

Orange Bytes

Award Winning News Magazine of the North Orange County Computer Club *

Vol 32 • No 9

SEPTEMBER 2007

Main Meeting, September 9

Second Sunday of the Month!

On September 9, 2007, we will have a presentation by a very familiar face. Terry Currier, NOCCC member and past president will share his knowledge and experience with us.

More meeting details on Page 3

Attention NOCCC Members

If you want to view your news magazine in color, go to www.noccc.org/bytes. And, it is available earlier than the printed copy!

Plan Ahead for Oct. 2007!

e-Waste Collection and the NOCCC Consignment Table will be Available

More information on Page 5

NOCCC Meeting – September 9th

NOCCC - Thirty-one years and counting

9:00 a.m.

AutoCAD *Science 203*

Computer Aided Investing *Wilkinson 221*

Investment strategies, techniques and software

Linux for Desktop Users *Wilkinson 117*

Visual Programming *Science 111*

Visual Basic and Visual Basic Script

Visual C++ and Visual J++ for beginners

10:30 a.m.

AmiBroker SIG..... *Wilkinson 221*

Beginners and existing users share ideas and learn to use and apply AmiBroker for investing and trading.

Digital Photography *Irvine Hall*

Per request, we will talk about what makes a good picture. We will also visit a couple of web sites.

Linux for Advanced Users *Wilkinson 117*

Computer Security *Science 203*

Unless something else comes up, we will be looking at an old JavaScript flaw that is becoming popular again.

Understanding Operating Systems..... *Science 111*

Get help with DOS, Windows 3.1, Windows 9x, OS/2, etc.

12:00 Noon

PIG SIG..... *Outside Irvine Hall*

Get together and talk during lunch. Held outside Irvine Hall since the Argyros cafeteria is closed for the summer.

12:30 p.m.

Hardware Essentials..... *Science 109*

Data projectors will be addressed.

OS/2 News and Installation..... *Science 203*

PC Q & A - Jim Sanders *Irvine Hall*

Questions answered, problems solved, demos done.

2:00 p.m. Main Meeting, Irvine Hall

NOCCC website:

<http://www.noccc.org>

Future Meeting Dates in 2007

Oct 7, Nov 4, Dec 2?

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Celebrating 31 years of “Friends Helping Friends”

Orange Bytes Staff

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Editor - Oversees, edits, and makes final selections of the articles to be included in the Bytes.

Open..... editor@noccc.org

Associate Editor/Production - Lays out and formats in Word the articles received from the editor, prints, and submits camera-ready copy of the Bytes to the printer.

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Contributing Editors – Write articles for the Bytes.

Open

Reviews Editor - Communicates with the vendors and the members who evaluate products and write the reviews. Makes sure members meet deadlines. Also sends a copy of the Bytes to vendors of products we review.

Ted Littman • (714) 779-1936... reviews@noccc.org

Copy Editor - Does final proofing of Bytes for typos and misspellings.

Ted Littman • (714) 779-1936.. reviews@noccc.org

Classified Advertising - Obtains members' computer- related non-commercial ads.

Open publications@noccc.org

Help Line - Maintains the volunteer list, and the software and hardware subjects for which they are willing to answer questions.

Ted Littman • (714) 779-1936 tedlit@roadrunner.com

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The following positions are available:

Circulation - Oversees mailing and distribution.

Commercial Swap Meets - Distributes the Orange Bytes and NOCCC material at swap meets.

Commercial Advertising - Obtains ads from both national and local vendors for the Bytes; the success of this helps our club finances.

September 9th Meeting Preview

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY SIG (Special Interest Group) - 10:30 a.m. In September, we will visit a website where a principle editor from an organization known around the world for excellent photographs will describe numerous photos and what makes each one good. Attend the SIG and help pick future program topics.

COMPUTER AIDED INVESTING SIG - 9:00 a.m. We will investigate building portfolios of stocks, ETFs, and mutual funds for long term investing. This is timely for those who need to repair their portfolios and have a plan ready-to-use when the market rings the bell that all is well.

AMIBROKER SIG - 10:30 a.m. I hope we can discuss and present how to implement the new *Hemscot* system for sectors and industries. We're still waiting for *QuotesPlus* to finalize their implementation of this stock classification scheme.

SECURITY SIG - 10:30 a.m. We'll be looking at an old JavaScript flaw that is becoming popular again. It's been named "retro" in the industry.

MAIN MEETING - 2:00 p.m., Irvine Hall - On September 9, 2007, we will have a presentation by a very familiar face. Terry Currier, NOCCC member and past president will share his knowledge and experience with us.

HARDWARE ESSENTIALS - 12:30 p.m., Science 109
Data Projectors, suitable for presentations or entertainment, will be addressed.

MEMBER-ONLY PRIZES Requires wearing your membership badge to get a free ticket.

- 1) Book: Malware: Fighting Malicious Code
- 2) Book: Microsoft's Windows Vista Product Guide

THE CLUB RAFFLE items this month are:

- 1) Book: Web Hacking Attacks & Defense
- 2) Book: How Secure is Your Wireless Network?

SIG list

Contact the SIG leaders by e-mail, preferably, rather than by telephone.

SIG	BLDG	RM.	TIME	LEADER	E-MAIL	PHONE
AmiBroker	Wilkinson	..... 221.....	10:30.....	Bob Krishfield	bobkrish@socal.rr.com	(714) 532-3096
AutoCAD	Science.....	203.....	9:00.....	Joe Mizer	joescrouge@earthlink.net	(909) 688-9848
Computer Aided Investing	Wilkinson	..... 221.....	9:00.....	Bob Krishfield	bobkrish@socal.rr.com	(714) 532-3096
Computer Essentials	Science.....	306.....	10:30.....	OPEN		
Computer Security	Science.....	203.....	10:30.....	Dave Keays	davekeays@sbcglobal.net	(714) 348-9096
Digital Photography	Irvine Hall.....	—	10:30.....	Larry Klees	lklees@dslextrreme.com	(714) 879-6405
Hardware Essentials	Science.....	109.....	12:30.....	Herbert Wong	ocug@singularitytechnology.com	(714) 968-7264
Linux for Desktop Users	Wilkinson	..... 117.....	9:00.....	Bob Ray.....	bobcray@pacbell.net	(714) 634-7520
Linux for Advanced Users	Wilkinson	..... 117.....	10:30.....	Bob Ray.....	bobcray@pacbell.net	(714) 634-7520
OS/2 News and Installation	Science.....	203.....	12:30.....	Steve Schiffman.....	schiffman@attglobal.net	
PC Q&A	Irvine Hall.....	—	12:30.....	Jim Sanders.....	jsanders@ligasmicro.com	(714) 544-3589
Understanding OS's	Science.....	111.....	10:30.....	Charlie Moore	mooreca@adelphia.net	(714) 529-9071
Visual Programming	Science.....	111.....	9:00.....	Anson Chapman.....	aeccrccs@hotmail.com	(909) 860-9515
				Please report SIG changes to Herbert Wong, Jr.	president@noccc.org	(714) 968-7264

Membership Benefits

As a valued member, we bring you a section of discounts and offers as part of the entire “Benefit of Belonging.” (Caveat: we are unable to endorse these companies, but make these offers available as a service to our members.)

Orange Bytes on PDF earlier in the month!

Members ONLY: Watch your e-mail every month for the password to get the award winning Orange Bytes much earlier in the month via PDF file on the NOCCC website, www.noccc.org. Send any e-mail address changes to membership@noccc.org so you can get the jump on all the great reviews and articles!

User Group Offers - Software

AskSam - SurfSaver 6, normally \$29.95, you can get it for \$19.95. AskSam 6 Standard + SurfSaver 6 is a flexible and powerful way to organize information and create searchable databases from Web pages, Email, PDF files, texts, and Word documents. Normally \$149.95 but you can get it for \$69.95 or the Pro version for \$99.95. You can also download a 30-day trial versions at www.asksam.com/usergroupspecial/.

Corel - Use the following link for special pricing for user group members: www.corel.com/specialusergroups

WordPerfect Office X3 for \$159

CorelDRAW Graphics Suite X3 for \$179

Corel Painter for \$229

Paint Shop Pro Photo XI for \$59

Snap Fire Plus for \$29

Laplink - www.laplink.com - Laplink Everywhere 4 is a great remote computer control and access program. PCmover is a program for moving all of your applications, settings, and data files from an old PC to a new PC. Get Laplink software for 30% off, use coupon code APCUG.

Techsmith - You can get SnagIt, a screen capture program, and Camtasia Studio, to quickly record, edit and publish multimedia demos and presentations, bundle for \$269, a \$50 savings. Go to www.techsmith.com/store/order/bundle.asp and use promotion code PRESBN05.

User Group Offers - Books and Magazines

O’Reilly Books - Get 35% off all books and PDFs from O’Reilly, No Starch, Paraglyph, PC Publishing, Pragmatic Bookshelf, SitePoint, or Syngress books you purchase directly from O’Reilly. Just use code DSUG when ordering online, www.oreilly.com/store/, or by phone, (800) 998-9938. Free ground shipping on orders \$29.95 or more in the US. If for any reason you are not completely satisfied with your purchase, return it to O’Reilly and get your money back. A return shipping label is included with every direct purchase and directions are posted online in case you misplace it. www.oreilly.com/oreilly/cs/guarantee.

Peachpit Press Books Discount - Get 30% off by joining the Peachpit Club. Go to www.peachpit.com to sign up as a member. User group members should note that once you’ve become a Peachpit Club member, you may use your user group coupon code ON TOP of the permanent savings you earn as a member of the club. Just make sure you’ve logged into the site before you make a purchase to ensure this permanent discount will be in effect, and then enter coupon code UE-23AA-PEUF (case-sensitive) at checkout! This coupon code is an exclusive offer that may not be used in conjunction with any other coupon codes. The offer applies to all titles at peachpit.com including New Riders, Macromedia Press, Adobe Press, and Peachpit Press.

Prentice Hall, Addison-Wesley, IBM Press, Sams Publishing, and Informit.com. Get 35% off list price by purchasing directly from the publisher sites: www.awprofessional.com, www.prenhallprofessional.com, www.samspublishing.com and www.informit.com/shortcuts. Select your books and enter “USERGROUP” (must be all caps) for the COUPON CODE in Checkout Step #3, Payment Method.

Smart Computing - www.smartcomputing.com For each paid membership (subscription to either Smart Computing or Computer Power User) via personalized membership forms or by telephone, the NOCCC will receive one credit. When the NOCCC has accumulated 5 credits, Smart Computing will donate one subscription to us (Great to use as a raffle prize or a “thank you” to a member, etc.) Call customer service at (800) 733-3809 and tell them you are with the North Orange County Computer Club. If you go to their website to subscribe, click on User Groups and there is a drop down menu with our group’s name on it.

FREE AD SPACE

If you are an NOCCC member, and have a computer-related, non-commercial ad that you would like to have placed in this newsletter or on the NOCCC web site, visit the Classified Ads section of the NOCCC website, www.noccc.org or contact the Publications Chairman at publications@noccc.org.

Consignment Table Planned for October

The Consignment Table will be set up during the **October 2007** meeting. E-Waste will also be collected by Omni Technics, Inc.

- 1) Only current members can place items for sale, but non-members are welcome to purchase items from the table. This is a great place to get some money for your surplus computer items, and help your Club at the same time.
- 2) The consignment table operates on a 90/10% basis — with the owner getting 90%, and the Club treasury 10%.
- 3) **You can fill out a user list and item tags at the table or on the club's web site:**
www.noccc.org/membrshp/consign.html
 The user list and each tag must contain:
 - Seller's name
 - Seller's NOCCC membership number
 - Item name and a short description
 - Asking price
- 4) All items and/or money may be picked up by the seller at any time, but no later than 2 p.m. on the day of sale. Because of California disposal laws, if you have a display or computer that doesn't sell, you must pick it up. The club has no storage room available, and cannot legally put it in the trash.
- 5) Any items and/or money not picked up by 2 p.m. will become the property of NOCCC and will be subject to disposal at the Club's discretion. As it is now illegal to put monitors or computers in the regular trash, you must agree to pick these items up if they don't sell.
- 6) NOCCC is NOT RESPONSIBLE in any way for items bought and/or sold at the Consignment Table. Each item is placed and sold on an AS-IS BASIS.

