# NIBBLES & BITS

**February 2006**

**Orange County IBM PC Users' Group**

**Tuesday, February 14, 6:30 p.m. at Placentia Library, Placentia — Bring a friend!**

# ProtoPage: It's a corkboard in your browser!

*by Linda Gonse*

**M**ike Lyons will demonstrate a remarkable new web technique utilized in Proto-Page at our February 14 meeting.

You may never have heard about a web page that you can change right in your browser! Moreover, without knowing programming language, you can personalize the web page for your own use — create and edit color-coded sticky notes, set-up a To Do list, store your bookmarks, customize page and panel colors, insert your favorite RSS feeds, put in a weather reporting service, and even add new pages!

"Protopage (version 2) is a free service that is astonishingly easy to use and doesn't even require registration. (If you create a page and wish to make it persist at an easy-to-remember URL, you must register. But it's still free.)," said Brad Hill in his blog at *http://tinyurl.com/ddkh8*.

ProtoPage also provides a default search panel with keyword boxes for Google, Yahoo!, Dictionary.com, and Wikipedia.

Interactive web pages, such as those in ProtoPage, are possible through the use of Ajax, an acronym for *Asynchronous JavaScript And XML*. Ajax is a web development technique for creating interactive web applications. The intent is to shift a great deal of interaction to the Web surfer's computer, exchanging data with the server behind the scenes, so that the entire Web page does not have to be reloaded each time the user makes a change.

This is meant to increase the Web page's interactivity,
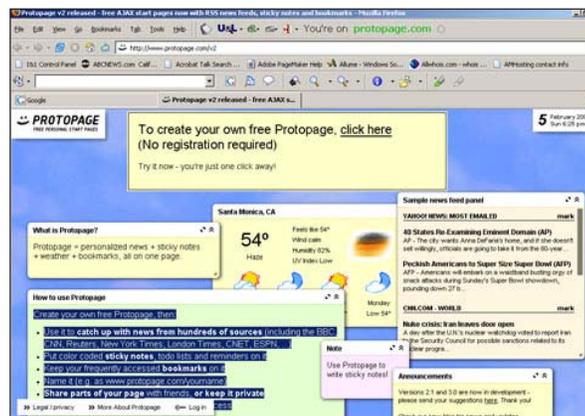


speed, and usability. The technique uses a combination of XHTML (or HTML) and CSS for marking up and styling information. according to Wikipedia.

Ajax is not a technology in itself, but a term that refers to the use of a group of technologies together. Still, users of the technique can enjoy the benefits of it without knowing the language or theory of any of the technologies that created it. The learning curve is negligible.

Best of all, you can share your ProtoPage URL with friends. You can also designate which pages you want them to see, or to keep private so only you can view what's on the page.

Many users choose to set their customized ProtoPage as the start page for their browsers. When the browser first opens, the page is ready to use.

**Volume 24 - Number 2**

# Notepad

**Mike Lyons** sent me an email about FotoChute, a digital storage device he bought at Office Depot. It was a great sale and I planned to share the message with everyone.

Then, I realized the expiration date was that same day. In fact, it was only three hours away!

So, I had a tough choice. Send out the message to my fellow clubmembers, or jump in the car and drive down to Temecula and buy the FotoChute and get $100 worth of rebates. Hmmm…

However, you can still read about **FotoChute** on page 12, and you can find it at some fantastic prices through *PriceGrabber.com.*

Talk about elegant writing… I regard **Pim Borman**, SW Indiana PC Users Group, as one of the finest writers in user group newsletters. Although, (in his current article on page 5), I discovered he does exhibit a certain amount of—shall I say insensitivity—toward computer-controlled toilet seats.

In case you haven't visited our website lately—if only in search of the special raffle keyword—you need to head on over there now. There is a list of dynamic links to interesting and timely articles in networking, comput-ing, and technology news on our main page. The links change automatically as the articles change on their home pages. This is what **RSS feeds** are all about. Please take a look and try out this new technology. It is easy and free.

Then, I hope you'll email me and let me know what you think of the feeds. Or, you might suggest other subjects that we could also carry.

The War on Spyware continues with it now being referred to (on page 12) as a **"global pandemic."** Learn all you can about it and join us in stamping it out. As computer users:

### We don't want it!
### We don't have to have it!

**Linda Gonse,** *editor@orcopug.org*

# Letters

## Member retires to Utah

My lovely wife and I are at the Utah ranch having a great time. It is so clear and beautiful here in Utah I can see for 100 miles.

I got my last check from the school district. That made me sad. I loved working for them. The greatest job I ever had.

Next month I get my regular retirement check. It will soon be a lot better when I get it through my head I do not have to go to work anymore.

Thanks for keeping the e-mail coming my way from you and the great computer club.

I only run around the City of Delta, Utah and City of Deseret, Utah with a very, very light jacket. At night it gets cold. I need a coat then. The sun comes up every day and is nice and warm.

This last Sunday I went out and changed license plates on the car and then worked in my warehouse only in my pajamas for three hours, that is how nice it is here.

I love the country living in the city of Deseret. We have neighbors but do not see them. They are far enough I have no problems doing and dressing the way I want to.

**Tony Lake**
**tonylake@earthlink.net**

## Podcast and website news

On the Steve Gibson/Leo Laporte Security Now podcast, Kerio Personal Firewall was discussed. It was recent-ly bought by Sunbelt Software (makers of Counter Spy). The price was reduc-ed from $49 to $19 and currently there is a special for $14.99. There is also a free version. Steve Gibson used to recommend Zone Alarm but said it has gotten too bloated. He now recom-mends Kerio.

