

January 2005



# NIBBLES & BITS

Tuesday, January 11, 6:30 p.m. at Placentia Library, Placentia — Bring a friend!

## JANUARY PROGRAM

### “Hate on the Internet” to be discussed by Simon Wiesenthal Center researcher



Disinformation, fear, and uncertainty are all tools of terrorists and hate groups, and the Internet is a convenient, easy, low-cost method used to spread their message.

Rick Eaton, Simon Wiesenthal Center senior researcher, our January 11 presenter, has a long history of dealing with these subjects. His work has included undercover operations with federal and local law-enforcement agencies, and testifying before Congressional investigations. Rick has closely monitored the exploitation of the Internet by extremist groups and their supporters over the past 16 years.

During that time, he has led the Simon Wiesenthal Center’s research efforts has produced six volumes of “Digital Terrorism and Hate—Research and Analysis of the Internet” since 1997.

Rick’s purpose is to expose “the growing use of the Internet as a key propaganda weapon, marketing tool and fundraising engine by terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda and Hamas, in addition to...traditional extremist groups such as the KKK and neo-Nazis,” explained Mark Weitzman, Director of the Simon Wiesenthal Center’s Task Force Against Hate.

For more than 18 years, Rick has specialized in contemporary hate groups as a researcher for the Simon Wiesenthal Center and the Museum of Tolerance, [www.wiesenthal.com](http://www.wiesenthal.com). CDs on “Digital Terrorism” will be available at the meeting for purchase.

## INSIDE...

- Notepad • 2
- Letters to the editor • 2
- Renewal dates • 3
- Member information • 3
- User group deals • 4
- Web Site Garage • 5
- Things to think about • 5
- Start with a scan • 6
- Firefox • 7
- Computers of future • 9
- Hoax photo • 9
- Synchronize files • 10
- Peripherals • 11
- Internet humor • 11
- Linux Expo • 11
- Contributors • 11
- Meeting info • Back cover

Volume 23 - Number 1

## ORCOPUG Meeting Info!



All 2005 meetings will be at the Placentia Library

Regular monthly meetings will be held at the Placentia Library from January to December 2005. See back page for address and map.

## Hot items in 2004 raffle

by Mike Lyons, ORCOPUG president

The camera was the hottest item in our 2004 Holiday Fundraising Raffle on December 14 with 176 tickets. The five System Mechanics utilities drew more than the four wireless Logitech keyboards. The Bluetooth mouse got almost as many tickets as the three wired optical mice. The two SnagIt packages did very well, as did the two backup utilities.

We took in \$771 in raffle money. We spent \$231 on the camera and \$98 on the food and drinks, so the net profit was \$442.

We also had one new member, Ann Carnahan; and one renewal, Joe Duffner.

Seems like everyone had a good time. But, I went home empty-handed this year!

To view a pdf of the raffle winners and what they won, go to our

(Continued to page 3)

# Notepad



It's not enough to just read your daily paper, or to watch the same television news channel. In order to get a complete picture and a clear perspective of the fast-changing events and decisions in today's world, which often affect the lives of millions, other news outlets and information sources need to be tapped.

Now, with the Internet, we can do this—right from our home computers. We don't have to rely on what's available on newsstands or in daily home deliveries.

But, where can you go to take a look from other perspectives?

A good first step is Google. Click on News. Google News is "culled from approximately 4,500 news sources worldwide and automatically arranged to present the most relevant news first. Topics are updated continuously throughout the day, so you will see new stories each time you check the page. Google has developed an automated grouping process for Google News that pulls together related headlines and photos from thousands of sources worldwide — enabling you to see how different news organizations are reporting the same story. You pick the item that interests you, then go directly to the site which published the account you wish to read," according to Google.

For some, a comfort layer may be added by understanding the manner in which Google news is edited. You may be surprised to learn that human eyes and hands have no part in the editing process.

"Google News is highly unusual in that it offers a news service compiled solely by computer algorithms without human intervention. While the sources of the news vary in perspective and editorial approach, their selection for inclusion is done without regard to political viewpoint or ideology."

Get a broader view. Explore issues and events that affect you from news sources you choose around the world.

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

## Letters

### She can drive, too!

To answer your question about Lady, I've had dogs all my life, and Lady is the best dog of all.

She loves everyone and likes to play all the time. You have to spell out your words when you say "walk" or "ride." She likes to ride in the car so much I made her a drivers' license...

She is part Shepherd and I don't know what else. She is a very pretty dog.

She will be 6 years old in March 2005. She is the Boss of the house!

**Joe Francis**  
joefran1@charter.net

### Member recommends program

Enjoyed perusing your list of shareware. One of the shareware programs is one that queries the national time standard and updates your PC's clock.

