

Orange County PC
Users Group

nibbles & bits

my first look at Windows® 8

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- new features that surprise users
- how to do basic tasks in Windows 8

presented by
ted wirtz



my first look at windows 8

by Ted Wirtz

“My First Look At Windows 8” is the subject of my presentation on March 12. As I wrote in the last newsletter, I recently purchased a laptop computer that came with Windows 8 preinstalled. It was my first laptop, as I’ve always used a desktop before now.

I had seen some earlier reviews of Windows 8 (Win8) and I was put off by the “Modern” user interface that Microsoft had implemented in Win8. I wanted to install Win 7 in order to have an OS that was familiar to me. The Win7 disks I had purchased some time ago were upgrade disks, and would not allow me to “downgrade” from Win8 to Win7. Good thing too, as I found out later that the laptop I had purchased had been designed specifically for Win8.

Drivers for Win7 are not available for this particular machine.

So...I guess I had to get familiar with Win8. One of the differences that rankled me was that there was no “Start” button. (I solved that by installing Start 8. See page 22 of the February newsletter for a complete description of the program.) Win8’s “Start menu” is also completely different than prior versions of Windows. I would have to get used to that interface as well.

Over the past few weeks I’ve learned quite a bit about the system. So come to the March meeting and I’ll show you what I know about Win8 so far. I’m still learning, so I’m not an expert. After the presentation we’ll have a Q and A and during that session we will probably learn more together.

feedback

CARL WESTBERG ORCOPUG, CA

Being appalled by the learning curve and cost of Windows, I am trying to keep XP running as long as possible.

Do you have any comments on ReImage, which supposedly restores one's system, providing files as necessary. It seems like a good idea to have a "warehouse" of files that can be called on, but, does it work?

On the hardware side — how does one replace a hard drive while still maintaining the multiple drive ability with the unavailability of PATA hard drives. The adapters appear to convert to SATA cables at the motherboard rather than converting at the drive. The optical drives are functional, but I fear for the life of the HDDs. Experience has meant caution, always have a replacement.

Thanks for any help you can give.

RON HIRSCH FLORIDA

Apparently the Hedy Lamarr story is making the rounds these days, as I see it in your current newsletter. I had heard of this back many years.

In November 1973, Sally and I were on a trip to the Caribbean, and we were in St. Maarten. While

I was walking on the beach with my camera, I came across the person below. I had heard that she was at this hotel, and I instantly recognized her as Hedy Lamarr. She was still slim, but of course she had aged. And there were many signs of plastic surgery. In the evening, she would dress up, keeping most of her body under clothing, and she would frequent the main bar at the hotel, to "pickup" male companions.

I approached her, and asked if I might take some pictures of her (I always had my camera with me). She said yes, and commented that in her day, taking her picture was an expensive proposition. But she allowed me to do so.

I took about half a dozen shots, and this one is the best. This was 40 years ago, and of course, she is no longer among us.



MIKE LYONS, PRESIDENT ORCOPUG, CA

If you are interested in security notifications, I follow this site (recommended by Steve Gibson) <https://krebsonsecurity.com>. He seems to get security news out sooner than anyone else and doesn't overload you with useless stuff.

TONY LAKE UTAH

In her final days as Commander of the International Space Station, Sunita Williams of NASA recorded an extensive tour of the orbital laboratory and downlinked the video on Nov. 18, just hours before she headed back to Earth.

The tour includes scenes the station's modules and research facilities with Williams' running narrative of the work which is ongoing aboard the orbital outpost. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=doN4t5NKW-k>

NEIL LONGMUIR WPCUSRGRP, CANADA

Here are two even better explanations of RAW formats. The explanation on photo.net is great. <http://photo.net/learn/raw/> and <http://www.luminous-landscape.com/tutorials/understanding-series/u-raw-files.shtml>

(The first explanation Neil sent is on page 16. —LG)

Favorite Shot

PHOTO BY FRANK BOLLINGER, ORCOPUG



The plane is performing a tumbling aerobatic maneuver at the Wings over Camarillo air show on August 19, 2012. “The pilot (called Tumbling Bear) was supposed to retire last year, but I’ve heard he will be at several air shows this year,” Frank said. He took the photo using a Canon EOS REBEL Tii.

WORD

displaying actual font faces

by Allen Wyatt

When you are applying formatting to various parts of your document, you may find it useful to actually see a sample of a font before you apply it. For instance, the drop-down font list on the Formatting toolbar can be very handy if the font names are displayed using the representative typeface, rather than just a simple listing of typeface names.

