

TWO EXTRA PAGES!
Bonus Article
by Gene Barlow!

AWARD WINNING MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR ORCOPUG MEMBERS

September 2005



NIBBLES & BITS

Tuesday, September 13, 6:30 p.m. at Placentia Library, Placentia — Bring a friend!

SEPTEMBER PROGRAM



How-to save money on ink and toner, plus how to fix any clogged printer!

Cynthia Hunter of The Ink Dot, www.theinkdot.com, will be our speaker on September 13. She is going to show us how to refill printer cartridges. And, we will learn how to unclog any printer that isn't working right.

"We all know cartridges are expensive and if you can learn how to fill them easily without spilling indelible ink everywhere, it will mean big savings — especially if you like to print lots of web pages or long documents," Cynthia said.

She will also introduce her company's product line of inkjet cartridges, specialty photo papers, and do-it-yourself laser toner refill kits.

Another thing that you may not have known about is continuous flow ink systems, where ink flows from tanks sitting next to the printer that connect to modified cartridges by flexible tubes. When the tanks run low you just pour in more ink from bottles that slip into the tank opening without spilling a drop! Commercial printers making large signs and banners have been doing this for years and now The Ink Dot is producing it. Cynthia will show you. This system works beautifully for anyone printing out lots of digital photos.

In addition, Cynthia will be presenting a group of computer tutorial CDs that are fantastic training tools, <http://www.theinkdot.com/misc-pages/tutorial-CDs.html>, and sold nationwide at CompUSA and Border bookstores. Each CD contains over 100 mini-movies to teach a new technique. The titles include Windows

XP, Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Buying and Selling on eBay, Photoshop 7.0/CS, Dreamweaver, Flash, Access, and Visual Basic. People who try these CDs report, "It is like having an instructor sitting right next to you." She will offer them at a special club price!

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Changed meeting agenda

by Mike Lyons, president

One of the things I learned at the SWUG conference was that program presenters aren't really interested in our club business. They would rather get in, do their thing, and get back to their family.

Starting with the September meeting, we will have Random Access and club business from 6:30 p.m. to just before 7 p.m. We will cut off discussion so the program presenter can be introduced promptly at 7 p.m. After the speaker's presentation, we will resume "Random Access/Club business" while we are setting up the special "Keyword" raffle and the regular club raffle.

The new format should not make our meetings much different for our members and the format should be a little more friendly to our speakers.

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Notepad



Mike Lyons announced at the last meeting that **our newsletter and our website were awarded first place** at the Southwest Regional User Group Conference. I did not attend the meeting and would like to add a few words here to recognize other efforts in conjunction with the awards.

Thanks to **Mike Lyons** for accepting the awards in San Diego. His unfailing assistance and encouragement, and his great ideas have helped us to achieve this recognition!

Also I'd like to bring two of our group members to your attention who were personally involved in the contests. They are **Lloyd Boutwell** and **Gary Covington III**.

For the second time in three years, Lloyd has been a judge in the website contest.

Terry Currier of Winners, Costa Mesa, was the website contest chairman and provided judges with a list of 13 questions to be answered about each website.

Although Lloyd did not judge our website, he judged the other entries. As our group's contribution to the judging, I had no doubt that Lloyd would give each entry a meticulous and experienced review. The process, though, requires hours to complete. By finishing and turning in his score sheets, Lloyd earned an additional point for us.

Judy Taylour, SWUG co-chair, headed the newsletter contest and gave judges a comprehensive list of newsletter areas to check and score.

Gary Covington III was one of the judges for the newsletter contest. I'm absolutely sure that Gary, with his characteristic enthusiasm and thoroughness, was a positive force in the judging. Reviewing and grading three issues of each group's newsletter (except ours) was a gigantic task for him.

I applaud Gary and Lloyd. They each took on a tough job without hesitation, and did it with care and conscientiousness. I think they are winners, too!

Linda Gonse, editor@orcopug.org

Letters

Zabasearch may be handing out information on the web about you

Thought you might like to see a PC World article, www.pcworld.com/resource/article/0,aid,121769,pg,1,00.asp dated 7/25/05, on Zabasearch and see what that author thinks of the service.

Our members were warned of this database, and I sent the firm an email to delete info on my family (some of which was incorrect).

I realized that the firm then also had my email address and wouldn't delete info unless I sent a snailmail including all info I wanted deleted and MY SIGNATURE. Surprisingly they didn't ask me outright for my Social Security number.

Parker Monroe of GTBPCUG, who found the article and notified the group adds, "Unfortunately the PCWorld article doesn't resolve anyone's qualms about giving Zabasearch the kind of info they need to remove one's personal information, and doing so also doesn't necessarily protect one from additional info Zabasearch may come up with later."

Dick Evans
Baybytes editor
Greater Tampa Bay Computer UG
revans03@tampabay.rr.com

Newsletter and web site awards receive members applause

Last night, Mike announced and showed us the awards for the newsletter and web site. I want to personally say how much I appreciate both. Having worked with computer programmers and now web developers most of my career, I long ago concluded that what most people see is like the tip of an iceberg. Even though I didn't start with manual cut and paste, I've seen enough of newsletter preparation to put it in the same category. No one who hasn't done it can truly realize what it takes to do one well.

Thanks again for doing both so well for ORCOPUG.

Frank Bollinger
frbollinger@earthlink.net

You have done an awesome job on the newsletter and the web site.