I've been using another freeware program called Dimension 4 that does the same thing, and I've been very happy with it. Easy to configure, always works. I've been using version 4.3. Latest is version 5.0.35.0. <http://www.thinkman.com>

**Ted Wirtz**  
twirtz@pacbell.net

### APCUG 2004 election results

The election results are in. Member groups elected three Directors and seven Advisors. Groups also approved a number of important changes to the APCUG Articles of Incorporation. For more details, go to [http://www.apcug.net/APCUG/election/04/04\\_results.htm](http://www.apcug.net/APCUG/election/04/04_results.htm).

Elected to three year terms on the Board of Directors: Ken Bundy, Steve Peyrot, and Ira Wilsker.

(Continued to page 11)



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The opinions expressed herein are the writers. They are not reflective of the Orange County IBM PC Users' Group position, and are not endorsed by inclusion in this newsletter.

Submit items to the newsletter editor at: editor@orcopug.org; or Linda Gonse, 22655 Valley Vista Circle, Wildomar, CA 92595-8334

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Add your email address to this list so other members can reach you. Your email will not be listed unless you request it to be. Send your request or updated information to: [editor@orcopug.org](mailto: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](mailto:charlie@orcopug.org).



**A user group membership is the best accessory you can buy for your computer.**

*Ash Nallawalla, Melbourne PC Users' Group*

## Members' renewal dates

- NOVEMBER** — Sheldon Peck  
**DECEMBER** — Bud Barkhurst, Loren Tuthill  
**JANUARY** — Joe Gionet, Ted Wirtz  
**FEBRUARY** — Charles Burgwin, Mike Lyons, Charlie Moore  
**MARCH** — Frank Balazs, Art Bullis, Frank Bollinger, Milton Gorham, Bill Pampaniya  
**APRIL** — Lothar Loehr, David Musser

*Submitted by Charlie Moore*

## Raffle...

(Continued from page 1)

website, [www.orcopug.org](http://www.orcopug.org), and click on the Members' Only! page.



## 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](http://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 fill out this application and mail it today!)*



# User group deals

## 40 – 50% discount on all BlueSquirrel products!

**ClickBook:** Automatically rotates, reduces and realigns Web pages, documents, pictures, assignments, notes, stories or other computer files into various sizes and types of booklets.

**WebWhacker 5.0.** Download Web pages or entire Web sites to PC, laptop, network, zip disk, floppy and CD-ROM.

**WebSeeker 5.0.** Tool to research information online.

**Spam Sleuth.** Monitors e-mail box and analyzes e-mail messages for spam and virus characteristics.

**Snapture.** Transfer text from PC to Palm

**Click2PDF.** Create PDFs from photos, recipes and stories.

Call or visit: 800-403-9025, [www.bluesquirrel.com/usergroup/](http://www.bluesquirrel.com/usergroup/)

## Magazine discounts just for computer user groups

	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	—
Mac Home Journal	\$15.97	\$29.97	—
Mac World	\$12.95	—	—
Maximum PC	\$ 9.95	\$18.95	\$27.95
Microsoft System Journal	\$21.95	\$39.95	—
PC Gamer	\$12.95	—	—
PC Magazine (22/44/66 issues)	\$25.97	\$48.95	\$68.95
PC World	\$16.95	—	—
Videomaker	\$11.95	\$21.95	—
Wired	\$ 6.00	\$12.00	\$17.00

Revised January 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](mailto: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. In the last few years, many computer magazine subscribers have used my services for over 300 titles I carry, also at excellent prices. Just email me for other prices.



# ACP

**Computer Show**



**January 30**

**8 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

**1310 E. Edinger, Santa Ana, CA**

**714-558-8813 • [www.acpsuperstore.com](http://www.acpsuperstore.com)**

**GIANT Computer Swap Meet**

**Free Admission • Free Parking • 100's of Sellers**

Submitted by Carl Westberg

## Say "Thanks" to the vendors who helped us raise money for 2005!

Companies who donated prizes to our 2004 fundraising raffle are: Acronis, Belkin, O'Reilly & Associates, Stardock, Ulead, 2nd Story Software, CableOrganizer.com, Dantz, Iolo Technologies, Logitech, No Starch Press, Photodex Corp., SmartDraw.com, StompSoft, TechSmith, Time Value Software, and WhiteCanyon.

Please thank these generous vendors by buying their products, writing reviews (either requested or voluntary), and telling everyone about them!

### Members can get dozens of discounts!

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!**

New discounts are always being received and can be seen by members using a password on our website.

Among other programs offered, are: AlienSkin programs, Aladdin products, Earthlink, nik Multimedia, O'Reilly books, and Klassic Specialties.

To access Members' Only! pages, at <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.

