

Orange County
IBM PC
Users' Group

Volume 16, Number 11
November 1998

Thought for November

When you get to the point where you really understand your computer, it's probably obsolete.

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Members describe computer shows on the radio. Page 4

Intelligent information manager handles data everywhere! Page 9

See you Nov. 10 at
6:30 p.m. at the
Hunt Library!

Nibbles & Bits

Monthly Newsletter for the Orange County IBM PC Users' Group
"Computer users helping one another"

November meeting to be Family Night at the Hunt Library

by Alan Jarrett

Our November 10 meeting will be Family Night. What, you may ask, is Family Night? That's when we will see a demonstration of games and family-oriented computer programs. That is also when we can invite friends, relatives and acquaintances, young and old, to come to our meeting for a fun evening.

The Family Night presentation will be made by Dan Sheffield, owner of ACT-4 Multimedia Group (www.act-4.com). His company features high-quality educational CD-ROM software at affordable prices. More than 90% of the products range from \$5 to \$19 list price. The ages range from early childhood and preschool to adult. Among the products are: general educational; language skills in English, French and Spanish; science and math; and personal productivity software.

5 Minute Mini-Topic

A five minute mini-topic will be presented at the start of each month's meeting by various clubmembers.

This month's presenter will be Gary Hollander, ORCOPUG member and president of Hollander and Associates, who will talk about the new Universal Serial Bus (USB).

Many devices, such as keyboards, mice, monitors, scanners and printers can be connected to a computer using a USB port.

Dan said, "I founded ACT-4 Multimedia Group in 1994 and it is a family run and owned business. I was heavily influenced to begin this business due to my involvement in the San Bernardino Personal Computer User Group. I got my first ideas for a Microsoft Word tutorial while preparing a presentation for my group. Being a member of a user group myself and having presented to several users groups, I know what appeals to user groups.

"My Microsoft Word tutorial is by far the product that user group members like the best. I will demonstrate it along

(Continued on page 11)

Sensational raffle items received for December

by Linda Gonse

The club's big annual December raffle is coming! Among the sensational items sent by vendors to be raffled at the December 8 meeting and yearly fund-raising event are software such as: PhotoDeluxe 3.0, Street Atlas USA, Family Lawyer 99, Partition Magic 4.0, Norton SystemWorks, Drive Image, DesignCAD Pro 2000, Learn to Speak Spanish, Calendar Creator, LiveArt 98, Street Wizard, Print Screen Deluxe and Yeah Write.

Among the books are: Upgrade

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Notepad



by Linda Gonse

Coined words or patronizing lingo?

One member has complained about computer jargon, saying it sounds patronizing. In particular, he's irritated by "boot." "Why can't they just say 'turn it on.'"

"Boot" has its roots in earlier days of computer development. Using permanent code, the computer has to load the operating system from disk to random access memory. It does this entirely on its own, without user input. Early developers imagined it picking itself up by the bootstraps. Hence, boot or boot up.

Other words were coined to fit new situations, too. This explains the word "crash." When a system stops operating *suddenly*—it "crashes."

And, computer users will agree, it doesn't reveal their true frustration to explain, "Yesterday, my computer suddenly quit running several times, and I had to keep turning it on." No! The whole story can only be told using computer terminology, "Yesterday, my computer kept crashing and I must have rebooted a dozen times!" Now, *there* is a sentence guaranteed to bring empathy from other users!

Descriptive computer jargon also is prevalent in popular pc magazines.

Big, full-featured programs are "robust." Too big? "Bloated." Doing anything in a rush is "on the fly." Fast computers are "blazing." Thrifty buying is "on the cheap."

And, speaking of on the cheap, there is a \$15 rebate on an \$18.99 50-pack of TDK color floppy disks at Costco. Up to three rebates are offered per customer until December 31. I've sent for two already!

Thank you to everyone who wrote this month. I love to hear from you, and hope you'll write again.

Letters to the editor

■ Another vote for surge protectors

I'll put in a plug for a good surge protector. One of the rare thunderstorms here blew mine, leaving the computer OK. I replaced the surge protector. A friend of mine in North Carolina wasn't so lucky. He didn't have a surge protector, but had a hit that resulted in his having to replace his computer.

Moral—buy a good one with plugs for your phone line as well as power line and test the plug that you are putting it into to make certain that it is really grounded.

Carl Westberg
carl@orcopug.org

■ Newsletter comment

We always enjoy your articles—this one in particular ("My heart and my desktop belong to Windows 98," Vol. 16, No. 10).

Don Faisy

■ ZIP drive update

Found the cause of problems with one of the computers that had a ZIP drive. ZIP wasn't the problem at all.

