



Orange County IBM PC
Users' Group

june 2006

nibbles & bits

award winning monthly newsletter for orcopug members

june program

NTI Shadow 3.0 power with simplicity!



NTI Shadow 3.0 is built on the solid technology of Shadow 2 which won the “Editors Choice” award from PC Magazine and “Best Buy For 2006” award from CDRINFO.com. Jonathan Schenk, NTI Sales Executive, will demonstrate this product at our June 13 meeting while “tying it into everyday life.”

One of the highlights of this program is a Continuous Data Protection program that backs up your files as you save. It has been described as “like software RAID.” Plus, you can save your data — in its native file format — to a number of devices including: CDs, DVDs, flash drives, media players, internal/external hard drives, and MP3 players. Even save multiple versions of the same file.

Can you still think of any excuses to not have your files backed up? We didn't think so!

More details and a trial copy at NTI www.ntius.com.

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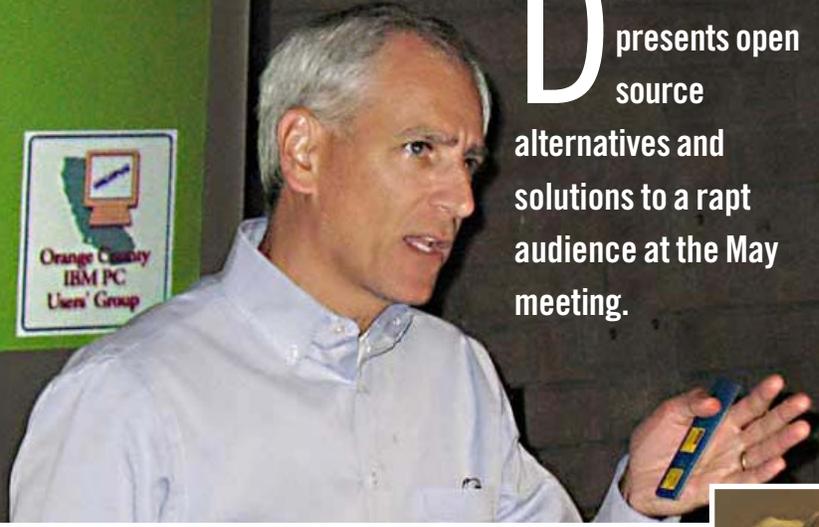
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next meeting: tuesday, june 13, 6:30 p.m. placentia library, placentia

A Means to an End
ORCOPUG May, 2006

Dennis Rex presents open source alternatives and solutions to a rapt audience at the May meeting.



photos by Dan Gonse

talented members enrich our group

We have so much talent in our user group!

It's always a pleasure to come to the meetings and hear news and advice that I probably wouldn't learn about in any other way.

I'm particularly surprised by the members who have deepening interests in digital photography and photo image editing.

You can see the results on the next page, and more photos will appear in next month's newsletter.

Additionally, I hope some of you take the opportunity that Judy Taylour offers on Page 6 to enter the digital photography contest in conjunction with this year's

Southwest User Group Conference in August in San Diego. The deadline is July 7, so you have plenty of time to take a winning photo.

Based on the fantastic photos I've seen, I believe you are all capable of bringing back awards and prizes.

This brings me to another question for you. It would be helpful in planning future programs if you would please be prepared to tell Mike Lyons at the next meeting what programs you use the most, or are the most interested in. Will you do that?

It seems to me that many of you have acquired PhotoElements and Photoshop. I'm curious to know how many of you are in this category.

This might be tiresome for you to hear, but I thank each and every one

of you who share your ideas, articles, photos, and advice with me. My experience is richer for this and I hope that I have been able to redirect it to the group as a whole through the newsletter and the website. If there is something that you'd like to see or know about, I'm anxious to hear. I'm sure that whatever it is, we will all benefit from it.

Just drop me an email and we'll take action from there.



photo by Hank Dart

Linda Gonse
editor@orcopug.org

your favorite shot

I was on my way to the Epson Print Academy with my free pass in hand (thanks to Epson and ORCOPUG) when I spotted this bee. It's about ten feet long and lives at the Metro station in Norwalk. The sky was transplanted from a photo taken in Fullerton.

Photo by Larry Klees, ORCOPUG



From our trip to Alaska in the summer of 2003... This was shot while camping on a lake. It was shot with a Canon PowerShot S410 Digital Elph (4.0 Megapixels).

Photo by Gary Covington III, ORCOPUG

Everybody has a photo that they believe is their best photo-taking effort. Or they have a shot that isn't technically great, but it is their favorite nevertheless. We'd like to publish a member's special photo (or photos) each month in this space. Won't you please send us your photo for our next "Your Favorite Shot" page?

Submitting your photo is as easy as emailing it. Send a low resolution 3" x 4" or 4" x 3" digital image to editor@orcopug.org. Please provide a short description of the photo, the story behind why you took it, or the photography trick that you used in capturing the image. We can all enjoy the photos on this page and learn something about taking photos at the same time! Photo subjects can be whatever you choose.



feedback

MIKE LYONS **ORCOPUG PRESIDENT**

Due to a scheduling conflict, the club's November meeting has been changed to the first Tuesday of the month, November 7, instead of on the second Tuesday, November 14.

GARY COVINGTON III **ORCOPUG MEMBER**

I ran across this Ziff-Davis article in my email today (which is in regard to your email alert, "Trojan threatens Word 2003 and Word XP"). Microsoft advises 'safe mode' for Word, by Joris Evers. Following at least one targeted attack that exploits a flaw, the company suggests running Office application in restricted (safe) mode. <http://tinyurl.com/lfrmy>

MARSEE HENON **O'REILLY UG LIAISON**

Can you please let your members know about the increase in our user group discount? You can get 30% off a single book or 35% off two or more books from O'Reilly, No Starch, Paraglyph, PC Publishing, Pragmatic Bookshelf,

SitePoint, or Syngress books you purchase directly from O'Reilly. Just use the code on your ORCOPUG Members' Only page when ordering online or by phone 800-998-9938. Free ground shipping on orders \$29.95 or more in the US. Other benefits you receive when you buy directly from O'Reilly include:

- **100% Satisfaction Guarantee**

If, for any reason, you're not completely satisfied with your purchase, return it to us and get your money back. A return shipping label is included with every direct purchase, and directions are posted online in case you've misplaced it: <http://www.oreilly.com/oreilly/cs/guarantee.csp>.