While I was at the Sunbelt website, *www.sunbelt-software.com*, I looked at the founder's blog site, *http://sunbeltblog.blogspot.com/*. He had

some stuff on the Kama Sutra virus that is due to hit Feb. 3. He also had a graphic showing which file extensions were most likely to carry malware, and some other interesting reading.

**Mike Lyons**
**mike@orcopug.org**

## Fundraising reminder

We do still collect printer cartridges for recycling, but only HP, Sharp, Xerox Dell, Canon and Lexmark.

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**Club information, review guidelines, updates, and members' pages at www.orcopug.org**

**apcug**   Member of
The Association of
Personal Computer User Groups

## Member expiration dates

*Submitted by Mike Lyons*

## January raffle winners

**ThumbsPlus 7,  $49\***
Sid Liptz, Not Present
Charlie Moore, Winner
**Smart Computing PC Files,  $10\***
Joe Gionet, Winner
**MS t-shirt,  $5\***
Joe Francis, Winner
**MS pen & ball,  $10\***
Frank Bollinger, Winner
**MS Genuine t-shirt,  $5\***
Terry Terrazas, Expired
Linda Gonse, Not Present
Sid Liptz, Not Present
Joe Gionet, Previous Winner
Lothar Loehr, Winner
**Antics 3D t-shirt,  $5\***
Lothar Loehr, Previous Winner
Ron Schultz, Not Present
Larry Klees, Winner
**Antics 3D t-shirt,  $5\***
Ann Carnahan, Not Present
Herman Beverburg, Not Present
Bud Barkhurst, Not Present
Glenn Emigh, Not Present
Michael Lyons, Winner
**Antics 3D t-shirt,  $5\***
Terry Schiele, Winner
**Spam Sleuth,  $39\***
Bill Pampaniya, Not Present
Larry Klees, Previous Winner
Siles Bazerman, Not Present
Ann Carnahan, Not Present
Ralph Seymour, Winner
**Laptop Sleeve,  $20\***
Bud Barkhurst, Not Present
Dan Gonse, Not Present
Carl Westberg, Winner
*\*Estimated value*

*Submitted by Mike Lyons*

**Member of the O'Reilly User Group Program**

# Members' email

Please send a request to be added to the list below. Email: *editor@orcopug.org.*

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**Wirtz, Ted**
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*\*Updated info 11/05 by Charlie Moore*

**lease recycle this newsletter —**
***Send it to a friend!***

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# Membership Application

**New Member** ☐        **Renewal\*** ☐
**\* Please fill out all the blanks below to help us keep your information updated in our database.**

**Don't lose your membership benefits… renew now!**  Expired members are not eligible to win raffle prizes or to access the Members Only web page.

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 your check payable to ***ORCOPUG*** and mail to:
**ORCOPUG, P.O. BOX 716, Brea, California 92822-0716**

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

# User group deals

## 2005 fundraiser made possible by 22 vendors!

We sincerely thank the following companies who donated prizes to make our 2005 fundraising raffle possible: **AirLink 101, Aviar Inc., Blue Squirrel, Brother, Cerious Software, Corel, Ink Dot Lady, iolo Technologies, Microsoft, Microsoft Press, Microvision Development, O'Reilly, Prentice Hall, Que & Sams, RoadWired, Roxio, Smart Computing, SmartDraw.com, Solid Documents, Stardock Systems, Sunbelt Software, and User Group Relations (Gene Barlow).**

## Members' Only! page is benefit of ORCOPUG membership

ORCOPUG membership entitles you to access the Members' Only page for dozens of special discounts and offers. Go to *www.orcopug.org.* Click on "Members' Only." The user-name is your first initial and last name (lower case, no spaces). The password is **R** followed by your member number. If you forget your member number, send an email to Charlie Moore, *charlie@ orcopug.org.*

## Magazine discounts only for user group members

|                          | 1 Year  | 2 Years | 3 Years |
|--------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Computer Games           | $10.95  | $20.95  | $29.95  |
| Computer Gaming World    | $14.95  | $28.95  | $41.95  |
| Computer Shopper         | $16.97  | $32.95  | $47.95  |
| Dr. Dobbs Journal        | $15.95  | $30.95  | —       |
| Maximum PC               | $ 9.95  | $18.95  | $27.95  |
| Microsoft System Journal | $21.95  | $39.95  | —       |
| PC Gamer                 | $12.95  | —       | —       |
| PC Magazine              | $25.97  | $48.95  | $68.95  |
| (22/44/66 issues)        |         |         |         |
| PC World                 | $16.95  | —       | —       |
| Videomaker               | $11.95  | $21.95  | —       |
| Wired                    | $ 6.00  | $12.00  | $17.00  |

*Revised November 2005*

These prices are for new subscriptions and renewals. All orders must be accompanied by a check, cash or money order. Make payable to *Herb Goodman*, and mail to: **Herb Goodman, 8295 Sunlake Drive, Boca Raton, FL 33496.** Call or write: 561-488-4465, *hgoodman@prodigy.net.*

Please allow 10 to 12 weeks for your magazines to start. For renewals you must supply an address label from your present subscription to insure the correct start of your renewal. I will mail a renewal notice to every subscriber about 3 months prior to their expiration date. I carry over 300 titles also at excellent prices. Just email me for a price and I'll email a price back.

**KEYWORD RAFFLE**
**LOOK FOR THE NEW KEYWORD!**

**4th Special Prize Drawing! Look for a new keyword hidden in Nibbles & Bits or on the ORCOPUG website each month.**

If your name is drawn at the next meeting and you know the keyword, you will take home a prize!