CPU cooling fan bearing was so stiff the fan barely turned, resulting in "Fried Pentium au la hot board."

Vendor replaced the board and fan,

but not the Pentium. Says system is still under warranty for the next year, so if it fails again, "just bring it back." After the Pentium got that hot, I don't think it's going to be reliable, but the vendor insists it works fine. Time will tell, but I'm not happy about the Pentium.

Ted Wirtz
twirtz@pacbell.net

P.S.: Saw the new site under orcopug.org. Looks good.

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Nibbles & Bits

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

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Visit ORCOPUG online!
www.orcopug.org

Letters

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■ Web site trouble

My attempt to download the newsletter met with interminable activity and never went past 1% downloaded. I am not having that problem with other sites. Is that just something that happens without any rhyme or reason? I'm using Netscape 3.0. My ISP is Earthlink.

Good job on the site. I fully expect some first place awards very soon.

Myra Milgrom

Can anyone help us answer this download problem? —LG

■ New address for member

This is my first attempt at e-mail from our new address, so I hope all of you get it. Our new address is: 302 Nathan Street, Apt. 301A, Elkins, WV 26241, and the phone number is (304) 636-9016.

Don Hepler
hepler1@juno.com

16 winners in Oct. raffle

KissCo	
ShortCuts	Value \$30
Dale Arnold	Winner
Corel	
WordPerfect Suite 8	Value \$199
Herman Beverburg	Not Present
Robert Clark	Not Present
Tony Lake	Winner
Rand McNally	
New Millenium	Value \$39
Cynthia Gonse	Not Present
Pat Kennedy	Not Present
Dick McMillan	Not Present
Joe Francis	Winner
KissCo	
Undo-it!	Value \$40
Don Faisy	Not Present
Vince Cimino	Winner

KissCo	
KeyView Pro	Value \$20
Arnold Francis	Not Present
Sid Liptz	Winner
Adobe	
Type on Call	Value \$39
Alan Jarrett	Winner
KissCo	
SpeedSurfer	Value \$20
Pat McMillan	Not Present
James Southall	Winner
Rand McNally	
StreetFinder	Value \$39
Linda Gonse	Winner
Rand McNally	
TripMaker 1998	Value \$39
Robert Kambeitz	Not Present
Lynn Herbert	Not Present
Larry Joyce	Not Present
Gloria Bearss	Winner
KissCo	
DoubleZip 97	Value \$40
Lloyd Boutwell	Winner
Microsoft	
eXtreme T-shirt	Value \$5
Rhett James	Not Present
Herman Beverburg	Not Present
Willard La Mont	Winner
Parsons Technology	
American History	Value \$20
Carl Westberg	Winner
Lotus	
Organizer 97	Value \$69
Jerry Patterson	Not Present
Elmer Thomas	Winner
Parsons Technology	
Home Inventory	Value \$20
Tony Lake	Prev. Winner
Dave Tennant	Not Present
Gary Hollander	Winner
Parsons Technology	
GreetingCards	Value \$20
Rhett James	Not Present
Carl Apponyi	Winner
Parsons Technology	
SuperSketch	Value \$20
Carl Westberg	Prev. Winner
Terry Schiele	Winner

*Information submitted by
Mike Lyons*

APCUG's Fall Conference set for Las Vegas

Roundtables and speakers will be presented to APCUG officers from around the world at APCUG's 12th Annual Fall Conference, November 14-19, in Las Vegas.

Alan Jarrett, ORCOPUG Vice President/Program Chairman, and Charlie Moore, Treasurer/Membership Chairman, will be attending as representatives from ORCOPUG.

See <http://www.apcug.org>, for details about the conference. —LG

Annual membership renewal dates

October 1

Lou Gorman
Myra Milgrom
Paul Wirtz

November 1

Randy Bremer
Robert Chenoweth

December 1

Donald Bickel
Cynthia Gonse
Gary Hollander
Jerry Patterson
Richard Tooley
Carl Westberg

January 1, 1999

Carl Apponyi
Joe Gionet
Linda Gonse
Don Hepler
Larry Joyce
LeRoy Kaump
Chuck Moore
Ted Wirtz

February 1, 1999

Dom Addonizio
Mike Lyons
Charlie Moore

*Information submitted
by Charlie Moore*

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Want to add your name and e-mail address to the list above? Print the information and send it to Linda Gonse (see address in the staff box on page 2), or give it to her at the regular meeting.

Get the scoop on radio computer shows

Two ORCOPUG members contributed to this article.

Stan Leese suggested a list of computer shows on the radio, compiled information, and listened to the shows for several weeks to prepare this listing for Nibbles & Bits.

