that won't boot due to a bad MBR: http://askbobrankin.com/fix_mbr.html. If you would like to view all of the issues of Bob's Tourbus newsletter, go to: http://www.internettourbus.com/arch/.

Unstick Your Frozen PC

In the March 2007 issue of PC Magazine (p. 128), there is a useful article on what to do if your PC freezes and the keyboard is non-responsive (other than turning the darn thing off).

Win a Prize from Microsoft

Attend any live or on-demand TechNet webcast about the 2007 Microsoft Office system through June 30, 2007, and you could win an Acer Ferrari laptop or other great prizes. Go to: http://go.microsoft.com/?linkid=6069416.

FireFox

If you use this popular browser, you may want to check out the free extensions available to improve your browsing experience: http://askbobrankin.com/firefox_extensions.html and https://addons.mozilla.org/firefox/recommended/.

The Netcraft Anti-phishing Toolbar

This free Internet Explorer add-on tool will help keep your system safe. Download it at: http://toolbar.netcraft.com/. Microsoft also posted some tips to protect your PC from spam at: http://snipurl.com/1adj7.

Thwarting the 3 biggest Internet Threats of 2007

In the March 2007 issue of PC Magazine (p. 120), you can read about the latest in protecting your PC from the bad guys.

The Perfect Browser

In another March 2007 PC Mag article (p. 87), there are some useful recommendations on add-ons for the latest versions of Internet Explorer and Firefox to improve your Internet browsing experience.

Clip Art

Microsoft has a large free collection of images and sounds that you can download at: http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/clipart/default.aspx.

Ziff Davis Web Buyers Guide

At this web site, http://snipurl.com/1adix, you can find a huge collection of white papers and buying recommendations for over 500 categories from anti-spam to wireless.

That's it for now. Happy computing to you all and I hope that you will check my column in next month's issue of the Bytes. ■

Candidates for the 2007-2008 NOCCC Officers/Board of Directors Members

Your nominating committee has put together the following list of candidates so far. There are a number of key positions for which there are no nominees or only single candidates. I urge you to contact me if you are interested in **serving your computer club** as an officer or if you can recommend someone**.** Elections are only a few months off and we will have a serious problem if we can't put together a full list of candidates. Notably, the club needs someone to take the lead in publishing the Orange Bytes.

President
Herb Wong – current Vice President
Vice President
Jim Sanders – current Bytes Editor & Publications Chairman
Secretary
Open
Treasurer
Open

Directors (8)

Dave Keays – current Director
Ted Littman – current Director
Richard Miller – current Director
Joe Mizer – SIG Leader
Else Olovsson – current Director
Gerry Resch – current Director
Bill Thornton – current Director
Open

Past President
Elise Edgell – current President

Editor
Open

Webmaster
Herb Wong – current Webmaster

Ted Littman, Nominating Committee Chairman
(714) 779-1936
tedlit@adelphia.net ■

NOCCC Camera Day

By Jim Sanders, Editor

It has been a while since we had a camera day. With all the new models of cameras and the great buys for the holiday season, I am sure that more than a couple of you are the proud owners of new cameras. Some of those cameras no doubt came with good manuals and then there are a few that undoubtedly came with less than great manuals. Regardless of which category your camera documentation falls into, it is probably a safe bet that there are a number of features that your new camera, and maybe even your old one, has that are difficult to understand. The purpose of camera day is to help all of those people who are having a problem with their camera, be it hardware, software, or photographic technique.

To address all of those different areas, I went to Samy's Camera, 3309 S. Bristol St. in Santa Ana and talked with store manager Jay Altman. He thought it would be a good idea to have a special day at our club meeting devoted to helping people get more out of their digital cameras. He offered to have one of his people speak at the Main Meeting and that grew into putting on the special help session with two more of his people. We have put together a package of special events that we think you will find useful. For the first of these special events, John Hlavac is going to lead a one time SIG on portrait photography in Science room 109 at 10:30 AM. He is going to bring in his portrait equipment, backdrops, photo flood lighting, tripod and a strobe if he can get it working. You will be able to take your own camera to this SIG and practice some of the tips and tricks of taking good portrait photographs.

At the same time, in Irvine Hall, Larry Klees will devote most the Digital Photography SIG to answering questions on how to improve your digital photography images.

The Main Meeting presenter will be Mr. Bob Wilde. He has been in the photographic industry for 28 years. Starting with Yashica/Contex, he was with them for 24 years, Sinar Bron Imaging for three years and Samy's Camera for the past year and a half. With Yashica/Contex he was in military sales, marketing, territory sales, district manager and finely regional sales and operations manager. The products were both consumer and professional 35mm and medium format cameras.

Sinar Bron Imaging distributed Sinar professional digital backs and view cameras, Braun color lighting and Foba studio equipment. He handled southern California and Las Vegas for them

With Samy's Camera, he handles all product lines for commercial photographers and corporate photographers.

Accompanying Bob will be Mr. Robert Morrissey, a video specialist, and Mr. Art Ramirez, a camera/software specialist. These three representatives of Samy's camera will be in science room 111 starting at 12:30 PM. This special one day event will be for hands on, one on one help with your camera problems. The concept is that you can bring in your video or still camera along with it's manual, any and all accessories that might be pertinent to your problem, and the software CD just in case. As I am sure that some of you have run into the fact that some digital cameras have some unusual operating sequences of buttons that must be pushed or levers that must be turned and without the documentation even a guru will be lost.

In addition to the above activities, Herb Wong we'll be covering digital camera technologies in his 12:30 PM Hardware Essentials SIG.

In the 12:30 PM PC Q&A SIG, I will be concentrating on a number of software programs that are useful in dealing with your digital images on the computer such as Irfanview, Photo Story 3, and Paint Shop Pro.

Bob Wilde will start his Main Meeting presentation with a short review on how Digital photography has evolved from the early low pixel count cameras to today's 8MB+ pixel cameras and the features that we may see in the near future. He will then discuss the top picks today for the entry level, midrange, and pro-consumer cameras. What level of user is appropriate for each of those and the features and quality attributes behind those choices. Depending on timing, additional subjects may be covered. At the conclusion of the presentation, the floor will be open to questions and answers, so be sure to bring yours. ∎

Wireless -"N"ot

By Jim Sanders, NOCCC

Have you paid good money for a wireless router that was advertised as a Wireless N router when in fact the fine print on the box says "Draft-n," "Pre-n," or something of that nature?

For a couple of years now the WiFi Alliance has tacitly OK'd the marketing of wireless products that are based on the IEEE 802.11n draft specification. So-called "pre-standard" products are usually designed around the draft specifications set down in the letter and sponsor ballots, however, and Belkin, D-Link, Linksys, and Netgear have all announced products marketed as pre-802.11n-compliant, at least with the draft specification. None can be officially marketed as compatible, however, before the standard is finally approved.

The following is an excerpt from an article on http://www.extremetech.com/article2/0,1558,1957077,00.asp.

Officials at the Wi-Fi Alliance, an industry organization which officially certifies products as interoperable through an intensive testing process, took a hands-off approach. As long as vendors don't market the products as IEEE 802.11n certified, the Wi-Fi Alliance won't take action, said Frank Hanzlik, managing director of the Wi-Fi Alliance. Labeling a product as compliant with or adhering to the 802.11n draft specification is "discouraged, but within the bounds of something they can do," he said.

"We want people to make informed decisions, and to

Countdown to the digital deadline

By Jim Sanders, NOCCC

Television as most of us know it has barely two years of life left in it. Congress has set a deadline of February 17, 2009 for analog broadcasts to end. That means that the faithful television that you have had, for I don't know how many years, will cease functioning on that date. Well, cease functioning may be too strong of a discription, but there will no longer be an over the air broadcast of the analog type of signal that it knows how to interpret.

Starting on that date, all of the over the air television broadcasting stations have been mandated to transmit the digital television format signal only. Old faithful, or maybe not so old, can still be used as long as there is some device that can feed it the analog signal that it knows how to deal with. This could be your VCR or DVD player for instance. Or, it could be one of the set top boxes that millions of people are going to have to purchase if they wish to continue using their analog television to receive over the air television broadcasts. The purpose of the set top box is to tune in the digital television frequency and convert it to the NTSB analog signal that your television knows how to deal with.

The set top boxes contain an ATSC tuner. This stands for Advanced Television Systems Committee. They are an international organization setting the standards for digital television. In time, they will replace the NTSC, which is an American organization overseeing analog TV transmissions. There is considerable talk about Congress passing legistration to subsidize or provide free of charge set top boxes to low income families. At this time there is no requirement that the recipients be United States citizens.

