NIBBLES & BITS

Orange County
IBM PC
Users' Group

Tuesday, May 8, 6:30 p.m. at Sunny Hills Racquet Club, Fullerton — Bring a friend!

MAY MEETING

Voice Pilot demonstation to be given!

Rolf Rudestam, President of Voice Pilot, Inc. and president of the Big Bear Computer Club, will demonstrate Voice Pilot Hear-Look software at the May 8 meeting.

The exciting new product provides a **convenient and effective method to send compressed voice and photos electronically via e-mail or embedded into other applications.**

You can send *your voice* and graphics in seconds, not minutes. By "compressing" voice, photo and graphics files, significant computer storage can be realized but, more importantly, these types of communications can be transmitted electronically much faster than other comparative products; up to 20, 35 and even 80 times faster!

In addition, Rolf will demonstrate **Voice Pilot PAL, a suite of voice recognition-based applications that is the world's first software solution to become virtually speech engine-independent.** Whether you prefer to work with IBM's Via Voice, Dragon Systems Dictate line; Lernout & Hauspie's VoiceXpress; or the new

Microsoft "Whisper" speech engine – it does not matter. Based upon Voice Pilot's pioneering "speech aware" application, PAL gives the user the ability to use more conventional speech patterns.

PAL includes a number of exciting application modules permitting you to perform a variety of hands-free tasks with the computer including managing your Calendar, To-do List, Address Book, Memo Pad, Project Planner, Remind Me, Expense Reports and Notepad.

Voice Pilot PAL includes the popular Voice Chat module to "chat" in Internet Relay Chat (IRC) rooms, gaining the feeling of a more personal contact, and letting you to keep up with all of the conversations and respond just with your voice.

Rolf has over 25 years in the computer industry, and managed the public relations activities of large high technology agencies and corporations on the West Coast. He has an M.B.A. in Strategic Planning from Pepperdine University and a B.A. in Philosophy from Rutgers University.

Get set for SWUG in July!

Judy Taylour, SWUG Co-chair

You are cordially invited to attend the 8th Annual Southwest User Group Conference — "Fun in the Sun & Computers, Too!" — again in San Diego, California.

This year it will be held from July

Award Winning Newsletter

May Meeting
May 8 • 6:30 p.m.

Sunny Hills Racquet Club
1900 Camino Loma, Fullerton
714-992-1300

Notepad

by Linda Gonse
editor@orcopug.org

We're doing good!

Well, as you can see on page 4, we have come a long way since January. Remember in January, Mike reported we only had $62.20 left in our treasury?

How did we manage to pull ourselves up out of the hole? As you know, we gave up our printed newsletter to save copying and mailing costs. And, we were able to use the Center Court Bar & Griill for free, thanks to Allen Rahmani, owner-manager. What a savings! It would be a nice thank you to him if all of us bought at least one item from the menu when we come to a meeting. He stays open just for us and serves wonderful dishes whenever we ask. Larry Klees, Ted Wirtz, and myself have ordered the pizza and can tell you firsthand that it is excellent! A couple of the members pooled their money to buy a large pizza, which they enjoyed at a table in the bar before the meeting.

Besides our Christmas fundraiser, we have had fundraising raffles for a QuickLink pen and a Belkin UPS. We also have been selling $5 APCUG shareware CDs. Many are left, though, and I hope we will buy out the entire stock at the next meeting. Come on! They don't cost much and when the software gets dated, the club will lose its chance at this income.

Lothar will continue to collect empty ink jet cartridges for a $2 refund. This week, he received a check for $135 for the cartridges you donated a couple of months ago. Please keep bringing the cartridges!

Now, as a benefit to members, we have a membership card. Would someone—or several someones—contact some computer stores and get us signed up for discounts and savings when we use the cards? It would be great to save money on computer supplies and accessories just for showing proof of being a member of this group!

As I told you in an earlier column, at the rate we are raising money, I would guess we could buy our new LCD projector sometime next year. Maybe very early in the year. But, we have to continue to build our savings until we get around $3,000 to do it.

With your help, WE CAN DO IT!

Letters to the editor

■ *April Peripherals page a hit!*

Thanks for a superbly wonderful newsletter again! That picture of the cat who ate the mouse is worth the entire year's membership fee. It's really delightful. :-)

Sharon Graham
shgraham@earthlink.net

■ *Surprise Internet site*

Go Here —— Enjoy. *http://www. shibumi.org/eoti.htm*

Dave Musser
dmusser@worldnet.att.net

■ *Address change*

(Here's) my new EarthLink email address: *morrswiss1@earthlink.net*.