NOCCC Officers

The area code for the following phone numbers is 714 unless noted otherwise.

President

Herb Wong..... 968-7264..... president@noccc.org

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Secretary

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Business Solicitations/Lecture Series

Open

Consignment Table

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Classified Advertising (non-commercial, members only)

Open

Commercial Advertising

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Membership Chairman

Open

SIG Coordinator

Herb Wong 968-7264..... president@noccc.org

Programs/Speakers Coordinator

Open

Public Relations

Else Olovsson..... 832-3155..... eolovsson@msn.com

University Liaison

Herb Wong.....968-7264..... president@noccc.org

NOCCC Help line

The Help Line is in the true spirit of NOCCC, which is to help others to learn more about computers. The following is a list of Help Line subjects. The list is organized by the topic that each volunteer is willing to help you with. Please help us to keep this list current. Call (714) 779-1936 or e-mail Ted Littman at helpline@noccc.org with additions, deletions, or corrections. *Note that the names of our volunteers are only available in print versions of the Bytes.*



- Apple II
- Artificial Intelligence
- AutoCAD
- C/C++
- CPU Aided Investing
- Computer Boards
- Computer Security
- Corel Draw
- Corel Draw
- Desktop Publishing
- Digital Photography
- Excel
- Genealogy
- GPS Navigation
- Linux
- Lotus 1-2-3
- Macintosh
- Memory/Interrupts .
- Microsoft Office t
- Networking
- Neural Networks
- OS/2
- PC Hardware
- PCs for Beginners
- Pinnacle Studio
- Photoediting
- Photoediting & shop
- Photoshop
- PowerPoint 2003
- Programming
- QuickBooks - all ver.
- Qbooks 5 & Quicken
- Tcl/Tk & UNIX
- Vista
- Windows 9X & XP
- Wireless
- Word 2003
- WordPerfect

President's Message

By Herbert Wong, Jr., NOCCC President

Summer is finally over. We've made our last trips to Disneyland, Knott's Berry Farm, the Pacific Amphitheatre, the Orange County Fair, etc. The rides are all computer-operated wonders. There are three dimensional displays and laser images everywhere. There were even a few kiosks to take survey information or dispense priority admission tickets to some rides. However, computers didn't seem to shorten the waiting lines or lengthen the time on the rides.



We will hold over one summer ritual. We'll have hot dogs in the Irvine Hall courtyard, again. This time we'll try to remember to bring the awning to provide some shade.

That reminds me... If you are interested in having coffee at the meetings, someone will need to volunteer to arrive early to

make the coffee and later clean up the pot in the afternoon. Eric Saca left detailed instructions for anyone to follow. If you are interested, please contact me (at president@noccc.org) and I'll make the arrangements.

Because of our tax status as a not-for-profit organization, we must make reports on our club's activities. Therefore, we must have a secretary. Requirements include ability to take notes, type, and attend board meetings. It's rather easy...

We have some very good presenters for the next few months. On October 7, 2007, Gene Barlow will bring his road show to Southern California. He'll tell us about the importance of hard disk drive maintenance and backup. On November 4, 2007, D-Link will probably be our presenter. Our contact definitely wants to be here with a technical expert. D-Link has many interesting products and they will have an open forum to discuss them. And, a few other interesting presenters are down the road...

On September 9, 2007, we'll have a presentation by a very familiar face. Terry Currier, NOCCC member and past president will share his knowledge and experience with us.

Computer Talk

Ted's Stuff

By Ted Littman, NOCCC Reviews Editor

In this column, I share with my fellow NOCCC members and other readers links to interesting and useful web sites as well tips and ideas on computing that I come across. **If you would like to include your gems or make comments, please e-mail them to me** at tedstuff@roadrunner.com for publication in this column, with appropriate attribution of course.



PC Magazine and Simple Photo-editing

If you don't get your fill of tips on taking good shots in our monthly Digital Photography SIG, see the July 18th issue of PC Magazine where expert Lance Ulanoff offers his top tips for us amateurs to take better digital photos (www.pcmag.com/article2/0,1895,2159663,00.asp). Also, look at the July 26th issue: www.pcmag.com/article2/0,1895,2156601,00.asp. Here you can find lots of useful information to fix flaws and improve your digital images using a variety of inexpensive software. If you don't mind blowing a wad on the top-of-the-line Photoshop CS3 that has the professional-level tools for photoediting, read PCM's April 26th write-up and rating (Editor's Choice award) at www.pcmag.com/article2/0,1759,2122737,00.asp. To learn about the options for sharing your masterpieces, read the July 11th story at www.pcmag.com/article2/0,1895,2156600,00.asp.

HP's Simple Tips for Taking Better Photos

For a helpful demo full of practical photography hints, look at Hewlett Packard's web site: www.hp.com/united-states/consumer/digital_photography/tours/beginners/index_f.html?jumpid=ex_R602_info/hho-ng-1292-discoverSimpleTips.

PC Magazine Rates Digital Cameras

If you are in the market for a simple digital camera or want to upgrade your old "Point-and-Shoot" model, read the July 11th buying guide at www.pcmag.com/article2/0,1895,2156167,00.asp with reviews of six models ranging from \$166 - \$400. If you want more features in a camera than those offers, consider a digital SLR and Terry Sullivan's April 11th recommendations at www.pcmag.com/article2/0,1895,2113132,00.asp.

PC World Rates Bargain Digital Cameras

In the August 2007 issue (p. 52), PCW rates five units ranging in price from \$120 - \$130 and gave their top rating to the Canon Powershot A460.

Ten Tips for Managing Digital Pictures

For those of you planning to take pictures on the road this summer, check out the tips and recommendations offered by Microsoft at:

www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/digitalphotography/learnmore/onthe.go.mspx. It might save you some grief. In a related article, "Tell vacation stories with photos," read how to plan your photo shoots so that your pictures will give you lasting enjoyment as your "personal movie" (www.microsoft.com/athome/morefun/vacationstories.mspx).

Online Digital Photography Classes

HP offers three free classes: "Professional Photography Made Simple," "Understanding Your Camera's Settings," and

“Digital Imaging from Camera to Printer with “Photosmart Essential.” To register, go to <http://h30240.www3.hp.com/>.

Keyboard Shortcuts

If you are one of those proficient people who knows how to type “fast,” you may be interested in some keyboard shortcuts that reduce your dependence on the ubiquitous mouse. For users of the Vista operating system, check out <http://windowshelp.microsoft.com/Windows/en-US/Help/2503b91d-d780-4c80-8f08-2f48878dc5661033.mspix>. If you use Windows XP, then you should check the shortcuts at www.microsoft.com/enable/products/KeyboardSearch_XP.aspx.

Safely Downloading Files

Enough cannot be said about PC security when downloading files from the Internet or installing them from a CD or other portable media. Here is a checklist to review if you want to make sure that you don’t also transfer a malevolent (virus, worm, spyware, etc.) file: www.microsoft.com/protect/yourself/downloads/about.mspix.

Dangerous Zipped E-Mails

According to Steve Bass, we are seeing another wave of e-mails with zipped files, some with ads but others with embedded viruses. In fact, I got one today and another yesterday that my Norton AntiVirus program spotted and removed. So, be careful out there and make sure you have an updated AV program on your PC. If you don’t, you are living on the edge! So, download the freebie <http://free.grisoft.com/doc/5390/Ing/us/tpl/v5>.

Beware of Faked Microsoft Security Alerts

“The latest ploy by Internet scam artists? Sending out fake security bulletins in Microsoft’s name that infect your computer with malicious software. Be aware that Microsoft never attaches software updates to its security communications. Find out about other clues that can help you spot e-mail messages that claim to be from Microsoft but aren’t by reading the article at: www.microsoft.com/protect/yourself/phishing/msemail.mspix.”

404 Error – Page Not Found

Do you sometime get the annoying 404 error when you click on a web link? Well, Steve Bass found some reactions and they are posted at: <http://blogs.pcworld.com/tipsandtweaks/archives/004908.html>. So, if you are in need of a few chuckles, take a look.

“Upgrading” Your Vista Operating System

If you are using one of the “lesser” versions than Vista Ultimate, you may be able to add, at little or no cost, some of the features found in the top-of-the-line OS, according to Scott Dunn of *Windows Secrets*. Read all about it at <http://WindowsSecrets.com/comp/070712>.

Costly Inkjet Cartridges

In another useful article in the same issue of *Windows Secrets*, Scott Dunn provides some suggestions from readers on ways to reduce cost if you are using one of those ubiquitous printers. For example, did you know that you might be using expensive color ink even if you are printing in monochrome?

Do I Need a New Computer?

If you have been asking yourself this question, read a recent informative article at <http://WindowsSecrets.com/comp/070712> and get Bob Rankin’s expert guidance.

Free Clip Art

Microsoft has over 140,000 images and media clips that you can download for your use at:



<http://go.microsoft.com/?linkid=7138107>.

The Largest Collection of Free Online Translation Services

If you are planning a trip/vacation to a foreign country, don’t speak the language, and you don’t have time for a quick language class, you may want to check out LingvoSoft at www.lingvozone.com/ which bills itself as the largest collection of free online translation service anywhere (some 41 languages are available)! Or you could spring for one of those electronic translators (Fry’s has one for about 100 bucks).

Some Tips for Users of Office 2003

Annik Stahl, the “Crabby Office Lady,” writes a regular web column for Microsoft and offers lots of useful tips. Check out this column if you use Office 2003 (the tips also may work on earlier Office versions): <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/help/HA011872211033.aspx>. For a list of all of Crabby’s columns, go to <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/help/FX101679371033.aspx>.

PC World’s Answer Line

The magazine has a regular column by Lincoln Spector that answers questions submitted by readers. If you aren’t a subscriber, you can view the columns on-line at www.pcworld.com/columnist/id,1/columnist.html?findid=31577. For example, if you are having a problem with Windows System Restore function, view the June 21st column (published in the August magazine on p. 128).

PC World’s Window Tips

Another regular PCW column is Scott Dunn’s monthly one on Windows that can be read at: www.pcworld.com/columnist/id,31/columnist.html?findid=31607.

That’s it for now. Happy computing to you all and, hopefully, see you next month.



Microsoft's Free Virtual PC

By Steve Bass (7-9-2007)

I've been using it for three weeks. It's perhaps the best way to play with new utilities, for instance, try out a different anti-virus program, or just fiddle with Windows.



I run another copy of Windows XP within Windows XP. Some people load up Vista in the virtual machine while others play around with Linux.

It takes no super skill set to install or use, and provided you have enough RAM (I'll say about 1GB), the VPC will run happily. I was worried that it would slow down my PC. I have just one VM window running, and even at that, it's open only when I was using it. Overall, with 2GB of RAM on my PC (and 512MB allocated to the VM when it was running), I didn't experience any sluggishness.

If it doesn't suite you, or it slows down your PC, just uninstall VPC like you would any other application.

You can get around the XP licensing issue (and activation) of two versions of XP on one PC easily. Some people (not, uh, me) call Microsoft for an activation and try to explain to the overseas tech person that yes I have this copy running on a PC, but all I'm trying to do is set it up on the same PC using Microsoft's VM product.

Chances are good they won't understand a word you're saying, not be able to find "VM Product" on their tree-based help chart, say screw it in their language, and give you the activation code.

Or you could just rely on XP's 30 day activation deadline. As the deadline approaches, delete the XP virtual machine (it's only a big swap file) and start again with a new installation.

Get Microsoft's Virtual PC: <http://snipurl.com/virtualpc1>

Read how to install and use VPC: <http://snurl.com/usevpc>

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September 2007

Security Tidbits

By Dave Keays, NOCCC SIG Leader

What is an extension?

A lot has been said lately about something in the Firefox world called "extensions." But, what is an extension? Why are they necessary? Are they a benefit or a burden?

