The Outer Edge

Newsletter of the Channel Islands PC Users Group

The Friendly Computer Club Helping Make Computers Friendly. On the Web at www.cipcug.org

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★
Attendance at the
October general meeting
70 members
★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

To Contact CIPCUG

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USB

IEEE 1394
FireWire

From http://www.coolnerds.com/Newbies/Ports/
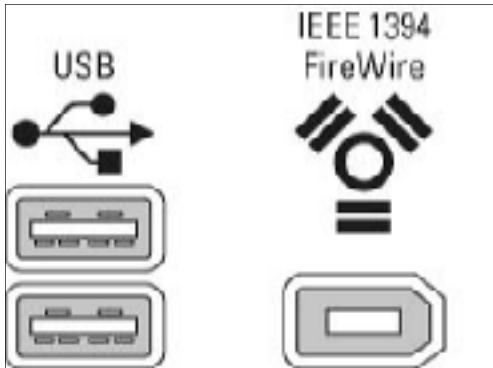
What are all those ports on the back of your computer?
The Internet has lots of useful information if you just know where to look.
Don't let the Internet and its features run your entire life.

COMMAND.COM

By Lois Evans de Violini, President

I am sorry that I could not be at the meeting this month. Hope everyone had a good time and learned a lot.

Twenty years ago, most of us wouldn't have dreamed about how dependent we have all become on computers. This was brought home to me hard last week when Toyota put out a recall on my car. Seems on some cars the computer shut the engine down unexpectedly, leaving one not only without motion power but without such essentials to driving as power steering and brakes, which hardly work without the power. I also have a GPS system in my car that seldom fails. I can program in an address, and the computer then tells me each turn I need to make to arrive at my destination. But like all computers, it's only as good as the programmer. The other day while traveling, I programmed in an address, and the computer dutifully brought me to the town on 101 where I wanted to go (I could have found the town on my own easily), and then as I got off the offramp that the computer suggested, it says to me you are within 2 miles of you destination, your guidance system is now turing off. Great!

EVANS-DE VIOLINI

Computers are wonderful; they help us in many ways in our everyday lives. They are faster, hold more information and are easier to use than they used to be. But interesting things do happen, and sometimes it seems as if they have minds of their own. I remember a lady I tried to help with an older computer, and suddenly the keyboard stopped working. When I inquired if this had ever happened before, I was told yes. Just turn it over and pat it on the bottom and it will work again. Sure enough, that was the cure. The other day, one computer on a network would not connect no matter how many times we tried to reconnect it. So a call went in to network service people. They came over and did exactly the same thing we had tried at least 10 times before, and it all worked. Why? No one knew.

Root Directory

CIPCUG NEWS

GENERAL

ADVERTISEMENTS

Channel Islands PC Users Group

Gene Barlow coming in November

Programs

This month's program will feature Gene Barlow, who is scheduled to discuss Invisus and/or Optimal Desk Top Pro. The meeting will be on the third Saturday of the month, Nov. 19, at the Camarillo Boys & Girls Club, 1500 Temple Ave. (northeast corner of Ponderosa Drive and Temple Avenue), Camarillo (see map on page 20).

The doors open at 8:30 a.m., and the Beginners SIG and Internet SIG start at 8:45 a.m.

Barlow sent this information on the two products:

"Internet Security and How to Fix It Using Invisus: The Internet is a powerful tool to communicate with others, handle your business online, research and shop. Unfortunately, the internet was not designed to protect you from security problems. This session will help you understand the threat that hackers have on your personal computer and show you ways to beef up your security to guard against them.

"Organizing Your Access to the Internet using Optimal Desktop Pro: We are living in the Information Age and actually have an 'information overload' to contend with. Finding information on the Internet or even on our large gigabyte hard drives is becoming a real problem. The best way to prevent this is by organizing your 'Access Points' to the information. The perfect tool to help you is Optimal Desktop Pro. Finding the information you want on your screen can be done in three easy clicks of the mouse. Optimal Desktop Pro uses Cabinets, Drawers, and Section. Gene will show you how to set up and tailor your desktop using Drawers and Sections by name, icon or color to make things easy to find and remember. Setting up and tailoring your desktop makes using this product simple and fun to do."

Other coming programs:

Dec. 17 (third Saturday): Ray Chavez, a product manager for USA Sunrex, a private label manufacturer of notebooks. He describes his presentation this way:

"Basically we, we educate the members on how notebooks are assembled, we pass around a barebones notebook so they can see the core unit. We begin to assemble the product as we are speaking: hard drive, DVD, OS etc. We talk about the position of the notebook in the marketplace, home, office, corporate etc. We talk about the different avenues to purchase these systems, the advantages and disadvantages of that. We talk about the dos and don'ts of building your own notebook in the garage. We never at any time, during the presentation try to sell your members our notebooks. At the end, as a courtesy to your group for allowing us to make a presentation, we offer special pricing if they wish to purchase directly through us."

2006

Jan. 28 (fourth Saturday): Bruce Fries on Audio Essentials (tentative).

Feb. 25 (fourth Saturday): TBA.

March 25 (fourth Saturday): TBA.

April 22 (fourth Saturday): TBA.

May 27 (fourth Saturday): Lee Otsubo, the Digital Photo Guy (a different presentation than the one in 2005).

June 24 (fourth Saturday): TBA.

July 22 (fourth Saturday): TBA.

Aug. 26 (fourth Saturday): TBA.

Sept. 23 (fourth Saturday): TBA.

Oct. 28 (fourth Saturday): TBA.

Nov. 18 (third Saturday): TBA.

Dec. 18 (third Saturday): TBA.

Special Interest Groups

Unless otherwise noted, Special Interest Groups (SIGs) run from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Ventura County Computers, 2175 Goodyear Ave., Unit 117, Ventura; phone 805-289-3960. 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 SIGs are sponsored by CIPCUG and led by volunteer club members. There is no charge for members to attend.

The general schedule follows:

Second Wednesday: Toby Scott on HTML, CSS and Web design.

Door prizes

The club door prizes for this month are:

Two Memorex travel drives 512 MB

Wireless Microsoft Optical mouse

And some TBA

We have two types of raffle tickets: one for 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.

Consignment table

A consignment table is set up at every meeting. Anyone can buy, but only members can sell. The club gets 10 percent of the sales price. A tag with the seller's name, CIPCUG membership number, item name, item description and price must be placed on each item. Sold items must be picked up at the end of the day's meeting. Any items not picked up will become the property of CIPCUG and will be subject to disposal at the club's discretion.

CIPCUG is not responsible in any way for items bought or sold at the table. Each item is sold as-is unless otherwise stated.

Meeting, SIG notices

If you would like e-mail notices of regular meetings and SIGs, go to www.cipcug.org, where you'll find a link on the home page to sign up. The URL is http://cipcug.org/listserv.cfm.

You will need your membership number, which is on your TOE mailing label, to complete the sign-up.

Third Thursday: Open.

Fourth Thursday: Linux

Fourth Saturday (or after the regular meeting): Michael Shalkey's SIG at CompUSA in the Shopping at the Rose center in Oxnard).

Here is the schedule for the balance of November:

Thursday, Nov. 17: Moderator, topic TBA.

Saturday, Nov. 19: Microsoft stuff at CompUSA in the Shopping at the

Issues with firewalls, detected and not found

Business meeting

Helen Long presided in the absence of President Lois de Violini and also read the Treasurer's report. A member asked why expenses were often greater than receipts. One explanation is that the ISP is paid monthly, but ISP subscribers pay CIPCUG quarterly, or even annually; their money is held until it is needed.

Craig Ladd reported on programs.

John Weigle reported on TOE. There was a question about having members' classified ads in the TOE. It has been approved, and there is interest, but we need a volunteer to manage it. If you are interested, please contact John or any member of the board. We also need a volunteer to manage display advertising for TOE.

Q&A session

Unless otherwise noted, questions are answered by Toby Scott, a partner in Ventura County Computers and our technical adviser. Michael Shalkey handles the demonstrations projected on the screen.

