

The Outer Edge

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Newsletter of the Channel Islands PC Users Group



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Visit our Web page at: www.cipcug.org
e-mail: helen@cipcug.org
OS/2:<http://www.vcnet.com/os2-corner>

The Friendly Computer Club Helping Make Computers Friendly

Attendance at the
March general meeting
117 members and 9 guests

**WE WELCOME
3 NEW MEMBERS**

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ROOT DIRECTORY

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COMMAND.COM

By Andy Toth, President

The Linksys presentation was well received. Router firewalls are approaching the cost of software firewalls. The added plus is the ease with which a home network can be set up. Two for the price of one. The choices of models has increased to meet any mixed/matched combination of wire and wireless conceivable. The challenge is to select one.

At the presentation, the "Last Mile" was brought up. It refers to the connection from your computer to the backbone of the internet. This is where the current battle for your and my dollar is taking place. There are three major competing technologies: Land Lines, Radio Transmission and Optical Transmission. The land lines, DSL and Cable, are currently at the front as the hardware infrastructure exists. Small pockets of radio transmission markets are being tested. The optical, as far as I can determine, is still on the bench. What it boils down to in the end is which will meet the needs of the consumer of the product. Is a 20 MHz bandwidth enough? My DSL connection is mostly limited by the server on the other end. However, if the server had an I/O of 80 GHz?? Well, I can hardly keep up with the technology of my desktop much less the entire computer field.

Just a reminder, Please sign up at <siglist@cipcug.org> to receive an announcement about the coming SIGs. I now have a working computer for something other than work. Once the DSL line is HOT, I'll be fully back.

I will be continuing with my SIGs on Star Office 5.2 by Sun Microsystems. It may take 6-8 months to cover the basics of each application within it. Even though I need the MS Office Suite to telecommute, I am having a hard time justifying the cost each time the company changes the version. The software can be downloaded from www.sun.com (80Mb). Every bookseller carries a line of books on Star Office. I am using the "Star Office 5.2 Companion" to familiarize myself with the software. If you plan on attending a Star SIG and would like a CD please send me an

(Continued on page 3)

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Executive Committee Meeting Notes

March 2002 By Martha Churchyard

The CIPCUG Executive Committee Meeting was held on March 5, 2002.

Present: Andy Toth, Art Lewis, Ralph Duchacek, Ken Church, Toby Scott, Arlene Lakes, George Lakes, David Minkin, Roland Fleig, David Harris.

Coming SIGs were discussed, and some SIGs for

April were scheduled.

The treasurer mentioned that it is time for some kind of audit of the club books and proposed it for future consideration.

The board agreed that the club should hold another garage sale in July.

Why join CIPCUG?

Here are just a few of the reasons: Monthly SIGs, a monthly program, a monthly newsletter, a discounted Internet Service Provider, a library of computer books and videos, discounts on a variety of books and software, access to computer help through F1—Your Help Key, friendships with other computer users and the chance to help others with your knowledge.

Coming up

Program to be announced; watch the Web

Programs

No program had been scheduled by the deadline for TOE, so once again all we can advise is that you check the Web site for the latest information. .

The next meeting will be at 8:30 a.m., Saturday, April 6, at Freedom Center at Camarillo Airport, the usual location.

We apologize for the lack of information, but the lead time required to produce and mail The Outer Edge means the issue could not be held for the program information.

SIGs

All our Special Interest Groups are presented at Ventura County Computers. From the 101 Freeway, exit at Telephone, take Telephone south to McGrath, turn left and go one block.

Turn right on Goodyear and then right again into the second driveway. Unit 117 is the back, right corner of the industrial building.

The Special Interest Groups (SIGs) are sponsored by CIPCUG and led by volunteers. There is no charge for members to attend. If no moderator is listed, the SIG is not officially scheduled. Check the Web page before you attend to make sure there will be a moderator.

Here's the SIG schedule for the end of March and all of April:

Wednesday, March 20: Toby Scott — Note Tab Pro

Tuesday, March 26: Andy Toth — Star Office

Monday, March 8: Mike Shalkey — E-Mail Hints, Hurdles, and Helps.

Tuesday, April 16: Jan Wasserman and Paula Davis — Comparing Paint Shop Pro and Photo Suite.

Thursday, April 18: Toby Scott — HTML: Build-

April door prizes

The club door prizes for April are:

Microsoft Works 6.0 OEM

Symantec Norton Anti-Virus 2002 OEM

Microsoft Trackball Optical PS/2

3COM OfficeConnect Fast Ethernet 10/100 PCI RJ45
NIC

Total retail value of more than \$170.

We have two types of raffle tickets: one for any prizes offered by the presenter and one for club-provided prizes. The tickets for the presenter's prizes are free and limited to one per member. The tickets for the club-provided prizes are \$1 each, \$5 for six tickets, \$10 for 13 tickets and \$20 for 26 tickets and are available to anyone.

SIG reminders

available by e-mail

To keep members up to date on coming SIGs, Andy Toth has agreed to offer an e-mail reminder service to club members. Sign up and he will automatically send you a reminder about two days before each SIG, indicating the topic, location, and date.

We hope that this service will remind more people about coming SIGs. Check the front page of the CIPCUG Web site in the "Latest Page Revisions" or at the bottom of the SIG INFORMATION page. Or, if you want to sign up without going to the Web page, send an e-mail to <siglist@cipcug.org> with the subject line "subscribe" to be placed on the list.

ing a Web page with our own favorites to use as our own Home Page.

Tuesday, April 30: Andy Toth — Star Office - Demystifying the Star Office Desk Top.

ISP server gets major upgrade

Our technical adviser, Toby Scott, has installed a brand new server to handle the growth of our club's Internet accounts as well as Ventura County Computers' growth. He spent the weekend of March 9-10 working only between the hours of midnight and 8 a.m. to install it while managing to get nearly eight hours sleep napping during the days.

But by 4:30 a.m. Monday, nearly everything was up and running.

The server is an ASUS dual processor rack-mount computer with dual power supplies, six hot-swappable drive bays, 1 gigabyte of RAM, two Pentium III 1 GHz processors, three 18 gigabyte SCSI 10,000 RPM drives all run-

ning Windows 2000 Advanced Server.

This computer is about four times as powerful as the NT4 system it replaced.

While Toby was configuring it at his house, his family

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More on Command.com ...

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e-mail, <president@cipcug.org>, and I will burn a CD for a \$3 fee.

I have had requests to repeat the audio SIG. I plan on doing it at least a few times each year until the interest dies.

Q&A

Is it safe to keep using NAV 2000?

Reported by Martha Churchyard

Business meeting of March 2, 2002

Art Lewis announced that the California Oil Museum in Santa Paula is looking for donated computers. They can use Pentium 166s or so that are not outstanding but will work very well for what the museum is doing.

John Weigle, TOE editor, thanked the folding committee and George and Arline for hosting them. He also asked board members to send him an update on how they want to be listed in TOE.

Helen Long reported on the Web site and the SIGs for March. She has added a page for photographs from 2002-2003 to the site.