- **Safari Enabled**

Whenever possible, our books are "Safari Enabled." This means you can access your book for free online for 45 days through the O'Reilly Safari Bookshelf. How do you know if your book is Safari Enabled? Turn your book over and look for the "Safari Enabled" logo on the bottom right of the page. If it's there, flip through the last couple pages of your book until you find directions for accessing your book online.

- **Booktech**

Have a question about your book? O'Reilly is the only publisher that offers tech support for books. Send

an email to bookquestions@oreilly.com and we'll help you out. Be specific: Include the book title and page number. It's also a good idea to include the ISBN so we know what edition you have.

- **Reader Reviews**

Our reader reviews are read by most people at O'Reilly, including Tim O'Reilly, all our editors, as well as sales, marketing, and PR. So if you have praise, a gripe, or ideas for improvement, writing a reader review on oreilly.com is a sure way for your voice to be heard. Just go to your book's catalog page on oreilly.com and click the "Write a Review" button.

- **Book Registration**

Register your book online and we'll notify you when the book has been updated or a new edition is available. You can also win books and other prizes. Haven't registered your books? Just go to <http://www.oreilly.com/go/register>.

- **Newsletters**

Our newsletters keep you updated on the latest articles, books, news, and events. A complete list of newsletters and lists can be found at <http://elists.oreilly.com/>. We're working on a slew of additional benefits to serve you even better so stay tuned.

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ORV BEACH LINUX ENTHUSIAST

Thanks for the heads-up regarding your email “Trojan threatens Word 2003 and Word XP.”

Alternatively, they (MS Office users) could move to OpenOffice. :-D You can get free documentation on it here: <http://documentation.openoffice.org/> and here: <http://wordprocessing.about.com/od/openoffice/> and here: <http://www.taming-openoffice.org.com/> and here: <http://inpics.net/writer2.html> (free downloadable book).



Orv Beach uses dual monitors with his Linux system.

DENNIS REX MAY PRESENTER

Sources and links (from May presentation).

- <http://mysettopbox.tv/index.html>
- <http://www.cs.luc.edu/projects/pvr/howto>

- <http://www.shoutcast.com/>
- <http://us4.samba.org/samba/>
- <http://www.freeradius.org/>
- <http://www.apache.org/>

PAUL STEPHEN WPCUG* NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Here's a nifty utility program I downloaded the other night. It makes switching between windows/apps really easy and you can use the Alt-Tab key combo. www.ntwind.com/taskswitchxp/

*Winnipeg PC Users Group, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

JUDY TAYLOUR/PATRICIA HILL SWUG Co-CHAIRS

This is an invitation to user group leaders and members to attend this year's Fun in the Sun & Computers, Too! The 13th Annual SW User Group Conference offers fun-filled days packed with vendor presentations, great food,

workshops, a chance to talk with user groupies from other UGs, and much more. The conference begins on Friday evening, August 11, and ends with lunch on Sunday, August 13. Workshops are offered for UG leaders and members, as well as workshops for enhancing the attendee's computer knowledge.

Location: This year the conference will again be held at the Town and Country Resort Hotel & Convention Center, 500 Hotel Circle North, San Diego 92108. The conference rate is \$99/night, single or double. The rate is guaranteed for three days prior and three days post conference. Come on down and include the conference in a vacation! You can't sleep in your RV, but the host hotel has an RV parking area. Please make your reservations by July 19 to ensure you receive the conference rate. The phone number for reservations is 800.772.8527 or go to <http://www.towncountry.com> to make online reservations; under Make a Reservation, select Group and enter Group Code SWUSR0806.

What is the cost? \$50.00 if your registration is postmarked by July 19; \$60.00 if your registration is postmarked by July 26; \$75.00 after July 27 and at the conference. The fee includes six meals, vendor presentations, workshops, conference T-shirt and Welcome Bag.

How do you register? Complete the attached registration form (one for each attendee, please) and return it to the address on the bottom of the

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form with your check. Or, visit the conference website <http://www.swugconf.org>, click on Registration and click on Form.

Events

Vendor sponsored meals and presentations; over 20 workshops to choose from (updated workshop listings on the website); Saturday evening Vendor Faire gives you the opportunity to talk to sponsoring vendors and to sign up presenters.

Digital Photo Contest

All attendees are invited to enter the Digital Photo Contest. If your user group has members attending the conference and your group has a digital photo contest, those contest winners are also eligible to enter the SW contest. Download the Word document at <http://www.swugconf.org/Digital Photo Contest.doc> for contest rules – the deadline for entering is July 7.

SWUG websites

[swugconf@socal.rr.com/](mailto:swugconf@socal.rr.com)

swugconf@aol.com

<http://www.swugconf.org>



Newsletter / Website Contests

Your user group is invited to participate in the newsletter and website contests, if members of your group are attending the conference. The criteria and deadlines can be found on <http://www.swugconf.org/> Contest button. – entry deadline is July 7

Extra Activities

For those guests / spouses who want to participate in outside activities, there will be a central meeting location where you can gather to walk to the Fashion Valley Shopping Center, take the trolley to The Gaslamp Quarter in Old Town San

Diego, etc. There is also a day spa and salon at the resort, four swimming pools, and many areas where you can walk and enjoy the beautiful gardens. See you in San Diego.

CHARLOTTE SEMPLE APCUG COMMUNITY SERVICE CHAIR

APCUG's Jerry Awards named for APCUG founder Jerry Schneider recognize and reward user group community service projects. No matter how big or small the project, recognition and reward is for user groups using technology to help their community. Monetary awards are given to help further the projects. Awards in three categories for 2005 were presented at the 2006 APCUG Conference.

New: (A program run by or in association with a user group since December 2004.)

1st place (\$1,500) - Rockport Computer Users' Group (Rockport, Texas) partnered with the local AARP representatives and Tax-Aide to provide income tax preparation for residents of Arkansas County, Texas. This involved allowing the AARP Tax-Aide group to use computers in the Rockport Computer Users' Group meeting room. Three computers were used two days a week from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. beginning February 1, 2005 until April 15, 2005. Tax-Aide volunteers worked 21 days and eight counselors spent 430 hours assisting 435 people.