Last month, **Terry Schiele**'s name was drawn. He did not know the secret keyword. That prize will added to a new prize in the next drawing.

# Reviews

## Webster's
### College Dictionary from Random House

*by Terry Currier*
*winnersug@aol.com*

Published electronically by WordGenius, this is an Unabridged Dictionary. After you install it an icon appears on the screen. When you come upon a word you don't know the meaning of, highlight it (double-click) and drag it over to the icon.

It also works for misspelled words. I would have preferred a hotkey combination to bring it up, but the drag and drop worked well.

If you only know how a word starts put in wildcard symbols. For example the word *dictionary*, put in *dict\** and it looks for any word that starts with *dict* – *dicta* to *dictyosome*. If I use *?* when I don't know just one or two letters, WordGenius looks up whatever could replace those letters, such as *dic?ion?ry*.

Great for crossword puzzles.

The Random House Webster's Unabridged Dictionary comes with more than 315,000 entries. It also gives voice pronunciations over your speakers. If the user is visually impaired they can scale it to the size needed. It worked with Microsoft Office, and Internet Explorer. The unabridged dictionary sells for $49.95.

# The New, the Best, and
## the Worst

*Collected by Pim Borman*
*SW Indiana PC Users Group, Inc.*

**Virtual Living**

I've partaken of my share of computer games, sometimes neglecting more urgent tasks. Using a computer adds significantly to the enjoyment of simple games, such as solitaire or Mah Jongg. During a recent power outage, I tried to kill some time playing Freecell with a regular deck of cards, but I quickly gave up in frustration – it just ain't the same.

I've never found the patience, however, to get involved in more elaborate computer games, such as Doom or Myst, let alone the elaborate online games to which many gamers are addicted. I use the term "addicted" advisedly after reading a review in *The Economist* (12/17/05) of the book *Synthetic Worlds: The Business and Culture of Online Games,* authored by Edward Castronova. Millions of people spend hours each week participating in "massively multiplayer online role playing games," inevitably abbreviated to MMORPGs. Successful players can amass tools and weapons that allow them to further penetrate the game's virtual world. On the side, however, a lively trade has developed selling (for real money, on E-Bay for instance) some of those artifacts to less proficient, or impatient, players. We're not talking chicken feed either: one player reportedly paid $26,500 for an island in the game "Project Entropia" and made his money back by selling hunting and mining rights to other players. In South Korea, police intervened in the robbery of in-game money that was sold for $1.3 million real dollars. Monopoly players, eat your hearts out!

*Scene from Myst V: End of the Ages*

Companies in China are said to pay thousands of people, known as "farmers," to play MMORPGs all day and then profit from selling the in-game goods to other players for real money. *The Economist"* was interested in this book because the author performed an economic analysis, not only of the real participants, but also of the fictional game worlds. The author determined the Gross National Product per capita of the fictional game world "EverQuest" to be $2,000, comparable to Bulgaria, but far higher than that of China or India. He discusses the phenomenon of rampant (virtual) inflation because killing monsters pays the killers, but there are always more monsters to be killed. To balance the growing number of successful, and thus wealthy players, the games generate a subset of computer-controlled "bot" citizens, doomed to be poor forever.

In one survey, 20% of MMORPG players reportedly regarded the game world as their real world, with Earth just a place to eat and sleep. The author concludes, "we should take a serious look at the game we have begun to play." (*Thanks to Louis Ritz*)

**Simple Digital Movies**

No question about it, digital camcorders are an infinite improvement over the 8-mm movies we used to shoot. We wish they had been around when our kids were young, as we review the jittery, out-of-focus images of our family some 40 years ago, still of nostalgic interest. What digital and movie cameras have in common is that they are best suited for recording moving objects, in particular young children. Otherwise, still cameras are usually better. The newer digital cameras, with higher pixel count, offer an in-between possibility. My Casio Exilim EX-Z750 camera, with 7.2 mega pixels, has

several movie settings to allow taking short movies of moving subjects when the occasion arises. With the high pixel count, the camera records in 640x480 size, large enough to present a good image when played back on a computer or TV screen. A small microphone simultaneously records sounds. The only size limitation is the size of the memory card. A built-in editor allows simple editing of the sequences. I recorded our little dog, running back and forth along the fence

barking at the neighbor's dog. When I played it back on the TV, she perked up her ears and merrily barked right along with herself. Check and see if your camera offers this feature – it may come in handy some time!

**The Swash**

The era of personal computing is generally considered to have started with the cover article in the January 1975 *Popular Electronics* magazine of the Altair 8800 computer kit. It was described as "a full-blown computer that can hold its own against sophisticated mini-computers now on the market." At a cost of under $400, the kit was a runaway success with electronics tinkerers.

*Popular Electronics* has long since disappeared. In its place many computer magazines popped up, dedicated to computer programming and instruction in the use of the limited commercial programs available. As individual programmers have been replaced by teams of thousands, there is little the individual can do to tinker with his computer other than to try to reboot when things go wrong.