### MS books discounted 20%

Mindshare is offering a special 20% discount on all titles of Microsoft Press Books. The discount is available for User Group members using discount code MCPC. Your friends may also use discount code DCPC. <http://mspress.microsoft.com>

## Web Search Garage

by Lloyd Boutwell, ORCOPUG member

If you are interested in learning more about Internet searches, then this book is probably the one to have. It's close to being in the "everything you wanted to know but were afraid to ask" category. The book is part of Prentice Hall's Professional Technical Reference (PTR) Garage Series (ISBN 0-13-147148-1) and was published August 12, 2004. It is about 227 pages long consisting of 26 chapters divided among eight parts. The author, Tara Calishain, is the editor of ResearchBuzz, a weekly newsletter on Internet searching and she is also a regular columnist for Searcher.



Topics include search engines, browsers, web searching principles, searching for news, jobs, and local information, finding images and audio on the web, searching for people, genealogy research, consumer help, drugs and medical information, and kid-safe searching.

Part 1, "Introduction to Web Searching," has three chapters dealing with search engines. The reader is introduced to the categories of search engines, namely full-text search and searchable subject indexes. Google and Yahoo are covered, noting the differences between the two. Of course Boolean modifiers and syntaxes are discussed.

Part 2, "Principles of Web Searching," has ten chapters. Among these chapters the author introduces something that seems counterintuitive to me. Instead of searching with a broad approach there are times when it is better to define a narrow search, then widen it to get desired results.

Part 3, "Searching the Web," has three chapters dealing with news and job searching plus finding local information on the web.

Part 4, "Searching for Multimedia," has two chapters that cover finding images and audio on the web. One of the chapters has a section "Avoiding the Naughty Bits" so its purpose is obvious.

Part 5, "Searching for People," has three chapters titled People Searching, Genealogy Research Online and Ready Reference (dictionaries, encyclopedias, almanacs). I found this section to be most interesting. I tried the "rphonebook:(name) ca" Google search and found my phone number, address, and map. Fortunately, Google provides a means of removing the data. I remember hearing about this before but it completely slipped my poor old mind.

Part 6, "Consumer Searching," has three chapters; Consumer Help, Drugs and Medical Information, and Kid-Safe Searching

Part 7, "Technical Support," has one chapter; Drivers, Cheats, Help, and More. The "cheats" part deals with playing computer games (sorry).

Part 8, "Searching the World," has one chapter—three and a half pages long—providing suggestions such as using various national libraries and possibly using a translation tool from Google or Babelfish.

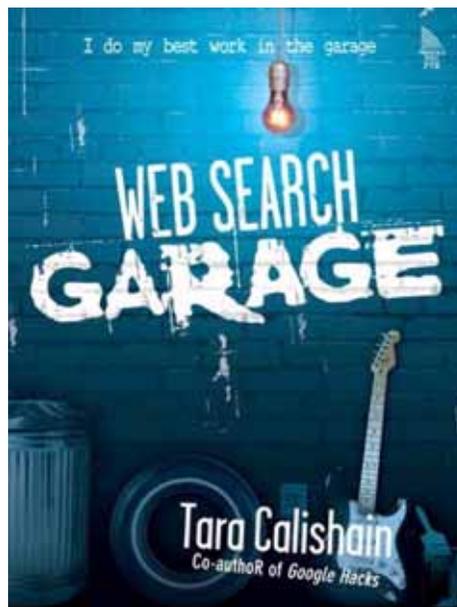
So what's the bottom line you ask? The book lists for about \$20, although there are discounts available, reducing the cost to around \$15. The book has a lot of useful advice and suggestions. It's not an easy read and sometimes I felt that some of the sections could have been more to the point and less 'entertaining.'

However, I can honestly recommend this book to anyone wanting to get more out of searching the Internet.

### Things to think about...

- ☹ What happens if you get scared half to death twice?
- ☹ I poured Spot remover on my dog. Now he's gone.
- ☺ Shin: a device for finding furniture in the dark.
- ☹ How do you tell when you run out of invisible ink?
- ☹ I used to have an open mind but my brains kept falling out.
- ☺ I drive way too fast to worry about cholesterol.
- ☺ Early bird gets the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.
- ☺ The only substitute for good manners is fast reflexes.

*Submitted by Tony Lake*



## Start with a Scan, Second Edition

### **A Guide to Transforming Scanned Photos and Objects into High-Quality Art**

by Bob Eldred

Do you own a scanner? Is it a flatbed or a sheetfed device? Is it standalone or part of an all-in-one configuration? Most important, how often do you scan? If you are like many people, you may own a scanner but rarely use it. Or maybe you think of your scanner as good for only one thing, such as scanning photos. If so, you may be interested in a wonderful book that is jam-packed with ideas for putting your scanner to work. Even if you use your scanner frequently, it's a fair bet that this book will yield a ton of ways to use it that you have never before imagined.