2nd place (\$1,000) - Computers Assisting People (Cleveland, Ohio) has helped over 250 local non-profit

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organizations with over 10,000 PCs and untold numbers of printers and other peripherals in the last 10 years. They have established dozens of computers labs with Internet connections in 21 city wards. They were faced with a new situation last year. Hundreds of prisoners were being released back into the community due to shortages of jail space and other reasons. Most were residents of 3 or 4 "tough" wards. CAP worked with local groups such as SAVE-A-VIP and Community Re-entry to provide a training and work environment where these men could come in and learn some skills without all the formalities of some of the government programs. As a result, several have become A+ certified and one has started a computer business and hired several ex-prisoners to work for him. CAP has now targeted returning soldiers from Iraq who want better jobs.

3rd place (\$500) - Central Maryland User Group (Columbus, MD). Multiple Sclerosis medicines cost from \$10,000 – \$15,000 dollars a year, so a computer can be out of reach for many. Forty-five computers were refurbished in 2005 and donated to clients of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society to use the Internet to correspond with family, friends, and other NMSS clients. The CMUG also established a training center where they will be able to train other non-profit workers in using Windows and various applications, and in computer maintenance for the non-techie. Most non-profits send workers to a \$150-200 or more one-day training class. The workshops will be provided for just the cost of printing training materials and lunch.

Ongoing: (A program run by, or in association with the User Group. The program should have been in existence for more than one year.)

1st place (\$1,500) - Central Maryland UG Columbia, MD) for the Phoenix project. Since 1991, the group has refurbished over 15,000 computers that were donated to schools in Maryland and persons in need, the Ronald McDonald House and community centers in Baltimore city and county.

2nd place (\$1,000) - Sarasota PCUG (Sarasota, FL) for refurbishing computers (240 over the past 25 months) to local non-profit organizations such as Girls Inc., the Women's Resource Center, Suncoast Center for Independent Living, Coastal Behavioral Health Care, Every Child, Inc., Children's Cancer Center, and individuals who can not afford a computer.

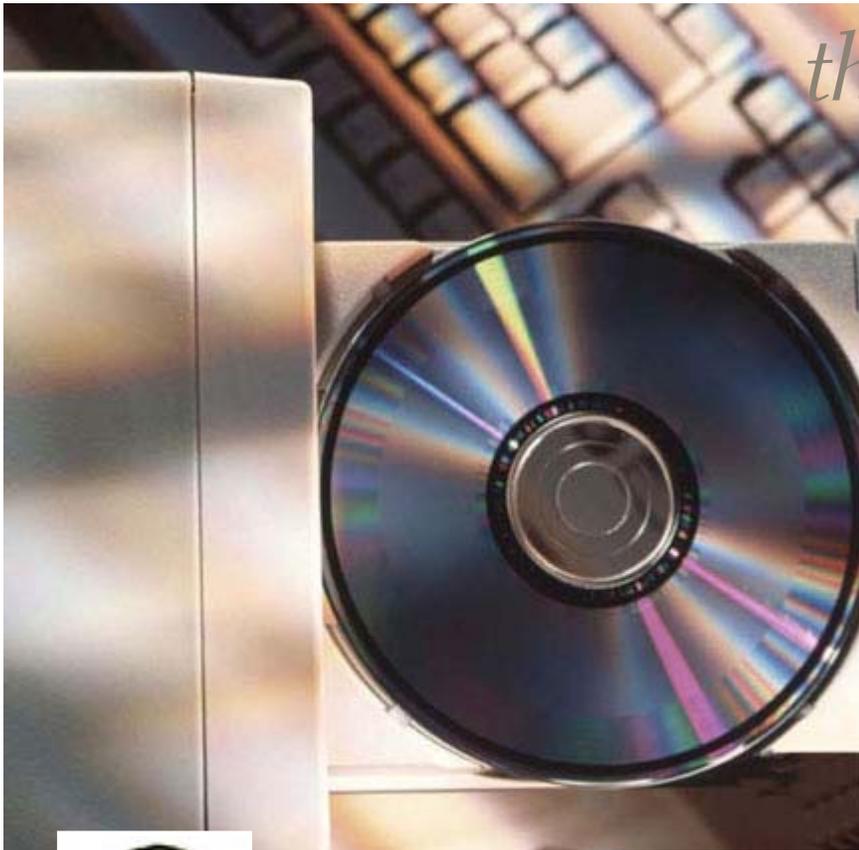
3rd place (\$500) - Central Iowa Computer User Group (Ankeny, IA) for Recycling Old Computers Kindly (R.O.C.K.) that refurbishes computers and provides them to non-profit organizations, schools, churches and government agencies. In 2005, R.O.C.K. provided equipment for a computer lab for a rural school district hit by budget cutbacks due to a local factory closing; supplied several other school districts with computers to increase computer resources without districts incurring large costs; provided computers to missionaries in New Guinea; shipped dozens of older computers, in conjunction with the Firestone Corporation, to Liberia. They also provided computers to Habitat for Humanity, local drug counseling agencies, church-run day care centers, non-profit child mentoring groups, etc. They refurbish up to 1,500 computers per year.

How: (This category requires the User Group to provide documentation on how they run their program.)

1st place (\$1,500) - Cajun Clickers Computer Society (Baton Rouge, LA) for developing a database, in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture, Humane Society and ASPCA, used to reunite Katrina pets with their owners.

2nd Place (\$1,000) - Tampa Bay Computer Society (Tampa Bay, Florida) via the Random Acts of Kindness program. By partnering with local libraries, civic groups, computer user groups, and the national Random Acts of Kindness Foundation, members with the necessary expertise repair computers for those in need. PC tune-up clinics are offered to the community; approximately 80% being served are seniors, many on limited incomes. RAK is operated at no cost to the recipient, so donated spare parts are essential for the program. Over 250 computers have been repaired during the five years that the TBACS clinics have been conducted. Computer systems are also built and donated to worthwhile organizations such as a museum, learning-disabled child, etc.

3rd place (\$500) - Tulsa Computer Society (Tulsa, OK) for helping the Superior Pawnee Computer Society in Nebraska get their computer refurbishing project off the ground by developing a standard image that can be loaded on all donated computers, thus making it easier and quicker to load software on donated computers.



the perfect rescue tool

Step by step instructions for making a custom bootable CD using both Nero (Burning ROM) or Roxio (Easy CD Creator) software are given in Fred Langa's "The Perfect Rescue Tool" part one at <http://tinyurl.com/eoyhm> on InformationWeek.com. A link to part two is to the right of Langa's article.



Fred Langa was previously VP/Editorial Director of WINDOWS Magazine and CMP's PC Group and Editor-in-Chief of Byte Magazine. In 1991, CMP hired Fred to relaunch WINDOWS Magazine and oversee editorial operations of WINDOWS Magazine, Home PC Magazine, and NetGuide Magazine.

