HardCopy

Slo Bytes

A publication of the San Luis Obispo PC Users Group

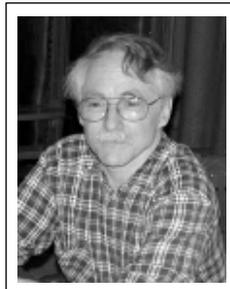**a publication of the san luis obispo pcug   vol. 18 • no. 11 • november 2002**

General Meeting
by Bill Avery

The October Meeting went back to the WIN-SIG Discussion meeting in the break area, with the Alan FAQ-demo in the main meeting hall, reviewing recent computer developments.

The HTML and Linux SIGs met on Monday and Thursday in the first week of the month at Ralph Sutters' home in Arroyo Grande, and at Ray's house in SLO, respectively.

This is the last issue of the printed version of our club newsletter, " HARDCOPY ", so I will be brief. Please stay tuned for further developments in this area.

Nancy Vrooman was our gracious hostess, once again providing a sweet spread of SLO Bites for our coffee, and tea breaks during social refreshment. Thanks, Nancy! ?

Guy Kuncir hosted our Main Meeting this month, as Ray Miklas was away visiting his family. Our featured speaker for October was Robert Thompson, Low Vision Technology Coordinator for the Central Coast Technology Center. Robert demonstrated using various assistive technologies for the visually impaired and blind individuals using computers.

Are You Having *Buffer Underrun Errors* With Your CD Burner?
by Ira Wilsker

Golden Triangle PC Club
From the October 2002 issue of the I/O Port Newsletter, Tulsa Computer Society

During one of my recent radio shows (KLVI 560AM, Tuesdays 6-7pm, Saturdays, 1-4pm), I received many calls asking how to overcome the infamous "Buffer Underrun" error when writing to CD-R discs. While many of the newer CD-RW drives have built-in protection to prevent this error, the vast majority of CD-RW drives in use are subject to this most frustrating disc-ruining error.

CLUB CALENDAR
November 3rd

1 pm
Early SIG.

Dining Room, Bill Avery
Main hall, Alan Raul

2:30 pm

Marty Joel
Demystifying the Internet

[see page 7]

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in this issue...

general meeting

Since 1998 The Central Coast Assistive Technology Center (CCATC) has provided services to disabled people whether it is assistive technology for computer access, augmentative communication, environmental control, ergonomic workplace safety or low vision assistance. CCATC has been awarded
2 low vision grants from the Department of Rehabilitation to provide low vision services to the senior community, free of charge. These include but are not limited to Orientation & Mobility Training, Activities of Daily Living, Adjustment Counseling, Advocacy, Transportation and Adaptive Equipment / Assistive Technology Training. Their older hosted website on SLONET was:
< http://www.slonet.org/~seniors/sloguide/equipment2.html >
Their new website is:
< http://www.ccatc.org/ >
A quote from their announcement says:

> "The low vision grants are very specific to seniors with some sort of visual impairment. The criteria is simple, if you are 55 and have a vision of 20/30 to totally blind CCATC can help you read a newspaper, write a letter, do a spread sheet, surf the internet or do email. Using various computer related software programs we can enlarge your screen up to 16 times with a screen enlarger or having you surf the internet without a monitor and doing email."

> CCATC is based in San Luis Obispo and covers the Santa Barbara region.

There is a Low Vision Center at SLONET, 4100 Vachell Ln. in San Luis Obispo, and the hours are available by calling the SLONET Help Desk at 545-5002.

Robert reported that there are also 2 other centers:

** 1150 Laurel Lane, #132 San Luis Obispo, CA 93401; Phone: (805) 549-7420 (voice); 549-7424 (TTY); 549-7423 (FAX) [This center is sharing a large office space with SLOCO Access, and the Independent Living Resource Center.]

