NIBBLES & BITS

February 2004

Orange County
IBM PC
Users' Group

Tuesday, February 10, 6:30 p.m. at Sunny Hills Racquet Club, Fullerton — Bring a friend!

FEBRUARY PROGRAM

Innovative product uses unique lighting technology

Radiant Frames, a new and exciting picture frame that is designed to "light up your digital pictures" will be demonstrated by a Radiant Frames representative at our February 10 meeting.

"As you know, there are many consumers who print their own photos at home or at work," Radiant Frames vice president Shin Ito said.

"What we have is a product that allows you to print a favorite image on a special inkjet paper made specifically for back lit lighting, place it in our frame, plug in the AC adapter and you now have an image that looks like it never did before. The colors seem to 'pop' and everything looks more vibrant when seen in our frames. New parents love showing off their baby pictures in our frames and they also make a great nightlight for a child's room or hallway," according to Ito.

"Different from other LCD Digital Frames, Radiant Frames is affordably priced at $29.99 and addresses an untapped market of digital camera users that print their own photos using their ink jet printer.," Ito also said.

You can see samples of Radiant Frames on its website at *www. radiantframes.com.*

Radiant Frames was featured in PC Magazine's "Gadget Mania" article before the holidays, as well as other publications that recommended the product for gift giving.

Take a look at what some of them wrote at: *www. pcmag.com/article2/ 0,4149, 1386114,00.asp, www.gannett online.com/e/advice/10000053.html, www. usatoday.com/tech/techreviews/ 2003-12-08-gns-great-gifts_x.htm.*

You won't want to miss February's presentation! Bring a friend!

Volume 22 - Number 2

Linux program CDs awarded in special raffle

Nine Knoppix 3.3 Linux CDs, donated by Orv Beach, were awarded in a special raffle held at the January meeting. Winners were: **Sharon Graham, Lothar Loehr, Frank Balazs, Michael Moore, Larry Klees, Ted Wirtz, Tony Lake, Sid Liptz, and Art Bullis.**

Orv Beach, vice president of the Simi-Conejo Linux Users Group, demonstrated the Linux operating system at our January 13 meeting.

Notepad

User groups may die out. Or will they?

A significant casualty this month is PIBMUG (Pasadena IBM Users Group). Steve Bass is shutting down the group he started 22+ years ago, after nurturing and guiding it from a handful of members to a couple thousand. (See pages 4 and 5.)

You have to wonder if this is becoming a common fate of user groups stricken for several years by decreasing memberships, economic problems, lack of volunteerism, and other challenges. And, besides these issues, there are other reasons for concern.

Although young blood and a few female faces can be found in computer user groups today—not taking SIGs into account—members are male, middle-aged or older, and likely to be computer hobbyists from DOS days, ex-IBM specialists, or techies. Energy and enthusiasm are decidedly low-key and participation is minimal.

Good programs are difficult to schedule and members often seem to attend out of habit or just for a diversion. Creative ideas on building membership or exploring new directions of interest flicker from time to time without catching fire.

Vendor support, long the lifeblood of user groups, has disintegrated in recent years. The economy, mergers, a wider range of consumers, lack of UG member participation in reviewing and buying products, may all have fueled departures.

Over the past 20 years, when many user groups were formed, computer technology has evolved beyond wildest expectations and computer use now is socially and culturally widespread. The rationale for a group of people meeting to get an understanding of complex operating systems and machines — the basis of a computer user group — is no longer a necessity. Now there is Internet communication, and computer technology and support is available everywhere.

Still, some newer members believe user groups might be revitalized if the focus is changed to digital technology — a booming and formative industry. Certainly there is already tremendous involvement with it that crosses age and gender lines that could bring energy, interest and purpose back into user groups.

But, there is a paradox here. If groups make a transition to new usefulness and interest for members, a different kind of follower will be attracted.

This means user groups would not specifically be about computers. And, members would not specifically be computer users. It's doubtful if anyone mainly interested in computers would remain a part of transformed groups, since that is not what initially drew the person to the user group.

So, the question remains: Are user groups dying, or DOS-like, will they survive under a new guise?

I'd like to hear from you. What do **you** thnk?

Linda Gonse,
editor@orcopug.org

Letters

Member recovers from car wreck

I'm back home with help of caregiver, but no e-mailing for awhile.

Mervin Frank
mfrank3@juno.com

We wish Mervin well. Although he will not be sendng email, he can read your messages of cheer. Thanks for taking a few minutes to write to him and giving his day a boost. —LG

New hard drive fails!