Sign up for his free, award-winning, twice-weekly newsletter, the "LangaList" at www.langa.com.

killer list of searches and websites for tools and tests

Drive Diagnostics:

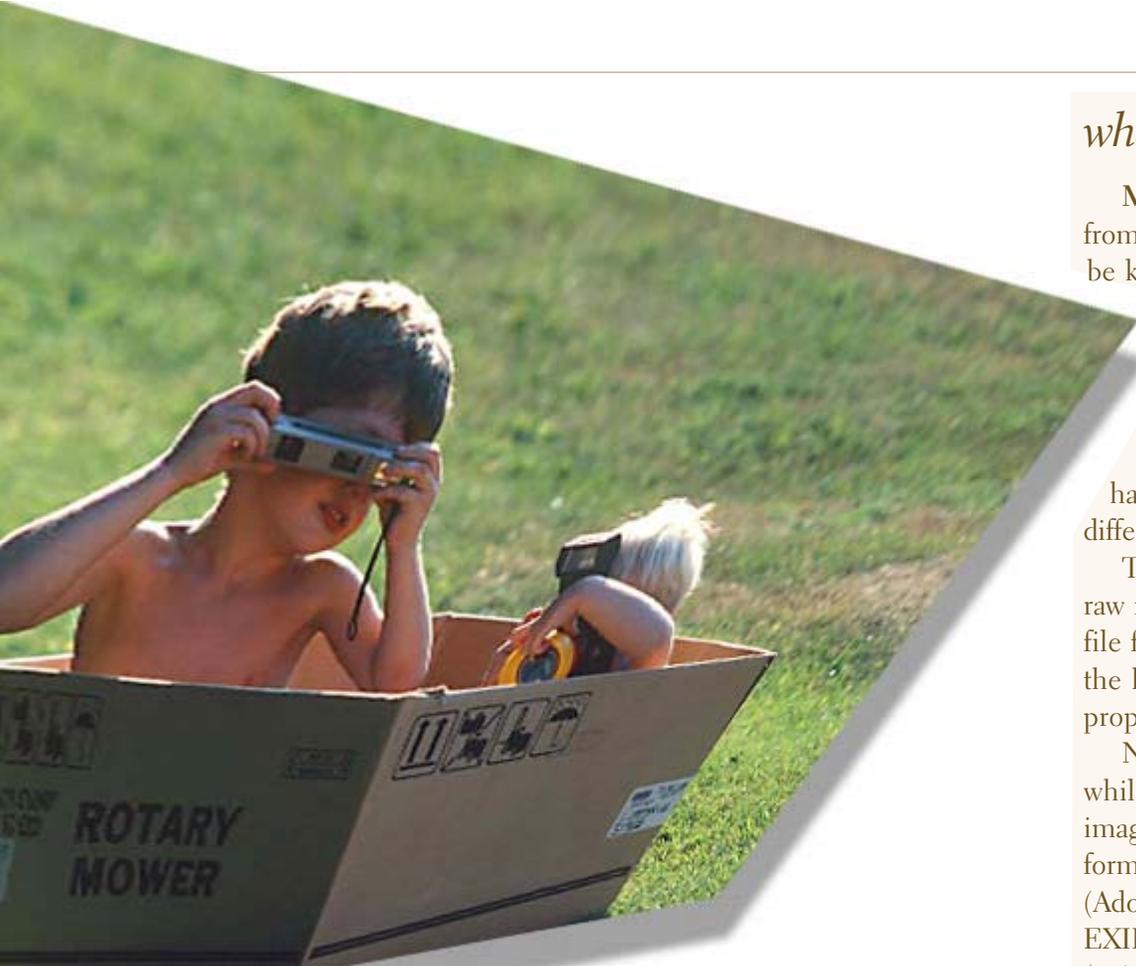
- <http://support.wdc.com/download/>
- <http://www.maxtor.com/en/support/downloads/powermax.htm>
- <http://www.hgst.com/hdd/support/download.htm>
- <http://www.seagate.com/support/seatools/>

Network/NIC Tests

- <http://www.google.com/search?q=dos+diagnostics+nic>

CD/DVD Tests

- <http://www.google.com/search?q=dos+diagnostics+cd>
- <http://www.google.com/search?q=dos+diagnostics+dvd>



new Microsoft image format challenges JPEG

by Linda Gonse

Microsoft announced a new still image format called Windows Media Photo (.WDP) at the May 24 Windows Hardware Engineering Conference in Seattle.

Microsoft said their format offers compression ratios close to JPEG-2000 and mirrors JPEG capability, but with smaller files, and claims a reduction in visible JPEG artifacts.

WDP will support a wide range of image formats, various color spaces, metadata (including EXIF) and even transparency. The compression technology is also "smart" and is able to process only part of a huge, picture file to show a smaller version, a Microsoft spokesman said.

Additionally, Microsoft's new image format allows such things as rotating the image without the need to decode it and subsequently encode it again.

This new format will be supported in Windows Vista and will be made available for Windows XP, but there apparently is no support yet for the format in hardware devices. Now that the format has been introduced, Microsoft will need to get Adobe and Apple behind them to generate enthusiasm among graphics professionals for the format.

Also unknown is licensing information. One professional photographer commented that although he sees promise in the new format, "Licensing can kill this."

what members say...

Mike Lyons — Getting support from the other players is going to be key. In digital photography, high end cameras use a RAW file format. This format is proprietary to each camera maker and some camera makers even have different raw formats for different cameras in their own line.

There is a movement to get the raw file format as an open source file format to eliminate some of the hassles associated with proprietary formats.

Nikon at one time said that while the photographer owned the image, Nikon owned the file format and other companies (Adobe Photoshop) could use the EXIF data unless they licensed it (paid a fee?) from Nikon. Adobe said Photoshop would not read the data directly and you would have to buy the Nikon raw converter and then import the converted file into Photoshop. Nikon quietly let their demand fade away and now several programs, including Photoshop, can read and convert Nikon raw files.

As a result, Adobe proposed a new raw format called DNG (digital negative) that would be open. So far some of the camera companies have adopted it (Lecia, Hassablad, and other small companies) but the big two (Canon and Nikon) so far have kept with their own raw formats.

