SLO Bytes HardCopy

A publication of the San Luis Obispo PC Users Group

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December 4th, 2005 Main Meeting Review by Bill Avery

Our special Christmas meeting got off to a quick start with Ray's introduction of our guest speaker, **George Lepp, of Lepp Institute in Los Osos,** a nationally known photographer and Editor of photo magazines. Their contact info is: (phone: (805) 528-7385) and website: leppinstitute.com. George brings beautiful examples of his work and is one of our most popular presenters. Due to the announcement of his presentation by Dan Logan in his Tech Talk column in the Tribune, this was one of the largest audiences (150+) we have ever had for a SLO Bytes club meeting.

George's website says this: "It is always a challenge to explain exactly what we do here at Lepp & Associates because we always have so many things going on! A lot of what we do involves education for fellow photographers. As a professional outdoor/nature photographer, George Lepp has always been one to freely share his knowledge on photography and digital imaging. This includes books, quarterly journals, articles, reviews, and the workshops we offer through the Lepp Institute of Digital Imaging."

"In addition to the educational aspects, we also sell limited-edition prints of many of George Lepp's photographic images. Visit LeppImages for a look at the collection of prints that are available. We also license George's images on a rights-protected basis. We are happy to research his vast inventory to locate an image to suit your specific needs. Learn more about this service at LeppStock."

George's subject was "Our World of Digital Photography" and we were treated to a discussion of what digital cameras can do, with some amazing results! The first example was a time-lapse photo shoot of over 2000 images, shot automatically using an "intervelometer", of the sky and cloud patterns in Los Osos outside George's studio. We watched the results using QuickTime, a free video display program. He used the smallest JPEG image size in his SLR digital camera, and a Belkin memory card, which can hold up to 8000 images at the smallest size, which is still bigger than a High Definition TV image frame!

He commented that digital cameras can exceed the light level ranges of film, using PhotoShop's high dynamic range capabilities in post exposure processing. We saw a volcano in Maui, a cathedral organ, the Lincoln memorial, and flags at sundown at a war memorial in Washington, D.C., each one a breath-taking shot impossible with film. The "film speed" available in digital is wider than that available in film.

A recent Canon 20D advertisement in National Geographic magazine was illustrated with on of George's shots, using a high speed still sequence, at more than 8 frames per second. It shows the flight of sand hill cranes at Boski Nature reserve. On the beach at Morro Bay, we saw the gallop of horses in the surf, taken by a lady in one of his photography classes. In Arkansas, on a visit to a race track, we saw proof that horses can fly, with a high speed 3200 ISO film equivalent shot of a horse with all its' legs off the ground at one time. It was similar to the famous picture done by Mulbridge with trip wires and still film cameras, many years ago. As cameras become more sensitive, dark areas of an image may get specks of red and blue color spots, which are electronic noise, and programs exist to remove them.

We saw butterfly eggs on flowers in Florida, and Fran Dukart in sari costumes here in Los Osos, each a treat in color and beauty, done with digital SLR cameras. A filter to allow only infrared exposures can be installed in a converted digital, and the images are also dramatic. We saw the show on George's own projector, which was a $3,500 unit, as compared to the club's projector, and those final results were very impressive, without any little squares of color or grainy images.

Off to Mexico, with a demonstration photo-slide project accompanied by quiet flowing music, produced by Lepp Institute, as a finale to George's talk. We were amazed to find it was done with Microsoft Power Point. We had a short question and answer session, which included a reference to Arcsoft's **Panorama Maker 3.0** for stitching shots together ($39.95). He also mentioned **HeliconFocus**, which is a program that creates one amazingly clear final version from several partially focused images. This solves the DOF (depth of field) problem in macro-photography. For his work, George shoots every image in RAW mode, so he can have control over the final product, he said. A final question by Ralph Sutter was about color spiders, which allow adjustment of a monitor for exact color display. The suggestion was given to share a $189 unit among friends, or maybe among club members (?), to reduce cost since they are not used very often for one monitor. Color Vision's **Spyder2** was the recommended product.

We had our customary cookie and coffee break with several home-made Christmas selections, hosted by Nancy Vrooman and Peter Stonehewer, to catch up on the past month and wish each other a happy holiday season.