Coincidentally, Don Faisy sent the August issue of the Cerritos Seniors Computer Group newsletter, which he edits. It included a radio listing which gave additional information about the CyberMedia Show, Jeff Levy Show, and the URLs.

Stan said, "Some shows may not be available in all areas. And, almost all start about seven minutes after the hour due to news on the hour."

Saturday—7-10 a.m. ***The Kim Komando Computer Show (KSLX, 97.1 FM)***

It is a call-in, answer-your-questions-type show. But it is national and so little chance to get in. I thought it was interesting and learned some things. Kim seems to be very knowledgeable. She says the show is more for the beginner, but doesn't seem to limit the questions to such types. She tries to keep her answers understandable. Her shareware and Internet picks of the week are at www.komando.com.

Saturday—10-11 a.m.

Digital Village (KPFK, 90.7 FM)

Two guys talking about computer happenings. Usually has a political or social theme. Experts on occasionally. National station, no commercials, but appeals for money sometimes. It was interesting too, but not as much as the Kim show.

www.kpfk.org/programs/dv

Sunday—9 a.m.—noon ***The Jeff Levy Computer Show (KFI, 640 AM)***

A local LA call-in show by a very knowledgeable guy. How-to topic, and two or three guests.

www.jefflevy.com

Sunday—4-7 p.m. ***The Computer Show (KABC, 790 AM)***

Two guys discuss the latest computer developments, such as DVDs, Y2K, etc. They talk to experts and take listeners' calls.

Sunday—12-2 p.m. ***The Earthlink Show (KSLX, 97.1 FM)***

It is a call-in show answering questions, and has different topics of

(Continued on page 11)

Members' helpline

Cindy Gonse **MS Office 97**
Anytime—cgonse@juno.com

Linda Gonse **Windows '95-'98**
(909) 245-0291 after 5 p.m. and weekends—linda@orcopug.org

Sharon Graham **MS Office, Access, Win 3.1, MS-DOS**
(714) 533-6043 after 7a.m., before 10 p.m.—shgraham@earthlink.net

Gary Hollander **Modems, Communications, Hardware, Systems**
(714) 879-9005 evenings, weekends

Please volunteer to help! Contact Linda Gonse, editor@orcopug.org.

Zing the 2.4-billion hour World Wide Wait

Zing Network, Inc., a new Internet company, recently uncovered a revelation about the Web usage of home Internet users. During product testing, Zing discovered that U.S. dialup Internet users waste more than a 2.4-billion hours a year waiting for Web pages to load.

NetRatings, Inc., a Web audience measurement firm, corroborated this finding. It calculated the average home Internet user waits 15 seconds for a Web page to download (image and text) and views an estimated 36.2 Web pages per day via modem. Based on the 43.1 million estimate of Internet home users, over two full days, or 55.05 hours are wasted by each one waiting online every year.

Zing Network has introduced a unique solution to the boredom of the “World Wide Wait:” the Zing Player, a free product, available at <http://www.zing.com>. The player displays fast, fun, “Zing spots” whenever a user clicks on a Web link and waits for a page to load. Zing immediately minimizes when the new page appears—so the program entertains users without ever slowing down the browsing experience.

Zing features a wide assortment of multimedia spots that suit a variety of user interests, ranging from music clips to language flashcards to photography. Users can customize the spots by selecting from ten Zing Channels. The Zing player works as a companion to Netscape and Microsoft Web browsers.

A complex system that does not work is invariably found to have evolved from a simpler system that worked just fine.

Technology and products

What is a “Flash BIOS”?

Quick definition: *“A flash BIOS is a BIOS that is stored in flash memory, and flash memory can be wiped and updated very quickly,” said Eric Butow, editor the Sacramento PC Users’ Group newsletter, Sacra Blue.*

Details from The SPUG Answer

Guys: BIOS stands for Basic Input Output System. It’s custom software stored in a ROM (Read Only Memory) chip on the motherboard that allows a single version

of an operating system’s boot up code, the Windows 95 system files for example, to work with the hundreds of different motherboards, hard drive controllers, and video cards.

Without the BIOS, Microsoft would have to write a custom version of the boot up code for each model of motherboard, hard drive, and video card. (Such was exactly the case in the early 1980s with CP/M—different versions for each and every model of computer.) Because the BIOS code is custom for each model of motherboard, etc., the operating system boot up code can be uniform for nearly every model of computer. The BIOS takes care of sending commands to the various hardware parts of the computer.

However, the BIOS can get “out-of-date.” Newer models of hard drives, video cards, etc., may not have even existed when the BIOS was written and “burned into” a

motherboard. The greatest evidence of this is what happened when hard drives with more than 1024 cylinders (larger than about 504 MB in capacity) became available. Installing a 1 GB hard drive meant you either had to install an “overlay” program which augmented or supplanted the BIOS, upgrade the BIOS, or upgrade the whole motherboard (with a new BIOS).