Be sure to check the Web site for any last-minute changes to the SIGs. If you want e-mail notification of the SIGs, please e-mail <siglist@cipcug.org> to sign up. The old list was lost, so everyone who is interested needs to sign up again. There is a link on the club Web site home page that makes this easy.

The New Horizons offer of a discount to club members ended Feb. 28. A few members took advantage of it, and it was a considerable savings.

Roland Fleig is looking for volunteers to staff the CIPCUG booth at computer shows. If you can do a two-hour shift at one of the shows, you get free admission to the show. Contact Roland if you can help let people know about the club.

Remember to save your empty printer cartridges and give them to either Andy or George at the meeting. The club is reselling them as a fund-raising effort.

Q&A session

Q: I have Norton Antivirus 2000. If I keep getting the updates, is that adequate?

A: Yes, it's adequate, but it may not be optimal. In 2001 they added active checking of e-mail [Editor's Note: E-mail checking was actually added in NAV 2000]. It doesn't work very well, but it does check e-mail as it comes in so that none of the e-mail scripts that run automatically when you download the messages can get on your system and do damage. With versions earlier than 2000, the only way you will detect them is if you take an attachment and save it to disk. If you open any of these things or if they have scripts that run when you display or view them, you won't necessarily fix them. Also, active update stops working after a period of time, and then you have to buy another period of subscription updates.

Another thing is, if any of you have Norton Antivirus 2001 and all of a sudden it says you cannot reach your server to get e-mail — you can send just fine, but you can-

not reach your server to receive e-mail — it's not your ISP, it's your Norton Antivirus. NAV 2001 creates a pseudo POP3 e-mail account on your hard drive, downloads the mail to that account to check it, and then moves it over into your e-mail program. It actually downloads the e-mail, but you can't get to it because it loses its settings. The solution is easy and quite clear. Open up Norton Antivirus and tell it to stop checking your e-mail, close Norton, reboot your computer, then go back in and tell it to start checking e-mail again. It will reset the settings and everything will be fine — for a while, until it gets confused again. It's a bug in Norton Antivirus 2001. It doesn't mean the ISP turned its server off; it's the "server" on your computer. NAV 2002 has an engine that checks the e-mail as it comes in, there is no pseudo-POP3 to confuse it, and it appears to fix that bug quite nicely.

To summarize, versions earlier than 2000 have no direct e-mail checking, 2000-2001 have the e-mail checking via the pseudo-POP3 server that gets confused, and 2002 checks the e-mail directly as it comes in instream and does not get confused.

Q: I bought 2002 and put it on one computer, and I have 2001 on another. Am I breaking my license if I put the same one on both?

A: Yes, the license is per computer. But if you are going to upgrade don't get 2002 until your license upgrade expires on 2001 because you can't carry it over. We had that problem at work also, and we would just occasionally have to reconfigure; it's no big deal.

Q: I had trouble with Outlook SMTP (outgoing) with Norton AV 2002 mailbox, and someone told me to turn off the scanning of Outlook. My question is, why?

A: Because e-mail viruses almost all propagate themselves by taking your address book and mailing themselves out to everybody you know, giving the virus to all of your friends, and only your friends.

Q: How will I get it to work if I turn it off?

A: Turn it off and turn it back on again and see if you still have problems. If you still have problems, I don't know what the answer is. You will probably have to ask Symantec. Yours is the only instance I know of somebody reporting that, and I didn't see anything about it in the Symantec knowledge base (although the knowledge base is not very adequate). Turning it off and turning it back on again worked in 2001 on incoming; maybe that will work on outgoing. That is actually a nice feature if it works, because it will prevent you from blowing viruses out to everybody you know.

Q: You have talked about MSCONFIG, and in my MSCONFIG, when I go to the Startup tab and I have rein-

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More Q&A: Can I get rid of duplicate startup entries?

(Continued from page 4)

stalled some programs, I have double or duplicate listings. How do you get rid of them?

A: Just uncheck them.

Q: I do uncheck it, but you still get the extra line there.

A: If you want to get rid of the duplicate line there, you have to edit the registry in four different locations, I believe. If you don't do it accurately, you have instability in your computer. It's something that I've decided I'm not good enough to do — though your mileage may vary. My strong recommendation is that you just live with the duplicates, they're just cosmetic.

Q: I'll forget that then. A follow-on question: When I uncheck the QW.DLL line from Quicken, I'll reboot the computer next day and it's there again. It just keeps coming back on startup. Is there a solution there?

A: I've never seen it come back like that. I have if you update it, sometimes you have to go in and uncheck it again, but I've never seen it come back just the next day. Has anyone else? Does anyone have a solution?

Q: When I check the Quicken, right next to it is Billminder, and Billminder always comes back again.

A: I have Quicken and Billminder, and my Billminder stays unchecked. I don't know what the difference is. Has anyone figured out how to get rid of it?

Q: I had the same problem and got rid of it by removing

it in Quicken setup. I couldn't just wipe it out from the selective startup, but taking that option in the Quicken setup worked for me.

A: OK, go into Quicken setup and remove it. That's weird; it must be different versions of Quicken or something.

Q: I'd like to know how I can get Windows to forget a password. When I go into my brokerage account I type in my account number and when I push Tab to go over to the password, it appears. Of course, it's stars, but I guess a while back I must have selected that I wanted Windows to remember it. So how do I get it to forget it?

A: Right offhand I don't know of a way. Have you tried typing in the wrong password?

Q: Yes and another box comes up saying, "The password you entered isn't the same as in the Windows memory."

A: At that point have it memorize a wrong password, and then you can just overwrite it each time with the right one. Try doing it with just a space. If you don't type in anything, I don't think it will memorize it, but I think it will memorize a new password that consists of one space. I can't think of another way to trick it into doing that. Play around with it and see what you can come up with. If you find a really elegant solution that works with no password, come

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More Q&A: 'NetSP' creates problems

(Continued from page 5)

back and report to us.

Q: I use AT&T Global for my ISP and recently every time I use the dialer I get a little box saying "NetSP" has caused something wrong, and I've got to close the program. If I click on that little box and close it, then Internet Explorer just goes on and I'm on the Internet and can do whatever I want to do. But that box keeps coming back every time I dial up.

A: NetSP? That's not part of the Windows dialer, it's part of the AT&T dialer. The only thing I can think of would be to make sure you know exactly what your dialer settings are and then delete your AT&T dialer and re-create it. I don't know of another way to solve that. You're into proprietary software and I don't use AT&T. Does anyone else have any ideas with that?

Q: I have Windows 98 SE. If I leave my computer on all night most of the time the next morning when I wake it up, I can see the desktop, and I try to use it, and then it just goes blank. I tried turning all the programs off, and that doesn't seem to make much difference. It doesn't always do it, but much of the time it does.

A: The sleep mode is a notorious problem for all the versions of Windows. Ideally what's supposed to happen is the hard drive stops spinning, the computer goes down into a bare maintenance mode where just the memory chips are running, which consume almost no electricity, and the computer just barely trickles along. When you come back and move the mouse or tap the space bar or something, it will wake up and come back to exactly where it was. It doesn't always do that though, and I don't have any sure-fire solution.