Unless Microsoft makes this an open standard, and can get the big players to agree to this standard (Adobe, Canon, Nikon), then I think the new Microsoft file format will just add confusion (and

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frustration) to the situation and not be an improvement for the digital photographer/graphic artist.

Frank Bollinger — My first thought is that a format promising smaller files could be useful. The other features won't have immediate impact for me since I don't use files that way. Microsoft has a habit of introducing new products before they're ready, so it may be "version 2.0" where the format catches on. Being part of Vista may give it a jump start.

Ultimately, success of the new format will depend on how "universal" it becomes.

Gary Covington, III — I had not heard of this WDP format yet.

It remains to be seen how easy it is to get readers and writers for this format. As well as editors.

JPEG certainly is bad if you do much picture manipulation. Repeated "saving" of JPEG leads to totally unacceptable artifacts which I call "ringing". Anything would be better.

But the infrastructure is what's important. Hardware and software readers, editors, generators, browser compatibility, etc., etc. Also MS hasn't said what they plan to charge.

I'm all for a replacement to JPEG, but for me it will be wait and see.



webroot uncovers thousands of stolen identities.

A Trojan is believed to have swiped info from 125 countries. The FBI is investigating a cache of data containing personal information belonging to thousands of people worldwide. The information was discovered by Webroot software on a password-protected FTP (file transfer protocol) server in the US and appears to be connected to a Trojan horse program designed to activate when computer users visit certain sites, in this case, certain banking and ecommerce sites. <http://tinyurl.com/o94ba>

jury duty anyone?

Two emails in general circulation warn users that scammers are committing identity theft by intimidation. And the emails are telling you the truth. The scammers phone potential victims and threaten them with prosecution for failing to report for jury duty unless they reveal sensitive personal information. More information: www.hoax-slayer.com/jury-duty-scam.html. — SANS OUCH

farmers' markets and local harvest info

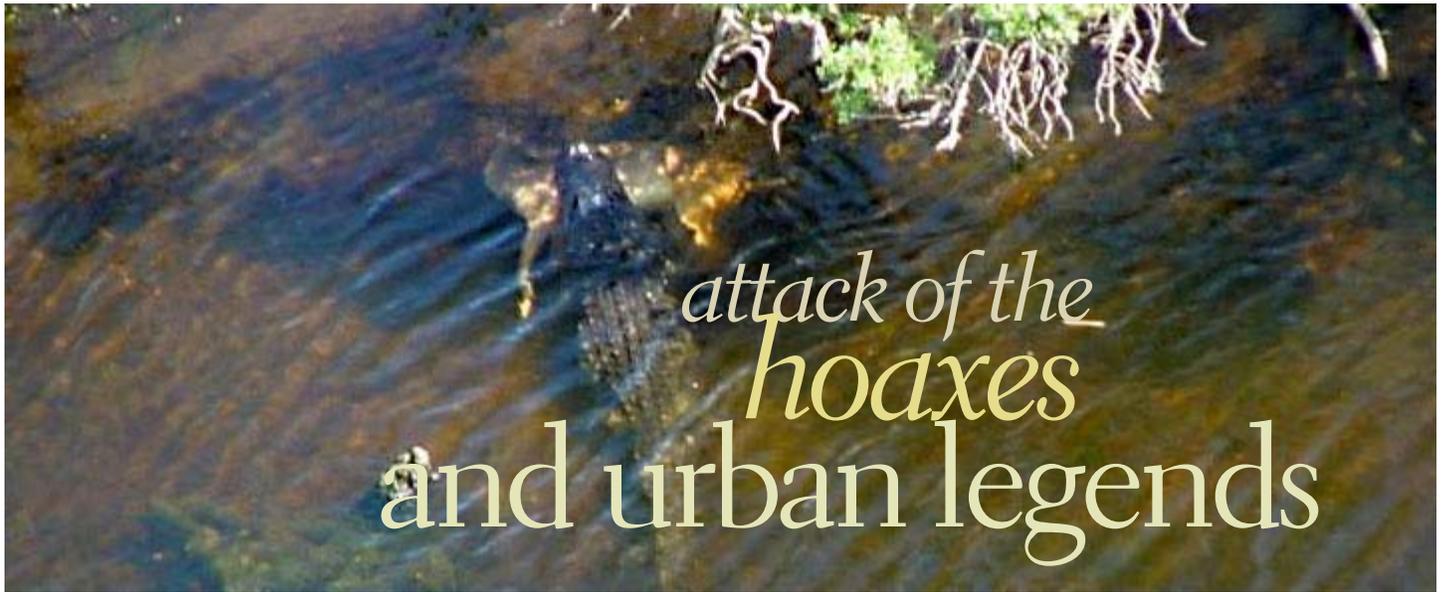
Nearly 350 farmers' markets in California, with locations, dates and times for shopping are at www.fruitstands.com/states/calif.htm.

And, find fresh, healthy, flavorful organic foods grown and sold closest to you at www.localharvest.org/. The list includes farmers' markets, family farms, and other sources for produce, grass-fed meats, and other goodies.

submitted by Tony Lake

they're still
spying
on you!

The number of organizations reporting their systems have been infected with spyware is up nearly 50 percent over last year, the annual Websense Web@Work survey said. Seventeen percent of companies with more than 100 employees reported their networks have been infiltrated by spyware, such as keystroke loggers. One likely reason for the increase in spyware infestations is the increasing availability of spyware toolkits on the Internet. The study also says that 44 percent of IT decision makers do not believe their employees can distinguish phishing sites from legitimate ones. <http://tinyurl.com/kj4cf>



by Ira Wilsker

I am about to burst. In recent days I have received so many emails from well intentioned friends warning me about a plethora of evils, scams, health threats, celebrities, politicians, causes, and other urgent circumstances that something must be done about it. There are literally thousands of these stories circulating on the internet, typically by email, and mostly inaccurate or totally false. It especially irks me that local people would take an urban legend that has been circulating widely, and put in the name of a local store or city in order to give it credibility.