When you purchase a digital television, ATSC is a term that will be listed on the specifications showing that the television has a built-in digital tuner. There are eighteen formats in the DTV spectrum, 12 SDTV formats and 6 HDTV formats.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is the regulating organization in the United States that controls conversion from analog to digital. The Federal Communications Commission has set deadlines that mandate all manufacturers include digital tuners in their televisions. These are the dates that have been mandated:

July 1, 2005: all TVs with screen sizes over 36 in. must include built-in ATSC tuner.

July 1, 2006: 100% of 25 to 35in. TVs must include ATSC DTV tuner.

July 1, 2007: 100% of 13 to 24in. TVs must include ATSC DTV tuner.

July 1, 2007 100% of all interface device's must have ATSC DTV tuner. That includes equipment such as VHS VCRs, DVD player/recorders, and DVRs.

These deadlines only apply to new televisions and do not include the huge inventory of existing units. That is why you may see a number of television's larger than 36in. still being sold without built-in digital tuners.

Definition of television, a television is a viewing device that includes a tuner. A device without a tuner is called a monitor. There is a loophole in the FCC regulations that allow Manufacturers to build TVs without any tuner which would technically make it a monitor.

Most cable subscribers and all satellite subscribers use their service provider's set top box to receive and decode the digital signals instead of using the television's built-in ATSC tuner. One exception to that rule is a small credit card type of chip that takes the place of the set top box and is called a CableCARD.

Most cable and satellite providers charge in the neighborhood of $9.95 a month to receive HD channels. Over the air High Definition channels are "free" in the same sense that current analog channels are free, that is you pay the price of watching the commercials but don't actually have to shell out money. So if you spend the extra bucks up front to buy an HD television that includes the ATSC tuner, you are not forced to pay that additional monthly charge. By purchasing an antenna from an electronics store for in the neighborhood of $25.00 to $100.00, a person that owns a set with a built-in ATSC tuner can enjoy the over the air broadcasts for free.

When the analog signals are turned off and digital becomes the standard, cable and satellite providers will probably provide the local networks for free if they don't do so already. But you will still have to buy or lease the cable box which right now costs in the neighborhood of $199.00. In addition to that you'll still have to purchase the programming from the provider.

So if you are a person that currently relies on getting all of your television through a rooftop antenna, in less than two years you will be faced with the choice of spending money for some new equipment or no longer being able to watch television.

One method of dealing with the problem would be to purchase one of the new DVD VCR combos that include the ATSC tuner. A number of VCR manufacturers, including Panasonic, have announced that when the new regulations go into effect, they will simply stop manufacturing that class of equipment. JVC has announced a new DVD/VCR/ATSC tuner model that will be available in May, the DRMV99 at $329.95. If you already own a good VCR and a good DVD player it might make more sense to go ahead and purchase just the ATSC set top tuner.

In addition to dealing with all of the high definition signal acquisition problems, a whole lot of people are already trying to deal with the somewhat confusing array of HDTV offerings. The terminology which is frequently observed in the papers can be very confusing. The phrase "HD ready" is usually an indicator that the unit is a monitor that does not include a tuner. A lot of advertisements conveniently do not include what version of high definition a particular offering is. It is simply referred to as HD without saying whether it is 720i, 720p, 1080i or 1080p. The actual pixel resolution is often omitted as well. The 720i or p sets need to have a resolution of 1280 pixels by

Photoshop Workflow Setups

Review by John Donan, NOCCC

I knew I had seen that girl before when I found her on the frontispiece facing Chapter 1. There are also eleven other excellent full page images, some used in examples, five are facing the other chapters. I had seen the frontispiece on the Creativepro Website, under "Photoshop How-To: Tame the Beast," (http://www.creativepro.com/story/howto/24366.html) which turns out to be Chapter 1 of the book which I also found at http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/photoworkflow/. I found these in my early research for the book. When I start a review, I browse for a cursory knowledge of a book's content then I research the author. I also find comments of other reviewers in case there is something I might overlook. Eddie Tapp, this author, is an award-winning photographer, lecturer, consultant, and author on digital imaging issues with over 20 years of experience in computer technology with a very impressive resume. From what Scott Kelby states on the cover, "If Eddie's teaching a session, I want to be there!" it implies that teaching is one of his strong points.

A statement preceding Chapter 1 says, "Adobe Photoshop has so many different work areas and tools that it can become confusing or even intimidating for digital photographers to use in a production environment. The fact is, there are only three particular zones or areas that you really need to become familiar with: tools, menus, and palettes." Upon examining my version of PS CS2, I find 58 tools and 198 menu items which include the choices for the 19 palettes. Sixty of the menu items have further choices, as high as 20 or more in fly out menus as do all the palettes as well. Each of the tools has settings, relative to its function, which are made in its option bar. To place an order of magnitude on all this I assumed the number of secondary choices to be ten, it can easily be justified that there are over one thousand choices possible. You can add to this, keyboard shortcuts. There are 521 of them, I have counted. What can be done in Photoshop seems unlimited when multiple processes are involved. I created an effect using an adjustment and a filter; when I reversed their order the result was entirely different. Combine more than two such executions and the possible combinations and permutations grow tremendously. This is why the author says, "What is important is learning this information one step at a time, finding the option or settings that are important to your workflow and then building from there." This book intends to make this humongous set of choices manageable.
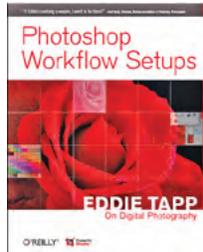
In 207 pages, the material covered had to be limited. Instead of picking apart a mass of nitty details the book provides guidance in overall effective usage. The book starts with efficient organization of the workspace. Any one using Photoshop knows how quickly palettes hog the visible area (Tools and Options are palettes by the way). I cleaned up my work space by his example most of which is ignored in teachings elsewhere. This first chapter covered using a second window (see figure 1 which is typical of the illustrations of the book) and also tiling images, neither of which I had done previously nor had I ever considered the 9 settings possible for the status bar, via its black triangle. The rest of the first chapter concerns the Bridge.
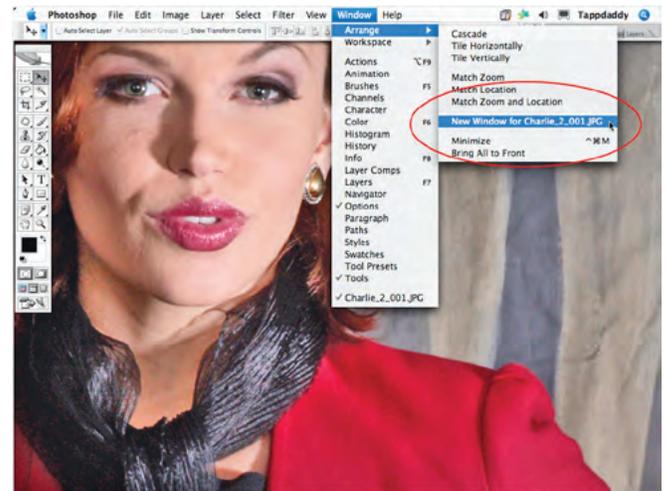
Figure 1, Photoshop opens a second window of your active image when you select Window > Arrange > New Window. It's perfect when you want to do detail work and see the entire image at the same time.

About 20% of the book concerns the Bridge, Photoshop's file browser. I had read where another Photoshop author refuses to use the Bridge because he feels it is yet too early in its state of development. This appears to be the case with my software for it will not open either Photoshop or JPEG images in Photoshop a feature of its main usefulness. To correct this will be expensive. Adobe technical support has told me that they require an advance payment of $39 to address either of these problems ($78). For those who are able to properly use the Bridge, or willing to pay to make it work, it is covered in

Chapter 5 of the book.

All palettes are covered and should one want to get a quick handle on a palette you don't use, such as Layer Comps, the information is there. Although the information for this palette is held to one page, it is adequate enough for me to have now mastered its use. The key palettes are stated to be these: Layers, Channels, Actions, History, Histogram, Color, Styles, Paths and the Info window. To unclutter his workspace, Tapp places his most active palettes in the Docking Well, cycling them as he needs them. By saving this configuration, it is always available as a starting workspace at some future time. One of his notes in this part of the book introduced me to the Scrubby Slider. It has been in existence since CS. When the mouse cursor is in the vicinity of a slider label, it changes allowing the slider value to be changed without having to grab the slider exactly.