The general method that I use is to turn off all of the automatic shutdowns, just have the monitor turn itself off after a period of time, but not have the hard disk spin down. Sometimes you have to do that in CMOS, sometimes you can do it just in Windows. It depends on what version of Windows you have and how recent your CMOS is. But that means that you probably don't want to leave the computer on all night because you really don't want to have that hard drive spinning all night doing nothing.

One of the things you can do, if you have one of the computers whose off button, on the front, if you push it while the computer is running, doesn't appear to do anything (you have to hold it for like 10 seconds before the computer goes off), try waking it up by tapping that button for about a second, not long enough to turn it off. That actually is the Wake key; it's supposed to wake the computer up. Sometimes it will do a better job, so give it a try. If you have an older computer that goes off immediately when you push that button, obviously it won't work.

Laptops almost always work better because it's a critical function for laptop makers, it must work well. The laptop manufacturer installs the operating system, and if it doesn't

work well in their lab tests, they put special drivers and so on that make it work well. For desktops everyone just relies on the standard Windows settings. And debugging it is virtually impossible, Microsoft puts out almost no information about the process, and a large part of it is hardware. It's not Microsoft, it's the BIOS manufacturers, the Chips & Technology, Award, AMI, SIS, et cetera. Some of them do a better job than others. Chips is probably notorious for being pretty bad at it.

Q: On bootup I get a notice "conflict at 2F8" and I have to press F1 to continue. How can I eliminate that conflict?

A: Do you have two serial port devices configured? That's a serial address.

Q: Yes.

A: OK, you need to go into your CMOS, and figure out where your serial and parallel ports are configured. You have two devices using the same address. When you try to use it like that, only one of them will work. You'll continue to get the error message because hardware bootup detects that there are two devices using the same address, and they can't.

Q: Could my scanner be the problem there?

A: It will not be the scanner. The scanner may not work because of the conflict; the conflict is in CMOS, the conflict is not in your scanner. When you do bootup, assuming you're not using Compaq or one of the proprietary guys that fix it so you can't see these, the computer will say, "hit Del to enter setup" or F2, those are the two most common. If you hit that key, you can go into setup, and in either PCI or Advanced or one of the tabs across the top, you can look at the addresses that your computer is using in hardware for devices. You have a hardware conflict in your computer. It has nothing to do with Windows. This is a conflict that takes place before you get to your operating system.

Q: Strangely, it doesn't seem to affect what the computer does at all.

A: That's because, whatever the device is that you're assigning conflicting addresses to, you're only using one of them. The other plug is blank or empty. It's not going to do anything. But if you were to plug something into that, suddenly neither would work. So you have a situation that could mess your computer up pretty badly, your printer or mouse or whatever you have attached to that device that's conflicting will stop working as soon as you plug something into the other device.

Q: So I go into CMOS ...

A: Go into CMOS and start looking for port addresses. If that is something you're not comfortable with, we'll do it for \$30, or you can get other shops to do it. It's not a very difficult or time-consuming job, and if you're worried about messing up your computer it might be worth it.

Q: I got a digital camera for Christmas, and I love it. I

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More Q&A: USB problems often hard to trace

(Continued from page 6)

got a brand new computer last month, and when I use the USB port — you're supposed to go into Windows Explorer and see a new drive. But I can't on the new computer. My question is, could it be because I have a DVD and a CD re-writable, so I've got an A drive, a B, C and D?

A: That's not the reason ...

Q: When I plug it in, it says, "Windows trying to find new device" and then something happens and it doesn't have a drive letter. Down at the bottom it says, "Warning, before you shut the device off you've got to click here to release the device ..."

A: USB when it works, works great. When it doesn't it can be a real mess to fix.

Sometimes you actually have to delete the USB device driver and have USB reconfigure itself. Usually the USB root hub is the last device in the Device Manager. You can try that, but do the least invasive ones first. Try getting rid of just the software for your camera. Go into Control Panel, System, and then the Device Manager tab on System, and look for your yellow exclamation marks or question marks. Delete the devices, reboot the computer and let them re-detect. Sometimes that will shake it free. For some USB devices, you have to uninstall the software, then remove the check mark, then unplug the device and reboot your computer so it's not detected, install the software and then reboot the computer with the device plugged in again, so it can detect it with the drivers running to pick it up. You

need to read the manual for the device. USB devices can be tricky.

Q: Two unrelated questions: With Microsoft you can use the Tab key to go from windows to window when you're in a program. Does Microsoft have anything to reverse that?

A: Shift-tab will go backwards.

Q: Second question: I have several of what are now considered small hard drives with various information on them, and I now have a large hard drive and I'd like to consolidate all my information in one place. Is the proper way to do that to create a folder like "old drive A," "old drive B" and then dump that all into them?

A: Yes.

Q: Now, from what I understand Norton has Ghost and Power Quest has Drive Image. Which one is better to use?

A: They're different programs. Ghost is used to copy one drive to another if you want to make an exact replica, so that's not the appropriate program for what you want. Drive Image probably would work better.

Q: Can Drive Image be on either drive, or does it need to be on the large drive?

A: Put it on the large drive. I'm not sure it has to be, but that's how I've always done it, and it works.

Q: Several of the drives are maxed out and I may have just very, very little room there. **A:** Put it on the big drive.

(Continued on page 8)

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More Q&A: How much power used in sleep mode?

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Q: Getting back to computer sleep modes, if your computer is on sleep mode and it says that the power supply is 250 watts, how much wattage is it drawing? And does that include the monitor? What if the monitor is in sleep mode, does that draw very much power?

A: If the monitor is in sleep mode, it draws very, very little power — about the same as a radio, however much that is. It's like your television sets that have the remote off and on, there's actually a little core that keeps running in order to have the remote turn it on. The monitor has a similar type of mechanism that waits for a signal from the computer, but basically all of the heavily amp-sucking parts of the monitor are not running. Your power supply goes down into some kind of a reduced state, but the fan still runs. I don't know what the minimal consumption is, but I think it varies by model. If they are an Energy Star partner I think they have to tell you what it uses on standby, but it's not as minimal as the monitor is.

Q: One more question: If you use the sleep mode does that reduce wear and tear on your computer because of reduced amounts of transient power when you turn it on and off?

A: Yes, it will reduce that. It spins the hard drive down, so it will reduce the wear and tear on the bearings on your hard drive, and several other things. And it significantly reduces the heat buildup, because there is hardly any.

Q: So basically is it better to leave your computer in sleep mode than to turn it off?

A: That's one of those debates I can find people on both sides of the issue. I think with the energy problems we've had in the last year or so, even in sleep mode you'll use significantly more electricity than shutting it down and starting it up again. So I think most of the literature is now suggesting we shut them down when not in use for more than a couple of hours. Your mileage may vary. The only thing I can tell you is to read the manual for your computer, the manufacturer of your case, to find out how much power it is using in standby mode. Your big sucker on standby mode is the power supply.