Firewall not detected

Q: I get a message that I may not be protected because my firewall is not being detected. On a wireless network do I need to be concerned about that, or do I need an additional firewall?

A: The issue is in the Service Pack 2 security center (demonstrating). Some of the antivirus programs report correctly to Service Pack 2, and some do not. If you have an antivirus program installed and you get that message saying that you might be at risk, etc., click on "recommendations" in the lower left corner of the security center window. There is a checkbox saying that "I have an antivirus program and I will monitor it myself." It doesn't detect Symantec 2005, for instance.

If you turn off the Service Pack 2 Firewall, you'll get a message that the firewall is turned off. There is a checkbox you can check that will allow you to manage your firewall yourself so you don't get nagged to death.

Downloading eTrust updates with a router firewall

Q: On your article about eTrust, I have a router with a firewall already built into it. Can I just go ahead and use that, considering that I have Windows XP and probably will not get a popup of any sort telling me that I am being inhibited from downloading the updates to eTrust?

A: Let's take this one item at a time. You have a firewall in your router. That will keep sources from outside getting into your computer. If you have a home network with several computers on it, and one of the computers gets a virus, the virus is now inside your firewall. If all the computers on your network have their firewalls turned off, the virus is free to infect all the other computers. So if you have more than one computer on your network, you probably should have some kind of minimal firewall running to protect you from this situation.

The second issue is this: The firewall will protect you from outside intruders, but it will not protect you from your own stupidity. If you open a virus attachment in an e-mail, or go to a Web page that has spyware built in and click on a link, the firewall can't help you at all, because you requested those things. You downloaded the mail, you went out to the Web page. The firewall is not smart enough to figure out that even though you said you wanted it you really shouldn't have it. The firewall only protects you from people just coming in randomly from outside

For a whole lot of reasons, if you are running Windows XP you should have Service Pack 2 installed, and if you have Service Pack 2, you should be using the security center. I can't imagine any circumstance where the security center wouldn't be a welcome addition to your protection.

(From audience) We should also mention that routers have the manufacturers' generic password on them, and you should change that, because a lot of the hackers out there will know that password.

A: If you don't have a wireless router, you don't need to do that unless you enable remote authentication. By default, every router brand that I'm

October Executive Board meeting

By Martha Churchyard

Secretary

The CIPCUG Executive Board meeting was held on Oct. 25, 2005, at 7 p.m. at the home of George and Arline Lakes.

Present: Ken Church, Martha Churchyard, Lois Evans, Craig Ladd, George and Arline Lakes, Art Lewis, and Helen Long.

The officers gave their usual reports, which appear in TOE. The APCUG annual meeting in Las Vegas is coming up. After discussion, it was agreed not to send a representative this time.

There were problems with CompUSA's classroom this time. Lois will contact the management.

Problems with the sound system were discussed. The club needs to have some knowledgeable alternate operators of the system. If you can help, please contact Lois or another board member.

The board discussed whether to order books that members could buy for gifts, but it wasn't clear which books members wanted. Art and Craig will prepare a list, and have a signup sheet at the next meeting.

More on Command.com ...

Do you have a strange story of a computer with a mind of its own? If so let us hear about it.

More on Q&A: Menus, Service Pack 2, drivers

aware of does not allow access to anyone from outside, whether they know the password or not. It depends on your circumstances. I have some customers that I need remote access to, so I have enabled it, but just for my personal IP address, and I use a strong password.

Alphabetizing the Windows programs menu

Q: Is it possible to alphabetize the programs in the Windows program menu?

A: (Demonstrating) Go to the Start menu, All Programs, then slide the mouse pointer over to the right, outside the list, right mouse-click, and select "Sort By Name" from the menu that comes up.

Should we install Service Pack 2?

Q: I've heard of some problems with Service Pack 2. Should we be installing it?

A: First of all, Service Pack 2 is not a single program; Microsoft has been working on it. Some of the issues that were initially reported no longer are issues. Secondly, it is where Microsoft is putting its security efforts, and without it you are much more vulnerable.

The basic requirements for installing Service Pack 2 are: (1) run every decent spyware detection program and every virus checker you have, and make sure your computer is as clean as you can get it. Viruses and spyware are known to blow up the Service Pack 2 install. (2) The recommendation is that you uninstall your antivirus program, but often you can just turn it off. Some of the antivirus programs, when they are turned off, stay off for only 15 minutes, and that isn't adequate. If you can't turn it off, you will have to uninstall it. You don't want the antivirus running, because the Service Pack 2 install engages in virus-like activity.

The Service Pack can be downloaded from Microsoft. There is an administrative version of about 200 MB, which has everything in it for all versions and all flavors of XP. You will need that if you are doing all 20 computers in an office. But at home, if you download the basic program with about a 60 MB kernel, it will go out and download any specific pieces it needs during the install. You'll end up with about 100 MB instead of 220 MB or so.

If you have a very old version of Service Pack 2, do yourself a favor — download the new one. It still says Service Pack 2, but it is not exactly the same.

USB keyboard, mouse don't work on a hub

Q: I have a USB keyboard and mouse. If I plug them into a USB hub, they don't work. Why?

A: I don't know why the keyboard and mouse have to be directly connected, but in my experience they almost always have to be. Some other equipment also likes to be directly connected. Generally speaking, you can solve the problem by getting a more expensive, powered USB hub. Some USB hubs take the power from the computer, and the more expensive ones actually plug into the wall. The powered hubs will run more items that otherwise would have to be directly connected to the computer. But there are still a few things that just don't run from any kind of hub, and the wireless keyboards and mice are included — especially the keyboard. The mouse you can usually run from a hub, but I've never known a keyboard that can be used with a hub — although I haven't tried it lately.

Updating drivers

Q: How do you know when you should update drivers? For example, I have an Epson printer and scanner, and I have seen updated drivers on the Epson site. Should I do them when they come up or only when there is a problem?

A: Only do them when there is a problem. If everything is working fine with the drivers you have, the only thing you can do by installing new drivers is break something. You either get no change or a big screw-up. If it's working, don't fix it.

Security packages from ISPs

Q: I have an Adelphia connection, and Adelphia announced that it has a security pack called "Freedom." I uninstalled Norton Antivirus and installed Freedom. Am I protected as well as I used to be?

A: Probably not. I have not investigated the Adelphia security pack. The AOL pack is, in my opinion, a joke. We have had two computers in our shop with terrible spyware/virus infestations that were running the AOL security program.

I'll just comment that if people are insecure about their own knowledge about computers and how to use them, they often would like to have somebody else run it for them, and there might be some benefit to that; it might

More on Programs and SIGS ...

Rose center in Oxnard, 1:15 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.: Michael Shalkey will give an overview of MS Word, MS Office and MS Works. Please help clean up the auditorium at the Boys & Girls Club and grab a bite to eat before coming over. We will get a head count before the meeting breaks up and will wait until those committed to the SIG to show up.

Thursday, Nov. 24: Canceled because of Thanksgiving holidays.

Thursday, Nov. 24: Moderator: Bill Wayson, topic TBA.

December

As of the early deadline for The Outer Edge, no information was available on December SIGs.

Check the Web site because the holiday season could bring changes.

More Q&A: Hubs, ClamWin, lost home pages

be a good thing in some circumstances. On the other hand, there are some of us who really don't like and don't trust black boxes; if we can't see it, touch it, feel it, taste it and test it, we aren't too interested. I tend to be in that second camp, so my comments may not be appropriate for everyone. But I would strongly suspect that the Norton Antivirus is considerably better protection than a free program that is being distributed by any of the vendors. AOL has one, Adelphia has one. I think SBC is rolling its out, and Earthlink has one. I know AOL uses a very stripped down version of McAfee.

Incidentally, you can't use two anti-virus programs at the same time. They will fight like cats and dogs; your computer will not run satisfactorily, if at all.

Hardware vs. software firewalls

Q: I have a single computer connected to DSL. Do I need a hardware firewall or can I just use the Service Pack 2 firewall?