Trudy Morrill-Ives

■ *Online reading*

Just read the April newsletter on (the) monitor. Another masterpiece! I don't know if there's a solution, but I prefer not to print out (can't right now because my printer is not conformed to a PS Type 1 model), but would prefer not to build a bigger pile of paper anyway. That is all a preamble to say I don't know if it's possible to fix, but for screen reading, scrolling to find the continuation of a story is troublesome. On the full page, going to the next page is easy, but when it's an item that starts a couple of inches from the bottom of the page and goes to the top of that page, it causes scroll craziness on my computer.

Just thought you needed another challenge.

Myra Milgrom
WriteOnBiz@earthlink.net

Thanks for making a good point, Myra. Two months ago, I asked members how many liked to read the

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Visit ORCOPUG online!
www.orcopug.org

12 win in April raffle

Learning Company

Calendar Creator	**Value $49**
Joe Gionet	Not Present
Lothar Loehr	Winner

Borland

C++ cup	**Value $5**
Donald Bickel	Winner

Power Quest

Drive Image 2.0	**Value $39**
Leroy Kaump	Winner

VisitTalk.com

T-shirt	**Value $5**
Haold Wann	Winner

Borland

C++ cup	**Value $5**
Richard Metzger	Winner

Adaptec

Water bottle	**Value $5**
Lloyd Boutwell	Winner

Borland

C++ cup	**Value $5**
Lloyd Boutwell	Prev. Winner
Pat McMillan	Expired
Sharon Graham	Winner
Kidstuff for OS/2	**Value $39**
Monte Holmes	Expired
Leonard Prince	Winner

Microsoft

Xtreme T-shirt	**Value $5**
Ike Black	Not Present
Lothar Loehr	Prev. Present
George Dedic	Not Present
Carl Westberg	Winner

Borland

JBuilder 4.0	**Value $10**
Mike Lyons	Winner

Borland

JBuilder 4	**Value $10**
Daniel Cadish	Not Present
Trudy Morrill	Not Present
Ray Evans	Winner

Corel

Mouse pad	**Value $5**
Don Faisy	Not Present
Glenn Emigh	Not Present
John Bednarski	Not Present
Herman Beverburg	Winner

Submitted by Mike Lyons

ORCOPUG Cash Flow
1/01/2001 to 4/24/2001

INFLOWS

Combined Income	676.61
Fund Raising	143.00
Membership	100.00
Beginning Balance 1173.79	

TOTAL INFLOWS	2093.40

OUTFLOWS

Mail Newsltr	37.40
Office Supplies	32.19
Postage	63.50
Print Newsltr	47.57
Utilities	
Telephone	54.64

TOTAL Utilities	54.64

TOTAL OUTFLOWS	235.30

OVERALL TOTAL	**1858.10**

Letters

☞ *page 2*

newsletter while online or did they print it out.There weren't enough replies to help me decide to tailor the issue for online readers.

Preparing the newsletter for online reading takes lots of time, so I had only hyperlinked web and email addresses. But now, I'll add hyperlinks for jumping back and forth between pages in articles. I hope it makes it a little easier for our online readers.

Incidentally, any printer should be able to print out pdf files. —LG

MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS

Due to lack of interest in the group and volunteer help, this feature has been discontinued.

Power User: Anyone who can format a disk from DOS.

Keyboard: The standard way to generate computer errors.

Floppy: The state of your wallet after purchasing a computer.

Submitted by Tony Lake

Members' email directory

Apponyi, Carl
.... *eubulus@netzero.net*
Arnold, Dale
.... *darnold33@hotmail.com*
Balazs, Frank
.... *fbalazs@netzero.net*
Bazerman, Siles
.... *siles.bazerman@gte.net*
Bearss, Gloria
.... *gbearss@pacbell.net*
Black, Ike
.... *ikeblack@msn.com*
Boutwell, Lloyd
.... *LloydB8@aol.com*
Bullis, Art
.... *bullis@worldnet.att.net*
Brubaker, Jim
.... *info@1homeseller.com*
Cadish, Dan
.... *dbcadish@netscape.net*
Chenoweth, Bob
.... *Chenoweth1@aol.com*
Emigh, Glenn
.... *glenne@linkline.com*
Francis, Joe
.... *joefran1@gte.net*
Frank, Mervin
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Gonse, Linda
.... *linda@orcopug.org*
Gorham, Milton
.... *m4gorham@home.com*
Graham, Sharon
.... *shgraham@earthlink.net*
Hedges, Ralph
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Jackson, Walter
.... *wvjaxn@aol.com*
Kambeitz, Bob
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Klees, Larry
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La Mont, Bill
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Lake, Tony
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Loehr, Lothar
.... *lothar@orcopug.org*
Lyons, Mike
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Moore, Charlie
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Morrill-Ives, Trudy
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Musser, Dave
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Prince, Leonard
.... *lenprince@juno.com*
Schiele, Terry
.... *terry@orcopug.org*
Tooley, Richard D.
.... *tooley@alum.mit.edu*
Turner, Denny
.... *dlturner@juno.com*
Wann, Harold
.... *WANN.HSW@worldnet.att.net*
Webster, Marvin
.... *mwwebster@earthlink.net*
Westberg, Carl
.... *carl@orcopug.org*
Wirtz, Ted
.... *twirtz@pacbell.net*