An extension is just something that extends an application. Extensions exist in Firefox (Ffx), Thunderbird, Apache, and OpenOffice suite to name a few. We will focus on Firefox extensions since they involve the Internet and have been getting so much publicity recently.

An extension is just a small javascript program that manipulates certain settings deep inside the program. Most everything an extension can do, you can do with a little knowledge. It wouldn't be as easy and it may not be worth your time.

What extensions should we avoid?

During the security problem a few months ago that involved updating Ffx's extensions, I published a list of extensions that have problems. Let me print it again:

Google Toolbar
Google Browser Sync
Yahoo Toolbar
Del.icio.us Extension
Facebook Toolbar
AOL Toolbar
Ask.com Toolbar
LinkedIn Browser Toolbar
Netcraft Anti-Phishing Toolbar
PhishTank SiteChecker

The Google toolbar is the worst. It ignores the settings in Ffx and does what it wants. I don't like the idea that when you tell Ffx that you don't want the extensions to update automatically, one of those extensions will ignore my preference and do it anyways.

What extensions should we have?

While I use several extensions (such as web developer, tamper data, tinyURL), there are only three that I consider necessary:

* NoScript

<https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/722>

This gives you the fine-grained control on when scripts or plugins execute in Ffx. Before, the best you could do was turn Java or JavaScript off for all web sites. NoScript not only lets you decide on which sites scripts should be allowed, but it

controls much more than just JavaScript. Almost every single recent exploit could be stopped with NoScript.

*Adblock

<https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/1865>

This used to be more of a privacy and annoyance issue than security one. But, now there are specially crafted graphics on the web that can cause security problems; so containing the ads as much as possible only helps your security. Some people claim this is stealing from them since many free web sites use the ad paradigm. My opinion is that it is their decision. Nobody is forcing me to not get up and get a snack during a TV commercial.

*spooftick

This was the first extension I ever used. It was important when fighting phishing and pharming attacks that try to make you think you are some place you don't mean to be. This extension will display the actual site you are on, not just the URL which might be made to fool you. Unfortunately, this is not available for the later versions of Ffx. But, if you are sticking to Ffx 1.5 or earlier, then give it a try.

What is the difference between a flaw, a vulnerability, and an exploit?

Three terms that are “thrown around” the security industry rather freely are flaw, vulnerability, and exploit. Sometimes those words are used like synonyms even though they aren't and it just causes confusion.

A flaw is just that -- a mistake or bug. When that flaw allows for a security problem or can be used to create a security problem, then it becomes vulnerability. Finally, it becomes an exploit when someone is actually using it. So, a mistake is called a vulnerability when it makes the program or system vulnerable to an attack. Then it is an exploit when someone is actually exploiting that vulnerability.

Defend Yourself

This is a more technical coverage of the issues in the SIG report and they focus on how to defend yourself.

Like I mentioned in the SIG report, there have been two more problems on Firefox's (Ffx) shoulders - one which allows a web-site to run a program if Internet Explorer (IE) is installed, and another which allows someone to steal any passwords you saved in Ffx.

The IE and Ffx flaw started with Ffx2.02 and IE7 so it can be avoided by sticking with the old browsers (Ffx1.5 and IE6). You can also turn java and javascript off completely. Use NoScript to turn them off for selected sites, or make some registry entries.

WARNING: Be careful when you change the registry. If it is messed up, then your PC may not boot or at least it would act really weird.

As far as the problem with passwords, most of that is avoided by just plain never using the option. I personally use an external password safe (it keeps a list of passwords encrypted on a hard disk) which I'll explain in another article. You should also set the options so you cannot accidentally save any passwords in Ffx.

So, to protect yourself from both problems you should do as many of the following as you can:

- * Turn off java and javascript
 - > tools -> options -> content -> uncheck 'enable java'
 - > tools -> options -> content -> uncheck 'enable javascript'
- * use NoScript
- * remove the necessary registry entries if you are comfortable doing so (see my warning above)
 - REG DELETE HKCR\FIREFOXHTML /F
 - REG DELETE HKCR\FIREFOXURL /F
 - REG DELETE HKCR\FIREFOX.URL /F
- * stick with IE version 6 and Ffx version 1.5
- * turn off password and form filling in Ffx menus
 - >tools -> options -> saved forms
 - > uncheck 'save information I enter in forms ...'
 - >tools -> options -> passwords -> uncheck 'remember passwords'
- * turn off form filling completely in the configuration file type 'ABOUT:CONFIG'
 - find the line that says 'browser.formfill.enable.' and double click it (so it is bold)
- * never use password and form filling
- * if you need to use password and form filling, use the 'safe login' extension

The details about these two attacks will be on the group's blog (www.ocsecsig.blogspot.com). Detail about the IE and Ffx flaw is already there and the password-stealing should be soon. The hard drive on my laptop completely died so I lost all my notes. I'm trying to redo them now.

Dumb Things to Avoid While Using Your Computer

By Vinny La Bash, a member and regular columnist of the Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group in Florida (www.spcug.org)

To paraphrase a recent TV commercial, we all do dumb things, but doing them with your computer doesn't have to be one of them.

Most of us know that our computers work better when they are plugged into an active electrical outlet, but ask any service technician how many times he or she has encountered that situation, and you may be surprised at the answer. Every one of us, no matter how experienced, has done at least one dumb thing with our computers. Maybe you pressed a wrong

combination of keys and changed a setting you didn't mean to disturb. Maybe nothing much happened or you ended up crashing your system.

Whatever does or doesn't happen, paying attention to what you're doing combined with a dash of forethought can prevent most dumb mistakes.

David Letterman has his top ten lists. I offer my top six. My list will do little to entertain you, but it will help you to be smarter about using your system.

Dumb Computer Mistake # 6: Failing to install or keep your anti-virus and anti-spyware programs up-to-date.

Some people think that keeping these programs current is too much trouble. Others quibble because sometimes they have to disable their anti-virus program to install another application.

Don't be misguided. Viruses and spyware can gum up your system to a point where your machine can be rendered useless and inoperable. You could be a victim of fraud or risk turning your machine into a "zombie" where a third party can use your computer for criminal activities. Innocent people have been arrested and charged with downloading child pornography. They had no idea that their machines were compromised for illegal purposes, yet they found themselves in deep trouble.

Dumb Computer Mistake # 5: Indiscriminately installing freeware and shareware you find on the internet.

If you are guilty of this it's only a matter of time before you get infected with a piece of sloppily written software that will cause your system to behave erratically or crash. If you follow dumb with dumber by installing pirated software, don't ask me for help.

Dumb Computer Mistake # 4: Share your files and peripherals with the immediate world.

Turn off file and printer sharing. Unless you do this you could open your computer to access by using a public wireless hotspot with your laptop. Even if you don't use a laptop be aware that Windows, by default, has administrative sharing for the root of each drive. You can turn this feature off in the Systems Administration portion of the Control Panel.

Dumb Computer Mistake # 3: Browse through the internet without a firewall.

People new to computers are most likely to make this mistake. They tend to be entirely unaware that they need a firewall because nobody told them what a firewall is or why they need one. This lack of knowledge exposes them to every virus, worm or malicious hacker in the computer universe. Fortunately, this exposure can be easily corrected. Many modems and routers have built-in firewall protection. Personal firewalls can easily be downloaded from the web. Go to www.avast.com and download one of the best all
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around network security programs in existence. The best part is that this excellent program is free to the general public.

Dumb Computer Mistake # 2: Picking weak passwords.

Every hacker in the known universe understands that many people use their children's or grandchildren's name as a password. Cracking that kind of security is as easy as breathing. Don't use a family member's birthday or social security number as a password either. It's the kind of information that is all too easy to obtain. Don't create passwords from a dictionary. Hackers have programs which automatically compare passwords against dictionary entries.

Passwords should be at least 8 characters long, and be a combination of upper and lower case characters and numbers. The common objection is that they are hard to remember. That also makes them hard to crack. Create a phrase that you can easily remember and use the first letter of each word along with logical numbers. For example, "Our vacation in Jamaica begins on the fifth day of August" becomes OviJbot5do8. A password like that is impossible to guess and is not found in any dictionary.

Dumb Computer Mistake # 1: Never backing up your data or system files.

Even if you never do any other dumb thing while computing, failure to back up your data can negate everything else if you lose important information. There are too many things that can go wrong for you not to be backing up your data. Hard disk crashes, fire or water damage, tornados, hurricanes, magnetic interference, and theft are just a few of the many things that can damage or destroy data.

Backing up data can be time consuming and inconvenient, but losing your data could be catastrophic. There are many strategies you can use to protect your data, but any strategy is better than none. Don't think that merely copying your data files to an external disk constitutes backing up. Make copies of your essential data to three CDs or three sets of CDs. Keep one set at home, but in a different room than where the computer is housed. Keep another set at the office if you work for a living. If you're retired ask a friend to keep a set for you. Do the same for your friend. The third set of disks should be kept in a secure place like a safe deposit box.

Data is the only irreplaceable thing on your computer. You can replace hardware, operating systems and application software, but you can't go to a store and buy a replacement copy of your data. The dumbest thing I can remember doing is backing up my data files to a RAM disk.

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Let Us Know, Part 2

By Steven Breitbart, NOCCC

Last month I announced that I had set up an email account, smb.NOCCCissues@gmail.com, for members to share ideas on how they feel about computer related issues. The idea was to generate topics for SIG meetings or the main meeting. However, I have not received a single response. As they say in the Southeast: "That dog won't hunt." Perhaps in these days of blogs and the almost infinite amount of other information available on Internet, a simple email and response concept is insufficient. I will keep the account open for another month. If I don't get any responses, I'll close the account.

Some general topics I feel are relevant are:

- What are your biggest issues with Microsoft Windows?
- What are your biggest issues with computer peripherals?
- Why do you use a particular search engine?
- What do you wish you could do using a computer, but can't.

This is not a complete list; I can't think of everything. Feel free to suggest new topics. If you prefer to remain anonymous, just include the word "anonymous" in the subject line.

Behind the e-Waste Collections

By Steven Breitbart, NOCCC

The Electronic Waste Recycling Act of 2003 has made it illegal to dispose of electronic waste as simple trash. This law is also responsible for the recycling fee added onto TVs, computer monitors and other products.

Some time ago, the NOCCC board decided to conduct e-Waste collections several times a year; the next e-Waste collection will be held at the October 2007, NOCCC meeting. The e-Waste collection is conducted by CA-Recycle, www.ca-recycle.com, part of the Electronic Waste Recycling Division of Omni Technics, Inc. There is a lot of good information at their web site. It contains a list of the type of devices that can be considered e-Waste and a description of the hazardous metals that are used in electronic devices.

This function is serving a great purpose - keeping electronics, and the hazardous substances used in them, out of the waste stream. Proper Recycling helps the environment in several ways. According to their web site "Conserves Natural Resources," "Helps Stop Global Warming" and "Helps Stop Landfill And Waterway Pollution."

When you hand over your obsolete widget, say an old Pentium I that has been gathering dust in your garage, it is

taken apart and its various components are sold to companies that recycle a particular material. For example, plastic parts are easily recycled because the type of plastic is usually marked on the part.

One person's trash is another person's treasure. Some of the computers given to CA-Recycle can, in fact, be refurbished and used again. They are able to supply non-profit agencies with these computers and a legal copy of Windows.

In the future, they are trying to set up a facility for the purchase of used computers and peripherals as well as a place where one could disassemble and buy individual components out of old computers.

2007 APCUG Digital Photo Contest

Following up on the success of our 2006 Digital Photo Contest, the APCUG is pleased to announce our 2007 Digital Photo Contest. Again, it will showcase the talents of our member group photographers! Somewhere inside all of us is a creative genius just waiting for the chance to grab the spotlight.....and we want to give you that chance. There will be multiple chances to win....including.....professional judging and our own "People's Choice Award" chosen from our Convention attendees! So, grab those cameras and start shooting!