Boy, the last month has been one of those I don't want to repeat. My wife and I have been trading colds/flu and top of that I had a hard disk failure.

What's strange about the disk failure, besides being the first ever for me, is that it was a new Western Digital drive with only about 20 hours of use.

It was under warranty so WD sent me a replacement after about 10 days.

Lloyd Boutwell
LloydB8@aol.com

January Linux presenter writes

If your club decides it wants a follow-on talk, or perhaps an update in a few months, my friend Dennis said that either he'd be happy to do the talk (he's a marketing guy, so knows how to give presentations), or he'd draft someone from OCLUG to do it.

Have you tried OpenOffice yet?

It's available for Win32 at *http://openoffice.org*. It's pretty compatible with Microsoft documents. We need to publicize Open Source Software — it's just too damn good to ignore.

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Include your listing here so our members know where to send you email. Send your name and email address to: *editor@orcopug.org.*

Got a new address or ISP?

Don't miss newsletters or announcements! Send your new information to Charlie Moore, Treasurer/Membership Chairman, *charlie@orcopug.org.*

Members' renewal dates

NOVEMBER — Jim Curtin
DECEMBER — Gregory Koch
FEBRUARY — John Bednarski, Mike Lyons
MARCH — Frank Balazs, Jim Brubaker, Art Bullis, Sharon Graham, Milton Gorham
APRIL — Lothar Loehr, David Musser
MAY — Lloyd Boutwell, Terry Schiele, Harold Wann

Submitted by Charlie Moore

January raffle winners

O'Reilly Linux in a Nutshell, $40*
Siles Bazerman, Not Present
Greg Koch, Expired
Michael Lyons, Winner

U-Lead Photo Explorer, $49*
Joe Francis, Winner

U-Lead Video Studio 7, $90*
Joe Gionet, Winner

U-Lead Video Studio 7, $90*
Walter Jackson, Winner

U-Lead Photo Impact XL, $69*
Milton Gorham, Winner

O'Reilly cup , $5*
Carl Westberg, Winner

U-Lead Photo Explorer, $49*
Sharon Graham, Winner

Smart Computing Learning Series, $30*
Jim Brubaker, Not Present
Lothar Loehr, Winner

*Estimated value

Submitted by Charlie Moore

TOP 10 VIRUSES and HOAXES

www.orcopug.org

Membership Application

New Member ☐   **Renewal*** ☐

* Please fill out all the blanks below to help us keep your information updated in our database.

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone (____)_____ Work Phone (____)_____

E-mail Address _____

Areas of Interest/Comments _____

ORCOPUG meets the second Tuesday of every month starting at 6:30 p.m. Dues are $25 per year. Please see our website at www.orcopug.org for meeting location and map, program announcements and contact information.

Make check payable to ORCOPUG
Mail to ORCOPUG, P.O. BOX 716, Brea, California 92822-0716

(Please fiill out this application and mail it today!)

What's new...

Bass calls it a day

by Greg West, SCUG Report editor,
Sarnia Computer Users Group, www.scug.ca

Greg West

There are two very important, and certainly memorable, meeting dates that the members of the Pasadena Users Group will never forget:

November 1982 – "First meeting in Bass's office at 711 East Walnut, in Pasadena."

February 2004 – "The doors are closing."

Steve Bass, one of the founding members of the Association of Computer Users Groups (APCUG), and owner/operator of the Pasadena IBM Users Group (PIBMUG), is shutting down PIBMUG.

"I'm shutting down PIBMUG for a lot of reasons. I think we've had a great run-22 years worth-and it's been a hoot. But it's time for me to redirect my energy into other projects," says Bass.

Any club that has lasted for almost a quarter-century must have been doing something right all these years. From the onset, (initial startup of the club) five members of PIBMUG initiated the club and it continued to grow and prosper. Bass quickly points out, "…we were quickly running out of room. I thought we'd either have to limit membership or look for another place to meet." Awareness spread fast about this new computer club which was pervading the Pasadena area consisting of "a bunch of computer nerds who met every month."

Bass recalls some of the club's many highlights including:

April 1988 – "Bill Gates meeting at Pasadena Convention Center. There must have been 1800 people at the event; a half dozen of the PIBMUG staffers went to a restaurant afterward with Bill Gates and the MS user group guy. Bill had a coke and spent most of the evening fiddling with his napkin."

June 1990 – "PCTV visits Bridge Building and videotapes a meeting. Aubrey Pilgram built a 486 in front of us and for the first time, I "accidentally" bounced a big hard drive onto his brand-new systemboard. Dropping things became a running gag that lasted for years."