This past week I received several urgent emails warning women about robbers in a local Wal-Mart parking lot offering samples of perfume for the ladies to sniff. The email mentioned a specific local store at a specific local address. One of my co-workers came to me in a tizzy with a printed copy of the email, because she shops regularly at that particular Wal-Mart, and lives around the corner from it. The email proclaimed, "PLEASE PASS THIS

ALONG TO YOUR WOMEN FRIENDS!!! I was approached yesterday afternoon around 3:30pm in the Wal-Mart parking lot at <local address>, by two males, asking what kind of perfume I was wearing. Then they asked if I'd like to sample some fabulous scent they were willing to sell me at a very reasonable rate. I probably would have agreed had I not received an email some weeks ago, warning of a "wanna smell this neat perfume?" scam. The men continued to stand between parked cars, I guess to wait for someone else to hit on. I stopped a lady going towards them, pointed at them, and told her about how I was sent an e-mail at work about someone walking up to you at the malls or in parking lots, and asking you to SNIFF PERFUME that they are selling at a cheap price. THIS IS NOT PERFUME — IT IS ETHER!" The problem is that this warning is false, and has been circulating around the internet for about five years, only changing the address of the local Wal-Mart (source: www.snopes.com/crime/warnings/perfume.asp).

We are all faced with the high

cost of fuel for our vehicles, and the hoaxers are all too eager to capitalize on our anxieties. Another email in wide circulation alleges to have an answer to high fuel prices. The email proclaims, "GAS WAR — an idea that WILL work. This was originally sent by a retired Coca Cola executive. It came from one of his engineer buddies who retired from Halliburton. It 's worth your consideration. Join the resistance!!!! I hear we are going to hit close to \$4.00 a gallon by next summer and it might go higher!! Want gasoline prices to come down? We need to take some intelligent, united action... For the rest of this year, DON'T purchase ANY gasoline from the two biggest companies, EXXON and MOBIL. If they are not selling any gas, they will be inclined to reduce their prices. If they reduce their prices, the other companies will have to follow suit." The email goes on to say that if millions of us will participate in this boycott, it will force prices down. Versions of this email urban legend have been circulating for over five years, with minor changes in wording and

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reflecting current prices. There are several flaws in this logic, including the ignorance that Exxon acquired Mobil a few years ago, as well a lack of economic common sense that all Eco 101 students would understand. If we boycott a particular brand or two, we would continue to buy more from the competitors, increasing the demand and prices for their fuel! Also realize that most of the Exxon and Mobil stations are owned by independent local entrepreneurs who would be financially devastated as innocent victims, as we boycott their livelihoods (source: www.snopes.com/politics/gasoline/gasout.asp).

There are a lot of local lakes around here, and someone thought that it would be cute to add a little local flair to take the true story of an alligator with a deer in its mouth, along with a documentary series of photographs confirming the story, and claiming that there is a threat in our local lakes. I have received countless variations of this email claiming that the photo was taken in almost every large lake in the region. I have also received emails claiming the same, except citing lakes in Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, Georgia, Florida, and the Carolinas. Some have even claimed a warning not to swim in those lakes, unjustifiably spreading fear among mothers and children in those areas. Some versions claim that the photos were taken by local TV news helicopters, in order to enhance the local connection (source: www.snopes.com/photos/animals/gatordeer.asp). The truth is that the pictures are real, and were taken in Georgia (source: www.fws.gov/southeast/news/2004/r04-073.html).

Several correspondents have informed me that if I forward specific emails to at least ten friends, I will

receive a cash gift from Bill Gates Microsoft, or AOL, and get gift cards from Old Navy, Applebee's, Best Buy, and other retailers. Some of these also contain testimonials from lawyers, accountants, and other respected professionals that the offers are true, and that they have personally collected fortunes by simply forwarding emails. In reality it is a lot of bunk. There is no such thing as a "Microsoft Email Tracking Program" that tracks the emails that you forward such that you can be compensated. This happens to be one of the longest running email hoaxes and urban legends, with examples going back nearly ten years (source: www.snopes.com/inboxer/nothing/microsoft-aol.asp).

Other long running urban legends include the classic "Don't flash your headlights at a car without its headlights on — it is a gang initiation rite and the gang members will kill you." Some urban legends have actually given criminals ideas, or

fostered copy-cat offenses, such as a few mentioning needles, or AIDS transmission.

Be especially wary when you receive emails that often cite reputable news sources, or name specific recognizable locations, along with an urgent demand to forward it to everyone that you know. Some even claim to have checked the urban legend websites, and that they are real; do not accept that statement at face value, and check the sites yourself. I simply don't have the time to respond to each of these hoaxes that I receive, and reply to the sender with the documentation that it is indeed a hoax. I did open a can of worms on several occasions when I hit the "reply all" icon, and replied back not just to the original sender, but to all that he had sent the hoax to as well, causing some embarrassment that he would fall for such malarkey.

Before you forward these emails to everyone, check them out yourself at any of the many urban legend sites, my personal favorite being Snopes, at www.snopes.com. Avoid the embarrassment of being caught and considered a gullible individual.

To add a "little local flair" to the story, this true photo of an alligator with a deer in its mouth is claimed have been taken in lakes in seven states.



websites:

<http://www.snopes.com>

<http://urbanlegends.about.com>

<http://www.fws.gov/southeast/news/2004/r04-073.html>

the new, the best, and the worst



by Pim Borman
SW Indiana PC Users Group, Inc.

times change

Leafing back through old copies of The P-See UrGent, I notice that I started this monthly column in February, 1998. That makes this about the 80th installment — hard to believe. It started out as a discussion of things New, Best or Worst in the computer world, but much has changed since then. We are no longer impressed with incremental improvements in CPU performance. Arguments over the most proficient Web search engine have pretty well been settled for now. Discussions of viruses and other malware have grown way beyond the scope of this column. LCD monitors are no longer “prohibitively expensive, suffer from poor brightness, a narrow viewing angle, and relatively sluggish refresh rates.”