Q: One of my motherboards has an ALM riser for, I guess, audio or modem. Can you explain that?

A: The motherboard has an ALM riser. It is a device that essentially uses the motherboard for the processing, but it provides an external card interface so that you can plug things into it. It is commonly used for modems. It's essentially a Winmodem. It works off of the motherboard, but it plugs into a very thin little slot, usually, and then provides you with a little plug you can plug your modem into. Generally speaking, they are devices found on inexpensive motherboards. It's a way of saving money by not having discrete components, not having a real modem. It's a lot cheaper to manufacture the little risers than to manufacture a real modem or sound card, or whatever. You probably

want to avoid these things if you are using Linux, maybe OS/2, because they may not have the drivers to run the software for them. They may not function under other operating systems. They work just fine under Windows, however.

Q: I installed a new printer two or three weeks ago and got a message, HPHM causing invalid, etc, so I called Hewlett Packard and I haven't seen that message since then. But this week I did get another message that says, "Unable to start driver from HPH bla bla."

A: When you get the second message, does the printer continue working?

Q: (inaudible) without the connection and then you push the yellow exclamation point, connect, and then it seems to continue to work, but I don't want it stripping its gears or something.

A: It won't strip its gears. What it might do is might not correctly report the ink levels if you use the software interface to check your ink levels and that sort of thing. That's the interface that works on that. But it's the reporting back interface you're having trouble with. I think the printer will still work until the ink runs dry. (Incidentally, the most common problem for people who bring printers into the shop, about 75 percent of the time it's remedied by putting in an ink cartridge.)

Q: My printer continues to work, it's just that I get these notices and it makes me nervous.

A: I understand; what I'm saying is that it may very well be that it will stop reporting your ink levels correctly, and so it may say you have plenty of ink when, in fact, you have none. Every time you print, the level goes down, and the level it reports should continue to go down until it's empty, and it should report that it's empty. If those get out of synch, then suddenly your printer will stop working and you won't know why, because you'll look at the ink levels and it will say they are full.

Q: It says they are half full.

A: Then it's probably still working. Keep looking at it and make sure they continue to go down as you use it.

Q: About six months ago I put an HP on my system that came with a USB cable. It worked fine for about two months, and then it quit working with the USB cable.

A: I'll go back to what I said before. When USB works, it works, and when it doesn't want to work, it's a mess. I'll give you the procedures for debugging USB, but it's long and involved and it can be a pain in the neck to do.

The first thing you do is to delete the device in the Device Manager, reboot the computer and let it detect it again and see if it will reconfigure. If that doesn't work, you want to uninstall the software, delete the device, and then depending on what the install instructions say, install the software first and then have it detect it, or have it detect it and install it, whichever they recommend. If that doesn't work, delete the USB root hub and the other USB devices out of

(Continued on page 9)

More Q&A: Checking printers' ink levels

(Continued from page 8)

Device Manager, have the USB reinstalled, and then you get to reinstall all of your USB devices. And if it still doesn't work, you shoot yourself, because what else is left?

Q: Going back to the previous question, how do you check the print level?

A: First of all, not all printers will allow you to check the print level in software. It takes one of the more modern printers. But if you have a printer that will do it, it will give you a program that, generally speaking, if you go into Control Panel, Printers, right-mouse click on the printer in the printer list, go down to Properties, and on Properties will be a tab that will report the status of your printer. Sometimes you get to that page and you have to actually click on a box that says something like "check print levels," and sometimes the tab reports it directly. It varies from printer to printer, but it will be in there if it checks it. Other printers will have a separate program that reports, and that will be in your Start Menu, usually under the name of your printer manufacturer, somewhere in there will be a printer reporting or status tool. It tells you what your ink level is, which can be very handy.

Q: My computer will not give me print levels, but my husband's does. How can I get that on mine?

A: Let me ask you, is it plugged into his computer and

you're using it as a network printer? It won't report the ink levels on a networked printer. It only reports it on the local printer, on the computer that the printer is actually plugged into. [It was a networked printer.]

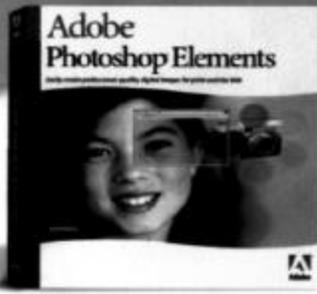
Q: I understand that there is a new version of USB out, USB 2. Do you know anything about it?

A: Out is probably not the right word. USB 2 has some improved diagnostics and reporting to stay healthier, supposedly. I want to see it in action before I'd really say that's true. It's faster, even faster than Firewire, but only slightly. It's probably going to replace Firewire and it's backward compatible with USB 1, so your USB 1 devices should all work. It's a panacea that is going to solve all computer problems for everyone everywhere — just like all technology will until the day it is actually released to the unwashed public who always screw it up, because it doesn't work for them like it worked for the engineers in the labs. It has been released in engineering quantities for manufacturers to test. A few manufacturers may have something that is actually shipping, but I don't think there is anything official by any of the standards bodies. SIS, ALR and those guys are not shipping USB 2 compliant motherboards yet.

Q: (Inaudible)

A: That figures, they've got the absolute cheapest BIOS

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More Q&A: Getting what you pay for

(Continued from page 9)

known to man. Not only are all the components manufactured in China, they are assembled in China. The original problem child in the industry was a Packard Bell computer. They sold for 60, 70 percent of what everybody else's entry-level computer was, and they were absolute total junk. They were completely proprietary, impossible to work on — you couldn't get parts for them. Blessedly, they have gone out of business. But Packard Bell forced the good computer manufacturers to come out with a low-end cheap line to compete. The next generation of cheap computers from Hewlett Packard, Dell, Compaq, and so on weren't too bad, but they weren't all that great either.

Then came the E-Machine. Packard Bells were bad, the E-Machine was even worse. The modem on the E-Machine is so bad that there are several ISPs who have a notice on their Web page they will not support modems on an E-Machine. They are known not to work most of the time. Now they are better than they used to be, but they are still a disaster. But they were cheap. So HP, Dell, Compaq, Gateway, and so on, came out with an even cheaper computer. They have now reduced their low end down to the point where it's really absolute junk. They are not at fault; I do not blame them a bit. Their choices were either to become a small bit player in the manufacturing of computers or to find a way to deliver cheap computers. Because the public didn't know, they weren't informed, and they didn't particularly care. As long as they could get a computer that looked like it was toward the high end of specifications (the processor speed, the RAM, and so on) the public didn't really care what it was getting. So the bottom end of everybody's line is junk. The HP Pavilions are just disasters. The HP Vectra line, which costs just about twice as much for the same specifications, are very nice computers. The Dell bottom line is also junk, maybe a little better than the Compaq and the Hewlett Packard junk.

Q: What do you mean by junk?

A: Power supplies that don't give you real solid 5 volts, or whatever they're supposed to give, of power; cases where the metal isn't turned, and they cut your fingers when you start working on them; a lot of bad soldering.