April 1992 – "Pasadena Hilton courtesy Microsoft. The Microsoft user group rep, Tanya Dressler, came through in PIBMUG's time of need. (This was when I was still on good terms with Microsoft.) They picked up the tab for the meeting room."

So, why are the doors of PIBMUG closing?

Life for Bass has taken a different direction and he wants to put his "engery into other projects." The structure of

Bass' User Group is somewhat unique in that "it was a sole proprietorship, often referred to by the staff as a dictatorship. I ran PIBMUG as a business, part of the other businesses I owned through the 80's and 90's-doing psychotherapy, and running a counseling group and seminar company," says Bass.

Bass says that his membership is down and believes membership "is down across the country….I think that's because PCs are now easy-to-use commodities," Bass reports [try telling that to SCUG membership who show up at SCUG's Drop-In and Windows SIGs where many computer users turn out to share computer related problems each month].

"The industry has changed," says Bass in his web address to the world, but he is unclear as to what changes. However, Bass does claim that computer users can get all they need simply by "downloading the trial version of [a] product." He also believes boredom is a "central point of every user group's demise" and
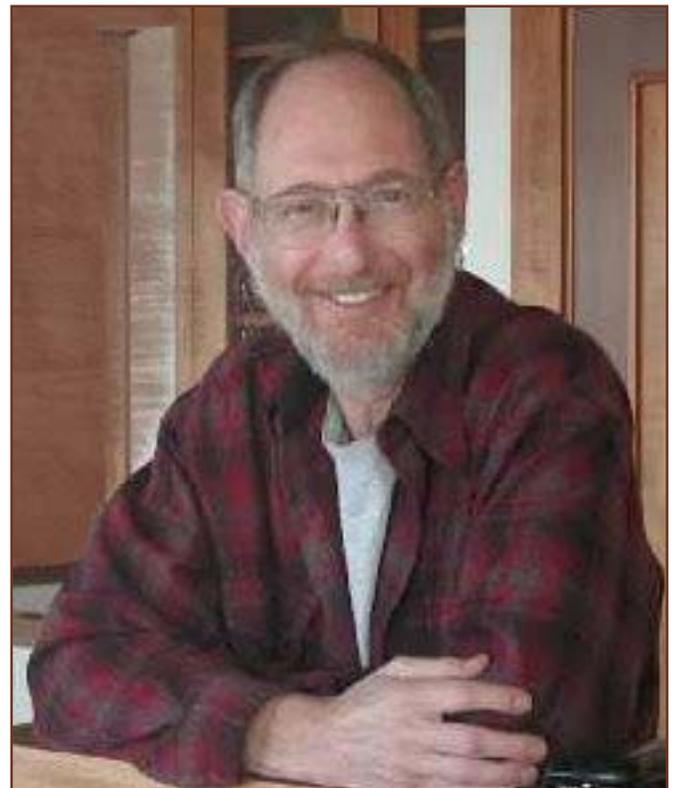
Steve Bass

rhetorically questions, "How many times can you see Zone Alarm or Partition Magic presented?" The industry has changed, computers are an ever-changing technology and instead of seeking out new and innovative initiatives for his club, to

handsomely paid. The column in the newsletter also takes a day, and then another day, or day and a half to build, process, and mail. It's a labor of love, but I've stopped loving it. Besides, everything in the newsletter's available on a user group web site. I mean, folks,

"great volunteers, people who have been with PIBMUG almost from the start and I couldn't run the group without them."

Let us hope these volunteers will now pick up the ball, form a new club, and continue for another successful quarter-century as Bass did. Let us also hope Bass remembers where he came from, and tosses the odd free article over to APCUG so they can once again distribute Bass' witty and informative computer bits of computer ideas and knowledge to participating User Groups such as SCUG.

For a full report from APCUG: *http://www.apcug.org/events/comdex/ fall2003/pdf/steve%20bass%20 retires.doc.*

(Reprinted with permission.)

> ## Bass says that his membership is down and believes membership "is down across the country….I think that's because PCs are now easy-to-use commodities"…

keep up with the changing times, Bass closes the doors.

Even though the "industry had changed" and membership "is down across the country" Bass complains about the ever-increasing workload: "Writing the newsletter's been a tremendous chore and, as you can see from the last few months, it's become very difficult for me to produce. Think about it—I write 650 words for PC World, it takes me a day, and I'm

where do you think I get the articles from?"

