

May 2004



# NIBBLES & BITS

Tuesday, May 11, 6:30 p.m. at Sunny Hills Racquet Club, Fullerton — Bring a friend!

## MAY PROGRAM

### Reviewer to tell about new programs

Terry Currier reviews products and programs each month for the newsletter and monthly programs of WINNERS, a Windows' users computer group in Costa Mesa. Terry is their Vice President, Webmaster, Program Chair, and APCUG Rep.



*Terry Currier*

For the ORCOPUG May 11 meeting, Terry will be showing some of the programs he has reviewed or is in the process of reviewing. His product reviews include the Kyocera digital camera, Executive Diskkeeper defrager, Altec Lansing speakers, Vox Proxy (a PowerPoint add-in), and the Planon scanner.

Terry Currier retired in January as a computer operator for Ford Motor Co. where he helped to maintain computers, terminals, laser printers, inkjets, thermal printers, and a mainframe. He also held several classes for employees at a Ford Special Education Center on what to look for in buying a computer and to how to maintain it.

In addition, three of his articles were published on the web. Two were on mediaandbeyond.com, and a review about the Belkin UPS unit currently appears on TechTV.com.

### APCUG Fall Conference scheduled

*by Ed Van Meter, Region 11 Advisor*

Mark your calendars! The APCUG 2004 Fall Conference is scheduled for Friday, November 12 through Tuesday, November 16, at the Stardust Hotel & Conference Center, Las Vegas. New this year: Conference is open to all User Group members, Round Tables start Friday afternoon, Spouse program, and Repeating Round Table sessions.

Information will soon be sent about Registration dates—don't miss the "early bird" pricing.



### Fun In the Sun and Computers, Too!

*Patricia Hill and Judy Taylour  
Co-chairs, SW User Group  
Conference*

Web Site Contest! Door Prize Drawings! Networking! T-shirts and Welcome Kits! All this and more can be found at the 11th Annual Southwest User Group (SWUG) Conference.

This year's activities run from Friday evening, August 6 through Sunday, August 8 at the Mission Valley Hilton in San Diego. Planned activities include workshops, vendor-sponsored presentations and meals, a Saturday evening Vendor Faire, numerous prize drawings as well personal contact with participating vendors.

"The leadership of the conference always finds good vendors who make excellent presentations about their software. In many cases these vendors will give each attendee a copy of their software to take home and learn," said Ed Zarr, Sunland Village East Computer Club.

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# Notepad



This month, there are **several important computer issues.**

One is the W32.Sasser worm. It doesn't do any direct damage. But, the worm uses a massive amount of your computer's resources so it slows down or even seems to stop completely. If you have not downloaded and installed the latest Windows update to cover this vulnerability, please do it now.

Here's the link for the Microsoft page that gives you details about sasser and contains an online checking program to see if your computer is already infected by it. <http://www.microsoft.com/security/incident/sasser.asp>.

This dovetails with another piece of information I want to pass along. Advice has been given that you need to enable Windows XP's built-in Internet Connection Firewall (ICF) to help protect your computer from worms like sasser—even if you are behind a router. This is a misconception.

The ICF works for local area network (LAN) or dial-up connections but only provides protection for computers DIRECTLY connected to the Internet. If you have a dial-up, DSL, or cable modem without a router, the ICF should be used. Here is a link showing how to enable it: [http://www.practicallynetworked.com/sharing/xp/ic\\_firewall.htm](http://www.practicallynetworked.com/sharing/xp/ic_firewall.htm).

Another issue concerns AOL's blocking policy. Did you know that AOL reads the INSIDE of ALL incoming emails? It does this to block any messages that contain links to sites that AOL doesn't want you to see!

This is not just a simple mail block where a message is discarded if it originates from a "forbidden" address. But, in fact, by scanning the content of email going to subscribers, it blocks them from being delivered to the AOL subscriber **even if the email merely mentions the name of a site that**

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## Letters

### Healthy PC author helps member

I have been having a variety of problems with my computer since I followed the instructions in Carey Holzman's book, "The Healthy PC." I compounded my problems by changing ISPs at the same time. Lesson—change one thing at a time. My problems were: 1) I could not download pdf files from the web and that includes the ORCOPUG newsletter, 2) my dial up connection speed dropped from 49 kb/s to 31 kb/s, and 3) I would get messages that something could not download because security would not allow the use of Active X.