“A flash BIOS...is stored in flash memory, and...can be wiped and updated very quickly.”

At one time, upgrading the BIOS meant opening the computer and removing a large integrated circuit chip from the

motherboard. Those with five thumbs often gouged the motherboard near the chip, bent and broke the pins of the new chip while pushing it in the socket, destroyed the chip with static electricity, etc. Technology then let users upgrade BIOS chips by overwriting the current code with new code read in from a floppy disk. The user still had to open the computer because these chips, EEPROMs, being reprogrammable, needed to have a special voltage applied to its “programming” pin by connecting a jumper. This is much safer, but still not as good as it could be.

FlashBIOS gets completely away from having to open the computer. The BIOS code is updated by running an install program with an accompanying data file: safe and extremely easy.

(Reprinted, with permission, from the September 1998 Sacra Blue newsletter, Sacramento PC Users’ Group.)

Is your PC Y2K ready? Use this test

Curious about your PC's Year 2000 compliance? It's easy. Grab the free utility YMARK2000.

Go to the NSTL Web site http://www.nstl.com/html/ymark_2000.html and download Y2000.exe (a tiny 35 KB file), run it to extract its two component files 2000.exe and Readme.txt. Reboot into MS-DOS mode and run 2000.exe from its host folder. The outcome is displayed on your screen.

If you're curious about possible outcomes, or if your PC fails the test, see the related FAQ at http://www.nstl.com/html/y2k_faq.html.

A Micron Millennia Plus 166 in our lab was Year 2000 compliant according to the manufacturer's Web page, but we wanted to use an empirical utility on the PC itself, and recommend you do the same for ALL your PCs.

When we ran the YMARK2000 utility it reported that this PC correctly supports the Year 2000.

On an old 486 that we knew would fail the test (it did), YMARK2000 reported that we should be able to deal with Y2K using a manual reboot and then manually resetting the year. The tool then referred us to its README file for more information.

(Excerpt from The Naked PC online newsletter, Vol. 1, No. 9.)

To subscribe to the The Naked PC's free online newsletter, go to <http://www.TheNakedPC.com/subscribe.html>. Technical questions about PCs and reader suggestions are posted at <http://www.PRIMEConsulting.com/cgi-local/annoy.pl>.

Ken's Korner



by Ken
Fermoyle

Upgrade or buy new?

With new computer prices at record low levels, does it make sense to upgrade your current computer or should you just take the plunge and buy a new one? Unfortunately, there are few easy answers, and those few apply mainly to very old (386 and 486 models) and rather new ones.

Upgrading 386/486 and even some early Pentiums generally is not wise economically. Their motherboards don't support newer CPUs that bring big boosts in performance. If you buy a new motherboard, it must be an AT type to fit in your old case, and many new boards are ATX types.

How about overdrive processors? Forget them, is my advice, unless you can get one for little or nothing from a friend or at a swap meet. According to recent catalogs, a new Intel OverDrive that jumps a 486DX/33 to an 84MHz Pentium costs close to \$200; same for upgrading a Pentium 100 to a Pentium 166 with MMX. Evergreen overdrives bump a 486 up to 133MHz for about \$100, early Pentiums to 200MHz with MMX for \$160. You can buy a Socket 7 motherboard and 225MHz WinChip for about \$150 to \$200, which may be a better choice.

Upgrading a Pentium 75 to 150 to MMX 180MHz Pentium (about \$240) or Pentium 100/133/166 to 200MHz Pentium with MMX (about \$280) are possible options. Note that those prices represent 25% to 40% or more of the cost of a new Pentium MMX, AMD K6, or Cyrix machine with more advanced components than those in your old computer.

For later models Pentium MMX computers, two enhancements that make sense are adding memory and a second, large-capacity hard drive. If you run Windows 95 and go from 16 to 32 megs of RAM (Random Access Memory), you should get a noticeable increase in performance. Going from 32 to 64 megs brings performance rewards, too, and costs very little these days.

Adding a large-capacity hard drive is, in fact, a sound upgrade for just about any Pentium-class machine. An Ultra DMA drive is backward compatible with IDE technology. It just won't deliver the same level of performance in an older computer as it will in a newer one that supports such drives.

Your investment in the drive will not be lost if you later buy a new computer. The Ultra DMA drive can be swapped into your new machine with no difficulty.