It is quite understandable that Bass feels the time has come for him to move on. There are only so many hours/days in a week, and for such a busy man as Bass, the numbers get crunched even shorter. Bass has his "HOME OFFICE" column with PC World magazine and is busy book-signing for his new book, "PC Annoyances." Bass admits he has

Write to Steve Bass at *steve_bass @pcworld.com*. Check out the content of PCWorld's current edition at *http:// www.pcworld.com/magazine/index/ 0,00.asp,* then sign up for the Steve Bass online newsletter at *www.pcworld.com/bass_letter*. —LG

Member reflects on UG closures and changes

by Ted Wirtz, ORCOPUG

I'm sorry to see groups like this dissolve. I think they provide a valuable service to the user community. But the Pasadena group is not the first to go like this.

There was another large user group, the Boston Computer Society, that folded in September 1996. They had 18,000 members, but still couldn't continue. This link will take you to a copy of their farewell letter: *http://www.library .umaine.edu/govdoc/other/ bcsletter.htm.*

I think one of the problems now is that the average worker is using a computer at work nearly the entire day. When they go home, they're tired of computers, and

aren't interested in spending still another couple of hours dealing with computers. Besides, at work they most likely have a guru that solves computer problems for them.

Computer operating systems and programs today are so complex that when a user encounters a problem, many times user group members are unable to help because that specific problem has not been encountered by any other user. Programs often "fight" with each other in inexplicable ways.

In a way, the Boston group has continued on as smaller splinter groups, each focusing on a specific specialty. Take a look at what you get from Google if you search for "'user group' boston."

I think what you see there is a demonstration of exactly what our

editor talked about in her byline.

Most appear to be focused on specific applications, rather than the computer technology itself. I guess if you think of the computer as another electrical appliance, how many toaster or microwave oven user groups do you know about? (If toasters were as cranky as computers, maybe there would be toaster user groups!) On the other hand, there are cooking schools.

Recently "digital technology" has been appearing in our own user group — presentations on digital photography, digital video editing, and the like. There seems to be a lot of interest in those types of presentations as well.

What is your resolution

by Geroge McGinnis, Computer Society of West Florida, gpmcginnis@mchsi.com

This story is not about your New Year's Resolutions. Instead it is about the resolution of your monitor. The resolution of a monitor is important because it determines how correctly the monitor will portray the textual and graphical material that is sent to it by the graphics board in your computer.

The following information relates to cathode ray tube monitors and it is not intended to apply to the so-called "flat" Liquid Crystal Display "LCD" monitors.

Your monitor is based on a 4 x 3 aspect ratio. This means that it is four elements wide by three elements high. If you measure the screen of your monitor, taking into account the portion of the screen that is obscured by the plastic frame, you will find this to be true. Historically, these numbers relate to the aspect ratio generally used by the TV industry and in a loose way are also related to the aspect ratio of the movies as invented by Thomas Edison almost 100 years ago. Computer resolution refers to the number of pixels on the face of the monitor. For example, a resolution of 800 x 600 (note the 4 x 3 ratio) means that there are 800 pixels wide on the monitor face and 600 pixels high. The width is always expressed before the height. In this example, if you multiply 800 x 600 you will get the number 480,000 and this represents the total number of pixels on the face of the monitor. The general rule that applies is that the greater the number of pixels the better the quality of the reproduced image. This same reasoning applies to both graphical and textual material. Of the two, graphical material is of course more difficult to reproduce and the number of pixels is of greater importance.

Whom, or what, determines the resolution? You do. You set the resolution when you set up the computer when you take it out of the box. Each Windows version has a slightly different way of setting the resolution however they are all similar. For Windows XP go to Control Panel, Display, Setting and move the screen resolution slider to the desired resolution position. At the same time you can select the color quality from the pull down menu. The highest setting is (Highest 32 bit). By going to Advanced, you can set the monitor refresh rate and change the size of the text.