Start with a Scan, Second Edition describes itself as “a guide to transforming scanned photos and objects into high quality art.” It is a sister publication to the book Start with a Digital Camera, Second Edition, which I reviewed for the Tucson Computer Society Journal in August 2003. Like that book, the value of Start with a Scan lies not simply in describing how to use a scanner or what you need to know to do a scan, but rather what to do with a scan once you have it and how to turn it into an effective illustration, if not outright art.

**This book is a treat for the eyes and the mind. I defy anyone to flip through the book without stopping several times to look at an eye-catching image followed by a caption describing “how to do it.” Before long, the temptation to try an idea yourself is overpowering.**

The book contains 132 pages of informative text with many high-quality full-color photos, graphics, and black-and white images. There are 13 chapters. Each chapter is divided into 2-4 parts and each part into sections. Most sections are a page or two in length. Everything about the book is designed to deliver intriguing facts and ideas with a minimum of study, alongside photos and graphics, which effectively illustrate each concept. It has a 2-page table of contents and a 3-page index, adequate for finding most topics on the fly.

The book begins with a brief discussion about the various types of scanners, how they work, and technical issues to consider before you even begin scanning. A succinct ten pages are devoted to providing the essential knowledge a scanner user needs to understand the arcane topics of optical resolution, interpolation, optimal resolutions for various uses, bit depths, scanning modes, and file formats. One caveat: Don't expect to become expert on these topics; each one is allotted but a paragraph or two.

Another ten pages are spent on the fundamentals of editing scanned images. This chapter includes all the topics that a user of Adobe PhotoShop or Elements (or a similar program) needs to become familiar with. Discussed are ways to improve image quality using levels, gamma curves, and color balance adjustments. How to repair damaged images, silhouette objects, remove backgrounds, sharpen images, and eliminate moiré patterns are also covered.

Start with a Scan makes much use of royalty-free clip art in the creation of commercial and artistic illustrations. Starting with simple black-and-white clip art, the authors demonstrate how to extract and overlay portions, add color and apply

filters to create attractive and effective commercial artwork. A discussion follows about how to convert bitmaps to PostScript art utilizing PostScript drawing programs (such as Adobe Illustrator or Macromedia FreeHand), autotracing programs (such as Adobe Streamline), and page layout programs (such as QuarkXPress, Adobe PageMaker or InDesign).



Why would you want to convert images from bitmap to PostScript format? As the authors explain, this technique “produces smaller, more compact files and makes it possible to print at any size with the same smooth resolution.” Clearly, you will need software in addition to your scanner to derive the most benefit from this book. Owing Photoshop Elements or something similar will suffice for many applications.

A lengthy chapter is devoted to illustrating examples of the almost infinite selection of special effects, filters, textures available in Elements and other editing programs, and how to apply them in creating backgrounds and montages. Especially intriguing is a technique for creating an “electronic marbling” effect by scanning colorful, household items (like buttons), and then applying wave and blur effects.

Another interesting chapter describes techniques for transforming photos into graphics. These typically involve increasing the contrast on an image until it approaches a black and-white state, whereupon you can

(Continued to page 8)



## Firefox: A program popularized by open source programmers

by Linda Gonse

The latest version of Firefox, an open source program, formerly Mozilla, and before that, Netscape Navigator, was released to popular acclaim about three months ago from [www.mozilla.com](http://www.mozilla.com). Many people, tired of security problems and perpetual patching of Internet Explorer, have begun to make the switch to Firefox. I was one of them. It was an easy transition to import my bookmarks, favorites, and other items, and set up housekeeping in it.

But, it was a real surprise to find free “themes,” a change of appearance for Firefox. Feeling the exhilaration of discovery, I downloaded Nautipolis, Red Cats, Gray Modern, and Littlefox, and others; finally settling on Littlefox. Then, I discovered “extensions.” Extensions are little programs, originally called applets, that run from within Firefox. Their specialized capabilities add to the functionality of Firefox and quickly become features you just can’t live without. There are about a dozen I use, including: Weatherfox, QuickNote, Titlebar Tweaks, SpoofStick, CopyPlainText, and Tabbrowser Extensions.

One extension that makes my online life simpler is called QuickNote. It allows me to copy and paste from browser pages into a tabbed notepad available right in the browser. It saves me from opening Word or Notepad and working back and forth from one of them to the browser window.

Fascinated with the free extensions, I tracked down QuickNote’s creator, Jed Brown, to ask him to tell me how he got started and why he wrote the program. Also, QuickNote had earned five stars as a popular Firefox item, I wondered if Jed thought it might end up being incorporated into Internet Explorer.



Jed Brown

Although Jed replied that he was in the middle of university tests, he generously answered my questions.

**JB:** My name is Jed Brown. I’m from Boulder Colorado. However, I’ve been studying in Mexico (Guadalajara) for the last few years. I’m an Electrical and Computer Science Engineer. Next semester I’m transferring back to Colorado University at Boulder.