Our club election of officers resulted in a new slate, with Alan recommending no-changes, which passed by voice acclamation. Peter Stonehewer took over from Don Jones as V.P./Programs/Publicity. All the other current positions holding for the coming year. Thank you Don for a job well done this past year!

Dave McLaughlin noted that he had a discussion going on our **SLO Bytes BBS**, which is available at: http://users.boardnation.com/~slobytes/index.php?board=1;action=display;threadid=395;start=0 (if you are logged in as a BBS member), which would help our members participate in PODcasts such as Leo LaPort's discussions on Tech TV.

The last event of our short meeting was the annual all-are-winners door prize drawing, with a gift for each member who stayed to participate. Ray was Santa, and Alan selected the names with George Campbell's Quick Pick raffle program. It was fun, and we will all be back on New Years day to see Don Jones who is currently leading the photography special interest group in SLO Bytes. Don will be presenting ways to convert your old vinyl records and audio tapes to computer data. Happy Holidays!!

Peter Stonehewer's Featured Speaker Programming Schedule by Peter Stonehewer

On January 1st, at 2:30 our featured speaker will be Don Jones who is currently leading the photography special interest group in SLO Bytes Don will be talking and presenting ways to convert your old vinyl records and audio tapes to computer data. He will follow this by showing how to fix some old (almost black) postcard-type pictures popular in the early 1900s. He will then move into modern times and fix poor quality digital photos using PhotoShop Elements 4.0. Both these subjects were of interest in the membership survey done in 2005. His presentation will be on an introductory level and will be of particular interest to beginning photographers.

At our February 5th meeting, our featured speaker will be David B. Whittle, author of "Cyberspace: The Human Dimension" and named by Working Woman Magazine as "one of America's most original technological thinkers." Dave's been a leader in the PC revolution since 1979, and an opinion-leader in the PC industry since his days as OS/2 Evangelist at IBM in the early '90s. Most recently, he's been writing for *Smart Computing*. Now he's bringing to you his favorite discoveries from recent trade shows in order to show new products that open up new horizons of possibility or solve problems you might be facing.

Would you like a brief look at the latest gadgets, goodies, software, and services available for the digital

home?   Would you like to have software that takes your digital photos and video footage and almost magically transforms it into a movie on DVD or CD that is a surprising delight to watch?   Do you want to easily but dramatically show all of the digital photos in any given folder while the song of your choice plays in the background? Ever wish you could rise above ordinary flat snapshots of those special places you visit and have an immersive, 3-dimensional picture of the place so you can revisit the scene looking in any direction? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then you won't want to miss Dave Whittle's presentation at our next monthly meeting!

Digital Photography SIG Review by Lou Pera

The digital photography SIG met at its usual 'time' (which has been a bone of contention) and there were only five of us attending. Oh well, just the more cookies for us! No, we were disappointed and hope that if we decide upon a time more acceptable, attendance will improve. This was our smallest group showing (about 1/3 of November's meeting), reversing our growing trend. Hope you all got your holiday activities done. Don will be sending an email requesting votes on desired changes in meeting dates. Please respond.

Ray Miklas presented a very interesting video explaining the digital photo editing capabilities built into Windows XP. Part of the film was devoted to displaying several add-ons which can be purchased such as "Picture It", and other enhancements available from MSN Photos. Several of us decided that most of the magical effects available off of these different applications are already built in to "PhotoShop Elements" which, for the most part, we are already using.   But, it is nice to know that there are people out there competing with each other, trying to get our business by making things easier for us to use.

Don took the second part of the meeting and showed some of the neat tools available to us digital nuts in "PhotoShop Elements IV", such as the "liquefying brush" which is really great for getting rid of pot bellies on photos you might otherwise treasure!

Lou Pera

President's Message

At our January 1, 2005 meeting:
At 1 PM, Alan will be moderating the Question and Answer session.
At 2:30 PM, Our speaker **Don Jones** will give his presentation.

Here is a great (free) utility program for Windows 2000 and XP:
Slow down, freeze and blue-screen crash are over. **Advanced WindowsCare** thoroughly examines the Windows system, accurately detects the bottlenecks for slowing down and crashing, fixes these problems and repairs Windows. All work will be done with 30 seconds and 1 click. The intuitive interface makes Advanced WindowsCare the perfect tool for big dummies. Go to http://www.iobit.com/WindowsCare.htm for info and download.