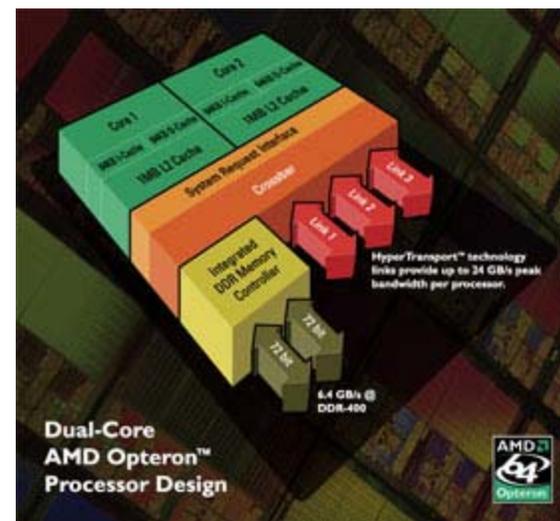
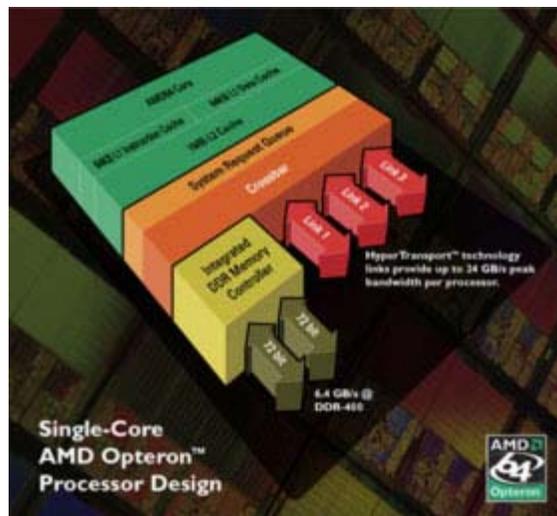
I began to look for long-range trends in computer technology. In my July-August 1999 column I mentioned the birth of a new Web search strategy based on evaluating hyperlinks to identify the most relevant Web sites for a given search term. I specifically described a search program, called *Clever*, that was being developed by the clever folks at IBM and was highly successful. Typically, IBM

used it only internally and did not make it publicly available. As a footnote I added that a similar program, being developed at Stanford University, was made available in beta form. Its name? Google.com. IBM missed the boat again.

It is no coincidence that I read about Google in the June 1999 issue of Scientific American. The most interesting new developments with potential long-term importance are not first reported in PC Magazine or PC World, but in high-quality publications with a more general readership. I often find interesting developments reported in *The Economist*, the outstanding British weekly news magazine, as well as on the Web site of the *BBC News*. Other good sources are national newspapers such as *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and

USA Today, but I don't get to read those regularly. As a sign of the times, the April 22nd issue of *The Economist* carries three full-page in-your-face ads touting the energy advantages of AMD Opteron processor-based servers (e.g. “You could've hired 250 engineers, 570 IT support people, 5,235 interns, and one new CIO with the amount of money wasted by non-AMD powered servers”). No mention of Intel (which is feeling the competition). David is starting to kick sand in Goliath's face!

On the other hand, *PC Magazine* is now mostly dedicated to gadgets, including a review in its May 9, 2006 issue of the Mercedes ML 350, which is loaded with electronics and sells for up to 70 thousand dollars. A 20-page review of Vista, not expected



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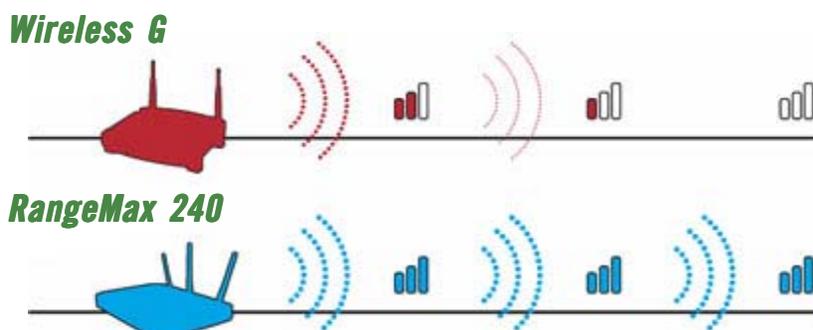
to become available until January 2007 at the earliest, reports that only 50% of current computers will be able to use it. Very few will be ready for the much-ballyhooed Aero Glass interface without upgrading their graphics capabilities.

PC World stays closer to specific computer topics, but how many “50 Best New Sites” and “Best Free Stuff” do we need? The most important contributions of these PC magazines are their product evaluations. Otherwise, how would we have known that AMD managed to overtake Intel in CPU technology?

wi-fi progress

In just a few years, as equipment cost dropped to affordable levels, wireless connections between computers in households have become commonplace. Several IEEE standards assure interoperability between different makes of equipment. The most popular standard today is 802.11g, capable of connecting at speeds up to 54 megabits per second (Mbps). It is backwards compatible with the older 802.11b which operates at up to 11 Mbps. A third standard, 802.11a, operates at up to 54 Mbps and uses a different frequency range to minimize interference with other equipment. It is not often used.

The IEEE has almost completed work on a new standard, 802.11n, that should increase the transmission rate to a maximum of 540 Mbps. In anticipation of the new standard, several wireless connection providers have been marketing new products that



provide faster connections over greater distances. According to PC World (February 2006) Netgear’s \$180 RangeMax 240 Wireless Router and \$100 Notebook Adapter can connect at close range at about the same rate (100 Mbps) as a standard wired 10-100 Ethernet connection. The router has 3 antennas and transmits over 3 non-overlapping bands within the allotted 9.4 Mhz frequency band to achieve this performance.

The high speed may be useful when you use bandwidth-gobbling applications such as VoIP telephony, network gaming, or streaming audio and video. If you mostly use a wireless Local Area Network (LAN) in your home to share an Internet connection you have no need for premium high-speed wi-fi equipment. The fastest download speed available from my local cable provider, SIGECOM, is 6 Mbps with its premium Xstream service. At that speed, even the slowest 802.11b equipment is adequate for short distances. The 802.11g standard is preferred for connections at greater distances while maintaining sufficient transmission rates.

Since I bought a new computer I

moved the laptop upstairs to my den at the other end of the house. As a crow would fly, if it were allowed inside and capable of penetrating floor joists and air conditioning ducts, the distance between the computers is about 35 feet. This is well within the range of 802.11g equipment in open areas, but due to the intervening obstacles I was unable to establish a reliable connection between my standard Netgear router and the Dell laptop with its built-in Dell-brand, 802.11g capable Wi-Fi adapter. I disabled that adapter and plugged in a standard Netgear wireless USB adapter (WG11v2) with the included USB cable. This gave me a strong connection to the router at the other end of the house, with a reported transmission speed of the full 54 Mbps. Although the cable allowed me to set up the adapter within several feet of the laptop computer, it was actually sufficient to Velcro the adapter to the lid of the computer so that it was roughly parallel with the antenna of the router. It goes to show that the quality of the Wi-Fi equipment can make a significant difference in the results when conditions are less than optimal.

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should you shisen sho?