Beginning with Word 2000 you can control whether Word uses typefaces to show font names. You do this by following these steps:

1. Choose Customize from the Tools menu. Word displays the Customize dialog box.
2. Make sure the Options tab is selected. (See Figure 1.)
3. Ensure the List Font Names in Their Font check box is checked.
4. Click on OK.

If you check out the font drop-down list, you will notice that it now uses the various typefaces to display font names.

Remember that this feature is only available beginning with Word 2000. Regardless of the version of Word you are using, you can always use the Font dialog box to display what a font will look like. Simply select the text you want to format and then

press Ctrl+D. The font dialog box is displayed, with the selected text appearing as the sample at the bottom of the dialog box. As you select different fonts in the dialog box you can easily see the effect it has on the selected text.

This tip applies to Microsoft Word versions: 97, 2000, 2002 and 2003 and is at http://word.tips.net/T001550_Displaying_Actual_Font_Faces.html

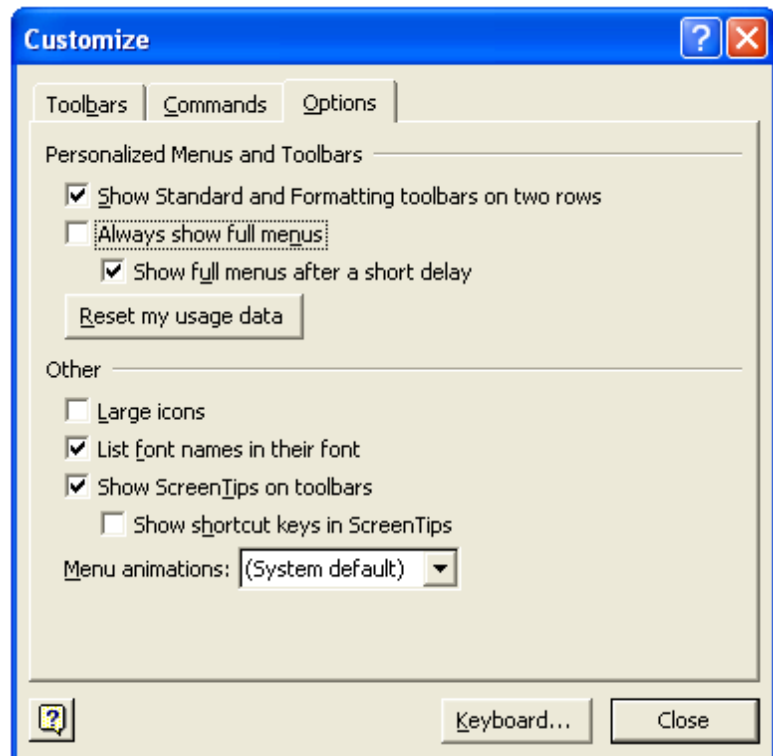


Figure 1. The Options tab of the Customize dialog box.

EXCEL

changing gridline color

by Allen Wyatt

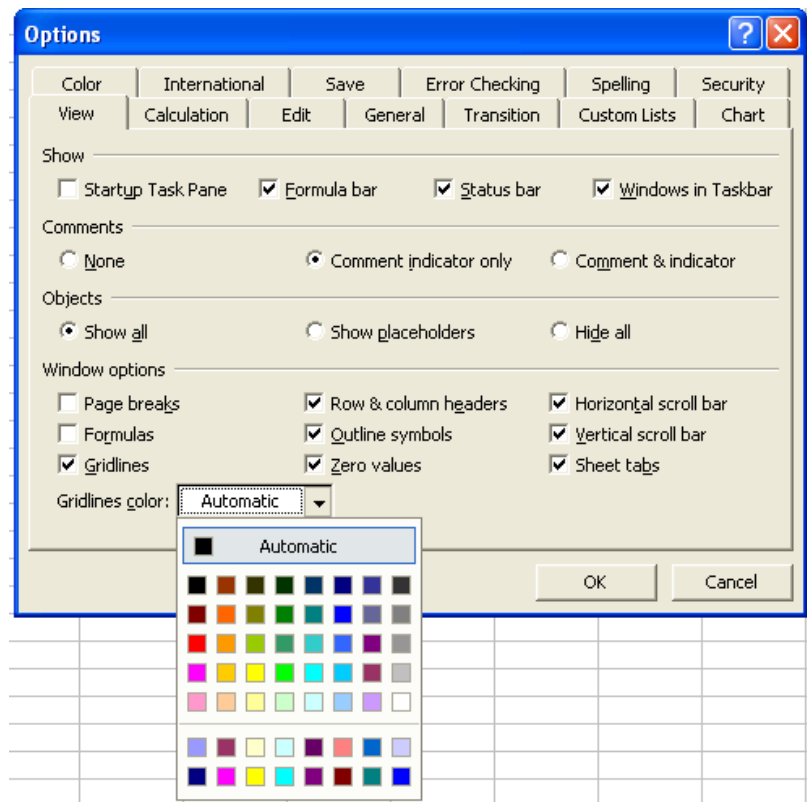
The gridlines help you track information on the screen easier and to locate cells quickly. Normally the gridlines are shown in black, but you may want to make them some other stylish color.