I became involved with Mozilla back in the 90s. I was a frequent user of what was then the Mosaic browser when the World Wide Web had just begun. Netscape was born from Mosaic and I was instantly a user of Netscape Navigator.

Once the “browser wars” began, I was a devoted Netscape user who really loathed how Microsoft used their OS dominance to spread use of their browser. Unfortunately, after Netscape released its 4.0 browser, MS was right on their tail and produced an even better and more standards-compliant browser.

Despite the better browser, I was loyal and stayed on NS as long as I could. Around the time when Netscape 5 was going to be released (1998 I believe), they decided to open-source their browser. That sparked my interest and I got my hands on the code as quickly as I could. Once the open source community realized that the NS code was a huge hack and badly organized, they decided to start from scratch and create what was to be the fastest most compliant browser ever. This was too good to be true. Unfortunately this was no easy endeavor and would take over three years to get even close to a final product. In the meantime, Internet Explorer was the superior product (over NS 4.x) and was becoming the browser of choice for many — including myself.

I wasn’t hacking on any of the code, but I did start testing the releases from the first public beta release. Since that day, I used this new engine and code base as much as I could, but always had IE there for sites that did not work in the new, young and untested engine.

Once Mozilla had matured (version 0.8) and became usable on a daily basis, I switched over and said goodbye to IE for good.

The folks at Netscape had a brilliant idea called XUL that would allow them to write the interface to the browser once, and allow it to run on any platform possible. This meant Mozilla looked the same on Windows, Mac, Linux/ OS 2, etc. This same technology allowed authors like myself to start creating programs that would live on top of the Mozilla platform and extend its functionality (now called “Extensions”).

As a high school student back then, I started a project called “QuickNote” that would allow easy access to a notepad-like sidebar for easy note taking.

While my extension was popular and used amongst many Mozilla users, Mozilla was plagued with bad interface design decisions from Netscape and AOL who later bought Netscape, so it really never hit it well with anyone but “geek” users. A few talented programmers at Netscape (Hyatt, Blake, Goodger, etc.) realized this and in their free time started a new project based on Mozilla, but much more simple, that was meant to be only a browser instead of a full suite like Mozilla was. This eventually turned into what Firefox is today.

Thanks to Firefox (formerly Phoenix and Firebird) much more attention was brought to it and a much larger user base. More interest in Mozilla, XUL, and extension development arose. This has led to over 200 extensions made for Mozilla applications, and has brought together programmers from around the world,

(Continued to page 8)

## Start with a scan...

(Continued from page 6)

substitute color or use it as an overlay to the original image. The resulting graphics are especially effective on book covers, brochures, and commercial applications, as well as eclectic art. Following that, one brief chapter describes how to create type treatments.

The book then turns to the fun topics of how to scan real objects and using scans in arts and crafts. These chapters will appeal to kids and adults alike, as the authors encourage experimentation and suggest ideas for projects few people will have imagined. Adding drop shadows and other 3D effects to images of scanned objects make them appear real, as if they are sitting on a surface.

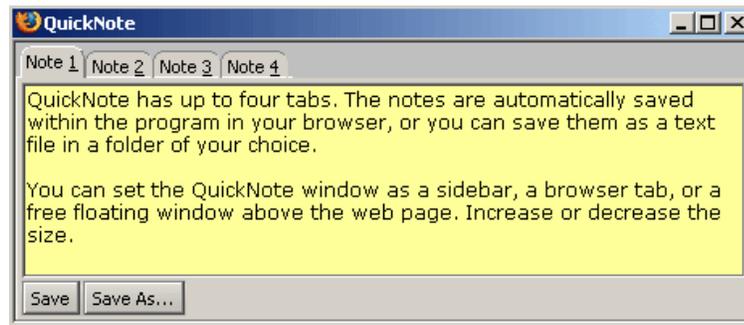
The authors conclude with a discussion of the issues involved in scanning for the web. Topics include image preparation, resolution and size, file formats, compression, color restrictions, and adapting printed pages to the web.

Start with a Scan is a fine introduction to the world of digital scanning and imaging. It provides a broad overview of all the relevant topics in a colorful, fun format. The authors' inventiveness is infectious. You will be inspired to experiment and create. And you'll never look at your scanner the same way again.

**Start with a Scan**, \$34.99, Peachpit Press ([peachpitpress.com](http://peachpitpress.com)). User Group members receive a 20% discount at Peachpit.

Bob Eldred is a member of the Tucson Computer Society, Tucson, Arizona

There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this review if it is kept in context, with proper credit given to the author. This review is brought to you by the Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member.



*QuickNote created by Jed Brown. Screenshot shows it open inside Firefox. It has several customizations, and is easy and convenient to use.*

## Firefox...

(Continued from page 7)

like myself, to join in and help make Firefox/Mozilla better.