(All addresses are hyperlinks.)

Members' Renewal Dates

MARCH 1	MAY 1	JULY 1	AUGUST 1
Ray Fitch	Chad Hansen	Dale Arnold	Gloria Bearss
	Terry Schiele	Herman Beverburg	Nolan Cave
APRIL 1	Harold Wann	Joe Francis	Don Faisy
Bud Barkhurst		Ralph Hedges	Stan Leese
Monte Holmes	JUNE 1	Walter Jackson	Sid Liptz
Robert Kambeitz	Dan Cadish	Dean Kise	Elroy Schoppa
Pat McMillan	George Dedic	Tony Lake	
Dick McMillan	Richard Metzger	Ralph Seymour	

Submitted by Mike Lyons and Charlie Moore

Got any old CDs for recycling into toys?

by Mike Lyons

Harold Wann has a use for your old, unused CDs. His woodworking group is using them to make toys for needy children. If you have some you can donate, please bring them to the meeting and give them to Harold. Harold and his group make tops and other toys with the CDs. The kids will appreciate it.

Computer users' prayer

Dear Lord:

Every single evening, As I'm lying here in bed, This tiny little prayer, Keeps running through my head.

God bless my mom and dad, And other family, Keep them warm and safe from harm, For they're so close to me.

And God, there is one more thing, I wish that you could do, Hope you don't mind me asking, Bless my computer too.

Now I know that it's not normal, To bless a mother board, But listen just a second, While I explain to you 'My Lord'.

You see, that little metal box, Holds more than odds and ends, Inside those small compartments, Rest so many of my FRIENDS.

I know so much about them, By the kindness that they give, And this little scrap of metal, Takes me in to where they live.

By faith is how I know them Much the same as you, We share in what life brings us, And from that our friendship grew.

Please, take an extra minute, From your duties up above, To bless those in my address book, That's filled with so much love!

Wherever else this prayer may reach, To each and every friend, Bless each email inbox, And the person who

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McAfee warns of two new viruses and tells where to find help

The incidence of the following 2 MEDIUM-RISK viruses has been rising over the last several days. McAfee.com recommends that you scan your system to check for infection.

1. W32/Badtrans@MM is a mass-mailing worm that spreads via the email program MS Outlook. This worm creates an Outlook object that sends an infected document as a reply to all unread email messages. If the attachment is opened, the worm displays a message box:

Title: **Install error**
Message: **File data corrupt: probably due to a bad data transmission or bad disk access.**

Once running, the Trojan attempts to mail the victim's IP Address to the author. When this information is obtained, the author can connect to the infected system via the Internet and steal personal information such as usernames, and passwords. In addition, the Trojan is capable of capturing other vital information such as credit card and bank account numbers. For detection and removal instructions go to: *http://www.mcafee.com/anti-virus/viruses/badtrans/*

2. W32/Matcher@MM is a mass-mailing worm that spreads via MS Outlook. Once running, the program attempts to email itself to everyone in the Outlook Address book repeatedly, until the worm is removed from the system. The email message appears as follows:

Subject: **Matcher**
Body: **Want to find your love mates!!! Try this its cool... Looks and Attitude Maching to opposite sex.**
Attachment: **Matcher.exe**

For more information go to: *http://vil.mcafee.com/dispVirus.asp?virus_k=99072&*

Submitted by Mervin Frank

What do you do if your wallet or purse is stolen?

Author unknown

We've all heard horror stories about fraud that's committed using your name, address, SS#, credit, etc.

Unfortunately I have first hand knowledge, because my wallet was stolen last month.