A: The short answer is, it is highly recommended, but it is certainly not required. The hardware firewall will definitely protect you against intrusions that software firewalls on your computer do not protect you from. Zone Alarm Pro and a few of the others will probably do nearly as good a job, but they are a lot more difficult to get up and running and to understand. There is a learning curve to them. Personally, I am much more comfortable preventing a threat from getting to my computer at all. I like the idea of having it attacking a remote box that basically has no hard drive, no RAM as we know it, so it can't get infected. The other nice thing about a router is that you can plug in more than one computer.

ClamWin updates

Q: This is about ClamWin antivirus program: Can it automatically update the same way that Norton does?

A: Yes. ClamWin can do anything that other antivirus programs do. The only strange thing about it is that by default it doesn't remove viruses, it just notifies you. You can configure it to do removal, but, actually, removing a virus isn't recommended any more, because the viruses nowadays are replacing DLL or other files that are part of Windows. So it can create real problems when you try to remove them. For any of you using Outlook, ClamWin has a very nice interface with Outlook and does a very good job of checking incoming e-mail.

Using a mix of USB hub, Zip drive, USB hard drive and flash drive

Q: If you have a USB hub with a Zip drive, USB hard drive and flash drive is it safe to back up to a USB device?

A: You will not have something that you wanted to have written on the Zip drive end up on the USB hard drive. You won't have that kind of problem. The issue is — and this is true of any shared USB device — if you have two little USB connectors on the back of your computer next to each other, and you plug a USB 1.1 device into one of those, the other slot automatically becomes USB 1.1 also. USB is downwardly compatible, but on a single channel it does not have the capability of running 1.1 and 2.0 simultaneously. So if you have a USB hub and you plug in a 1.1 device of any kind, all of the other devices plugged into that hub will automatically become 1.1. Many USB mice are 1.1. This means that you will be running at one-tenth the speed if you have a large USB storage device. The issue is everything has to be USB 2; nothing 1.1. Each pair of USB sockets on your computer should be on one connector on your computer. If you isolate all your 1.1 devices on a single pair, your 2.0 devices will run at full speed on other pairs.

Internet home page has changed

Q: I have a problem when I go online now with Internet Explorer. Instead of the CIPCUG Web page, I get a Yahoo Web page, an advertisement for Yahoo. To get to the CIPCUG page I have to type in the address.

A: In IE, go to the Tools menu, Internet Options. In the top line, there is a space to enter the default home page. You can either type in the address you want to use, or, before opening this dialog box, navigate to the CIPCUG Web site with Internet Explorer. Then go to Tools, Internet Options, and click on the button labeled "Use Current." It will change your home page.

If that does not work, you have a spyware infestation that has hijacked your home page. Remove it right away, or your computer problems will get worse and worse and worse. In the shop, we have had infestations that were so bad that we had to bill the customer something like $200. There are two companies in this area that charge a standard fee of $300 for spyware removal. We do it by the hour. The problem is that it is ugly and nasty stuff. There is no program that gets rid of 100 percent of the spyware. When you have multiple spyware programs running, they start to conflict. Multiple programs are trying to change your home page, trying to change your default search page, fix it so when you do a Google search you get somebody else's answers, and so on.

And the spyware programmers are getting really creative about not letting you get rid of them. This week, for instance, I had one that I couldn't find. When I finally got some tools that could find it, I couldn't remove it. When I booted from a different operating system, from a CD, to delete the files, the files weren't visible. After I changed the attributes to make them visible, I could finally remove it. Then when I rebooted, it installed itself again. A few months ago, I knew how to get rid of this program, but they changed it to make it harder.

Please, spyware is not a joke. If you get some funny things happening on your computer, do yourself a favor and run AdAware and Spybot, and get rid of it. If you run them repetitively and still cannot get rid of it, call me and tell

More on Q&A: Backweb Lite, other pains

me what the infestation is, and I will tell you if you need to bring it in or not. You may hesitate because it will cost too much, but remember I can get rid of one spyware infestation for less than an hour's billing time, $75. But if you have 50 or 60 on your computer, it takes forever, because you have to undo them one at a time. They interfere with each other. If you try to get rid of three of them at a time, they don't go away.

If you are running Windows XP only (not Windows 95 or Me), you can use the Microsoft Antispyware Beta for a while longer. Microsoft has extended the ending date three times now. It works pretty well. It worked much better four or five months ago, but Microsoft has not updated the definitions as aggressively as some of the others. But it is the only one of the free ones that can detect spyware on the fly, the only one that runs in the background. Spy Sweeper does, but it is not free. It is an excellent program, probably one of the best, but it can only detect 60-70 percent of the spyware out there. So even the ones you pay for are not 100 percent effective.

Once you get infested with three or four, they tend to block the effectiveness of your antispyware programs, and a lot more spyware can come in. Ones that the antispyware would have caught are no longer being detected and stopped. What was at one time a fairly simple fix becomes a horribly convoluted mess.

Message that Norton Antivirus is not running

Q: I have two quick questions: When I boot up my computer, running Windows XP and Norton Antivirus, I get a message that Norton Antivirus isn't running. But after awhile it is running OK. Should I be worried?

A: You run thorough scans and you are coming up clean, right? The probability is (though there is no guarantee on this) that when you are starting up the computer, the sequence of things in the start up is not optimized. Some-

thing is out of sequence, but I don't know what it is, and trying to figure it out would be vastly more complicated than just living with it. Your window of vulnerability in the boot process like that is very tiny, unless you have an infection already.

'Found new software' message for printer

Q: I'm still getting a "found new software" message for my printer. I uninstalled and reinstalled it, and that may be how it happened.

A: That will do it. A failed install will cause things to go out of sequence. I'm willing to bet that that is the cause of your Norton not starting up.

Q: I moved my computer temporarily, and when I moved it back I got a message that I needed to reload the printer. When I did that, I had two instances of the printer, and one is showing as not installed.

A: What you probably will have to do is uninstall them both completely, and start over. There may be other ways of fixing it, but that's probably the quickest and easiest.

Backweb Lite keeps coming back

Q: One other quick question: My Spybot still brings up Backweb Lite when I run it. I can remove it, but it comes back every time I reboot.

A: Backweb Lite is actually used by a few legitimate programs. As a matter of fact, AdAware does not even detect it as spyware. It has some characteristics of spyware, and the Spybot programmer doesn't like the way they do it.

The full version of Backweb is definitely spyware, so he classifies the light version as spyware, but it is actually used for reporting purposes by a whole bunch of other programs, one of which you probably have installed. So every time you start that program up, it reinstalls Backweb Lite.

It is probably a needed component, and at this point I wouldn't worry about it. It is fairly benign; it won't block anything else or cause cascading problems.

Bad checksum on Spybot updates

Q: With Spybot, every time I download an update I get a bad checksum.

A: (Demonstrating) In the program, when you search for updates, the default is the See-Cure Web sites, but their definitions have been corrupted for some time. The Safer Networking sites work for me.

Volume control lost from System Tray

Q: I no longer have the volume control in my System Tray. How do I get it back?

A: Go to Control Panel, Sounds, and check the box where it says "Place volume icon in the taskbar."

Can I set up what icons are in the System Tray?

Q: Is there a control where we can set up what icons show in the System Tray?

A: Basically, no. If you want to change what displays in the System Tray, you have to deal with it on a program-by-program basis. Each has its own controls, and with some you have no choice. Typically video cards, CDs and sound have an option; usually antivirus is not optional. It is not controlled by Windows, it's programmatic control.

Problems with Spy Sweeper

Q: In June or July I bought a new version of Spy Sweeper and installed it. I ended up having to take it off, because when I started another program and started working, every 5 or 10 minutes Spy Sweeper would pop up and ask to start a spy sweep. If I said "no" it would come right up again in about a minute. Eventually I just got rid of it, and switched to SpyBot.

A: There's a setting for how often it wants to sweep, but I don't use that program. Can somebody in the audience tell you how to do it?

(From audience) My experience with Spy Sweeper is that it is a little bit annoying. It wants to do things when I

How to get what you need on the Web

By John Weigle

jweigle@vcnet.com

Toby Scott and Michael Shalkey, fresh from the Q&A session before the coffee break, teamed up to present the October program on where to find some of the most useful information on the Internet.