In order to build motherboards with wave solderers, etc, it costs half a billion dollars or so. If a manufacturer has a factory that's gotten old and doesn't have all the latest equipment, and they decide it's time to replace it, they will pack that factory up, lock, stock and barrel, ship it to China or Thailand or some Third World place, and have them start making the low end equipment. The good places are Singapore, Ireland, and Mexico. Thailand is borderline now. Most of the real junk is coming right out of China. The manufacturing equipment and engineering quality control they have are bottom of the line. The BIOS chip sets on the motherboard are old, have known flaws, and are being closed out by VIA and some of the other chipset manufac-

urers. Sometimes you can look at the dates on the chipsets, if you snoop around for the date in the CMOS, and you can see that even on a new computer it's not anything like a current date.

People don't understand about computers and computer speed. Right now there are all kinds of ads out for cheap Pentium IV systems. You can buy one for \$800. How do they do that? First of all, you have no cache. Why is that important? When a computer processes information, there is a preprocess where the information comes in, it is sequenced, the computer figures out what the processor is going to need first, what it's going to need second; the stuff that is iterative, that is, it is used over and over again, is put into a cache so that it can be there without having to go out to memory, which is much slower. There are about three wait states, three complete clock cycles, to go out to memory and bring it back in. So the cache will significantly speed up any processing.

AMD was beating Intel to the punch on all of the processor speeds; it had faster processors all through the Pentium III years. Intel got upset about this, and said, one of the things that's slowing us down is this cache thing, so we won't manufacture a cache on the board anymore. No L1 cache, L1 means level 1, on the chip. Only the more expensive Xeon chip had L1 cache. If you want cache, you can get L2 cache, which is one step away, one more wait state on the clock cycle to get to it, but it's closer and it will speed it up a little bit. If you pay for it, you can get L2 cache. Now why should you care? Because a 900 Mhz Celeron chip with L1 cache will run circles around a 1.7 Ghz Pentium IV with no cache, in any real world application test. Intel has been very successful in the marketing wars and has recouped a lot of ground selling them to ignorant computer users. A 1.4 Ghz AMD is still about 30 percent faster than a 1.7 Ghz Pentium IV with no cache. If you buy based on Mhz you're probably making some mistakes.

What else don't they tell you? When Intel came out with their Pentium IVs, the bottleneck for processor speed was the speed of the motherboard and the memory speed. And so Intel came out with a new specification for memory

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More Q&A: Inexpensive not always a bargain

(Continued from page 10)

called Rambus. AMD, facing the same bottleneck, came out with DDR, double data rate. Rambus is tricky to build and expensive. A lot of junk is produced that has to be thrown away. It had some theoretical advantages, but DDR RAM clobbered it in the marketplace. The next generation of Pentium IV is going to be DDR RAM. Rambus was on the market less than a year. If your Rambus memory goes bad two years from now, or you want to upgrade, you may not be able even to find it. Every dealer out there is unloading his stock of Pentium IVs that use Rambus memory as fast as he can.

The problem with anything that does not succeed in the market and goes off the market in a relatively short period of time is, nobody stocks it and it is very hard to find. If it is available it is very expensive because it is a special order. There can be a high failure rate on it because it has been out there a long time and they keep cycling it hoping it won't come back again.

I'm not real happy with a lot of the cheapening of the product that's going on out there. Let's do a test: How many of you have computers running that are 5 years old or more, maybe not your primary one, but you're still using it? A goodly percentage of us — virtually all of the low end computers that are being manufactured today will not be running five years from now. Power supplies will give out, the motherboards will give out — and most of these are all

on one motherboard; if something gives out, the whole motherboard's junk.

The other aspect of the speed thing is the speed of the motherboard, 66 Mhz, 100 Mhz, 133 Mhz, 200 Mhz, and 266 Mhz. If you are going to buy a cheap system, ask them what the speed is. It is an overall determinant of overall system speed, how fast data can get from other components like memory, video, and so on.

Also, what is the speed of the hard drive? The cheap ones are all coming out with 5,400 RPM drives, but there are 7,200 RPM drives that are significantly faster, and some of the systems being manufactured are only 66 Mhz interfaces. The industry standard is 100, that's a 50 percent increase in speed. When you boot your computer, 70 percent of the wait time that you have is the time your system takes to read the hard drive. Only 30 percent, approximately, is the processor actually processing data. By far and away the biggest wait the typical computer user has is not the processor; it's the hard drive, probably by a factor of 2 to 1. If they can't tell you what the speed is for a cheap system, don't buy it.

Q: How about hard drive speeds?

A: Two factors: There's the bus speed, which right now is either 66 Mhz or 100 Mhz for IDE drives. That is how fast data can move from one end to the other once it starts moving. The second thing is the latency or seek time. The

(Continued on page 12)



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Networking your home or office with Linksys

By John Weigle

<jweigle@vcnet.com>

Representatives of Linksys and All-City Computers were peppered with questions as they described the Linksys tools for home and office networks at our last meeting.

The speakers were Chris Chapman, Linksys product manager; Scott Schweizer, Linksys national account manager; and DeeWayne Jones, retail sales manager for All-City Computers.

The Linksys product line includes power line routers and bridges, wireless routers, cable modems, CAT-5 routers, network adapters, hubs, print servers and storage devices. The company specializes in home, home-office and small-office networking applications.

Why network? To allow two or more computers to share Internet access, files and hardware, such as printers, Schweizer explained.

Networks can be connected by cables (the wires) or can be wireless. Even the Internet, the world's largest computer network, is available wireless in some areas, he added. The Internet is available by satellite in some areas, but only 8 percent of the U.S. population has access to cable or DSL Internet service, Chapman said. California ranks high on the list of numbers of such connections.

A cable DSL router — Chapman showed a Linksys four-port router — lets several users connect to the Internet via DSL or cable modems and provides security measures. A direct connection is inherently insecure, so the router also includes a firewall. The router includes a CD with full instructions on setting it up, and more information is available on the company's Web site and elsewhere on the Web.

"These devices are very easy to configure. It does not take a rocket scientist to figure this out," Chapman added.

The equipment can support up to 253 users: You pay for

(Continued on page 14)

More Q&A: Security settings and updating

(Continued from page 11)

5,400 RPM drives are usually in the neighborhood of about 13 milliseconds seek time. The 7,200s are down around 8. When you click on a file, how long is the delay from the time you click until the hard drive moves the heads over, gets them positioned over the right track, and then that track spins underneath the head so it can start reading your data? That's latency. That has nothing to do with how fast the data can move across the board once it starts being read by the hard drive, it has to do with how long it takes before it starts to read data. There are two factors: latency, which is a factor primarily of hard drive speed. The faster it spins, the less you have to wait for it to come around again, because the buttons that actually read the data are fixed, and the hard drive turns underneath them. If it misses, it has to wait one more RPM for it to come around. If it were only one, that's no big deal, but frequently the data gets moved around if you haven't done a defrag recently. The data gets "checkerboarded," with little pieces of data in a bunch of different locations. It has to move over here for however long your latency is, read some data, move over again with some more latency and read some more data, et cetera. That process can slow your computer down to a crawl.