Preferences allow you to tailor your work to your needs. Of course some are more important than others. Chapter three considers those the author has found to be most important. As with other Adobe programs, the Preferences dialog box can be accessed via Ctrl-K. Nine dialogs are selectable. A point came up regarding image interpolation and the General Preferences dialog which is not widely known. For Image Interpolation: Bicubic Smoother is designed for up-sampling images, while the Bicubic Sharper is designed for down sampling images. Compared to some of my 600 page books, there is twice as much information on preferences in this little guy.

The chapter "Customizing Keyboard Shortcuts and Menus" is brief (12 pages) but handy, should one want to specialize either of these for personal use. An adjustment, which I regularly use, is Shadow/Highlight. It is also frequently used by the author. He has assigned for it the shortcut Shift+Ctrl+M which I have now also done, thanks to this chapter. Should I lapse into my old ways and traverse Edit>Adjustments>Shadow/Highlight the selection is handily highlighted in red (my choice.)

In the preface for the last chapter (Tapping into the Tools), the author states: "What is your favorite tool in Photoshop? Most people will say without reservation, the Clone Stamp tool. Yes, it's a very powerful tool indeed, but the Clone Stamp tool can also be the most dangerous if it's not used properly." What he is referring to is repetitive patterns which aren't seen until after the image is printed. In slightly less than a page the use of this tool is completely covered. In fact this concise coverage brought home to me two features I had overlooked using.

I will continue using this book as a handy reference as can others whose PS skills may vary anywhere from beginner on. The book details are:

Title: Photoshop Workflow Setups
Subtitle: Eddie Tapp on Digital Photography
First Edition: August 2006
ISBN: 0-596-10168-6
Pages: 207
MSRP=$30.

The book is available from O'Reilly at a discount of 35% to user group members. (See our Membership Benefits column.) ∎

Real Digital Forensics

Review by Jim DuWaldt, NOCCC

About the authors: Keith L. Jones leads the computer forensics and electronic evidence discovery practices at Red Cliff Consulting. Richard Bejtlich is the founder of TaoSecurity, a network security monitoring consultancy. Curtis W. Rose provides support to criminal investigations and civil litigation as an executive vice president at Red Cliff Consulting.
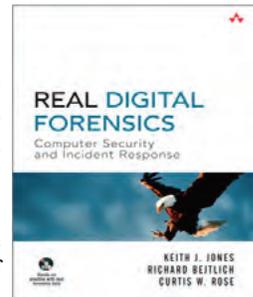
This book (with included DVD) intends to teach Computer Forensics for both Windows and Linux systems, that is, gathering evidence from infected machines and the network they operate in so that the intended victim can effectively react to a successful penetration.

Or, to quote the book: "...give new forensic investigators more than words to learn new skills." "We use the same tools attackers use... the same methods rouge employees make... [collect] the same media we typically collect...this book takes a practical, hands-on approach to solving problems...[with] techniques you can employ immediately."

The clear implication is that the book is aimed at the inexperienced practitioner. As usual, TCP/IP knowledge is a good idea. There is one staring oddity: to use one of the tools you need to alter your kernel! From pg 208: "Please download and install the NASA-enhanced kernel..." This takes more than just a beginner's skill!

The context for the procedures is provided by five scenarios which are a mix of internal and external threats as seen from the point of view of admins or law enforcement. As the techniques are presented, it is explained how they might be applied to these scenarios, as opposed to stepping through the scenarios and describing the methods.

Richard Bejtlich's books usually focus on evidence gathered by network monitoring. Instead, Part I ("Live Incidence Response") begins with host-focused procedures for both Windows and Linux (one chapter for each). Live Response techniques invoke a series of programs on the suspect machine in order to gather "volatile data," that is, system state that will not survive a reboot or shutdown. This explanation is entirely suitable for creating your own Live Response software and procedures.

Networks return to the center of attention in Part II ("Network-Based Forensics"). There is a brief but well-done review of the types of data (Full Context, Session, Statistical, and Alert Data) that should be collected and the software to collect them (Tcpdump, Snort, and many others) as well as the five steps of intrusion (recon, exploitation, reinforcement, consolidation, and "pillage"). A Cop/Drug Ring analogy is employed to describe these four data types which, given the popularity of CSI, might be good for rank beginners but will be less useful

Product Reviews

DIGITAL FORENSICS

to anyone with more experienced. This section also has separate chapters on analysis of the information for Windows and *NIX machines.

Part III ("Acquiring a Forensic Duplication") presents open and closed tools for the forensic cloning of a suspect disk, regardless of the operating system. Its chapter on legal paperwork is very efficient but it would be great if the authors had photos or illustrations of what they use, if only as an example. The material on disk duplication, on the other hand, had lots of excellent photos and screen shots for both the commercial (EnCase and FTK) and open source products (DD, DD_resume, DCFLDD and NED).

Part IV (Forensic Analysis Techniques) shows you what to do with your new disk image. Methods for disk analysis begin with looking for and recovering deleted files, what to do when that is not possible, discerning strings of interest from NBE (Network-Based Evidence) and Live Response findings (like the name of an executable) and searching the disk for them.

This is followed by techniques for reconstructing emails (even Outlook and Outlook Express proprietary formats can be analyzed by open source tools), pages visited while web browsing including reconstructing emails sent with web clients, and the examination of the Windows Registry (good for finding recently-accessed documents or evidence of programs subsequently deleted).

(Currently only commercial applications are available for analyzing the Registry which is odd, considering that scripting languages, like Python for example, have Registry access libraries.)

Multiple chapters focus on examining unknown files to determine their use, with an emphasis on Microsoft-formatted documents and on the examination of unknown Windows and *NIX executables. This includes static analysis with tools like strings.exe and hexWorkshop and disassemblers like IDA to discover system calls or modify a binary file in order to, for example, bypass password security. Missing are instructions on using a product like VMware to set up a virtual machine environment for protecting the rest of the system from the foreign executable; they only mention that you *should* use something like VMware when in fact it is vitally important to do so or you could wind up with yet another infected computer!

Part V ("Creating a Complete Forensic Toolkit") succinctly describes creating CDs for a Live Response toolkit. (But, why not do this in the first part of the book?) It also describes the use of a Knoppix disk which allows you to examine a suspect system without having to boot it from its (possibly) contaminated disk or be concerned about your 'clean' OS being cleverly contaminated by a suspect hard drive.

Part VI ("Mobile Device Forensics") describes gleaning and examining data from PDAs like Palms and iPaqs (with additional information about how they manage memory and how to access internal debugging consoles), USB and CF drives.

Forensic examination of USB/CF devices using a loopback is well illustrated and an example of recovering a deleted file is shown. The chapters also illustrate that, while some PDAs have good forensic tools available (like later Palms and iPaqs), the earlier ones do not: sifting through evidence on a Palm III, for example, is limited to hex and string searches.

Part VII ("Online-Based Forensics") presents methods for determining where an email originated from via header examination, and how determined users could cover their tracks. Finally, they leverage searching for DNS records into a lesson on manipulating the entire VeriSign TLD (Top Level Domain) file in a large (100GB+) Postgres database, allowing them to find all DNS names owned by, in their example, the company Foundstone.

My only complaints about the book are the sudden request to change the kernel and a failure to put front and center the necessity of using a virtual machine environment before executing potentially hazardous code. Otherwise it was a typical Bejtlich security book (no offense to the other authors), containing the basis for immediately creating Standard Operating Procedures, in particular for Live Response, proper forensic documentation, and creating forensic-compliant duplicate drives. It definitely has a place on my security bookshelf, alongside The Tao of Network Security and Extrusion Detection.

The book is published by Addison-Wesley (http://www.awprofessional.com/bookstore/product.asp?isbn=0321240693&rl=1), ISBN 0-321-24069-3, and lists for $55. User group members can get a 30% discount (see our Membership Benefits column); it sells for $34.64 at Amazon.com (new). ∎

The eBay Price Guide
or
What Sells for What (in Every Category!)

Review by Catherine Shimozono, NOCCC

The eBay Price Guide by Julia Wilkinson is a VERY heavy and large book. But, what it contains is pure platinum (way better than gold). The eBay Price guide is divided into the same categories as eBay and lists many items in each category.

While impossible to list in just one book, all the products people sell on eBay, this listing gives you a fairly good idea of what your item is worth. Armed with this information, you can sell without pain. That is really all this book does.