Browsing through the games available with Linux distributions such as Linspire and Xandros, I happened on a Mah-Jongg variety called Shisen Sho. If you like to play Mah-Jongg you ought to give it a try – it is definitely habit forming. The game starts out with a square grid of Mah-Jongg tiles. The size of the grid can be varied, but I found 24x12 a suitable size. The goal of the game is to remove identical tiles in pairs, with the restriction that a pair of tiles can only be removed if they can be connected with no more than 3 straight lines (horizontal or vertical) without crossing other tiles. You can specify that the game must be solvable, although that doesn't guarantee that you'll actually solve it on a first try. The secondary goal is to solve the game in the shortest time. The game remembers previous scores to let you assess your increasing proficiency. My first game took me 40 minutes, but since then I have managed a few in slightly under 20 minutes.

There are many versions for Windows available. A listing is available on <http://home.halden.net/vkp/vkp/shisensho.html>. I downloaded a game by Daniel Valot from <http://dvalot.free.fr/games.htm> that is well implemented, but Google displays many other versions also. Shisen, in culinary circles usually called Szechuan after the Chinese province, is also known as Four Rivers. Give it a try!

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



how to clean the house

1. *Open a new file in your PC.*
2. *Name it "Housework."*
3. *Send it to the **RECYCLE BIN**.*
4. *Empty the **RECYCLE BIN**.*
5. *Your **PC** will ask you, "Are you sure you want to delete Housework permanently?"*
6. *Calmly answer, "Yes," and press the mouse button firmly...*
7. *Feel better?*

...works for me!

submitted by Kay Gutmann

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time for your membership renewal?



MAY 1– Harold Wann (2nd month)

JUNE 1– Bud Barkhurst, Richard Metzger (1st month)

JULY 1– Herman Beverburg, Joe Francis, Walter Jackson, Ralph Seymour

AUGUST 1– Sid Liptz, Stan Leese, Michael Moore

SEPTEMBER 1– Leonard Prince

submitted by Charlie Moore

NOTE: You must be a member in good standing to access our Members' Only page or to win raffle prizes. Web page passwords are deactivated the first day a membership expires.

new member

Peter Romeo, Yorba Linda, joined us this month. He's interested in anything PC. Welcome Peter!

submitted by Charlie Moore

may raffle winners

MS stress ball, \$5*

Joe Gionet, Not Present

Bill Pampaniya, Expired

Donald Bickel, Winner

Stompsoft Registry Repair, \$49*

Ron Schultz, Not Present

Joe Gionet, Not Present

Walter Jackson, Winner

Syantec travel mug, \$5*

Leroy Kaump, Winner

APCUG bag, \$5*

Leonard Prince, Winner

Spell Catcher, \$49*

David Sander, Not Present

Stan Leese, Not Present

Ed O'Donnell, Not Present

Leroy Kaump, Previous Winner

Charlie Moore, Winner

ThumbsPlus 7, \$39*

Richard Metzger, Winner

TechSmith t-shirt, \$5*

Leroy Kaump, Previous Winner

Bud Barkhurst, Not Present

Lothar Loehr, Winner

TechSmith t-shirt, \$5*

Leroy Kaump, Previous Winner

Larry Klees, Winner

*Estimated value

submitted by Mike Lyons

Please bring your empty printer ink cartridges to the next meeting for our fundraiser!

New Member

membership application

Renewal*

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

Last Name _____ First Name _____ Nickname _____

Mailing Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone () _____ Work Phone () _____ E-mail Address _____

Areas of Interest/Comments _____

Meetings are the second Tuesday of every month. See www.orcopug.org for more details.

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.

Make check for \$25 payable to **ORCOPUG** — mail to:

ORCOPUG, P.O. BOX 716, Brea, California 92822-0716

**secret keyword
found by Larry Klees!**

May's secret keyword raffle was found. The prize was won by Larry Klees. A new keyword raffle begins in June. Keywords are hidden in Nibbles & Bits or our website. If your name is drawn at a meeting — take home a prize if you know the keyword!

**thank you
newsletter contributors!**

Charlie Moore, Charlotte Semple, Dan Gonse, Dennis Rex, Frank Bollinger, Gary Covington III, Hank Dart, Herb Goodman, Ira Wilsker, Jonathan Schenk, Judy Tylour, Kay Gutmann, Larry Klees, Linda Gonse, Marsee Henon, Mike Lyons, Orv Beach, Patricia Hill, Paul Stephen, Pim Borman, Tim O'Reilly

Deadline for July issue is June 24

win a backup hard drive

Seagate/Maxtor is giving away free backup hard drives each day in June as part of Backup Awareness Month! www.backupawareness.com

**computer swap meet
scheduled for July 30**

The ACP Computer Store swap meet is held every other month, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 1310 E. Edinger, Santa Ana. Admission is free. www.acpswapmeetbyhyperactive.com.

**members' only! page
benefit of membership**

ORCOPUG membership entitles you to access the Members' Only page at www.orcopug.org for special discounts. User name is first initial+last name (lower case). Password is member letter+number.

**what have you done lately
to stamp out spyware?**

Have you written letters to the media and your legislators? We all have the power and the responsibility to stamp out spyware? Find California lawmakers' contact information at <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/yourleg.html>; get information for other states and Federal officials contact info at <http://www.congress.org/congressorg/home/>



save the internet!

What do you know about Internet neutrality? It concerns you. Let a user group member tell you about it. Go to www.orcopug.org

thanks to our generous 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).

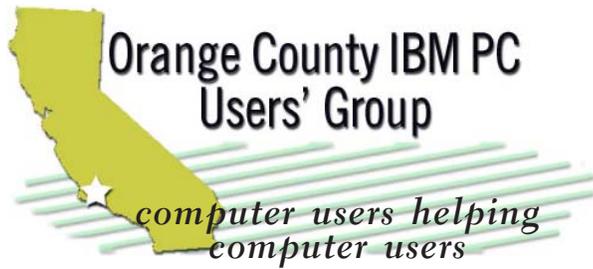
magazine discounts for user group members

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.

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	Y	E	A
		R	S
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
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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

Please allow 10 to 12 weeks for your magazines to start. You must supply an address label from your present subscription when renewing. I carry over 300 titles at excellent prices. Just email me for a price. The keyword may be found at <http://www.orcopug.org/members/june.html>.



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- Newsletter and web site
- Special offers & discounts
- Monthly meetings
- Affiliation with worldwide group

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- current & past programs

www.orcopug.org

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

where are the meetings and when are they held?

Regular meeting are 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. Call (714) 990-0580, for information, or go to www.orcopug.org. Meetings are free and the public is welcome!

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 welcome to attend *planning meetings*!