Now, you are probably wondering what your setting(s) should be. Here are most of the standard resolutions that are ordinarily available for your monitor, however they may vary slightly depending on the size and model of your monitor:

640 x 480   800 x 600   1024 x 768
1280 x 1024   1600 x 1200

However, each size monitor has a recommended resolution number. Here are the recommended numbers:

17" 1024 x 768
19" 1280 x 1024

The capability of your computer to obtain the desired resolution depends on several things. For example, the graphics board that is in your computer and the quality of the monitor are predominant. A high quality graphics board will probably permit you to go to the highest setting your monitor will permit. You will have to look at the manual you received with your monitor to find the settings that are recommended and to determine other parameters of the monitor's capabilities. For some monitors, you must not go above a certain resolution or refresh rate for fear of harming the monitor. Another factor to consider is the Screen Refresh Rate. This represents the number of times per second the monitor screen is refreshed. If your monitor will permit a refresh rate of as high as 85 Hz, at the recommended monitor resolution, then choose that number. However, a refresh rate of 75 Hz is more likely the maximum number your monitor will permit unless you have a high quality monitor. The higher the refresh rate, the finer detail the picture and the better the quality of reproduction. Very low refresh rates such as 65 Hz are likely to produce annoying flicker and possibly jumpy text. This is very hard on your eyes and is to be avoided. To repeat, look in your monitor manual and determine the maximum refresh

User group deals

Magazine discounts just for computer user groups

	1 Year	2 Years	3 Years
Computer Games	$10.95		
Computer Gaming World	$14.95	$28.95	$41.95
Computer Shopper	$16.97	$32.95	$47.95
Dr. Dobbs Journal	$15.95	$30.95	$43.95
Mac Addict	$10.97		
Mac Home Journal	$15.97	$29.97	
Mac World	$12.95	$24.95	$35.95
Maximum PC	$ 9.95	$18.95	$27.95
Microsoft System Journal	$21.95	$39.95	$57.95
PC Gamer	$12.95		
PC Magazine	$25.97	$48.95	$68.95
PC World	$16.95	$27.95	$40.95
Wired	$ 6.00	$12.00	

Revised 7/1/2003

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I will mail a renewal notice to every subscriber about 3 months prior to their expiration date.Many computer magazine subscribers have used my services for over 300 titles I carry, also at excellent prices. Just email me for other prices.

Submitted by Carl Westberg

What do you get from a membership in our group?

by Linda Gonse

Membership in ORCOPUG entitles you to access the Members' Only area on our website where you are eligible for user group offers and discounts worth hundreds of dollars!

Among other programs currently offered, are: File Protector, O'Reilly Books, Drive Image 7, Stuffit 8.0, AlienSkin pro-grams, Keyfinder, Kroll ONtrack programs, Aladdin products, Klassic Specialties, Que Publishing, Road Wired, Earthlink, Blue Squirrel, Click2PDF, Flip Album, Diskeeper Lite, and Hemera PhotoObjects.

How to access Members' page

Go to *http://www. orcopug.org.* Click on the "members' only" link on the left side of the page. When the password dialog box opens, type your user name (this is your first initial and last name in lower case, no spaces), and your password. The password is a capital letter "R" followed by your member number.

Windows XP Annoyances (The Good, Bad, and Ugly)

by Lloyd Boutwell

First the Ugly — As you can see by the figure of the cover it is a typical O'Reilly book with distinctive if not ugly art

Second the Bad — If you get this book be sure to get the three and a half pages of corrections from the web site *(www.annoyances.org/ exec/show/book_xp_errata)*. Frankly the error rate is a bit too high. The proofreader must have been in a hurry.

Third the Good —You sure can't judge a book by its cover or title. I had heard about this book only by title so I thought that is was probably one of those 50-page things. Boy was I wrong. The book is over 500 pages long with the author spending about two and a half pages of **Chapter 1, Making the Most of Windows XP,** just to define his version of what annoyances are. This chapter also mentions a utility program, Creative Element Power Tools, available on a trial basis from *www.creativelement.com/powertools*. To keep this program beyond the trial period costs about $18. Too bad it wasn't included as part of the book.

Chapter 2, Basic Explorer Coping Skills, includes sections on working with explorer, handling files and folders, and regaining control of the desktop. All pretty much basic stuff but worth a review.

Chapter 3, The Registry. Thirty pages dealing with the registry (big surprise) and editing approaches.

Chapter 4, Tinkering Techniques. Registry editing to customize the desktop i.e. the icons and what they do to creating an option to right-click a folder to print out a folder listing.

Chapter 5, Maximizing Performance. The author provides advice on how to select various hardware components to maximize performance. I think most of us with a few years experience won't find anything really new in this chapter.

Chapter 6, Troubleshooting. One thing I found particularly interesting was the author's comment regarding incremental backups. He makes the point that the incremental backups still require a full backup and if that backup is not intact all the incremental backups are completely useless.

Chapter 7, Networking and Internetworking. Good background material but does not address known ZoneAlarm quirks. Quality of Service (QoS) turns out to be a 20% bandwidth hog and is not useful for home networks. The author tells how to throttle/disable this feature. Apparently unchecking the QoS Packet Schedule option in General tab of the Properties sheet for the network connection doesn't do the job. This chapter also spends a few pages on closing back doors in XP.