After thinking my ISP was at fault for the pdf file problem based on various messages that I got, I had quite a series of messages with their tech service who finally said, correctly, that it was a system problem, not theirs. In desperation I sent a message to Carey and received an answer one hour and twenty minutes later—how about that for a good response! He suggested restoring the default settings (Control Panel—Internet Properties—Security and set default on each of the four icons). That restored the pdf downloading problem. For the Active X, follow the same path but go to Advanced rather than Security and again restore defaults.

Not only did this seem to cure the pdf and Active X problems, it restored my connection speed. I have verified that the ISP was not responsible for any of the problems since changing the ISP was the only change in the computer and everything worked on the machine.

**Richard Tooley**  
[tooley@alum.mit.edu](mailto:tooley@alum.mit.edu)

### Looking for Amazon reviewers

Would you or your members be interested in writing reviews for Amazon? O'Reilly is always looking for avid readers who can help us out

by posting their thoughts. You can keep the books you review! Please pass this info along to folks who might be interested. And if you don't already, please consider posting copies of your current UG reviews on Amazon, as well as your group's site or email list. Let me know if you need more info!

**Marsee Henon**  
[marsee@oreilly.com](mailto:marsee@oreilly.com)

### Small but free

TinyApps.org, is a guide to very small software programs and provides program downloads (most are free) at <http://www.tinyapps.org/>.

*Submitted by Tony Lake*

Published and distributed to club members by the



Orange County IBM PC Users' Group

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.

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**More club information and review guidelines at: [www.orcopug.org](http://www.orcopug.org)**



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The Association of  
Personal Computer User Groups

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**Include your listing so other members can reach you. Send your 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).

## March raffle winners

- U-Lead Photo Explorer, \$39\***  
John Bednarski, Expired  
Charlie Moore, Winner
- U-Lead PhotoImpact XL, \$79\***  
Sharon Graham, Expired  
Bud Barkhurst, Not Present  
Stan Leese, Winner
- Smart Computing magazine subscription, \$25\***  
Michael Moore, Not Present  
Harold Wann, Winner
- Smart Computing 2003 issues, \$25\***  
Ted Wirtz, Winner
- U-Lead PhotoVideoStudio, \$79\***  
Joe Gionet, Winner
- U-Lead PhotoExplorer, \$39\***  
Larry Klees, Winner
- South Bay Engineering fan, \$25\***  
Siles Bazerman, Not Present  
Sharon Graham, Expired

Lind Gonse, Not Present  
Carl Westberg, Winner

*\*Estimated value*

*Submitted by Charlie Moore*

## Members' renewal dates

- MARCH** — Jim Brubaker, Sharon Graham
- APRIL** — David Musser
- MAY** — Terry Schiele, Harold Wann
- JUNE** — R.A. Metzger, Terry Terrazas
- JULY** — Herman Beverburg, Joe Francis, Walter Jackson, Tony Lake, Ralph Seymour
- AUGUST** — Stan Leese, Sid Liptz, Michael Moore

*Submitted by Charlie Moore*

## Write reviews online!

Fill in an online review form and click to submit your reviews. Go to [www.orcopug.org](http://www.orcopug.org), Review, and Online Review Form. It's fast and easy!

**Don't be the victim of a virus or hoax! Check the TOP 10 hoaxes & viruses at [www.orcopug.org](http://www.orcopug.org)**



## Membership Application

**New Member**       **Renewal\***

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

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Areas of Interest/Comments \_\_\_\_\_

*ORCOPUG meets the second Tuesday of every month starting at 6:30 p.m. Dues are \$25 per year. Please see our website at [www.orcopug.org](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!)*



## Use Run commands for fast access to almost everything

by Linda Gonse

Did you know that the Run command is the Swiss Army knife of Windows' built-in apps? Using it can make your computing time move along more quickly and smoothly.

Available since Windows 3.1, the Run command is often overlooked by users except as an option for installing programs, although techies use it frequently to access various system diagnostics and information.



But, the average computer user should take a closer look at Run for its versatility. For

example: Run can be used for quick access to the Startup Configuration tab, to start programs and utilities, to open files and folders, to open web sites (when connected to the Internet), and as an alternative to placing shortcuts on the desktop.

To use a Run command, click on the Start button. Click on Run. In the open box, type in one of the following commands—there are others besides those listed here— and click on OK. Alternately, if you have a Windows key on your keyboard you can avoid using the mouse by pressing Windows and the letter “r”.

