

SLO Bytes Hard Copy

A publication of the San Luis Obispo PC Users Group

Vol. 19 No. 3 March 2003

General Meeting, by Bill Avery

Our January Meeting opened with Ray's welcoming message and greeting announcements for the HTML and Linux SIG groups. The HTML group has undertaken the risk of redesigning the SLO Bytes Website, <http://www.slobytes.org/>. Alan Raul gave a review and discussion of Windows Media Player vs. Real Player, as we all have to use these multimedia programs on our machines. Our guest speaker, Mik Mrakovic, was introduced by Guy Kuncir. Mik gave a short review of his history in industry as a manager for several well-known companies. He is currently the Chief Executive Officer of Sunbay Software USA, Inc. [<http://www.sunbay.com/sunweb/us/>], which he represented at SLO Bytes. Sunbay produces custom programs for computer companies around the world, with branches in Switzerland (Head Office), Australia, South Africa, Russia, Ukraine . According to their Website, "The vision of Sunbay Software USA is to crystallize and unleash the creativity of our customers by listening with dedication, consulting with commitment, designing with intelligence, developing with confidence born of experience and delivering genuine value and uncompromising quality."

"What are we doing?"

"Sunbay is different. The customer's business is more important than our service. Sunbay is active in Europe (HQ), North America and Australia. Sunbay is built on three "Business Pillars". The first and biggest is our custom software development pillar. Instead of offering solutions with broad applicability, we listen to our customer and then tailor software to perfectly match the need. The second pillar is our product pillar. We leverage our custom development experience into affordable products for smaller companies that give them a competitive advantage. The third pillar is our knowledge investment pillar. We invest our IT expertise in people with great ideas that could change the face of the market. We seek to be an en-abler for change, growth and improvement for our partners and our community."

"Sunbay Software USA is a subsidiary of Sunbay Software AG that is chartered to build and grow a customer oriented business in the United States by leveraging established Sunbay expertise, methodologies and resources."

Their products overlay various companies software, and make them easier to use. The compression algorithm is intelligent and improves over time, up to 70%. Nokia, the cell phone maker, uses the Sunbay Netsnapper software to improve their own performance, Mik noted. Another program which has seen success is an English tutoring program for Spanish speakers. This is unique because of the way it allows flexibility in the use of any characters, and new words can be added easily. Other languages could also be developed, he said. Local clients in San Luis Obispo include an insurance company, a bank, and a telephone company. Mik said that consulting with these people is opening new doors for his company.

A question from our audience about wireless technology lead Mik to comment that Finland and Norway are the leaders in this area. He shared his extensive experience with European and worldwide communications, comparing current developments in those areas with our country. Ray commented that the new wireless technologies are succeeding where the old wired systems have failed.

Following Mik's presentation, Ray noted that we had some new visitors, and he welcomed them, while we set up for the raffle. We shared some questions and answers on a sticky modem conflict, which occurred when one member tried to turn off his machine. Another member explained that the operating system and networking software sometimes wait for each other in an endless loop, causing the system to hang forever. Finally, we closed the meeting with five Quick-n-Pick winners. One of our prizes was check-

printing program which prints customized official checks, if you have the money in your bank to cover those checks!

See you at the next meeting, March 2, 2003 - 1:00 p.m. Be sure to check out our new and improved Website at <http://www.slobytes.org/>
-- WA.

President's Message

At 1:00 PM, Alan will be demonstrating OPERA 7.01 and will show you why users are calling this the fastest, smallest, most full-featured desktop browser on the market. OPERA 7.01 is smaller and faster than before, and packed with new features such as the new e-mail and news client, a sleek new interface, the Wand, one-click skinning and much, much more. This demonstration should compliment the demonstration of Mozilla in the second SIG.

As usual, bring your questions and someone will have a possible solution for you.

At 2:30 PM, our featured speaker will be Steven Boothe, a local San Luis Obispo resident, who will be discussing Internet Privacy issues.

