

Orange Coast IBM PC User Group

README.DOC

December 2004

Newsletter

Volume 20.12

ALL MEETINGS ARE HELD IN THE COSTA MESA SENIOR CENTER 695 WEST 19TH STREET
AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF 19TH AND POMONA

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Don Edrington

The Senior Computer Tutor



General Meeting Dec. 18th

Season's Greetings Holiday Potluck



Orange Coast IBM PC User Group
695 W. 19th St
Costa Mesa, California 92627



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



OCIPUG Web Page: www.ocipug.org

General Meetings are held from 9:00AM to noon on:

December 18th, 2004
 January 22nd, 2005
 February 26th, 2005
 March 26th, 2005

Web Page
www.ocipug.org

Meetings of the Executive Board will be held at noon on:

December 18th, 2004
 January 22nd, 2005
 February 26th, 2005
 March 26th, 2005
 All OCIPUG members are welcome

Special Interest Group (SIG) meetings are held monthly as follows:

1st Tuesday	Internet
2nd Tuesday	Hardware
3rd Tuesday	Windows
4th Tuesday	Digital Photo

All SIG Groups start at 7:00pm



User Group Shopping Exclusive Dec. 16th, 7-9am

APCUG sent us this information only being given to User Groups

Get into the holiday spirit and join the festivities at CompUSA nationwide for a PC Users exclusive holiday celebration. The event will be held from **7:00a.m. to 9:00 a.m. Thursday, December 16,** so get there early!

Eat, drink and be merry, the coffee and donuts are free and the deals are worth celebrating. Do your shopping early and take advantage of special pricing on almost every product in store, and exclusive offers from CompUSA just for you. Get 10% off your purchase of upgrade parts including MotherBoards, memory, video cards, etc during this special sale for you only at CompUSA! Check out the selection of home entertainment products- one may be on someone's wish list for the holidays!

When: Thursday, December 16th
 Time: 7 a.m. to 9 a.m.
 Where: All stores, check store locator: <http://www.compUSA.com/locations/>
 Call 1-866 4 COMP BZ to speak to a CompUSA team near you!
 When: Thursday, <http://www.compUSA.com/locations/>
 Call 1-866 4 COMP BZ to speak to a CompUSA team near you

Dec. 18th General Meeting & Potluck

Don Edrington is a Teacher, Author, Senior Tutor, Columnist (both in print and on the web) and will talk about sites that contain good info, he has everything from great tips to useful keyboard shortcuts, and seasonal and interesting art, music to fascinating stories. He can show you how Using a PC Can Be Hazardous to Your Health. He has written a virtual cyber Autobiography and it really shows people the various ways that one can utilize a web page to express themselves. Don has accumulated some great resources on his webpage, such as Free music downloads of classics such as Sinatra, Tony Bennet, Benny Goodman, and much, much, more. He has an incredible amount of helpful resources and the great thing is that you know they are valid and helpful ones or they would not be up on the site. Bottom line is don't MISS PC Don!!!



SCHEDULES AND REPORTS OF EVENTS

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP (SIG) SIG MEETINGS

(All Special Interest Group (SIG) meetings are held at the Costa Mesa Senior Center on the southeast corner of 19th and Pomona at the times noted below.) The next SIG meeting will be:

Dec. 14, 2004

Hardware - 2nd Tuesday 7:00PM
Ed Leckliter eleckliter@adelphia.net

Dec. 21, 2004

Windows - 3rd Tuesday 7:00PM
Robert Strader robert.strader@comcast.net

Dec. 28, 2004

Digital Cameras / Scanning -
4th Tuesday 7:00PM
David Wintle allart@pac.bell.net

Jan. 4, 2004

Internet - 1st Tuesday 7:00PM
I will be out of town for APCUG. Will notify as to whether or not we have a SIG



Upcoming General Meetings

December 18th

“PC Don”

Don Edrington

“The Senior Computer Tutor”

Annual Pot Luck Feast

January 22nd, 2005

February 26th, 2005

March 26th, 2005



Computer Fair

Online tickets purchased in advance are only \$4.95 for Pomona and \$2.95 for all other shows. Go to <http://tickets.lacomputerfair.com> to buy your tickets now. Online ticket sales available up until 7:00am Saturday the weekend of the event.

Costa Mesa December 11 & 12, \$5 Admission, FREE Parking.
\$2.95 admission with advanced online ticket purchase.



President	Dave Wintle	949-548-7994	president.bod@ocipug.org
Vice President	Robert Strader	949-646-1475	vicepres.bod@ocipug.org
Secretary	Frank Mastroly	714-960-9472	secretary.bod@ocipug.org
CFO/Treasurer	Shirley England	949-770-1645	Treasurer.bod@ocipug.org
Director-2004-6	Eugenia Frerichs	714-979-5356	Director1.bod@ocipug.org
Director-2004-6	Mark Borison	310-944-6453	Director2.bod@ocipug.org
Director-2004-5	Morris Fier	949-646-8292	Director3.bod@ocipug.org
Director-2004-5	Sandi Tierney	714-648-2218	Director4.bod@ocipug.org
Past President	Leonard Stein	949-454-0158	pastpres.bod@ocipug.org
Long Range Planning	Leonard Stein	949-454-0158	pastpres.bod@ocipug.org
Readme.Doc Editor	Mark Borison	714-963-8296	Editor@ocipug.org
Webmaster	Mark Borison	714-963-8296	webmaster@ocipug.org
Programs	Mark Borison	714-963-8296	programs@ocipug.org
SIG Coordinator	Robert Strader	949-646-1475	sigcoordinator@ocipug.org
APCUG Rep	Robert Strader	949-646-1475	apcugrep@ocipug.org

Minutes for the November 2004 OCIPUG General Meeting, November 20, 2004

The General Meeting of the Orange Coast IBM PC User Group (OCIPUG) was held on November 20, 2004, at the Costa Mesa Senior Center, with 30 members present. Ed Leckliter conducted the Random Access session. There was a discussion on Windows XP Service Pack 2 (WinXP SP2) and Internet Explorer updates. Several members have updated to WinXP SP2 with few, if any, problems.

This was followed by a discussion of the merits of DSL (Digital Subscriber Line) vs. cable for high-speed internet connection. In general, cable is approximately twice as fast as DSL. It was also noted that Verizon Communications is no longer making any new DSL connections, as they are switching their system over to fiber optics. For information on cable and DSL and its availability, go to www.broadbandreports.com. It was also noted that some establishments advertise that they have "high-speed internet," when in fact all they have is dial-up.

There was a discussion about an unsecured Wi-Fi network in the vicinity of the Senior Center that apparently detected Steve Schiffman's laptop computer. Also, Frank Mastroly reported that while working with a SeniorNet student who has Intel Centrino laptop, this same network ("Maple") was detected, but that he was unable to connect to it.

* * * * *

President David Wintle then started the General Meeting by announcing that there was some confusion with a Yoga class in the room assignments at the Senior Center, as our meeting was moved up one week because of the Thanksgiving Day holiday, but that it was resolved with Darryl Kim of the Senior Center staff. He announced that the November 2004 Readme.Doc had been released and asked for a show of hands who had not received it. If any member has not received it, he/she should e-mail him at president.bod@ocipug.org.

David announced that OCIPUG e-mail addresses have been established for all OCIPUG officers, directors, and SIG coordinator of the form 'position'.bod@ocipug.org. These are published in the Readme.Doc and posted on the OCIPUG website. When e-mail is sent to any of these addresses, it is automatically forwarded to the individual holding that particular position.

SIG Reports:

The upcoming SIG schedule is as follows:

- * Internet and Web Page Design (Mark Borison), 1st Tuesday of each month. Mark started by saying that he is considering dropping this SIG due to low attendance, but will wait until early next year before making any decision. On December 7 Mark will continue exploring web sites of interest as well as conduct a Q&A session.
- * Hardware (Ed Leckliter), 2nd Tuesday of each month. On December 14 Ed will begin his series on detailed

- discussions of PC components, with processors (CPUs) being the topic for December.
- * Windows 9x/XP (Robert Strader), 3rd Tuesday of each month. On December 21, Robert will continue his discussion on Windows Tip and Tricks. If any member has a Windows-related question, send him an e-mail and it can be discussed at the SIG.
- * Digital Photography and Scanning (David Wintle), 4th Tuesday of each month. On November 23 David begin a series of discussions on Adobe Photoshop Elements 3, the latest version of the program which now incorporates the Photoshop Album program.

SeniorNet: Dan Dickinson, the Costa Mesa SeniorNet Learning Center Coordinator, announced that we are now beginning to sign up students for the next session of classes which will start on Monday, January 10, 2005. In addition to switching the days for the various classes around, the team has added a new class on Family Tree Maker which will be taught by OCIPUG member Muriel Fitzsimmons on Wednesday afternoons. As usual, the SeniorNet team is always in need of new volunteers to coach and eventually teach a class. The only requirement to be a coach is to be patient with the students and to simply watch to see that they are following what the instructor is saying. All those interested in joining the SeniorNet team are invited to come to the next team meeting on Friday, December 3, 2004, at 3:00pm in this room.

Vice President Robert Strader announced that although Advanced Computer Products (APC), is closed, there will still be an APC swap meet on Sunday, November 30.

Director Mark Borison noted that the OCIPUG 20th anniversary is coming up, and solicited ideas on how to mark the occasion.

Finally, Director Mark Borison announced that the December General Meeting will be on Saturday, December 18, 2004 (one week earlier than usual due to the Christmas holiday) at which he is trying to get Don Edrington, AKA the [PC Don](#), to make a presentation as he did last December. This will be followed by our annual Pot-Luck Brunch. More details on the meeting and pot luck will be issued later.

* * * * *

President David Wintle then introduced Cynthia Hunter, The Ink Dot Lady (www.theinkdot.com) who discussed in considerable detail the subject of refilling ink-jet cartridges and presented the latest information the major printer manufacturers don't want you to know. Each year these OEMs spend many millions of dollars in research to find a way to keep their customers from refilling cartridges. Now there is new technology in the refilling market that makes it possible to refill any ink cartridge very simply and at a cost that anyone can afford. In this presentation, Ms. Hunter covered all the solutions as well as the most common things that can cause a printer to skip, clog, and break down.

Ms Hunter started her company in 1995 in partnership with a gentleman who then taught her everything he knew from 20 years in the computer industry. She and her partner attended shows together, and with his expertise and her demonstration talents,

they had a winning combination. In 2001 her partner retired and she has piloted the company ever since.

The company now services ten school districts, thousands of small businesses and uncounted home-based computer aficionados. Her philosophy is simple — To provide the best quality inks, cartridges, photo papers, ribbons, lasers and fax film at a price anyone can afford. Her employees still answer their phone live and offer free training classes at four computer shows per month. Everything they carry has a warranty and they will cheerfully replace or refund your money on any purchase. It is their great pleasure to take care of customers and they are always searching for solutions to problems presented to them.

Ms. Hunter prides herself for giving each customer the personal attention he or she needs, and will often take the calls herself at 1-800-203-1938. Their business address is 1212 N. Sycamore Avenue, Hollywood, CA 90038.

The Ink Dot Company produces generic and remanufactured ink cartridges and ink refill kits for most current production printers, as well as a continuous flow system for the Epson 4 and 6-cartridge systems. They also mark training CDs for several photo editing programs such as Photoshop. Ms. Hunter brought several examples of her products for sale at the meeting, as well as donating a training CD for our raffle. In response to a question, Ms. Hunter expressed a preference for Epson printers because of lower copy costs, and for their excellent customer service.

Ms. Hunter began her presentation with a brief discussion of the basics of how printer cartridges work. However, the primary emphasis of her presentation was demonstrations of how to fill ink cartridges from various OEMs such as HP, Epson, Canon, and Lexmark. This portion of her presentation will be covered later. Because many of the pages on the Ink Dot site were under construction as this was being written, much of the material presented here was taken from various sites found using Google and the search term “refill ink cartridges.”

How Ink Cartridges Work

No matter how large your printer is, the print heads and circuitry contained in the small ink cartridge are what do most of the work involved in printing. The most commonly used cartridges actually have 48 nozzles or jets located in the bottom of every ink cartridge. Each of these nozzles or jets is smaller than a human hair and each one is backed by a heater or resistor which heats on electric command and then cools with the ink from inside the cartridge. When the ink is heated, a bubble forms. Then when the heat source is removed, the bubble “bursts” sending a dot of ink onto the page through anyone of the 48 ink nozzles. These dots form the characters on the page at the rate of up to 6,000 drops per second. This heating and cooling process happens at very high rates. Printers that use this system have the print head built into the ink cartridge. It should be noted that Epson uses a different process as their print head is built into the printer.

Although manufacturers would like customers to believe that when the ink runs out, the ink cartridge itself is no longer any

good, the heaters and jets will continue to work for more than one use. In fact, the heaters or resistors on most ink jet cartridges will continue to fire until they either burn out completely or weaken significantly. On the average, that happens from the third to fifth time the cartridge is used.