They started out by describing ways to add functions to their favorite Web browser, Firefox.

First, if you don't have Firefox but want to try it (it's free), you can download it at http://www.mozilla.org/products/firefox/.

If you already have Firefox, you can get extensions, themes and plugins at https://addons.mozilla.org/?application=firefox. The site describes the differences this way:

"Extensions are small add-ons that add new functionality to your Firefox web browser or Thunderbird e-mail client. They can add anything from toolbars to completely new features.

"Themes allow you to change the way your Mozilla program looks. New graphics and colors.

"Plugins are programs that also add functionality to your browser to deliver specific content like videos, games, and music. Examples of Plugins are Macromedia Flash Player, Adobe Acrobat, and Sun Microsystem's Java Software."

Links on the page take you to lists of everything that's available. Many of these tools are not available in Internet Explorer, he said.

Scott said he likes the Advanced Search Sidebar, which allows a search of multiple search engines, sorts results

More on Q&A ...

am changing programs, it sometimes doesn't close automatically when I shut down my computer, and so on, but on the other hand it runs in the background and I haven't had to change any settings to make it run successfully.

by search engine and places them in a sidebar.

Scott said he also uses Sage as an RSS (really simple syndication) reader. It gathers results of RSS sites you've chosen and displays them at once.

RSS feeds generally come from news sites and similar locations that send periodic updates or offer headline services. A list of such sites can be found by searching for rss sites in your favorite search engine.

Scott used a bookmark to get to the extensions page, but member Larry Hudson pointed out another way in an e-mail after the meeting:

" … There's a way that's directly in Firefox that I think is easier. (Although it's three mouse-clicks instead of two as a bookmark would be, but it's not mixed up with a lot of other entries, which makes it easier to spot.)

"It's: Tools->Extensions, then in the lower right corner of the box there's a link to 'Get More Extensions.'". (It is a link, not a button.)' "

Extensions can add all kinds of features to Firefox. The list of general categories for extensions (as of Oct. 30) is blogging, bookmarks, developer tools, download tools, editing and forms, entertainment, humor, image browsling, kiosk browsing, languages, miscellaneous, navigation, news reading, privacy and security, search tools, tabbed browsing, web annoyances, website integration and XUL applications.

Answering a question, Scott suggested that people who prefer the Netscape browser should download the Mozilla browser, which is built on the same core as Netscape. The Mozilla Suite, which includes the browser, e-mail, newsgroup, IRC chat and HTML editor, can be downloaded at http://www.mozilla.org/products/mozilla1.x/.

Although Scott described blogging as "the biggest waste of time man's ever invented," he said in answer to a question that blogs are a good way to keep up with developments in specialized field. Blogs are basically online commentaries or diaries that have be-

come very popular. Blogs are permanent, while chat rooms, which might often contain good information, too, disappear when the chats end. Think of blogs as columns with continuing "letters to the editor" responses, he said.

Google offers a blog search on its advanced search page (http://blogsearch.google.com/).

The Internet has eliminated the need to buy annual almanacs, Scott said, especially for information about nations of the world. The CIA has posted The World Factbook online at http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/.

The Factbook is packed with statistics and other information about all the countries of the world, along with information about the leaders of the countries and the forms of government.

It's just one of the many government documents online, he said.

National economic information can be found at the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis site, http://research.stlouisfed.org/. The site contains such information as the cost of living figures since Jan. 17, 1996. For information going much further back, use the FRASER link to go to **F**ederal **R**eserve **A**rchival **S**ystem for **E**conomic **R**esearch.

Statistics related to labor and the work force can be fond at the Bureau of Labor Statistics at http://www.bls.gov/. It even offers a kids' page.

Looking for detailed information about books and authors (even more than you get on Amazon)? Hop on over to the Library of Congress, Scott suggested. It's at http://www.loc.gov/, where you can view the library's catalogs, check out exhibits and find all the other resources that the Library of Congress offers.

If you're sure the government has information about a subject but don't know where it might be, try FirstGov at http://www.firstgov.gov/

Any port in a storm and how to tell them apart

"Ports: The Ins and Outs of of Your Computer" was the topic of this month's Beginners / Novice SIG taught by Michael Shalkey.

As the title suggests, ports are where you plug in such things as keyboards, monitors, mice, printers and scanners so they and the computer can exchange information.

Although some manufacturers color-code the ports and the cables for them, the color codes aren't standard, Shalkey said.

Manufacturers also use symbols, which tend to be more standard, however, on the both the ports and plugs (see the accompanying illustration from the Web site Coolnerds.com).

Ports are usually on the back of the computer, although some manufacturers are now putting USB ports on the front, Shalkey said.

The Macintosh keyboard has USB ports on both the left and right sides so a mouse and one other device can be plugged into it.

The ports are on the motherboard or on cards that plug into the motherboard.

The keyboard and mouse ports look identical, Shalkey said. "You can very easily plug them in backwards. Nothing will work, but you can plug them in backwards," he said.

The magic of USB ports, he said is
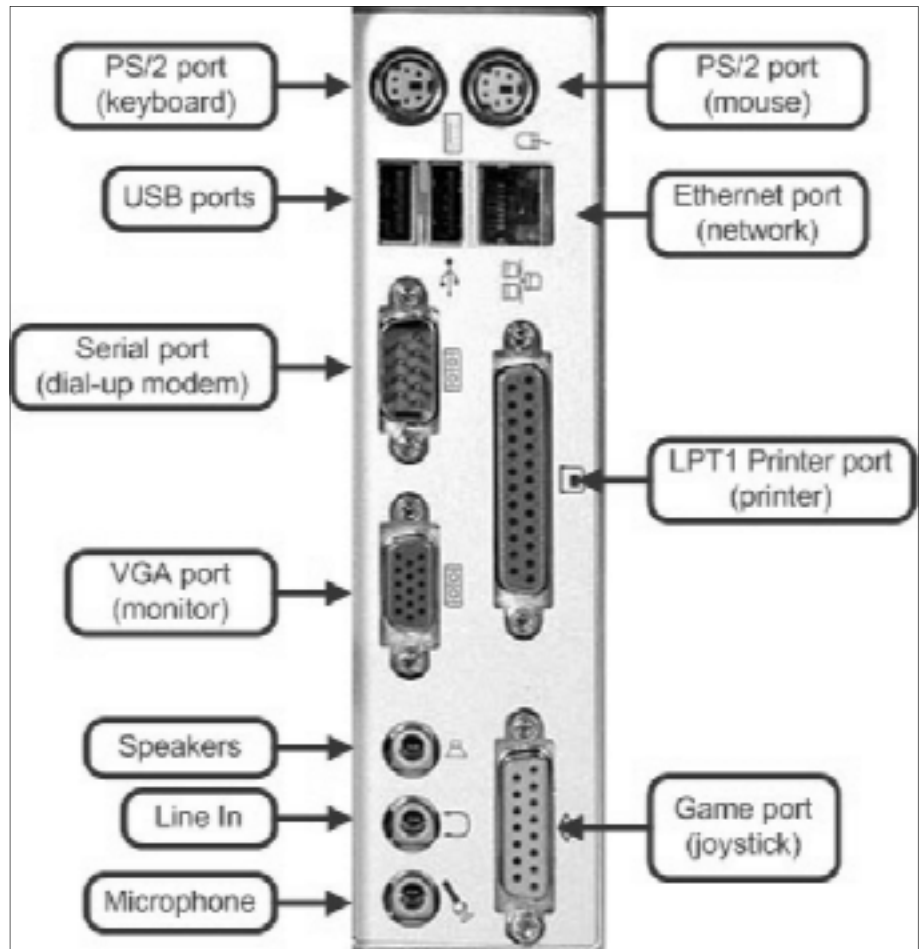
that the computer should instantly recognize devices plugged into them.

The Ethernet port is used for network connections, but it looks a lot like a phone port (not shown on the dia-

More on program ...