Contest Rules

1. The photo contest event will begin on September 1, 2007.
2. Final submittal of entries will be October 15, 2007. Entries not postmarked on or before that date will be disqualified.
3. The contest is open to all individuals who are members of APCUG affiliated User Groups. Photos may be submitted in each of four categories:
 - A. People
 - B. Animals
 - C. Landscape
 - D. Still lifeNote: Landscape can be mountains, sky, sea, flowers, desert, trees, etc. Still life is any object not shown in motion; architecture, automobiles, boats, sculpture, historical objects, etc. Let your imagination look through your viewfinder!
4. Entries must be taken with a digital camera
5. All photos are to be printed no larger than 8 ½ x 11. Panoramic prints are accepted but should not exceed the same area as 8 ½ x 11 (93 square inches). Prints must be made on glossy photo paper.
6. Prints are to be without borders. Entries received with borders will be trimmed before presentation for judging.
7. Entries can be color or black and white.
8. The entry label is to be pasted or taped to the back of each print.
9. Entrants will submit one photograph (with 4 prints of it) per category and a CD or floppy disk with the image in .jpg format. Entrants can enter all 4 categories if desired.
10. Entrants will be judged for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place under the following criteria but will not be applied to the People's Choice Award:
 - Composition (5 points)
 - Technical Skill (5 points)
 - Visual Impact (10 points)

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18

Products Available For Review

A number of products have been obtained from vendors for review by qualified NOCCC members. If you are interested in doing a review (which will be published in Orange Bytes), please call or send an e-mail and provide your membership number, phone number, and e-mail address; or pick up the product at the next NOCCC meeting. **This list is partial.**



If you would like me to request a specific product for you to review, let me know.

Remember, **YOU GET TO KEEP THE SOFTWARE OR BOOK!** Ted Littman, NOCCC Reviews Editor, (714) 779-1936, reviews@noccc.org

Boxed Programs and CDs

Norton 360 – The highly-rated all-in-one security program from Symantec provides automatic protection for up to 3 PCs per household including Antivirus, Antispyware, Antiphishing, Firewall protection, Email scanning, Web site authentication, and Online identity protection, plus Automatic backup & restore, PC performance tune-up, embedded support, and 2 GB secured online storage. MSRP=\$70.

Norton Internet Security 2007 – This Symantec program provides AntiVirus/Firewall/Antispyware/Antiphishing and other protection for up to 3 PCs per household. MSRP=\$70.

Norton AntiVirus 2007 – The latest version of Symantec's plain old NAV to protect your PC from viruses/worms/spyware/virus-infected e-mails. MSRP=\$40.

Norton Confidential – A new Symantec program to protect you from online identity theft. MSRP=\$50.

Books

Dynamic Learning Photoshop CS3 – 13 self-paced lessons on DVD, full-color, real-world examples & lesson files to teach you everything you need to know to use the new Photoshop software. Authored by Jennifer Smith from O'Reilly. MSRP=\$45.

Adobe Photoshop CS3 one-on-one – Authored by Photoshop master, Deke McClelland, this new book+DVD has 12 self-paced tutorials using real-world projects with 850 full-color photos to help you master the essential & advanced capabilities of Photoshop CS3. From O'Reilly, the MSRP=\$50.

Real World Adobe Illustrator CS3 – To help you navigate through all of the features in the new Illustrator, this book by

one of the graphics industry's experts, Mordy Golding, gives you practical insights on creating type, symbols, graphs, color effects and Web graphics. It is packed with tips, sidebars, expert commentary, and numerous illustrations. From Peachpit Press, the MSRP=\$45.

Windows Vista for Starters: The Missing Manual – This new book by David Pogue from O'Reilly is a great way for beginners to learn the basics of Microsoft's new operating system. MSRP=\$20.

Windows Vista in a Nutshell – Well-known author Preston Gralla wrote this new 700-plus-page desktop quick-reference book covering every important setting and feature in Vista. MSRP=\$35.

Access 2007 for Starters: The Missing Manual – Matthew MacDonald's new book from O'Reilly is for the beginner using Microsoft's latest database. MSRP=\$20.

Access 2007: The Missing Manual – Matthew MacDonald also wrote this new 730-page book that offers complete coverage of the latest version of Microsoft's database. Also from O'Reilly. MSRP=\$35.

Excel 2007: The Missing Manual – This new 830-page book also is by Matthew MacDonald from O'Reilly Publishing and covers the highly-rated spreadsheet part of the Microsoft Office 2007 suite. MSRP=\$40.

PowerPoint 2007 for Starters: The Missing Manual – A good book for beginners by E.A. Vander Veer from O'Reilly with step-by-step instruction and lots of illustrations to help learn the use of this new presentations software from Microsoft. MSRP=\$20

PowerPoint 2007: The Missing Manual – This new book also by E.A. Vander Veer in the O'Reilly "Missing Manual" series offers complete coverage of PowerPoint's new look and dramatically new way of doing things in preparing presentations. MSRP=\$30.

The Official Ubuntu Book, 2nd Ed. – Hot off the press from Prentice Hall, MSRP=\$35 with DVD.

The Official Damn Small Linux Book – Another new book/DVD from Prentice Hall, MSRP=\$40.

The Linux Programmer's Toolbox – A new book by John Fusco from Prentice Hall helps you tap into the vast collection of open source tools available for GNU/Linux distributions. The author systematically describes the most useful tools available using concise examples that you can easily modify to meet your needs. MSRP=\$40.

Linux Administration Handbook, 2nd Edition – This book is the definitive resource for Linux system administrators who must efficiently solve technical problems and maximize the reliability and performance of a production environment. MSRP=#50.

Understanding AJAX – If you are already an experienced Web developer, this book by Joshua Eichorn, senior architect

for Uversa, will show you exactly how to create rich, useable, Internet applications using AJAX. MSRP=\$40.

SELinux by Example – This book is the first complete, hands-on guide to using SELinux in production environments. It illuminates every facet of working with this operating system from its architecture and security model to its policy language. MSRP=\$45.

UNIX to Linux Porting – This new book is a definitive guide to porting applications from today’s most widely used UNIX platforms to Linux. Published by Prentice Hall, it has an MSRP=\$65.

User Mode Linux – This new addition to the Bruce Peren’s Open Source Series, this book by Jeff Dike shows you how to create virtual Linux machines within a Linux computer and use them to safely test and debug applications, network services, and kernels. Published by Prentice Hall, the MSRP=\$55.

Guide to Linux – This new book by Peter van der Linden from Prentice Hall takes the mystery out of learning Linux. It comes with the Linspire 5.0 CD. MSRP=\$40.

Linux Pocket Guide – This book by Daniel Barrett covers the most useful and important parts of day-to-day Linux in a concise and friendly style for beginners as well as experience users. From O’Reilly. MSRP=\$10.

Linux Desktop Garage – This book/CD by Susan Matteson from Prentice Hall PTR is full of tools and info to do practically everything with Linux. MSRP=\$30.

A Practical Guide to Red Hat Linux, 3rd Edition – This new book from Prentice Hall was written by Mark Sobell and includes the full Fedora Core on the accompanying DVD. Completely revised, it will meet all your Fedora Core and Red Hat Enterprise Linux needs. MSRP=\$50.

Red Hat Fedora 5 Unleashed – This new book from Sams Publishing was written by Paul Hudson and Andrew Hudson and presents comprehensive coverage of Fedora 5, the open-community version of Red Hat Linux – the most comprehensive Linux distribution. The accompanying DVD includes the full Fedora Core 5 binary distribution and the complete OpenOffice.org office suite. MSRP=\$50.

The Apache Modules Book – A new book by Nick Kew from Prentice Hall begins with detailed, accessible introductions to Apache’s architecture and API, then illuminates all the techniques you’ll need, from request processing through code security. MSRP=\$50.

AJAX – Creating Web Pages with Asynchronous JavaScript and XML – One of the Bruce Perens’ Open source Series, this book will help you build AJAX Web applications from the ground up, one step at a time. And, you can do it using standards and open source software. MSRP=\$45.

Ajax for Web Application Developers – This book by Kris Hadlock from Sams Publishing shows how to create an Ajax-driven web application from an object-oriented perspective, and it includes several useful Ajax design patterns. MSRP=\$35.

The TAO of Network Security: Beyond Intrusion Detection – This book by former AF Security Officer,

Richard Bejtlich, will arm you with the knowledge you need to defend your network from attackers. MSRP=\$50.

Software Security – This book/CD, authored by Gary McGraw, a leading authority in the field, teaches you how to put software security into practice. MSRP=\$50.

The Art of Software Security Assessment – This A-W book is one of the most sophisticated and useful books ever written for software security auditing. MSRP=\$55.

How to Break Web Software – This book is a definitive guide to security testing any Web-based software and is authored by Mike Andrews and James Whittacker. The companion CD contains full source code for one testing tool you can modify and extend, free Web security testing tools, and more. MSRP=\$35.

IPsec Virtual Private Network Fundamentals – An Introduction to VPNs – This book by James Carmouche, provides you with a basic understanding of how IPsec VPNs operate and also prevents an explanation of the different components of Cisco IPsec implementation. MSRP=\$55.

The Effective Incident Response Team – An Addison-Wesley book by Julie Lucas and Brian Moeller. A complete guide for network administrators and managers on dealing with computer attacks by intruders, worms, and viruses. MSRP=\$40.

Project 2003 Personal Trainer – You can become the Project Superhero in your office with this easy-to-follow training manual with an interactive simulation CD. Published by O’Reilly. MSRP=\$30.

Virtual Honeypots – Security experts Niels Provos and Thorsten Holz cover a large breath of cutting-edge topics from low-interaction Honeypots to Botnets and malware in this new book from Addison-Wesley. MSRP=\$50.

The Art of Software Security Testing – This Symantec Press/Addison-Wesley book delivers in-depth, timely, battle-tested techniques for anticipating and identifying software security problems before the “bad guys” do. MSRP=\$50.

PDF References 1.6, 5th Edition – The official Adobe guide to the Portable Document Format, an essential resource for all developers writing programs that read or generate PDF files. From Peachpit Press. MSRP=\$55.

Preparing a Review Article for the Orange Bytes

by Ted Littman, NOCCC Reviews Editor

Important! There are two articles at the following link. One provides suggestions and guidelines for preparing a review article for the Orange Bytes. The second provides guidelines for submittal. Please read both.

www.noccc.org/bytes/info/index.html

Books Available In the Library

NOCCC has a special benefit program for members – the Club Library. Members may check out books at the Reviews & Library Desk at the monthly meeting for a period of one or two months for a nominal fee of \$2 for one month or \$3 for two months. A security deposit (equal to the list price of the book) must be posted. When the book is returned in good condition, the deposit is refunded. No review is required.



Building the Perfect PC – This book by Robert Bruce and Barbara Thompson delivers end-to-end instructions, simple enough for even the most inexperienced computerist, for creating your ideal machine. Five different classes of machines are covered with full descriptions of all items and options. From O’Reilly. MSRP=\$30.

Upgrading Your PC, 2nd Ed. – New Riders book + DVD authored by Mark Soper. A good reference if you are planning to enhance your PC. MSRP=\$25.

The Art of UNIX Programming – Authored by Eric Raymond from Addison-Wesley, this book bring together philosophy, design patterns, tools, culture, and traditions for this best and most innovative software. MSRP=\$40.

Advanced UNIX Programming, 2nd Ed. – The classic guide to UNIX programming is authored by Marc Rochkind and published by Addison-Wesley. MSRP=\$45.

Linux Programming by Example – This book teaches Linux programming by showing and explaining well-written programs drawing from both V7 UNIX and GNU source codes. Authored by Arnold Robbins (who wrote UNIX in a Nutshell), the book is from Prentice Hall. MSRP=\$40.

Understanding the Linux Virtual Memory Manager – This book/CD, authored by Mel Gorman, presents both theoretical foundations and a line-by-line commentary in unprecedented detail. It covers everything from physical memory description to out-of-memory management. Published by Prentice Hall, MSRP=\$60.

Interprocess Communications in Linux – The definitive guide to Linux processes and IPF for programmers and system administrators by John S. Gray from Prentice Hall. MSRP=\$50.

Managing Linux Systems with Webmin – System Administration and Module Development by Jamie Cameron from Prentice Hall. MSRP=\$45.