- calc** (opens calculator utility)
- cdplayer** (opens cd player)
- charmap** (opens character map utility)
- clipbrd** (opens clipboard utility)
- command** (opens DOS window at command line)
- defrag** (opens defrag utility)
- drvspace** (opens drive space utility to compress drives, etc.)
- dxdiag** (for DirectX, sound, input devices-joysticks, etc. info)
- freecell** (opens freecell game)
- mplayer2** (opens Windows Media Player 6.4)
- msconfig** (accesses programs that run on startup)
- mshearts** (opens hearts game)
- msinfo32** (accesses system resources info)
- notepad** (opens program)
- regedit** (accesses command to edit the registry)
- rsrctmtr** (loads resource meter utility in system tray)
- scandiskw** (accesses scan disk utility)
- scanregw** (registry scan)
- sndrec32** (opens sound recorder)
- sndvol32** (opens sound volume utility)
- sol** (opens a solitaire game)
- sysedit** (accesses the System Configuration Utility)
- sysmon** (opens system monitor utility)

- win.ini** (accesses file that loads some Windows components)
- winipcfg** (displays Internet connection/adaptor info)
- winver** (displays the Windows version installed on the computer)
- wmplayer** (opens Windows Media Player)
- wordpad** (opens program)
- wupdmgr** (connects to Windows update)

Using the Run box can also give you a jump start on addressing your email messages. Go to Run and type in `mailto:<desired email address>` and press OK. (Example—`mailto:editor@orcopug.org.`) Your e-mail application will open to display a blank new message that already has the email address you typed in the ‘To:’ field! You can even check websites by typing in a web address in Run. (Example—`http://www.orcopug.org.`) When connected to the Internet, you will be whisked to wherever you want to go.

In addition, you can type in DOS commands in the Run box to accomplish tasks, such as `attrib`, `move`, or `xcopy`. There are many more DOS commands that you can use in conjunction with Windows Run.

To see them, go to [http://www.techiwarehouse.com/DOS/XP\\_DOS\\_Tutorial.html](http://www.techiwarehouse.com/DOS/XP_DOS_Tutorial.html), or <http://www.computerhope.com/msdos.htm#02>

As you type commands in the Run box, a list of your Most Recently Used (MRU) commands—a history of the commands you’ve used—accumulate. The growing list can come in handy, because you can just click on any command to activate it without retyping it.

On the other hand, you may not want to wade through a long list, or you may not want others to have access to the visible commands. In these cases, you need to clear the MRU commands. Here are two ways you can do that.

1. Right click the start button and

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# User group deals

**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*

## Magazine discounts just for computer user groups

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

Revised 7/1/2003

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. Many computer magazine subscribers have used my services for over 300 titles I carry, also at excellent prices. Just email me for other prices.

## What do you get from a membership in our group?

by Linda Gonse

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

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

### How to access Members' page

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

**Please support the companies below who donated prizes to our fundraising raffle this year. Buy their products and tell others about them! And, whenever you can — say "thanks" for helping us out, won't you?**



**Adept, AlienSkin, Belkin, J.D. Savage, LapLink, Laser Service, New Riders, nik multimedia, NotePage, O'Reilly & Associates, PKWare, PowerQuest, RoadWired, Smart Computing, SmartDraw, South Bay Engineering, Stardock, Limit Software, Ulead, Microsoft**

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GIANT Computer Swap Meet

Submitted by Carl Westberg

## AVerDVD EZMaker

by Terry Currier

The AVerDVD EZMaker from AVerMedia is used to capture movies directly from a video camera, or VCR through either a composite video port (RCA jack), or S-Video plug. You can get sound in from a sound card. You can also capture TV output. Perhaps I should tell you right away I don't have a DVD

burner. So, why would I be interested in this? Well it works the same way on a CD-ROM burner. By the way, with video files on a CD they call it a VCD.

They use neoDVDstandard 4.0 software from MedioStream for making the conversion. The card comes with a one year warranty. Users can capture video from any analog source and save it to a hard drive, DVD, or VCD with MPEG-1 or MPEG-2 quality and resolution up to 720x480.

Installing was very easy, put the card in, and it came up right away looking for the installation files. Hooked up a RCA jack cable to my camera and the card, and I was ready to go. With the neoDVDstandard software the user can easily capture the video and do a one step process of burning it directly to a DVD, or VCD. You can also save it to a hard drive until you're ready to burn a disk.

You can create a menu with titles for different chapters. A thumbnail image is automatically created for each chapter. A chapter being each capture or MPEG you add. Choose from 15 different background images, along with 11 types of frames. Their nine step wizard walks you through the choices and gives you a preview of how it will look. You can add or delete clips onto the same DVD. It will also let you import DV, AVI, QuickTime, and MPEG files directly into it. So any of those shows you've recorded from your AVerTV card you can bring in. You can also do audio overlays onto a video clip.

Don't expect to cut or add scenes within a capture though. If you want to edit parts within a video you will need a more powerful program. It will do NTSC/PAL conversion.