For example, QuickNote was a project I was doing by myself in my free time. But now many different users contribute code and translation. A Russian programmer, Nickolay Ponomarev, has joined with me and contributes to QuickNote on a regular basis.

**The whole idea of multi-platform and open source software is amazing as it has brought thousands of people together under one cause, despite language and cultural barriers. This in part, is thanks to Mozilla and its example that open source software can be just as good — and in this case — better, than priority software.**

**N&B:** What do you see for Firefox in the next couple of years?

**JB:** I think we will see a continuous trend in the growth of Firefox users. Once Microsoft won the browser wars, it dismantled its IE team, and left users high and dry. Firefox is filling this void, bringing a new and fresh idea to the World Wide Web and making it the place it should have been (virus/popup/spyware free) years ago.

I also can see more and more companies embracing Firefox in their internal networks and products they offer to their users. Google, Amazon and many others are already starting.

**N&B:** Will Mozilla/Firefox survive and grow through the efforts of the open source community? Or maybe Microsoft will gobble up talented program writers like you and IE will remain dominant?

**JB:** Mozilla/Firefox will definitely survive, and be vital for the years to come. Microsoft is far behind with Longhorn and even when it ships it will take years to get users to migrate over. In the meantime Firefox will continue to see growth in users on multiple platforms, and be extremely important to the survival of Linux as a desktop alternative. Sure MS will copy features and do its best to find exploits in Firefox. **No software is perfect, but I believe the very nature of Mozilla and Firefox appeals to users and gives the Web freedom from control from one sole company.** As time goes by, I think the average user will begin to understand this and realize the importance of alternative products and that they are superior in many aspects.

The other huge benefit that Firefox has as a browser and Mozilla, in general, as a platform, is their mutiplatform nature. As a programmer, I can create any application or extension based on Mozilla and easily make it work on every platform that Mozilla/Firefox runs on. This allows users to use any system they like, perhaps Unix/Linux at work, Mac OS on their laptop and Windows XP at home, and yet feel no difference when it comes to surfing the web and using the applications/extensions built on Mozilla. Microsoft has no real answer to this (although .Net tries) and it is a huge selling point to both users and corporations.

*(You can email Jed at [contact\\_me@jedbrown.net](mailto:contact_me@jedbrown.net))*

The future is now...

## Computers of the future

by Pim Borman

“For the last 40 years or so computer chips have closely followed Moore’s Law, which states that the number of transistors doubles every 18 months. The corresponding increase in computing performance has been enormous, but chip manufacturers are beginning to reach the physical limit of miniaturization. Intel’s latest chip, “Prescott,” with 125 million transistors an improved version of the 55-million transistor Pentium 4, was delayed by production difficulties and proved to be only marginally faster. Cramming more transistors in a certain area by reducing their size leads to increasing electrical leakage problems and crosstalk; it also increases heat generation. Some recent microprocessors consume over 100 watts, generating more heat per square centimeter than a laundry iron on the cotton setting.” (W. Wayt Gibbs, writing in *Scientific American*, November 2004, pp.96-101.) Increased computation speeds have to a large extent also

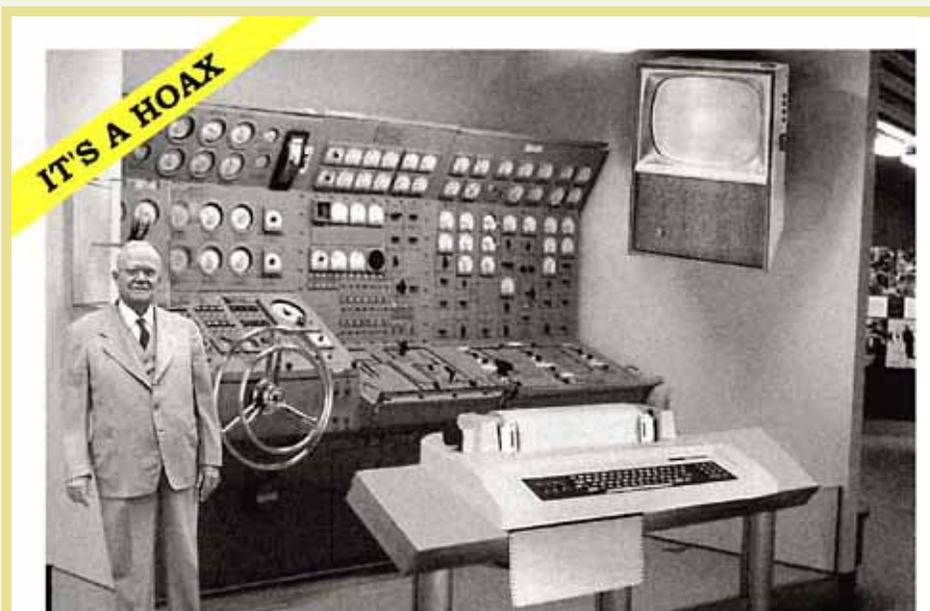
been the result of clever changes in computer architecture that allow the chip to execute multiple instructions for each clock tick. We are finally reaching the inevitable end of Moore’s Law.