Within a week the thieves ordered an expensive monthly cell phone package, applied for a VISA credit card, had a credit line approved to buy a Gateway computer, received a PIN number from DMV to change my driving record information on-line, and more.

But here's some critical information to limit the damage in case this happens to you or someone you know. As everyone always advises, cancel your credit cards immediately, but the key is having the toll free numbers and your card numbers handy so you know whom to call.

Keep those where you can find them easily. Having to hunt for them is additional stress you WON'T need at that point!

File a police report immediately in the jurisdiction where it was stolen, this proves to credit providers you were diligent, and is a first step toward an investigation (if there ever is one).

But here's what is perhaps most important: **Call the three national credit reporting organizations immediately to place a fraud alert on your name and Social Security Number.**

I had never heard of doing that until advised by a bank that called to tell me an application for credit was made over the Internet in my name. The alert means any company that checks your credit knows your information was stolen and they have to contact you by phone to authorize new credit.

By the time I was advised to do this—almost 2 weeks! After the theft all the damage had been done

There are records of all the credit checks initiated by the thieves' purchases, none of which I knew about before placing the alert.

Since then, no additional damage has been done, and the thieves that threw my wallet away. (someone turned it in). It seems to have stopped them in their tracks.

The numbers are:
Equifax 1-800 525-6285
Experian (formerly TRW) 1-888-397-3742
Trans Union 1-800-680-7289
Social Security Administration also has a fraud line at 1-800-269-0271

I hope you will never have to use this information.

Submitted by Tony Lake

What can you do when your DSL dies?

What would you do if you turned on your modem and found you had no connection?

ZDNet Small Business gives you tips on how to avoid this and keep tabs on your service.

http://cgi.zdnet.com/slink?95024:2112944

Now you can use a laptop while lying down!

Have you ever wanted to work with your laptop while stretched out on a chaise lounge by the pool, on the couch in your living room, or even in bed? If you tried it, you know it is nearly impossible to get the computer in a comfortable, stable working position and still feel relaxed and capable of working.

But, a solution has been found for this problem! It is the Lap Genie, a

durability.

Lap Genie, Ltd., P.O. Box 190, Morristown, AZ 85342 Toll free: 877-388-0072, *lapgenie@earthlink.net, www.lapgenie.com. —LG*

Use a mouse without using your hands!

If you have your hands full while computing, or you suffer from arthritis or another disability, the Stealth Footmouse might be what you need!

With the footmouse, pointing and clicking is as simple as resting your foot on top of the product and gliding it in the desired direction.

The footmouse functions with any PC-compatible using a serial port. It is well-suited for applications such as surfing the Internet, data entry, games, etc.

For more information contact I/O Test Inc. at 305/238-8441 or visit the website at *http://www.wwdir.com/iotest.html. —LG*

rugged, infinitely adjustable table/platform device that is light (only 1.7 lbs.) that folds for ease of transport and storage. It fits across the waist of the user who is in a semi-reclining or seated position. Adjustment is easy and positive to place the computer (or book or writing pad) in the ergonomically ideal position for working. Furthermore, no heat or weight is transferred to the user, thereby assuring a more relaxed computing or reading body environment.

In addition, LapGenie also is ideal for disabled or bedridden persons for reading (especially for large and heavy books) and for writing.

LapGenie costs $129 and is manufactured in U.S. of aircraft-quality anodized aluminum for ruggedness, lasting beauty, and

Writer considers two big issues: AOL and high-speed Internet connection

by Lee Hudspeth

My first article in this series generated several emails from folks incredulous that I would suggest using AOL under any circumstances. I appreciate these readers' cries of alarm, and here's my reply.

Lee Hudspeth

I consciously chose not to get into a discussion of AOL in my initial article. In retrospect, that was a mistake. Too many readers may have inferred that if Lee says AOL is okay for a backup plan, it must be okay for general use.

In my opinion, it's not okay for general use, but under certain very specific circumstances it can provide a safety net (more on this in a moment). I never had any direct empirical evidence that AOL was causing system instabilities, only that it had what I considered a poor user interface and bad technical support. The "bad UI" judgment was easy to make; AOL connection software is proprietary, frenetic, and laden with "eyeball traps" that simply shouldn't be part of a paid-for online connection experience. I made the bad technical support judgment based on the experiences of numerous clients and friends, all of whom reported extensive problems with the service, but I had never used it myself. (As you'll read in a moment I now have my own bad AOL experiences to lament.)