When I was grading the newsletters (as a SWUG contest judge), I also graded ORCOPUG's (even though my score didn't count) and I was pleasantly surprised that it came out the highest in my scoring sheet by

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Club information, review guidelines, updates, and members' pages at www.orcopug.org



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August raffle winners

WebWhacker 5.0, \$24.98*

Darryl Swensen, Winner

Intel Book booklight, \$20*

Ted Wirtz, Winner

Counter Spy t-shirt, \$5*

Carl Westberg, Winner

Home Networking Annoyances, \$25*

Ron Schultz, Not Present

Ed O'Donnell, Not Present

Dick Tooley, Winner

FHCN t-shirt, \$5*

Dave Musser, Winner

Intel Bag, \$5*

Richard Metzger, Winner

CPU magazine, \$5*

Ed O'Donnell, Not Present

Michael Moore, Winner

Intel CD case, \$10*

Ralph Seymour, Winner

Flip Album 5 Std., \$39*

Donald Bickel, Winner

Two nights lodging, \$200*

Terry Terrazas, Not Present

Lloyd Boutwell, Winner

Smart Computing set, \$10*

Terry Shiele, Not Present

Chuck Wheeler, Expired

Linda Gonse, Not Present

Joe Francis, Winner

PC Today magazine, \$6*

Tony Lake, Expired

Leroy Kaump, Winner

Lapworks legs, \$10*

Lothar Loehr, Winner

**Estimated value*

Submitted by Charlie Moore

Member expiration dates

3rd month, JULY 1 – Tony Lake

2nd month, AUG. 1 – Don Ogden

1st month, SEPT. 1– Don Faisy

OCT. 1 – Siles Bazerman, Gary

Covington III, Larry Klees, Ed

O'Donnell, Darryl Swensen

NOV. 1 – Terry Terrazas

DEC. 1 – Donald Bickel, Joe

Duffner, Dick Tooley, Carl Westberg

Submitted by Charlie Moore

Don't lose membership benefits...

renew now! Members will receive the

newsletter for **three months** past the

expiration date. But, they are not

eligible to win raffle prizes or to have

access to the offers and discounts on

the Members' Only web page.

Members' email

You must send your request to be added to the email list below.
Email your information to: editor@orcopug.org.

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Wirtz, Ted

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Special Prize Drawing! Look for a new keyword hidden on the ORCOPUG website or in Nibbles & Bits each month. If your name is drawn at the next meeting and you know the keyword, you will take home a prize! If no one knows the secret keyword, or the person whose name is drawn is not at the meeting, the prize will added to the next month's drawing.



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 for meeting location and map, program announcements and contact information.

Make your check payable to **ORCOPUG** and mail to:
ORCOPUG, P.O. BOX 716, Brea, California 92822-0716

(Please fill out this application and mail it today!)

User group deals

Members' Only! page offers more discounts!

Membership in ORCOPUG entitles you to access the Members' Only area to take advantage of dozens of user group offers. Just go to <http://www.orcopug.org>. Click on the "members' only" link. In the password dialog box, type your first initial and last name (lower case, no spaces). The password is **R** followed by your member number. (If you forgot your member number, send an email to Charlie Moore, charlie@orcopug.org.)

Discounts and Special Offers are always changing on the Members' Only page. Be sure to check on them regularly so you don't miss any!

Thanks to these vendors

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

Magazine discounts only for user group members

	1 Year	2 Years	3 Years
Computer Games	\$10.95	\$20.95	\$29.95
Computer Gaming World	\$14.95	\$28.95	\$41.95
Computer Shopper	\$16.97	\$32.95	\$47.95
Dr. Dobbs Journal	\$15.95	\$30.95	—
Mac Home Journal	\$15.97	\$29.97	—
Mac World	\$12.95	—	—
Maximum PC	\$ 9.95	\$18.95	\$27.95
Microsoft System Journal	\$21.95	\$39.95	—
PC Gamer	\$12.95	—	—
PC Magazine	\$25.97	\$48.95	\$68.95
(22/44/66 issues)			
PC World	\$16.95	—	—
Videomaker	\$11.95	\$21.95	—
Wired	\$ 6.00	\$12.00	\$17.00

Revised January 2005

These prices are for new subscriptions and renewals. All orders must be accompanied by a check, cash or Money Order. Make payable to Herb Goodman, and mail to: **Herb Goodman, 8295 Sunlake Drive, Boca Raton, FL 33496.** Call or write: 561-488-4465, hgoodman@prodigy.net.

Please allow 10 to 12 weeks for your magazines to start. For renewals you must supply an address label from your present subscription to insure the correct start of your renewal. I will mail a renewal notice to every subscriber about 3 months prior to their expiration date. In the last few years, many computer magazine subscribers have used my services for over 300 titles I carry, also at excellent prices. Just email me for other prices.



ACP

Computer Show

Sept. 25*

8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

1310 E. Edinger, Santa Ana, CA

714-558-8813 • www.acpswapmeet.com

Free Admission • Free Parking • 100's of Sellers

*Please double-check the date with the store!

Submitted by Carl Westberg

Have you thanked a vendor today?

by Judy Taylor, APCUG Advisor

It's important for our user groups' continuing relationship with vendors to remember to thank them for the variety of ways they support our groups.

If your group reviews software, it is vital to send the newsletter containing the review of the vendor's product in a timely manner. Most vendors like to receive the review within 90 days. If someone from your group attends the Annual or Regional Conference and writes an article for their newsletter about vendor support at the meeting, don't forget to send a copy of the newsletter to each vendor mentioned.

I'm sure all of the user groups have received support from many vendors in 2004/2005 — don't forget to say "thank you." Our user group liaisons at the various companies need tangible evidence that the user group community is benefiting from their support.

Special to Members' Only!