There are signs to let you know when the ink cartridge is wearing out. If you notice streaks on the paper, even after you have refilled the cartridge, it may be a sign that the cartridge is wearing out, but this might also be a sign of some other problem with the printer. The most obvious signs that you will have to dispose of your ink cartridge are missing sections of print on the page or spaces on graphics where there is no ink at all. Even then, you may still get more time out of the cartridge though by running a little warm water over the print head or cleaning the contacts with rubbing alcohol.

Printer Ink Cartridges

When you buy a printer, the ink cartridge that is needed for that particular model is included with the purchase. There are also instructions as to how to install the cartridge and align the printer for its use. Each printer generally uses a different ink cartridge. Thus, when you purchase a replacement it is of vital importance that you know the brand name and number you are looking for. The professionals who deal with ink cartridges sometimes use specific terms when they are discussing them. A customer may not know what these terms mean and could end up buying the wrong cartridge. Some of these terms are:

- * OEM ink cartridges are those sold underneath the printer manufacturers names. For example, if you own a HP printer, then the OEM cartridges for your printer will be carrying the HP company name and packaging. Essentially, they are the manufacturers ink cartridges, the ones they tell us we all should use
- * Compatible ink cartridges are aftermarket cartridges developed for your printer. They are manufactured by a company other than the printer manufacturer themselves. These are generic ink cartridges that will fit several different models of printers. Using compatible ink cartridges does not void the printer warranty from the manufacturer because most compatible cartridges are of an extremely high standard
- * Remanufactured ink cartridges are sometimes recycled ink cartridges. They go through an extensive process of cleaning and repacking to ensure they are up to, if not in excess, of the manufacturers OEM standards.

Ink cartridges usually last a long time, unless you do an excessive amount of printing. A typical cartridge is good for about a thousand pages. If you do a lot of printing, it is probably a good idea to purchase several ink cartridges at a time. Some companies provide combo packs, which include three or more cartridges for a cheaper price than purchasing each one separately. Some printers require separate color cartridges for

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Nov. Gen Mtg. Cont.

each color, while others have a combination of colors all in one cartridge. These cartridges require replacement or refilling even when one of the colors is used up. If you don't refill them, you are throwing ink away. When you are buying a new printer, you should always check to see the number of ink cartridges that you will need to buy once the ink runs out. This can determine the brand name of printer you choose to go with.

Buying Ink Cartridge Refills

An inkjet refill for your ink cartridge is an economical way of doing the refills yourself at home. Whenever the ink runs out, all you have to do is take out the cartridge and replace the ink. Then you put the cartridge back in the printer and resume your printing activity, unless the cartridge ink level is controlled by a chip built into the cartridge case. In this case, the chip would have to be reset with a chip resetter (see later discussion).

There are specific products for refilling ink cartridges and are designed to be used with different printers. When you are checking out the available products, check the listing on the packaging to ensure that it is compatible with your printer. Everything you need for easy refills is included, even plastic gloves so that you do not get ink all over your hands.

The first time you refill the ink cartridge will probably be very messy. You have to find the little pin that the manufacturer installed to keep the ink from running out. A tool is provided in your kit for taking this out. Read the instructions as to how much ink you will need to refill the cartridge as some require lesser amounts than others. A syringe and at least three bottles of ink are in the package. Use the syringe to draw up a measured amount of ink and insert the tip of the syringe into the hole that exists where you removed the pin. Carefully depress the syringe until all the ink goes into the cartridge.

Some ink cartridges allow you to replace the pin when you have completed the refill. If not, there are silver colored stickers in the packaging that you use to cover this hole. Replace the cartridge in the printer and put the supplies away in the package ready for your next refill.

If you want to refill these cartridges, you need a chip resetter, which will reset the chip on your existing cartridge, and make it register as 'full' to your printer. It works with BOTH your black and color cartridges and you can use it up to 1,000 times * HP and Lexmark use pigment-based inks due to the nature of the design of their print heads which are integral with the cartridge. Epson and Canon, for which the print heads are part of the printer, use both pigment and dye-based inks.

- * Some single-ink cartridges have a Mylar bag for the ink, with a spring used to force the ink out. Others have a vacuum in the print head to suck the ink out.
- * In multi-ink, e.g., tri-color, cartridges, you have to be very careful when drilling holes to prevent puncturing the membrane keeping the colors separate.
- * HP will try to confuse you by having a misleading color coding on their tri-color cartridges. To avoid problems, follow the instructions in the kit!

- * Cartridges should be refilled as soon as the low level light comes on, as the ink is used as the coolant for the print head. If a cartridge is allowed to go bone-dry, it can damage the print heads in those printers, e.g., Epson, as the print head is part of the printer and not part of the cartridge.
- * When refilling tri-color cartridges, refill with the lightest colored ink, i.e. yellow, first, followed by light cyan, light magenta, magenta (red), and then cyan (blue). Clean all tools between colors.
- * To clean print heads, use a coffee filter dipped in Windex.
- * With respect to the effect of using generic and/or refilled cartridges on printer warranties, the OEMs have lost court cases. However, the "safe" procedure is to have a set of OEM cartridges in a zip-lock bag that you can install whenever the printer needs warranty service.
- * Because of their patents, only remanufactured cartridges can be sold for HP and Lexmark printers. Generic cartridges can be sold for Epson and Canon printers. In either case, the inks are identical to the original, as they are made by the same few companies, e.g., Kimberly Clark, all using the same open-source formulations.
- * When refilling a cartridge, make sure all of the air has been removed as seen by ink in the syringe when withdrawing the air.

With respect to her demonstration of refilling HP cartridges, Ms Hunter noted several items.

- * HP has recently changed the design of their cartridges (less ink for the same price!). However, the new design is easier to fill. Irrespective of this, all HP cartridges contain the print head.
- * HP has installed a device in their newer printers that track the serial numbers of the cartridges, and the printer will reject any "old," aka, refilled, cartridge. This can be countered by taping over a resistor on the back of the cartridge before installing it, and then removing the tape.
- * When buying HP cartridges, make sure that the serial numbers on the box and the cartridge match. If not, take it back to where you bought it.
- * HP cartridges should be stored upside down to maximize shelf life.
- * HP cartridges will clog if not used frequently, with the pigment settling to the bottom adjacent to the print head.
- * HP black cartridges can be cleaned by submerging the print head in cleaning fluid available from Ms. Hunter. The color cartridges can be cleaned by standing them up on a paper towel soaked with the cleaning fluid. After refilling the cartridges, run the printer through one head clean cycle.

With respect to her demonstration of refilling Epson cartridges, Ms Hunter noted several items.

- * The older Epson cartridges were transparent and thus easier to refill;
- * The Epson print heads are in the printer, not the cartridge.
- * When refilling Epson cartridges, always refill through the front, not the back.

- * Approximately five years ago, Epson installed a “smart chip” on its cartridges that counts the number of pages printed with that color. This chip must be reset, using a chip resetter which she sells, before refilling the cartridges.
- * As mentioned earlier, Ms. Hunter sells a continuous feed system for the Epson 4 and 6 cartridge system which replaces the OEM cartridges and uses external individual bottles of ink for high volume users.
- * Epson now sells a UV-resistant ink which is supposedly good for 15 years.
- * For cleaning Epson print heads, use the print head cleaning instructions for your particular printer.

With respect to her demonstration of refilling Canon cartridges, Ms Hunter noted several items.

- * Off-brand inks may not do well when printing photos.
- * The procedure for refilling Canon cartridges is similar to that for Epson.

With respect to her demonstration of refilling Lexmark cartridges (also used on Dell printers), Ms Hunter noted several items.

- * Lexmark cartridges are similar to, but more expensive than, HP cartridges. They too have the print head in the cartridge.
- * Lexmark cartridges have a breathing hole on the back which will indicate that the cartridge is full when the ink starts to bubble out.
- * The Lexmark tri-color cartridges need to be carefully cut with a box cutter, after which they can easily be refilled.
- * Lexmark print heads are cleaned the same way as are the HP print heads.

* * * * *

The meeting was concluded with our raffle.

Prizes won were as follows:

- * Ink Dot Tutorial CD – Eugenia Frerichs
- * Video Vegas, Flip Album Suite 4.0, and Photo CD — Leonard Stein
- * Photo Parade and Flip Album – George Thuro
- * Video Poker — Muriel Fitzsimmons
- * Computer Duster – David Wintle
- * Mouse — Irene Jewell
- * Touch Pad, Print Shop, and 225 Educational Problems CD – Robert Strader

Members only Raffle

Be sure to wear your badge to the meeting as there will be a special members only raffle prize for all members who wear their badges and are currently paid members. Be sure to get your free ticket at the meeting

SeniorNet Classes Winter Term January 2005



◆ Digital Photo Editing

January 10, 2005 - March 07, 2005

Mondays, 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Instructor: Bob Walker

Description: Make your photos really stand out. Cropping and editing photos. Special effects and coloring photos. Stitch photos to create panoramas.

Type: Graphics Skill Level: Intermediate

Term: Winter - 05 Cost: \$65.00

◆ Digital Camera, Scanner Photo Album

January 10, 2005 - March 07, 2005

Mondays, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Instructor: George Thuro & Dave Wintle

Description: Work with your digital camera. Learn to use a scanner. Create albums to hold your photos.

Type: Graphics Skill Level: Intermediate

Term: Winter - 05 Cost: \$65.00

◆ Computers Made Easy

January 10, 2005 - January 31, 2005 (4weeks)

Mondays, 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Instructor: Daniel Dickinson

Description: Very basic introduction to the computer. Hands-on training using our computers. A personal coach for every 2 students. Find out what computing is all about.

Type: Computer Basics Skill Level: Beginner

Term: Winter - 05 Cost: \$20.00

◆ E-Mail

January 11, 2005 - March 01, 2005

Tuesdays, 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Instructor: Frank Mastroly

Description: Learn to manage you E-Mail. Receive and send, save in folders, receive and send attachments, manage address books, etc.

Type: Internet Skill Level: Intermediate

Term: Winter - 05 Cost: \$65.00

◆ Intro to Computers, using Windows XP

January 11, 2005 - March 01, 2005

Tuesdays, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Instructor: Henry Guttentag

Description: What is a computer? How does it work? How to use the mouse and keyboard. What can I do with a computer?

Type: Skill Level: Beginner

Term: Winter - 05 Cost: \$65.00

◆ Exploring Windows XP

January 12, 2005 - March 02, 2005

Wednesdays, 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Description: Modify your desktop to make it reflect your personality. Learn basic Windows procedures. Prepare your START menus and task bar for the way you want to work.

Skill Level: Intermediate

Term: Winter - 05 Cost: \$65.00

Cont. from Previous Pg.◆ **Family Tree Maker****January 12, 2005 - March 02, 2005**

Wednesdays, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Instructor: Muriel Fitzsimmons

Description: The easy way to build, search and share your precious family history.

Type: Genealogy Skill Level: Intermediate

Term: Winter - 05 Cost: \$65.00

◆ **Word Processing****January 13, 2005 - March 03, 2005**

Thursdays, 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Instructor: Ron Perkins

Description: Learn techniques to make your Letters, Newsletters and Signs look professional and eye-catching. If you want to write, but don't know how to make it look "just right" this class is for you!

Type: Word Processing Skill Level: Intermediate Term: Winter - 05

Cost: \$65.00

◆ **Money Management, using Quicken 2005** **January 13, 2005 - March 03, 2005**

Thursdays, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Instructor: Daniel Dickinson

Description: Manage your bank records, stock portfolios, personal budgets, other assets, etc.

Type: Personal Finance Skill Level: Intermediate Term: Winter - 05

Cost: \$65.00

◆ **Intro to Computers, using Windows XP****January 13, 2005 - March 03, 2005**

Thursdays, 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Instructor: Leonard Robertson

◆ **Printshop**

January 14, 2005 - March 04, 2005

Fridays, 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Instructor: Robyn Kolander

Description: Learn to create impressive print projects. Greeting cards, custom calendars, fliers, postcards, etc. Scan your own pictures into projects.

Type: Graphics Skill Level: Advanced Term: Winter - 05 Cost: \$65.00

◆ **Computers Made Easy**

January 14, 2005 - February 04, 2005

Fridays, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Instructor: Henry Guttentag

◆ **Free Lab**

January 11, 2005 - March 02, 2005

Tuesdays, 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Wednesdays, 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM

February 2005◆ **Computers Made Easy**

February 11, 2005 - March 04, 2005 (4 weeks)

Fridays, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Instructor: Henry Guttentag

The Importance Of Being

For almost 20 years, SeniorNet has been the community of computer-using older adults. In that time, our thousands of volunteers, a small professional staff and all the students and members of SeniorNet have been dedicated to the idea that empowering older adults with technology can help them enhance their lives and contribute to society.

SeniorNet endeavors to fulfill this mission through a range of services. Of most importance to you, the Learning Center volunteers, are SeniorNet's efforts to establish and support a network of Learning Centers providing on-the-ground training and inspiration to older adult computer learners. Today that network has more than 200 locations operated by more than 5,000 volunteers. SeniorNet national supports those Centers through programs made possible by the membership dues paid by Learning Center members.