Computers have become tools for productivity or relaxation, and many of the computer magazines have disap-peared. The remaining publications dedicate themselves mostly to discus-sing the merits and cost of computer peripherals and have broadened their coverage to items such as digital cameras, cell phones, PDAs, and high definition TV sets. Maybe *PC Magazine* ought to rename itself "*Digital Gadgets."*

It seems that anything digital is now fit for discussion under the heading "computers," no matter how far-fetched. An extreme example showed up on the weekly computer page of *The Evansville Courier and Press* (12/18/05) with a discussion of the Swash, a hi-tech toilet seat that rinses

and warms people's bottoms. The high-end model comes with a remote control (whatever that is supposed to do), thus qualifying for mention on the computer page. Sigh… (*http://www.brondell.com/intro.php4*)

Pim Borman is website editor for the SW Indiana PC Users Group, Inc. at *http://swipcug.apcug.org..* Email Pim at *swipcug@sigecom.net.*

# Further adventures with backup programs

*by Bob Click*

Since my last article about using NTI Shadow backup, I downloaded a backup program, called "Cobian," that a friend gave me the URL for. One night I decided to install it and see if I could figure it out. When I started to install it, I got a message saying that if I had a firewall, Zone Alarm in particular, it could be a problem for Cobian. In fact, the author pretty much said other firewalls were not as offensive as Zone Alarm and I got the distinct impression that he didn't have much use for Zone Alarm and it would not work well with the Cobian backup for some reason.

At that point I stopped the install-ation and was glad that at least he told people up front about it. So much for the free Cobian backup.

I then decided that I would try Microsoft's backup included in XP

Professional. I got it running and picked the same files to backup as I had with the .99 cent one that at least fit them all nicely on my 256 meg USB Flash drive, but even my one gig USB Flash drive was not large enough to hold the files it was trying to backup according to a message it gave me after starting. I rechecked what I was asking for, then added up the sizes of the files, but again after the program started backing up the files, got the same message about the drive not having enough room. My computations told me it should have needed only about175 megs of space. Bummer! Such is the life of a klutz.

When I finally couldn't figure out how to cope with this problem after reading as much in Help that I could find, I gave up on it. However, I could not find out how to edit the backup I had scheduled or how to even delete it. At least I got it so it only is supposed to backup once a day and actually does not finish it, but now I have it on my Start menu of programs and have no idea what to do about it. But since it doesn't bother me any more I should leave well enough alone.

I have another backup program that was given to me a year ago so I might give that one a try one of these days. Its tough doing everything the hard way.

Bob Click is well-known by user groups everywhere as The Deals Guy. His lat-est special offers and discount deals report is available from our Members' Only page on www.orcopug.org.

They don't take Epson and Brother.
Tell everyone to save their used printer cartridges and bring them to the meetings where we collect them in a big box. When we get enough, we turn them in for a nice rebate that goes into the treasury to help pay our expenses.

**Lothar Loehr**
**lloehr@hotmail.com**

# Windows Vista
### Clear. Confident. Connected.

**Microsoft has not released a full new version of its desktop operating system since Windows XP debuted in October 2001. A new Windows version was expected in 2004, but the work on Vista, then known by its Longhorn codename, was bogged down by delays. In late 2004, Microsoft scaled back its plans for Longhorn and promised a 2006 ship date.** *http://news.zdnet.com/2100-1009_22-6026576.html*

**The scheduled release date for Windows Vista is July 23, 2006, according to sources. That release date is only scheduled for PC vendors so that systems will be made Vista-ready before Christmas. The general public availability is projected to be around late September to early October 2006, five years after the release of Windows XP, making this the longest time span between releases of desktop versions of Microsoft's Windows operating system.** *http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Windows_Vista*

## Beta 2 of Windows Vista

*by Gene Powell of San Diego, CA — To SW Indiana PC Users Group,Inc.*

I've been asked by John Powell, my uncle and world famous banjo picker and tuba player, to write a review of the upcoming Vista version of Windows.

This is build 5231 which was released in mid October 2005. This review will be done as I conduct my exploration of the OS on an AMD 64 bit processor running on an ASUS A8V board at 2.2 MHz with 2GB of RAM. I'm using a spare 40 GB Maxtor hard drive which I formatted with MAXBLAST from Maxtor. The system is networked with a 32 bit Windows XP unit and an IBM ThinkPad.

The screen will show the opening page of Windows Vista (graphic above).

One of the things I found missing in this beta was the wizard to create a home network. I overcame this by using the Network disk created with the wizard in Windows XP on my 32 bit machine.

Clicking on All Programs brings up the list of programs. The Control Panel has a new look.

The Classic View gives us all the icons viewable by scrolling.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, Windows Vista has several planned new features such as an entirely new user-interface called Aero, improved searching technology dubbed Search, and an XML specification designed for document formats and similar in many ways to Adobe's PDF entitled XPS.

Windows Vista also has an entirely new development API , WinFX, along with several other key technologies. In addition, current speculation points to several different editions of Windows Vista being released, including starter, home, and professional editions. System requirements of the new software are also higher than previous versions of Windows. XPS (the "XML Paper Specification," formerly code named "Metro"and subsuming the Next Generation Print Path [NGPP] marketing concept) is Microsoft's initiative to integrate document creation and viewing into its Windows operating system.

The specification itself describes the formats and rules for distributing, archiving, rendering, and processing XPS documents. Most notably, XPS uses the Windows Presentation Foundation, so that the methods used for rendering for display in Windows are the same as those used for rendering for print devices.

XPS is viewed as a competitor to Adobe's portable document format. *http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Windows_Vista#Hardware_requirements.*

The Pictures button on the Start menu brings up a viewer and image organizer. I found the slide viewer would not work with my video card, an e-GeForce MX4000 with the latest Nvidia drivers installed. The viewer does allow for magnifying the images with a slider under the views on the tool bar.