I recommend that people NOT use AOL, but I didn't clarify that in my initial article. What I should have said was this. All the Internet connectivity tools at my disposal at the time were broken (DSL was down, my ISP doesn't offer dial-up for DSL subscribers, and NetZero was belly up). With several time-critical consulting projects on deadline, I chose to take a risk and sacrifice a clunker PC to AOL. When AOL worked, I was able to connect, browse the Web, and conduct my email business for three days while waiting for my ISP to fix

> AOL connection software is proprietary, frenetic, and laden with "eyeball traps" that simply shouldn't be part of a paid-for online connection experience.

the problem. So, yes, AOL worked for me under those circumstances. But thanks to TNPCer Michael Zipf, we can all study important empirical evidence of AOL's insistence on destabilizing systems. If I had known then what I do now, I would have further qualified my comments.

Michael shared a link to an online article penned by the venerable Fred Langa, Publisher of LangaList (*http://www.langa.com*) and freelance computer/Web author, about his AOL experiments. You can find "AOL 5.0: The Upgrade of Death?" at: *http://www.TheNakedPC.com/t/407/tr.cgi?lee1*

In fine empiricist form, Fred took a perfectly clean, stable Windows 98 SE system; cloned an exact "disk image" copy so he could always return to the

same "clean PC" state; and installed AOL 5.0 on it. AOL wreaked havoc on the PC's networking protocol stacks, created several online security vulnerabilities (this was reported in a more recent version of the article that's not currently available online), unnecessarily installed Virtual Private Networking (this was reported in a more recent version of the article that's not currently available online), changed power management Registry settings, and added or replaced numerous system files, all for no apparent reason. To add insult to injury, AOL's uninstaller did not return the system to its original state. Fred concluded that AOL 5.0 was a high risk because it made so many changes to a system for no logical reason (AOL technical support engineers were never able to intelligently answer any of his questions). He repeated the experiment with AOL 6.0 and found it made only slightly fewer changes.

Oh, but it gets worse and closer to home. I read TNPCer Richard H.'s email and filed it away for future reference when he wrote, "[Regarding canceling AOL before your initial free 30-day trial,] been there did that, make sure you ask for reference number, and be willing to put up with timeshare-like jerk on the AOL cancellation desk." I cancelled well before the 30 days had ticked by, but not without almost getting duped out of at least one month's charges.

When I called to cancel I took careful notes, but I had forgotten Richard's advice about the cancellation confirmation number. The rep (I'll call him Eric) responded to my cancellation request by saying, in his best huckster patter, "I'll waive the bill date until May 12th blah blah blah..." and kept on with some goofy spiel, so I stopped him and said, "No, I want to cancel forever, right now, not extend or waive

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anything. I want you to unequivocally guarantee me that it is cancelled and that there will be no charge for AOL ever on my credit card. Do you guarantee that?" Eric answered yes. Twenty minutes later while working on this article, I remembered Richard's warning and that I had forgotten to get a cancellation confirmation number, called back, and got a different rep. She looked up my account and it was alive, un-cancelled, and "extended" to May 12th at which point the billing would have kicked in. I quoted her my notes, explained that I wanted to escalate to a supervisor and file a formal complaint about Eric. She apologized, quickly filed an electronic complaint about Eric (so she said), asked if I would be willing to be contacted by phone by a manager in regards to the regrettable incident (I said okay), and then gave me my cancellation confirmation number. Just bad karma? Whatever it was, it was bad. Take heed folks, and take Richard's advice: always get the cancellation confirmation number when canceling your AOL account.

Here are several Internet connectivity options to consider if your primary high-speed connection goes down. (Some of these options work well when you're traveling, too.)

1. Get a high-speed connectivity provider that offers free dial-up access.

Our colleague Al Gordon reports that as an AT&T RoadRunner cable subscriber he can use a free dial-up connectivity service called "Mobile Access Beta Test." Al reports that this may be the world's longest-running beta test: three years! However, Al relates that RoadRunner does **not** offer its own proprietary Web-based email, and yet AT&T WorldNet does. Go figure. Others I have corresponded with cite arrangements like this: Telocity

DSL subscribers get free dial-up access through an 800 number (limited to 60 minutes per month); PacBell DSL provides free dial-up with a local number; and so on.

Your DSL provider may not proactively advertise its free dial-up access. Listen to TNPCer Gary V.'s tale, "I have ADSL through Bellsouth for $40 a month. They do not advertise this fact when you sign up for ADSL, but included along with the ADSL is a regular dial-up account. I found this out from a Bellsouth tech rep when I had to call about an ADSL service outage."