More good news: installing the big new drives is not the hassle that hard drive installation was not too many years ago. I added a 6.4-gig Seagate Medalist to one of our machines some months back. I set aside an entire afternoon and psyched myself up for the project. To my surprise, it took less than two hours, with most of that spent in shoehorning the drive into the box, which is pretty loaded.

Seagate's DiscWizard software

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Ken's Korner

(Continued from page 6)

formatted and partitioned the new drive automatically. The process is a no-brainer, if you follow the instructions, especially the one about installing and running DiscWizard before you install and configure the hard drive.

I was so pleased with the drive I bought a second one for another of our office computers. The machine was an older one, and I goofed somehow.

I got help from the most competent, nicest tech support person it

has been my good fortune to encounter in the 15 years since I bought my first computer. He took me carefully through the process, explaining where I had gone wrong and what I needed to do to correct the problem.

We swapped some of the components, including the Seagate drive, out of this old system into a brand-new computer recently. (The new mid-tower box contains a 225MHz WinChip CPU and Tyan Socket 7 motherboard, an excellent, budget-priced combination we will look at in a later article.) It performs beautifully in the new environment, and neither of the Medalist 6.4-gig drives have given us even a hint of trouble.

Adding memory, as mentioned above, is an excellent way to enhance the performance of almost any Windows computer that is running Win3.X or Win95/98. Most

experts regard 32 megs of RAM as the practical minimum for Win9X (64 megs for NT). Anyone using just 16 megs is not getting optimum performance from his or her system.

With memory prices so low today, upgrading RAM is well worth the small cost involved. As part of my upgrading program, all of the computers in our office will soon have at least 64 megabytes of RAM, and I'm planning to have 128 installed in our new server.

One cautionary note here: the variety of RAM chips available is

very confusing. We have older machines with standard RAM, many with EDO

(Extended Data Output) RAM and newer machines with SD-RAM (Synchronous Dynamic RAM). We had RAM chips, SIMMs (Single Inline Memory Modules) and new DIMMs (Double Inline Memory Modules).

And there are more new types coming, folks.

So be very careful when buying RAM; be sure what you get will work in your system. Consult your manuals and documents, and deal with someone knowledgeable about the subject. That may NOT include the hard-to-find "sales associates" at the big computer chain stores!

You might be better dealing with someone who specializes in memory chips, at a computer show or swap meet, or on the Internet. If you're fortunate enough to have a reliable local computer shop with a competent staff, as I have, take your

computer there. Technicians can check your system, tell you what RAM will work in it, and then install it for you.



Ken Fermoyle is a member of TUG-NET in the San Fernando Valley and a professional writer. Ken's articles appear in more than 160 User Group newsletters.

For permission to reprint this article, write kfermoyle@earthlink.net.

Places to look for User Groups on the web

APCUG

<http://www.apcug.org>

Ash Nallawalla's Newsletters

<http://easysvp.com/ugnotw>

Ash Nallawalla's UGs

<http://easysvp.com/ugotw>

Caboom!

<http://www.jbrain.com/caboom/>

User Group Connection

<http://www.ugconnection.com/>

User Group Network

<http://www.user-groups.com/>

Yahoo

http://www.yahoo.com/Computers_and_Internet/Personal_Computers/User_Groups/ —LG

“A computer lets you make more mistakes faster than any other invention in human history, with the exception of handguns and tequila.”

—D. W. McArthur

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Alan Jarrett, Carl Westberg, Charlie Moore, Dom Addonizio, Don Faisy, Don Gonse, Eric Butow, Gary Hollander, Ken Fermoyle, Linda Gonse, Lynne Cimino, Mervin Frank, Mike Lyons, Myra Milgrom, Paul Stephen, Richard Tooley, T.J. Lee, Stan Leese, Steve Polyanchek, Ted Wirtz, Tony Lake, and Vince Cimino.

Turn it off, or leave it on

by Linda Gonse

In a past issue, one club member questioned whether to turn off the computer overnight, or leave it on.

Answers we have read indicate it is a toss-up as to whether the computer's moving parts will wear out from running constantly, or electronic parts will wear out from power spikes during boot up.

But, definitive information about both alternatives has just appeared in the November issue of Windows magazine.

Fred Langa said, "There used to be flame wars over what to do with a PC overnight. The "turn-it-off" crowd argued about disk drive spindles and fans burning out. The "leave it on" proponents cited thermal cycling and power spikes.

"It's all moot today: If you prefer to leave your PC on so it can perform self-maintenance overnight or be available for incoming calls or faxes, that's fine: The power-control mechanism can shut down the hard drive and monitor during extended idle times, and reduce the CPU speed.