**Don't miss Bob Click
"The Deals Guy"**

His latest column is at
www.orcopug.org
Members' Only! Page



O'Reilly adds several cool online features!

by Marsee Henon, UG Liaison

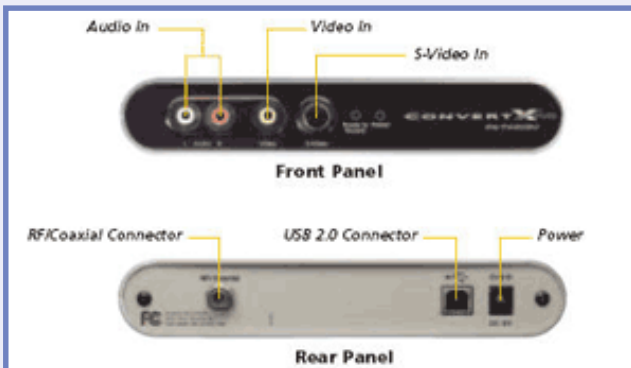
O'Reilly has just launched the new Annoyances Central weblog site, focused on topics and issues from the Annoyances Series books. Check out the Daily Fix, the Experts' Blog, and Robert's Rant for the most annoying annoyances—and their fixes. You can even subscribe to the RSS feed and have piping-hot annoyances delivered to you. www.annoyancescentral.com/

Don't forget to check out the O'Reilly UG wiki to see user groups around the globe: wiki.oreillynet.com/usergroups/index.cgi

Plextor ConvertX PVR

by Terry Currier, winnersug@aol.com

The Plextor ConvertX PVR model PX-TV402U is a external Personal Video Recorder (PVR.) There are connectors for cable, S-Video, and RCA jacks. The S-Video, and analog audio/video (RCA jacks) let you hook up your video camera, DVD, or VCR to it. Connection to the computer is



through the USB 2.0 port. Digital Video Recorders are very popular but cost a lot of money. PVRs for the computer cost half as much as the units you hook up to the TV, and you don't have to pay a monthly fee.

I put this unit to the test by hooking it up to my computer that already had the AVerMedia 1500 MCE card in it. This is where I love the USB connectivity. I did not have to open the computer, and it just blends in with the other peripherals. Each had a separate cable connections and each worked perfectly.

I try not to watch TV on the TV much anymore. The beauty of using a PVR is I can quickly fast forward through commercials. I find I can save 15 minutes from a normal 60 minute show by skipping commercials. Watching live TV the time shifting lets you go back to see something you missed and speed through to catch back up to the live part. This is ideal for those times when you're watching

TV and some guy on the TV says something, but you could not understand what. Just go back to that part and replay it, then catch up to the live part.

The ConvertX is a slim (7.24 in x 1.28 in x 6.10 in) plastic encased unit which comes with a high quality TV tuner. It also is DivX certified so if you happen to choose that for recording quality it won't take much space. I've recorded a two hour show onto an ordinary CD with space to spare.

Plextor includes InterVideo's WinDVR 5.0 and WinDVD Creator 2.0 software.

With that combination I can record in DivX, MPEG-4, MPEG-2 and MPEG-1. I can also choose the level of quality for them. Choosing a lower quality will save disk space. It can also really make the picture look terrible if you make it too low, while still trying for a large window. The WinDVD Creator software allows me to go through and take out parts (commercials) I don't want before burning to a disc. Plextor's website says for a limited time Plextor is including Ulead's VideoStudio 8 SE DVD video editing and DVD creation

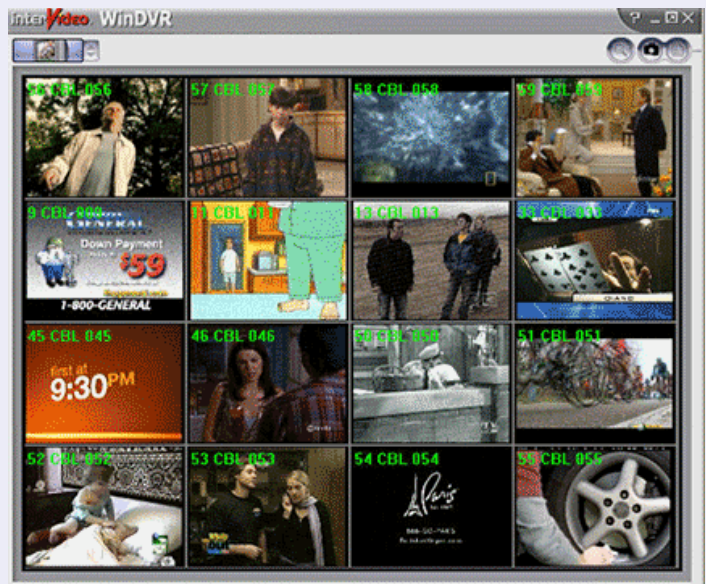
software.

The WinDVR worked well for watching TV and scheduling what I wanted to record. I did find it odd though, once it was done recording the scheduled entries for recording it did not do a self delete. I had to delete them myself. Running it took 120Kb of RAM. It also can link to TitanTV.com, a free internet-based program guide which allows convenient scheduling of unattended recording. TitanTV also gives good TV Guide like descriptions of each show.

If you just want to see what is on TV, use the surf function and it shows you 12 screens rotating through available channels.

I hooked up my VCR through the analog audio/video RCA jacks and imported a VHS tape for my daughter's work and convert it to DVD. I used the WinDVD Creator software to import and edit the recording. Editing with it is okay, but I did find it easier to do with CyberLink PowerDirector. On the other hand with the Creator software I was able to make a DVD that went right into the movie without stopping for a menu. I could not do that with

(Continued to page 6)



Channel surfing: Rotate through 12 channels at one time

Technology helps to open locked car

If you lock your keys in the car and the spare keys are home, call someone at home on your cell phone and ask them to get your car key with your remote device.

Hold your cell phone about a foot from your car door and have the other person at home press the unlock button on your remote while holding it near their phone.

Your car will unlock. It will save someone from having to drive your keys to you. Distance is no object. You could be hundreds of miles away, and if you can reach someone who has the "remote" for your car, you will be able to unlock the doors (or the trunk) this way!

Submitted by Kay Gutmann

New old member

Leonard Prince, Fullerton, has rejoined our group after an absence of a few years. Welcome back, Leonard!

Submitted by Charlie Moore

Signs you are no longer a kid

You're asleep, but others worry that you're dead.

You quit trying to hold your stomach in, no matter who walks into the room.

You buy a compass for your car dash.