2. Use a free dial-up service like NetZero. If you're going to have this as part of your safety net, be sure to have an updated copy of the connection software handy or you'll be stuck, unable to connect to get the software.

3. Use a free public email retrieval site that allows you to connect to any POP3 provider via a Web interface (thanks to Jonathan A. to be the first to make this suggestion).

Here are some of the most popular sites.

Mail2Web: *http://www. TheNakedPC.com/t/407/ tr.cgi?mail2web*

POP2Web: *http://www. TheNakedPC.com/t/407/ tr.cgi?pop2web*

ThatWeb: *http://www. TheNakedPC.com/t/407/tr.cgi?thatweb*

4. Use your provider's proprietary Web-based email interface (as mentioned in my initial article).

In my unscientific tests, Verizon/ GTE's interface seemed slower that the public email retrieval sites listed above.

5. Pay for a limited-usage dial-up account as a backup.

Thanks to subscriber Lee H. for this tip. Check with your ISP as mileage may vary.

6. Completely segregate your email service from your ISP.

Thanks to subscriber Craig R. for this tip. To reduce the risk of being

dependent on the same company for both email service and connectivity, never use your ISP's email infrastructure. Instead get your own domain name and get a reliable host that provides an SMTP server and allows you to manage your own POP3 mailboxes.

7. TNPC Editor-in-Chief Dan Butler believes that receiving email is more important than sending, because with an unreliable email provider you won't ever know if incoming email has come in or not (Email Metaphysics 101!). In a pinch you can almost always use phone/fax to replace the temporary loss of the outbound email medium. Dan's suggestions include: (1) buy a domain name (say, example. com) then have mydomain.com redirect—it's a free service—any email sent to example.com to the location of your choosing; *http://www. TheNaked PC.com/t/407/tr.cgi?mydomain*

(2) find an ultra-reliable email provider so you don't have any email problems; and (3) alternately, run your

Submitted by Tony Lake

The Naked PC…

own email server. For great tips on choosing an ISP, see our ebook "The Book That Should Have Come with Your Computer" chapter 17 "Making Internet Connections." Dan's ideas will be addressed in more detail in a future issue. *http://www.TheNakedPC.com/t/a/tr.cgi?tugpc2*

Credit is due to TNPCer Mark L. for his timeless advice, "I knew the e-mail would still be waiting for me when I got back, the Web sites wouldn't disappear and try as it might, the world would not come to an end just because I didn't see it over the wire at 300Kbps."

TNPC subscriber Stephen G. kindly but tersely :-) offered a clever plan for me, "Get cable."

I'll close with some high-speed facts to consider: in North America, DSL users grew 185% in 2000 to 2.9 million (Cahners In-Stat), and cable modem users grew 144% to 3.4 million (Gartner Group). That's 6.3 million individual cable and DSL connections combined.

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Read Lee Hudspeth and T.J. Lee's latest book, "T.J. Lee and Lee Hudspeth's Absolute Beginner's Guide to PC Upgrades," at http://www.TheNakedPC.com/t/403/tr.cgi?sponsor2. You can reach Lee at: *leehudspeth@TheNakedPC.com.* The Naked PC is a free, online newsletter. Subscribe at *http://www.thenakedpc.com.*

Computer users' …

hits send.

When you update your heavenly list, On your own CD-ROM, Remember each who've said this prayer, Sent up to God.com. Amen.

Submitted by Don Hepler
dhepler@access.k12.wv.us

Some thoughts on USB

by Lloyd Boutwell

I have always been interested in computer hardware so the advent of USB was a challenge to me to see what was available and how much stuff I could hang on my computer. I guess I have some sort of aversion to computer slots and IO ports left unused.

Anyway I have managed to collect a few USB devices such as a camera, drawing pad, keyboard, mouse, microscope, Zip drive, TV, and EIDE hard drive adapter.

I have gone though the process of finding a bad A-B USB cable even though it checked out continuity wise. I have also found that USB hubs are very handy if you don't want to plug and unplug cables when connecting a USB device to your computer.

One of the hubs I have supports the usual four ports but, in addition, also has two serial ports and one parallel port. All the hubs I use have their own power supply so I don't overload the computers' capacity.

So far I am impressed with the USB concept. The future IEEE 1394 Firewire has more promise but most PC's today already have two USB ports built in. The USB TV has been a disappointment (poor resolution and update rates) so I don't recommend anyone purchasing one.