Why then, you might ask, do I say that what it contains is worth platinum? Here's why. This book contains a disk called HammerTap - Power to Profit. This is auction research as I have never seen before. The disk is actually a demo but is the most powerful and useful program I have seen. Let's say you want to auction a lamp. HammerTap will tell (at the click of a
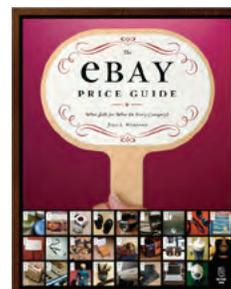
button)how many lamps are presently being sold on eBay, the average price, and how many bids it has had. But, it tells so much more. It tells which day of the week each lamp auction closed, which was the best closing day, and for how much it sold.

This disk also has selling lessons to teach you to be a power seller. It is designed so simply, even a rank novice could do it, but powerful enough to make even the best power sellers sit up and take notice. You get your choice of getting lessons via e-mail twice a week or all at once. I was absolutely amazed at what I learned just from the first couple of lessons!

The HammerTap eBay Analytics course gives you the first six of ten lessons on the demo CD. You can purchase it from http://www.hammerTap.com for $17.95 for the first six months (the first 10 days are free) through the CD. This equals a 20% discount. You can buy the book (with the CD from Amazon.com for only $19.77, but it is also available from the publisher, O'Reilly (http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/1593270550/)at a

35% discount off the $30 list price to user group members. (See our Membership Benefits column.) ∎

INDESIGN Production Cookbook

Review by Jim Sanders, NOCCC

As a title, Indesign Production Cookbook can invoke several different mental images. One would be the massive cookbook with instructions on how to make various dishes with page after page of printed instructions that has existed for ages. Another is the more modern picture cookbook that is full of wonderful colorful pictures of mouth watering dishes that you can thumb through and drool over until you see something that you have to try. This book has borrowed a page from the second concept. It is full of page after page of color photographs showing the various things that InDesign can do and that you may have wanted to try in your own efforts. Along with those photos, it has multiple screen shots of the controls within Indesign for those various features, and, of course, includes text to explain the functions that it is referencing. By simply thumbing through the book and looking at the photos on the pages, I ran across many procedures that I wasn't sure how to do or didn't even realize that the program could do.

This book is not a tutorial for the beginner, nor is it a detailed reference for the guru, but it sure covers a lot of ground that those of you who are in between, should find useful. In deference to standard practice and usefulness, the book does include a table of contents, and an index. The table of contents is divided into eight major sections, nine if you count the InDe-sign for QuarkXpress users. Those sections are, in order, Text, Pictures, Drawing, Color, Transparency, Pages and documents, Interactivity, and Output. Each of those sections has several subsections. Text, for instance, has twenty subsections spread over almost 50 pages.

I produce the 28 plus page Orange Bytes monthly newsletter for the North Orange County Computer Club, www.noccc.org. Desktop publishing of the club newsletter was supposed to be something that I would do in my spare time. Not something that left me with no spare time, and started infringing on the time needed to make a living. As often happens when a user is pressed for time and dealing with a complex computer program such as Indesign, it is difficult to find the time to study and learn how to work smarter instead of harder. When it came to navigation within the Indesign program, I was using a number of the methods that are intrinsic to windows, and a few of the shortcuts that I had picked up from help, stumbled across, or found on Google. The Hand tool keyboard shortcut tip on page 137 was very useful unto it's self. Plus, it caused me to try and find the same info in the Adobe manual, which referred me to F1 help, where I eventually found the Alt+spacebar shortcut that temporarily activates the Hand tool anytime.

Indesign is capable of an amazing number of intricate and impressive visual manipulations of both text and images. Adobe has borrowed a number of these functions from Photoshop, which is certainly another steep learning curve program. Just as some of the photos in the food cookbooks can put the saliva glands in high gear, some of the nifty effects portrayed in this book can cause your creative side to develop a mighty itch to give them a try, and I may do so yet. Image files of the examples shown in the book can be downloaded from http:.//examples.oreilly.com.indesigncook so you can try the examples on your own computer. On a more practical level, the section on Pages and documents, and in particular, the two pages on navigation alone, are worth the price of this book to me. I have no idea how many hours of my time the tips, tricks, and suggestions on those two pages have saved me, but it has been a lot.

I think this is a book worth owning if you are at all serious, whether from desire or necessity, about using InDesign. The book is published by O'Reilly, www.oreilly.com, with a list price of $29.95. 192 pages, large 10"x9" format, ISBN 0-596-10048-5. O'Reilly offers a nice discount to club members, see the benefits column. ∎
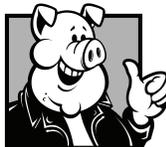
Pig SIG Open To ALL

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! ∎

February Meeting Photos

Converged Electronics

Irene Chow
Sr. Category Manager
CE & Digital Signage

February 4, 2007

Photography by Jim Sanders

Product Reviews
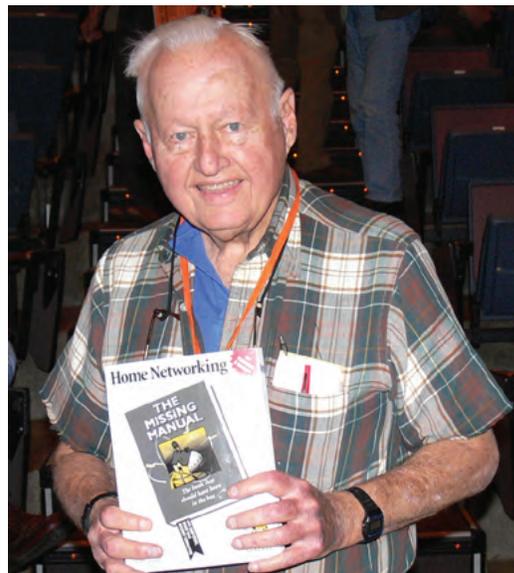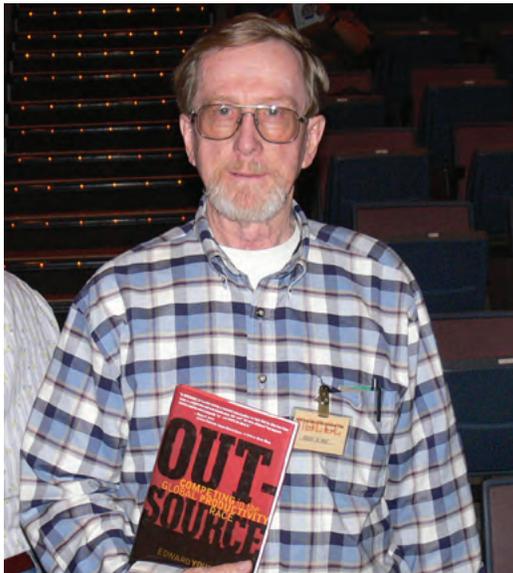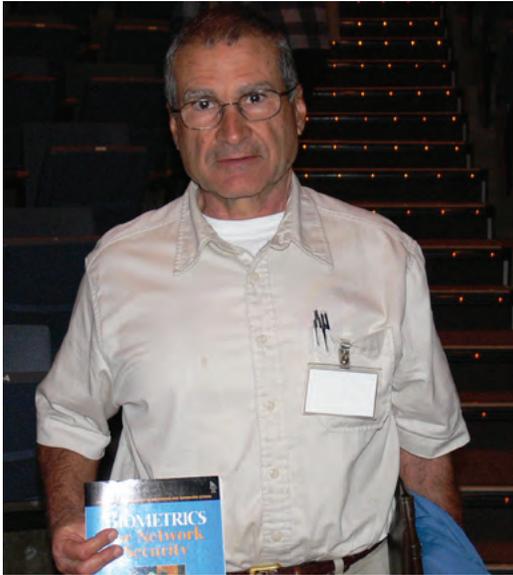
know what questions to ask," Hanzlik said, noting that the association's own research has shown that 54 percent of U.S. consumers look for an official Wi-Fi certification mark before purchasing a networking product. "Question number one is, how important is support for official standards? Is it something that you'd prefer to buy now, or wait until a certification program is in place?

"Question number two: how important is interoperability? For you may be buying products from one manufacturer that may not work with products from another manufacturer," Hanzlik noted.

I have been irritated by these ads for quite a while. I believe that they are, at the least, misleading. Some people that I have talked to think of them as a form of "bait and switch." When I explained what was really going on to a person that considered himself to be an average computer user, he got rather angry and exclaimed that as far as he was concerned, that represents fraudulent advertising.