Intel has already announced that it will no longer distinguish its microprocessors by clock speed, which is after all only part of the system’s performance characteristic. In addition, starting this year, all Intel chips will have not one but two “cores” that allow higher computation speeds through parallel processing. AMD already has such chips. There is nothing new about fast computing with parallel processing computers; the fastest computers in the world are now built using thousands of processors that operate in parallel to perform specific operations, such as playing world champion chess. But all current software for home and office use will have to be rewritten.

Many users, as well as software companies, may decide it is not worth the hassle. If you have an up-to-date computer it probably responds faster to your inputs than you can provide them, unless you are a game freak or use industrial-strength graphics or database programs. Customers will be better served by improved security and simplified operations.

Not by coincidence, W. Wayt Gibbs also wrote an article in the same issue of *Scientific American* (Nov. 2004, pp. 80-87) about future computers using photons (light) instead of electrons (electricity) to perform computations and connections between the CPU and memory storage. There are many technical problems to be solved as yet, including the challenge to bring the cost down, but it seems likely to be the computer technology of the future. Photons move many times faster than electrons and do not significantly generate heat. All the rest is engineering detail!

(Continued to page 10)



*Scientists from the RAND Corporation have created this model to illustrate how a “home computer” could look like in the year 2004. However the needed technology will not be economically feasible for the average home. Also the scientists readily admit that the computer will require not yet invented technology to actually work, but 50 years from now scientific progress is expected to solve these problems. With the teletype interface and the Fortran language, the computer will be easy to use and only*

### Hoax photo is fun, link is fascinating

by Ted Wirtz

Someone sent me the photo above, and at first I believed it. Then I thought I would check it out.

It’s a hoax. Check out this link. It was fun while it lasted though.  
[www.popularmechanics.com/technology/computers/2004/12/hoax/](http://www.popularmechanics.com/technology/computers/2004/12/hoax/)

## The Computer Corner

### Synchronize those files!

by Joe Shipley

With so many laptops available these days, one of the more common things I come across is the need for people to synchronize their files between their laptop and their desktop. Or synchronize files among several computers on a network.

Let's say you use a spreadsheet to keep track of information. This spreadsheet is used on a daily basis to show you what you did in the past. Every day you add to the spreadsheet to keep it current. Some days you add information while using your desktop, and others while using your laptop. You want to make sure the same information is available to you whether you're working on the laptop or the desktop.

If you had copies of the same file on both your desktop and your laptop, each time you added information to the file on your laptop, it would not automatically be added to the version on the laptop. So you'd have to do double work and spend lots of time copying the latest version from one computer to the other.

What File Synchronization does is provide a way for you to update the same file from either machine and make sure that both files are exactly the same. The way to do this is by using Offline Files. You could also use the Briefcase feature on your laptop, but I suggest Offline Files. And I'd make the desktop the "master," even though the files on both systems will be identical.

To set up your desktop computer to use Offline Files, open My Computer or Explorer, go to Tools, Folder Options, Offline Files and make sure that the Enable Offline Files check box is selected. Select

Synchronize all offline files before logging off to get a full synchronization. Leave it unselected for a quick synchronization. While you're here, also check the box to place a shortcut to Offline Files on your Desktop.

Once this is done, go to your laptop and use Explorer or My Network Places to find those files on the desktop computer you want synchronized. When you have highlighted the shared folder or file(s) you want to work with, click on the File menu item and then click on Make Available Offline. If you don't see Make Available Offline, you didn't correctly set up your system to enable Offline Files. Note: To make Offline Files work on a system running XP, you may need to disable Fast Switching. If an entire folder is made available offline, any files in that shared folder now or in the future will automatically be made available offline the next time the computers are synchronized.

At this point you have selected files to be worked on offline. When you want to work on a file that will be synchronized with another computer, you can access the file by opening the folder, Shortcut to Offline Files, select the file you wish to open, and make any changes you desire. When you save the file and get ready to close your system, if you're connected to the other computer your files will be synchronized. If not, the next time you do connect to the other computer, synchronization will take place.

While this may appear to be very complicated, it's actually easier than I have described it. For more information, go to [www.microsoft.com](http://www.microsoft.com) and enter "Working Offline" in the search box, then select the first result to see a more comprehensive discussion of this topic. By using this feature you can



keep important files on one machine while still working with them on another, and know that both are identical.

Joe Shipley, co-owner of SMART IDEAS!, is a computer consultant, in Mesa, AZ. Email: [joeship@cox.net](mailto:joeship@cox.net). There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this article if kept in context with proper credit given the author. The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you.