The only drawback that I have found is that trying to send large amounts of data through a USB hub to a Zip or hard drive does not work reliably. It seems if I try to copy files totaling around 100 MB that the system locks up and has to be rebooted. Using the computers' port directly to the USB Zip/hard drive appears to be OK.

According to Microsoft "You can change hardware on the fly. Just like with a wall socket, you can unplug one device and plug in another, and it works." In Windows Me there is a little icon in the right hand side of the taskbar (where the clock is) that is used to unmount (disconnect) either the Zip drive or hard drive. This gives the software a chance to control disk letter assignments. If not used the computer gets confused and may hang. When you put your cursor over this icon you get the indication "Unplug or Eject Hardware." This icon only appears with the use of USB drive devices and fortunately, it does not actually eject hardware (I had this vision of my Zip drive flying across the room).

All in all, USB devices are cool.

SWUG in July…

13–15 at the Hilton Hotel, Valley Circle. We'll have presentations and meals sponsored by vendors, and a variety of workshops to choose from to enhance your skills (personal as well as leading your group). There will be a vendor faire where you will have the opportunity to talk with vendors and schedule those all-important meeting presentations. On Sunday you will again have the opportunity to take part in a group'give & take' workshop with participating vendors. All in all, we want everyone to enjoy themselves, the presentations, food, workshops and weather and go home with ideas and skills to enhance their user group experience. Please check out the conference web site at *www.swugconf.org* for more information. You can print a registration form and mail it in with your

Betas, betas, and more betas—what do they mean to you?

by Siles Bazerman

Let's see what is new this time.

Internet Explorer 6.0 Beta has been released for public download. Since I have used it for only a few days, I am not sure of what has changed. It does seem faster to load and to download pages though. But, there is no promise that you will find this to be the case. Reports are coming in that this one has created problems on some systems. If you are having problems with I.E. 5.0 or 5.5 then do NOT install this one. It will not fix existing problems.

Also out is the Public Preview of Microsoft Office XP. This will be a limited time version which will cease working a short time after the release of the gold version. Included with this is WPA (Windows Program Activation) which will require a contact with Microsoft after installation to keep the program working. Supposedly this will have to

Microsoft may yet change their mind about this. Rumors abound, with claims from NON-Beta testers that only a motherboard or CPU change will need this. At the other extreme are claims, again from NON-Beta testers, that even a change of mouse will require re-activation codes. The only people who have experience with this are the real Beta Testers and they are still bound by their NDAs. We will soon know as the Beta 2 which was released in late March will become public preview without NDAs in mid to late April.

How this WPA will effect users in still very uncertain, but hackers have already broken the Activation for Office XP betas, and will probably do so for the full release within a very short time. In fact, I think it took two days for the beta work around to be posted. The same will happen for

legal home end user. Corporate multi machine licenses will not have this "feature." There are reports that not only will your hardware be scanned for activation, but also your software will be checked for legal ownership. This is extremely farfetched as it would require an immense database of ALL software and registration codes, but would violate privacy laws and thus would not be actionable in court or other forums. In fact it would leave Microsoft open to civil and criminal action, especially in view of recent court decisions.

Again, as with all betas, those who know cannot say and those who say do not know.

One of the best places to obtain information about Windows Me and Windows XP is *http://www.winsupersite.com*. Paul Thurrott receives information from Microsoft and has proven to be very accurate in the past, with the exception of shipping and release dates. But then, Microsoft has been known to miss deadlines.

At this time the schedule looks like the following. Beta 2 Public Preview will be mailed to those already signed up in mid to late April. Release Candidate 1 will ship or be downloadable in late June/early July. Release Candidate 2 downloadable in late July. Release to manufacture in September and retail release October to November. This is, as usual with Microsoft, subject to change. There is,

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> Again, as with all betas, those who know cannot say and those who say do not know.

be done also after hardware changes. More on this a little later on.

Due out shortly is the Public Preview of Microsoft Windows XP. This will be the replacement for windows 9x (Me, 98 FE, 98SE) and NT. This OS will also require activation. Exactly what will be considered a change for getting a new activation code is not clear yet. The whole concept is being strongly opposed by the Beta Testers, and

Windows XP, but might take a week. The same tools programmers use to debug software is being used to reverse engineer the programs and to find the work around. I do know of a work around for Windows XP Beta 1 that has been posted to Warez sites and is circulating.

Microsoft claims that is an anti-piracy move, but these are the very ones with the talent to break it. The ones stuck with the WPA will be the

Newsletter Deadline!