** Services are offered in Santa Maria, and their original site: PO Box 1195, Buellton, CA 93427; Phone:(805)688-0830

According to their website:
> "One of the unique characteristics of CCATC services is that they are mobile – in other words, we travel to the individual for AT evaluations and training. We have found that these services are most effective if they are provided to

Are You XPerienced?
by Todd Rosen,
HAL PC Magazine, October, 2002

Monthly Questions and Answers For Windows XP

I am planning on upgrading my Windows 98 computer to Windows XP. Do I also have to purchase the upgrade of Office XP for my Office 97? It's twice the price of Windows XP!

No. Super question! We get asked this one a lot. Previous versions of Office run on Windows XP. There is no need to upgrade unless you need some of the new Office features. Microsoft names the product the same (XP) to let you know that they were designed to maximize each of the product's features.

As far as the price, please realize with the recent stock market drop, Bill probably has less than 7 Billion Dollars in the bank to send his son to school. Have you seen how expensive schools are today?

I am running Windows XP and Outlook Express. Where are the mail files and attachments kept on the hard drive? I also have Eudora 4. When I receive an attachment in Eudora, I find that a copy is automatically placed in a subfolder to Eudora called: ATTACH. I am unable to tell where attachments are stored in Outlook Express.
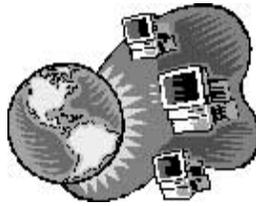
* * * people helping people * * *

NAME	PROGRAM(S)	PHONE NO.	HOURS TO CALL
Bill Roch	Ami Pro	466-8440	anytime
Marvin Baxendale	MS Access	481-8392	evenings
Jim Kiraly	Win 98, Office 97, Quicken, Map Programs	556-0301(pismo)	anytime
Ray Miklas	Any PC hardware or software questions	541-5633	anytime

We could use more volunteers here. If interested, contact Ray Miklas!

The Surf Board

by Dorothy Kirk
ibm/pcug, redding, ca.
kirk@snowcrest.net

I have looked at thousands of sites since I began writing this monthly article. Many of them I have shared with my readers under a specific subject and others, like today's article, a random selection of sites. Some of the sites I have looked at have been excellent, some have been BORING, some have been weird, or disgusting, gross, and some pornographic, but most, frankly, have been mediocre. I try to pick subjects that are of use or interesting to a variety of tastes; I do not include pornography or anything that I consider in poor or questionable taste. Today's offering includes a variety of different subject sites. Hope you find at least one of interest or use to you. THE WORLDNEWS NETWORK http://www.wnnetwork.com/ - News about everything from all over the world. There are at least seven main categories and over a hundred sites.

FREEBIES http://personal.palouse.net/ben486/freebies/home.html – Get a FREE internet answering service and other free stuff at this site.

JACK'S WORLD AVIATION LINKS http://www.angelfire.com/ego/aviation/ - Airlines, A-Z/Cargo Airlines, Airports, Aviation(General), Aviation photography, Collections, Crashes and Safety, Flight Simulator, Gliders-Paragliding-Ballooning, Herpa diecast models and other Collections. Helicopters, Manufacturers and types. Military Aviation, Oldies/nostalgia/history, Organizations, Registers, Spotterspages, Virtual Aviation

BEST SITE 4 HUMOR http://www.bestsite4humor.com – This site includes pictures, jokes, cartoons, Osama pics, and links to other humor sites.

COMPLETE COMPUTER SOURCE http://www.ccsandm.com/ - Just about everything you want to know about computer. What is the difference between Simms, Dimms, and Nanoseconds?

TOP TEN ONLINE AUCTION SITES http://www.online.freeola.com/auctions.htm – Actually there seem to be only 8 sites including eBay.

MODEM SITE.COM http://www.modemsite.com/56k/index.asp –Here you may get the latest news concerning modems. You may also find extensive information on dial-up modems with help for correcting problems from installation to disconnects. If you want information on driver, that is here, too.

DOYOUHAVEA BUCK http://doyouhaveabuck.com/ - Check out 30 pages of pictures, "You've Been Kissed", 50% off cigarettes, Monkey Cliff diving and more. FANTE'S http://fantes.com/onlinesafety.htm – Buy everything imaginable for the kitchen.