Thanks to Pim Borman, SW Indiana Computer Users Group, Inc. editor and webmaster for sending us this article. — *LG*

## What's the best format for DVD burners?

*by Fred Langa, The Langa List*

I recommend +/-R DVD burners, dual-layer if possible; and -R media. There's actually not a lot of difference between the +R and -R media, but I've seen some tests that give a slight edge to the -R format; and there also seem to be more -R drives out there. So, for what it's worth, on my own PC, my burner is a +/- unit, and I use mostly -R media.)

Sign up for Fred Langa's free, online newsletter, "The Langa List" at *www.langa.com.*

## Things you should know about medications

### Are they expired?

Toss out medicines, prescription and OTC alike, as soon as they expire. After the use-by date, they won't be effective and may even be harmful. Don't flush old drugs down the toilet, because they can contaminate groundwater and end up in the drinking water supply. Instead, make sure they're sealed in a childproof container and toss them out with the trash.

### Over-the-Counter

The the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Consumer Healthcare Products Association (CHPA) has prepared a guide to understanding and deciding whether to use nonprescription, over-the-counter (OTC) medicines. Subjects include how to read a label, drug interactions, checking for expired medicine, pregnancy, breastfeeding, giving OTC medi-cine to children, child-resistant packaging, and protecting yourself from tampering. — *www.fda.gov/ cder/consumerinfo/ WhatsRightForYou.htm*

*Submitted by Tony Lake*

# Microsoft pulls plug on its older products

*Researched and compiled by Linda Gonse*

In case you weren't aware of it, Microsoft developed a policy for the length of time that support is provided for any one of its products. **For instance, support for XP Home will end December 31, 2006.** XP Pro, because it is a business product, will get "extended support" for five additional years following the expiration of mainstream support, which will come two years after Vista's debut.

Basically, Microsoft's Support Lifecycle policy was developed to standardize Microsoft product support policies for Business and Development software, and for Consumer, Hardware, Multimedia, and Business Solutions products. The policy was originally announced on October 15, 2002 and updated on June 1, 2004. The update applies to most Business and Development software products that were in mainstream support at that date, and to future product versions.

The new Support Lifecycle policy for Consumer, Hardware, Multimedia, and Business Solutions products offers a minimum of 5 years of mainstream (or the current, typical) support from the date of a product's general availability.

**Products with a new version that is released annually** (such as Microsoft Money, Microsoft Encarta, Microsoft Picture It!, and Microsoft Streets & Trips) **will receive a minimum of 3 years of mainstream support** from the product's date of availability.

Extended support, which includes all paid support options and security-related hotfix support that is provided at no charge, is not offered for Consumer, Hardware, Multimedia, or Business Solutions products. Most products will also receive at least 8 years of online self-help support. (Microsoft Xbox games are currently not included in the Support Lifecycle policy.)

With extended support in mind, it's important to note that users of Windows 95, 98, and Me shouldn't expect much from Microsoft. It announced last year that "extended support" for these OSes would expire on June 30, 2006. But that only means the company will issue patches until then for issues that are rated "Critical." After that, nothing is expected in the way of official updates.

But we have to admit by now that these platforms suffer from a variety of problems that won't go away whether supported or not, and we may be better off upgrading to newer ones.

Check out support timelines for your product. Go to these URLs: *http:// support.microsoft.com/gp/lifeselect* (products listed by Product Family) or *http://support.microsoft.com/gp/lifeselectindex* (the Support Lifecycle Index).

# What you should know

## about routers... *by Ted Wirtz*

I am partial to the Linksys products although there are other good lines out there as well. Linksys is now an arm of Cisco, so Cisco must have liked what they saw.

I am using a Linksys BEFSR41. Once I set it up, I never had to change it. I do change my password periodically. Other than that, I have never had to change anything.

My ISP uses PPPoE which means that you need to go through a login process each time you connect. Each time you connect the ISP assigns a temporary IP address (Dynamic IP) which is yours only until you end the session. Behaves like a high speed dial-up. I have the Linksys set up to automatically perform that handshake whenever I access the internet. It acts as if I have a permanent or "Static IP" even though I don't. I never have to go through the login and password process. The Linksys takes care of it automatically. The beauty of dynamic IP is that when you're not on-line, there is no connection to your computer for a hacker to break.

There is a good possibility that your cable ISP may assign you a static IP. A static IP is an address that belongs to you until you cancel your service with the ISP. Since the IP is always assigned to you, as an example you could set up a web server at your address, register your domain name, and people would be able to always find your web server through the DNS servers. Static IP also greatly simplifies VPN (Virtual Private Network) connections. With a VPN set up, as an example you could have your home workstation configured as another workstation on the Union's network. You could work at home, and access all the resources available to you on their internal network. One obvious downside is that a static IP is "always on" and is a potential target for hackers to exploit. That is why additional security measures must be taken. VPN connections are always encrypted.

If you have only one computer to connect, the BEFSR41 is the way to go. As a minimum, it performs NAT (Network Address Translation) which means the router translates its external address (the one seen by the internet) into a completely different one on the computer side of the

# COMPUTER TRIVIA

Terry Currier, Winners user group, recently put a PowerPoint presentation together with questions and answers about computer trivia. It's a lot of fun. Here are a few of the questions. Think you can answer them?