- Supports all DVD Formats - Write DVD Format to Optical Media: CD-R, CD-RW, DVD-R, DVD-RW, DVD-RAM, DVD+RW, DVD+R
- Write VCD Format to HD, CD-R, CD-RW
- Three Quality Video Options (Low, Medium, High)
- CPU: 1 Gig or Higher
- Operating System: Windows 98SE/Me/2000/XP
- AGP Graphic Card with 8MB Memory, and more

How much space will this take? Well I record/captured 8 minutes which turned out to be a MPEG file at 292Mb. When converted it takes less space. AVerMedia says you can put up to one hour onto a 700Mb VCD (MPEG-1), and up to 3 hours and 20 minutes onto a DVD (MPEG-2). Just remember, if you do record first to the hard drive you will need a lot of free space.

You can also copy DVD's on to another DVD but it will not bypass the copy protection. This make it easy to convert those old video tapes you have on to a



DVD, and at \$50 it is a good buy. AVerMedia (408) 263-3828  
[www.aver.com](http://www.aver.com)

## Photo Backup 2.0.6

by Carl Westberg

There is some relatively new software of value to those using digital cameras. I found this program on Tucows, but the version listed there (2.0.2) was a bit buggy. However there is an email address to the author who furnished a later version (2.0.6) in a couple of days.

If others like me have gotten in the habit of using a digital camera in order to have immediate images, you have the problem of storing them. Inasmuch as each image can use 3+ Megabytes of space on the storage media and CF media still costing something, although not nearly what they did when I started on digital, most users will probably move their images to a hard disk. Now, what happens when the hard disk eats it. I have had several do that. Inasmuch as there are no backup negatives the files should be backed up. If you follow any sort of a filing system, other than chronological, you will have a problem consistently maintaining the backups.

PhotoBackup combines a backup facility, utilizing your CD burning software, with a data base maintaining a record of what you have already backed up. In addition PhotoBackup can be set to periodically search for files with specific suffixes, like .jpg or .tif, for backup. The software creates thumbnails of the images so that you are not just left with a file number and a "what is that?"

Contact info: Amir Helzer, *Support @onthegosoftware.com*, Download: <http://www.onthegosoftware.com/download.htm>, Shareware: \$20. Requirements: Windows 98/Me/2000/XP, 64Mbyte RAM, 15Mbyte disk space, CD or DVD burner

## Fun in the Sun...

(Continued from page 1)

There will be newsletter and web page contests for all user groups with officers in attendance. All attendees will receive a t-shirt and Welcome Kit stuffed with all sorts of promotional materials, most with special pricing.

User group members will have an opportunity to interface and network with user group leaders to share ideas and experiences, as well as solutions to problems. This year's user group leader and PC skill enhancement workshops will be even more exciting.

The conference registration fee is \$40 per person if paid by July 16. If registered and paid between July 17 and 23, the fee is \$50; July 24 through the conference date is \$60. The conference registration fee includes admittance to all workshops and Vendor Faire; meals and vendor presentations; a Welcome Kit and a T-shirt.

"I especially enjoyed the Vendor Faire on Saturday night when I had an opportunity to see close up and hands on the many products, applications, and equipment that the company representatives bought along for display and sale," Delvina Fiducia, SIG leader, Temecula Valley Computer User Group said.

The conference will be held at the Mission Valley Hilton, 901 Camino del Rio South in San Diego. Reserve your room at a special group rate of \$109, single or double occupancy. To make your reservations, call the toll-free reservation number 800-733-2332 by July 16 and tell them you are attending the Southwest User Group Conference.

Stay at the host hotel and you are automatically entered into a drawing to receive one of your conference nights FREE!

For more information contact Judy Taylour at [judy@swugconf.org](mailto:judy@swugconf.org), Patricia Hill at [swugconf@aol.com](mailto:swugconf@aol.com), or visit [www.swugconf.org](http://www.swugconf.org).

## Building a computer

by Carl Westberg

**This possibly should be titled "How not to build a computer."**

Having purchased a couple of branded computers which had a bunch of problems, I decided that if I wanted a more powerful computer, I should select the components and build one myself. After all I had built a couple of other less powerful computers and it should be just a matter of buying more advanced components. One restriction, since the stock market swooned, I didn't have the resources that I previously had so it was necessary to do it on the cheap.

I started researching the main board using various Internet forums and reviews. I selected the main board and processor which appeared to do what I wanted and purchased the whole collection of components at once. When I got home, the first thing I discovered was a really messy CPU with white greasy stuff all over the top of the chip and the bottom of the heat sink. I had zero confidence in that working right so I took that one back and got another one. With optimism and confidence in the outcome I assembled the entirety according to directions, even getting additional instructions from the processor manufacturer's site on precautions.