WHATCHAMACALLIT http://www.geocities.com/banneshee/ - A very enjoyable and original site. It contains for your PERSONAL use only Templates, Background tiles, Humor (original and good), Cursors, Taglines (very amusing), Silliness (dry humor), Software (a bunch of unusual ones), a Color Finder, and more.

MACKENZIE HOME BREW http://home.cablerocket.com/~willyum/index.htm – An attractive site with the history, FAQ's, and recipes for beer, wine, mead (what is that?), and liqueur.

COMPUTER SWAPS http://www.robertaustin.com – Information and schedule for computer swaps in the San Francisco Bay area. If you have never been to one of these bit swaps, plan one for the future, it's fun and eye opening. The one at the Cow Palace is usually the best.

BOYCOTT KaZaA!

by Matt, Los Angeles, CA
NWA-PCUG Newsletter Article,
October 2002

I found a REALLY GREAT alternative to KaZaA-and it's NOT on another network. Nope, it's not BearShare, not Morpheus (certainly not the horsepucky of a sold-out version) and absolutely not (not not) Spy-Ware!

That's right, you heard me, it's a P2P file-sharing program and IT IS N-O-T Spy-Ware! (For those of you who think using all caps is considered "shouting" and, thus, rather rude, I have to say that some things, such as the above news, are truly worth SHOUTING about.

Here's the KaZaA Story
Apparently, some guy got really ticked off about all the ad-ware and spy-ware piggy-backed on top of KaZaA. The spyware came with little to no explanation in the supposedly all-inclusive explain- all EULA that KaZaA requires you to agree to before it installs. Now, KaZaA kinda explains things, a little bit, and even offers you the option to opt-out of some of the spy-ware and ad-ware.

But KaZaA does not explain that other bits are going in anyway, whether you like it or not. And you must agree to it in order to use the program. KaZaA's plan rather miffed Our Hero, and he set

Linux Sig

**Next meeting sometime in November.
Possible new meeting place too.
Any volunteers? Check at
http://www.slonet.org/~araul/linux.htm**

general meeting

people in the environments in which they will be using technology. Furthermore, this approach is more convenient for the people we serve. Before the creation of the CCATC, individuals with disabilities on the Central Coast had to travel to the San Francisco Bay Area or Los Angeles regions for AT services. Now AT services can come to them."

If you can't see your microwave clearly anymore, you may be able to get some help. Robert explained that:

"The CCATC conducts evaluations in the areas of computer access, augmentative communication, and home, school, and work-site access. A team of professionals who specialize in assistive technology carries out evaluations. This team includes occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, rehabilitation technologists and/or engineers. "

Robert " can take someone who is totally blind, and have them `surf' the Internet, do spreadsheets, send and receive emails, whatever the case may be. ", he said. The services are **free!** He used a Closed Circuit TV, with voice command, to view his business card, making the image larger with spoken commands, with each command confirmed by a spoken response from the computer controlled camera. Another system is called Zoom-Eye, which uses your personal TV as a display monitor. Also demonstrated were a scanning reader technology, a screen enlarger, to improve the view of a small section of your computer screen, like a magnifying glass, and JAWS, a word processor for totally blind computer users. See one user website: < http://www.rommes.org/computer/jaws.html >.

For further overview of these types of products, check out:
Freedom Scientific Learning Systems Group
Palo Alto, CA 94035-0215; Ph.: (888) 223-3344
<http://www.freedomscientific.com>

Many amazing stories can be told about this technology. Robert noted one client who can now get his bills from the mailbox, scan them into his computer, and pay them without ever leaving home, all with " AT " [Assistive Technology], after 27 years of being totally disabled!

Braille technology is available in both display readers and page printers, to work with PC and MAC computers. Even laptop style computers can work with special " keyboards ".

Guy asked about who the majority of AT users might be.
Robert reports that most of his clients are losing their sight, as a result of accidents, illness, or age, rather than those who are disabled from birth.