You are proud of your lawn mower.

You sing along with the elevator music.

You enjoy hearing about other people's operations.

You no longer think of speed limits as a challenge.

People call at 9 p.m. and ask, "Did I wake you?"

You have a dream about prunes.

You send money to PBS.

You would rather go to work than stay home sick.

You wear black socks with sandals.

You know what the word *equity* means.

Your ears are hairier than your head.

You get into a heated argument about pension plans.

Submitted by Tony Lake

HELP STOP HELP STOP phishing expeditions!

Send all phishing e-mails you receive to the following groups:

- Anti-Phishing Working Group (reportphishing@antiphishing.com)

- Federal Trade Commission (spam@uce.gov)

- The "abuse" e-mail address at the company that is being spoofed (e.g., spoof@ebay.com)

These groups use the information they collect on phishing attacks to shut down phishing Web sites and take legal action against phishers.

View the complete checklist to avoid or detect phishing scams at <http://tinyurl.com/7mkeb> —LG

Source: www.searchsecurity.com

Plextor...

(Continued from page 5)

PowerDirector. There is separate software for Mac and Linux users. One other thing to mention about recording and deleting the viewed shows, it fragments the hard drive quite a lot. So be sure to defrag your drive regularly. Diskeeper Software's helps me save time with this function.

Summary

Great unit, easy to install, and half the cost of the bigger digital video recorders. Cost is \$150-\$209 on PriceGrabber.com. It comes with a one-year full warranty (parts, labor or replacement). www.plextor.com/english/products/TV402U.htm

Minimum System Requirements:
Pentium 4, 1.8 GHz (recommended),
Pentium 4, 2.4 GHz (Using WinDVR 5 in MPEG-4 mode), 10GB of hard drive space recommended, monitor resolution — 1024 x 768, 24-bit color, video card with 24-bit resolution capability and DirectX support, sound card that supports 48KHz playback, DVD+/- RW (to burn DVDs and CDs), Windows 2000/XP.

Letters...

(Continued from page 2)

quite a large margin. I used the same sorta bored/skeptical criteria that I used on all of them. You do a very nice job.

Our club is superb in the website and newsletter area.

It is a pleasure knowing you, and congratulations on your first place trophies.

Gary Covington III
garyiii@hotmail.com

Thank you to SWUG attendees

Thank you so much for attending the 2005 Southwest User Group Conference. We had 357 attendees register for the conference — 99 more than last year!

Patricia (Hill) and I appreciate all of the thank you e-mails you have sent to the participating vendors. If you haven't sent your thank you e-mail yet, you will find e-mail links to the vendors on the Welcome CD.

Thanking the 2005 vendors will encourage them to return in 2006 and make it easier for Patricia to recruit more — they do talk to each other.

You will also find handouts for several workshops on the CD. I am getting some of the other handouts ready to upload to the conference website: www.swugconf.org.

A great big thank you to everyone who helped at the conference. We couldn't do it without you!

Don't forget to put August 11, 12 & 13, 2006 on your calendar for next year's conference.

See you next year,

Judy Taylour, Co-Chair
SWUG Conference

Mergers that *could* happen

- 3M and Goodyear to issue forth as MMMGood.
- Fairchild Electronics and Honeywell Computers to become Fairwell Honeychild.

Submitted by Ted Wirtz

OPEN LETTER to user group newsletter editors and columnists

from Linda Gonse, ORCOPUG editor

If you read my past Notepad articles in this newsletter, you know how I feel about spyware. This month, I was reading a paid online newsletter by Brian Livingston, when I ran across an article which is excerpted below.

This news is really outrageous. Consumers actually seem only to be pawns in this spyware assault that benefits those who have committed themselves to making profits using unethical methods.

I'd like to enlist the aid of other newsletter editors and newsletter columnists, to alert members and others to this insidious menace. We shouldn't "get used" to it. And, we shouldn't be silent about it. We deserve better.

In fact, as citizens, we should protest this blatant invasion of our privacy, and the vandalism of our personal property.

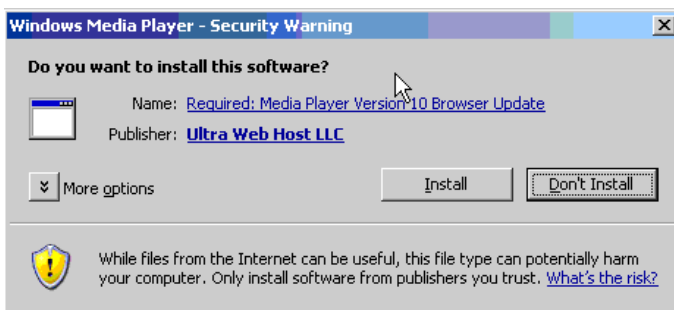
Update Windows Media Player to avoid surprises

Late in 2004, computer experts noticed that a popular Windows Media Player video file was actually a silent delivery mechanism infecting millions of PC users with spyware.

On Jan. 3, 2005, security researcher Ben Edelman, www.benedelman.org/news/010205-1.html, revealed what was happening to people who played this video file in WMP. After clicking the OK button on a single, legitimate-looking "browser update" dialog box, "My computer quickly became contaminated with the most spyware programs I had ever received in a single sitting," he said.

Edelman counted an amazing total of 31 programs that had silently been installed, without even displaying a license agreement. These included adware from 180solutions, CoolWebSearch, Ezula, ISTbar, and many other adware companies, he said. (A July 14 report by Brian Livingston, coauthor of Windows 2000 Secrets, and Windows Me Secrets, said that Microsoft's AntiSpyware beta program stopped recommending the removal of programs by 180solutions, Ezula, and some other adware companies to the dismay of spyware experts.)

Microsoft initially said the misleading dialog boxes were using a "by-design feature" of WMP, which wouldn't be changed. The company then reversed course, telling eWeek <http://www.eweek.com/article2/0,1895,1752247,00.asp> in January that a patch would be available by mid-February.