**Did it work? In a word, NO. The operating system could not be installed. Must be a bad hard disk. Send that one back and get another one. Did that one work. NO. Now try another main board. Did that work? NO, just another clobbered hard disk. The power supply must be bad, emitting bad voltages. Get a different case and power supply. Did that work? NO. Get a friend to help. Did that work? NO.**

What now? How do I figure out which component is bad? Let's try the Internet. I had done a bit of lurking on a couple of forums that had comments on various computer problems from participants across the country, even out of the country. So I lurked a bit more and picked the one that appeared to have the group that was the most helpful and knowledgeable. I posted a one paragraph description of my problem with description of the components and asked for help.

About the time I signed off and went to check my email there was notice of the first reply asking for more detail on the error messages that I had received. I reran the attempt at installing the operating system and wrote down all the error messages, typed them in a reply, and soon had three more comments, some complete with links of diagnostic routines. To those more knowledgeable than I the error messages apparently indicated a problem with the memory.

I ran the first referenced routine overnight (it ran for 12 hours and was still not finished). After the tenth running hour I checked my mail again and used another link which took me to a routine that was quicker and easier to understand. I discontinued running the first which was indicating nothing but errors and ran the second one which showed the memory stick failing all tests on both passes.

That was enough evidence for me. Back to the store with what was apparently either a faulty or mismatched memory strip. Fortunately they believed me at the return area and were good enough to exchange for a different memory strip. Considering the willingness, I don't think I was the first with the problem, but it was nice to get it done.

Oh yes, the system worked after I installed the new memory.



# ACCESSIBILITY for everyone

by Billy Mabray

Oklahoma City PC Users Group, eMonitor — February 2004

Many people, including a lot of Web designers, think Web-site accessibility is only about making sites work for blind users with screen reader software. Accessibility should be about all of us. There is a wide range of physical conditions that can make using the Web difficult. The Internet can be a frustrating place when you have poor eyesight, colorblindness, or trouble using a mouse. You may not fall into any of these categories right now, but consider this statistic: 100% of Internet users are growing older. At some point, we will all need help navigating the Web.

There are many things that can be done to make the Web more accessible. Some of those things are already built into your Web browser. Others require Web designers to implement accessible features on their Web sites. If you are one of the many people who has difficulty using the Web, you will want to know what help is out there.

One of the biggest complaints people have is that text is too small. It is also the easiest to remedy. If you are using Internet Explorer, choose View>Text Size from the top menu. Also, if your mouse has a scroll wheel, you can hold the CTRL key and scroll up and down to change the text size. Now, this will not work on all Web pages – later, we will discuss why that is and what Web designers can do about it. The Netscape/Mozilla browser, however, can change text size on all Web pages. Choose View>Increase Text Size, or hold CTRL and press the + key.

**There are many shortcut keys** available for those who have difficulty using a mouse. For example, the backspace key will take you to the previous page, F5 will reload your current page, and ALT plus the Home key will take you to your home page (the page set to load when you open your browser). Also, if you have gone back to a previous page, ALT plus the right arrow will take you forward again. Another useful key on any Web page is the TAB key. You can use the TAB key (and SHIFT plus TAB to go in reverse) to quickly navigate forward through all the links and form fields on a Web page. Once you have tabbed to a form element, other keyboard shortcuts may come in handy. For drop-down boxes, you can use the up and down arrows to highlight your selection. For radio buttons or checkboxes, use the space bar to select your choice. If you are using a recent version of Netscape/Mozilla, you can also use “Find As You Type.” Start typing at any page and it will automatically do a search for what you are typing on that page.

Some people, particularly the colorblind, find Web sites hard to use because the color of the text does not contrast enough with the background colors. If the color scheme of your favorite Web site makes it difficult to read, you can override that as well. You will find this under Tools>Options or Edit>Preferences, depending on your browser. You can **set your default fonts**, font sizes, and page colors. You can also specify that your defaults always override what is set by the Web page.

While these browser features can be helpful, there is still much Web designers must do to make their site accessible to the widest possible audience. A good example is text sizing. If Web designers use fixed text sizes — sizes that specify an absolute unit of measurement, such as points or pixels — on their pages, Internet Explorer users cannot change their text size as I described

earlier. Web designers can, and should, use relative text sizes to make their pages more accessible.