In his talk, Steven will be addressing some of the irritating, in your face, violations of privacy permitted by popular web browsers, the devious activities performed by information ferret systems, and the availability of some software to selectively protect web users from these encroachments to our space and security. We have all been annoyed by the pop-up and flashing advertisements that suddenly appear in front of us, irritatingly obscuring the screen from the information that we're viewing. We have also heard of "spyware" whose function is to pass on information gleaned for our computer to others for their benefit. There are software systems which go far to eliminate these problems. Free software that can restore lost privacy without affecting Internet enjoyment will be described by our speaker.

Steven began tinkering with computers sometime in the late seventies and became serious about them in 1992. He discovered electronic Bulletin Boards in 1993 and the Internet in 1995. Since that time, he has endeavored to learn everything he can about electronic communications. He has installed and maintained a variety of electronic information systems for various local business and non-profit organizations. Steven is a certified Linux professional and is currently employed in that capacity. He received his education from Cuesta Community College and Cal Poly State University.

Our featured speaker at the April 6th SLO Bytes meeting will be Jim Medeiros, Vice President and General Manager, Performance Technologies, Computer Products Group (formerly Ziatech-Intel). He will discuss the technology thrust of his organization and the markets he is seeking for their products. The Computer Products Group has offices at 1050 Southwood Drive, San Luis Obispo.

Medeiros earned a bachelor's degree in Electronic Engineering from Cal Poly in 1987. He started work at Ziatech as an intern in 1986 and has been with the company since that time.

Viruses and Hoaxes

Go to http://www.kcbx.net/customer_support/virus1.html/ to find out all about viruses and hoaxes. Dara of Slonet (now KCBXnet) has published a page, titled: "What is a Virus?? Why is it so bad?" which contains basic, easily understood information about viruses. She also has included some very neat links on this site which have a wealth of information about viruses and hoaxes.

Take advantage of the four **learning CDs**: "Learn Windows XP, Excel, Word & Power Point" available for our members to check out (at Marvin's table) and use on their computers. Because of the demand, we have now two sets of the CDs.

If you have any **used ink-jet printer cartridges** bring them to our meeting. We collect them (at Marvin's table) and turn them over to "Make A-Wish Foundation" who generate much needed funds for their organization by refurbishing and selling them.

--Ray Miklas

Club information and meeting times

Hard Copy is a monthly publication of SLO BYTES PC Users' 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 PCs and various Operating Systems.

Membership: Dues are \$25 per year. Full membership entitles you to our monthly newsletter, technical assistance, raffle gift drawing at the end of the meetings, and comradeships.

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 word processor including tabs, indents, extra spaces, or highlighting. We prefer articles on disk or via email but will accept hard copies if necessary.

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General Meetings are held the 1st Sunday of each month. Our meeting location is the San Luis Obispo I.O.O.F. Hall at 520 Dana Street, SLO.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) meet at 1:00 p.m. to 2:15 p.m.

The General Meeting starts at 2:30 p.m.

Outside SIGs:

HTML-Internet SIG normally meets on Monday at 6:30 PM (following our Sunday's General Meeting) at Ralph Sutter's home in Arroyo Grande.

Linux SIG normally meets on Thursday at 6:30 PM (following our Sunday's General Meeting) at KCBX.net [a.k.a. SLONET] Training Center, 4100 Vachell Lane, SLO.