Cliff got an answer to his question on Flat Panel Monitors. For these applications, 18 - 22 inch (diagonal) flat panels LCD, TFT, or Plasma screens are best to ease a users visual distress. Flat Screen CRTs are less desirable alternatives, although they are less expensive.

Our Question and Answer session concluded a very interesting, and educational, presentation. The raffle Pic'N'Win rewarded those hardy members who stayed to

the end of the demo, with Image Wizard, FrameMaker4, Super Show & Tell for kids as software prizes. Jim Buenrostro donated some " hard-disk coasters " as gagware, hi, hi.

I counted about 45 of you who showed up to share our fun this time. On Sunday, Nov. 3rd, we will hear from Marty Joel, President of Perceptions Unlimited LLC in Nipomo, CA. He will be speaking on the subject of "Demystifying the Internet" in which he will go into detail about how the Internet works, addressing topics which include the functions and workings of packets, protocols, and the DNS.

Thanks to all my patient readers for a fun run, and to Bob Ward, who squeezed my efforts into this column, for the last time? See you after Halloween, so no Trick or Treats this time. Take care,

W.Avery, [wavery@slonet.org]

KaZaA

about to teach them a Lesson. The results of his efforts-"KaZaA Lite"-is a spyware-free, ad- ware-free, and even Banner-free version of KaZaA. Not surprisingly, it's some-how 100% compatible with the Sharman P2P file-sharing network, even if it isn't 100% compatible with Sharman's wishes. To Sharman and KaZaA I say tough. If you want to squeeze the Sharman (pun intended) go to http://www.kazaalite.com and download KaZaA Lite. It works, and it really, really, REALLY isn't spy-ware.
Here's What Happened

When I installed KaZaA, Ad-Aware (http://www.lavasoft.com) immediately jumped to Full Red Alert Mode, detected something like 28 spy/ad-ware components, and started running Ad-Aware. For some reason Ad-Aware kept

Buffer Underrun
continued from page 1

According to several of the CD-RW drive manufacturers' websites, as well as the websites of several of the major CD burning software publishers, this error is the single most common problem encountered by users when creating CD-R discs. A buffer underrun occurs when the buffer or memory cache (temporary storage) either built in the CD-RW drive, or supplied by the CD burning software, can not keep up with the data being written to the CD disc. Normally the buffer receives data from the computer, and parcels it out to the disc, the buffer supposedly holding enough data to feed and write smoothly to the CD-R disc as it is also receiving data from the computer. Ideally, the data stream should be smooth and continuous. If, for any of many reasons, the buffer does not have the requisite amount of data available, it is possible that a buffer underrun error may be created. Common causes of this error are inadequate system performance (not enough memory, slow processor, hard drive problems, too many programs loaded and running), and low quality or defective CD-R discs.

There are several simple tasks that can be done to reduce the chance of buffer underrun errors due to poor system performance. Most CD burning software indicates the maximum speed that the CD can write, typically in the format of "8x" or "10x" on a pull down menu. By selecting a writing speed one or two levels lower than the maximum, the error often disappears. Running both the Windows integral Scandisk and Defrag programs, or similar third party utilities, can possibly ensure that the hard drive is not the culprit causing the errors. Most of the CD burning software uses that hard drive as intermediate storage while the CD is being created, and the rule-of-thumb is that hard drive space of at least 150% of the amount of data being written must be readily available on the hard drive. If cluttered with obsolete data, simply cleaning the c:\windows\temp

directory by deleting obsolete files can often help prevent the problem. In many older Windows computers, mostly running Windows 98 and 95, the CD drive settings may be incorrectly configured. Go to My Computer – Control Panel – System – Device Manager – click on the "+" to the left of "CDROM" to show the drive model – click on the CD drive to highlight it – click on properties – Settings – and check both "Disconnect" and "Auto Insert Notification", and uncheck "Sync Data Transfer". On many computers, properly setting this configuration alone may be adequate to eliminate the error.