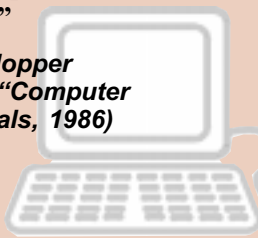
"If you prefer to turn your system off, that's fine, too: Modern power supplies are much better at preventing power-on spikes, and today's surface-mounted components mean there's less chance of a part working loose due to thermal creep."

There. We hope that helps. Of course, you may still be confused, but we guarantee no matter which you choose, you'll be right!

Then and Now

"Truly the future world of computers offers hope, challenge, and excitement. We've been through the preliminaries of the computer industry and we now have the Model T. It's a bright beginning for what will be the largest industry in the U.S. because computers will be in everything."

Dr. Grace Hopper
(quoted in "Computer Fundamentals, 1986")



Created and designed by Linda Gonse

Moving applications may not work

If you try to move a Win9x application, it probably won't work right. When you install a Win9x program it usually alters the Registry, and also installs various DLL files. So, if you move the program's directory to another PC, the Registry info and DLL files won't be there. Reinstalling the entire program is your best choice. —LG

Get free Windows news

"Woody's Windows Watch" will tell you more about Windows 3x, Windows 9x, and Windows NT: the latest up-to-the-nanosecond news, insider gossip, bug reports, level-headed virus warnings, product and book reviews, tips and tricks, and web links. Subscribe to the free e-mail newsletter by going to <http://www.wopr.com/www/>. —LG

Put keyboard shortcuts in Win.9x wallpaper!

by Linda Gonse

To help you to remember Windows' keyboard shortcuts, turn them into wallpaper so you can always see them on your desktop!

Begin by copying your list of shortcuts within any program. Then, launch Paint, click the text button, create a large text box, and paste the shortcut list into the text box.

Name the file and save it, but don't close it. Next, pull down the File menu again and select Set as Wallpaper (Centered). Now, look at your desktop!

Buy inkjet ink by the pint

Automation Consulting & Supply, Inc. (ACSI), sells inkjet ink by the pint in black, cyan, magenta, and yellow for \$89. According to ACSI, inkjet cartridges hold between 10-40 ml, depending on the printer model and the cartridge color. Each pint (450 ml) of inkjet ink will provide from 10-20 refills for the cartridges at a cost of between \$2.20 to \$3.60 for each refill. Refill instructions are available from the company.

To find out more about Inkjet Ink by The Pint, visit <http://www.oddparts.com/ink/>, or call (888) 728-2465.

Information submitted
by Tony Lake

Get Q'deck updates

Updates to CleanSweep, RealHelp, TuneUp, Zip-It and RapidRemote fixing various Windows 98 incompatibilities have been released by Quarterdeck. If you upgraded to Windows 98, get the updates at <http://support.qdeck.com>. —LG

Tracker Pro *intelligently* manages information

by Linda Gonse

The way I store data has changed over the past year. I used to have partitions on my hard drive and files in neat categories for quick access. Everything was tidy. My e-mail was light to moderate. So, every couple of weeks, I'd clean out the Inbox.

Life was good.

But, somehow, things got out of hand. E-mail increased to hundreds of pieces each month. Data became scattered in various folders, and I had trouble finding things in the glut.

How did I arrive at this sad state?

Well, I got a new computer. But, it didn't work. So, I got another one. Then, there were conflicts in the tape drive and the Windows backup. The tape drive got dumped, a Zip drive got put in. Worse, a tech helpfully restored my backup tape's contents to the hard drive—without the folders! All the data was loose. Hundreds of files had to be viewed and sorted.

In the meantime, due to a variety of problems, more data got scattered.

Further complicating matters, I am busy with computer instruction, promotional materials, and web site. I do the club newsletter, club web site and printed literature. I'm involved with a different kind of club in Riverside. I'm hosting its web site, and a web site for retirees from the City of Buena Park, where I previously worked.

And, for the sake of my clients, who are buying the newest hardware and programs, I installed Windows 98.

As a result, the hard drive is no longer partitioned. Instead of one monster drive, I have two: a 5.1G and a 7G. One is devoted to applications

and the other holds data. I seemed to be constantly trying to hold my head above the flood of data coming in, going out, and being processed.

Recently, the data overflow has been channeled into a peaceful stream. I can dip into it at will and find whatever I want and go back to work serenely.

Enfish's Tracker Pro has made the difference.

Tracker Pro is not to be confused with a Personal Information Manager. It doesn't just store information, it *intelligently* manages it. It tracks all the information on the hard drive—and web sites. It finds it in any folder, any e-mail program, or on any drive. It does this by examining the *contents* of files for the word, phrase, or topic you request. And, it does it quickly.

But, it provides even more. It highlights each occurrence of the word or phrase within each of the documents it gathers for you.