**How do you pronounce SCSI?**

A)   ess cee ess eye
B)   sicksy
C)    scuzzy
D)   sucksy

**1**

**What was the first personal computer?**

A)    The TRS-80
B)    HAL
C)    The Apple
D)     The Kerbak-1

**2**

**The type of UNIVAC computer delivered to the U.S. Census Bureau in 1951 was sold with a printer that cost:**

A)   $185,000
B)   $92,500
C)   $250
C)   $260,000

**3**

**Computer demos have a long and glorious history that all started in 1960, with the PDP-1, a $125,000 precursor to the minicomputer. What game was played to test the setup of the PDP-1?**

A)    Spacewar!
B)     Space Invaders
C)    Pac Man
D)    Splat man

**4**

*Answers page 11.*

# Norton 'fesses up
## about its use of rootkits

Symantec revealed that it has been using a rootkit-like method, similar to the Sony BMG rootkit, in Norton SystemWorks 2005 and 2006. This technique was used to hide a directory that protects items deleted from the Recycle Bin.

Symantec was warned by security experts, including Mark Russinovich and researchers at the antivirus vendor F-Secure, that hiding this directory could also give hackers a great hiding place for infected programs. The company has released an update for this problem, which is downloadable via LiveUpdate.

Symantec product engineers have developed and released an update for products affected by this exposure. The update is available through Symantec LiveUpdate by running a manual update. To manually update via Symantec LiveUpdate, users should:

    * Open Norton SystemWorks
    * Click on LiveUpdate
    * Run LiveUpdate until all available Symantec product updates are downloaded and installed

This update will require a system reboot.

Symantec is not aware of any attempts by hackers to conceal malicious code in the NProtect folder. This update is provided proactively to eliminate the possibility of that type of activity.

As a part of normal best practices, users should keep vendor-supplied patches for all application software and operating systems up-to-date.

Symantec recommends customers update their products to protect against any probability of this type of threat. — *LG*

## Column Excerpt
## *The Rootkit of All Evil*

*by Bruce Sterling*

"It's time for lawmakers, trade groups, and public-interest organizations to get down to the hard work of hammering out standards for what businesses can and can't do to customers' computers. Such an effort will need to be international, because the Net knows no bounds. It will need to come up with simple understandable language for end-user licensing agreements. It will need to draw red lines around unacceptably invasive hacks and map gray areas between spying and market research.

"I'm not holding my breath though. We allowed manufacturers to claim more and more control over the ways we use their products and what they can do with our information. It should come as no surprise that they're using that power as a cover for bigger, possibly more lucrative schemes.

"You may not be interested in the digital rights war, but that doesn't mean you'll have the luxury of sitting on the sidelines. Because the other side is very, very interested in you."

*—Wired magazine, February 2006*

They also have the Random House Webster's College Dictionary which has more than 87,000 word entries for $19.95.

You can purchase and download each from their website *http://www.wordgenius.com.* The Unabridged is a mere 14 MB while the College version is 7 MB.

Available in February 2006.

Terry Currier has been involved in computer user groups since 1984, and is the past president of North Orange County Computer Club, and founding president and current vice-president of WINNERS (WINdows usERS) user group in Fountain Valley.

**Christmas Raffle Book Review**

## Digital Photography Pocket Guide

*by Mike Lyons, President*

After the Christmas raffle, several members came up to me and said that they had hoped to win "Digital Photography Pocket Guide" (second edition) by Derrick Story. Since there was a lot of interest in the book, I thought I'd give you my impressions.

The book (which includes color photos) is divided into three sections: "What is It?" "What Does it Do?" and "How Do I?" There is also an appendix with some quick reference

**User Group Awareness and Action is Vital in Ridding Our Computers of Spyware!**

The graphic on the left can be downloaded from our website at www.orcopug.org and used on user groups' webpages and in user group newsletters.
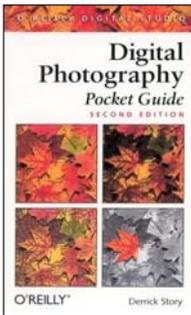
WE DON'T WANT IT!
WE DON'T HAVE TO HAVE IT!

## Digital Photography…

tables.

Chapter One shows the front and back of a typical consumer point-n-shoot camera and an advanced camera. Each item on the camera is labeled and coded as a beginning, intermediate or advanced function. This section is nicely done and gives the reader a brief description of what each function does.

Chapter Two provided an alphabetical listing of the most useful digital and photographic terms that apply to digital photography. Not only is everything from Aperture priority and Zoom/magnify control discussed, but they also briefly cover Outdoor portraits, composition, and the decisive moment. The descriptions offer more that just the dictionary style explanation, often including tips or suggested uses.

Chapter Three is a deeper discussion (by deeper I mean one to two small pages at most) of various shooting situations that a photographer might encounter — things like: group shots, portraits, kids, weddings, action shots, architecture and landscapes. There is even a couple of pages on how to send your photos to family by e-mail.

The Appendix contains nine quick reference tables. They include lighting situations, flash modes, white balance settings, camera modes, metering modes, starting points for sunset and astrophotography, megapixel to print size, memory card capacity, and color temperature in Kelvin. For the advanced photographer, this is probably the most useful section.

For someone new to photography, I think this book does a good job of explaining the basics one needs to get started in digital photography. It tries to get the reader to know their camera so that, at least when the situation demands it, the photographer can get the shot because they know their camera and how and why they need to change things from the auto program setting.

O'Reilly Books, 2nd Edition, Dec. 2003. New at *Amazon.com* for $10.17. Used and new from vendors registered at Amazon beginning at $3.93.

## Letters…

### Betas: Not Siamese Fighting Fish

True beta testers were bound by a signed legally enforceable Non-Disclosure Agreement. When I started testing for Central Point for DOS utilities I legally could not even admit to being a tester. We were required to do a minimun number of testing per week and to submit weekly reports even if we found no bugs. No discussion even among beta testers was allowed.