Below are some of the benefits your Learning Center receives as part of that network:

Human Help. You are part of a community of like-minded folks who offer one another support, ideas and inspiration. No matter how energetic, enthusiastic, creative and smart your volunteers are (and we know they are), you'll always be able to learn something from:

- **SeniorNet Regional Reps**, who are just a phone call or email away. They can give you advice, tech support and even a shoulder to cry on. They have all worked in and been leaders of Learning Centers, so they have on-the-ground experience.
- **Other Center Volunteers**, who share their ideas via our weekly eMail Update and in the Leadership Exchange. The SeniorNet family has more than 5,000 volunteers operating more than 200 Learning Centers across the country. In addition, we have hundreds of volunteers running SeniorNet.org discussions on a wide range of topics. You can reach out and touch some of these folks to share ideas, get help and ideas, etc.
- **Regional Conferences**, which are held about every 18 months. You can have real face-to-face time with both your Regional Rep and the other smart and fun Learning Center volunteers at regional conferences. These are opportunities to exchange ideas, curricula and even complaints. It's the place to figure out what best practices you can borrow from your brethren.

- **Headquarters staff**, available by phone or email at all times.

The staff in San Francisco takes the role of a good hostess, making sure everybody is talking and sharing. They can put you in touch with somebody who has the answer to almost any question. They also can answer your questions related to administration, curriculum and other SeniorNet resources.

Information & Resources. SeniorNet manages a range of publications that also help "spread the wealth" by sharing HQ information and news and ideas from other Centers. These publications include:

- **LC eNewsletter** – This weekly email newsletter keeps you up-to-date on all of SeniorNet's projects, curriculum and projects. It's also the place you'll hear about best practices, success stories from other Centers and up-coming regional events.
- **Leadership Exchange** – This is your web-based "information central." You can download almost anything you might need in the operation of your center — curriculum for courses and workshops from both headquarters and other centers, marketing brochures and materials, the Marketing Tool Kit, logos, model

grant applications and more. Spend some time looking through the Exchange...you might be surprised to see what's there. The Exchange also has message boards where you can share information and ideas with other Centers

Learning Center Marketing Tool Kit – The Tool Kit, available in the Leadership Exchange and in a binder at your Center (we update it regularly via U.S. Mail), is full of ideas to help you recruit and serve members. We update the Tool Kit twice a year, picking a different topic for concentrated attention each time.

Curriculum. SeniorNet's unique Senior-to-Senior teaching method is facilitated by our step-by-step curricula. These course manuals are designed to enable even inexperienced teachers to "pay it forward" at the Learning Centers. HQ maintains a core curriculum, updating it as the software changes. HQ also develops workshops and seminars of interest. And, as always, the other LCs share their courses and workshops.

- ◆ 17 **core courses** from HQ (regularly updated as software changes) and even more courses from LCs.
- ◆ More than 20 **workshops and seminars** from both HQ and LCs
- ◆ **Web Workshops** – Can be used independently at your center, can be a place to learn something you can then pass on.

Software — SeniorNet HQ negotiates master licensing agreements that allow us to provide Learning Centers with software for educational uses. Recent software we've provided includes:

- ◆ Works Suite 2005
- ◆ Family Tree Maker 2005
- ◆ Subscriptions to Ancestry.com
- ◆ Quicken 2005
- ◆ Subscriptions to American Greetings.com
- ◆ Windows XP operating system.

Discounts for your Center and your students

- ◆ Office Max discounts are available for your Learning Center .
- ◆ Special Offers for your students. From time to time, we are able to secure special offers for you to distribute to your students. Current offers (Fall 2004) include:
- ◆ FTM Free software for students.
- ◆ Smart Computing Magazine trial copies and special online access.
- ◆ Special Offers for members.

SeniorNet also negotiates special deals for all members. You can see a list of current offers at www.seniornet.org/members.

The mission is bigger than each of us

Perhaps the most important part of being a SeniorNet Learning Center is that you are part of a national movement to empower older adults to use computers — to ensure they have more independent lives, they can use new technologies to help others and they can overcome the barriers to becoming part of the information age. The work that SeniorNet members have accomplished with their computer skills – family histories, newsletters for senior centers, membership database for churches and synagogues and much more – constantly inspires us. And the ability to play a part in ensuring that Seniors can take advantage of new technologies – to stay in touch with families, to manage their own health and wealth and to stay connected despite physical constraints – is amazing. Each volunteer and Learning Center can be proud of their role in fulfilling this mission.

President's Message

David Wintle

President

OCIPUG

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

Well we have arrived at that hectic time of the year again. This is the time of the year when everything is jamming up. There is too much to get done & too little time to do it.

Now is the time when all the new goodies for computers enter the stores. When we say I wish I had waited to purchase that item, if only I knew they were bringing it out.

This is also a time when we reflect on those things we did and those we should have done over the past year. Well it's too late to change any of those things that happened last year, but guess what; we can correct some of these things this coming year.

Attending the various meetings and volunteering to help with the various committees in **your OCIPUG** user group. Things like the Readme.Doc; the Web page; setting up the room for meetings; inviting people to attend the various meetings; many other things that take time & energy to make this group function. OCIPUG didn't just happen, it was created by people, and it needs people to keep it going and growing.

If you see something you would like to have presented at a meeting, let someone know. Better yet ask the presenter for their card or phone number. Tell them you belong to a user group that would like to see their presentation. Not all presentations need to be about computers. We could have 2 presenters at a general meeting one computer related and another about some other interesting subject. The subject could be hunting, fishing, traveling, photography; cell phones with picture or e-mail enabled.

I know that there people in this group that do things other than stare at a computer screen 24/7/365. Come on people let's hear about things you do outside of computers. I know there is a world beyond computers. You can get up and tell the rest of us what you do. This will help the members to know each other better. This is a group of persons that have at least one similar interest, computers. That doesn't mean we have to limit ourselves to that one thing.

David Wintle

President

See you at the potluck on December 18, 2004 to wind down this year. Please bring something to share and don't forget that Don Edrington, aka PC Don, and The Senior Computer Tutor will be showing his resource-filled website and regaling us with some of his stories drawn from his experiences with user groups & computers.





Mark Borison
Editor README.DOC
Webmaster & Programs
OCIPUG

I went to a book signing for O'Reilly author and star of movies and television Wil Wheaton, last Tues. evening: I wrote him a note the next day:

Hi Wil,

I thought that your appearance last night was a total triumph. I was impressed by your entire presentation starting with your community awareness and involvement with the Alzheimer Organization to your response to my question about how your book found its way to the perfect publisher for it. Your entire presentation in between, where you used your considerable skills as a performer to transport us for a time into your world, entering that stark room where the casting director holds your future and that of your family, in their hands. The feeling of rejection for an artist can often lead to a life of failure, a feeling of victimization, a downward spiral ending in addiction, incarceration, or even death.

You chose otherwise and in doing so, you are an example of how a motivated individual can use certain tools and technologies to change the course of their lives and at the same time, make a difference and touch or even change other's lives. This is the feeling that I left last nights gathering with.

The power of the Internet is a wondrous thing indeed, giving the forum to enhance or enlighten people or on the other hand, the license to expound on hatred & prejudice or even the sickening murderous insanity of the terrorists who commit horrendous acts in the name of their cause.

Once again you have chosen the High Road and in doing so have given hope to others, including me that this technology can be used To Make a Difference, To Create, To Teach, To Show people they can make a difference, and create a positive legacy for change, or just a forum where an individual can expound on whatever subject or cause they feel strongly about.

This reminds me of Bug House Square in Chicago, a park where an individual could grab a soapbox and get up on it, expound on their particular beliefs without going through a bureaucracy that would certainly, in most cases, censure those beliefs. There the only censure is your common sense and probably the reaction of those listening to one's words. It is democracy in its most basic form, Freedom of Speech at its best. The wondrous power of the Internet opens up a virtual Bug House Square, which can be used for good, positive ends where an individual can express himself or herself, and at the same time make a Difference in the lives of others.

I find these possibilities to be quite exciting and virtually unlimited. My feeling is that it is our responsibility to encourage the best use of this power, as You & O'Reilly Publishing have done and will continue to do.

I Salute You Both for That.....

Mark

By the Way,

My son Jory is a Blogger(joryjohn.com), writer, cartoonist, juggler, and musician And a Counselor at Wavy Gravy's Camp Winarainbow in Humboldt County.

WiFi in OC& 20 Year Anniversary

If you read my meanderings last month you might remember that I have been combing the wilds of OC in search of the Perfect Hot-Spot. I have run into a few more that I like. As a matter of fact I am writing these words (pearls of wisdom) from one right now. I am at the Ugly Mug in Orange at 261 N. Glassel, a very nice little coffee shop/hot spot near Chandler College. Another hot spot I came across recently was Bogarts Coffee - 905 Ocean Ave in Seal Beach. On Thanksgiving I took a nice ride down PCH in my 1965 Mustang Convertible and came across a great little place in San Clemente named the California Cigar & Smoking Lounge at 1640 N. El Camino Real, Suite C - (949)369-6923. This a great little place that combines some of my favorite pursuits (vices) under one roof. Here one can Multi-Task (smoke a cigar or whatever, access the Internet for free wirelessly and watch the Chicago Bears(guess where I'm from) on tv. I thought I was in heaven, actually I was in San Clemente, and since they were not listed in JiWire's Free Hotspot directory (<http://www.wififreespot.com/ca.html>) I took it upon myself to do this for them. Some people are always going the extra mile. Thankyou very much! I will continue my pursuit of The Perfect Hot-Spot in 2005 and will let you know of the progress of my quest.

Sure would like to get some input from some of you members about some possible presentations for next year. Also as we approach OCIPUG's 20th year some input as to what type of celebration or recognition of this milestone would be appropriate. Perhaps some of you would participate with me in a 20th Anniversary committee, that could we do? This is a significant milestone for any group in terms of surviving that long and at the same time as that, filling a certain role in the community. OCIPUG still does some things that are positive manifestations of the club, such as our involvement in the SeniorNet Learning Center and our SIGS also provide some information and education as hopefully does our General Meetings, but truth be told we have a very stagnant club and I for one find that to be difficult to accept. This club during it's history has had more 3500 members pass through its doors and has helped to shape the history of the personal computer. To see this once proud club limp into it's 20th year without so much as a recognition of that I find to be a shameful thing, maybe it's time to put it to sleep. A Last Dance?

I feel we have 2 choices at this point, do something to instill some new enthusiasm and direction for the club or simply wake up and smell the coffee and let OCIPUG go quietly into the night. It's up to each one of you, I have done ALL I can Do!

Happy Holidays to All!

Minutes for the October 2004 OCIPUG Board of Directors Meeting, October 30, 2004



The October Executive Board of Directors (Board or BOD) Meeting of the Orange Coast IBM PC User Group (OCIPUG) was held on October 30, 2004, at the Costa Mesa Senior Center. President David Wintle called the meeting to order at 11:55am, with eight of the officers and directors, and member Barto Wash present.

Because there was no August Board meeting due to the lack of a quorum, the minutes of the July 2004 Executive Board of Directors Meeting had not been formally approved. However, this was accomplished in a motion by Director Mark Borison, seconded by Director Eugenia Frerichs, and carried.

Secretary Frank Mastroly had previously e mailed a draft copy of the September 2004 Executive Board of Directors Meeting minutes to all board members for their review, with no comments or corrections received. In a motion by Director Mark Borison, seconded by Director Eugenia Frerichs, and carried, the minutes of the September 2004 Executive Board of Directors Meeting were approved.

President's Report: — President David Wintle started the meeting by stressing the need for OCIPUG to get members to renew their membership and the need to get the membership roster up to date. David distributed new (green) officer badges prepared by member Robert Walker, and requested all officers to check to see that information on the badges is correct.

Secretary's Report: — Secretary Frank Mastroly reported that he received a renewal check from Warren Frandsen along with his new address at the October General Meeting. Frank also reported that he gave the current bank statements to Treasurer Shirley England. Finally, the raffle proceeds from the October 2004 General meeting were \$51.

Treasurer's Report: — Treasurer/CFO Shirley England said she had several issues to resolve and some progress to report as follows:

Shirley noted that the CalNational Bank statements show a direct fee for deposits and checks. She was advised to check with the bank on this, and to see if these fees should be waived because of our non-profit status.

Shirley expressed some confusion over the spending categories in the Quicken accounts, such as how to categorize a check for raffle prizes. Shirley was advised to see what categories are currently in the Quicken accounts. Shirley had a problem with

the data disk she had received. This will be taken care of after the meeting.

The current account shows a budget for 2003-2004, but not for 2004-2005. President David Wintle said that he might have the data for 2004-2005, which Shirley will then incorporate into the Quicken accounts.

Shirley reported that she has started new Quicken accounts using the balances from the latest bank statements as the starting points. Shirley later noted that the by-laws require a financial review, and requested that one be performed and approved so that she can use the results as the starting point for her new Quicken accounts. The Board will decide on this at a later date. Shirley inquired about the status of the new OCIPUG letterhead. President David Wintle reported that he has a copy of the current file.