It links to all the federal government's Web sites, serving as "the government's mezzanine for getting off on the Internet," Toby said. "There's a tremendous amount of information that you can get there."

A good entry point for lots of general information is iTools.com (http://itools.com/). The first page has search tools, language tools, research tools.

The search tools are broken down to Web search, Google video search, ask other people, Web directory, discussion groups, and find people.

Language tools include a dictionary, word lookup, computer terms, text translator and Web page translator.

The research tools include an encyclopedia, newspaesrs and magazines, topic guides, biography, quotations and telephone area codes.

Later pages include finance, maps and Internet.

Yahoo offers personalized pages at My Yahoo for people who will sign up for a free account. Go to http://www.yahoo.com/ and click on My Yahoo to set up the account. The default includes e-mail (which is disabled if you don't use it often enough), message center and customized news content like a stock portfolio tracker. You can also pick from a variety of types of news stories. Many other sites, including Google, Netscape and Lycos also allow customized home pages, but Scott suggested not using Lycos, which, he said, installs spyware.

Windows XP backup program — Part 2

By Jim Thornton

jasthorn@gmail.com

In a previous article, we learned that Microsoft has developed a backup program for its Windows XP operating system and that it's usually not installed on the typical Windows XP Home Edition computer. Instructions were provided on how to identify if the program had been installed or if it had not, how to install it from your Windows XP Home Edition CD-ROM. After the installation, we used the Backup Wizard to back up whatever you selected, and now we will restore those backed up files.

(1) From the desktop, click on Start, then point to All Programs, Accessories, and System Tools, and click on Backup, and a "Welcome to the Backup or Restore Wizard" window appears.

(2) Click on Next, and a "Backup or Restore" window appears.

(3) Click on the empty circle to the left of "Restore files and settings" to place a dot in the circle.

(4) Click on Next, and a "What to Restore" window appears. The Windows Explorer-like window has two panes: In the left pane there are the items to be restored and in the right pane is a list of the previously backed up files along with the date and time those files were created.

(5) Expand the information in the left pane by double clicking the item, and each lower level until all of the items are shown.

(6) Click on the empty boxes to place a checkmark in those boxes to designate the backed up drives, folders, and/or files to be000000000000000 restored.

(7) Click on Next, and a "Completing the Backup or Restore Wizard" window appears.

(8) Click on Next if you want to restore the backed up files to their original location and skip down to step (13). If you want to restore to a different location, click on Advanced and a "Where to Restore" windows appears.

(9) In the Restore file to box, select one of these options:
Original location
Alternate location
Single folder

(10) In the Folder name box, specify the location (drive and folder) where to restore the files.

(11) Click on Next, and a "How to Restore" window appears. Select one of these options:
Leave existing files that already exist (Recommended).

More on Beginner / Novice SIG ...

gram).

The serial port is used for a dial-up modem.

The LPT1 port is generally used for a printer and can usually be distinguished by its size. Some printers will let you daisy chain peripherals by plugging one into the printer.

The game port is used for a joystick.

Speakers are plugged into the speaker port.

A microphone is plugged into the microphone port, of course, and, the monitor is plugged into the VGA port.

In about three years, Shalkey predicted, everything will be FireWire or IEEE1394, which are hot pluggable (that is, devices can be plugged or unplugged as the computer is running).

Two types of USB ports are available — 1 and 2.

If you plug a USB 2 device into a USB 1 port, you'll get a message that the device would work faster in a USB 2 port.

The FireWire vs. USB speed contest is relative, Shalkey said. FireWire is technically slower than USB, but in the real world the IEEE 1394 port is faster for an external hard drive. Not all computers have FireWire ports, but all Pentium 2 or better machines have USB ports.

If you have more USB devices than you have USB ports, you can buy a hub to expand the number of ports.

Some hubs draw power from the computer, while others plug into a wall socket for power.

The powered hubs are more expensive but might well be the better buy in the long run depending on what you're plugging in.

"You're going to see a lot of these ports go away sometime in the future" as technology changes, he said.

He predicted the future holds more fiber optic and faster ports.

On the Net:

Ports in general:

http://www.coolnerds.com/Newbies/Ports/ports.htm

PS/2ports:

http://www.ultimatepcrepair.com/news/56.html

http://www.ramelectronics.net/html/connecters.htmlhttp://www.ramelectronics.net/html/connecters.html

USB:

http://www.everythingusb.com/usb2/faq.htm

Firewire:

http://www.computervideogear.com/digital_video_capture_card/firewire-vs-usb.htm

SCSI:

http://www.macspeedzone.com/archive/5.0/usbcomparison.html

Printer:

http://www.lvr.com/parport.htm

Fit to be Fryed: Why some prices are lower

Salutations and greetings, faithful readers.

For those of you who don't get out much or read the paper, Fry's Electronics has landed in Ventura County. It's conveniently located on the 101 freeway between Oxnard and Camarillo at the old House to Home store.

What could be better for a PC enthusiast, except for CIPCUG that is? Fry's is an adult candy store with aisles and aisles of goodies. For those of you who have been there yet, and I know most of you have, it's OK; we **SMITH** forgive you. We know it's like moths being drawn to a bright light, but be careful you don't get burned.

What I'm trying to say is that, as a competitor, albeit a small one, we want you to shop at the discount store and get the good deals. I know what you're thinking. Why is he saying this? Well, there is a reason why our selection is more limited and our prices are higher, and it's not just because we purchase so much less. It's that the shelf life of PC products is shorter than fresh produce on a hot day. I mean, things get outdated seemingly overnight as new technologies and manufactures come to play.

There is no possible way that all these products produced can be sold at premium prices while new and better technologies become available. This is where the retail giants come in to play. Has anyone ever shopped at BIG LOTS? It is a chain that buys overstocked, discontinued, closeout and items from bankrupt businesses. It passes these items on at considerable discounts because it's better than throwing them away.

We get all sort of offers from various sources that offer these items to us, but they come with a price: little or no warranty, lack of support and unknown brand names. Buyer beware applies in this case.

So where am I going with this? OK, I'll get to the point. We want you to shop at Fry's. That's right! Fill your cart up. Buy a new screwdriver while you're at it and go to town. Who knows? You may get lucky and get it to work on the first go around. But if you don't, get ready to dance. You know what I'm talking about. Calling the store where you bought the product. Humm? I wonder if they have a dozen people lined up to take your questions. Call the manufacturer of the product. That can work if they answer the phone. Speaking Chinese is very handy in this instance. Call Microsoft. Good luck. Sometimes they can be helpful, but you can easily become embroiled in the game of "call the other guy."

You can always try "Googling it."

More on Windows XP Backup program ...

Replace existing files if they are older than the backup files.

Replace existing files.

(12) Click on Next, and an "Advanced Restore Options" window appears with these options:

Restore security settings.

Restore junction points, but not the folders and file data they reference.

Preserve existing volume mount points.

Note: These options are very complex and involve the changing the permission, audit entries, and ownership of the backed up data, changing data location and/or partitions on the hard drive, etc. It is best just not to change any settings on this window and immediately jump to the next step.

(13) Click on Next, and a "Restore Progress" window appears displaying the:

Drive and label that you specified.

Status of the backup.

A fuel gauge indicator of the progress.

Elapsed and estimated remaining time in hours, minutes, and seconds.

Drive, folder, and file currently being processed.

Quantity of processed and estimated remaining files and bytes.

(14) When the backup process is done, the "Restore Progress" window will change slightly near the top saying, "The restore is complete." In addition, the window displays the:

Drive and label that you specified.

Status of the backup as Completed.

Elapsed time in hours, minutes, and seconds.

Quantity of processed and estimated files and bytes.

(15) Click on Close and the "Restore Progress" window disappears. Note: There is an option of obtaining a report by clicking on Report, which will be described in a future article.

In other parts of this article, which will appear in future newsletters, we'll learn how to schedule the backups, how to use the Automated System Recovery (ASR) feature, which enables you to create a set of floppy disks that can be used to automate the process of recovering a failed system, etc.