If inadequate system resources cause the problem, it may also be easily resolved without the necessity of spending money to add memory or install a faster processor. Sometimes programs that have been already exited leave kernels of code or data in memory that unnecessarily consumes resources; typically the easiest method to restore those resources is to simply reboot the computer. By simply stopping any unnecessary programs from running in the background, and not performing any other tasks while burning CDs (multitasking), system resources consisting of CPU power, memory, and other resources may be easily and quickly made available. That traditional method to stop unwanted programs that may be running is to either right click on their icon in the taskbar and click on "close", or do a CTRL-ALT-DELETE, followed by task manager on newer operating systems, and "end task" all programs running except "systray" and "explorer", before burning the CD. After the CD has been successfully created, reboot the computer in order to load antivirus software, and other desired utilities. Another option, which may also improve general system performance, not just CD writing, is to stop unnecessary programs from loading at all during the boot "start up" sequence. Detailed instructions on how to do this for all Windows operating systems can be found by clicking on the first link on my radio show web page at www.mycomputershow.com. An alphabetical list of programs that may be in the startup, along with an indication of if they are necessary or unnecessary, is the second link on my website. Being connected to an "always on" broadband internet connection, such as DSL or cable can also consume resources. If the error occurs, disconnect from the net.

Another possible cause of the error may be the CD burning software itself. Most software included free with CD-RW drives is the "lite" or "limited" version lacking some of the features of the full commercial versions. Check your software publisher's website for updates to the version of software being used, as these may resolve the buffer underrun problem. Newer versions of the software, sometimes downloadable either as free upgrades, or available to registered users at a discount, may also resolve the problem. Some CD burning software better manage resources and buffers than others, and a software change may show improvement. Many of the CD software publishers offer a free trial version of their product for download; this may be a useful exercise.

The CD-R media itself can be the culprit. Newer disc technologies, often using a blue or green dye on the writable side of the disc, can usually be written to faster and more reliably than the older, and cheaper, silver dye technology. The difference in price between the better quality blank CDs, and the no-name cheap generics is often small, considering the savings in both ruined discs, and the time to create them.

By properly configuring your computer and software, the CD burning experience can be less frustrating, and more productive.

December
Election of Officers — Swap Meet — Bring Food

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quitting then restarting, causing me to wonder if something in KaZaA was trying to get rid of it. Or, at least, shut it up for a while. ("No-no. Not now! Go away! Sssssssshhhhhhhh!") I shut it off for the duration of the install process, then used KaZaA for a bit to see if I liked it.

Turns out, it's exactly like the sell-out version of Morpheus, and it even sucked in my old Morpheus download files, and continued them... Wow! Unfortunately, it's loaded, bogged-down with heaping helpings of ad- & spy-ware.

OK, I thought, it's time to get rid of all that. I quit KaZaA, and ran Ad-Aware, which then proceeded to have what seemed to be an epileptic seizure. This time it reported something like 60 spy/ad-ware components, which I then did Very Bad Things to, terminating them with extreme prejudice. When the deed was done, I re-booted and started fresh. I tried running KaZaA again and got the message, "You have un-installed a component that KaZaA needs to run. The program will shut down now so you can re-install it."

Here's the Lite
Next, I tried installing KaZaA Lite. Ad-Alert didn't notice a thing, and installation was a breeze. I ran Ad-Aware it merely burped, reporting only one component, which the EULA explains, in advance, is a bogus file to fool KaZaA into thinking itself to be a fully-functioning advertising sever. I put the file in the "Ignore" list and moved on. As I mentioned before, the program works like the Morpheus of olde, sucking in my old Morpheus downloads (kazaadownload*.dat files) and (where available) continued downloading them.

But-and here's where the gleeful shouting comes back into play- THERE WERE NO ADS! There were NO ad-banners, there was no constant annoying flicker of MSIE popping up with annoying pop- up, pop-under, **hidden,** system or read-only-if-you-can-find-them

ads. In fact, in the entire time I've used the program (three days since I installed it) I only had one pop-up Internet Explorer window. And, thanks to Zone Alarm, it couldn't find the ad it was supposed to open.
I'll update anyone that wants to know what I think after I've used it for a while longer. I just thought everyone would want to know right away. All the benefits of a full-service P2P file- share network, without the ads or spy-ware. Who'da thunk it?