Shirley reported that she had inventoried the contents of the safe and the boxes of data, and noted some discrepancies with other documentation. President David Wintle said the he will work with Shirley on this.

Shirley reported that all the forms she is responsible for have been redone using a disk provided to her by former Treasurer/CFO Kevin Moser.

Shirley, President David Wintle, and Secretary Frank Mastroly have executed new signature cards with the bank. David will follow up on the bank's requirements for a document on our letter head showing the officers' names and a copy of the meeting minutes showing the current officers.

Outgoing Treasurer/CFO Leonard Stein told Shirley that he has stamps and envelopes that he can give her.

Committee Reports:

Program Committee Report: — Program Chairman Mark Borison reported that we had just been treated to a very informative presentation by Gene Barlow (www.ugr.com) who now represents several new companies since PowerQuest (of Partition Magic fame) was recently acquired by Symantec. The main emphasis of Mr. Barlow's presentation was on backing up the data on your hard drive.

The November General Meeting will be on Saturday, November 20, 2004 (one week earlier than usual due to the Thanksgiving Day Holiday), at which the main speaker will be the Ink Dot Lady (www.theinkdot.com), an online supplier of replacement ink jet cartridges and cartridge refill kits.

The December General Meeting will be on Saturday, December 18, at which there will be our annual Christmas potluck.

Mark asked for help in setting up programs, otherwise he might resign as Program Chairman, and Director Sandi Tierney volunteered to help Mark. Mark also stated that he is working to resolve issues with Microsoft Mindshare so that we can continue to receive software packages and other mailings from Microsoft.

SIG Reports:

The upcoming SIG schedule is as follows:

Internet and Web Page Design (Mark Borison), 1st Tuesday of each month. On Nov. 2 Mark will continue exploring web sites of interest as well as conduct a Q&A session.

Hardware (Ed Leckliter), 2nd Tuesday of each month. On November 9 Steve Schiffman will present the 2nd of his two presentations on networking hardware. In December Ed will resume his series on detailed discussions of PC components, with processors (CPUs) being the topic for December.

Windows 9x/XP (Robert Strader), 3rd Tuesday of each month, or on November 16.

Digital Photography and Scanning (David Wintle), 4th Tuesday of each month. On November 23 David will continue his presentations on the book "Complete Digital Photography" as well as conduct a Q&A session.

SeniorNet: Secretary Frank Mastroly reported that we are almost through with the current session of classes, and that the next session will start on Monday, January 10, 2005. In addition to switching the days for the various classes around, the main change is the addition of a new class on Family Tree Maker which will be taught by OCIPUG member Muriel Fitzsimmons on Wednesday afternoons.

All those interested in joining the SeniorNet team are invited to come to the next team meeting on Friday, November 5, 2004, at 3:00pm in either this room or in the computer room.

Community Service Report: — No report.

Long Range Planning Committee Report: — No report.

Facilities Report, Maintenance, and Improvement: — As previously reported, we have received a motherboard and processor from Intel which, per agreement with Intel, must be installed on the club's computer and cannot be auctioned off or used as a raffle prize. However, there is a difference of opinion as to whether we should install these components on the existing computer or build a new computer using these components and chassis already owned by some of the members. The main problem is that the new Bluetooth keyboard and mouse will not work with the motherboard in the existing computer, but will work with the new Intel motherboard. If we build a new computer, it will be necessary to purchase a new copy of Windows XP Professional and a new hard drive. Also being considered is the enabling of a Wi Fi network. In a motion by Director Sandi Tierney, seconded by Director Eugenia Frerichs, and carried, the club was authorized to spend up to \$300 in the event it is decided to build a new computer.

Operations (Policy and Procedures): — President David Wintle reported that due to equipment problems he was unable to make copies of the proposed revisions to the OCIPUG by-laws as prepared by members Kevin Moser, George Thuro, and Charles Schreiber. David said that he would e-mail all board members the proposed changes, and asked if all board members have a copy of the current by-laws. David noted that the major changes are the reductions in the number of committees and in the number of directors (two instead of four but still serving two years, with the current directors still serving out the entire term for which they were elected). David also noted that having directors serve two years is intended to provide continuity should all of the other

officers be replaced at an election.

Publications Report: — Newsletter Editor Mark Borison reported that the October 2004 Readme.Doc was late in being released due to problems encountered in converting some fonts to PDF format. Mark requested assistance in compiling articles of the most recent General meeting to be in the next interest. In particular, if possible he wants a summary month's Readme.Doc. Currently, the board meeting minutes are approved at the subsequent board meeting, and thus they are published over a month after the meeting. We currently do not have a procedure in place for approving the minutes of the board meetings in time to get them into the succeeding month's Readme.Doc. Per President David Wintle, the desirable procedure would be to have the secretary distribute the draft minutes via e-mail within one week of the date of the meeting, with corrections and/or additions returned to the secretary within three days or less. One problem with this is that not all e-mail programs have a receipt requested and reply function, and thus there is no way for the secretary to absolutely guarantee that all board members have received and opened the minutes.

President David Wintle stated that we should send the Readme.Doc out to only paid-up members. Also, the Readme.Doc should be updated to show the OCIPUG e-mail addresses for all officers and directors and for the SIG leaders (see also Webmaster Report).

Webmaster Report: — Webmaster Mark Borison reported that the OCIPUG website is working properly. President David Wintle reported that OCIPUG e-mail addresses will be set up for all OCIPUG officers and directors, as well as for the SIG leaders, and posted on the website. The question of APCUG and FatCow renewals came up. As these are both coming due shortly and since they are both budgeted items they should be paid as soon as it is practical.

Membership Committee Report: — The club is still in need of a Membership Committee Chairman. In the interim, Secretary Frank Mastroly will update the roster file he received from member Robert Walker using the most recent renewal data. Member George Thuro has offered his services to assist in updating and maintaining the membership roster.

Advertisings and Public Relations Report: — Director Mark Borison reported that he is working on a tri-fold to hand out to prospective members. As previously reported by Director Sandi Tierney, Member Bob Walker previously had been working on developing such a tri-fold. Mark will send a draft tri-fold to the board members as a JPG file, as not all may have Print Shop installed on their computers.

Sunshine Committee Report: — Committee Chairperson/Director Sandi Tierney reported that member Ed Fitch will be starting dialysis treatment shortly, but that he recently was able to go on a cruise with his old Navy ship mates. Sandi reported that Irwin Haydock and his wife are still both ill. Sandi reported that she had sent flowers and a card to Director Mark Borison on the passing of his mother. Finally, Sandi repeated her request that members contact her if they or a close relative are ill.

Cont. Next pg.

BOD Cont. from pg. 13

Old Business: — President David Wintle stated that there was nothing new to report on putting two two-drawer filing cabinets in the classroom next to the existing five-drawer cabinet under the white board for storing OCIPUG data.

President David Wintle reported that the Senior Center has no objections to our changing the meeting date for the General (and Board) meetings to be the 4th rather than the last Saturday of the month. (Editor's Note: The first meetings that this will affect will be the January 2005 General and Board meetings, which will be on Saturday, January 22, 2005.)

New Business: — None.

Adjournment: — Moved by Director Eugenia Frerichs, seconded by Director Sandi Tierney, and carried. The meeting was adjourned at 1:10 pm. The next OCIPUG Board meeting will be on Saturday, November 20, 2004, immediately following the November General Meeting.

Use ClearType To Improve Readability In WinXP

Chandler Myrick


WinXP product manager, says that ClearType "refines jagged pixels and smoothes the edges of fonts, making them more readable." The technology works hand in hand with the monitor's refresh rate, and, simply put, the results are breathtaking. Interestingly enough, WinXP ships with this amazing feature turned off by default. The easiest way to activate it is to right-click the Desktop, click Properties, choose the Appearance tab, and click Effects. Select the Use The Following Method To Smooth Edges Of Screen Fonts option, and then select ClearType from the drop-down menu. Click OK to save your change and close the Effects dialog box, and then click OK again to close the Display Properties dialog box. You should see the difference in display quality immediately.

Quote of the Day

The work an unknown good man has done is like a vein of water flowing hidden underground, secretly making the ground green.

-- Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881)

Error Messages in Haiku

 file that big?
It might be very useful.
But now it is gone.

The web site you seek
cannot be located
but endless others exist.

Chaos reigns within.
Reflect, repent, and reboot.
Order shall return.
Aborted effort: Close all that you have.
You ask way too much.

First snow, then silence.
This thousand dollar screen dies so beautifully.

With searching comes loss and
the presence of absence:
"My Novel" not found.

The Tao that is seen is not the true Tao,
until you bring fresh toner.

Windows NT crashed.
I am the Blue Screen of Death.
No one hears your screams.

Serious error. All shortcuts have disappeared.
Screen. Mind. Both are blank.

A crash reduces your
expensive computer to a simple stone.

Out of memory.
We wish to hold the whole sky,
but we never will.

Do Not Call List for Cell Phones

Within a few weeks all cell phone numbers are going to be released to telemarketing companies and you will start receiving unwanted calls. To prevent this you need to call 888 382 1222 from your cell phone and you will be removed and that number will be placed on the national do not call list for 5 years.



Dave Cross's Top 10 New Photoshop Elements 3 Features

By [Dave Cross](#).

Article is provided courtesy of [Peachpit Press](#).

Compiling your top 10 favorites of anything is difficult, especially when there are many possibilities to choose from. That's certainly the case with Photoshop Elements 3, trying to narrow it down to a top 10 new (or improved) features was really a challenge. But, top 10 it is, so here goes...

1. The Dramatically Improved File Browser

The File Browser in Photoshop Elements 3 is a dramatic improvement over the "original" File Browser, offering many new time-saving features.

The File Browser (on the Mac), for example, now has its own menus: File, Edit, Automate, Sort, and View. Each menu contains a slew of options for working with images right inside the File Browser—without forcing you to open any of the images first.

Now, to automatically create a slide show, contact sheet, or Web gallery, you can select several images at once and simply choose PDF Slide Show, Contact Sheet II, or Web Photo Gallery from the Automate menu.

The new File Browser also lets you "flag" images for easier viewing and searching. This is a blessing for those of you who take a lot of pictures because now you can choose to view only those images that you've flagged. You can also search for only flagged images, which makes it faster to find just the shot you're seeking.

Oh, didn't I mention that there's a search function in the new File Browser? Yes, you can apply keywords to an image and then use the File menu's Search function to find all the images with those keywords.

And that's not all! In the new File Browser, you can also access and work with metadata—File properties, IPTC, and Camera Data (Exif) can all be viewed or searched.

2. Camera RAW Support

Photoshop Elements 3 now supports the Camera RAW format from high-end digital cameras allowing for the sort of advanced image editing previously only available in Photoshop CS.

To edit this "digital negative" in Elements 3, just double-click a RAW file in the File Browser. The Camera Raw dialog will open, with a ton of options for adjusting the white balance, exposure, shadows, saturation, sharpening, and more. You can save your Camera Raw settings and easily apply them to other RAW images. Very cool.

3. Shadows/Highlights

One of our former top 10 Photoshop CS features is now in Elements 3: Shadows/Highlights. This command (found under Enhance>Adjust Lighting) is set by default to lighten the shadows by 50 percent and to leave the highlights alone, but you can easily change these settings. This tool is a great solution for times when you wished you'd used a fill flash or simply when you'd like to see what the image would look like if the shadows were a little lighter.

4. Healing Brush and Spot Healing Brush

Have you noticed a trend yet? Many of our favorite Photoshop CS features have quietly slipped into Elements 3. In this case, it's the Healing Brush, an ideal tool for covering up problems in an image without messing with the underlying textures. Elements gets a leg up on Photoshop CS, however, with the Spot Healing Brush—kind of a "one-step" healing tool.

5. Auto Smart Fix

Normally, I'm not a big fan of automated image adjustments, but this one works quite well. And if it doesn't appear to help, you can always undo it and try Adjust Smart Fix, a more interactive version of Smart Fix that lets you use a percentage slider to adjust the image (both options are found in the Enhance menu).

Smart Fix is particularly useful if you first duplicate the Background layer and apply Smart Fix to the copy. Then you can lower the Opacity of the duplicated layer in the Layers palette to lessen the effect of Smart Fix.

6. Cookie Cutter

If you've always wanted to have a photo cut into the shape of a butterfly, a heart, or a paw print, now it's possible—and incredibly simple. (OK, so you may never have wanted to do this, but I'm sure you'll find ways to use this tool, once you see what it does.)

Just choose the shape, click-and-drag, resize if necessary, then hit Enter and you're done. Actually, I would definitely recommend duplicating the Background layer first and hiding it. Then, apply the Cookie Cutter shape to the top (duplicated) layer. That way, you'll still get the effect of the Cookie Cutter, but you'll have a built-in back-up plan in case you change your mind.