Designers who prefer to use absolute sizes for text should provide a “style switcher.” This is a link on the page that allows the site’s visitor to make the text bigger and saves that preference in a cookie.

Another accessibility feature that some designers use is access keys. These are just like the shortcut keys I mentioned earlier; except they are defined by the Web page you are on. For example, the designer could define ALT plus 4 to take you directly to the search function. If you visit a site regularly and know their access keys, they can be useful.

**Web designers should also use labels for forms. Labels make the text next to a form field clickable, just like the field itself.**

For example, if a form has a checkbox that reads, “Click here to subscribe,” and that text is set as a label, the user can click anywhere on that text to check the box. It can be very helpful to have a larger target when trying to click things with a mouse.

We still have a long way to go before the Web is accessible to everyone. But now you know some of the helpful features you have at your fingertips already, and you know what to ask for from the Web sites you frequent. Hopefully, as users learn what they can do, and designers learn what they need to do, we can all enjoy the Web a little more.

Billy Mabray and his wife, Angela, own Smart Goat, a software development and web design business. They are members of OKCPCUG. Article comments or questions are welcome. Write: [billy@smartgoat.com](mailto:billy@smartgoat.com).

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.



# PCI Express: Say goodbye to AGP and PCI slots

by Timothy Everingham, TUGNET, [teveringham@acm.org](mailto:teveringham@acm.org)

Those of you who have been around personal computers for a while might remember plug in cards slots referred to as ISA, EISA, Microchannel, and VESA Local Bus. ISA, EISA, and Microchannel were replaced by PCI. VESA Local bus was primarily for video cards, which was replaced by PCI, then AGP slots. It was a fun time during these card slot transitions because many times you could not use the plug in cards from your old machine in your new computer or motherboard or if you did it could slow down the entire system. Well guess what, its time to do it all over again. **Intel has come up with a new slot standard PCI Express, which will start to show up in computers/motherboards this spring.**

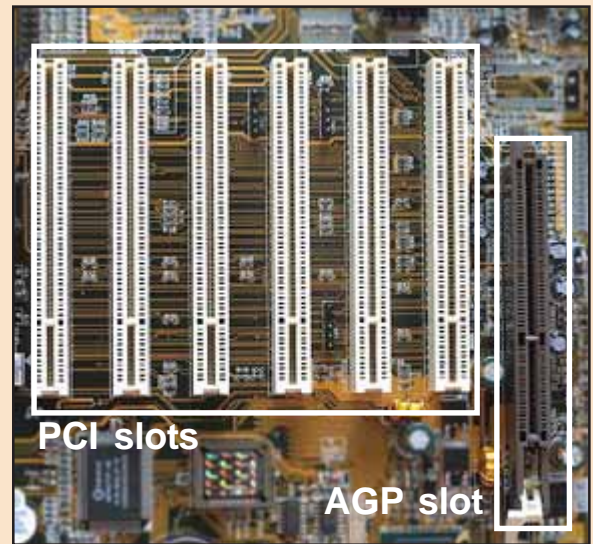
PCI came out in 1992. Today these slots and its data bus technology are used for things not envisioned when it was under development over 12 years ago. PCI has its limitations and the PCI pro slots never became popular. The limitations are coming to the forefront in delivering multimedia content and Gigabit Ethernet. Of course getting higher frame rates at higher resolution and quality for video games also is an issue. PCI has been evolving over time increasing its speed to five times the original, but it has reached its limits of development. Many say that stretching out the AGP to 8x speed might be pushing at its limit too.

First let us look at the current PCI architecture you will find on most motherboards. The CPU/Microprocessor communicates with the first of two data bridges, normally referred to as the Memory Bridge or Northbridge. The Northbridge not only communicates with the CPU; but also communicates to the AGP port, which is where your main graphics card is (usually the only graphics card). It also communicates with your RAM. The fourth thing it communicates with is the second data bridge, known as the Input/Output (I/O) Bridge or Southbridge. The Southbridge also communicates to your plug in slots/cards, drive controllers, and USB, Firewire/1394, parallel, serial, game, keyboard and mouse ports. The theoretical speed limit of the Southbridge communication to I/O including the PCI slots is 133 MB/second. All of the communications in the system are parallel with none of the data having any priority over any other. Blocks of data have to be sent one at a time and cannot be done concurrently. Therefore the data is transferred from one section of the motherboard to the next section based on the order received, not the importance or whether a piece of data arriving by a certain time to its destination is critical.

PCI Express, instead of using a parallel bus architecture, uses serial networking typology with only two wires for each direction. At higher speeds, it allows concurrent transfer of data while having a similar look and the same type of Northbridge/Southbridge architecture as currently in desktops and laptops.