Saturday May 19

Peripherals

Earthlights…Awesome!

This is what the Earth looks like at night. Can you find your favorite country or city? Surprisingly, city lights make this task quite possible. Human-made lights highlight particularly developed or populated areas of the Earth's surface, including the seaboards of Europe, the eastern United States, and Japan. Many large cities are located near rivers or oceans so that they can exchange goods cheaply by boat. Particularly dark areas include the central parts of South America, Africa, Asia, and Australia. The above image is actually a composite of hundreds of pictures made by the orbiting DMSP satellites. Source: *http://antwrp.gsfc.nasa.gov/apod/ap001127.html*

Submitted by Ted Wirtz

Order dinner or a snack at the May meeting!

We have the Courtside Bar and Grill all to ourselves the second Tuesday of every month—and it's free of charge! In addition, you are invited to order delicious items off the menu before or during the meeting. If you have any questions about the menu or comments, feel free to call Allen Rahmani, the restaurant's owner/manager, at 714-738-1100.

Soda		**Pizza**	
Coke, Diet Coke, Sprite	$1.00	Small Cheese	$7.00
Fruit Juice	1.50	Small Pepperoni	7.50
		Large Cheese	12.00
Light Ideas		Large Pepperoni	13.00
Dinner Salad	$3.00	One Slice	1.00
Fresh Bowl of Fruit	3.00		
Chicken Wings	5.00	**Sandwiches**	
		Ham or Turkey	$4.00
		Club (Ham & Turkey) ...	4.50
Pasta		Hamburger	4.00
Spaghetti (Red Sauce) .	$5.00	Cheeseburger	4.50
Spaghetti (Meat Sauce)	6.00	1/4 lb. Hot Dog	3.00
		French Fries	1.50

however, a strong push not to miss out on holiday sales as was the case with Windows Me.

Due to the volume of posts in the Microsoft private Windows XP usenet newsgroups I have quit monitoring the Windows 98 groups. There hasn't been much new in the last few months, just the same old shut down problems, programs not loading, or running, etc. They were heavy with spam, and I was becoming bored with them also. New groups—new challenges.

———————

Siles Bazerman is Vice President of WINNERS computer group in Garden Grove, and belongs to ORCOPUG. Write him at siles.bazerman @gte.net; or call, 714-897-2868 (after 9 a.m.).

check or wait for the registration packet that will be mailed to you.

VOLUNTEERS ARE WELCOME AND NEEDED! Please let me know if you would like to help by coordinating the Web page contest (again sponsored by Adobe), help at the conference, or facilitate a workshop. We strive to offer workshops that reflect the attendees' interests. Please reply with your suggested topics.
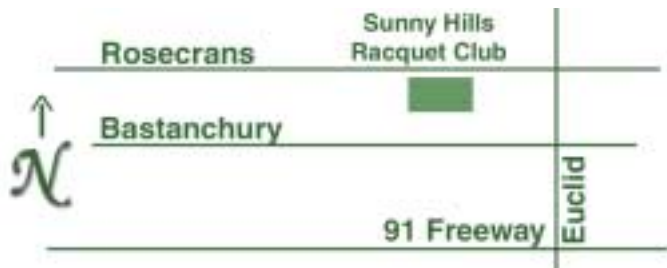
If you would like to share a room with someone, please let me know.

Newsletter contributors

Charlie Moore, Dave Musser, Dean Kise, Judy Taylour, Lee Hudspeth, Linda Gonse, Lloyd Boutwell, Lothar Loehr, Mervin Frank, Mike Lyons, Myra Milgrom, Rolf Rudestam, Sharon Graham, Siles Bazerman, Ted Wirtz, Tony Lake, Trudy Morrill-Ives.

"The User Group community plays an important role in educating computer users and reaching out to those who are new to technology." – Dr. Charles M. Geschke, President, Adobe Systems

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

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

Visit ORCOPUG's new and improved web site— New! Text index for PDF newsletter. Fast opening!
www.orcopug.org

Everyone is welcome at meetings

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. Everyone is welcome to attend and participate in planning future meetings and events.

Reprint Policy: User groups wishing to reprint unaltered, uncopyrighted material, with credit to the author and Nibbles & Bits, are encouraged to write: *editor@orcopug.org.* In exchange for your newsletter's name and date of publication, ASCII and image files will be forwarded to you for the desired article(s).

See meeting map on back panel

6:30 p.m.
Tuesday, May 8

Voice Pilot to be demonstrated

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IBM PC Users' Group
Orange County
Computer users helping one another