Check it out at www.kazaalite.com.

Matt is a Los Angeles based Kaza Boycotter and a member of the Pasadena IBM Users Group.

When you installed Outlook Express, you should have also created a personal folder on your computer as part of the installation process. This personal folder is where all of your mail and attachments are saved unless you use the "Save As" feature. Your Personal Folder is one big database file that ends with the extension of PST. Individual files and attachments cannot be read from this PST database file without using Outlook to read or extract the data. To find this file click on:

- Start->Search from the Start Bar in Windows XP.

Click on the option "All Files And Folders". In the box "All Or Part Of The File Name" type: .pst. Click on the "Search" button. Make sure that you are checking all folders on your hard drive including Hidden and System folders.

Your search will probably uncover two files with a PST extension. The Archive.PST is archived older mail. The

other file should be your Personal Folder database that has all of your current mail and attachments. Check the date on this file to make sure that it matches the last date that you opened and read mail. If it matches, you have found your personal folder where your current mail and attachments are stored. Great question! Thanks.

I have always used Microsoft Binder. Since I have upgraded my PC to Windows XP, Microsoft Binder no longer works. Is it no longer part of Windows XP?

No. Actually, Microsoft Binder is an application that was very popular in Office 97. It has never been part of Windows. It, however, is normal to purchase and upgrade your Office product when you upgrade your operating system. If you upgraded to Office XP, you no longer have Microsoft Binder. Microsoft stopped making Microsoft Binder and thus it is not part of Office XP.

Office XP does include an export program that will allow Microsoft Binder files to be extracted into their original file format (Word, Excel, etc.). Once extracted, the file can be read. To learn more about Microsoft Binder and the extraction program, click on the F1 key while in Microsoft Office and type "binder" while in the help screen.

If you want to continue to use Microsoft Binder, reinstall it from your licensed previous version of Office. Thanks for asking!

How do I create shortcuts on my Desktop from programs that are in my menu?

One of the nice new features of Windows XP is how easy it is to create Desktop shortcut icons. Just go to your Program Menu (From the Start Bar, click on Start->All Programs) and find the application for the Desktop shortcut icon. Click and hold down the right mouse key over the application that you want to be the Desktop shortcut. While holding down the mouse key, "drag and

XPerienced?

continued from page 6

drop" the program from the Program Menu to the Desktop. Choose "copy here". Voila, you just created a Desktop shortcut icon.

PS: Using your left mouse key will move the shortcut instead of copying the shortcut.

How do I make the picture that my Family emailed to me, my Windows XP background?

There is more than one way to make a picture your Desktop Wallpaper (background). The easiest way is to right mouse click on the picture that was emailed to you and save the picture as a bitmap (picture file ending in the three letter extension "bmp") to your "C:\Windows" directory.

Go back to your Windows XP Desktop. Right mouse click on an open area of the Windows XP Desktop. Choose "Properties". Click on the "Desktop" tab and choose your picture that should now appear in the "Background" list in alphabetical order. Click "OK".

For more information on changing Windows XP wallpaper, click on the F1 key and type wallpaper in the help menu.

If you have any Windows XP questions that you would like to see in this column, please email them to utmr@hal-pc.org. The top 5 most requested questions will appear in the Magazine each month along with new helpful Windows XP websites.

Windows XP Helpful Websites:

If you need the latest in Windows XP supported software: www.download.com.

For the latest Windows information from Windows magazine: www.winnetmag.com.

For Windows XP reviews and tips: www.winsupersite.com.

For information on the next version of Windows; Windows Net Server: www.microsoft.com/ windows.netserver/preview/ default.mspx. For Articles on Windows XP and CD burning: go.microsoft.com/ fwlink/?LinkId=9112.

Todd Rosen is a HAL-PC Windows & Internet Instructor.

And this coming month...