However, in servers the Southbridge is eliminated producing greater data throughput. The PCI slots initially have a 250 MB/second throughput, but the scalable width technology (increasing the number of wire pairs) enables slots and cards to communicate at 32 times that speed in later implementations using longer slots. But the typology can also use network switching type technology, giving data priority and quality of service functions. Hot plug/swap of components is a native part of the architecture.

**The PCI Express Graphics Port, replacing the AGP Port, will have a 4GB/second transfer rate in its initial configuration, double that of the**



**current 8x AGP ports. For laptops units there will be a new plug-in card to replace PCMCIA called ExpressCard.** It will come in two forms, one that more looks like a PCMCIA card referred to at the 34 module form factor (34 x 75 x 5 mm) and a more oversized L looking card called the 54 module form factor (54 x 75 x 5 mm). This new architecture is compatible with existing operating systems.

**Also the new PCI Express slot is capable of being placed alongside current type PCI slots so a choice can be made which type of card can be used in a motherboard just like was done with ISA slots and current PCI slots. The standard PCI Express slots being put in motherboards this spring (1x) will be a lot shorter than the standard PCI slots.**

All of this will mean that a lot of issues having to do with multimedia on desktop and laptop computers will have been solved. It also opens wider use of Gigabit Ethernet on local area networks. It also enables the prospects of new motherboard form factors and computer case designs. As the transition from ISA to PCI was

(Continued to page 10)



## Whatever happened to...Mike Elgan?

by Linda Gonse

Like many other computer users, I subscribed to Windows magazine until its sad demise. One of the columns I had enjoyed was written by Mike Elgan, the editor of Windows magazine. Recently, from a link on Fred Langa's site (another Windows magazine survivor) I found that Mike Elgan is still around and is active on the Internet.

His website, [www.mikeslist.com/](http://www.mikeslist.com/), and free newsletter offer up-to-date computer news and yet give equal time to the humorous and wacky side of technology. Subjects he tackles include technology culture, smart phones, smart people, random gadgets, bad ideas, weird computers, painful implants, malicious robots and the Internet.

Sign up for Mike's newsletter or tune in to Craig Crossman's Computer America ([www.computeramerica.com](http://www.computeramerica.com)) featuring Mike Elgan Thursday nights. The show runs from 7 pm to 9 pm and is on the local Business TalkRadio station or on the Internet every week night.



## Notepad... (Continued from page 2)

### AOL disapproves of.

I can verify this through firsthand experience. Undeliverable email and error messages informed me that AOL identifies the server that ORCOPUG resides on as a spammer. Therefore AOL rejects all email from [orcopug.org](http://orcopug.org), in addition to email sent from [comcast.net](http://comcast.net) that contained a link to our newsletter! (In fact 88% of ALL newsletters going to AOL — including those on subscribers' white lists — are rejected! See <http://briansbuzz.com/w/040408/>)

Here's a final item. You may one day encounter spyware, adware, or a Trojan that takes control of your browser and causes a blizzard of pop-up windows—pointing to a porn or sales site. "Browser hijacking" may also prevent working on your computer until you find and remove the hijacking program. Before you get hijacked, head over to <http://www.rediff.com/netguide/2003/jul/15hijack.htm> and read how to prevent it.

Although your experience might be different from mine, here is the removal plan that worked for me that you might try. Go to Safe Mode. Open browser (I had IE). Go to Tools and Internet Options. Click Use Blank for start page and delete Temporary Internet files, click Apply, and OK. Then, go to Run and type in `msconfig`. Click OK. Select Startup tab and remove checks in boxes next to suspect programs. (Don't uncheck systray.) Go to Add/Remove Programs and look for new and unusual entries to delete. I also ran Search for Files and Folders to find new files and deleted the baddies still on my computer. Then, I ran both SpyBot—Search & Destroy and Ad-Aware, and deleted the entries they found. Lastly, I downloaded Google's free toolbar and enable its pop-up window stopper when I surf the 'net.

Linda Gonse,  
editor@orcopug.org

## PCI Express...

(Continued from page 9)

an interesting transition with computer buyers having to do more research and planning on their purchases, the move from PCI to PCI Express will do the same. However, as was with the previous transition, the performance and capability increases of computers will be profound. Further information on PCI Express can be found at [www.express-lane.org](http://www.express-lane.org).

Timothy Everingham, CEO of Timothy Everingham Consulting in Azusa, California, is also Vice Chair of the Los Angeles Chapter of ACM SIGGRAPH; a member of the Management Information Systems Program Advisory Board of California State University, Fullerton; Vice President of the Windows Media Users' Group of Los Angeles; part-time writer of high technology, computers, video, audio, and entertainment/media; and has been published throughout the United States, Canada, Australia, England, and Japan. See more at <http://home.earthlink.net/~teveringham>.