If any of you have old systems you haven't defragged recently, and you think it's really getting slow, you may not even need a new computer; all you need to do is to defrag. Be sure to run Scandisk first, and then defrag.

Q: When I perform a Windows Update, it tells me my security settings are too high.

A: Let's talk a little bit about ActiveX. The question is,

sometimes when he goes out to a site he clicks on a link and it will say, "Your ActiveX settings are too high to allow this to work." And he asks, what's the solution, just turn off all your security?

The answer is, you have to make a judgment and decide what it is you are doing and what the risks are. It's interesting that the default Windows install on the latest versions of ME from Microsoft sets the security so high that you cannot do a live update from the Microsoft site. It's a problem. You can go into the Windows, Tools, Options, the Security tab and get rid of all your security. The hackers will love you. On the other hand, if you set it all up so that nobody can install ActiveX or Java, JavaScript, Visual Basic scripts, you probably can only visit 20% of the sites on the internet. Almost all pages have some kind of scripting language in them.

In the security settings, there are 3 choices: allow, disallow (or prohibit) and ask. On a system where I am having trouble I go in and convert all of the prohibits to ask. Then when I go out to the Internet it will keep asking me if the scripts can run. It depends on the site I'm visiting and how much I trust them whether I will allow it or not. I have the systems I use all configured this way, and it's a pain in the neck. I always allow signed controls. It doesn't guarantee anything, but they do have a security system and it has to be approved by Microsoft or someone else in the industry. That's a compromise, but you're pretty safe with signed controls, and it will save me a whole lot of clicks to get the page to display.

BEGINNERS CLASS

March 2002

Mike Strecker roostermike.roosterm@gte.net

LOGO



KEY

The Windows logo key, is located in the bottom row of most computer keyboards used today. Press and release it and up pops the Start menu. If you hold down the logo key and press a letter key (as shown below), it does the following tasks:

- Windows + D: Minimize or restore all windows
- Windows + E: Display Windows Explorer
- Windows + F: Display Search for files
- Windows + Ctrl + F: Display Search for computer
- Windows + F1: Display Help and Support Center
- Windows + R: Display Run dialog box
- Windows + break: Display System Properties dialog box
- Windows + shift + M: Undo minimize all windows
- Windows + U: Open Utility Manager

KEYBOARD SETTINGS



Click on Start then Settings then Control Panel.

Click the Keyboard icon.

Note If all of the Control Panel icons are not displayed, click view all Control Panel options.

In the Keyboard Properties dialog box, select the appropriate tab:

To adjust the character repeat rate, repeat-delay speed, and the cursor blink rate, select the Speed tab. We will cover these keyboard settings in class.

New page features additional photos

By Helen Long

<helen@cipcug.org>

I am a tad behind in club photos. I have created a new page called Club Photos 3, which has the pictures for the general Saturday meetings beginning 2002. I plan to make new pages for 2002 for the Behind the Scenes page. This is being done in an effort to keep the pages from taking forever to load. Keep your eye peeled for these new pages.

Michael Shalkey has a Web page for the SIGs he is doing at <www.geocities.com/cipcugsig/>. Check it out. He has a couple of his classes posted here. Neat idea, Michael. From his Must See Sites SIG he has a site with L.A. Free-way traffic jams. Anybody on the way to the airport should check that out.

I will list this site on the Index page in the TOC under Education as Shalkey's Sigs.

A few club members have asked about an e-mail membership list.

The club does maintain one; however, it was decided not to distribute it. George and Arline Lakes maintain this list and anytime you change your e-mail address, you should contact them so they can update your information. Anytime you want a club member's e-mail address, just contact George or Arline at <thelakes@cipcug.org> or call them at 983-2969. The information is available to club

members but will not be published in order to keep it out of the hands of spammers.

We have 41 club members signed up for the CIPCUG ISP. This is only a tad more than 10 percent of the membership. Our service has been excellent, as I have had no reports of unable to connect. As our fees are only \$15 per month, I

am at a loss to understand why there is not more participation. When you hear the treasurer's report, there are times that it sounds like it isn't beneficial, but keep in mind that I bill on a quarterly basis, and we pay ISWEST monthly; so four times a year there is a lot of money coming in with a minimal amount being disbursed monthly. Since part of the income for the ISP is donated back into the treasury, it really is a money-maker for the club.

If you are interested in helping the club out and you don't currently have an ISP, or you are unhappy with what you have, please consider giving the club a try.



More on Linksys: Wireless service offers freedom

(Continued from page 12)

one IP address on your cable modem or DSL connection, but many people on many computers can use it. You could even share access with a neighbor within 320 feet. "We're not promoting it, but trust me folks, it's happening every single day," Chapman said.

Similarly, wireless networking allows sharing of service among many people. Linksys makes a cable DSL router with a wireless access point so users can stay connected to the Internet with a laptop and the wireless access point. The all-in-one-router looks just like the other router but includes a wireless access point. A desktop computer can have an 802-11B wireless network card so the computer can receive information from the wireless access point.

"It's all about freedom, freedom to roam around, move around, and work where you want to work," Schweizer said.

Indoors, the wireless access point and computer have to be within about 150 feet of each other, with some of that depending on how the house is built. Outdoors, it's basically line of sight and has worked at more than 1,600 feet and to about 16 miles with add-on antennas.

Because of possible interference, routers shouldn't be put near microwaves, refrigerators or huge transceivers for ste-

reo equipment, the two said. The microwave and 2.4 Megahertz phones are cited most often as problems.

Chapman recommended putting the wireless access point at the highest point in the home and walking around with a laptop to find the best signal strength. Or you can watch the signal on a laptop and have someone walk around with the wireless access point to find the best location. Linksys includes a utility to help in that search.

If you and your neighbor both run wireless networks and both of you are on the same channel with the same SS identification you can get on to each other's systems. That's why Chapman and Schweizer recommend encryption and setting different SS ID numbers.

Giving many people access through wireless is becoming more common, they said, especially in areas where connections are difficult or expensive. One person can install a wireless router, get a PC card for each neighbor he wants to serve and become an Internet service provider. "We've seen small towns in the Midwest where some of the guys will take four or five access points, put them up on their roof, point them in different directions and give everybody within a two-mile radius access to the Internet. It's been done, it will

(Continued on page 16)

Membership report: Is it time to renew?

By Ken Church

[<membership@cipcug.org>](mailto:membership@cipcug.org)

Welcome to the following new members: Clinton Bell, David Harris and Howard Karlsberg.

Total membership: 345

RENEWAL INFORMATION

The renewal dues are
 \$25 for single membership,
 \$30 for two or more family membership.
 Please send your renewal payment to:

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OXNARD, CA 93031-1354

Or bring your payment to the April Meeting.