Building Applications with the Linux Standard Base – An initiative of the Free Standing Group, the LSB is a set of standards designed to increase compatibility among Linux distributions and enable applications to run on any LSB-compliant system. This book (plus CD) shows developers how to create, test, and certify software for LSB-2 compliance. MSRP=\$45.

The Official Samba 3 How to and Reference Guide, 1st Ed. – From Prentice Hall PTR. MSRP=\$50.

Next Generation Application Integration – From simple information to Web services, this book by David Linthicum from Addison-Wesley is an indispensable resource for those responsible for managing or implementing application-integration middleware. MSRP=\$40.

Open Source Network Administration – Author James Kretchmar from MIT presents an extraordinary collection of open source tools for streamlining and improving virtually every facet of network administration. Publisher is Prentice Hall. MSRP=\$45.

PHP-Nuke Garage – This book shows you how to master the most powerful open source Web content system ever created, then use it to build whatever your heart desires, hands-on, step-by-step. Authored by Don Jones, from publisher Prentice Hall PTR. MSRP=\$25.

Open Source Licensing – Software Freedom and Intellectual Property Law – This is a complete guide to the law of open source for developers, managers and lawyers; authored by attorney Lawrence Rosen, the book is published by Prentice Hall. MSRP=\$40.

Biometrics for Network Security – Authored by expert Paul Reid, this book covers options ranging from fingerprint identification to voice verification to hand, face and eye scanning from a practitioner’s viewpoint. From Prentice Hall. MSRP=\$45.

Know Your Enemy - Learning About Security Threats, 2nd Ed. – Max Kilger and Rob Lee provide an unrivaled “intelligence report” on those who use the Internet for destructive purposes plus an in-depth guide to honeynets—high-interaction honeypots designed to capture extensive information on exactly how your enemies operate so you can protect your systems from them. Book + CD from Addison-Wesley. MSRP=\$50.

Essential Check Point FireWall-1 NG – An installation, configuration, and troubleshooting Guide authored by Dameon Welch-Abernathy (aka “PhoneBoy”) from Addison-Wesley/Pearson Education. MSRP=\$55.

WI-FOO The Secrets of Wireless Hacking – This hands-on, practical guide covers everything you need to attack or protect any wireless network. Authored by Andrew Vladimirov, Konstantin Gavrilenko, and Adrei Mikhailovsky, the book is published by Addison-Wesley. MSRP=\$35.

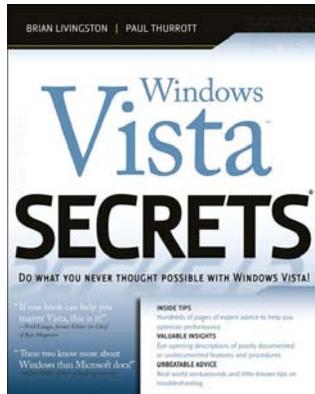
Real 802.11 Security, Wi-Fi Protected Access and 802.11i – An Addison-Wesley book by Jon Edney & William Arbaugh provides what you need to know on wireless LAN security. MSRP=\$45.

.Net Security & Cryptography – A book from Addison-Wesley by Peter Thorsteinson and G. Ganesh provides practical and comprehensive coverage on implementing cryptography and security in the Microsoft .Net platform. MSRP=\$50.

Windows Vista Secrets

By *Jim Sanders, NOCCC Vice President*

This book is a collaboration between authors Brian Livingston and Paul Thurrott. Although you might interpret the title to mean this book only contains little known information about Microsoft's Windows Vista operating system, that would be far from the truth. In fact, on the back cover of the book, there is a Reader Level rating that states the book is intended for Intermediate to Advanced readers. I would be inclined to slide the scale down a little and maybe place a minus sign in front of each of those classifications.



The book is divided into 22 chapters that contain about 550 pages. The chapters are subdivided into seven major categories with a standalone beginning section titled Read This First. The Read This First section spends 27 pages covering the features in Vista that are either new or significantly changed from its WinXP predecessor. This section does a good job of providing a quick overview of 18 of the new Vista features in both text and a liberal sprinkling of screen shots to illustrate what is being talked about. A nice addition to the highlights of most of these new features is the light blue Cross Ref diamond. The Cross Ref diamond precedes a line of text that informs you that the above highlight is discussed in detail in Chapter XX. This line would be even nicer, and certainly more reader friendly, if the concept had been carried one step further and included the starting page number of that chapter.

The Read This First section contains 7 blue highlighted Secrets diamonds, 12 Cross Ref diamonds and 5 Tips diamonds. The 7th Secret details how a procedure that allowed one to cheat at the traditional Solitaire game is no longer available in Vista. As a useful Secret, this didn't impress me. The reason: I got hooked on Spider Solitaire several years ago and consider the traditional Solitaire a wimpy game.

Chapter 1 does a good job of outlining the features and costs of the various versions of Vista and why you might pick one over the others. Chapter 2 deals with installation considerations. I was surprised that it does not mention the fact that the old upgrade version procedure; inserting your previous install CD to verify qualifying to use the upgrade version in a clean install mode, no longer works with Vista. I

don't think the double install cheat for getting around this problem was found until after the book was published. Chapter 3 talks about compatibility of Vista with existing hardware and drivers. Their basic advice seems to be; buy a new machine with Vista preinstalled.

The rest of the book gets into the details of how to use various features of Vista with emphasis on the details of how to use the new or different from WinXP features. A lot of space is devoted to the new Aero Graphical User Interface (GUI) and how a number of things are no longer where you are accustomed to finding or using them in WinXP. For instance, if you want to remove a program from your computer, when you go to Control Panel, the category Add or Remove Programs is not there. That function is now located under Programs and Features. Even more space, 150 pages, is devoted to Digital Media and Entertainment. All but the cheapest versions of Vista allocate a significant amount of functionality to those categories.

Again, all of the chapters are liberally sprinkled with screen shots that do a good job of showing the reader what the subject being discussed looks like on the screen. The text is written in the style of someone talking to you and explaining how to perform a task. Most of the Secrets and Tips in the book apply directly to Vista; some, like the one on letter accents, are more general in nature.

The authors devote the 18 pages of Chapter 22 to introduce you to the new Microsoft Powershell programming language that is built into Vista and replaces CMD.COM. They provide a brief description of what it is, followed by a brief description of how to use it and 13 pages of commands from ADD to WRITE. They make the point that Powershell is far more powerful than the older CMD.COM. That point is easily underscored by the fact that the top two results of a Google book search found two titles devoted to Powershell programming that totaled nearly a thousand pages.

Overall, this is an easy to read and understand tutorial that contains a lot of good information. Worth having on the bookshelf.

Windows Vista Secrets, by Brian Livingston and Paul Thurrott, 660 pages, Copyright 2007, MSRP \$39.99, Wiley Publishing, Inc., 10475 Crosspoint Blvd, Indianapolis, IN 46256, www.wiley.com ISBN: 0-7645-7704-2.

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Photoshop CS3

Product Review by Tom Ekvall, newsletter editor for Northeast Wisconsin PCUG (www.webpages.charter.net/newpcug)

Some things just keep getting better. And the latest release of Photoshop CS3 is no exception.

This new release offers major enhancements that will appeal to present Photoshop users as well as to those interested in transitioning to Photoshop CS3 from Photoshop Elements or other similar products.

As someone doing photo art, my interest in Photoshop CS3 centered on new features related to creating black and white prints and applying “smart filters” to photographs. And there are so many more enhancements to drool over related to everything from an improved interface to a new integrated Adobe Camera Raw that allows working with jpg and tiff images as well as those shot in the raw format.

Previously, I have used Photoshop Elements (Versions 1 through 5) to do my image editing and welcomed the opportunity to transition to Adobe’s flagship product. The latest version, which works with Vista, was simply fantastic to use and not all that difficult to make the transition. There is still a learning curve as the image editing product offers so many opportunities to “tweak” photos to make them look their best. However, there are many resources on-line and in book form to learn how to use the product.



I downloaded the product onto an Acer laptop running Vista Premium with dual-core processors and 2 gigabytes of RAM. After installing the product, I was amazed how fast Photoshop CS3 started up, just ten seconds. For those with previous versions of Photoshop, one will notice a revamped interface that focuses on collapsible palettes docked to the right side of the screen to make it easier to work on photos. This is especially helpful when working

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on a laptop or when you just don’t want a lot of clutter on the screen.

So what is new and improved? Many seem to be aimed at improving workflow performance through enhancing and simplifying the way changes are made.

Here are just some of the features I found of most interest, recognizing my passion for creating art as compared to creating perfect photos.

Black and White Enhancement

I have been very much interested in creating black and white photos from color images. Never could get them to look like that from Ansel Adams; however, the digital divide is getting narrower.



Typical ways to create black and white pictures was to either desaturate the photo of color, use the grayscale tool, or use the channels feature. Photoshop Elements 5 introduced a “Convert to Black and White” feature that presented thumbnail images of different effects with less or more of blue, red, and green channels in different styles.

Photoshop CS3 offers a fantastic Black and White adjustment that includes all six colors (cyan, magenta, and yellow in addition to the blue, red, and green) as well as the ability to simply click on a point on the photo and drag either right or left to either lighten or darken the appropriate tones of the photo, giving you more control over the photo. The dialog box also provides opportunities to tint the photo with slider bars for hue and saturation.

Trying out this adjustment, I found the quality of the photo to be much improved over previous ways of creating a black and white photo.

Smart Filters

The next feature I found to be very appealing to me, and undoubtedly to other Photoshop users, is the Smart Filter, a new addition from previous versions.

The Smart Filter feature enables the user to apply non-destructive changes to an image on layers when used in conjunction with Smart Objects. What this means is that I can try out one or more filters to enhance my photo the way I want without that change becoming permanent. This way, if I don’t like the effect now or later, I can

remove it, modify it or use a different filter without having to start over at a later point in time. Of course, you can always use the Undo command; but sometimes, you like to make the changes later after you apply another effect and then decide against the earlier filter effect. A layer can be converted to a Smart Object by right-clicking on this feature in the Layers menu.

Non-destructive editing is becoming more popular today, with CS2 introducing the Smart Object feature to layers.

Improved Raw Processing

A significant feature in image editing programs these days is the ability to edit photos shot in the raw format. Those cameras able to shoot in raw tend to be the digital SLR ones, which means that the camera does not make any internal changes to the image, but leaves that up to the software program.

With this release of Photoshop CS3, users can work with Jpg and tif images in Camera Raw 4 rather than only those shot in the raw format. Working with Camera Raw 4 is very enjoyable and provides a histogram of the image and sliders to make various changes, such as white balance, fill lighting, recovery (for highlights) blacks, brightness, contrast, and more. The feature can be accessed through File/Open As and then choosing "Raw." I especially like the HSL/Grayscale tab, which is new to this product, and gives outstanding control over specific color ranges in the image as you control the amount of each range of 'color' in the grayscale image. The saturation tab also enables creating a partial grayscale image with part of the image in black and white (or shades of gray) and other parts in color. This is a favorite of mine in creating photo art. I will definitely be using the Camera Raw 4 feature more often.

There are many other new features too numerous to elaborate on in this review but which will be of interest to current Photoshop users to justify upgrading to this new version.

These include:

- Improved Adobe Bridge, which is the photo organizer and media asset management tool, and includes a loupe to check out sharpness of the picture
- Quick Selection and Refine Edges tool, which enhance capabilities for selecting and masking areas of a photo much like a lasso tool
- Refinement to the Curves tool which adds a histogram similar to that in Camera Raw of CS2
- Enhanced 32-bit HDR (high dynamic range) support (a feature I did not try out but enables bracketed photos to be combined to get the desired highlights and shadows that would not be possible from a single photograph)
- The ability to Auto-Align and Auto-Blend Layers as part of advanced compositing tools

- Enhanced print with preview dialog box that make printing options easier to use for correct colors
- Revamped Clone Stamp tool
- Mobile Device controls
- Enhanced vanishing point
- And the list goes on and on for experienced users.