There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this article as long as it is 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.

## Run...

(Continued from page 4)

go to properties. Click on the radio button next to Start Menu and click on the Customize... button. Then, click on the Advanced tab. Locate the Run box and check the box on the left. Then, click on clear history.

2. You can navigate to `HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Explorer\RunMRU`.

This is where you will find all the commands in the Run history. Delete the ones you don't want. But, backup the registry first!

## Internet Humor

*More* single women are buying homes and a major toolmaker is hoping to tap the new market...

*Submitted by Loren Tuthill*



## Computer users **BEWARE!**

### Earthlink audit service finds spyware items on PCs

Data collected by Earthlink through its free SpyAudit service found an average of 28 spyware items on PCs scanned during a three month period. <http://news.zdnet.co.uk/internet/security/0,39020375,39152266,00.htm>, [http://www.theregister.co.uk/2004/04/16/spyware\\_audit/](http://www.theregister.co.uk/2004/04/16/spyware_audit/)

[SANS editor's note: Hooray for Earthlink! The individual is given a choice whether to scan their machine, and, from the posted results, every user needs to do the scan. Possibly the GUI and advertisement for this service is not quite what your mom and dad need, but it is close, and if you were to call and talk your mom or dad through it they would be fine. <http://www.earthlink.net/spyaudit/>]

### Program will warn users of suspected phishing sites

Earthlink plans to release a program that will warn users if they click on an e-mail link that directs them to a website that has been reported as a phony. The ScamBlocker program will be available to everyone, not just Earthlink customers. <http://msnbc.msn.com/id/4741973>

### Spammers sending fake stock tips

The incidence of phony stock-tip related spam has grown three fold between December 2003 and March 2004. <http://www.reuters.com/newsArticle.jhtml?type=internetNews&storyID=4865047&section=news>



Excerpt from SANS NewsBites, a free online newsletter available at [www.sans.org](http://www.sans.org)

## GCPCUG plans unique first event

by Ed Van Meter, Region 11 Advisor

On the weekend of July 30, 2004, Greater Cleveland PC Users Group (GCPCUG) will be holding an Association of PC User Groups (APCUG) Regional Event in coordination with the International Children's Games Competition — to be held in the United States for the first time and in Cleveland, Ohio!

For more information visit their web page at [www.chrinkingworking.com/regionalgames.htm](http://www.chrinkingworking.com/regionalgames.htm)

## Members get new special offers and discounts!

by Linda Gonse

Go to the Members' Only! page on our website to see the new offers for MediaResizer, GhostSurf Pro, and MailWasher Pro.

Only members in good standing are allowed to access the password-protected pages with fantastic offers, just for them. Our website is at [www.orcopug.org](http://www.orcopug.org).

## Things life has taught me

"Some Days You're the Pigeon, Some Days You're the Statue" — *Becky Dietrich*.

"I Childproofed My House, But They Still Get In!" — *Angee*

### Newsletter contributors

Billy Mabray, Carl Westberg, Charlie Moore, Dick Tooley, Donald Gonse, Ed Van Meter, Herb Goodman, Judy Tylour, Linda Gonse, Marsee Henon, Mike Lyons, Patricia Hill, Richard Tooley, Terry Currier, Tim O'Reilly, Timothy Everingham, Tony Lake

Newsletter deadline  
May 22

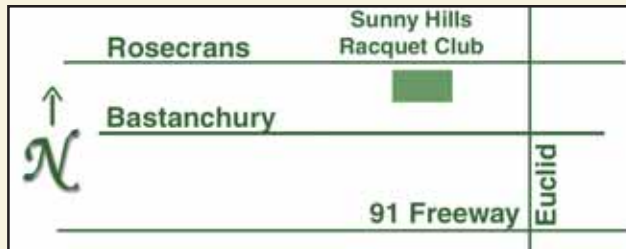
Send a printed copy of the newsletter to a friend. Use this mailing sheet for the address. Staple newsletter together at top left corner with this last page facing out. Fold in half, so this page is visible. Tape ends together, stamp and mail.

## 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 Sunny Hills Racquet Club, 1900 Camino Loma, Fullerton, (714) 992-1300.

For more information, call (714) 990-0580, or go to [www.orcopug.org](http://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.



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

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

### UG Member Benefits

- 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

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

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New Programs  
Tuesday, May 11  
6:30 p.m.

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