A request to readers:

We need to know if you are interested in this type of article. Is it too technical and would you rather see articles on learning how to use Windows' Scheduled Tasks, improving your screen colors and resolution, changing Windows XP to look like Windows 98, product (hardware and software) evaluations, etc. Please e-mail to me with your preferences and identify what general computer items you are interested in, etc.

Venturan gets jury duty in Simi Valley

I just finished my civic duty, serving on a jury panel in Simi Valley, yet! Simi Valley is a lovely little sleepy neighborhood, but frankly, I retired so I wouldn't have to get up so early in the morning. I'm not human until I have had four cups of coffee, read the funnies, and worked two crossword puzzles! It was a lemon law case, and we managed to take care of it in a week.

LONG

I enjoyed the 118 route, though the traffic is only a single lane each direction and moving at 50 mph, but at least it was moving, which is better than you can say for the 101 freeway. It wasn't so bad in the morning, but in the evening, I got held up by the one traffic lane at the midway point caused by a very long light that slowed the traffic in both directions for at least a mile in each direction. Other than that, it was a delightful drive, and now things are almost back to normal again.

As usual I am still a bit behind on the photo page updates. I did get the August pictures posted but will try to have September and October pictures up by the next meeting. Jerry Crocker sends me so many great pictures that it is hard to decide what to use. Be sure to tell him how much you appreciate his efforts.

I have temporarily turned off the User Group Discount page. Andy, where are you when I need you? He used to update that page for me, and all of a sudden, I realized that the data on that page was over two years old. I will try to have it reinstated by the next meeting.

HAVE YOU RUN YOUR ANTI-SPY WARE PROGRAMS LATELY?

More on Rick's rant ...

Odds are there is some other poor sap who had the same problem as you, and he is posting a fix because he's a nice guy, but more likely you'll find others just like you trying to find the answers.

It can be tough. I should know. I've logged more hours on hold than all my readers combined, I would think. But let me give you an example of what I'm talking about …

VCC is an authorized Intel product dealer (the sign on the door proves it). We purchase Intel mainboards in brown box 10 packs. One recent purchase was the 865PERL motherboards. Good hardware with lots of features and great performance.

When we assembled our first PC, it would not POST. Try several different processors, but the supported processor would not work. I checked EVERY-THING, especially an error on my part, which happens more frequently than I care to admit. But nothing.

The documentation says it should work, but no. After poring through Intel's Web site, I find that most of the processors that are supported require BIOS version 10026.00.20 and above. Lo and behold, stamped on the circuitry was 10026.00.19, and this version supports CPUs with the 512MB cache — which aren't being produced anymore.

They switched to 1 MB cache, which performs much better.

This I found quite distressing, to say the least. They can still be found at our shop for a considerable discount.

Sound familiar? So please patronize the newest member of our business community. We wholeheartedly support it!

And, remember, you can always haul all the stuff you bought down to us, and we'll try to figure it out, for a small fee, of course.

I need the money; this baby is already costing me a small fortune, and he doesn't even have his driver's license yet.

Some helpful Web sites

Search engines:

Google: google.com
Lycos: www.lycos.com
Alta Vista: www.altavista.com
Yahoo!: yahoo.com
Dogpile: dogpile.com
All the Web: alltheweb.com

Helpful computer sites:

Ventura County Computers (Rick and Toby's shop): vccomputers.com
PC Pitstop: http://pcpitstop.com/
PC World: http://pcworld.com/
Smart Computing: http://www.smartcomputing.com/
Microsoft: http://

www.microsoft.com/

User Group Relations (Gene Barlow): http://ugr.com/

Microsoft Windows XP The Official Magazine (UK): http://www.windowsxpmagazine.co.uk/

Steve Gibson: http://grc.com/

The saga of the $100 laptop for school children

By Bill Wayson

www@vcnet.com

If you have ever shopped for a laptop or notebook computer, you probably know that these portable computers are significantly more expensive than their desktop cousins sporting similar specifications. "It's expensive to design and manufacture those smaller components"; "heat is a big problem and it costs money to dissipate it"; and "that's just the way it is" are familiar justifications for this price difference. So it was quite a surprise when in early 2005, at the World Economic Forum in Switzerland, plans were detailed for a $100 laptop that would be distributed to school-age children in developing nations. The laptop is being designed and

WAYSON

developed by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT) Media Laboratory and its chair and founder, Nicholas Negroponte. These computers will not be offered for retail sale. Rather, the plan is to distribute them through national educational ministries and departments that adopt a One Laptop per Child policy. So far, discussions have been held with China, Brazil, Thailand, and Egypt. Once Negroponte and his One Laptop per Child nonprofit group have received financed orders for 5 million to 10 million units, manufacturing will begin. Negroponte projects this will occur by the end of 2006 or early 2007. He envisions ultimately building 100 million of his laptops. More information on the laptop can be found at http://laptop.media.mit.edu/.

Why is this project the topic of this month's column? Why, because it is driven by a customized version of Linux, of course.

Given that desktop computers sans monitors have yet to be priced below the $100 barrier, how much laptop can $100 produce? Well, quite a bit, as it turns out. After all, the purpose of the laptop is to help a kid learn. The laptop will be a Linux-based, full-color, full-screen laptop that will use innovative power (including wind-up) and will be able to do most everything except store huge amounts of data (in other words, it will not have a big, honking hard drive). This rugged laptop will be WiFi-enabled and have USB ports galore. Its current specifications are 500MHz CPU, 1GB of RAM, and a 1 Megapixel screen.

The cost reductions are expected to come from three design decisions. First, the use of a novel, dual-mode display that represents improvements to the LCD displays commonly found in inexpensive DVD players. These displays can be used in high-resolution black and

Chasing the Internet is like Lucy packing candy

By Gabe Goldberg

APCUG advisor; columnist, AARP Computers & Technology Web site

A long-ago famous and favorite "I Love Lucy" episode (www.tvtome.com/tvtome/servlet/GuidePageServlet/showid-1038/epid-15119/) showed Lucille Ball and sidekick Ethel facing an ever-faster conveyor belt delivering chocolates for them to wrap: They couldn't keep up. The Internet sometimes makes me feel as though I'm at the wrong end of that conveyor belt.

I confess that I don't always reduce online interruptions and information coming at me. I'm not yet a recovering info-junkie, so this article is definitely "do what I say, not what I do" advice.

The Internet is like the accelerating candy conveyor belt. There's more content (online newspapers, portals, Web rings, etc.) and more forms of content (e-mail initially, then Web sites, mailing lists, blogs, streaming audio/video, downloadable music, Web cameras, etc.)

But even with today's pace of change, whether we do it deliberately or just let it happen, we create our own online experiences. So we can make it fit our needs and change it when necessary. I've sometimes resisted dropping e-mail lists because I once liked them. That's silly: My and your most precious resource is time.

So I'll share time savers:

Tell people what you're interested in; if they scan online and offline resources for you, you don't have to.

Tell people what you don't want! If you don't want jokes, motivational sayings, political news, etc., cancel your subscriptions by asking people to stop sending it. I like jokes, I like technology, I'm interested in politics. But some people just aren't on my wavelength.

When you send e-mail or reply, don't send unnecessary copies. Encourage people to not copy you unless you need to know or do something about the topic.

When replying, trim what you quote to essential matter and (especially) encourage others to do the same for you. Bloated and repetitive reply-reply-reply notes waste time while you look for what's new!

If you send common replies or send periodic e-mail such as club meeting notices, use templates (stored copies of pre-formatted e-mail) so you can just fill in details but needn't enter text repeatedly.

Use e-mail and spam filtering. Most e-mail software can automatically route spam to a special folder (and, of course, I'd like to route spammers to a special place). Some spam filters learn what's spam based on what you flag, so their accuracy improves over time. My spam is increasingly filtered, and no real e-mail is filtered. You can also set rules for

More on Penguin's Lair ...

white in bright sunlight all at a cost of approximately $35. Secondly, the software will be slimmed down to its essentials (getting the fat out of the system, as the site says), and each function will be done one way. Lastly, as the old discount store ad said, How do we do it? Volume! They plan on achieving economies of scale by manufacturing millions of units.