Playing a video file in Windows Media Player can launch a dialog box that looks official but installs spyware.

I'm not pointing to Microsoft as THE one to blame for spyware. But rather saying even a legitimate company's product can be the source of spyware. There is profit in allowing spyware to be distributed with a desirable product.

Ben Edelman also noted on his website that, "As in my prior video of spyware installing through security holes, www.benedelman.org/news/111804-1.html my records make it possible to track down who's behind the installations — just follow the money trail, as captured by the "partner IDs" within the various software installation procedures. When one program installs another, the second generally pays the first a commission, using a partner ID number to track who to pay. These numbers make it possible to figure out who's profiting from the unwanted installations and, ultimately, where the money is going."

So, who can you trust? Don't say the antispymakers. Several are on the payroll of companies who struck deals to be delisted as spyware!

Apparently, many businesses can't resist the opportunity to make easy cash. It is up to the customers—US, YOU and I — to resist being harvested as a money crop.

Make no mistake, we are the only ones who care about customer rights or privacy.

I've been reminded that keeping Windows updated may help to prevent spyware installations.

But, this is the real world. Not everyone drives with a seat belt fastened, stays alert while standing at an ATM, or keeps Windows updated.

Even if we only write a paragraph a month about any new spyware advance, program, or experience, etc., it will be good. We need to keep reminding our members, our vendors, and our lawmakers that this is something we DO NOT want.

If enough ruckus had been raised at the beginning, spyware might have been stopped in its tracks. Don't make this mistake twice. Raise a ruckus now! And, keep raising it until spyware is declared dead—dead wrong!

FURTHER ADVENTURES IN LINUXLAND

Siles' August article about Linux generated an online correspondence with Pim Borman, webmaster of SW Indiana PC Users Group, Inc. They graciously allowed us to share in the discussion they had about adapting to new technology and exploring new ideas. As experienced users they have different points of view on what is secure and how to obtain it; and they continue to be active participants in this era of millisecond changes.

To Siles:

I was interested to read about your (Further) Adventures in Linux Land in the August Nibbles and Bits newsletter. I have traveled the same path and currently I have a dedicated (older) Linux laptop computer. It sits next to the La-Z-Boy in my den, connected to the Internet and my LAN via a wireless router, and allows me to instantly access online information whenever I need it. It's not only great for email and news (preferably BBC News Online, as well as newspapers in my long-ago native Netherlands), but Google and OneAcross (the crossword solver) also are useful at times when crossword clues are mysterious. Not to mention occasional time wasters such as Mah Jongg, BreakOut and numerous solitaire games.

Over the years I have reviewed seven (so far) Linux distros, including SimplyMepis. I still think Linspire is the best, even though it costs a few bucks. For about \$20 a year (recently reduced from \$50) you have access to a wide variety of Linux software that you can install with literally a single mouse click. After installing itself

the application puts an icon on the desktop and you are set to go. They have the right philosophy about making Linux easy to use for non-geeks.

Mimosa Press recently published a guide to Linspire, "Linspire, The No-Nonsense Guide," listed at \$29.95, that includes the Linspire 5.0 live CD (that can't be installed permanently on the hard drive).

The book also is an excellent guide to the features of the major Linux applications, OpenOffice, The Gimp, the Network Share Manager and other programs they provide. It is the cheapest and best way to get started with Linspire.

As you may know, Linspire started as Lindows. Originally, the goal of Lindows was to provide a Linux environment in which to run MS Windows programs. Along the way they realized that it is a losing battle (MS can easily make some changes to wipe out earlier successes in Linux) and started to concentrate on providing equivalent Linux programs where available. After prolonged legal maneuvers, Microsoft paid Lindows \$20M to change their name - well worth it!

I still use my Windows XP laptop for those applications that I don't want to move over. As Web Editor for the SW Indiana PC Users Group I don't want to hazard screwing up our big Web site by changing Web editors - Front Page will do just fine. Although Linux has an excellent finance program with GNU Cash, I still stick with Quicken primarily, although I keep a shadow account in Linux just



Siles Bazerman

"I'll be looking forward to more of your adventures in Linux Land. I am sort of a one-man Linux SIG in our small PCUG (50 members or so)."



Pim Borman

in case. As long as you have MS Windows, why not keep using it!

Just for the record, I have no financial or other interest in Linspire. I just think they are doing a terrific job and they have the right approach. In my opinion, Xandros would be a second best concerning ease-of-use.

I'll be looking forward to more of your adventures in Linux Land. I am

sort of a one-man Linux SIG in our small PCUG (50 members or so).

Keep up the good work!

**Willem ("Pim") Borman
Web Editor and APCUG
Representative
SW Indiana PC Users Group, Inc.
<http://swipcug.apcug.org>
swipcug@sigecom.net**

To Pim:

Thanks for the kind words. I have not looked at the Linspire 5.0 distro. As I recall Lindows was not very secure as you did not need to be root or sudo to make system changes. Could be wrong as memory is not as good as it was when I was a youngster in my 60s. I did not like Mandrake, Redhat (Fedora) and most of the

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Siles...

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Debian versions. Too many of them seem to be “geekie” for the sake of being “geekie”. Sort of “See how much I know and you don’t.”

The groups I am involved with want cheap. Even a Norton subscription charge seem excessive to many of them, even though it is a vital adjunct to safe hex.

Siles

To Siles:

Yes, the greatest obstacle of Linux being accepted as a alternative to MS Windows is its reputation of being free. I can’t think of anything in life that’s free as well as worthwhile. I enjoyed puzzling over DOS programs in my younger days, but DOS was child’s work compared to the Linux console. I gladly pay the experts to make my life easier, within reason <:)

As far as security is concerned, Linspire installs by default as the superuser, but there is nothing to stop you from setting yourself up as a regular user and reserving the administrator privileges for when they are needed. Sitting behind a password-protected router I don’t know why anyone would take the time to get through that to take over my Linux box. A little paranoia goes a long way!