System requirements include:

- Intel Premium 4, Intel Centrino, Intel Xeon or Intel Core Duo (or compatible) processors
- Microsoft Vista or XP with Service Pack 2 (Macintosh supported including those with multi-core Intel processors with faster performance)
- 512 MB of RAM (the more the better)
- 64 MB of video RAM
- 1 GB of available hard disk space

Photoshop CS3 can be tried out by going to the Adobe website (www.adobe.com) and downloading the product, which is valid for 30 days. All the features are available. A full version of the product runs \$649 suggested pricing while an upgrade can run \$199 or more. Those upgrading must have at least Photoshop 7 or higher to qualify.

I heartily recommend this product for those who are serious about digital photography who may be thinking of making the plunge from Photoshop Elements. While Photoshop CS3 may not have all of the "quick fixes" associated with Photoshop Elements, the product offers exciting features to create great photos and unlimited opportunities to customize settings as your talents develop.

And for those who have a previous version of Photoshop, there are numerous enhancements and new features that justify upgrading. I wonder what remains for the next version.

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

11. All Entries must be postmarked no later than October 15, 2007 and mailed to:

APCUG Photo Contest
C/O Roger Tesch
1918 Greenway Cross, Apt 3
Fitchburg, WI 53713-3037

APCUG will not be responsible for any lost photos in the mail. Entrants should retain copies of the photos. Entries that are not postmarked by October 15, 2007 are disqualified.

12. There will be 3 judges reviewing all entries. Each category will have 1st, 2nd and 3rd place awards. The People's Choice award will be selected from all entries, and that selection will be chosen by the attendees at the APCUG Convention in January, 2008. First Place winners and the Peoples Choice winner will be published in the APCUG Reports. Awards and

CMS Products at August 2007 Main Meeting

By Steven Breitbart, NOCCC

Backing up your data is essential because hard drives don't last forever. One of the local companies that provide a total backup solution is CMS Products www.CMSproducts.com. Daniel Reilly of CMS was our speaker at the August main meeting. He demonstrated the ABS (Automatic Backup System) Plus Notebook backup system on a Windows PC which uses a USB 2.0 interface, advertised as the "Worlds easiest backup system." This family of products consists of 2.5-inch premier brand external hard drive, their special enclosure and BounceBack software. The enclosure has a fixture to hold a small USB connector, but the system comes with a USB cable that has two connectors at the computer end, to ensure the external hard drive gets enough power. The notebook products are available in capacities up to 250GB and in several varieties including a Macintosh version and a ruggedized version with 256 bit encryption. In combination with their software, the external hard drive can mirror all the data on your computer's hard drive. If your internal hard drive fails, you can replace it with the hard drive from the ABS Plus. Also noteworthy is that the notebook products carry a 3-year warranty.

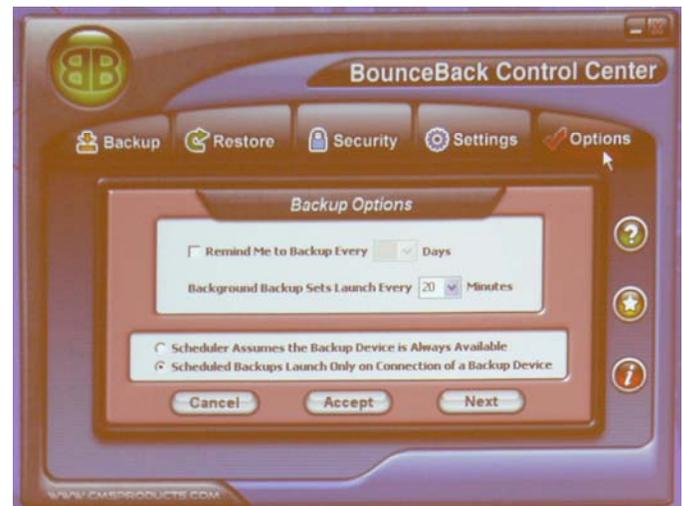
Their BounceBack Professional software, appears amazingly simple to use, and has the usual array of backup options such as full and incremental backup and scheduled backup. It comes in four versions: BounceBack Express, which copies data but does not create a bootable backup drive, BounceBack Professional, which does create a bootable backup drive, plus two versions of BounceBack Enterprise which can do even more. They also sell copy2go, which is software for managing multi-media files.

Mr. Reilly donated a data transfer kit and a copy of BounceBack Professional to our raffle. In addition, he offered a 15% discount and free shipping to attendees (Now you know what you are missing when you don't come to NOCCC meetings.). Even without the discount, these products are affordable; starting at less than \$100.

CMS Products manufactures many other varieties of backup products: the ABS Plus, which we saw demonstrated, external hard drives for desktops, all the way to 3.75 5-drive RAID arrays. They also sell data transfer kits and hard drive upgrades for notebook computers consisting of a replacement hard drive and software to transfer all of your data from the old drive to the new one. The old drive can then be used for another external backup. CMS Products use SATA based external hard drives and their RAID arrays use an eSATA interface connector. This allows an internal transfer rate of 1.5 Gb/s for SATA I and 3.0 Gb/s for SATA II. This is, of



Daniel Reilly of CMS Products.



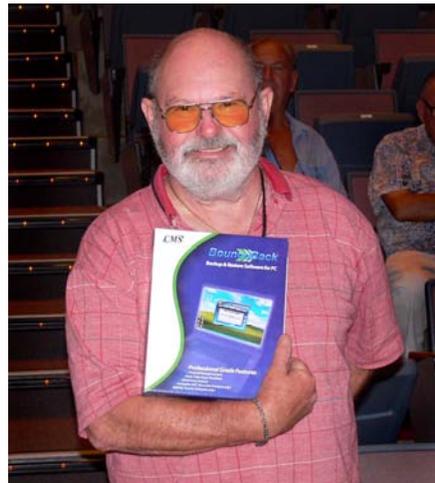
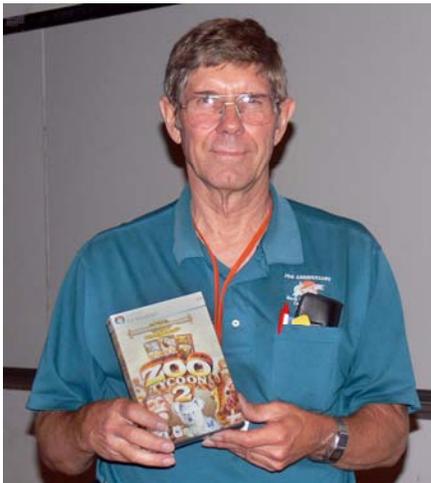
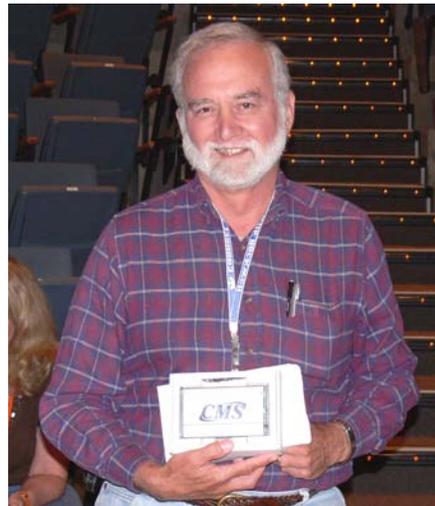
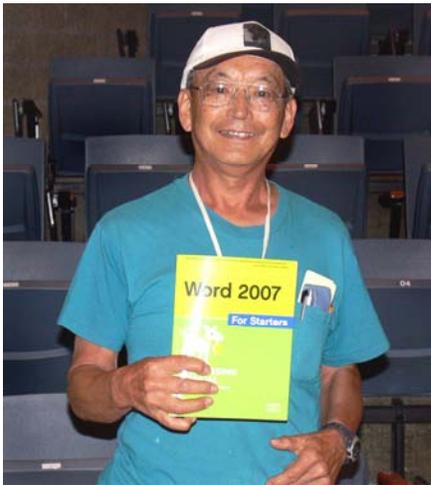
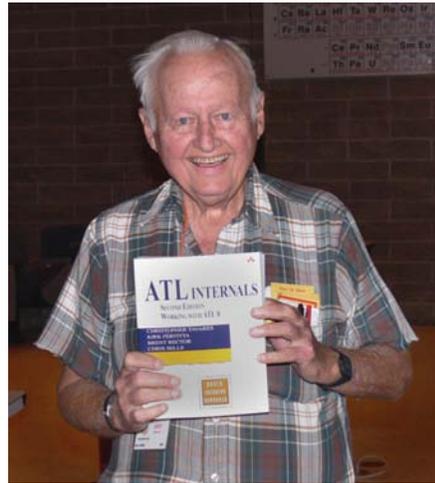
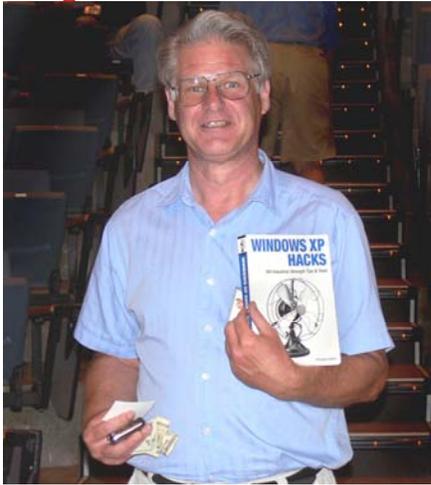
Demonstration of BounceBack backup software.



An interested audience.

Raffle Winners from the Aug 5th NOCCC Meeting

Your photo could be here!



Photographs provided by Jim Sanders.

AutoCAD SIG

By Joe Mizer, SIG Leader

There was no meeting in August due to absence of Joe.

This Special Interest Group is basically a discussion group in which we try to answer your questions. It can be specific or a general inquiry on how to get started with AutoCAD. Even if you don't have a question, you are welcome to come and listen. We have worked with Mechanical Desktop, Inventor, SolidWorks, Architectural Desktop, and AutoCAD 14 through 2004. We hope you can join us at the next meeting.

Computer Aided Investing SIG

By Bob Krishfield, SIG Leader

Market Review: Each meeting we take time to review what happened in the markets over the past month so we can understand the current market environment and how our investing plans should deal with it. In July, we saw that the 5-year uptrend was showing signs of weakness, ending the months in a dip. Then for the next 2 weeks the markets climbed upward, making new all time highs on the Dow and S&P 500. Was the strength in the trend back? If you jumped back in the market with new money, you were making an emotional rather than technical decision. The McClellan Summation Index was already below zero (a no-no buy signal) and other signs were showing deterioration, with the expansion of new lows to levels not seen since the August 2006 lows.



In a few days, the bottom fell out of the market, with the Dow falling 750 points in 4 days, then bouncing up and down, 250 points or more each day. The other indexes behaved the same. A sure sign that it was a significant drop was when an index crossed the 200 day MA that occurred for the S&P500, and almost for the Dow. This signal is a major red flag, a time to exit the market in case it is the beginning of a new bear market cycle.

The stock market is suffering from the worries about the sub-prime loans, the credit crunch, loan defaults and billion dollar losses being reported by investment bankers and hedge funds. These big loan deals were made with highly leveraged debt packages (CDOs) that included junk from many of the sub-prime ARM mortgages that no one wanted and couldn't be offloaded by the big banks or hedge funds. As of this writing, the markets have been down for a 4th week, and a crisis was pending until the Fed poured money into the banking system to increase liquidity and restore order in the market of repurchasing of mortgage loans.

We looked at the technicals to determine if this is likely to be a bottom or just a stopping point as the market moves lower. For the S&P 500, we are still in the trend channel that began in 2002, but now in the lower half. A support level exists at the bottom made in Mar. 07 at the 9-mo. cycle bottom (around 1380). The next support level for the Dow is around 12,800. The VIX strength indicates this could be an interim bottom. The drop amounted to 7.7% for the S&P500 and NASDAQ, 5.8% for the Dow and 11.7% for the Russell 2000. These drops are about the size experienced in May 2006, where they ranged from 7.5 to 14.3%, and took 4 – 6 months to recover. These indicators are helpful for the short term, but leave the market direction for the longer term in question. The cycle gurus are expecting the markets to drop in 4-6 months for the long awaited 4-year cycle bottom. They could see a market bounce in Sept, but they don't expect it to reach the highs of July.