So while going through the 01-14-2007 Sunday ad inserts in the OC Register I looked to see who was running ads for "Wireless N" products. Staples, Office Depot, Office Max, Circuit City all had them. Fry's ran an ad that had a Draft-n logo in the ad that was so smudged you couldn't read it. I was surprised and pleased to find that Best Buy was clearly labeling the same Linksys product as "Draft-n."

I decided that I would email Staples and ask what their position on this practice was. I went searching on their web site for contact information and found this email address on the Staples Code of Ethics web page, ethics@staples.com. It reads like it is primarily for employees, but seemed like an appropriate starting point for my question.

I was somewhat surprised when the email bounced with an error message that said in part:

    -- The following addresses had permanent fatal errors ---
    ethics@staples.com

    ----- Transcript of session follows -----
    ... while talking to frasmtp3.staples.com
    >>> RCPT To:ethics@staples.com
    <<< 550 Mailbox unavailable or access denied - ethics@staples.com

I then mailed, with an envelope and a stamp, a copy of the email addressed to Mr. Ron Sargent, the CEO of Staples. I received a prompt reply via email from a customer relations person that included a photocopy of my letter. The comment was that ethics@staples.com no longer works and has been replaced with www.staplesethicslink.com. That may be true, but I was unable to find it on the Staples web site. I did eventually locate the official Staples Code of Ethics PDF and that still contains the bad address. The email went on to say that my enquiry was being forwarded. Shortly after that, I received a phone call from the same customer relations person who said

the call was to assure me the matter was being looked into.
The following is the email that I sent to Staples:
"What is Staples ethical and/or legal position relative to the following item in your January 14, 2007 weekly circular?

The item of interest is on page 9:
"Save $60 after instant savings with a combined purchase of: Linksys® Wireless-N router and Easy Mobile Tech installation service. Valid Jan 14 – 20. Add to Shopping List. See store for details. Coupon code 93388."
On that same page you have this item: "Linksys® Wireless-G router Save $20, $49.98, Reg. $69.98, Valid Jan 14 – 20, Add to Shopping List Buy Online, #509558"
My problem with your ad is as follows:
Item two really is a Wireless-G router that meets the specifications of the officially released definition of Wireless-G, that is IEEE 802.11g.
Item one can not be a Wireless-N router because no officially released final specification for Wireless-N exists. There is a 'Draft-802.11n ' release specification of Wireless-N and that is all. All current 'n' products are based on IEEE Task Group N, draft release version 1.0 of the 'n' specification.
An honest Staples disclaimer would read something like: "All of our current WiFi Pre-'n' or Draft-'n' products are based on an interpretation of the IEEE Task Group N, draft release version 1.0 of the 'n' specification. Our Linksys Wireless-N products will work with each other and provide performance similar to what will be in the final release. Staples offers no guarantee that our Linksys Wireless-N products will work with other vendors Pre-'n' products. Staples offers no guarantee that our current Pre-'n' products will work with Linksys Wireless-N future products that fully comply with IEEE Task Group N, final release of the 802.11n specification."
As long as Staples allows this inaccurate advertising to go on, a lot of people are likely to get burned.
One consumer solution that I have heard circulating amongst computer club members may interest the Staples legal department. That solution is to save the ad and receipt for all current purchases that claim to be 'Wireless-N.' When the real 'Wireless-N' products are released, if they do not work correctly with the Pre-'n' products purchased from Staples, take them back for exchange with real 802.11n equivalent products. If Staples doesn't offer an exchange program of that nature, ask a local Small Claims Court judge if he thinks they should.
I am making this inquiry as a private individual and consumer and not in any official NOCCC capacity. However, it is of concern to a number of club members. I would like to be able to write an editorial on the subject in the near future that includes the official Staples Corporate position on this issue.
I look forward to your timely reply.
Sincerely,
Jim Sanders
Editor, Orange Bytes Newsletter
North Orange County Computer Club
editor@noccc.org"
Well, as noted, I did get a timely reply. I realize that a large

corporation hardly ever changes course in months, much less weeks or days. The fact that page 2 of the 02-18-2007 weekly circular is advertising a Netgear Wireless-N router, without any notice that it is a Draft –N product, is confirmation of the that reality. I don't know if the reason Best Buy decided to run the risk of lost sales, by clearly labeling their ads for Linksys routers as Draft-N, is because they have a more concerned legal department, a different set of ethical standards, more concern for the well being of their customers or all of the above, but I offer praise for the fact that they do. Linksys appears to be in favor of being less than forthright about their products. On their web site page for the WRT300N product you will find "Wireless-N" repeated 13 times and buried in nearly 400 words of text one little "(draft 802.11n)" to indicate that this is anything other than what in the software world is called a BETA release product. If you look at the packaging for this product in the store, on the front of the box in large letters you will see WIRELESS-N, on the back of the box in large letters you will see WIRELESS-N, on the side of the box, inside of a small square of print, in small letters, you will find the sequence of characters - draft-n.

If I was able to search Google for reviews on Draft-N wireless products and find mostly praise for how well they work within a vendors line of products and what great interoperability exists between vendors, I wouldn't have much concern. You might consider spending a little time on Google looking up reviews on the performance and interoperability of Draft-N offerings. Then draw you own conclusions. ∎

DIGITAL DEADLINE FROM PAGE 9

720 pixels. The 1080i or p sets need to have a resolution of 1920 pixels by 1080 pixels. Just like the older VGA computer monitors the 720i refers to an interlaced display and the 720p refers to a progressive scan display. The progressive display is the better quality.

Then you have to decide which display technology you are going to pick. The Plasma flat panel, the LCD flat panel, the rear projection DLP television, the rear projection LCD television, the wall projection unit in either DLP or LCD. What is the brightness level? What is the viewing angle? What is the life expectancy of the projector bulb? What is the cost of the projector bulb? Does the unit have a VGA, a DVI and an HDMI video connector?

At the moment, I think the best bang for the buck is to purchase a projector that will do 720p, and if you can afford the extra cost, one that will do 1080p. If you have never seen even an older 800x600 projector displaying a movie from a standard DVD on an eight foot diagonal screen, I think you will find it impressive and I think you should do that before you spend money on anything.

Some selected FAQs from your http://www.dtv.gov/ site.

What is the digital TV transition?

The switch from analog TV (the traditional TV system using

magnetic waves to transmit and display TV pictures and sound) to digital television (the new TV system using information transmitted as "data bits" -- like a computer -- to display movie-quality pictures and sound), is referred to at the digital TV (DTV) transition. In 1996, the U.S. Congress authorized the distribution of an additional broadcast channel to each TV broadcaster so that they could introduce DTV service while simultaneously continuing their analog TV broadcasts. In addition to improved picture and sound quality, an important benefit of DTV is that it will free up parts of the broadcast spectrum for public safety as well as other valuable uses. This is possible because the modern technology of DTV is more efficient than analog TV technology. DTV allows the same number of stations to broadcast using fewer total channels (less of the broadcast spectrum) which will free up scarce and valuable spectrum for public safety and new wireless services.

What is the February 17th, 2009 DTV deadline date?

Congress passed a law on February 1, 2006, setting a final deadline for the DTV transition of February 17, 2009. Most television stations will continue broadcasting both analog and digital programming until February 17, 2009, when all analog broadcasting will stop. Analog TVs receiving over-the-air programming will still work after that date, but owners of these TVs will need to buy converter boxes to change digital broadcasts into analog format. Converter boxes will be available from consumer electronic products retailers at that time. Cable and satellite subscribers with analog TVs should contact their service providers about obtaining converter boxes for the DTV transition.

What is digital television (DTV)?

Digital television (DTV) is a new type of broadcasting technology that will transform television as we now know it. By transmitting the information used to make a TV picture and sound as "data bits" (like a computer), a digital broadcaster can carry more information than is currently possible with analog broadcast technology. For example, the technology allows the transmission of pictures with higher resolution for dramatically better picture and sound quality than currently available – called High Definition Television (HDTV) - or the transmission of several "standard definition" TV programs at once – called "multicasting." "Standard definition" digital TV pictures would be similar in clarity and detail to the best TV pictures being received and displayed today using the current analog broadcast system and TV receivers. DTV technology can also be used to provide interactive video and data services that are not possible with "analog" technology.

Is HDTV the same thing as DTV?

No. HDTV is the highest quality of DTV, but it is only one of many formats. In addition to HDTV, the most common formats are Standard Definition Television (SDTV) and Enhanced Definition Television (EDTV).