Slobytes Officers/Volunteers:

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Bill Avery (Contributing Columnist/Win95/98 SIG)

Alan Raul (General SIG/Linux SIG)

Nancy Vrooman (Refreshments)

Nate Wallenstein (Contributing Columnist)

Ken Stilts (Set-up/Clean-up)

Cliff Buttschardt (Set-up/Clean-up)

John Enos (Set-up/Clean-up)
Bill Palmerston (Set-up/Clean-up)

Treasurer's Report Jan 15, 2003 - Feb 15, 2003

Income

Membership Dues \$225.00

Refreshments \$22.00

Expenses

Rent \$75.00

Checking Acct Balance \$2,457.70

Savings Acct Balance \$377.81

New Member

David Burns

Slobytes Website www.slobytes.org

PDF version of this mailing available at:

<http://www.slobytes.org/news.htm>

Nate Wallenstein's

Recommended Reading

1. I found the web site of the San Gabriel Valley Technology Users Group hoping to find an interesting article for you. Their home page looks so promising I'm going to suggest that you go there and explore <http://www.sagatug.org/> to your heart's content. The home page has many links to other great sites of interest to computer users, recent copies of their newsletter the SAGATUG Interface which most have useful articles, and several buttons which take you to club information and one entitled "Tips, Info, and Reviews". This last one has thirty one links to "how to" items and even a download site to a digital photo management program. I dare you to ignore this site.

2. The December 02 issue of PC World has an article on The Top 15 Free On Line Newsletters. One of the fifteen is at <http://www.woodyswatch.com/> by Woody Leonhard , the author of "Windows XP for DUMMIES". He sends out weekly newsletters on seven topics, among them are Windows XP and Office XP. The 1/27/03 Windows letter has a short article on preventing popups in Internet Explorer. You won't be able to get it because next week it will be gone. Please bear with me, I'll include it here.

(Woody Leonhard is quoted below)

"I've been wrestling with Web popups for years. You know, those annoying ads that appear in Internet Explorer when you're trying to look at something else? They're all over the place, and they drive me batty."

"I finally - finally - found a popup smasher that seems to work. At least, so far I haven't hit any problems. And that's no small trick. <http://www.endpopups.com/>"

"A popup-inhibiting program has to do three things well. First, it has to stop popup ads. That isn't as straightforward as it sounds because Web pages can create other Web pages in many different ways - and some of those ways have nothing to do with popup ads. Second, a good popup killer can't block pages that I want to see. For example, if I click on a link in a Web page that opens a new page, I want to

see the new page. I don't want my popup-inhibitor to "protect" me from my own actions. Third, if the popup-inhibitor blocks a popup, I want it to tell me unobtrusively that it's holding something back, and I want an easy way to see what got blocked - just in case I really did win \$500,000 in the Kazblukistan Lottery."

"Most of all, the popup-inhibitor shouldn't crash or freeze my system, even when I bring up Internet Explorer in a strange way, such as clicking on a link from inside a Word document that's attached to an email message. I've had so many problems with buggy popup-inhibitors over the years that I'd completely given up on them. Until now."

"My new favorite popup smasher is called <http://www.endpopups.com/index.cgi/> EndPopups. It's a tiny program (180 KB) from Jeff Bartolotta in San Francisco, downloads in no time at all, installs like a dream, and works like a champ."

"You can tell EndPopups is running because it puts a small vertical green bar in the lower left corner of IE's window. When EndPopups blocks a popup (or what it thinks is a popup), the green bar turns to red. Hover your mouse over the red bar, and you'll see a tooltip that tells you the title of the popup window and its address. Click on the Internet Explorer icon that appears to the right of the bar, and EndPopups dutifully opens the blocked Web page."

"If you right-click on the green bar, you can tell EndPopups to stop scanning popups on specific Web sites. That kind of 'White list' can be useful if you know that you want to respond to, oh, all the offers to take surveys on <http://www.microsoft.com/> for example."

"I put EndPopups through a barrage of <http://www.popup-killer-review.com/> tests created by Sergei Kaul. The tests go through many different ways of creating popups, trying to trick popup-inhibiting programs into showing popups that shouldn't be shown, or blocking popups that should get through. EndPopups only missed one of the tests, and it erred on the side of caution by showing me a page that shouldn't have gone through."

"Those of you who have read my books and newsletters over the years know that I don't recommend small add-ins very often. This is one of the few. It's free, although the author has set up several easy ways to make donations. I recommend that you do."