Some of the innovations planned for this laptop are fascinating. It will be interesting to see if they make their way into notebooks you and I can buy. By using technology developed earlier at MIT and the Media Lab, these laptops will automatically create a mesh peer-to-peer wireless network the moment they are taken out of the box and turned on. Low-cost alternatives for connecting this mesh network to the Internet are being explored. The removable battery is encased in a large cylinder that is part of the back of the base and screen. It acts as the pivot axle for the screen and doubles as a carrying handle. Depending on how far the screen is opened, the computer can be used as a conventional laptop, a screen viewer in theater mode, a tablet PC, a handheld computer, or an e-book to comfortably read text. The computer will include a handwriting recognition pad. The carrying strap doubles as an AC adapter and power cord. When the battery runs low, or where electricity is unavailable, a built-in crank handle can be used to recharge it. While most of the exciting innovations being pursued to bring the manufacturing cost of a laptop down to $100 are in the area of hardware, the adoption of Linux to make this mass of plastic, copper, and silicon actually useful is both logical and itself exciting. The open nature of Linux, and the right to person-ally modify it to do what you need it to do make Linux the premier choice for an operating system. Undoubtedly some interesting programming will be done for this laptop. Since that programming will be returned to the Open Source community, that bodes well for expanded innovation in Linux, and for all of us who use Linux and other open source software.

Right now, it appears there will be no Linux SIG meeting in November (it's Thanksgiving), and December's meeting may be up in the air. Whenever it is, at the next meeting we will install Novell's latest SuSE Linux 10.0 on the CIPCUG computer at Ventura County Computers. Stay tuned to the CIPCUG Web site SIG page for the date of the next Linux SIG. And if you have a topic you would like to see discussed or have a topic you would like to present, drop me a mes-

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Tips from Smart Computing magazine

Streamline your Start Button: Many people feel that the default Windows XP look is just too cartoonish and disruptive. A few changes to the Start button can fix that. Right-click the Start button and select Properties.

If you're a true nostalgia buff, you can select Classic Start Menu here, but you can also use a hybrid approach; click the Customize button next to Start Menu instead.

Choose the small icons option to save space, which will allow you to increase the number of programs on the start menu to a bigger number, such as eight.

On the Advanced tab for Start Menu customization, there is a long list of links you can choose to add or remove from the menu. I always take out Favorites because 90 percent of the time I'm going to do a Google search, which I've set to be my home page. Then I set Control Panel to be a menu instead of a link and remove Printers And Faxes from the Start Menu. On this dialog I also turn off the Highlight Newly Installed Programs feature, which can be distracting.

Usually I reorganize the shortcuts for applications after they install anyway because they add extra shortcuts such as uninstall. That's what the Add/ Remove Programs Control Panel does.

Recover an Accidentally Deleted File: To recover an accidentally deleted file, double-click the Recycle Bin icon on your Desktop to launch the Recycle Bin window. To find your file, simply look in the Recycle Bin folder. Right-click the appropriate filename and click Restore.

Advice for eBay Buyers: Shopping on eBay isn't the tactile affair that grocery shopping is, but the fact that you can't thump a Web picture of a melon doesn't mean you should shy away from buying online.

Make sure you read the item's description very carefully. If something doesn't look right, ask the seller about it. If the item description includes subjective phrases, such as "minor dings and scratches," don't hesitate to send the seller a request for some elaboration. The seller will often even send you additional pictures of the area in question.

More on chasing the Internet ...

routing e-mail into folders for easier reading and management. Based on rules I've defined (special keywords in e-mail subject and sender fields), my e-mail is put in folders such as AARP, Lists, To-Read, and Travel. This lets me organize e-mail time, prioritize my reading and answering, and sometimes catch up by deleting an e-mail category I don't really need to read. And the best part is that I avoid interruptions of each note arriving, since routing takes place silently and invisibly.

Set discussion mailing list subscriptions to "digest mode." This groups list e-mail into fewer/larger notes, sent occasionally, sometimes once/daily. This has two benefits: It eliminates many interruptions, and it greatly reduces the temptation to answer list notes, since by the time you see something someone else has likely already answered it.

Pick times during the day to handle e-mail, read favorite Web sites, use instant messaging, etc.; ignore it all at other times. This allows focusing on tasks at hand, reduces frenzied multi-tasking (trying to do many things at once), and lets you actually finish things you start!

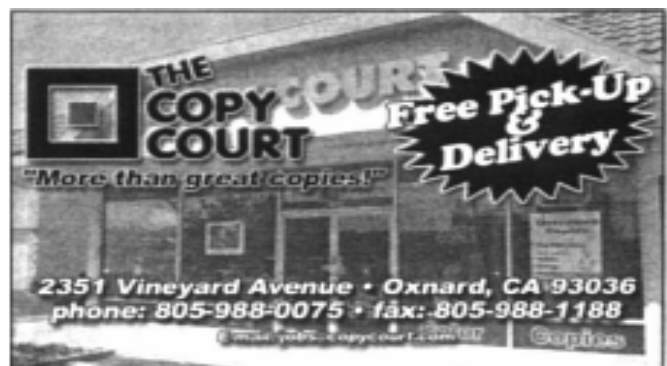Don't be trapped by time-wasting habits. Use technology that matches your needs; change it for yourself, not because people urge you to (there's peer pressure at all ages!); adopt changes such as broadband Internet that save you time, but be selective in what it brings you.

Recognize that the conveyor belt always wins the race, and focus on what really matters — most of which, after all, isn't even online.

It's just about time to learn a new program

I don't think I'm revealing any trade secrets by saying that The Star is just about ready to change its editorial publishing software. We're moving from Quark Express, which seems to have backed away from the kind of support that newspapers want and need, to Adobe's InDesign. I've looked at some InDesign information that I could find on the Web, and our designers who have had a chance to play with the program seem to be thrilled by it, even though we'll all be going through a learning curve at the same time we're putting out the daily newspaper.

We're staying with the Macs and, of course, the Mac version of the software, but we are

WEIGLE   upgrading to OS X. We're told it's more stable than the version we're using now. I just hope it's better at networking than the version we have now is.

There is a problem with having to work on two different systems — Macintosh at work and a Windows XP PC at home. I periodically catch myself using the wrong shortcuts and key combinations on whatever machine I happen to be using.

Fortunately, many of the shortcuts that work on the PCs work on the Macs, too (or vice versa; I'm not sure who had which feature first, only that I started learning the computer on a PC).

* * *

I'm looking forward to Gene Barlow's presentation this month. Ever since Symantec bought PowerQuest, which he used to represent, he's been finding a variety of new programs to present to user groups. And he's a great presenter.

I'm not sure if he's going to discuss both the programs mentioned in the report on page 3 or just one of them, but both of them sound like software it would be good to know about. Anything that helps us keep the nasties off our computer or that helps us find the information on them has to be helpful.

— John Weigle, editor

More on helpful Web sites ...

Annoyances Central blog (from authors of the O'Reilly Annoyances series, including Steve Bass): http://www.annoyancescentral.com/

Treasurer's report
By Art Lewis

treasurer@cipcug.org

Category Description	September 2005 9-1 through 9-30, 2005
INCOME	
Donation	$ 2.00
ISP Income	300.00
New Members	35.00
Raffle	-17.57
Renewals	510.00
TOTAL INCOME	**829.43**
EXPENSES	
Coffee-Doughnuts Expense	3.00
Equipment	40.00
ISP Expense	397.00
Miscellaneous Expense	31.33
Rent Paid	150.00
TOE	418.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	**1,039.33**
TOTAL INCOME-EXPENSES	**- 209.90**
Unrestricted Funds	3,885.93
Restricted Funds	2,000.00
Bank Balance 8-31-05	**5,885.93**
Year to Date Income	3,353.36
Year to Date Expense	-3,751.00

2005 contributors to The Outer Edge

Your name can appear here, too. Share your knowledge with other members by sending an article, letter or computer tip to editor@cipcug.org.