7. Organizer

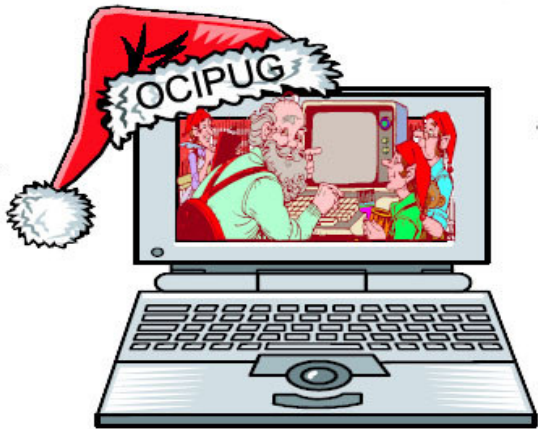
A Windows-only feature, Organizer lets you organize images and automatically create Web galleries and slide shows, including presentations that can be shown on your DVD player. Similar in many ways to the File Browser in terms of photo organizing, but with many added features, Organizer includes integrated access to calendar and email functions.

Cont. on next page

Computer Christmas

By Fried-Frog

One night on the computer, alone in the house,
Was surfing the internet, was using the mouse;
To Microsoft.com, to download shareware,
In hopes that Mr. Bill Gates soon would be there.
The links were all nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of web-cookies danced in their heads;
And as java did run, loading script in a snap,
Animation ran smooth without any mishap.
When inside the box there arose such a clatter,
Fell out of my chair, "what the hell is the matter?"



Away went my windows, they flew like a flash,
Used all my resource and deleted my cache.
The colors were fading, the programs ran slow,
Gave the hint that the system was going to go;
When, what to my wondering ears should I hear,
Mr. Bill Gates himself, "you have nothing to fear."
With some updated drivers, so lively and quick,
For all of my hardware, even the joystick;
More rapid than ram that his courses they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name:
"Now, Backup! now, Floppy! now, Copy and Paste!
On, Format! on, Setup! on, Default and Save!
From the top of the port! through directories all!
Now disk drivers! disk drivers! drivers install!"
As viruses that infect the system files fly,
When they erase all the objects, mount the hard drive;
So all through the programs the courses they flew,
With a zip full of drivers, and Mr. Bill Gates too.
And then, in a twinkling, I saw it reboot,
The spinning and clicking inside of my root;
As I drew in my head and was turning around,
Upon the screen, Mr. Bill Gates, came with a bound.
He was dressed to the nines, from his head to his toes,
And his shoes were Italian with tailor made clothes;
A bundle of software in one CD pack,
And he looked like a webmaster ready to hack.

His eyes, how they twinkled! his dimples, how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his nose big and scary!
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow;

His pocket protector was as white as the snow.
The Microsoft mouse he held tight in his fist,
And the cord it encircled his arm at the wrist;
He had a broad face and some coke bottle glasses,
That slid down his nose, like a drop of molasses.
He was wealthy and rich, a right nerdy old elf,
Man, what I could do with all that money myself;
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
And fixed the whole system, then signed on with Mirc;
And pushing his glasses back up on his nose;
And giving a nod, through the modem he goes.
He sprang to com three, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle;
But I heard him exclaim, as he faded from sight,
"I'll monopolize all and I'll do it up right!"

Cont. from pg. 14 Photoshop Elements 3

8. Duplicate Layer Command

OK, so it may seem like a pretty lame thing to put on a top 10 list, but to me, it's a reason to celebrate. The keyboard shortcut for the Duplicate Layer command (which mysteriously disappeared in Elements 2.0) has come back. Again, it may not seem like much, but considering the number of times that I start off by duplicating the Background layer, the ability to simply press Control-J (Mac: Command-J) is a godsend.

9. Photo Filter Adjustment Layer

Photo Filter adjustment layers, yet another feature borrowed from Photoshop CS, simulate traditional screw-on camera filters, such as warming and cooling filters. You can choose from a pop-up list or pick your own color and adjust the density. Since it's an adjustment layer, you can easily double-click the layer to change its settings or simply reduce its opacity to lower the effect.

10. Printing

I'm sorry, but since I was down to my last nominee, I bundled together a few things and called them "printing." Overall, printing is simply better than it was in Elements 2.0. A modified printer interface makes precise printing much easier and there is greater control in the printing layouts, as well as functions such as Picture Package.

There you go, my top 10 list of new-and-improved features in Photoshop Elements 3. Wait, I forgot to mention the changes to batch processing, the Photo Bin for working with multiple open images, the Reduce Noise filter, Match Zoom, the Histogram palette, and 16-bit support. Can we make it the top 20 features?

(Thanks to Dave Huss, author of Adobe Photoshop Elements 3: 50 Ways to Create Cool Pictures, for his Elements 3 feature list, which helped me narrow down my choices.)

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Gab With Google Groups

Back in the early days of the Internet, Usenet newsgroups were one of the key features drumming up user interest. **News**groups, giant online bulletin boards, provided a way for people around the world to interact, or at least wage flame wars. The ascendancy of the Web left Usenet a little behind the curve. The entire archive eventually became part of Google, where you can still search posts past and present. At the moment, the most recent version of Google's Groups feature is in beta. You can access it at <http://groups-beta.google.com>. If the Googliers finish the Groups beta by the time you read this, head to the main Google page (<http://www.google.com>) and click the Groups link right above the search field. ■ **Read All About It** The main Groups page lists forums by topic in the same vein as the Yahoo!'s (<http://www.yahoo.com>) Web page list or Google's own Google Directory. To make full use of Google Groups, you'll need a free user account. On the left side of the screen, click the Sign In link. On the next page, click Sign Up Now and follow the on-screen instructions.



Google Groups 2, now in beta, is a powerful newsgroup reader that can take you back to the old days of Usenet. Once you've signed in, click a forum category that looks interesting. A typical directory page has links to additional subcategories, along with green links to individual forums. Look at the Groups Directory line to see how many forums are listed in that category. Scroll to the bottom of a page to see familiar Google links for navigating through pages of results. A faster way to find a group that fits your interests is to use the search function. On the main Groups page, enter terms in the search field and click Search Groups. The results will include any groups having to do with the query, as well as individual posts from any group. To keep track of a group, subscribe to it. From the top of any Group page, click Subscribe To This Group. On the next page, choose how you want to keep up with the group. Google can send an email summary of new postings to the address you provided when you signed up. Alternatively, you can just read the group online. You can read a group in several different ways. A group page generally shows the latest posts in the middle column. Topics with recent replies fill a smaller column to the right. A better way to see many topics at once is to click the Title View link at the top of the center column. A third way, for the serious group reader, is to click Tree View. Topics appear in hierarchal format on the left side of the screen. Select a post by clicking the author link in the tree. Text of the posts appears on the right. You may want to resize the columns for easier viewing—just hover the mouse over the line dividing the columns and then click and drag. In the Default view or Title view, small stars appear next to topic names. Click a star, and it turns yellow. Back on the main Google Groups page, all starred topics with new messages appear under the yellow My

Groups banner. This system gives you a quick way to keep track of new developments in especially interesting conversations. **Speak Freely** The general online bulletin board rule is that you should read a group for a while to become familiar with the unstated netiquette of do's and don'ts. When you're ready to launch your own conversation, navigate to the correct group and click the Start A New Topic link in the upper-right corner of the screen. An email-like message screen appears where you can set out your ramblings. If you poke around groups and Usenet long enough, you'll probably come to the conclusion that 95% of the content is not exactly stimulating reading. A particular group, however, might just fill the niche you've been seeking. If no existing group fits your topic, consider starting something new. On the main Groups page, click Create A New Group on the left side of the screen. As a group master, you'll need to come up with a unique name and decide whether other readers will be allowed to post messages of their own. You'll also be one of the latest heirs to a long tradition of Usenet groups. *by Alan Phelps*

GOOGLE NEWS: GOOGLE BUYS MAPPING SOFTWARE

Google is up to something again and, yet again, no one quite knows what. This week Google acquired Keyhole, a 3-D mapping company which uses technology made famous by its use by news agencies during the early days of the invasion of Iraq. Not only did Google purchase the company, but they also cut the purchase price of the software by more than half, from \$70 to \$30. Google has not said what their reasoning is behind buying the company, but many speculate that they may add their own mapping service similar to MapQuest or Yahoo Maps, with a 3-D perspective.

EBAY NEWS:

WHAT'S IN YOUR BREAKFAST BOWL?

A few weeks ago the world watched as a dried up old cheese sandwich with the likeness of the Virgin Mary sold on eBay for \$28,000.

One observant individual decided to ride the wave of people with too much money and placed a piece of Nurti-Grain up for bid that resembled E.T. This week the piece of cereal sold for \$1,035.



Google Desktop Search



Now you can use Google Desktop Search to find documents on your local computer as easily as you use the Google Search Appliance to find information on your company's intranet and public website.

Google Desktop Search provides full text search over your email, computer files, chats, and the web pages you've viewed. By making your computer searchable, Google Desktop Search puts information easily within your reach and frees you from having to manually organize your computer.

Google Desktop Search updates instantly for most file types, so that when you receive a new email in Outlook, for example, you can search for it within seconds. In addition, when you view a web page in Internet Explorer, Google Desktop Search "caches" or stores its content so that you can later look at that same page, even when you're offline.

Google Desktop Search reflects Google's continuing commitment to help our users easily find information at work and at home. Stay tuned for the "Enterprise Enhanced" version of Google Desktop Search, which will integrate directly with the Google Search Appliance.

Go to <http://desktop.google.com/?promo=gsa-nl-gds-en> and download this great add-on from Google. You will be glad!

Which has now been re-routed to Washington State
Because Santa's workshop has been bought by Bill Gates.



All the elves and reindeer have had to skedaddle
To flashy new quarters in suburban Seattle.
After centuries of a life that was simple and spare,
St. Nicholas is suddenly a new billionaire,
With a shiny red Porsche in the place of his sleigh,
And a house on Lake Washington that's just down the way
From where Bill has his mansion.
The old fellow preens In black Gucci boots
and red Calvin Klein jeans.
The elves have stock options and desks with a view,
Where they write computer code for Johnny and Sue.

No more dolls or toy soldiers or little toy drums (ahem - pardon me)
No more dolls or tin soldiers or little toy drums
Will be under the tree,
only compact disk ROMS With the Microsoft label.
So spin up your drive,
From now on Christmas runs only on Windows OS.

More rapid than eagles the competitors came,
And Bill whistled, and shouted, and called them by name.
"Now, ADOBE! now, CLARIS! now, INTUIT! too, Now, APPLE!
and NETSCAPE! you are all of you through,
It is Microsoft's SANTA that the kids can't resist,
It's the ultimate software with a traditional twist -
Recommended by no less than the jolly old elf,
And on the package, a picture of Santa himself.

Get 'em young, keep 'em long, is Microsoft's scheme,
And a merger with Santa is a merketer's dream.
To the top of the NASDAQ! to the top of the Dow!
Now dash away! dash away! dash away - wow!"
And Mama in her 'kerchief and I in my cap,
Had just settled down for a long winter's nap,
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
The whirr and the hum of our satellite platter,
As it turned toward that new Christmas star in the sky,
The SANTALITE owned by the Microsoft guy.
As I sprang from my bed and was turning around,
My computer turned on with a Jingle-Bells sound.
And there on the screen was a smiling Bill Gates
Next to jolly old Santa, two arm-in-arm mates.
And I heard them exclaim in voice so bright,

**Have a MICROSOFT CHRISTMAS,
and TO ALL A GOOD NIGHT**

~~ JINGLE GATES ~~ with apologies to Clement Clarke Moore

Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the
house Not a creature was stirring, except Papa's mouse.
The computer was humming, the icons were hopping,
As Papa did last-minute Internet shopping.
The stockings were hung by the modem with care
In hope that St. Nicholas would bring new software.
The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of computer games danced in their heads.

Dark Forces for Billy, and Doom II for Dan,
And Carmen Sandiego for Pamela Ann.
The letters to Santa had been sent out by Mom,
To santaclaus@toyshop.northpole.com -

DONA'S COMPUTER CAPERS

By Dona Z. Meilach

DEFINE IT, THEN WRITE IT BETTER AND SAFER

Here's another GOOGLE-ism that's sure to make you moor erudite more quickly. And two pens to make your money more secure. Check your penholder and toss out all those freebie pens you pick up at auction, hotels, meetings, and even the bank. For your continued safety, there's also information about a talking first aid kit that could save a life.

GOOGLE OUT CLASSES WEBSTER?

I found another invaluable Google feature that may send the on-line Webster dictionary to the trash bucket. Need to find the meaning of a word and where to find lots more information about it. Just put the word definition in the Google search box followed by the word. Not only will you get the definition but you'll find resources and research. Try it with a few odd, or even common words, and you'll be amazed at what you get.

Try definition blacksmith for example and see where that leads you. Or definition ganache and you'll be an instant candy gourmand. Don't know what a gourmand is? Look it up. Put Definition gourmand in the Google box.

PILOT PERMABALL PENS

Always looking for a pen that will write on a CD and not smear? And be legible? And so much more. I didn't believe the press release for Pilot's new **Permaball** pen so I requested a test pen and it has hardly left my hand since I've had it. Anyone who spirits it off my desk will have a hand chopped off. Yes, it's that good and it gives even more than it promises.