I DID download and install F-prot antivirus for Linux. Installation is automatic with the KDE package manager. Linspire also offers an anti-virus package at additional cost, but in this case free F-prot is just as good. It also sends out updates several times a week and is free. F-prot is better known in Europe, but it has an excellent reputation.

Anyway, whatever your preferences, it is nice to do things different once in awhile!

Willem (“Pim”) Borman

To Pim:

In Windows I use both a hardware firewall, D-Link router, and software firewall Zone Alarm. I get hit with

attempts to break in continuously. In Linux I use the same router and guarddog firewall. Routers are not as secure as you think. There are open ports or you would not be able to use email, usenet, or www. So far I have been able to stop all attacks. But people still try. The hits are fantastic. The Chinese are still actively looking for zombie machines for both DOS attacks and to conduct phishing activities. I have on many occasions cleaned machines that sit behind so called secure routers. Again, it used to pay well when I did it.

Siles



Security Quiz:

Is spyware getting the best of you?

SearchSecurity.com: The best — and most frustrating — advice we’ve heard for winning the war against spyware is not to let it on to your systems in the first place. This can be tricky when there are myriad types of spyware, and no consensus as to what’s safe and what’s not. We’ve designed a quiz to help you test your spyware savvy and determine what you want on your systems and — more importantly — what you don’t. After you’ve tallied your score, check out the resources tailored specifically for your level of spyware expertise.

The quiz is at <http://tinyurl.com/a4pel> —LG

Ink dot...

(Continued from page 1)

Cynthia was a SWUG exhibitor/workshop speaker this year. She is an author, actress, and a public speaker. She has been an educator and successful business owner, with a decade of experience in the ink business. Her presentations are loaded with useful information, and you will be entertained, and charmed by her engaging personality.

Windows Tips

Close Multiple Windows (works in all Windows versions) If you just opened a number of separate, related windows (a folder inside a folder, and so on), there’s an easier way to close them all than one-at-a-time. Hold down the Shift key as you click the X caption button in the upper-right corner of the last window opened. Doing so closes that window and all windows that came before it.

Add Familiar Icons Back to Your Desktop It’s the case of the missing icons. Many of you may be wondering where all the icons from your desktop are in Windows XP? Well if you’re like me, you like to have at least My Computer, My Network Places, and My Documents on the desktop.

To do this:

- Right-click on the desktop, and then click Properties.
- Click the Desktop tab and then click on Customize Desktop.
- Put a check mark in the box next to My Document, My Computer, My Network Places, or Internet Explorer, to add those familiar icons to your desktop.

www.tipstr.com/windows-xp-tips.html

Report tells of threats

“The Report On Identity Theft and Attacks On Computer Users” has been published in OUCH, an online newsletter by SANS. The August 2005 issue containing the full report is at <http://tinyurl.com/af8fq>.

SANS is the most trusted and the largest source for information security training and certification in the world. It also develops, maintains, and makes available at no cost, the largest collection of research documents about various aspects of information security, and it operates the Internet’s early warning system — Internet Storm Center.. —LG

by Gene Barlow,
User Group Relations

This is the first of a two part article on Internet Security. This article will focus on the harm that predators can do to your computer while you are attached to the Internet. The second article addresses what you can do to protect your computer from these predators. You need to read both articles to get the whole story.

Introduction

The Internet was originally designed as a communication tool between users of a few mainframe computers located inside some Universities and Government offices. To access this early Internet, you had to use a terminal that was inside these



have them delivered to our door. We access our bank and investments using the Internet to handle our financial affairs. The Internet has brought us tremendous benefits in the past few years.

they do. If you remember the old western movies, the cowboys that wore white hats were usually the good guys. The bad cowboys normally wore black hats. Likewise, you have the White Hat Hackers and the Black Hat

How Internet predators can harm your computer

PART ONE

secure locations and attached by cable to one of the mainframe computers involved. The outside world could not get access to this early Internet system. Because the original Internet was limited to a very secure environment, no security measures were designed into the Internet. Later, as the scope of the Internet was broadened and became available to almost anyone around the world, additional security features were not added to the Internet. The Internet was initially designed without security and security was never added to the Internet as it grew.

The Internet has become one of the most useful features of our computers. Almost all computers can be connected to the Internet through phone lines, wireless, or via many types of broadband connections. Today, we keep in touch with our families and friends via Internet email, chats, and Internet phones. We find enormous amounts of information on almost any topic by researching the Internet. We locate hard to find items on the Internet and can order them and

That is the bright side of the Internet. Unfortunately, there is also a dark side to the Internet that many of us are not fully aware of. The simple fact is that while you are connected to the Internet and can access thousands of locations, thousands of predators on the Internet can access your computer at the same time. As our connection time to the Internet increases, the risk of having harm done to our computers is skyrocketing. Broadband Internet connections greatly speed up our use of the Internet, but these are always connected and so our computer is always available to these predators. The purpose of this article is to identify who these predators are and how they use your computer for their own needs. The following article will show you what you can do to protect your computer from these predators.

Internet Predators

Who are the Internet predators that cause harm to your computer? They are called "hackers" and they come in a variety of types. Taking a cliché from the old western movies, these hackers are often distinguished by the deeds

Hackers. They both break into your computer, but the White Hat Hackers do no harm and only do it for the challenge. The Black Hat Hackers are not as kind and will do all sorts of damage to your computer once they break into it. Finally, you have the Script Kiddies who are young kids learning to become hackers.

Where do these hackers hang out? There are hundreds of hacker web sites around the world and the hackers use these sites to exchange ideas and things they have learned about hacking into certain computers. They also brag about their hacking accomplishments once they have broken into a special computer. This brings them the admiration of their fellow hackers. Young kids from 10-14 years old learn to become the future hackers of the world on these web sites. So these web sites are the training ground for new hackers to learn and develop.