Feb. 2002 renewals past due, Final Notice:

Mbr #	Last Name	First Name	Pd to Date
0661	Cinque	Mark	200202
0180	Daily	John	200202
0094	Golden	Edward	200202
0913	Guedel	John	200202
1010A	Jackson	Helen	200202
1010	Jackson	Rusty	200202
0566	Meeker	Kirsten	200202
0565	Meeker	Mary	200202
1053	Norris	Owen	200202
1052	Norton	Cliff	200202
0306	Presutto	Joseph A.	200202
0655	Simmons	Gene	200202
0098	Vlazny	Don	200202

March 2002 renewals past due:

Mbr #	Last Name	First Name	Pd to Date
0963	Anderson	Arvid	200203
0858	Bennett	LeRoy	200203
1056	Dayman	Bain	200203
1057	Dayman	Evelyn	200203
0669	De Wolfe	Terry	200203
0573	Kelly	Scott	200203
0138	Lakes	Arline	200203
0137	Lakes	George	200203
0773	Lang	Nita	200203

March 2002 renewals past due (continued):

Mbr #	Last Name	First Name	Pd to Date
1014	Marcovitz	Morton	200203
0100	McLoud	Jerry R.	200203
0177S	Ross	Donald	200203
0221	Thornton	Dianna	200203
0136	Thornton	Jim	200203
1013	Willson	Martin	200203
1012	Yates	Jeffrey	200203
0771	Zuromski	Alexandra	200203

April 2002 renewals due:

Mbr #	Last Name	First Name	Pd to Date
0688	Arriola	Kirby M.	200204
0865	Carter	Steve	200204
1061	Churchyard	Martha	200204
0687	Clark	Lewis	200204
0776	Darnielle	Jack	200204
0964	Faue	Warren	200204
0439	Jeffreys	Robert	200204
0202	Kleeburg	Hank	200204
0965	Kreitzer	Shlomo	200204
0210	McMurray	Richard	200204
0142	Peck	Darrell	200204
0452	Simon	Hal	200204
0919	Sundberg	Ralph	200204
0868	Webster	Ed	200204
0777	Williams	Shirley	200204
1062	Wolff	Ray	200204
0966	Wright	Margaret	200204
0967	Wright	Ward	200204
0863	Zapf	Michael	200204

It's time to check and update your e-mail information. Is your email address correct or missing from the club's records?

Please help us keep accurate records by checking your e-mail address when signing in at the next club meeting or e-mail me at [<membership@cipcug.org>](mailto:membership@cipcug.org) with any changes in e-mail, home address, or phone numbers.

As always, thank you for supporting your CIPCUG, and take care.

More on Linksys: Redundant firewalls?

(Continued from page 14)

continue to be done," Chapman said.

In Seattle, a public organization is trying to blanket part of the city with free access. In San Francisco many coffee shops have it. At Dallas-Fort Worth Airport you can walk around the airport with a laptop and find spots with wireless Internet access.

Schweizer said he expects similar services to become available on a pay-for-use basis, too, as companies like Earthlink and others grow into the area.

Some laptops already have wireless integrated on them, and next-generation PCs will probably have internal wireless integration, the speakers said.

Sky Pipeline offers fixed-point access in this area, Jones said, and users have been impressed with the speed they get. But it's not available everywhere. He suggested staying away from satellite Internet access.

For those who don't want to install new cable in a home, Linksys is in beta 2 stage on equipment to let people connect computers through power lines already in the home. They are not shipping yet but are listed in the catalog.

Responding to a question about using software firewalls with hardware firewalls, Chapman said, "If it's software, it's breakable. If it's hardware, it's still breakable, but it's going to take a lot of extra time and effort to break that hardware," Chapman said. "... You can give me two hours and I'll tell you I'll probably be able to get through Black Ice or Zone alarm. There's hacks out there, there's vulnerabilities that are publicly published on the Internet. You'd be better off and this would be a lot more cost effective for you if you were to get a hardware firewall."

Chapman and Jones had a slight disagreement on using Zone Alarm or another software firewall with a router that has a firewall.

"It is redundant; however, it is a very smart move," Chapman said. If a hacker did get into the router's remote

management and change its settings, Zone Alarm would still protect the computer involved in the change. "You can never be too paranoid," he said.

But later Jones noted that all the software that runs on a computer takes up resources, and a firewall takes about 10 percent of the resources. "A computer running Windows 98 that's in the 60-some-odd percent is ready to crash," he said. Using the Linksys router is like hiring someone to sit there and do the job for you without taking up RAM.

Linksys doesn't make a dial-up router, but you can be on a Linksys network with a hub or a switch and reach the Internet on a shared dial-up connection.

The company also makes cable modems so users can buy one rather than lease from providers.

The Linksys Web site is <www.linksys.com>. All-City Computer's Web site is <www.all-city.com>.

If you're looking for tips from other members, check the CIPCUG Web page.

www.marketpro .com

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F1—Your Help Key

(Revised Feb. 10, 2002)

CIPCUG INTERNET SERVICE

(For general Internet and Communications programs, see Communications/Internet)

Jerry Crocker, 486-0308, 6-10 p.m.
normsplumb@aol.com,
Roland Fleig, 983-8707, mornings
schwable@cipcug.org,
George & Arline Lakes, 983-2969, 2-10 p.m.
thelakes@cipcug.org,
Helen Long 642-6521
helen@cipcug.org
David D. Minkin, 484-2974, 5-12 p.m., weekends
dddave@compuserve.com,
Claude Whelchel, 482-4017, 8-12 a.m.
claudio@cipcug.org

COMMUNICATIONS/INTERNET (GENERAL)

World Wide Web DM, TS
Compuserve. DM
Note Tab Pro. TS
Procomm Plus DM, WB

DATABASES

dBASE. GM

DOS RP

EDUCATIONAL / CHILDREN TZ

E-MAIL

Eudora JT
Lotus:CCMail. DM
Outlook TS
Outlook Express TS

FINANCIAL

Quicken JD

GENEALOGY TL

HARDWARE, UPGRADING JM, JD

HTML TS

NETWORKS TS

OS/2 LZ

SPREADSHEETS

Lotus 1-2-3 GM
Microsoft Excel DM
Quattro Pro DM

UTILITY PROGRAMS

Norton Utilities DM, JD
PCAnywhere DM
PC Tools . WB
XTree Gold. DM

WORD PROCESSING

Microsoft Word BW, DM, MR
WordPerfect. DM, GM, JD

WINDOWS

Windows 3.1 DM, JM
Windows 98, 95 DM, JM
Windows Me JT
Windows 2000 TS
Windows NT TS

<u>Initials</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>(805)</u>
BW	Bart Wood	482-4993 (e)
DM	David Minkin d: voice mail	484-2974 (e); 339- 1729
GM	Gracia Marks	484-7572 (e)
JD	John Daily	650-0029 (b)
JM	Jerry McCloud	(818) 889-6176 (e)
JT	Jim Thornton	987-1748 (d)
LZ	Len Zakas	388-8452 (b)
MR	Marvin Reeber	984-1974 (b)
RP	Robert Provart	498-8477 (b)
TL	Terry Lee	tdlee28@hotmail.com
TS	Toby Scott tech@cipcug.org	289-3960 (d)
TZ	Trish Zakas	388-8452 (b)

Practice safe computing:
Back up
Back up
Back up



Are you tired of looking at all the ads on your free Internet or free E-mail service? Are you looking for a reliable ISP at a reasonable price? How does \$15 per month plus \$15 processing fee sound to you? You will also have the advantage of a special DOMAIN name; however, it may not be a name of your own choosing. It is the name of the club that provides this service to its members; CIPCUG.