Better still, when it detects a cross reference to other files in a document containing your word or phrase, it inserts a hyperlink to them! You just have to click on a link to widen your search to other files. Pretty neat, huh?

Tracker Pro even marks the files it collects with a pie chart icon to show which have the highest percentage for containing the information you want.

What's more, it allows you to view any file or graphic in the

searched list—even if you don't have the application.

You can also tag a file with a personal note and read it later without opening the file. But, the note always rides with the file, so it's handy.

You'll notice Tracker Pro's clean, attractive interface when you open it. But, despite intuitively designed features, it does have a moderate learning curve. You will have to browse the organized, easy-to-read manual, to understand how to do effective searches. Plan, too, for the hour it initially takes the program to thoroughly inventory data on your hard

drive—a small delay for the time it will save later.

In fact, the second day Tracker Pro was on my system, it unerringly found a file I had been unable to locate for a half hour using conventional computer searches.

Because of its capabilities, it didn't take me long to realize partitions and folders aren't necessary in order to find information. File hunting is nearly extinct. This is important considering that Reuters reported, "More information has been produced in the last 30 years than the previous 5,000. And, the total quantity of all printed material is doubling every five years and accelerating."

Tracker Pro costs a little more than I expected. But, it's the only information manager on the market, and certainly does the job it was designed to do. It has helped me gain control over my data, and I didn't have to do anything except install it!

Pentium 166 or higher, 16 MB RAM (32 MB recommended, 64 MB optimal), Win 9x, Win NT 4.0. 256 colors VGA. Internet recommended. Approx. 50 MB of free disk space (average 1G drive), \$79.95, <http://www.enfish.com>, 676-796-8080.



Humorous Bits

by Don Gonse



Cartoons free to User Groups with credit to Don Gonse. Request images from Don at degonse@juno.com.

Getting your system to recognize your scanner

by James C. Kinard

If you are like me, you often forget to turn on your scanner before booting your system, only to discover that you suddenly need to scan something you hadn't anticipated.

As you may or may not know, SCSI scanners want to be turned on before the system boots so that the scanner device will be recognized. This usually means you have to restart your system to use your scanner. SOLUTION: Just turn on your scanner and proceed as follows: 1. Load your Device Manager (right-click My Computer and choose Properties; or click on the System icon in the Control Panel; or hold down the Windows key and press the Pause key). 2. Select your SCSI adapter from the Device Manager list (Device Manager tab /

SCSI controllers / SCSI device). 3. Once you've selected the SCSI device/adaptor, go to the bottom of the Device Manager dialog box and hit the Refresh button. 4. Wait a few seconds, and you're ready to begin scanning.

This is one of the most useful scanner tips I have come across. Not only does it deal with the "Oh, I forgot to power up my scanner before my system!" blues, it allows you to turn the scanner off and then back on when you encounter problems with the scanner. No need to reboot/restart again to get your scanner working.

I found this tip at: <http://www.scantips.com>. This is a handy site for scanner information. Wayne Fulton, the site's owner, has made an arrangement with Xerox's ScanSoft to get Pagis Pro 2.0 for a \$30 discount (from \$99 to \$69). Just click on the Pagis button to connect directly to Xerox for the purchase. This pack-

age deal includes Pagis, TextBridge Pro OCR, MGI PhotoSuite, Forms Fill-In, and Copy Utility.

Excerpt from The Naked PC online newsletter. To subscribe to the The Naked PC's free newsletter, go to <http://www.TheNakedPC.com/subscribe.html>.

3 ways to fix a breakdown

A mechanic, a businessman, and a Microsoft programmer are in a car, when suddenly it breaks down and stops.

Mechanic: "I can fix the motor. It'll take six hours."

Businessman: "I can call Triple-A on the cell phone. They'll be here in two hours with a new engine."

Programmer: "OK, here's what we do: Close the windows, get out from car, get back in, open the windows and everything will be OK." —LG

Automatic web pages!

Automatically create web pages using your graphics. With AutoPics to HTML, select a directory or group of image files, choose a background color or image and text color, and click "Create." In a flash, your images are transformed into web documents! It's simple and fast. Windows 95x. Free to try, \$12 to register, download at <http://www.polyvision.net>. —LG

Error "message"?



A dialog box in 3Com's Rapidcomm Voice software. Users are supposed to see a telephone.

Submitted by Paul Stephen
Winnipeg PCUG

“Reclaimed resources” can bring you riches!

by Linda Gonse

A “reclaimed resources” table will be setup at every meeting to display items ORCOPUG members wish to sell. Bring your computer items, leave them on view, and sell them to interested members at the break. You may bring items as often as you wish, but you must take them home after the meeting. At the last meeting, Carl Apponyi bought four CDs which had been taking up space in my bookcase. I went home richer and lugging less!