The public "betas" that were sold, particularly MS, had no such requirements and could be freely discussed on a special board set up for those purchasers. To me public "betas" were worth the price because I had a number of months to write about things that the general public had no access to, and a headstart to trouble-shooting.

**Siles Bazerman**
**siles@orcopug.org**

### System Mechanic conflict

I got System Mechanic 6 Professional at the Christmas raffle. I planned to use it to improve my Windows XP Registry, and it did. However, it also created a problem. It seems that Adobe Photoshop Elements 4 puts the user name, organization and serial number into the Registry, and checks that information everytime it starts. Without that information Elements 4 declares a fatal error, puts up an error message and exits. As I said System Mechanic cleaned up my Registry and included Elements 4 user ID. This problem is addressed by Adobe support document 329663. So far I have not found any user ID problems with other programs.

**Charles Burgwin**
**ceburgwin@msn.com**

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## Answers to Computer Trivia (page 9)

**1. (c) scuzzy — SCSI stands for "small computer system interface " and it's the method by which you hook up extras —like and scanners —to your computer.**

**2. (d) The Kerbak-1 was the first personal computer, but it didn't last. It came out in 1969, and was advertised for $750 in Scientific American. Four years later, after a mere 40 were sold, the company shut down. Interestingly enough, HAL —the computer in Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A Space Odyssey —appeared in 1968, before the Kenbak -1. But it wasn't a personal computer, and it also wasn't, well, real. The Apple was first marketed in 1976, and Radio Shack first sold its TRS -80 in 1978.**

**3. (a) $185,000 — The printer that came with the first UNIVAC cost a cool $185,000. Adjusted for inflation, that would be $1,332,711.54 in 2004 dollars. A bargain printer today can be had for as little as $43.04 — $ 5.97 in 1951 dollars. The UNIVAC I itself cost $750,000, and was made by Remington Rand (and not IBM, as many suppose).**

**4. (a) Spacewar! The game was Spacewar!, and it has the honor of being the first computer game. An MIT student named Steven "Slug" Russell led the team that wrote it. Now these programmers are old enough to be members of the AARP. Space Invaders and Asteroids came later, during the golden age of the arcade game.**

*Check for more computer answers at trivia.com.*

# FotoChute
## creates buzz in forum

*by Mike Lyons*

I was reading one of the photo forums yesterday and the buzz was about a SmartDisk 20G battery powered hard drive for photographers. Everyone that had one (the longest ownership was two months) all said they "worked like a charm."

It is a self-contained unit that allows photographers to transfer files in the field directly from camera or card reader onto FotoChute's hard drive. That way the photographer can reuse his card. It is ideal when you are on a trip and don't want to take your laptop.

The 3"x2.5"x1" unit has a a built-in lithium ion battery, a USB 2.0 A-Jack, and a USB 2.0 B-jack. The transfer rate is 480 megabits/second (not blazing but fast enough). It has a LCD screen to view the files on either the card reader or the hard disk. (Epson makes a model that will display the image on a 2.5" screen, but it runs $400.)

In a sale that ended in January, Office Depot was selling SmartDisk's FotoChute for $169. With a $30 instant rebate that was $139; and SmartDisk had a $70 mail-in rebate for a final total of $69!

I bought one, charged the battery, and transferred files from my card reader to the drive and I am pleased with it. A 1G smart disk card for my camera is about $90. I carry at least two cards. So now I have 20G at $69 and two 1G cards for $180 which

should cover any trip I take.

The unit works as a regular hard drive, too, so I could use it to transfer files from work to home instead of a thumb drive. (I'll bring it to show during February's Random Access.)

(You can still get FotoChute for a low price, plus read other informative reviews, on PriceGrabber.com's page: *http://tinyurl.com/9subd*. For complete specifications on FotoChute go to: *http://tinyurl.com/cpay8 —LG)*



## SO WHAT if search engines' divulge info about you?

Why should anyone worry about the government requesting search logs or bother to disguise their search history? "Some people simply don't like the idea of their search history being tied to their personal lives. Others don't know what the information could be used for, but worry that the search companies could find surprising uses for that data that may invade privacy in the future. For example, if you use Google's Gmail and web optimizing software, the company could correlate everyone you've e-mailed, all the websites you've visited after a search and even all the words you misspell in queries.

*Excerpt from "How to Foil Search Engine Snoops" by Ryan Sangel, at http://tinyurl.com/ahyzd*

## AOL lists top spam subjects for 2005

AOL has found that the amount of spam reaching its subscribers' email boxes declined more than 75 percent this year, compared to the 2003 peak. The company said it blocked an average of 1.5 billion spam messages

each day. The total number of emails blocked was more than 556 billion, a slight increase over last year.

AOL attributed the overall reduction to consumer software tools, spam filtering technology, public policy, litigation and enforcement, and industry partnerships.

Starting with No. 1, the top 10 subject lines were: Donald Trump Wants You — Please Respond; Double Standards New Product — Penis Patch; Body Wrap: Lose 6-20 inches in one hour; Get an Apple iPod Nano, PS3 or Xbox 360 for Free; It's Lisa, I must have sent you to the wrong site; Breaking Stock News** Small Cap Issue Poised to Triple; Thank you for your business. Shipment notification; Your Mortgage Application is Ready; Thank you: Your $199 Rolex Special Included; and Online Prescriptions Made Easy.