To sign up, contact one of the club's techies in the F1 — YOUR HELP KEY (page 17) under CIPCUG INTERNET SERVICE. Call one of them you may know or one in your area and they will be glad to provide you with the details necessary for signing up. Checks should be made payable to CIPCUG and forwarded to Treasurer, c/o CIPCUG, P. O. Box 51354, Oxnard CA 93031. Don't forget to include the \$15 set-up fee in your first sign-up check. You may make payments in three-month, six-month or annual increments. (Renewals can also be mailed to Treasurer; just be sure to mention the dates that your check is to cover).

We have had over a year of flawless service to our club members. There is no program to install, you will be making use of the programs that are already on your computer. It is a simple matter to talk you through the set-up as it is today — much easier than it was in the past. If you are the least bit timid about setting up your computer for our service, a club member will be glad to come to your house and make the necessary set up arrangements. How many ISPs do you know who will do this? Our agreement will also give you a 5 MB Web page allowance.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call any of the Tech Support team and they will either answer the questions or find out the answers for you.

Treasurer's report

February 2002
By Art Lewis

<treasurer@cipcug.org>

Category Description	2-1 through 2-28 2002
Income	
ISP Income	\$ 435.00
New members	135.00
Raffle	202.00
Renewals	540.00
TOTAL INCOME	1,312.00
EXPENSES	
Coffee-Doughnuts	25.94
ISP Expense	460.00
Misc. Expense	6.21
Storage	45.00
TOE	455.21
TOTAL EXPENSES	992.36
TOTAL INCOME – EXPENSES	992.36
Unrestricted Funds	\$5,453.61
Restricted Funds	2,344.00

More on ISP upgrade ...

(Continued from page 3)

complained that with all five fans running it sounded like a 747 coming in for a landing. But it sure is fast.

Toby did comment that it appears that quite a few CIPCUG members keep a lot of e-mail on the server. Some of us have hundreds of messages going back to October or November saved on the server.

Copying all the e-mail using a network connection took over two hours, so Toby got to watch all those messages get copied from about 1 to 3 a.m. Monday. He wasn't thinking nice thoughts about some of our pack rats.

But at long last our ancient (3 years is a long time in computer years) server has been retired. It served us well.

We hope members were not inconvenienced too badly by the transition, and Toby can finally get some sleep.

**Tell our advertisers
you saw them in
The Outer Edge**

Editor's corner

Changing the look of these ramblings

One way to make a writer shut up is to limit his space at the start, so that's what we're doing with the editor's corner this issue.

Filling part of the space where this column used to go is a feature suggested by the Association of PC User Groups that makes a lot of sense when you think about using TOE as a recruiting tool: a membership application. This way, if someone picks up a copy of TOE and the blue membership folder at a computer show or elsewhere and loses the folder, there's still a way to find the necessary information and join. The Treasurer's report, which used to share column two on this page, has been moved to another page.

After a couple of months of little or no paid advertising, this issue has several paid ads. That, of course, cuts the space available for editorial matter unless we go to a 24-page issue. Doing that, however, increases the costs and the difficulty in folding the issue for other Postal Service, so I made a command decision to stick with 20 pages.

Why, you might wonder, does anyone get a free ad? Copy Court, where TOE is printed, gets its business-card size ad as a thank-you for the speedy turnaround and help we get from them. Ventura County Computers gets a free ad because of Toby's expertise for the Q&A, discount prices for raffles, assistance with a variety of CIPCUG-related computer problems, providing a site for SIGs and a whole lot of things I've probably forgotten to list. Market Pro gets an ad in exchange for a table at the shows. And we give an ad to our own Internet Service Provider.

As we've mentioned a few times, but not recently, the national advertising comes from APCUG and, I believe, has more than covered the cost of dues to belong to the national association. But they're finding that getting ads is as hard as getting speakers, so appreciate what we get. All the advertising dollars help to pay for The Outer Edge.

As I've said before, when you patronize an advertiser, paid or not, say you saw the ad in The Outer Edge. Let them know their advertising dollars are working.

I'm still looking for your experiences with Windows XP, be they good or bad. Send them to me at <jweigle@vcnet.com> or <editor@cipcug.org> so we can share them with other members and possibly save them some time and effort in upgrading.

I'd also be interested in what kind of articles you want to see in TOE. Regular contributor Jim Thornton has asked, and I replied that I get little feedback, so I'll continue to try to provide a little bit of everything computer-related. If that's not what you want, let me know.

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Individual member. \$35.00
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Amount enclosed: _____

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User level:
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Computer type: Pentium II/III/IV _____

Other: _____ Speed: _____.

Operating System: Win 95/98 _____; Win Me _____;
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The Outer Edge

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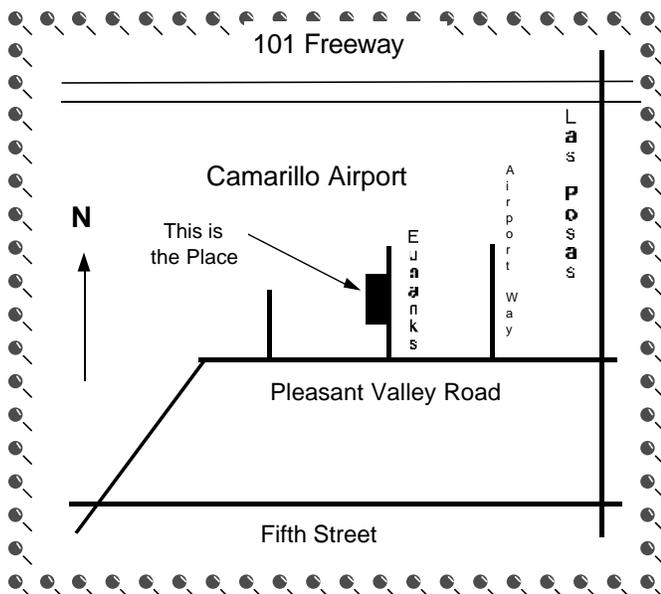
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DUES REMINDER

If the number after your name is 0204, your membership dues are payable in April 2002

APRIL 2002 MEETING OF CHANNEL ISLANDS PC USERS GROUP



Saturday morning, April 6,
at
Freedom Center,
Camarillo Airport
515 Eubanks (at Pleasant Valley Road)
Camarillo, Calif.

Meeting Schedule:

- 0845-0930 Beginners SIG
- 0845-0930 Internet SIG
- 0930-0945 Business Meeting
- 0945-1030 Q&A Session
- 1030-1055 Break - Please contribute requested amounts for coffee & doughnuts
- 1100-1200 Program