Discussion: We had planned to go through a series of stock-picking strategies, but it seemed to be out-of-sync with the mood of the market. The strategies included:

1. Looking for pull backs – buying a quality stock on the dip
2. Follow market momentum and buy stocks in top ranking sectors
3. Buying IPO's – a scheme that requires lots of study and help from a broker.

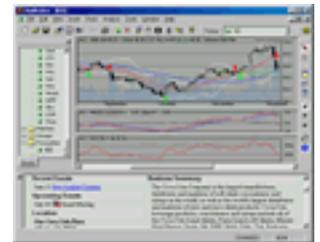
We used AmiBroker to demonstrate each of these techniques and found that there are many stocks still going up while the market is down. Several of these stocks are in the IBD 100 and are making favorable earnings reports – so the trends may be short-lived.

In September we will investigate building portfolios of stocks, ETFs and mutual funds for long term investing. This is timely for those who need to repair their portfolios and have a plan ready-to-use when the market rings the bell that all is well.

AmiBroker SIG

By Bob Krishfield, NOCCC SIG Leader

This session discussed the approach of trading an ETF or Mutual Fund by developing a signal that yielded reasonable performance, and then applying that signal to the stocks contained within the fund. This is a technique for selecting the "best" stocks (or funds). Data may be viewed on the screen or exported to a CSV file for detailed



review in Excel to look at the statistics of each stock and its profits, drawdowns, trades, std deviation, UPI, Sharpe, etc.

A simple-minded trading signal used was the Zigzag. This function looks into the future and is not valid (logically) for developing usable trading systems. It is a helpful research tool because it provides a near optimal set of trades. If Zigzag cannot produce good results for trading (such as during a bull market run) then it isn't likely you will find any solution better. Zigzag's are also helpful to characterize which stocks will trend without trading, or have fewest trades. The AmiBroker formula editor provides a check to keep you honest, identifying if you are using a "futures" mode that would invalidate a trading systems. Opening the AFL file with the Formula editor, going to Tools, and invoking "Check" can check this.

Once the signal is applied to the ETF or fund, the next step is to create a watch list of the stocks that comprise the fund. For *QuotePlus* users, the new Charting program lists the stocks for many of the ETFs. For Funds, one can use *MorningStar* to look at the stocks in the portfolio and get a partial listing.

Next, the trading system is set up to run against the watch list containing the stocks, and using the same AFL program that produced the signal for the ETF or fund, the program is run against the individual stocks in the watch list. This back test option is a special selection (right click) using the Back test button. This produces a back test of each ticker in the list, as an independent test of the others. The results that appear in the AA window show the profits, trades, drawdowns of each stock traded against the signal for the date interval. One can then sort and select the best choices, save them to a list and use this technique as a selection method for finding the most tradable securities for a given signal/time period.

This method does not depend on use of ZigZag as the signal formula, but it helps users to become familiar with it. Any trading formula, such as simple crossing EMA signal system could be used to do the same, but it is applied to the ETF or Fund, not the individual stock. A copy of the AFL program will be sent to the meeting attendees.

In September I hope we can discuss and present how to implement the new Hemscot system for sectors and industries. We're still waiting for QuotesPlus to finalize their implementation of this stock classification scheme.

Digital Photography SIG

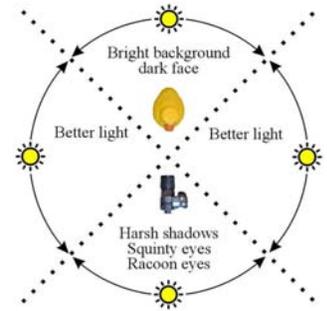
By Larry Klees, SIG Leader

August Meeting

We talked about how to take better outdoor portraits and how it is desirable to have the sunlight to one side of the subject instead of behind the subject or behind the camera. If



the sun is behind the camera, it will shine directly into the subject's eyes causing them to squint. It may also cause dark shadows (raccoon eyes) around the eye sockets. It will also cause very strong shadows. You can see in **picture 1** that even when looking directly into the sun, rubber duckies don't squint and don't have eye sockets to cause raccoon eyes. However, the shadows are still very harsh and contrasty.



On the other hand, if the sun is behind the subject, the subject will be a dark silhouette with a bright background. When possible, you will get better results when the sun is on either side.



Sometimes you can't place your subjects so that the sun is on either side. In such cases, the best solution is frequently to use your camera's flash to fill in the shadows as in **picture 2**. So long as the sun isn't so direct that your subject has to squint, the fill flash will give very good results. It will soften the shadows if the sun is behind the camera or prevent the silhouette if the sun is behind the subject. Fill flash adds just enough light to fill the shadows without being the primary light source. In **picture 3** the ducky was placed in full shade and the flash was set to provide full lighting. The result is a photo lacking details and having a flat appearance.



You may notice that in both of the flash pictures there is a large bright spot in the ducky's left eye. Real eyes will show a small attractive catch light in both eyes instead. (Assuming there is no red eye, and there are several methods to avoid that.)

Helpful Tips

Steven M. Breitbart submitted the following pair of tips:

- 1) If you get to a new place while on a trip where you will visit several locations, before shooting photos of the scenery, you take a photo of a brochure or map of the place. This serves to separate the photos following from the preceding photos. This takes advantage of the modern camera's close-up capabilities. Of course, you have to remember to take it out of close-up mode.
- 2) Take a dummy photo of the ground or something before and after you take a series you will make into a montage. The idea came to me after I couldn't tell which photos I had shot together for that purpose - all the mountains looked alike.

I like to shoot panoramas and can put these tips to good use.

September Meeting

Per request, we will talk about what makes a good picture. We will also visit a couple of web sites. Primary among them will be one of an organization known round the world for excellent photographs. One of their principle editors will describe what makes each sample a good photo. This will be one meeting you don't want to miss.

Security SIG

By Dave Keays, SIG Leader



Well, apparently campus security decided to make our lives a little more difficult Sunday. Of course Steve Schiffman found a way around their diabolical schemes. Usually I'm not so paranoid and think everybody is after me. But, paranoia is rather normal in IT Security. I should have taken the blue pill. Or was it red?

Anyway, it had something to do with not being able to keep the door open. But, then the stairs were locked and Wilkinson hall's front doors were locked. Something was going around.

After Steve figured it all out we sat down and realized that the network wasn't working. So we just discussed the latest Firefox (Ffx) news face-to-face; not very common today.

It seems there have been a couple of Ffx flaws in the news lately. One was an exploit that sent information through Internet Explorer (IE) and allowed a hacker to run a program that he (or she) wanted. The other was a problem with the passwords saved inside Ffx. A problem that allowed a hacker to steal your passwords. Not a good omen.

There is a technical summary in another article which tries to focus on how to protect yourself.

The details about these two attacks will be on the group's blog (www.ocsecsig.blogspot.com). Detail about the IE and Ffx flaw are already there and the password stealing should be soon. The hard drive on my laptop completely died so I lost all my notes. I'm trying to redo them now.

I recently was told that the information on the blog went over their head. That blog is intended for the notes for whatever is discussed at the meeting. My articles in the ORANGE BYTES are distilled to the point that they are much more understandable and much less detailed. The blog is an attempt to make my unreadable notes a little more coherent but it isn't meant for mass consumption.

Next month, we'll be looking at an old JavaScript flaw that is becoming popular again. It's been named "retro" in the industry. When I started doing RD on it, all I could find was a 'retro attack' of 1980's dancing. Maybe we'll be doing some

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retro dancing in Science 203 if the network is down again next month. Come and join the fun!

PC Q&A SIG

By Jim Sanders, SIG Leader



There were two topics of discussion at the August meeting that are really worth some commentary. Flash memory and DSL both seem to be poorly understood by a number of members. Starting with flash memory cards and USB thumb drives, it is a fact that both use the same memory chips be they NAND or NOR technology. At the user level, the only things we care about are capacity, speed, and longevity. Capacity is simple and clear-cut. Speed is murky water and often it is difficult to get a factual answer. If speed is like murky water, longevity is downright muddy. On the plus side, the way most of us use flash memory, longevity is a non-issue. Most brand name units easily and honestly claim 10K-100K+ write-read-erase cycles. The cheap no-name units are often made with parts that the name-brand manufacturers have rejected. Regardless of the reason the cheap no-name acquired cheap parts, those units are often plagued with both speed and longevity issues.

For some of the flash memory cards, determining speed is simple as they use the same X rating that CD drives have used for years. Each multiple of X is 150KB per second. The fastest flash memory card that I have seen advertised is 133X. That is, $150,000 \times 133 = 19,950,000$ Bytes per Second and it is supposed to be for the write speed. The read speed is typically 30-50% higher. If the on-sale flash card with the really attractive price has no X rating printed on it, you may be getting pot luck. Depending on the application, it may not matter and you might not care.

When it comes to USB thumb drives, until recently, there was even less to go by. With the advent of Microsoft Vista and the ReadyBoost feature that helps to speed up the bloated operating system, that changed. Microsoft published a specification that defined the minimum speed that a USB thumb drive had to operate at if it was to be considered useful for that application. Vista prefers to see 2GB or more of RAM installed for "good" performance. In general, that means you are looking for a 2GB thumb drive that meets or exceeds those specs. As usual, a faster speed unit is better. A unit that is made by Lexar is about as good as it gets now. Specifications for the Lexar JumpDrive Lightning in 1GB, 2GB, 4GB, sizes: * Windows® Vista™ compatible, * Enhanced for Windows ReadyBoost™, * PowerToGo™ software, * Secure II software, Limited lifetime warranty, * Stylish, stainless steel case, * Speed rated at 30MB/s read and 21MB/s write.

A member asked if I knew of a better dial-up Internet Service Provider (ISP) than the one he was using and I asked him why he would want a dial-up ISP. It took awhile before I realized that he actually didn't know the following: in most of

the L.A. basin you can get a DSL ISP for less than \$15.00 a month that is at least 20 times faster than dial-up. Also, you can be using DSL for the computer on one phone line at the same time as you or your spouse is talking on the same line. If you currently have a second line mainly for computer dial-up modem, you can more than pay for DSL by getting rid of the second line.

I will have more info on these topics and Keyboard Shortcuts if we run out of questions in September

Hardware SIG

By Herbert Wong, Jr., SIG Leader

The topic for the Hardware SIG on August 5, 2007 was Laptop Computer Technology. We discussed the many different options and what to look for when you buy a machine.

Of course, the first considerations when buying any hardware is “What software applications are you going to be using?” “Are you going to use the laptop as a desktop replacement?” “Will you run your laptop on batteries for an extended period of time?”

Insufficient system memory will cause the operating system to write out chunks of data or code from system memory to the hard disk drive (in a process known as paging). This mechanical process is extremely slow in *computer time*. A laptop hard disk drive is substantially slower than most desktop computer hard disk drives, so this process is exacerbated. Therefore, it is highly recommended that you have sufficient system memory available to prevent paging. However, the extra RAM will use more power at all times. If you run on batteries, the power drain from excessive RAM must be less than the power caused by paging. For most people, more RAM will be a much better choice.

A laptop usually has two memory slots for system memory. Usually both slots are filled. If you try to upgrade the total memory, you will have to remove one or more memory modules to insert the newer modules. As a result, you cannot add one gigabyte of memory to a one-gigabyte configuration to yield two gigabytes. Standard *SO-DIMMs* are preferred because they do not lock you into buying from the one manufacturer.

A “hidden” feature of many laptops is a discrete video chipset and dedicated video memory. This probably adds improved video performance for games, videos, graphically oriented applications, etc. There might also be better resolution available as well as improved video features such as dual video outputs, DVI, HDMI, s-video, etc. More importantly, the dedicated video memory is optimized for the video chipset and augments the motherboard’s system RAM (which wholly remains available for the various softwares’ data and code).

Most low-end laptops have a primary chipset with integrated video. These models will consume a significant

amount of the system RAM for use as the video display. Hence, when estimating total system memory requirements, additional memory will be required to offset the integrated video’s memory usage.