Marty Joel, President of Perceptions Unlimited LLC in Nipomo, CA will be the featured speaker at the November 3rd SLO Bytes' Meeting. He will be speaking on the subject of "Demystifying the Internet" in which he will go into detail about how the Internet works, addressing topics which include the functions and workings of packets, protocols, and the DNS.

Perceptions Unlimited LLC (www.PerceptionsUnlimitedLLC.com), a 12-year old organization, is a custom software engineering company that is able to deliver high-quality, high-performance, well-designed and thoroughly-documented software for client projects. The company develops both customized and customizable software, assisting its clients with project design, redesign, development, documentation, integration, testing and management. Previous clients are Adobe Systems, Compaq, Epson, IBM, Ricoh, Texas Instruments and Xerox. Perceptions Unlimited does business using software development agreements, billing either hourly or on a per-project basis.

During his 24-year career as a software engineer, Marty has been involved in the hands-on development of applications, drivers, embedded systems and operating systems. Some of his more creative work has been on 3-D rendering, image processing and motion control. He currently programs in C++ but has used quite a few languages in the past, including Pascal, PL/1 and several assembly languages.

Gobe Productive
A Software Review
by Brian K. Lewis, Ph.D.
Member of the Sarasota Personal
Computer Users Group, Inc.
August 2002

Gobe Productive is a software suite that includes word processing, spreadsheet, graphics and presentation components. It is provided with a license that is quite different from the usual "one machine" per license. The home use part of the license states "you may install Gobe Productive onto the hard disk of every computer in your primary personal residence, including laptop, notebook or other portable computers, owned by you for personal use." Also, " you may make one backup copy of Gobe Productive, provided your backup copy is not installed or used on any other computer." The license for business or commercial ventures allows installation on a primary desktop computer workstation and one secondary laptop, notebook or other portable computer. This is far more reasonable than most software licenses. Just compare it to the license for Office XP with its requirements for activation and limited installation to one desktop and one laptop.

The word processing software resembles MS Word. Documents can be saved in a number of formats including Word doc, RTF, csv, pdf, plain text and Gobe Productive's own format. If you save the document in any format other than the Gobe format, you will be

Gobe

greeted with a window asking for the file name and when you select the same name, you get another request as to whether or not you want to overwrite the current file. Only when you save the file in the Gobe format do subsequent saves occur without questions.

There are other differences when you compare Gobe with Word. In Word, the first word in a sentence can be automatically capitalized, not so in Gobe. The word "I" is also automatically capitalized in Word but not in Gobe. Dates and days of the week will be automatically entered when you start typing them in Word. This does not occur in Gobe. You must use the "Insert" menu to add either date or time to your document. Neither does Gobe have an automatic correction for frequently mistyped words. Also lacking in the word processing environment is a "widow/orphan" control. This topic is not even listed in the Help files, however, for many types of documents I believe it is a necessary function. Please understand that these are not major deficiencies in Gobe. They are just nice functions to have that are found in other word processors. Even though this is version 3, it is obvious that some more "polish" could be added to this application. I also downloaded an update, ver. 3.03, but found no significant differences in it.

Other than these differences, the basic word processing functions are quite easy to use, especially if you are already familiar with MS Word. Text editing, word, line and paragraph selection and the marking of misspelled words is identical to MS Word.(Incidentally, this review is being written with the Gobe software and saved in MS Word format.) Anyone looking at the screen appearance of the word processor or the spreadsheet would find it to be a familiar interface.

Gobe also has a number of samples of various documents. Most of these are one page combinations of text and graphics. There is a sample brochure, ad pages and business cards. Gobe appears to be primarily designed to simplify the mixture of text and graphics, not just word processing. In fact, the primary topic in the Gobe Help files relate to the graphic environment.

I also used Gobe Productive to read the comma separated format (*.csv) of a spreadsheet. I then saved it in MS Excel (*.xls) format. Then I transferred it to another computer and read it into Excel. I also transferred an Excel spreadsheet to the computer which had Gobe installed. Both processess worked without a whimper. I did not test any Excel formulas, however, the documentation indicates that a full range of formulas is available.