Chapter 8, User Accounts and Admin "control userpasswords2" and the Local Users and Group policy editor (lusrmgr.msc in XP pro only). For example, UserAccount2 can assign a user to a group while Local Users and Groups can additionally assign a user to multiple groups. There is a lot more in this chapter dealing with encryption and customizing the welcome screen and log on screen.

Chapter 9, Scripting and Automation. Scripting of two forms Windows Script Host (WSH) and batch files. Using VBScript to create script. Provides some example scripts but this chapter looks like it would be more interesting if someone just wants to play around,

Chapter 10, Installing Windows XP. If you already have installed XP or purchased a computer with XP, then this chapter won't be very useful. I noticed that the XP version I have is a so-called OEM (full pro version with SP1) and does not quite match all the setup screens given in this book.

Finally the book contains four appendices, Setting Locator, BIOS Settings, Command Prompt Crash
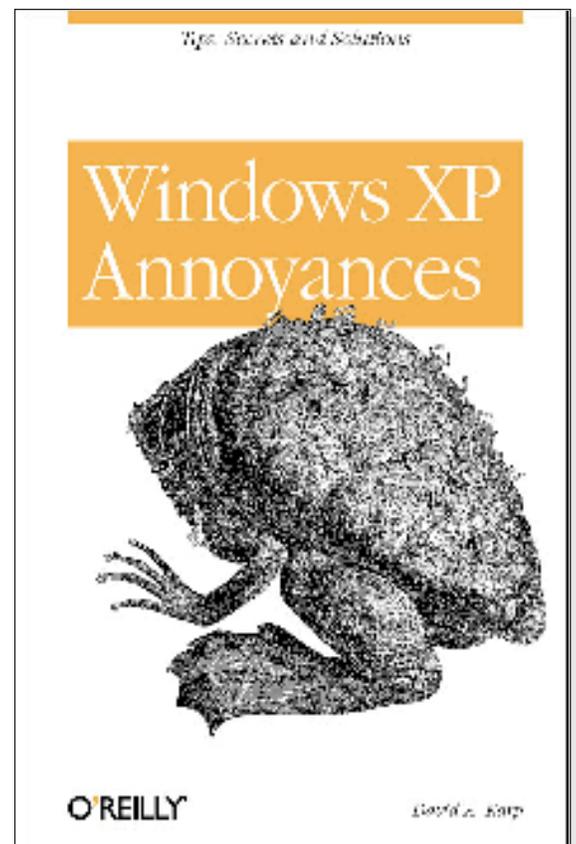
rate it will permit and try for that number at the recommended resolution of your monitor.

I took a poll of 50 computer users to determine the monitor resolution they used. I was surprised to learn that, regardless of monitor size, the predominant resolution was 800 x 600. I also learned that most of the individuals were not aware that a higher resolution produced higher quality graphics representation on the monitor. Several individuals indicated that the higher resolution produced very small text and small icons on the desktop and therefore they had difficulty reading the text. All this is true; however these problems can easily be remedied. With Windows XP, go to Control Panel, Display, Appearances, font size and choose the larger font. Then go to Advanced, desktop, icons, to increase the size of the icons; then to icon spacing to adjust the horizontal and vertical spacing of the desktop icons. All these adjustments are important and will overcome the objection to smaller icons and smaller text and at the same time give you better quality graphics and text.

In case you are interested, I have a 19" monitor. It is set for 1280 x 1024 pixels, 32 bit color quality and 90 Hz screen refresh rate. As you would expect at these numbers, it produces outstanding textual and graphics reproduction.

What's on **computer radio** these days?

by Stan Leese

Jeff Levy has moved from KFI to KNX (1070 am) on Saturdays and Sundays from noon to 3 pm. Jeff Levy spends most of his time answering phone questions, with a lot of ads thrown in. A lot of the questions are repeats over the weeks. *http://www.jefflevy.com*

Leo Laporte, who bills himself as "The Tech Guy," replaced Jeff Levy on KFI (640 am). He is on at a slightly different time —12-3 pm on Sat. & Sun. He answers phone questions. But, based on a single lesson, he gives a lot of good advice without prompting from callers. *http://leo.typepad.com/tsn/*

Marc and Mark are on KABC (790 am) from 9-11 am on the same days. Besides answering some phone questions, Marc and Mark have people on who tell about their new software/games/hardware. *http://www.kabc.com/showdj.asp?DJID=3668*
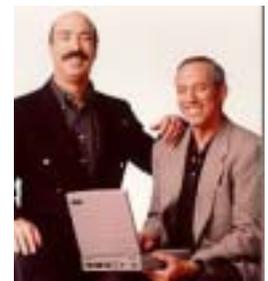
What are these things called ports?