A laptop battery can take two common forms. The first is a larger battery that is heavier and has a much longer run time. The second is a smaller version that is lighter in weight and has limited run time. The former is the more common variety. Are you going to require battery only operation, or will AC power always be an available option? If you really don’t need to run on a battery, the smaller battery option will not be a deterrent.

However, to reduce cost and maximize profit, some laptops will come with the smaller battery and offer the larger battery as an option. In that case, add in the price of the larger battery option and reconsider purchasing another model at the new, higher price.

Video displays are now commonly formatted to some wide screen ratio (such as 16:9) instead of the traditional 4:3 ratio. Some people like this and other people don’t. A strange byproduct of wide screens is that the keyboard may now have room for a full numeric keypad. This is good news for those who like to ten-key or navigate with the numeric arrows.

High-end laptops can have multifunction drive bays that can take an optical disk drive or even a second hard disk drive. Easily removable hard disk drives allow the easy changing of the operating system or secondary data drive for many applications.

I’ve only covered a small part of the SIG meeting, but I’m out of space and time.

The topic for the September 9, 2007 Hardware SIG will be Data Projectors. Data projectors are suitable for presentations or entertainment. The price has come down so that any small business or individual can own one. However, there is a wide range of quality among the gamut. What is acceptable for the office may be unusable for the home theater. You can contact me at HWSIG@SingularityTechnology.com.

Pig SIG Open to All

Meet us outside Irvine Hall from about noon to 12:30 p.m.

Normally, there is a buffet lunch and snack bars open in

Argyros Hall, but they may be closed on Sundays for the summer. So bring a lunch or enjoy one of Herb’s franks with all the trimmings!



There are several benches where NOCCC people gather, eat and chat. Just look for the member badges, grab a chair and join in! This is an informal group, so many different subjects are discussed. It’s a great opportunity to mix, mingle and network. See ya there!

NOCCC Membership Fee Schedule

In an effort to increase club membership, attract people having an interest in computing, attract local computer-related businesses to place ads in the Orange Bytes with or without becoming NOCCC members, the fee schedule has been revised. We are also offering members the opportunity to help our club financially by making donations that should be income-tax deductible since we are chartered as a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. Membership level will be designated on the Membership Badge and donors will be acknowledged in an issue of the Bytes.

Membership Level	1 Year	3 Years
Individual Member	35	90
Each Additional Family Member	15	45
College Student	20	
High School Student	15	
Business Member + Ad (Business Card)	180	
Business Member + Ad (1/4 Page)	465	
Business Member + Ad (1/2 Page)	800	
Business Member + Ad (Full Page)	1,475	

Membership Donations (\$)

Contributing Member	75
Supporting Member	100
Advocate Member	250
Patron Member	500

August Board Meeting Minutes

Location: Universal Career College, 1125 E. 17th St. Suite E210, Santa Ana, CA.

Thank you to our host Bill Thorton.

Date: 8-6-2007. **Call to order:** 7:40pm.

ATTENDANCE: There were a total of 9 officers in attendance: Herb Wong, Elise Edgell, Jim Sanders, John Heenan, Ted Littman, Steven Breitbart, Dallas Hazelton, Dave Keays, and Gerry Resch.

The minutes were taken by Steven Breitbart.

Last month's minutes were accepted as published.

TREASURY REPORT (John): The following amounts were brought in last month: \$510 dues, \$3 library, \$6 Consignment, \$60 raffle, and \$75 eWaste collection.

John stated that the IRS may have somehow changed the club's 501(c)(3) status and he will investigate further.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

PUBLICATIONS (Ted): The August publication of the Orange Bytes was delivered on time despite a few hitches. It was sent to us via UPS with 5-day delivery instead of 3-day delivery as requested. Photographs also need to be improved. A deadline of August 16th was set for items to be printed in the September Orange Bytes. Jim stated that the minimum resolution of photographs should be 300 dpi.

REVIEWS (Ted): To date NOCCC members have not written a review for the September issue of the Orange Bytes. September 2007

We don't want to depend on outside club inputs. One review is due in September and another in October. One book was loaned from the club library.

PROGRAMS - Review of August meeting

About 41 people attended the August meeting. Gerry said that Omni Technics, who ran the eWaste collection in August, took out two ads to promote the event and gave the club \$75 as a result of the eWaste collections in February and June 2007. Jim said that Daniel Reilly of CMS, our main meeting speaker, donated three items for the raffle. Gerry said that raffling off two of these items is the reason the club earned \$60 from the raffle. One item was saved for a future raffle. Steven has a press release from CMS for the article for the Orange Bytes.

Future Meetings (Herb & Jim): The following are confirmed meeting dates:

- September 9th - Due to the Labor Day holiday, the next general meeting will be held on September 9th, the **second Sunday of the month**. No program had been planned at the time of the meeting. *[Editor's note: Information about Terry Currier being our speaker was not available at the Board meeting.]*
- October 7th - Gene Barlow and another eWaste collection
- November 4th - No program planned yet

MEMBERSHIP (John): There are currently a total of 236 regular members, 8 family, 1 student, and 9 newsletter, which yields a grand total of 254.

John also proposed a Holiday Gift Certificate for members that could be given to prospective new members. Then, they could join for \$25 instead of \$35. Gerry suggested giving a discount to guests who attend a meeting with a member and join the club. The member who brought the guest would get raffle tickets as a prize. No action was taken.

SIGS: Several of the SIG leaders were present and described how many people attended the various SIG meetings.

INTERNET: Dave Keays volunteered to redo the club's web site. Several board members responded that the Board would need to see the changes before approving it.

OPENING AND CLOSING (Herb): Nobody else has volunteered for these jobs, so he will still do it. We had several problems in August with rooms and stairways that were locked or could not be kept open. A new security telephone number was provided.

OLD BUSINESS: Herb pointed-out the need for a permanent Secretary because our bylaws state that a Secretary is a required position. Adhering to the bylaws allows us to maintain our non-profit status.

We need other volunteers also. Dallas said that we needed descriptions of the duties to be done in order to get volunteers. Also, that we should thank the volunteers in the Orange Bytes.

NEW BUSINESS:

Elise said that we need a central storage location for old club records. The next board meeting will be at the current location on September 10th.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 PM.

Duties of the NOCCC Board of Directors

Do you know what is required to serve as a member of the NOCCC Board? As written in the club's Bylaws, the duties of the various position-holders are stated below.

OFFICERS

Section 1. Number and Definition

The NOCCC officers shall be four in number, and shall be president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer.

Section 2. Duties of the President

The president shall:

- a. Conduct all NOCCC business, and affairs of that office, in an unbiased manner;
- b. Establish the agenda for, and preside at, all regular and special general meetings of the NOCCC;
- c. Appoint regular members to chair all standing and special committees;
- d. Represent the NOCCC to the community as the chief executive officer;
- e. Serve as ex officio member of all committees;
- f. Form or cause to be formed such special groups within the NOCCC as desired by the membership;
- g. Establish the agenda for, and preside at, all meetings of the NOCCC Executive Board;
- i. Receive, on behalf of NOCCC, all contributions in the form of moneys, real or personal property, equipment, or other items.

Section 3. Duties of the Vice President

The Vice-President shall:

- a. Assume the duties of the president in the president's absence;
- b. Assume such special duties as may be directed by the president so long as any duties are not in conflict with the purposes established in Article III.

Section 4. Duties of the Secretary

The secretary shall:

- a. Establish and maintain a journal of the proceedings of all regular and special general meetings, and of the Executive Board meetings;
- b. Establish and maintain a record of all NOCCC correspondence, and attend to correspondence as directed by the president or the Executive Board;
- c. Establish and maintain a record of all real or personal property acquired by the NOCCC and cause said property to be permanently identified as property of the NOCCC.

Section 5. Duties of the Treasurer

The Treasurer shall:

- a. Receive and deposit into the NOCCC accounts all moneys received;
- b. Establish and maintain an accurate journal of all receipts and disbursements of NOCCC moneys;
- c. Report at the regular general meetings a summary of the financial status of the NOCCC.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. Definition and Membership

The NOCCC Executive Board, sometimes referred to herein as the "Board," shall be made up of officers, eight elected directors, and ex-officio members. The editor of the club newsletter and the web master of the club web site shall be ex-officio members of the Executive Board. The immediate past president, if the term of office is completed normally and if not re-elected as officeholder, shall be an ex-officio member of the Executive Board.

Section 2. Duties and Powers

- a. The Executive Board, subject to the limitations of those bylaws, shall debate, establish, amend, and update the policies for all the affairs and business of the NOCCC.
- b. The Board shall concern itself with the disbursement of all NOCCC moneys. The Board shall consider the budget and such additional expenditure requests as are submitted by the president, and shall authorize such expenditures as it considers wise and appropriate.

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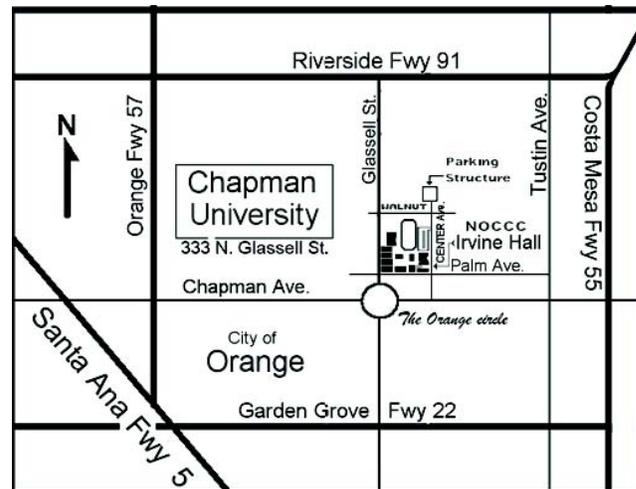
- **Meetings.** Keep up with what's going on in the computer world. Hear outstanding industry representatives make presentations of the latest and greatest in computer products.
- **Special Interest Groups.** Our SIGs cover a broad spectrum of user interest; they invite you, whether you rank as beginner or seasoned computerist, to the lectures and demonstrations they sponsor, and to share computer knowledge.
- **Get help with your current computer problems.** In the Random Access portions of the Irvine Hall meetings, you ask your question of the entire assemblage, and more than likely someone will have the answer.
- **The NOCCC Help Line.** NOCCC volunteers, experts in their fields, are ready to assist with your problems, and are as close as your telephone.
- **The Orange Bytes Newsmagazine.** Our Award Winning news magazine reports on current activities and gives you articles and reviews geared toward your needs.
- **Raffles.** We have distributed thousands of dollars worth of hardware, software, and book raffle prizes at our Main Meeting.
- **Product Review.** Write a review for this newsletter and keep the software, hardware, book or CD. Members' reviews are published in this newsletter.
- **Consignment Table.** We have a thriving consignment table on select monthly meeting days in which we assist members to sell or buy all kinds of computer items.
- **Volunteer Work.** You are given opportunities to help our activities with interesting assignments. *An all-volunteer organization*, you can join with other members in a variety of activities, write articles for our newsletter, conduct a seminar, run a SIG, man the help desk, show new members around, help the membership committee, and more.

Parking Information — Chapman University's main parking lot (P6) is on the north side of the campus (enter from Glassell and University Dr.) and lot P3 (N Center St. and E Sycamore Ave) is free of charge for NOCCC's meetings on Sunday. Please feel free to park in the parking lots. *Note that Center St. does not run through to Chapman Ave.*

Parking is also free on the **campus-side** of the surface streets. The city of Orange's parking laws prohibit parking in front of residential housing which is across the street from Chapman University. **Expensive parking tickets will be issued to violators.**

The NOCCC **Information Desk, Membership Desk, Reviews Desk, Consignment Table**, and most of the meeting rooms are in the Irvine/Hashinger Hall and the Science Center on the east side of the campus (near Center Street).

Become an NOCCC member by signing up at the Membership Desk on our general meeting day, usually the first Sunday of the month. Or simply fill out the form on the reverse side of this page and send it in!



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