November meeting

(Continued from page 1)

with some of my other products and the SoftBook Maker, a multimedia authoring program I use to develop products. I keep moving right along, so if you aren’t interested in one thing, maybe you’ll be interested in something else. And I am always happy to try to answer your questions.”

He will bring door prizes and make available his entire line at user group discount prices.

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Radio Shows

(Continued from page 4)

general interest.

www.earthlink.net/radio

Sunday—1-2 p.m.

The CyberMedia Show
(KVCR, 91.9 FM)

National show, complete coverage of one topic, with support by an expert guest. Listeners e-mail or fax questions.

www.cybermedia.org

Monday–Friday—3:25 p.m.

The Computer Minute
(KNX, 1070 AM)

It is a five-minute show about some of the latest computer developments.

Planning meeting set

The ORCOPUG planning meeting is November 18, at 7 p.m. in the meeting room of Downey Savings and Loan, Fullerton. It is located on the corner of Bastanchury and Laguna, one block west of Harbor Boulevard. Meetings are held the third Thursday of every month. You’re invited!—LG

December raffle

(Continued from page 1)

Your Own PC, Windows Annoyances Word 97 Annoyances, Quick Bytes: Computer Lover’s Cookbook, Buying a Computer for Dummies, and More Windows 98. There is even toothware for food lovers: Computer Cookies!

Supporting vendors are: Adept Computer Solutions, Adobe, Aviar, DeLorme, IDG Books, JE Software, O’Reilly, Pacific Micro, Parsons Technology, PowerQuest, Strawberry Patch, Summerfield Foods, Symantec, The Learning Company, Viagrafix, Viewpoint Datalabs, and Word Place.

More software and book titles are expected to arrive before the December raffle. If you’ve never attended this special event, you will be astonished and pleased. If you have attended in the past, you won’t need a second invitation.

The full list of contributing vendors and raffle items will be available in the December newsletter.

Members’ Web Pages

Gloria Bearss	http://www.geocities.com/~glen-glo Breed & Show Harlequin Great Danes
Vince Cimino	http://www.pe.net/~capov Model Airplanes
Linda Gonse	http://basicbytes.com PC Instruction, Web Page Design, Newsletters/Brochures
Sharon Graham	http://home.earthlink.net/shgraham/ Family Photos and Information
Gary Hollander	http://www.hollanderassociates.com System Architecture Consulting, Information Protection Products, and Security Training

FREE Web listing for ORCOPUG members! Add your Web address!
Send your information to the editor: editor@orcopug.org; or Linda Gonse, 22655 Valley Vista Circle, Wildomar, CA 92595-8334.

Newsletter deadline!

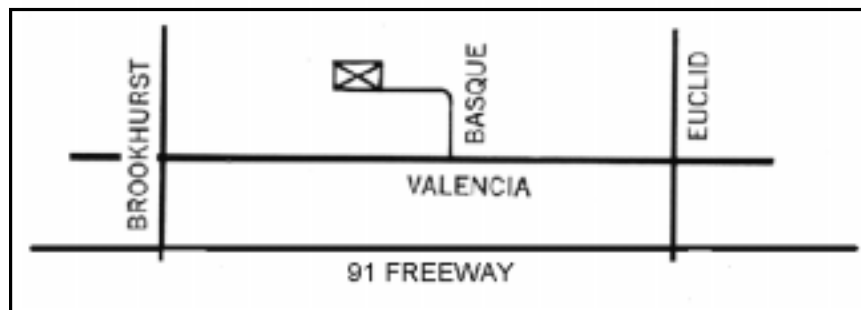
The deadline for
Nibbles & Bits’
December issue is
Sunday, November 22.

Nibbles & Bits

*Computer users
helping one another*
Orange County
IBM PC Users' Group
Post Office Box 1779
Brea, California 92822



"Family Night"
November 10
at 6:30 p.m.
Bring your family
and friends!
News updates,
announcements—
anytime!
www.orcopug.org
Click on HOT
NEWS!



The Orange County IBM PC Users' Group regular meeting is scheduled Tuesday, November 10, at 6:30 p.m. at the Hunt Library, 201 S. Basque Avenue, Fullerton, (714) 738-5364.

Directions: From the 91 Freeway, exit at either Euclid or Brookhurst Streets and go north. Turn onto Valencia Drive. Go to Basque Avenue and turn north. The Hunt Library is located at the end of Basque, which only can be accessed from Valencia.

For more information, call ORCOPUG at (714) 990-0580, or check the club's web page at www.orcopug.org.