Taking Over Your Computer

What do these Internet Predators do to your computer? The Black Hat Hackers go through a number of steps

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Internet predators...

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to break into and harm your computer. The first step is to scan for a target. They want to find a computer that has fast Internet access, has enough empty space on their hard drive for storage of their hacker tools, and is a fast computer. While this is the ideal target, they will take a less valuable target if they can access it easily.

They have special computer programs that scan and test computers connected to the Internet. Did you know that your computer is tested on average of 17 times each day by hackers looking for a target? When will they stop at your computer and decide to use it for their purposes? One in four computers will be hacked this year, so your turn is not far off.

Once the hackers find a target, their next task is to break and enter into that computer. Unfortunately, this task is very easy to do, since most computers have no security protection at all to keep the hackers out. Some users will have a firewall set up to prevent hackers from entering their computers. These firewalls have doors in them called ports. A firewall may have 256,000 doors or ports in them with some of these doors wide open. When a hacker finds a firewall, all he needs to do is to scan these ports until he finds one that is open and available for him to enter into your computer. Finally, hackers know of weaknesses in your operating system and Internet browser. He can take advantage of these weaknesses in the software and break through any security you think you have in place. It may take him a bit of time, but eventually, a hacker will find a way to break into your computer without you even knowing that he is doing this.

Once inside your computer, the hacker goes about setting up shop in your system. He may first look around for anything of value that he can steal from you. It may be as dangerous as your social security number, credit

card numbers, or other financial information that he can use in the theft of your identity. Identity Theft is the number one consumer problem today and the number of thefts is growing each year. If your identity is taken and used, it will cost over \$10,000 in goods and services to resolve the problems from this crime.

The hacker may find your personal digital photos saved on your computer and share them with others on the Internet. Finally, the hacker may help himself to copies of any software he finds on your computer.

Next the hacker will make changes to your computer to fit his needs. He will store his hacker tools on your hard drive so that it is available for him to use in a moment's notice. These tools may include viruses and worms to send out from your computer, key loggers to watch the keys you press as you enter your password to get into your online banking, email monitors to read your email messages, and other devious tools he has available to use from your computer. Once he gets all of his tools loaded on your computer, he will make your computer secure from other hackers. He will close up all of the open ports and operating system weaknesses in your computer so that other hackers will not be able to break into it. He wants your computer for his own use and not to share it with other hackers. He will leave one very well hidden back door open so that he can get back in to your computer at any time he wants to. The hacker now has your computer all ready for his future use.

Using Your Computer

Having set up your computer for his needs, what things will a hacker do with your computer? First, he may set up your computer to send out viruses to other computers. He will start with your email address book and send out these viruses to all of your friends and family members. After all, he does not want to have his

computer identified as the source of the virus. Junk mail is also sent out mostly from hacked computers. My computer was hacked a couple of years ago and thousands of SPAM messages were sent out late one night using my computer. The next morning my inbox was filled with bounced messages from email addresses that were no longer valid. Just emptying these bounced messages from my inbox took hours to accomplish. Working with my ISP, we found the faulty code that let my system be hacked and fixed it. I quickly learned that these hackers are serious. Another favorite hacker use of your computer is to send out porn pictures. It would really embarrass me to learn that my computer had been used to distribute porn to others. I may even be held legally liable for permitting this porn to be distributed from my computer.

Some hackers pride themselves in bringing down main computers, like eBay, Yahoo, or AOL. Other hackers go after mainframe computers at

(Continued to page 13)

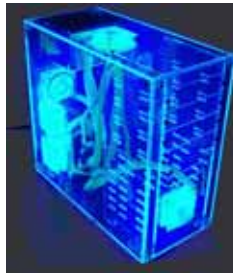


What's new in computer cases?

Cooler, quieter, eye-popping cases!

<http://www.xoxide.com>

This new clear acrylic case is perfect for the show-off hardware enthusiast. With a completely clear all-acrylic design, your case interior will be highly visible at all angles. Perfect for lighting and fan mods, this case can be custom-fitted to your specifications. The case comes in an easy to assemble format, with detailed instructions on assembly. The design is sturdy, proven, and ready to be fitted with all new hardware on the market. There are five 80mm fan holes placed in key spots on the case.



The enthusiast thinks of performance before aesthetics. We've been able to incorporate both into this excellent case. The two side mounted 80mm Y.S. Tech fans and two front mounted 80mm Adda fans provide a steady stream of cool air to your components. There is also an attractive window on the side that can enhance the look of the case especially with the addition of a cold cathode to light up and show off your system components.



<http://www.endpcnoise.com>

This Antec Aria case is an ideal case for small spaces. It is also designed for quiet and reliable operation. If you like you can choose to customize the Antec Power Supply with the silent Nexus Real Silent 120mm Computer Fan for truly silent operation.

The TNN-500AF is the world's only absolutely noiseless computer case for high-end systems. The TNN 500AF package includes a high performance aluminum computer case with an absolutely noiseless cooling solution that does not require the use of a fan. The TNN 500AF is the perfect choice for storage servers, workstations, high end home systems, and sound studio computer systems.



<https://www.casedepot.com>

This is an Intel P4/AMD ready, yellow, sturdy "gaming-Samurai" mid tower case with plastic shield cover. Its side open accessibility makes maintenance and installation easy. 1 x 12cm fan in front and in rear are installed.

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News Bites

Windows Security News

Zotob Attacks MS Plug-and-Play

At least three versions of the Zotob worm find a flaw in the Windows Plug-and-Play system that could give attackers complete control of vulnerable PCs are circulating. The flaw in Plug-and-Play allows remote code execution and privilege elevation. Zotob has been spreading on the Internet via TCP port 445.

Malicious Web Pages Found

More than 750 web pages were found to contain programs that try to install code on visitors' machines without any action from the user. Discovered by Honeymonkey, a Microsoft project that detects security threats before they become widespread, unpatched Windows XP clients are used to surf the web and be exploited by malicious web sites.