My final test of Gobe was to use the presentation function to create a slide show. This worked very quickly and easily using some pictures that I had already stored on the computer. Gobe can insert many different graphic formats including jpeg, gif, bmp, wmf, tiff, tga, png, pict and ppm. Gobe also has various types of fade-ins that can be used with each slide. That worked quite well. However, when I tried to activate the slide show without showing the editing menu, I couldn't access that function. I was also unable to have the cursor show during the slide show so I could point out various items on individual slides. The Help file referred to an Options menu in the Presentation panel. I was never able to find the Options menu. Without that menu, there didn't seem to be any way to turn on either of these functions.

Gobe has a very complete set of drawing and graphic editing tools. These can be used in designing graphics for use in presentations. Although you can design and produce slide presentations with Gobe, they can not be saved in a MS Powerpoint format, only in the Gobe format.

There are a few other disparities between the Help files and the program. For example, the Help files refer to "frames" and their insertion, manipulation, etc. In order to access the frames you need to turn on the graphics tool bar. However, when you do so, there are no tools which refer to frames. I found this to be very odd as Gobe seems to indicate that the graphics environment is the fundamental environment for this software suite. If you right click a section of the screen there is a selection for frame properties in the menu that appears. This selection, at least when working with graphics, lead only to a form for an Internet address entry.

As a final test of a Gobe formatted document, I transferred the .DOC file for this review to another computer. Then I opened it in Microsoft Word. It looks and behaves exactly like any other Word document. So, I think there would be no problem moving documents between Word and Gobe Productive. Anyone who needs MS Word or Excel capability and doesn't want to pay the price for MS Office should seriously consider this product.

Gobe Productive is produced by
Gobe Software, Inc.,
917 SW Oak St., Suite 412
Portland, Oregon 97205.

The introductory price is $75.95 and can be ordered through their Website: http://www.gobe.com. Gobe has also indicated that any user group member will be able to order the software at this price. So if the introductory price is no longer in effect on their Website try http://www.gobe.com/UGorder.

club information

HARD COPY is a monthly publication of SLO BYTES PC User's Group located in San Luis Obispo, California. Information in this Newsletter is derived from both our own membership and other PC User Group Newsletters. The purpose of this publication is to inform our members of meetings and provide information related to the use of IBM PC's and compatible computers.

Membership: Dues are $25 per year. Full membership entitles you to our monthly newsletter, full use of the public domain software library software drawing at the end of the meetings.

Article Submission: Deadline for submission of articles is the 15th of each month. Articles should be provided in ASCII format without any type of formatting from your wordprocessor including tabs, indents, extra spaces, or highlighting. We prefer articles on disk but will accept hardcopies if necessary.

Disclaimer: Neither SLO BYTES PC User's Group, its officers, editors, or contributors to this newsletter assume liability for damages arising out of this publication of any article, including but not limited to the listing of programming code, batch files and other helpful hints.

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Member of

APCUG

Association of Personal Computer User Groups

meeting times

GENERAL MEETINGS are held the 1st Sunday of each month. Our meeting location is the San Luis Obispo I.O.O.F. Hall on Dana Street.

The general meeting starts promply at 2:30 p.m.

Special Interest Groups (SIGS) meet at 1:00 p.m.–2:15 p.m.

slobytes website

WWW.SLOBYTES.ORG

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for sale

In December, bring all your hardware/software for sale or trade. Software must be original/new or have the ability to transfer the license.

treasurer's report

October 14, 2002

OPERATING FUND

Beginning Balance	$2,190.58
Income	
Membership Dues	100.00
Refreshments	16.00
Dividends	5.93
Expenses	
Rent	75.00
Newsletter Copying	74.86
Postage	39.22
New Checks	10.16
New Balance	$2,113.27

SAVINGS ACCOUNT

Beginning Balance	$373.52
Dividends	1.87
Ending Balance	$375.39

I.O.O.F
520 Dana

Next Meeting
Sunday
November 3rd

1:00pm

Early SIGS

2:30pm

Marty Joel
Demystifying the
Internet