SDTV is the baseline display and resolution for both analog and digital. Transmission of SDTV may be in either the traditional (4:3) or wide-screen (16:9) format. EDTV is a step up from Analog Television. EDTV comes in widescreen (16:9) or traditional (4:3) format and provides better picture quality than SDTV, but not as high as HDTV. ∎

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

Roxio's Easy Media Creator 9 Suite – Keeps you up to speed with all of your digital media needs, whether you're mixing music, capturing or editing video, organizing or fixing photos, burning or copying CDs or DVDs, or backing up irreplaceable files. From Sonic Solutions. MSRP=$100.

ScanSoft PDF Converter 4 Pro – Everything you need to create, convert, & edit PDF files – New from Nuance at much less than Adobe Acrobat. MSRP=$99.

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

ConceptDraw Project 2, Desktop Edition – This software 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.

Books

Windows Vista for Starters: The Missing Manual – This new book by David Pogue from O'Reilly is a great way for beginners to learn the basics of Microsoft's new operating system. MSRP=$20.

Windows Vista in a Nutshell – Well-known author Preston Gralla wrote this new 700-plus-page desktop quick-reference book covering every important setting and feature in Vista. 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.

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

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 begin-

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

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

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

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

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

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

The 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.

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, & Adrei 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-foll0w 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 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 Linthicum from Addison-Wesley is an indispensable resource for those responsible for managing or implementing application-integration middleware. MSRP=$40.

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

.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

We had our very first 2 o'clock main meeting in February. President Elise Edgell ran it and our speaker was Irene Chow from Ingram Micro.

It was an e-waste collection day. Omni Technics, Inc. came to collect our members' electronic waste for free. During announcements, Elise and Gerry Resch mentioned that quite a bit of good, usable computer equipment had been disposed of during this and prior e-waste collections. Elise said she would like to see this equipment recycled by the club and donated to the community. Particularly now that Windows Vista was released, people and companies will be upgrading thousands of computers and throwing old ones out. It would be a shame to see so many perfectly good PCs that aren't Vista-capable go to be melted down instead of donated to good causes that need them.

To set up this recycling and donating, we are first looking for a company willing to donate storage space. Gerry suggested that 1,000 to 1,500 square feet would be ideal. We could set up an e-waste day at the company (or any company), then store the resulting equipment in the donated storage space. After that, we could rebuild and donate any equipment still in working order. Equipment not worth re-using would be sent for recycling in the usual manner. The club would handle all the work -- publicity, management of the e-waste day, and work associated with donating or recycling the equipment. The company that donates the space would get a tax write-off. The com-munity would get some free, working equipment. Everyone would win. (If you think your company can donate this storage space, please contact Elise at president@noccc.org.)

Jim Sanders announced that he was resigning as the Orange Bytes Editor as of June 2007 and a volunteer was badly needed for the position.

He then introduced Irene Chow. Irene is the Senior Category Manager of Consumer Electronics and Digital Signage at Ingram Micro. Ingram is the world's largest distributor of computers, gadgets, and other technology products. They have a great influence in ensuring products get to market and in front of consumers. Irene evaluates products for Ingram and what she recommends can ultimately make or break a product. An article was written about her in the January 7, 2006, issue of the Orange County, viewable at this link: http://www.ocregister.com/ocregister/money/yourcounty/article_935384.php.

On the screen, Irene titled her presentation "Converged Electronics." She first spoke a little about herself and Ingram Micro. She has a BA from UC Irvine (in Psychology) and an MBA from Pepperdine University. She worked in technology companies her whole life and has been with Ingram the past four and a half years.

Ingram Micro is a global distributor of computer technology products with about $30 billion dollars in annual revenue. They have approximately 11,000 employees worldwide. They have over 40,000 customers in the U.S. alone, which consist of resellers and solution providers. The impressive list of these customers includes retail/e-tail sellers like Best Buy, Wal-Mart, Amazon, and Buy.com; direct marketers like Dell, Gateway, and CDW; government and education sellers like university book-stores; Pro A/V dealers and installers; Apple retailers and resellers; system builders; value-added resellers; and point-of-sale resellers.

Their standard distribution method is to "buy, hold, and sell." They buy high quantities of products, hold them in their warehouses, and then sell them to customers, which are resellers and solution providers, not the general public. The advantage Ingram provides businesses is that they only have to deal with a single vendor to get products from many manufacturers and other sources. It's costly for companies to deal separately with many retailers. Ingram also provides training and education for resellers, as well as "pure logistics," i.e., picking, packing, and shipping for customers, directly to end-users. They have five warehouses (termed "Advanced Logistics Centers") strategically placed across the country and from these, they can provide same-day delivery to 90% of the U.S. and next day delivery to over 95% of it.

Irene's main duties at Ingram include signing on new vendors, evaluating new products, being a consultant for new and existing vendors on new products (she reviews products before going to CES), and regularly tracking the performance of products.

Next, Irene provided her review of CES (Consumer Electronics Show) 2007, which occurred in January. First, she noted that the majority of products were the same from last year's show. There were just more of them, including LCD TVs (at better pricing), MP3 and MP4 players, home theater components, HD-DVD, Blu-ray, and GPS products. There seemed to be a lighter crowd this year, perhaps because CES is competing with MacWorld.

In two screens, she listed her "Cool CE Products for 2007." (These were partly based on vendor successes in 2006.) They included the following:

- Microsoft Zune - Completes their digital home solution with Xbox

- Apple TV & iPhone - Completes their digital home solution with iPod and iTunes

- Sony PS3 - Everybody wants, but hard to get; economical way of getting a Blu-ray player

- Portable power for portable CE devices and notebooks (Xantrex, Solar Technologies)

- HP's MediaSmart LCD HDTV

(with built-in wired and wireless connectivity)

- Over-the-air HDTV antennas for notebooks (Thomson/RCA)

- "Bluetooth Your MP3 Player" products - Combo headsets (for cell phones using Bluetooth), mobility devices, and VoIP, e.g., Jabra, Plantronics

- Wi-Fi enabled point-and-shoot digital cameras (Nikon Coolpix, Kodak EasyShare-One, Canon SD430 Digital Elph)

- Dual-lens point-and-shoot digital cameras (ultra-wide and standard zoom) - Kodak

- HDMI (High-Definition Multimedia Interface) - Cable is fully backward compatible with PCs, displays, and CE devices incorporating DVI. There is one cable that transmits all ATSC (digital) HDTV and supports 8 channels of audio.

- IP surveillance cameras (Sony, Toshiba, Cannon, Digital Peripherals, WiLife) - Cannon uses Power over Ethernet (PoE), WiLife uses Powerline.

- LG's combo HD DVD (reader) & Blu-ray (reader & recorder) player

- Any multi-room audio enablers - NetStreams, Niveus, Audioaccess

- Portable GPS navigation systems - Some compatible with Microsoft Pocket PC OS and can offer real-time traffic (Garmin)

- GPS phones - Pharos (for Smart-Phones like Treos, etc.)

More information about the above products (including pictures) can be found at the Honoree Awards page of the CES 2007 website at http://www.cesweb.org/attendees/awards/innovations/rd_2007honorees.asp. More information can be found about Apple TV and the iPhone at http://www.apple.com/appletv/specs.html.

The key thoughts Irene wanted us to take away from her presentation were as follows:

- Not all cool technologies sell.

- Technologies today require you to be technology savvy.

- Product(s) must address useful applications to succeed. (In Ingram's case, this also helps minimize returns.)

- It's about networking and recommendations/reviews. 2-3 degrees of separation can help a product succeed or fail.

- Ingram Micro is serious about Consumer Electronics success.

Members asked Irene several questions after her presentation, including the following:

- How do you determine product popularity? She said that three ways immediately came to mind - 1) She's been out there and has experience in the field, 2) She's constantly checking magazine reviews, and 3) She sends e-mail about new products to her vendor customers with brochures and pricing, then sees what kinds of responses she gets.

- How does Ingram Micro protect itself from big vendors going direct to its customers instead of through it? Well, that's always a danger. She reminded us that it's expensive for companies to deal with many vendors, so they have a cost advantage just using Ingram as a single "super store" for all purchases. At times, Ingram can keep customers by offering better prices. They also sometimes integrate products into useful new solutions (generally called kits).