Cell Phone Virus Spreads

An outbreak of the Cabir cell phone virus was reported at the World Athletic Championships at Helsinki's Olympic Stadium. In order for a phone to become infected, users must accept a download. The virus can spread through Bluetooth at distances of up to 10 meters, which is significant in close quarters like a stadium.

IE Security Updates

Microsoft's monthly security release for August included three bulletins which address critical security issues concern Internet Explorer. One problem is in the way it handles JPEG images. A maliciously crafted image could allow an attacker to take control of a computer when the user simply views the image. The vulnerability could be exploited to install Trojan horse programs, spyware or other malicious code. The other IE flaws could also be exploited to gain control of vulnerable computers.

SANS
INSTITUTE

Source:
www.sans.org

Internet Humor



Submitted by Kay Gutmann

A sign you are driving too fast...

Computer cases...

(Continued from page 12)



This is a (P4 Ready) ATX gaming case with Color-Change (Blue to Red) Spider Thermal Indicator on the front panel. Stylish punched-hole metal side panel with thermal management to control the rear fan speed. The power supply is equipped with a rear LED fan.

— Products compiled by Linda Gonse

Internet predators...

(Continued from page 11)

banks, stock markets, and government offices. To do this, they need to use more than one computer. Hackers will break into and set up hundreds of computers which are called Zombie systems. The hacker can activate these Zombies to do what it wants in a few seconds. Your computer may be sitting as a Zombie computer waiting to be activated to attack some large government defense computer. When it is activated with hundreds of other Zombie computers, they all send messages at the same time to the large computer under attack. When the mainframe computer is hit at the same time by hundreds or thousands of Zombies, it can't handle the load and will shut down to protect itself. Just what the hacker wanted. The shutdown of a major computer may take hours to bring back up and can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost businesses to these companies. This is serious hacking and your computer might be involved without your knowing it.

Check Out Your Computer

So, how do you know if your system has been affected by a hacker? Hackers pride themselves in doing their mischief without anyone knowing that they have been hacked. So, finding out that you have been hacked is not easy to do. There are a few excellent software tools that have been designed to find and remove hacking tools from computer systems. The second article of this series will identify all of the things you need to do to protect your computer from hackers and to remove their mischief if you have already been hacked. Watch for this article.

In the meantime, you can check to see if your computer has hacker tools on it by accessing my Invisus web site at www.myinvisusdirect.com/usergroupstore. Look for and click on the small red button that is titled, "Test Your PC Now." This will take you to a page where you can download a trial of the hacker tool removal program and see what hacker tools are located on your computer. You will probably be surprised at what you find.

I hope you have learned more about the harm that can happen to your computer on the Internet. If you have questions about this article or Invisus tools, please email them to gene@ugr.com and I will try to answer them for you. Watch for my following article on protecting your computer from Internet predators.

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Gene Barlow is the president of User Group Relations, a consulting firm specializing in promoting computer products to the user group community. He has over 40 years of experience with computer systems. He worked for IBM for 34 years and managed IBM's user group support organization for 14 years. He helped hundreds of user groups get started and is sometimes called the Father of User Groups for his involvement. When he left IBM, he set up his own consulting firm and has represented many software vendors to the user group community the past 9 years. He is an outstanding speaker, writer, and helper of end users and loves working with user groups. You may contact him at gene@ugr.com.

THANK YOU!

Newsletter Contributors

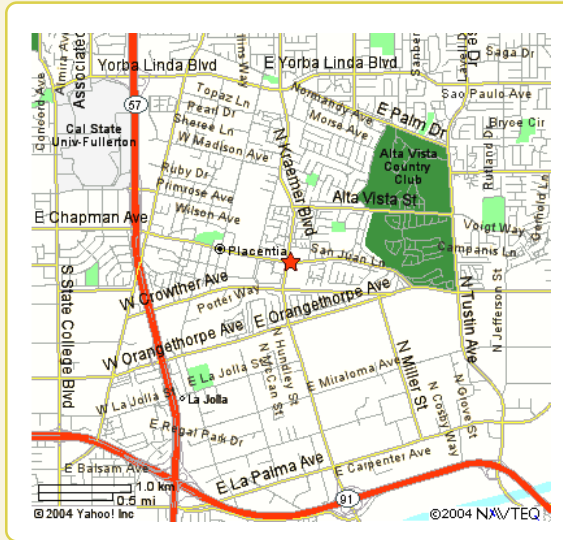
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**Newsletter Deadline
September 17
for October Issue**

The Public Is Welcome! Meetings Are FREE!

The Orange County IBM PC Users' Group regular meeting is scheduled for the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the **Placentia Library, 411 East Chapman Avenue, Placentia, California 92870, (714) 528-1906**. The library is 0.4 miles east of Kraemer Blvd. Call (714) 990-0580, for info, or go to www.orcopug.org.

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



Benefits of Being a User Group Member

- Product & "How To" demos
- Free raffles and magazines
- Help from other members
- Newsletter and web site
- Special offers & discounts
- Monthly meetings
- Affiliation with worldwide group

User groups represent the spirit of the frontier, a community getting together to do things that no individual ought to have to do alone. The pioneers of the

American west got together for barn raisings, cattle roundups, and the occasional party. The pioneers of new technology get together for installfests, new user training and support, and just plain fun. Being part of a user group is the best way to get more out of your computer, and lets you make friends while you're at it. — *Tim O'Reilly, President, O'Reilly & Associates*

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- Top 10 Viruses & Hoaxes
- Search in PDFs
- Personalized Map
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- Windows Help & Tips
- and Much More for Computer Users!

www.orcopug.org

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

6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, September 13

Ink Dot

P.O. Box 716, Brea, CA 92822-0716
**Orange County
 IBM PC Users' Group**

Computer users helping computer users