It doesn't smear on the backs of glossy paper photo prints or leave its imprint on one that is placed over it. It writes clearly on plastic, cloth, glass, wood, cloth, leather, etc. and it doesn't smear. I haven't been able to prove other claims such as fade-proof and waterproof, but I bet it's true. It's odorless and won't bleed through paper.

It's a rolling ball pen with a nice fine tip that has the utility and permanence of a felt tip pen but it won't splay or bleed like a felt tip will.

Yep, some chemist got it right. I predict you'll have them all over the house for writing on freezer labels, marking the kid's sport and school gear, labeling things in the workshop and craft room. They are available in black, red, and blue, at most retail and office supply stores, retailing for \$4.99 for a four-pack. Next time you buy pens, note the manufacturer, and look for their specific products. www.pilotpens.com for more information

UNI-BALL PENS FOR SECURITY

We've been so busy chronicling identity thefts, that many of us overlook old fashioned check stealing. But the retro style of "check washing" has made a comeback and there is a pen that will thwart any thief from laundering your money. It's the Uni-ball 207 Gel pen by Sanford. The Uni-ball gel inks contain color pigments that are absorbed into the check's paper fibers. When an individual tries to "wash" the information written on the check, the ink is in effect "trapped."

Check washing refers to a thief practice of stealing checks, erasing the ink using common household products, then rewriting the check payable to themselves in the amount they want. According to the National Check Fraud Center, check washing costs individuals in the United States an estimated \$815 million annually.

Can't happen to you? Rent a video copy of the movie, *Catch Me If You Can*, the story of Frank Abagnale. Abagnale has also written a book called, "The Real U - Guide to Identity Theft". Abagnale, a consultant to Sanford, says your first line of defense is to write checks with the Uni-Ball pen because it can't wash out. He also offers these suggestions for check writing year around.

1. When mailing checks make sure the check is wrapped with a sheet of paper or in a card, so the envelope's contents aren't obvious.
2. Never leave mail in an unsecured mailbox, such as "curb-side" in front of a residence. Instead, drop your outgoing mail at a post office or locked postal boxes. Abagnale says approximately 99 percent of all checks that are washed are stolen from home mailboxes.
3. If public mailboxes are nearly full, find another secure box to drop your mail in. Thief's prey on mailboxes that fill up during the weekend and when access is easy.

The Uni-ball pens come in black, blue, and red ink and are available in 1-, 2-, 3- and 4-pack options at the suggested retail prices of \$2.29, \$4.69, \$6.89, and \$8.85, per box respectively. For more information about defending against check washing and other forms of identity theft, go to www.uniball-na.com.

TALKIN' FIRST AID™ KIT

There's a growing concern over safety in the home and the workplace. While most people have some kind of first kits available, they wouldn't know what to do if an injury occurred beyond a cut or a simple twisted ankle. The Talkin' First Aid™ kit removes the guess work and provides knowledge and guidance to help reduce the severity of an injury's outcome.

The Talkin' First Aid™ kit organizes supplies with instructions into individually labeled and color-coded packs for each type of injury. Audio instructions are delivered via a chip affixed to each of the injury instruction

cards. A press of a button starts, stops, and pauses the audio instructions.

Scott Kappmeyer, Vice President—Safety & Health Programs, National Safety Council, says, “Our research has found that very few individuals retain first-aid training when faced with a medical emergency and most are unable to adequately assist an injured person. Through its combination of medical supplies and detailed written and verbal instructions, first-aid givers can be more effective and have confidence in the care they’re providing.”

DLH, Inc. has teamed with the National Safety Council (NSC) to offer this awesome technology. Kits will be available in early 2005 and retail for \$149.95. Call 888-388-4854 or see www.talkinfirstaid.com, <http://www.futureoffirstaid.com>.

Dona Meilach is the author of over 85 books with 10 on computers. Her just released newest book is WOOD ART TODAY from Schiffer Publishers. <http://www.schifferbooks.com>. Put her name in the search box. Other computer organizations interested in running this column should contact the author. The column is also available as a free E-zine. Subscribe DCC: Contact Dmeilach@msn.com. Dona’s Computer Capers may also be found at <http://www.smalladdictions.com/Skateboard>.

Technology Tidbits & Info

GOOGLE WANNABE NEWS: YAHOO WANTS A DESKTOP SEARCH UTILITY TOO!

A couple months ago Google announced a new tool that lets you search for files on your computer the same way it searches the web. The tool works great and finds information fast. It is free of spyware and take up little space on your computer. Now, Yahoo wants to get in on the action. If it is anything like Yahoo’s other programs (instant messenger, email, search bar) installing this one utility will make all kinds of changes to your defaults and preferences in your Internet settings. Be careful before you download.

ANTI-SPYWARE NEWS: PENN STATE ENCOURAGES SHIFT FROM IE

Any large college sees its share of security problems, but many schools are finding that students’ computers are in such bad shape from spyware and viruses that it is having an effect on their productivity. Pennsylvania State University believes the solution to these problems is simple - dump Internet Explorer and switch to Mozilla, Opera or other alternative browsers (they must be tuning into Castellini on Computers every week). Almost all spyware and many viruses are designed to spread by exploiting

security holes in Internet Explorer. By using a different program to surf the Internet, computer users are nearly immune to many of these kinds of problems.

FERTILITY NEWS: IF YOU ARE READING THIS ON YOUR LAPTOP - BEWARE!!!

State University of New York (yes, that’s a real school) has announced the results of a new study finding that heat from a laptop on your lap can significantly decrease your sperm count - but only if you are a man. After discussing the results with industry experts, many said that new “shields” and “padding” are a possible solution. Perhaps office supply stores will have to add a “behind the counter” section for such new items.

TECHNOLOGY STATISTIC!!!

According to Nielsen Netratings (www.nielsen-netratings.com) ONLINE CONSUMERS SPENT \$8.8 BILLION IN NOVEMBER; UP 19 PERCENT FROM 2003, ACCORDING TO THE HOLIDAY ESPENDING REPORT FROM GOLDMAN SACHS, HARRIS INTERACTIVE AND NIELSEN//NETRATINGS Online Consumers Spent the Most on Apparel/Clothing, Toys/Video Games and Video/DVD ROCHESTER, N.Y. and NEW YORK—December 6, 2004—Goldman Sachs, & Co., Harris Interactive®, and Nielsen//NetRatings’ Holiday eSpending Report revealed today that online consumers spent \$8.8 billion overall, excluding travel, in November 2004, marking a 19 percent jump over the \$7.4 billion spent online in November 2003. The 2004 figure represents a 62 percent increase from the \$5.5 billion that consumers spent online during the 2002 holiday season. According to the 2004 eSpending report, based on weekly surveys of more than 1,000 respondents, adult consumers spent the most on apparel/clothing, totaling \$1.5 billion in November 2004. The toys/video games (hardware and software) category came in second with \$1 billion, while the video/DVD category followed closely behind with \$882 million. The books and music categories rounded out the top five with \$621 million and \$481 million, respectively. (hardware and software) grew 43 percent over last year, while the video/DVDs (hardware and software) and music categories increased 39 percent and 32 percent, respectively. “We remain enthusiastic about the start of this holiday season, as several categories saw substantial revenue increases,” said Heather Dougherty, senior Retail analyst, Nielsen//NetRatings. “The growth in 2004 holiday revenue suggests that consumers are shifting more dollars to the Internet this season.”

Members only Raffle

Be sure to wear your badge to the General meeting as there will be a special members only raffle drawing for all members who wear their badges and are currently paid members. Be sure to get your free ticket at the meeting

Computer Essentials

By Pim Borman, Web Ed& APCUG Representative SW Indiana PC Users Group

What can be done to make computers true household appliances, intuitive and simple to use even by technophobes? Computers capable of email and word processing, Internet browsing, audio and video editing and storage, simple data processing such as checkbook and genealogy tree maintenance, and entertainment in the form of games and puzzles. After all, modern cars have highly complex, powerful engines under the hood, but turn on with a simple ignition switch and only need a steering wheel, accelerator and brakes for operation. Computers should be just as simple to use. Here are some suggestions.

A simple on/off switch for instant-on computing, with a reset button for the rare occasions the system goes haywire and needs to reboot. The hibernate feature in Windows XP is the nearest thing to it, but for shutting your system down you must first click on Start (!), then hold the shift key down to change the Standby option to Hibernate, and click on Hibernate. Stupidly unobvious, and it should be easy to replace the whole rigmarole by reprogramming the current on/off switch.

Security and privacy, built-in virus and spyware protection, automatically updated. Upgraded Internet/email protocols to thwart sender address spoofing. Fortunately, the need for improved security is now widely recognized, and the search for solutions is on.

Application programs. As my former boss used to say, "Be reasonable, do it my way." That should go double for computer applications that satisfy the users' needs without extraneous bells and whistles and with simple menus to access special features and built-in security provisions. Most common menu items should be available by using clearly labeled, standard, special purpose keyboard keys; read on.

Special purpose keys on the keyboard to perform common operations in most programs. There already are Insert, Delete, Backspace, Home, End, Page Up and Down, and Arrow keys; why not have more of that kind? To start with, the function keys (F1 – F12) could be reassigned, standardized, and clearly labeled to make them more useful. F1 might always provide context-sensitive help and be relabeled as such. F2 could Save current work while shift-F2 would Save as... F3 might do Find and Find/Replace operations, and so on. Many current programs, such as Microsoft Office, already make extensive use of the F-keys, but usage is non-standard and few users are familiar with them for lack of labeling. The same holds for the Windows and Menu keys on most keyboards; they provide handy shortcuts but are mostly underused.

Wireless Connections, high-speed, self-configuring, to peripherals such as a mouse, printer, scanner, sound system, and router for connections to Internet and a local computer network.

That rat's nest of wires under and behind our computers has to go!

Broadband connection to the Internet, essential for regular updates of security programs and desirable for other Internet activities. You may be able to think of more simplifications. Let me know about them.

Pim Borman (swipcug@sigecom.net) is Web Editor and APCUG representative for the SW Indiana PC Users Group, Inc (<http://swipcug.apcug.org>). This article appeared in the November 2004 issue of the P-SEE URGENT, newsletter of SWIPCUG

There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this article as long as it is kept in context with proper credit given the author. The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you.

SPYWARE NEWS:

NO END IN SIGHT FOR SPYWARE COSTS

IDC research group announced this week that spyware is one of the most expensive concerns for both business and home computer users.

The amount spent on anti-spyware software totaled \$212 million in 2003, but that amount is expected to reach \$305 million by 2008. The same study ranks spyware as the most common security threat PC users face.

Spyware increased by 260 percent over the past year. And there is some on your computer if you haven't been following our advice.



From The DealsGuy for January, 2005, by Bob (The Cheapskate) Click Greater Orlando Computer Users Group



When working the Handicap show I was impressed with the technology I saw. There are computers with sensors capable of detecting even eyebrow or eye movement that can be used to control certain things. There is too much to go into detail, but it was sure interesting to see all the technology available for the handicapped. One product was a special computer in the \$8,000 range that has tremendous capabilities. Legislation exists concerning the provision of whatever technology would help a student if certain tests suggest that a technology is necessary to help them. To find out more about how this legislation works, try a search for "IDEA", better known as "Individuals with Disabilities Education Act." If you know anyone severely handicapped, a test and that legislation could help him or her.

I also noticed the Christopher Reeves Foundation booth there and hoped he and Dana might attend, but was told his health prevented it at that time. Sadly, news of his death came shortly after that show.

Another show I worked was the Rockwell International Automation Fair and you would have surely "loved" that one. [<http://www.automationfair.com>] There were automation displays all over the place and I was totally impressed checking them all out. The exhibit area was 94,000-sq. ft. and packed with big name vendors demonstrating elaborate operational robots and conveyers with robotic arms moving packages around. Since then I found out that Charlie Semple of Los Angeles Computer Society was in attendance as a consultant and we were probably only a few feet apart at times without knowing it. Two magazines I picked up there were Automation World [<http://www.automationworld.com>] and Instrumentation & Automation News [<http://www.ianmag.com>].

Disappearing Rebates

I discovered a new problem concerning rebates. I've had good luck with OfficeMax rebates in the past, but the last two I sent in ended up with a follow-up phone call later by me only to be told that the check was sent on a certain date and cashed on a certain date; end of conversation. I gave them the benefit of the doubt for the first one, but when I got the same answer for the second one, I know I keep better records than that and we have no problem with mailboxes in our neighborhood. A \$10 rebate wasn't worth any further efforts, but that's making me more gun-shy of rebates.

Reminders

I talked to Rich Henf at Banner Badge [<http://www.bannerbadge.com>] and if you have not ordered one of these fun gadgets yet they will still honor the DealsGuy offer. Call 1-772-571-9944. If you had problems contacting them during Florida's vicious storms, they apologize and urge you to try again. Peet Bros. (weather station) may have had similar problems. I'm not sure but you may still be able to get that special on the Ultimeter Weather Station [<http://www.peetbros.com>] by calling 1-321-206-6214. When I ordered a Big Weather Picture for my weather station I found it was backordered, but I now have it. Just a glance provides all the weather information. What a nice present for my wife and I, (mostly me).

How About Helping Microsoft!