Next Meeting -- Camera Day! The speaker will be veteran of the photo world Bob Wilde from Samy's Camera. ∎

Computer Aided Investing SIG

By Bob Krishfield, NOCCC

The Markets: It's always good to report good news, and that's what the markets gave us for January. All of the markets made progress, with some sideways movement too, but that's good for the indices to consolidate a little before moving further. That news is also a good omen for the rest of 2007 – so says the January Effect, or the January Barometer, which states that as the S&P goes in January, so goes the year. This

indicator has be right 50 out of 55 years. Progress of the NASDAQ has been the weakest, but the Russell 2000 hit new 6-year highs, signaling that small cap stocks are continuing to perform well.

We introduced a new indicator – the Headsup Score, which is used for rating funds and ETFs as buys, holds, and sells, and plotted it on the market index charts showing that are in buy territory. There are no big swingers from the market indicators to say the top is in and we're about to reverse. The lower price of oil has been good, but now on the rise. Meanwhile some people are accumulating gold. Interest rates are on hold by the Fed while they try to deal with the falling dollar and fears of inflation. It looks like the up trend can continue as long as we don't have a political event that changes things.

Presentation: The Three Legs of Investing can be viewed as: Selection, Trading, and Portfolio Management. We plan to focus on Selection – strategies, tools and techniques for the next few meetings. This is a change from the previous focus on Trading, but we will tie the areas together later. A quick review of some selection methods included the stock screening programs based on fundamental analysis, some programs that use technical analysis to rate stocks and screen by the ratings, and some newsletters and proprietary programs such as Vector Vest or Portfolio123 that produce results, but you don't know exactly the formulations involved. Our detailed review started with AAII's Stock Investor Pro, a subscription software and database updated weekly that uses some 250 fields of fundamental data to screen stocks into portfolios. AAII provides a large collection of canned screens that follow the principles of famous stock-picker strategies. These screens are tracked by AAII by creating portfolios of the stocks that pass the screens, buying them on a monthly basis, and selling them when they fail to pass. Most of these screens have been around since 1998 and their long-term performance plots are available on the website along

Meeting Reports

CAI SIG

with spreadsheets of their monthly statistics. These are the only data available to evaluate which of these screens to pick, because trying to recreate or backtest the results is a formidable task. Back testing a screen's performance is not easy since there is a 30% turnover each month, and each database update provides only a snapshot of the fundamentals for each company at that point in time. Some historical data is contained for earnings, sales, and prices, but not enough to run screens for different dates against the same database. This means different date screens must be run against different updates of the database – a separate installation for each. Turnover invalidates trying to extrapolate performance across many months, and leaves the user to rely on the AAII data and plots. This makes it difficult to compare performance for selected portfolio screens for different periods to make a decision on which screens to use. To get started with this tool, one has to pick a set of strategies subjectively and trust that your experiences will follow the data on the website.

Next month we will look how make use of a screen's results, making the final selection, timing and buy decisions. What are the compatibility issues for various screening strategies and timing methods? We'll also take a detailed look at Gorilla Trades, which is proprietary system for selection and trading, but has a lot of good points to learn how to enter and exit positions and monitor your portfolios. ∎

AmiBroker SIG

By Bob Krishfield, NOCCC

We had a dedicated set of member's turnout to learn and discuss AmiBroker programs, in-spite of it being SuperBowl Sunday. Four programs were reviewed, including how they worked, how they were coded, and how they could be used in various Charting and Technical Analysis studies. The programs were made available on the AFLTidbits bulletin board, accessible by SIG members for downloading the code, making comments and asking questions. The first program, Apoles8, is a charting program that was developed by Bruce Robinson, and updated by others, including myself. The program uses advanced coding and is more useful as a working tool, rather than something to tear apart and use as a tutorial. Apoles provides a capability for AmiBroker to plot up to 8 tickers in a comparative percentage plot, automatically scaling the starting point for the time interval displayed. It displays key performance statistics on each security for the time period, similar to the T Chart in FastTrack. Various time intervals can be setup for evaluation by using poles (vertical lines) or inserting a trendline to start and stop the interval. This adjusts the statistics to the interval between the poles. Apoles8 is a very important tool to compare performance of funds, composites, indexes, etc for various periods. The next program introduced was Headsup Score, an AFL program run as an indicator on a plot or a scoring calculation in a exploration of a set of tickers. The technique was demonstrated for taking a set of funds, stocks, etc. in a watchlist, running an exploration, sorting the result and selecting the results to be saved in a new watchlist. Setting the filter in the exploration program may accomplish the same screening function, but you often need to run it with no filtering to see the results first.

The most useful program for screening was the screening AnnMPT program that computes various performance and MPT statistics for tickers in a watchlist. The results can be sorted on various parameters and selections made of the top 10, etc. to generate a short list of securities for further interest and study. This is one of the most powerful techniques for screening funds and stocks down to a list of candidates to buy as one scrolls through the charts of each. The last program provides is more of a tutorial exploration program that produces fundamental data. This will only be useful for those Amibroker users that use QuotesPlus as a datasource. Other data sources do not have the same set of fundamentals. Databases based on Yahoo have some fundamentals and this leaves an area to look at in the future.

Next month we will look at some program to generate some popular signals and how to apply the signals for trading. In addition, we will hear some of the highlights from the Amibroker Houston conference and what new directions are being taken in AmiBroker, and what are some of the new programs that we can get to use. ∎

Computer Essentials SIG

By Elise M. Edgell, NOCCC

Please note that our new meeting time is 10:30 in Science Room 306. This is a good SIG if you are new to computers, or you are bringing a guest that is new to computers. It is an informal meeting. I try to set a topic for a meeting, but questions are welcome on any subject. There is no guarantee that I will have an answer but I can try. Sometimes others in the meeting will have an answer. Then there is always the Oracle, Google. I am always impressed with how often I can get an answer to my question by asking Google.

The March meeting will be on how to find photos on your computer. I will go over the different file extensions that are used by digital images. Once you have found your photos, do you know what to do with them? Do you know how tell your computer which program you want to use to look at photos? There is an excellent FREE program that lets you look at your photos, look at videos, scan photos, make a slide show, and so much more. Come to the SIG to find out about this program plus other favorite FREE programs dealing with photos and video.

When you look at a photo is it too large to fit on the screen? Learn how to change the size so you can see the

whole photo.

If you do not have a digital camera, you can still get your photos into the computer by using a scanner. This is also an excellent way to get old photos into digital format. You can easily improve old color photos that have faded. There are many other easy fixes you can do with your photos once you get them into digital format. Tears, dust, unwanted items or people can all be corrected, no dark room needed.

Are you feeling a crunch for space in your home? Storing photos on your hard disk is a real space saver. Because the cost of large hard disks is so inexpensive you can have room to store as many photos as you want. It is also a good way to distribute your family photos to others. Most computers have CD or DVD burners so it is easy to "burn" a photo disk to distribute. Don't know how to burn a CD? It is easy.

Come to the March SIG and I'll go over that above topics and more. ■

Home Automation SIG

By Dan Cregg, NOCCC

Session summaries for January / February 2007

Thank you to all who have attended the Home Automation Special Interest Group the past few months. It is, after all, the attendees that make a group like this successful.

The meetings have been well attended, so well attended that they have been moved to the much larger main meeting lecture hall.

The past two meetings have focused mainly on lighting and lighting control in the home, with the main areas of focus being:

1) Convenience /safety

2) Security - motion detection, random timed lighting

3) Beautification – amount, color and directionality of lighting

The main method of control discussed has been a fairly new technology called INSTEON, developed by SmartLabs Inc. in Irvine, CA. INSTEON technology uses powerline and radio frequency transmission methods to route command and control signals through-out the home. A detailed description can be found at www.insteon.net. The pluses and minuses of competing systems have also been discussed.

The group as a whole seemed interested in more hands on, and more in-depth detail on INSTEON technology and lighting control. In fact, many of the meeting attendees had done lighting control projects with an older technology called X-10. Most attendees seemed interested in pursuing new projects now that more reliable technology is available.

The next meeting will continue to focus on lighting, with a transition into computer based control systems and software. We look forward to seeing everyone there again. ■

PC Q&A SIG

By Jim Sanders

Most of this months SIG was devoted to an installation of a final, shipping, version of Vista Home Premium Upgrade and what I had to do to get it to install as both an upgrade and as a clean install. I had a little help with an article at http://windowssecrets.com/comp/070201/#story1 by Brian Livingston. He explains in detail how M$ has changed the definition of an upgrade install and what that means to the installation procedure options.