Dick Chaiclin	Art Lewis
Ken Church	Helen Long
Martha Churchyard	Tony Pizza
Jerry Crocker	Stan Ranson
Bob Elgines (APCUG article)	Toby Scott
Gabe Goldberg (APCUG article)	Smart Computing
	Rick Smith
David Harris	Jim Thornton
Larry Hudson	Bill Wayson
Richard Johnson (APCUG article)	John Weigle
Kim Komando	Ira Wilsker (APCUG article)

To avoid all kinds of problems, keep your operating system, antivirus and anti-spyware programs up to date

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Is it time to renew?

By Ken Church

email address: *membership@cipcug.org*

Sorry, no new members this month so let's invite a friend to the next meeting.

Attendance at the October 2005 General meeting: 70 Members

Total membership: 296

MEMBER RENEWAL INFORMATION
$25 for single membership,
$30 for two or more family membership.

NEW MEMBER INFORMATION
$35 first year for single membership,
$50 first year for two or more family member-ship in same household.

Please send your renewal payment to:

**CIPCUG MEMBERSHIP
P.O. BOX 51354
OXNARD, CA 93031-1354**

Or bring your payment to the sign in table for the November Meeting at the Boys and Girls Club of Camarillo.

September 2005 renewals:

Mbr#	Last Name	First Name	Pd to Date
1163	Babbitt	Virgina Lee	200509
0661	Cinque	Carmela	200509
1162	Fargo	Edess	200509
0613	Green	Gunnar	200509
0145	Lee	Bill	200509
0716	Nichols	John	200509
1160	Perry	David	200509

October 2005 renewals:

Mbr#	Last Name	First Name	Pd to Date
1164	Berwick	Mike	200510
0034	Campbell	Gordon	200510
1107	Carlson	Gordy	200510
1049	Duncan	Gerald	200510
0972	Farley	Ulysses	200510
0037 T	Hosford	Victor	200510
0990	Mehr	Steve	200510
0492	Skinner	Donald	200510
1165	Taggesell	Bernice	200510
0733	Wall	Sinclair	200510
0994	Zaas	Robert	200510

November 2005 renewals:

Mbr#	Last Name	First Name	Pd to Date
0388	Armstrong	Bob	200511
1074	Chaison	Doris	200511
0944 T	Coon	Donn	200511
0268	Douglas	Patti	200511
0738	Dutro	Georgia	200511
0823	Gieschen	Barbara	200511
0822	Gieschen	Vic	200511
0635	Godwin	John	200511
0945	Gorelik	Donn	200511
0946	Gorelik	Patricia	200511
0905	Knauer	Hedy	200511
0789	Knauer	Wolfgang	200511
0820	Laningham	Lynn	200511
0272	Provart	Robert	200511
1046	Snyder	Bill	200511
1109	Stafford	Jack	200511
1017	Vaughn	Connie	200511

See you at the November meeting and bring a guess. Until then, happy computing.

F1—Your Help Key
(Revised July 3, 2005)

COMMUNICATIONS/INTERNET (GENERAL)
Compuserve	DM
World Wide Web	DM

DATABASES
Access	BR

DOS RP

EDUCATIONAL / CHILDREN TZ

E-MAIL
Eudora	JT
Outlook	MS
Outlook Express	BR
Poco Email	MS

HARDWARE, UPGRADING JM

GRAHICS PROGRAMS
IrfanView	MS, JT
Print Shop	BR

SPREADSHEETS
Microsoft Excel	DM
Quattro Pro	DM

UTILITY PROGRAMS
Norton Utilities	DM, JT (and Anti Virus)
PCAnywhere	DM

WORD PROCESSING
Microsoft Word	BW, DM
WordPerfect.	DM

WINDOWS
Windows 98, 95	DM, JM, MS (98)
Windows Me	JT
Windows 2000	BDV

Initials	Name	(805)
BDV	Bob de Violini	rjddev@comcast.net
BR	Bill Robinson	389-2997 (b) bill@bzus.com
BW	Bart Wood	482-4993 (e)
DM	David Minkin	469-6970 (cell); 484-2974 (home); dddave@QuixNet.net or dddave@cipcug.org
JM	Jerry McLoud	(818) 889-6176 (e)
JT	Jim Thornton	987-1748 (d) jthorn@adelphia.net
MS	Michael Shalkey	483-9921 ext 142 (d) mshalkey@cipcug.org
RP	Robert Provart	498-8477 (b)
TZ	Trish Zakas	985-8519 (b)

Phone: (d) = days; (e) = evenings; (b) = both

If you would like to volunteer to help others, please send your contact information and programs you're willing to help on to <editor@cipcug.org>.

Also, if you have a favorite help site on the Web, please forward that, too, so we can make a separate section for Web-based help.

Practice safe computing:
Back up
Back up
Back up
(And then test the backup to be sure it worked)
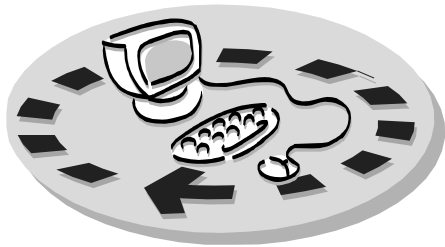
Why join Channel Islands PC Users Group (CIPCUG)?

Every month, members of the Channel Islands PC Users Group have access to:

♦ The Outer Edge newsletter, which includes a list of members willing to help other members
♦ The general meeting, featuring a question-and-answer session and program on new software or hardware
♦ Special Interest Groups — special meetings held several times a month on a variety of topics
♦ Door prizes at the regular meeting.

Other benefits include:

♦ Special user group discounts on books and software
♦ An Internet Service Provider at a large discount (see below).
♦ A chance to make friends with people who have similar interests
♦ The ability to put your knowledge to good use by helping other members. The whole concept of user groups is members helping members.

CIPCUG members are eligible to sign up for the group's Internet Service Provider (ISP) at the low price of only $15 per month plus a $15 processing fee.

To sign up, contact one of the club's techies (see below). 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. We also give a 12-month subscription if prepaid in advance at the 11-month price of $165. Many of our club members are electing to do this to keep Helen from nagging them for money. Renewals can also be mailed to Treasurer; just be sure to mention the dates that your check is to cover.

There is no program to install; you will use programs that are already on your computer. It's simple to talk you through the set-up, but if you're the least bit timid about setting up your computer, a club member will come to your house and make the necessary arrangements. Our agreement will also give you a 5 MB Web page allowance.

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CIPCUG INTERNET SERVICE TECH TEAM

Roland Fleig, 983-8707, mornings
    schwable@cipcug.org,
Helen Long, 642-6521
    liz@cipcug.org
David Minkin, 469-6970 (cell), 484-2974 (home)
    dddave@QuixNet.net or
    dddave@cipcug.org

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Please clip last column and send with payment to CIPCUG-Membership, P.O. Box 51354, Oxnard, CA 93031-1354.

Please make checks payable to CIPCUG

Dues for new members
Individual member, $35.
Family membership (same address), $50.
Renewals are $25 and $30 per year respectively

Channel Islands PC Users Group Inc.

P.O.Box 51354
Oxnard, CA. 93031

DATED MATERIAL
Please Do Not Delay

DUES REMINDER

If the number after your name is 200511, your membership dues are payable in November 2005.

November 2005 Meeting
Of the Channel Islands PC Users Group

The map shows the easiest route to the Boys & Girls Club, but if you prefer, you can take the Carmen Drive offramp to Ponderosa Drive, which leads to Temple Avenue.

Saturday morning, Nov. 19, at the Boys & Girls Club, Ponderosa Drive and Temple Avenue, Camarillo, Calif.

Meeting Schedule:
 8:30 a.m. Doors open
 8:45-9:30 Beginners SIG, Internet SIG
 9:30-10:30 Business meeting, Q&A
10:30-11:00 Break — Please contribute requested amounts for coffee and doughnuts
11:00-12:00 Program (Gene Barlow), Drawing
1 p.m.   SIG at CompUSA at Shopping at the Rose at Highway 101 and Rose Avenue in Oxnard