Source: Sygate January 2004 newsletter

This tip applies to both Sygate Personal Firewall Pro and Sygate Personal Firewall products. When you allow or block an application (browser, email, or ftp client) from a dialog box, you are making a decision to allow or prevent network communication for that specific application. Computer "ports" can be thought of as individual 'communication channels' for these applications. To simplify, just like the unique broadcast channels for a television... each application on your computer (Browser, Email program, FTP program, etc.) requires a specific channel to communicate over a network such as the Internet. The following is a list of a few common ports or "channels" that are associated with the programs you may use day-to-day.

- **IE, Mozilla, Opera Internet Browser** – Port 21, 20
- **Email** (SMTP — Simple Mail Transfer Protocol) – Port 25
- **DNS** (Domain Name Server) – Port 53 –- Port 443

If you are interested, a very well written and more detailed description is available at the following URL: *http://computer.howstuffworks.com/firewall.htm*

For the more technically oriented, visit the SAN's assigned ports (RFCs) at *www.sans.org*.

Digital photos made easier with
Jasc Photo Album

by Siles Bazerman

I am in the midst of editing 60 digital photos taken on a Disney Cruise. I went in December with six members of my family. Before I went I put all thirteen of my subscription mail list memberships on browser mode. That meant that I could access them and read mail using my browser, but would not receive email from them. Since these lists range from one message every few weeks to over 200 per day, I did not want my mailbox filling up while I was gone. I would suggest that you consider doing the same if you are going to be gone for very long. Actually I did not access the Internet during the entire ten days I was gone even though access was available on the ship, and even free during certain specified days and times. Yes, I survived, as can you, and I did not even miss it.

I am editing these pictures using both Jasc Paint Shop Pro v8 and Jasc Paint Shop Photo Album v4. The January 2004 issue of PC World reviews nine photo editing programs and rated Paint Shop Pro v8 the "best buy." It is not quite as full featured as Adobe Photoshop, but is priced a $95 versus $649 for the Adobe suite. It fairs very well in competition with Adobe Photoshop Elements however.

I download my camera using Photo Album as it makes it very easy to sort pictures by date, event or topic. You can easily move a picture from one album to another by drag and drop or use "send to." It even has some photo editing capabilities, and I usually use them for a quick and dirty edit to see if the photo is worth keeping. I switch to Paint Shop Pro for the actual editing, but switch back to Photo Album for printing. This latter change is not necessary, but is just my preference. My wife sometimes likes me to do some printing with borders or trim effects which this program allows.

Microsoft has released to beta SP2 for Windows XP in late December. The full release will be available in late first quarter of early second quarter 2004. It is much more security oriented than any previous patch.

First, updating will be more automatic than previously. Microsoft learned that even IT managers can not be counted to update Windows XP on a regular basis, even with critical security updates. Second, the built in firewall will be activated by default upon installation. There have been reported cases of virus or Trojan infestation upon installation with broadband connections always on. Some people run without firewalls or AV programs, as they feel they are imune or that it will only enrich software companies to use them. They completely disregard the free programs feeling that they can not be effective if they are free. They also probably click "YES" on every popup they see, and then wonder why their machine runs so slow. Again they do not use popup stoppers or Spyware detection programs.

SP2 will probably contain a bi-directional firewall blocking both inbound and outbound communication that is not authorized by the user. Also it may contain a popup stopper. Remember this information is based on Alpha and very early Beta releases and may change by release date. Also, expect changes in both Outlook Express and Windows Messenger (not Instant Messenger) for more security. Active X will be modified to give the end user more control to block malware from running without user consent. This will not help those who blindly check everything without thinking.

This will be a huge download as it will not only contain new patches, but also all patches released since SP1. It will also contain the full SP1. It might pay to obtain a CD from Microsoft which should be available for just a nominal shipping and handling charge. Historically this has been about $9.95. It may also be available as a CD included with newsstand copies of computer magazines. SP1 was distributed that way in the UK, although not in the US.