My thanks to Joe Barth of Alamo PC Organization for sending this information. Joe says; "They are seeking people to participate in Microsoft product evaluations and get free software. Ever wanted to talk to Microsoft about that one feature you wished the company would change in a product, or on a Web site? The Usability Research Group at Microsoft is interested in talking to you! All participants will receive a software gift for participating in a study." Check [<http://www.microsoft.com/usability/jump1.htm>].

Time Is Of The Essence

Here is a sophisticated time and data management software, C-Organizer Professional, which offers PC users a digital Planner, Event Scheduler, Calendar, Notebook, Address Book, Password and Bookmark managers, all packed up into one powerful and easy-to-use application. C-Organizer can bring out and help to cultivate time architect skills even in the most hopeless time prisoner. For further information, go to [<http://www.csoftlab.com>]. User Group people can get it for \$25.00 rather than the usual \$35.00 price by downloading (4.15 MB) at [<https://secure.element5.com/shareit/checkout.html?productid=167248&language=English&COUPON1=248QHM>] for the discounted price. I doubt there is any help for me and my scarcity of time. I'm supposed to be retired, but so far, I have only managed that part time, (mini-part-time).

How About A Great Relational Database!

I called Alpha Software to order the new version of Alpha 5 on special, and while talking to the order-taker, he remembered me so we created a deal for my readers. Alpha Software has been offering their database for years and has continued to improve it. They have introduced Alpha 5 ver. 6 and user group members can get a deal on it. Remember that Alpha 5 is a relational database that has some exciting new features. Check their Web site at [<http://www.alphasoftware.com>] for full information. You can build Web-accessible database applications without any programming. You can access and work with your data no matter where it resides if you have an Internet Web Browser. Alpha 5 uses Genies, which are similar to Wizards, but they say Genies are better.

Cont. Next Pg.

Deals Guy Cont.**The High-Tech Dreidel**

It offers action scripting with hundreds of predefined actions that can be used for building applications without writing one character of code. Alpha's Visual Report Writer will also impress you with its ease of use, and lets you accomplish custom layouts and many other tasks. As suggested above, it also works with HTML and supports Active X. Read more about it on their Web site and you will see that Alpha 5, ver. 6 is even more outstanding than ever. I've used Alpha Software's database for my own purposes for years and I'm no expert.

The retail price for Alpha 5 ver. 6 is \$349.00, but during January and February of 2005 you get a tremendous discount, just \$179.00 if you download it (24 megs). To do that, e-mail Brett Johnston at brett@alphasoft.com with the code "dealsguy" in the subject line to make arrangements for downloading. If you prefer to have it shipped, e-mail Brett with "dealsguy" in the subject line. You can also call Brett at 800-451-1018 Ext. 11. Shipping is \$12.00 in the US, \$30.00 to Canada.

Working On Your Icons?

I received this announcement from Roman Rudnik, Marketing Communications Mgr. of ArcticLine Software, which produces Bee Icons. He states: "Bee Icons is an icon customization tool that allows you to change over 250 system icons in Windows 95/98/Me/2000/XP, individually or using icon themes. I think you will find our software interesting. Designed for Windows 95/98/Me/2000/XP, the application allows changing over 250 standard icons separately, one after another, or all together using one of the many Bee Icons Themes. Along with Desktop, Drive and Folder icons, the program can successfully change icons on the Windows XP Start Panel. (DealsGuy note: Check the product page: <http://www.beeicons.com/features.php>.)

"We offer 15% discount for user group members. If you are interested, please e-mail me at roman@beeicons.com and I will send you a Discount coupon code. This code should be entered during registration process to get the discount."

Talk All Over The World

I was browsing a recent issue of Hewie's Favorites (his newsletter) and noticed something that might interest you. Information on their Web site is a bit vague so beware. Sounds like both parties must be on-line. Called "Free World Dialup (FWD)," it is located at <http://www.pulver.com/fwd/> and they claim you can make free phone calls over the Internet using your regular telephone and a computer program. I didn't try it. Maybe you could call your own phone with the computer and give your spouse hell, then hang up before they find out who is calling. Just a thought!

That's it for this month. Meet me here again next month if your editor permits. This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers or freebies I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of any products, no matter how enthused I might sound. Bob (The Cheapskate) Click bobclick@mindspring.com. Visit my Web site at <http://www.dealsguy.com>. I have posted new Web pages with announcements I received in 2004. Sorry they are not well organized, but what is there was a lot of work, as they all have to be edited.



In a world of 3-D video games and surfing the Internet, kids may look skeptically at dreidels - no color graphics, no electronic sounds and no batteries needed. How could a toy like that possibly be fun?

Even though the dreidel has been played with by children for thousands of years, kids today may find this simple little top a bit "low-tech" for their liking. For those modern day kids who think playing the dreidel game is soooo bo-ring, here's a new spin on the way we look at this favorite Chanukah toy.

THE OFFICIAL DREIDEL OPERATORS MANUAL

You are now the proud owner of a high-quality, state of the art "Dreidel" which can make you a winner! A multi-faceted, interactive educational and entertainment micro-system, the versatile Dreidel utilizes maximum kinetic transfer technology, putting years of wondrous experience at your fingertips.

Rapidly rotating on its axis, the Dreidel is driven by centrifugal forces that defy gravitational pull. The Dreidel operates efficiently on renewable energy sources at high, medium and low speeds. Velocity and RPM levels are adjusted by the flick of a finger. Perfectly balanced and precision engineered, the Dreidel is virtually maintenance free. It has no moving parts, and no batteries or upgrades are required.

TO USE: Hold joystick-like handle in upright position, using thumb and forefinger to accelerate. Best when operated on smooth surfaces with low coefficient of friction. Device may appear stationary, but sound indicates Dreidel is in use.

After completing its spinning mode, the Dreidel reaches its turning point and begins to gyrate, displaying various conic sections as it decelerates. Dreidel will then shut down automatically. Quick turnaround time allows Dreidel to be used repeatedly. Follow instruction code indicated above and restart.

INTERNET TALK

by
Frank Chao
 (December 2004)

Welcome one and all to the 76th "Internet Talk" article for "The Bug Report", a publication of the Greater South Bay PC Users Group (GSBUG). Liz and I wish you and yours a wonderful holiday season !

WAYBACK MACHINE

Do you like nostalgia? You might enjoy looking at some historic Web pages from back in the 1990's using the "Wayback Machine". It is located at <http://www.archive.org> For example, you can go to this location, type in <http://gsbug.apcug.org> and see how the GSBUG website looked at various dates between March 2000 and January 2004. For even older GSBUG Webpages, type in <http://www.lafn.org/community/gsbug/> to see how our Website looked between February 1998 and April 1999.

CHECKING OUT A CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTOR

If you are looking for a contractor to work on your home or business in California, you can find out about any problems that they have had with the Contractors State License Board at <http://www.cslb.ca.gov/consumers/default.asp>

Some of the contractors in the South Bay area have a very clean record and a few have a very bad record. The information at this Web site might save you a lot of aggravation and money. If you need to select a contractor in another state, most other states also have similar Web pages:

In Nevada, you can go to <http://www.nscb.state.nv.us/>

In Oregon, you can go to <http://www.ccb.state.or.us/>

For other states, go to <http://www.google.com> and search for state contractor board <name of state>

For example, for the state of Arizona, you would search for state contractor board Arizona in Google and one of the hits would be <http://www.rc.state.az.us/links.html>

COOL WEB SEARCH

"Cool Web Search",

also known as "CWS" is the most virulent spyware/adware trojan program that has ever been invented. It comes from some hackers in Russia and even the most technically astute computer technicians are often unable to eradicate CWS from infected computers. To learn about this nasty malware "application", go to http://beradio.com/mag/radio_browsers_hijacked/ For some instructions on how to eradicate "Cool Web Search", go <http://www.kephyr.com/spywarescanner/library/coolwebsearch.ifeats/index.phtml>

The instructions at this Web page include running "regedit" to edit the Windows registry which is risky. However, in the case if your computer has been infected with "Cool Web Search", it is a risk that you have to take.

CD STORAGE

Liz recommends that when you store CDs, you can save space by using double-type jewel cases that store two CDs, instead of using single-type jewel cases.

BLOGGING

Blogging, also know as Web Logging has proliferated over the past two years. To learn more about it, go to <http://www.blogger.com>

According to this Website: "A blog is a personal diary. A daily pulpit. A collaborative space. A political soapbox. A breaking-news outlet. A collection of links. Your own private thoughts. Memos to the world. Your blog is whatever you want it to be. There are millions of them, in all shapes and sizes, and there are no real rules. In simple terms, a blog is a web site, where you write stuff on an ongoing basis. New stuff shows up at the top, so your visitors can read what's new. Then they comment on it or link to it or email you. Or not. Since Blogger was launched, almost five years ago, blogs have reshaped the web, impacted politics, shaken up journalism, and enabled millions of people to have a voice and connect with others." This Web site contains blogs from nice folks throughout the United States and all around the world. The blogger Web site is owned by Google. To search for blogs on a subject, go to <http://www.google.com> and type in blog <subject> For example, to find blogs on fishing, type in blog fishing If you enjoy reading about other folks' fishing experiences and expertise, you would then be busy for a long time !

HOLIDAY SEASON GRAPHICS

In this festive season, you might need to "borrow" some graphics of festive objects, so here is a list of Websites for you to look at:

<http://home4christmas.com/hanuka.html>

<http://www.kidsdomain.com/holiday/chanukah/clip.html>

<http://www.patswebgraphics.com/christmas/Christmas.html>

<http://www.christmas-graphics.com/>

<http://www.caryn.com/holiday/holiday-Hclipart.html>

<http://www.bry-backmanor.org/holidayfun/hanukahclips.html>

<http://presentart.tripod.com/>

<http://www.holidaygraphics.com/christmas/>

<http://www.christmasfreebies.com/christmasgraphics.html>

<http://www.caryn.com/holiday/holiday-xmas-clipart.html>

To download a graphic into your computer, click on it with your right mouse button. Then click on "Save Picture As.."

VENICE NEIGHBORHOOD AREA NETWORK

The folks in the Venice area of Los Angeles are determined to provide themselves with free Wi-Fi wireless Internet access. See <http://vnan.org/index.php>

WAYS TO CONTACT ME:

If you have any questions or problems, I can be contacted by the following methods:

1. Send me e-mail at: fchao@pacbell.net

2. Leave me a voice message
at (310)768-3896.

3. Send "snail"

United States Postal Service (USPS) mail to Frank Chao 4001
Inglewood Ave.,
Ste. 101f PMB
305 Redondo Beach, CA 90278

Or sell your computer
and take up sewing instead !!

User Groups Overlooked Again

The industry has stagnated as market penetration has stopped dead, simply because we have forgotten that computer use has to be taught.

It always makes me laugh when people equate computers with appliances or assume that someday computers will become devices you can buy and immediately operate. In fact, computers are more like cars.

The car has been around for over 100 years, and it still requires training to use. In fact, a car is so dangerous that it requires a license to operate. Why do we expect that anything as complicated as a computer will someday be trivial to use? It never has been. It never will be. And that's why we need user groups. You may have heard of them. Apparently, the computer industry has forgotten about them.

The industry has recently stagnated as market penetration has stopped dead, simply because we have forgotten that computer use has to be taught. Computing is best taught by a friend or associate—the way parents teach children to drive. More complicated matters can be taught at school, similar to drivers' education. And traditionally, expertise is maintained by reading computer magazines and joining user groups. During the dot-com boom, user groups were already in decline, and the economic downturn made things worse. Monster groups that used to have meetings with thousands of people, such as the Houston Area League (HAL), have faded into near oblivion. The massive and powerful Boston Computer Society simply folded its tent.

How is it that user groups thrived in the late 1970s and early 1980s, when there were a fraction of the number of users who exist today? What happened? Some might argue that the Internet mitigated the need for such groups, but the decline began before the Net took over. Besides, the Internet should help groups to thrive, because of its community-engendering nature. So that argument doesn't fly.

I blame the industry itself. Chip and computer makers should do a better job of keeping magazines viable and user groups active. In the early days of computing, all these companies were involved in the user-group movement. One of the key figures in today's

scene is former IBMer Dave Whittle, who told me that today the company working most closely with user groups is Microsoft. Gee, and you wonder why it's so successful.

This became an issue with me shortly after a recent meeting I had with AMD, in which I was shown the company's plan to get the business back on track. The AMD folks gave me their presentation, which included a pitch for the AMD Global Consumer Advisory Board (AGCAB), set up "to identify and seek to resolve key challenges in computing technology facing home and small-business users." The 17-page document goes on and on about a technology adoption gap but never once mentions user groups, which are all about closing that gap. The document instead recommends convening focus groups, closing the digital divide, and creating a product success index, among other hopeless ideas—which also include "organizing knowledge cells." Knowledge cells? What is this, Russia in the 1920s.

The question I began to ask was, where is AMD in the user-group movement? It seems to be a natural fit, but even Intel is more involved.