### Computer of future...

(Continued from page 9)

Pim Borman, [swipcug@sigecom.net](mailto:swipcug@sigecom.net), is Web Editor and APCUG representative, for the SW Indiana PC Users Group, Inc, [swipcug.apcug.org](http://swipcug.apcug.org). Reprinted from the November 2004 issue of P-SEE URGENT, SWIPCUG. There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this article if kept in context with proper credit given the author. The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups, an international organization, brings this article to you.

#### LATE NEWS ANNOUNCEMENT!

**Nibbles & Bits was awarded 2nd Place for newsletters in small groups (30-140 members) in January by APCUG.**

## Internet Humor



## Check out Linux at the So Cal Linux Expo!

by Orv Beach

Interested in Linux, but not sure where to start? February 12–13, 2005 at the Los Angeles Convention Center, So Cal Linux Expo booths will be manned by various Linux User Groups, all eager to show you something about Linux.

There will be presentations on various facets of Linux and Open Source Applications; and beginner topics for the new and prospective Linux user.

Order your ticket online at <http://www.socallinuxexpo.org>.

### Bumper stickers we liked in 2004...

*"Very funny, Scotty. Now beam down my clothes."*

**Consciousness: that annoying time between naps.**

*Forget world peace. Visualize using your turn signal.*

## Letters...

(Continued from page 2)

Elected to two year terms on the Board of Advisors: Bill James, Donna Sword, Judy T aylour, Roger Tesch, Melvin Weekly, Cheryl Wester, and Sherry Zorzi.

For those of you coming to APCUG's Annual Conference in January, we look forward to seeing you there. For more information on the Conference, go to [http://www.apcug.net/Events/fall\\_2004\\_preview.htm](http://www.apcug.net/Events/fall_2004_preview.htm).

**Jim Evans, APCUG secretary,**  
[secretary@apcug.net](mailto:secretary@apcug.net)

## Web show is sounding board for user groups

John Iasiuolo (eye a sue low) from Computer Outlook has offered his show as a sounding board for user groups around the world. You can hear some of his previous shows at [www.computeroutlook.com/audiostudio.html#](http://www.computeroutlook.com/audiostudio.html#) and can listen to his show on the web via streaming media on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. PDT. If you are interested in being on the air to share a tip or trick in working with your user group or an upcoming special event, please let me (or Donna Sword, [dsword@apcug.net](mailto:dsword@apcug.net)) know if your group would like to participate so we can get you scheduled. This is just another benefit of membership in APCUG — free advertising for your group.

**Judy T aylour, APCUG Advisor,**  
[jtaylor@apcug.net](mailto:jtaylor@apcug.net)

### Newsletter Contributors

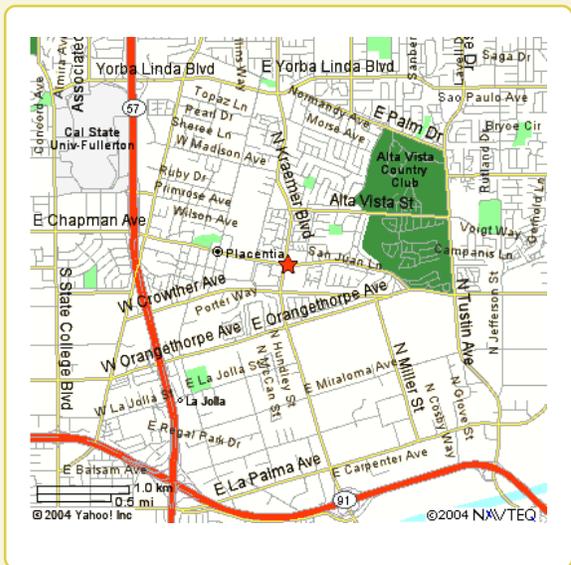
Bob Eldred, Carl Westberg, Charlie Moore, Donald Gonse, Gene Barlow, Herb Goodman, Jed Brown, Jim Evans, Joe Francis, Joe Shipley, Judy T aylour, Linda Gonse, Lloyd Boutwell, Marsee Henon, Mike Lyons, Orv Beach, Pim Borman, Ted Wirtz, Terry Currier, Tim O'Reilly, Tony Lake

**Newsletter Deadline**  
**January 22**

## The Public Is 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 Placentia Library, 411 E. Chapman Ave., Placentia, California 92870, (714) 528-1906. The library is 0.4 miles east of Kraemer Blvd. Call (714) 990-0580, for more information, or go to [www.orcopug.org](http://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!



## Benefits for User Group Members

- 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*

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[www.orcopug.org](http://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.

6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, January 11

Internet

Hate on the

Computer users helping computer users  
Orange County  
IBM PC Users' Group  
P.O. Box 716, Brea, CA 92822-0716