Here is another great program for Windows NT/2000/XP which Fred Cook introduced me to: A free Spyware Removal Software, **SpyCatcher™ Express**. Go to http://www.tenebril.com/consumer/spyware/spycatcher-express.php for info and download.

I installed both of these programs and am pleased with them. Both are simple to use and do what they are

designed for. Both programs can be upgraded to a more powerful, paid version.

Here is great article by **Orv Beach on Linux and Open Source software** at our website
http://www.slobytes.org/newsletter/push/0106/opensource.rtf Here is his website http://www.orvsplace.net/
and his Linux page http://www.orvsplace.net/Linux/. BTW, you will find there the announcement on the
Fourth Annual So Cal Linux Expo, scheduled for February 11 & 12, 2006, at the Radisson LAX hotel, in
case you would like to attend. Here is the Linux Expo http://www.socallinuxexpo.com/ website
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Take advantage of the four **learning CD's** "Learn Windows XP, Excel, Word & Power Point" available
for our members to check out (at the Treasurer's table)

We also have **Adobe PhotoShop 7, learning CD's** to check out (at the Treasurer's table). These 5 CD's
cover, in depth, the various program features in lesson format.

Continue to bring any **used ink-jet printer or toner cartridges** to our meeting. We collect them (at the
Treasurer'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

Treasurer's Report

Nov 24, 2005 Dec 24, 2005
Income

New members	$150.00
Renewing members	425.00
Refreshments	35.16

Expenses

Hall rent	75.00
Drawing prizes, Ray Miklas	492.90

Bank accounts @ 11/30/05
Saving Acct Balance	3,193.32
Checking Acct Balance	2,261.73
Interest - year to date	47.17

New members: six
     Anne Julian, Natural Foods Co-op, Ginny Monteen, David Coronel, Rosanne Seitz, James Johnson
Renewing members: seventeen

Robert Mires, Treasurer

Club Information and Meeting Times

SLO Bytes, a PC Users Group dedicated to educate its members in the use of personal computers, digital devices and software, meets on the first Sunday of each month at the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) Hall at 520 Dana Street, San Luis Obispo. All meetings are open to the public at no cost. Special interest groups meet from 1 to 2:00 PM and guest speaker presentations begin at 2:30 PM. Contact Don Jones (773-5526, donej@sbcglobal.net) or visit www.slobytes.org for additional information about SLO Bytes and the scheduled presentation.

HardCopy 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 via e-mail, technical assistance, raffle gift drawing at the end of the meetings, a voice in the affairs of the club, and comradeships.

Article Submission Deadline for submission of articles is the 20th of each month. Articles should be E-mailed to the editor (rmiklas@bigfoot.com).

Disclaimer: Neither SLO Bytes PC Users' 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. Articles from this newsletter may be reprinted by other user groups if credit is given to both the author and newsletter from which it was taken. Reproduction of articles with a specific Copyright notice is prohibited without prior permission from the original author.

Outside Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

HTML/Internet SIG normally meets at 6:30 PM on the Monday (following our Sunday's General Meeting) at Ralph Sutter's home in Arroyo Grande. Call Ralph at 489-8678 for directions.

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

Photography SIG normally meets at 7 PM on a second Tuesday (following our Sunday's General Meeting) at Don Jones's home in Pismo Beach. Call Don at 773-5526 for directions.

SLO Bytes Officers/Volunteers
Ray Miklas (President, HardCopy Editor) rmiklas@bigfoot.com
Peter Stonehewer (V.P./Programs/Publicity/Refreshments) stonepet@slonet.org
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Bill Avery (Contributing Columnist/Win95/98/XP SIG) wavery@slonet.org
Alan Raul (General SIG/Linux SIG)

Don Jones (Photography SIG)
Lou Pera (Contributing Columnist/Photo SIG)
Nancy Vrooman (Refreshments)
Ken Stilts (Set-up/Clean-up)
Cliff Buttschardt (Set-up/Clean-up)
John Enos (Set-up/Clean-up)
Bill Palmerston (Set-up/Clean-up)

SLO Bytes Website http://www.slobytes.org