What amuses me about many of these market concerns and the way companies such as AMD mean well with their do-nothing initiatives is that they seem to miss the big picture in more ways than one. Ignoring user groups is a classic. But look at AMD's Web site. I have a 1,600-by-1,200, 20-inch ViewSonic flat-screen. AMD's site has a fixed font that cannot be enlarged by the normal browser mechanism. It sits on my screen, the equivalent of unreadable 6-point type. Seems like a technology gap to me—and in this instance, AMD is causing it. Does the company need to create a committee to figure this out?

At least AMD is aware of the problem and is trying something, even though it's rubbish. And this certainly won't cost AMD the \$10 million that Intel is reportedly throwing away on recent pointless ads in *The Wall Street Journal*. Toss half that money at the user-group community through the Association of Personal Computer Users Groups (APCUG), a well run but unspectacular umbrella organization, and Intel might possibly reignite the tech scene.

The industry has forgotten the adage that it should **"leave the dance with the date that brung 'em."** **Computer companies ditched user groups in favor of the fickle prom queen who ditched them in return. Now they're complaining.**

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POLITICALLY CORRECT SANTA

by
Harvey Ehrlich



Twas the night before Christmas and Santa's a wreck...How to live in a world that's politically correct? His workers no longer would answer to "Elves", "Vertically Challenged" they were calling themselves. And labor conditions at the north pole Were alleged by the union to stifle the soul. Four reindeer had vanished, without much propriety, Released to the wilds by the Humane Society. And equal employment had made it quite clear That Santa had better not use just reindeer. So Dancer and Donner, Comet and Cupid, Were replaced with 4 pigs, and you know that looked stupid! The runners had been removed from his sleigh; The ruts were termed dangerous by the E.P.A. And people had started to call for the cops When they heard sled noises on their roof-tops. Second-hand smoke from his pipe had his workers quite frightened. His fur trimmed red suit was called "Unenlightened." And to show you the strangeness of life's ebbs and flows, Rudolf was suing over unauthorized use of his nose And had gone on Geraldo, in front of the nation, Demanding millions in over-due compensation. So, half of the reindeer were gone; and his wife, Who suddenly said she'd enough of this life, Joined a self-help group, packed, and left in a whiz, Demanding from now on her title was Ms. And as for the gifts, why, he'd ne'er had a notion That making a choice could cause so much commotion.

Nothing of leather, nothing of fur,
Which meant nothing for him. And nothing for her.
Nothing that might be construed to pollute.
Nothing to aim. Nothing to shoot.
Nothing that clamored or made lots of noise.
Nothing for just girls. Or just for the boys.
Nothing that claimed to be gender specific.
Nothing that's warlike or non-pacific.
No candy or sweets...they were bad for the tooth.
Nothing that seemed to embellish a truth.
And fairy tales, while not yet forbidden,
Were like Ken and Barbie, better off hidden.
For they raised the hackles of those psychological
Who claimed the only good gift was one ecological.
No baseball, no football...someone could get hurt;

Besides, playing sports exposed kids to dirt.
Dolls were said to be sexist, and should be passe;
And Nintendo would rot your entire brain away.
So Santa just stood there, disheveled, perplexed;
He just could not figure out what to do next.
He tried to be merry, tried to be gay,
But you've got to be careful with that word today.
His sack was quite empty, limp to the ground;
Nothing fully acceptable was to be found.
Something special was needed, a gift that he might
Give to all without angering the left or the right.
A gift that would satisfy, with no indecision,
Each group of people, every religion;
Every ethnicity, every hue,
Everyone, everywhere...even you.
So here is that gift, it's price beyond worth...
"May you and your loved ones enjoy peace on earth."

Notice: This poem is copyright 1992 by Harvey Ehrlich. It is free to distribute, without changes, as long as this notice remains intact. All follow-ups, requests, comments, questions, distribution rights, etc should be made to mduhan@husc.harvard.edu.

Maxims for the Internet Age!

- ◆ Home is where you hang your @
- ◆ A journey of a thousand sites begins with a single click.
- ◆ You can't teach a new mouse old clicks.
- ◆ Great groups from little icons grow.
- ◆ Speak softly and carry a cellular phone.
- ◆ C:\ is the root of all directories.
- ◆ Don't put all your hypes in one home page.
- ◆ Pentium wise; pen and paper foolish.
- ◆ The modem is the message.
- ◆ Too many clicks spoil the browse.
- ◆ The geek shall inherit the earth.
- ◆ A chat has nine lives.
- ◆ Don't byte off more than you can view.
- ◆ Fax is stranger than fiction.
- ◆ What boots up must come down.
- ◆ Windows will never cease.
- ◆ Virtual reality is its own reward.
- ◆ Modulation in all things.
- ◆ A user and his leisure time are soon parted.
- ◆ There's no place like <http://www.home.com>
- ◆ Know what to expect before you connect.
- ◆ Oh, what a tangled Website we weave when first we practice html.
- ◆ Give a person a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a person to use the Net and he won't bother you for weeks.

Can you whiz your way through Word?



Are you a shortcut whiz? You may be surprised by some of the ways Word helps you work efficiently? Try your hand at this quiz.

1. What is the fastest way to highlight a word every time it occurs in a document?

- Use the CTRL key to select all occurrences, and then highlight them all.
- Remember to highlight the word as you type.
- Press CTRL+F, type your word in the **Find what** box, and select the **Highlight all items found in** check box.

2. What is the most efficient way to save several Word documents at once?

- On the Tools menu, click Options and the Save tab, and then select the Allow fast saves check box.
- Hold down the SHIFT key and click **File**, and then click **Save All**.
- On the **File** menu, hold down the SHIFT key and click **Exit**.

3. Suppose you've written "suppose" too often. Suppose you right-click it; you'll see Synonyms.

- True.
- False.

4. What is the quickest keyboard way to switch back and forth between Word and other programs?

- ALT+TAB.
- CTRL+F10.
- CTRL+F5.

5. You can change a whole document from single-space to double-space by pressing CTRL+A, then CTRL+2.

- True.
- False.

6. What is the fastest keyboard way to insert a hyperlink?

- CTRL+I.
- CTRL+H.
- CTRL+K.

6. How can you quickly add a special look to selected text by changing its case to small capital letters?

- Press ALT+O, E, U.
- Press CTRL+SHIFT+K.
- Press CTRL+SHIFT+P.

7. You can use CTRL+P to open the Print dialog box and preview your printed document.

- True.
- False.

8. To quickly expand or collapse subdocuments in a master document, you would press:

- CTRL+\.
- ALT+SHIFT+PLUS SIGN.
- ALT+SHIFT+MINUS SIGN.

9. It's lunchtime. What's the fastest keyboard way to close Word?

- ALT+F10.
- ALT+F12.
- ALT+F4.

GOOD IDEAS TAKEN TOO FAR NEWS:

OLD DEAD CELL PHONES PUSHING UP SUNFLOWERS

Researchers announced this week that they have developed a new biodegradable cell phone casing material. That's the good idea.

These same researchers have imbedded a single sunflower seed into the case so that when the phone reaches the end of its life, the user can bury it. A few weeks later, nature's most beautiful edible flower will spring forth.

Blog

U.S. dictionary publisher Merriam-Webster says "blog" topped the list of most looked-up terms on its Web site during the last 12 months. The word will now appear in the DATALINE 10 DECEMBER 2004-2005 print version of Merriam-Webster's dictionary, defined as "a Web site that contains an online personal journal with reflections, comments and often hyperlinks."

However, Oxford University Press says "blog" is already included in some print versions of its Oxford English Dictionary and has entered mainstream usage. According to an Oxford U. Press spokesman. "Now we're getting words that derive from it such as 'blogosphere' and so on." According to the Pew Internet & American Life project, a blog is created every 5.8 seconds, and blog analysis firm Technorati estimates that the number of blogs in existence now exceeds 4.8 million.



**Computer Hysteria:
Compurescue!**

by
**Berry F. Phillips,
member of the Computer Club of Oklahoma City**

On a cold winter morn in December, I realized that I was missing the Christmas Spirit. Alas what must I do? I have it; I will turn once again to my trusty computer for a "Compurescue!"

Join me as I sing: Happily Addicted to the Web
(to the tune of "Winter Wonderland")

"Doorbell rings, I'm not list'nin,
From my mouth, drool is glist'nin,
I'm happy—although
My boss let me go—
Happily addicted to the Web.

All night long, I sit clicking,
Unaware time is ticking,
There's beard on my cheek,
Same clothes for a week,
Happily addicted to the Web.

I don't phone, don't send faxes,
Don't go out, don't pay taxes
Who cares if someday
They drag me away?
I'm happily addicted to the web!

.....
The Bill Gates Song
(to the tune of "The Christmas Song")

Netscape roasting on an open fire,
Apple begging on its knees,
Photo popping up on Time magazine,
Yes, Bill Gates dreams of days like these!
Everybody know he's never fully satisfied,
Throws himself behind each task,
World dominion is his company's goal.
Well, hey, is that so much to ask?
He knows the world is in his sway,
We'll buy whatever software he might toss our way,
We'll surf his Internet, watch his TV,
He'll take us anywhere we ask him—for a fee.

And so we're offering this simple prayer,
To Bill and all his MS grunts:
Since we all follow any standard you write,
Make it good, please,
Make it good, please,
Make it good, please, just once!"

.....

Violent Night
(to the tune of "Silent Night")

"Silent Mac, broken Mac!
System bombed, screen went black.
Books suggested things; I tried 'em all:
Shift key, desktop file, clean reinstall.
Now my deadline is tight,
This Mac's been silent all night.

Violent night, horrible night!
Lost my cool, filled with spite,
Threw my Mac through the balcony door
Watched it fall from the 20th floor,
Now I'm sleeping in peace;
Thank God I had it on lease."

TECHNOLOGY STATISTIC!!!

According to Nielsen Netratings
(www.nielsen-netratings.com)

**ONLINE SHOPPING
THE DAY AFTER THANKSGIVING
JUMPS 11 PERCENT YEAR-OVER-YEAR,
ACCORDING TO NIELSEN//NETRATINGS**

eBay, Amazon and Wal-Mart Stores
Lead Top Ten Online Shopping Destinations

NEW YORK — November 29, 2004 — Nielsen//NetRatings, the global standard for Internet audience measurement and analysis, today reported that online shopping jumped 11 percent in unique shoppers the day after Thanksgiving in 2004 as compared to the same day in 2003, according to the latest Nielsen//NetRatings Holiday eShopping Index, which tracks shopping activity at 109 key retail and shopping sites across ten categories.

The day after Thanksgiving, otherwise known as "Black Friday," traditionally the biggest shopping day of the year, saw the highest number of online shoppers tracked by the Index thus far during holiday season 2004, with 26 percent more shoppers, or 13.3 million people, visiting online stores on November 26 than the previous Friday, November 19.

"Even diehard holiday shoppers that weather the Black Friday crowds at sunrise know to research the Web for product selection and price comparisons before heading out to the mall," said Ken Cassar, director of client analytics, Nielsen//NetRatings. "Online shoppers deluged the Web sites of their favorite brick-and-mortar stores, as well as online retail resources such as BF2004.net, which provided ad updates on Black Friday sales and promotions."

eBay led the top online shopping destinations the day after Thanksgiving with 5.4 million unique audience (see Table 1). Amazon followed with 2.6 million, while Wal-Mart Stores saw 1.4 million shoppers. Rounding out the Top 5 sites were Target and BestBuy.com with 923,000 and 847,000 unique audience, respectively.



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(OCIPUG)

Mailing Address

**695 W. 19th St
Costa Mesa, CA 92627**

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Publication Deadline

Material for the **Jan.** issue must be received on or before

Jan. 15th, 2005 by
mborison@yahoo.com

Publication Guidelines

All material submitted will be published *exactly* as submitted, but may be subject to editing at the *Editor's* discretion. We reserve the right to refuse any material submitted for publication. Send all submissions as follows:

1. Send via Internet e-mail to: editor Mark Borison
mborison@yahoo.com
2. Mail a 3.5" disk so as to be received by the deadline by the Newsletter Coordinator at the OCIPUG mailing address above.
3. Hard copy to Editor at the OCIPUG mailing address above.

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Benefits of OCIPUG Membership include, but by no means are limited to:

- * Subscription to OCIPUG's monthly newsletter, *Readme.Doc*, with up to-date information on meeting schedules as well as the newest software and hardware.
- * Free monthly General Meetings with speakers from industry and academia describing advances in technology.
- * Free Special Interest Group (SIG) meetings/seminars to exchange tips and tricks and to solve problems.
- * Free technical support from knowledgeable fellow members via telephone and/or e-mail.
- * Pleasure in helping your fellow member solve their problems.
- * Camaraderie with those of similar interests.
- * Discounts from vendors on software, hardware, and other items.

Meetings Location

**Costa Mesa Senior Center
695 W. 19th St
Costa Mesa, Ca
Southeast Corner of 19th and Pomona**

**Orange Coast IBM PC User Group
695 W. 19th St
Costa Mesa, CA 92627**

Membership status: New Renewal - Member # _____

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Make check payable to OCIPUG Individual \$30.00 \$ _____
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I consider my skill level to be:

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