"While the volume of spam reaching AOL email inboxes has remained at low levels compared to its height in late 2003, the spam that's out there is more insidious, crafty, devious, and dangerous than ever," Charles Stiles, AOL's postmaster who helps direct its spam-fighting unit, said in a statement. *(Details at tinyurl.com/89nn4) —LG*

## Money is in spyware, not virus writing

"Spyware…is a billion-dollar industry, so we think virus writers are switching to spyware as a way to make a living," said Natalie Lambert, security analyst with Cambridge, Mass.-based Forrester Research Inc.,

Recent research from vendor Webroot Software Inc. indicates that's already happening. The Boulder, Colo.-based antispyware firm's annual "State of Spyware" suggests spyware has already become a "global pandemic," with the average infected PC in the U.S. holding more than 24 different spyware programs.

"Based on what's happened in 2005, it's hard to believe the volume of

# Internet Humor

### What happens when you

1) have nothing to do
2) own a sharp knife
3) have a large lime
4) own a patient cat
5) drink too much tequila
6) and it's football season?

*Submitted by Loren Tuthill*

## Routers…

(Continued from page 9)

router. This translated address is in a reserved non-routable grouping of addresses that cannot be routed over the internet, One more gotcha to hinder hackers. NAT is a simple type of firewall.

If you have other computers in the same room, they can easily be connected to the Linksys using Cat 5 patch cords connected to an Ethernet card in each computer. The Linksys has four 10/100 MB switch ports, so one internet connection can be simultaneously shared by four different computers, each doing something different on the network. Some ISP's object to multiple computers, and insist on charging you a fee for each additional computer. The Linksys setup allows you to assign the Linksys the same address as the network card on your computer, so if the ISP queries the device it looks like your computer's network card, not like a router. Some ISP's don't care if you have a router and some will even help you set up your router. All depends on the ISP.

If you want to connect to computers located in other rooms you may not want to run patch cords into the other rooms. In that situation I suggest a wireless router such as the Linksys WRT54G. You will need a wireless network card for each remote computer you want to connect. The WRT54G also has a four port switch, so computers in the same room as the Linksys can be patched in, eliminating the need for wireless network card on the nearby computers.

Most wireless routers come with the encryption security option turned off. **For sure, you want to immediately enable the encryption to keep a neighbor with wireless from using your network. Same goes for "drive by" hackers who cruise neighborhoods using a wireless equipped laptop looking for open access points.**

Wireless has a maximum range of about 150 feet or less depending on construction of the house and how much metal is in the way between the access point and the remote computer. Some cordless phones and microwave ovens work in the same band, so the possibility of interference exists.

Yes, there are ALWAYS new models. The hot wireless items right now are the "pre N" wireless devices. Better wireless speeds and better coverage by use of multiple antennas and special algorithms that combine the multiple signals into a single more robust data stream. Only problem is "pre N" means just that. It is in advance of any adopted standard.

The IEEE high speed wireless task force has proposed a new wireless standard 802.11n. This proposal is being reviewed by all the various members of IEEE, and with modifications will eventually be published as a standard.

Pre N products are being introduced to the market prior to any adopted standard from the IEEE. This means every piece or hardware has to be from the same vendor and must be certified by the vendor to be "pre n" compatible with the same vendor's other hardware.

## Money in spyware…

(Continued from page 12)

spyware in the wild will level off anytime soon," said Michael Cobb, a SearchSecurity.com expert and founder and managing director of London-based consultancy Cobweb Applications Ltd.

"I think it's going to have to get worse before it gets better," Cobb said, because users aren't aware of the need for antispyware applications as they are with antivirus apps and firewalls. "It's still very low on their list of security requirements and in terms of awareness."

Shon Harris, president of Logical Security Inc., a McKinney, Texas-based consulting firm and a Search Security.com expert, said it will be at least another year before the average user understands what spyware is. And even then it will be a challenge to thwart it. *(More at http://tinyurl.com/c4fc8) — Researched and compiled by Linda Gonse*

### THANK YOU!
#### Newsletter Contributors

Bob Click, Carl Westberg, Charles Burgwin, Charlie Moore, Gene Barlow, Gene Powell, Herb Goodman, Linda Gonse, Loren Tuthill, Lothar Loehr, Mike Lyons, Pim Borman, Siles Bazerman, Ted Wirtz, Terry Currier, Tim O'Reilly, Tony Lake

#### Newsletter Deadline
### February 18
for March Issue

# Benefits of
## User Group Membership

- **Product & "How To"demos**
- **Free raffles and magazines**
- **Help from other members**
- **Newsletter and web site**
- **Special offers & discounts**
- **Monthly meetings**
- **Affiliation with worldwide group**

**User groups represent the spirit of the frontier, a community getting together to do things that no individual ought to have to do alone.** The pioneers of the American west got together for barn raisings, cattle roundups, and the occasional party. The pioneers of new technology get together for installfests, new user training and support, and just plain fun. Being part of a user group is the best way to get more out of your computer, and lets you make friends while you're at it. — *Tim O'Reilly, President, O'Reilly & Associates*

## Meetings Are FREE, Public Is WELCOME!

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 **Placentia Library, 411 East Chapman Avenue. Placentia, California 92870, (714) 528-1906.** The library is 0.4 miles east of Kraemer Blvd. Call (714) 990-0580, for info, or go to *www.orcopug.org.*

**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!



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## www.orcopug.org

**Send a printed copy of this 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.

Tuesday, February 14
6:30 p.m.

**ProtoPag:**
Interactive web page is like a corkboard in your browser!

*Computer users helping computer users*

**Orange County
IBM PC Users' Group**
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