Siles Bazerman is ORCOPUG's APCUG Representative and well-known user group columnist. His expert help appears in UG newsletters in the US and Canada. *siles.bazerman@gte.net.*

Computer worms cost businesses $55-billion

Businesses world-wide lost an estimated $55 billion due to computer worms in 2003, according to Trend Micro. Losses in 2002 were between $20 and $30 billion, up from $13 billion in 2001. Trend Micro predicts that figure will increase again in 2004.

Spammers forced to use gibberish

Though the incidence of spam may not be decreasing, the coherence of the messages is definitely decreasing. Spammers who wish to evade filters must garble their messages; most people are unlikely to open e-mail with subject lines full of gibberish.

C/Net.com says, "Currently, the Internet is swarming with mutants like this: "Cheap Val?(u)m, Viagr@, X(a)n@x, Som@ Di3t Pills Many M3ds RIZfURqgHr77B." *http://tinyurl.com/286d7*

Source: SANS NewsBites

NewsBites is a free online newsletter available at www.sans.org

Internet Humor

World's First Parking Lot for Women

Submitted by Ted Wirtz

Gates On Spam:

The End Is Near

Microsoft's Bill Gates is promising the virtual elimination of spam in two years, citing three separate weapons being readied for the fight against the burgeoning junk-email problem.

Speaking at the annual World Economic Forum, in Davos, Switzerland, Gates said monetary penalties against the spammers would be the decisive tactic in thwarting unwanted email. Email senders would be required to attach a payment as a form of postage to their messages. If the receiver recognizes the message as spam, he simply would accept payment from the sender. Eventually, the senders of spam would suffer financially and spam would dwindle.

Gates, however, noted that his predictions haven't always come true.

The Microsoft chairman said another method could involve human intervention, with the receiver getting a message that is required to contain proof that an acceptable sender generated it. The final method would involve a requirement that email senders' computers solve a "computational puzzle." Again, the programming involved to solve this puzzle would prove too expensive for mass spammers.

January 26, 2004, TechWeb News — www.techweb.com

Save with H-P's digital camera offer

Save up to $75 with an HP digital camera and a select HP printer purchase through March 27, 2004.

Save $50 when you purchase a non-HP digital camera and a select HP printer. For more details, see *http://tinyurl.com/2tp93*

Review…

Course, and Error Messages (Blue Screen of Death) that look like good reference material.

The list price of this book is $30 but use the O'Reilly discount or check PriceGrabber.com (I have seen the book listed for $18.39).

The book is definitely more than just a collection of annoyances and is a worthwhile addition to your library of computer books.

(Get the user group code for your O'Reilly discount on the Members' Only! page at www.orcopug.org. — LG)

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A user group membership is the best accessory you can buy for your computer. *— Ash Nallawalla, Melbourne PC Users' Group*

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Newsletter deadline February 22

Send a printed copy of the newsletter to a friend. Use this mailing sheet for the address. Staple newsletter together at top left corner with this last page facing out. Fold in half, so this page is visible. Tape ends together, stamp and mail.

Visitors are welcome! Meetings are FREE!

The Orange County IBM PC Users' Group regular meeting is scheduled for the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Sunny Hills Racquet Club, 1900 Camino Loma, Fullerton, (714) 992-1300. For more information, call (714) 990-0580, or go to *www.orcopug.org.*

Directions: From the 91 Freeway, exit at Euclid and go north. Go past Bastanchury and turn west (left) onto Rosecrans. Sunny Hills Racquet Club is located on the south (left) side of the street.

Rosecrans | Sunny Hills Racquet Club

Bastanchury

N

91 Freeway | Euclid
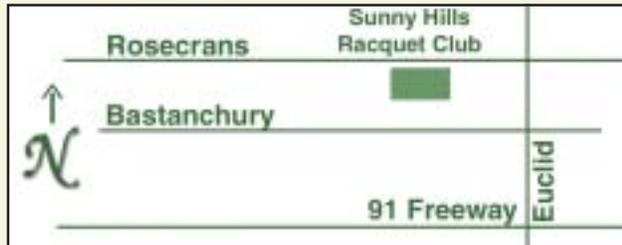
Planning meetings are held the third Thursday of every month at 7 p.m. at Downey Savings & Loan, one block east of Harbor at Bastanchury in Fullerton. **All members are invited to attend the planning meetings!**

Special offers for our user group members are on the Members' Only web page at *www.orcopug.org.* (No access without member number.)

Check out our award-winning web site!

www.orcopug.org

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- **Affiliation with worldwide group**

A user group membership is the best accessory you can buy for your computer. — *Ash Nallawalla, Melbourne PC Users' Group*

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6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, February 10

Innovative Lighting Techology

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Orange County
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