The funniest moment came after installing Vista in the 30 day trial mode. While running Vista in the trial mode, I started doing the upgrade install of Vista where you actually enter the serial number. Vista warned me that the Vista install disk I was using was from an unknown publisher, go figure! ■

ners 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.

PowerPoint 2007 for Starters: The Missing Manual – A good book for beginners by E.A. Vander Veer from O'Reilly with step-by-step instruction and lots of illustrations to help learn the use of this new presentations software from Microsoft. MSRP=$20

PowerPoint 2007: The Missing Manual – This new book also by E.A. Vander Veer in the O'Reilly "Missing Manual" series offers complete coverage of PowerPoint's new look and dramatically new way of doing things in preparing presentations. MSRP=$30.

Access 2007 for Starters: The Missing Manual – Matthew MacDonald's new book from O'Reilly is for the beginner using Microsoft's latest database. MSRP=$20.

Access 2007: The Missing Manual

SIG List

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

SIG	Bldg	Room	Time	Leader	E-mail	Phone
AmiBroker	Wilkinson	221	10:30	Bob Krishfield	bobkrish@socal.rr.com	714-532-3096
Autocad	Science	203	9:00	Joe Mizer	joem@pvateplaamerica.com	951-688-9848
Computer Aided Investing	Wilkinson	221	9:00	Bob Krishfield	bobkrish@socal.rr.com	714-532-3096
Computer Security	Science	203	10:30	Dave Keays	davekeays@yahoo.com	714-348-9096
Digital Photography	Irvine Hall	—	10:30	Larry Klees	lklees@dslextreme.com	714-879-6405
Computer Essentials	Science	306	10:30	Elise Edgell	EliseEdgell@aol.com	714-544-3589
Hardware Essentials	Science	109	12:30	Herbert Wong	ocug@singularitytechnology.com	714-968-7264
Home Automation	Irvine Hall	----	9:00	Dan Cregg	dan.cregg@smarthome.com	
Linux for Desktop Users	Wilkinson	117	9:00	Bob Ray	bobcray@pacbell.net	714-634-7520
Linux for Advanced Users	Wilkinson	117	10:30	Bob Ray	bobcray@pacbell.net	714-634-7520
PC Q&A	Irvine Hall	—	12:30	Jim Sanders	jsanders@ligasmicro.com	714-544-3589
Understanding OS's	Science	111	10:30	Charlie Moore	mooreca@adelphia.net	714-529-9071
Visual Programming I - IV	Science	111	9:00	Anson Chapman	aeccrcss@hotmail.com	909-860-9515

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

Membership Benefits

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

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

Board Minutes

TION: Regarding the purchase of a new projector: Jim Sanders added an Amendment to Original Motion to, "Modify the current proposal to read: $1,000 dollars or less for purchase of a manual focus projector". The Amendment was accepted and approved. This will result in a savings to our NOCCC club.

SIG Rearrangement: Ted spoke with members and felt the new schedule went very well.

Help Line: Ted Littman updated our NOCCC Help Line; please look for his list in the March Bytes.

New Business:
A club community project involving Gerry Resch and his recycling partners was discussed.

Nominating Committee: Ted Littman & Richard Miller volunteered. The election will be held on Sunday at the June Main Meeting and newly elected officers will attend the new Board Meeting the following Monday. If you are interested running for an officer position, or a board member position, please contact: Ted Littman at: tedlit@adelphia.net, or call 714/779-1936. Please help our NOCCC club by volunteering. The meeting was adjourned at 9:10pm.

Submitted by: Mary Cornett. ■

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.

Adobe Acrobat
Apple II
Artificial Intelligence
AutoCAD
C/C++
CPU Aided Investing
Computer Boards
Computer Security
Corel Draw
Corel Draw
Desktop Publishing
Digital Photography
Excel
Geneology
GPS Navigation
Linux
Lotus 1-2-3
MacIntosh
Memory/Interrupts
Microsoft Office
Modem Hware, Sware
Networking
Neural Networks
OS/2
PC Hardware
PCs for Beginners
Pinnacle Studio
Photoediting
Photoediting & shop
Photoshop
Powerpoint 2003
Programming
Quickbooks - all ver.
Qbooks 5 & Quicken
Tcl/Tk & Unix
Vista
Windows 9X & XP
Wireless
Word 2003
WordPerfect

Names and phone numbers of Help Line volunteers are published in the printed version of the Orange Bytes whiich is mailed to members.
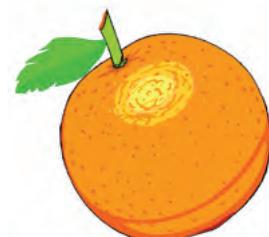
New volunteers for the Help Line would be appreciated! If you have an area of expertise to share, let us know.

– Matthew MacDonald also wrote this new 730-page book that offers complete coverage of the latest version of Microsoft's database. Also from O'Reilly. MSRP=$35.

Excel 2007: The Missing Manual – This new 830-page book also is by Matthew MacDonald from O'Reilly Publishing and covers the highly-rated spreadsheet part of the Microsoft Office 2007 suite. MSRP=$40.

Word 2007 for Starters: The Missing Manual – A new, fast-paced and easy to read book by Chris Grover from O'Reilly helps you to learn the latest word processor from Microsoft. MSRP=$20.

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

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 oerspective, 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 authored by Mike Andrews & James Whittacker. The companion CD contains full source code for one testing tool you can modify & extend, free Web security testing tools, and more. MSRP=$35.

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.

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.

PDF References 1.6, 5th Edition – The official Adobe guide to the Portable Document Format, an essential resource for all developers writing programs that read or generate PDF files. From Peachpit Press. MSRP=$55.

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

NOCCC Membership Fee Schedule

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

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

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PLEASE PRINT!
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email_____
Fees: see page 26 for fee schedule, $35 for single membership

Amount enclosed $_____

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Are You an NOCCC Member?

Consider all that you get with membership and Join Now

- **Meetings**. Keep up with what's going on in the computer world. Hear outstanding industry representatives make presentations of the latest and greatest in computer products.
- **Special Interest Groups**. Our 20 SIGs cover a broad spectrum of user interest; they invite you, whether you rank as beginner or seasoned computerist, to the lectures and demonstrations they sponsor, and to share computer knowledge.
- **Get help with your current computer problems**. In the Random Access portions of the Irvine Hall meetings, you ask your question of the entire assemblage, and more than likely someone will have the answer.
- **The NOCCC HelpLine**. Some 20 NOCCC volunteers, experts in their fields, are ready to assist with your problems, and are as close as your telephone.
- **The *Orange Bytes* Newsmagazine**. Our Award Winning newsmagazine mailed monthly to your address reports on current activities and gives you articles and reviews geared toward your needs.
- **Raffles**. We have distributed thousands of dollars worth of hardware and software raffle prizes at our General meetings.
- **Product Review.** Write a review for this newsletter and keep the software, hardware, book or CD. Members reviews are published in this newletter.
- **Consignment Table**. We have a thriving consignment table on our regular meeting day in which we assist members to sell or buy all kinds of computer items.
- **Volunteer Work**. You are given opportunities to help our activities with interesting assignments. ***An all-volunteer organization***, you can join with other members in a variety of activities, write articles for our newsletter, conduct a seminar, run a SIG, man the help desk, show new members around, help the membership commitee, and more.

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

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

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

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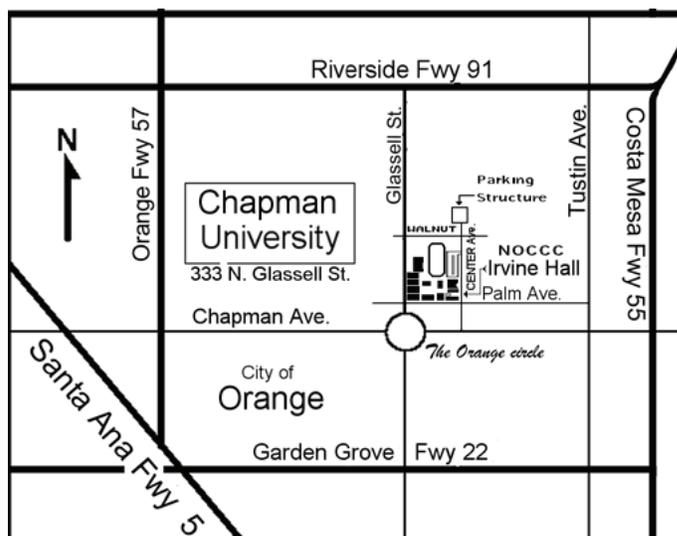
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