If you want to change the gridline color, follow these steps if you are using Excel 2007:

1. Click the Office button and then click Excel Options. Excel displays the Excel Options dialog box.
2. At the left of the dialog box click Advanced.
3. Scroll through the options until you see the Show Gridlines check box; select it.
4. Click the Gridline Color control and choose a color you want to use for the gridlines.
5. Make sure the Show Gridlines check box is selected.
6. Click on OK.

If you are using an older version of Excel, follow these steps instead:

1. Choose Options from the Tools menu. You will see the Options dialog box.
2. Click on the View tab.
3. Use the Color drop-down palette to select a



color for your gridlines.

4. Make sure the Gridlines check box is selected.
5. Click on OK.

You can specify different gridline colors for each worksheet in a workbook.

This tip applies to Microsoft Excel versions: 97, 2000, 2002, 2003 and 2007 and is at http://excel.tips.net/T002736_Changing_Gridline_Color.html



I cannot send or delete emails in Microsoft Outlook. My internet connection is working and my Internet Provider says that I need to “compact” Outlook. Why this is happening?

QUESTION: I need to buy an external hard drive. I’ve been looking at Western Digital and Seagate. What do you recommend and what files should I back up?

ANSWER: When I recommend WD highly and have many of them. The 1TB will do for all your needs and you do not need an extra program, it is all in the one unit. This one is password protected, which I recommend; I have the same one and love it! Remember to disconnect the external drive when you have completed your backup! Put it in a safe place ready for your next backup. This is very important to remember. It is also important to remember not to disconnect your external hard drive while your computer is on. Wait until you turn your computer off at night and then disconnect your external hard drive or use the “Safely Remove” icon.

QUESTION: Can you tell me how to log off of SkyDrive?

ANSWER: It seems you won’t be able to logout from the SkyDrive in Photo app. Once logged in using your Win-

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To use an ALT code, hold down the ALT key and type the numbers on the numeric keyboard.

dows Live account, you will be always connected to SkyDrive like the other apps which use the Windows Live account.

QUESTION: Why can't I open your Tutorials? It says that I do not have the program. What program do I need?

ANSWER: To read my tutorials you will need Adobe Reader X. If you have a previous version you may not be able to open the files. To be sure you have the correct version go to your program list and click on Adobe Reader if it is on the list. Then click on the "help" file and scroll down and click on "Check for updates." If you do not have the program visit the following link and download the latest FREE version: <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>

QUESTION: Would you please publish a list of ALT codes?

ANSWER: Below are the most popular ALT codes. If you need additional ALT codes please contact me. Make sure your "numlock" is active, hold down the ALT key and type the numbers on the numeric keyboard.

QUESTION: I cannot send or delete emails in Microsoft Outlook. My internet connection is working and my ISP (Internet Provider) says that I need to "compact" Outlook. Can you please give me detailed instructions and tell me why this is happening?

ANSWER: All of your email is stored in a Personal Folders file (.pst), if you are using Microsoft Outlook or Outlook Express, which tends to build up in size over time. This can cause MO or OE to malfunction or "overload" if not "compacted." It can also cause emails to get stuck in the "outbox" and even refuse to delete. To avoid this, regain some hard drive space and speed up Outlook you should "compact" the "pst" file regularly. Follow the steps below for your version:

Microsoft Office Outlook 2010

1. Delete any items that you do not want to keep, and then empty the Deleted Items folder.
2. Click the File tab on the Ribbon, and then click the Info tab on the menu.
3. Click the Accounts Settings tab, and then click on Accounts Settings again

4. Click the Data Files tab.
5. Click to select your Personal folder, and then click Settings.
6. On the General tab, click Compact Now.
7. Click OK, and then click Close.

Microsoft Office Outlook 2007

1. Delete any items that you do not want to keep, and then empty the Deleted Items folder.
2. On the Tools menu, click Account Settings.
3. In the list, select Microsoft Exchange Server, and then click Change.
4. Click More Settings.
5. On the Advanced tab, click Offline Folder File Settings.
6. Click Compact Now.

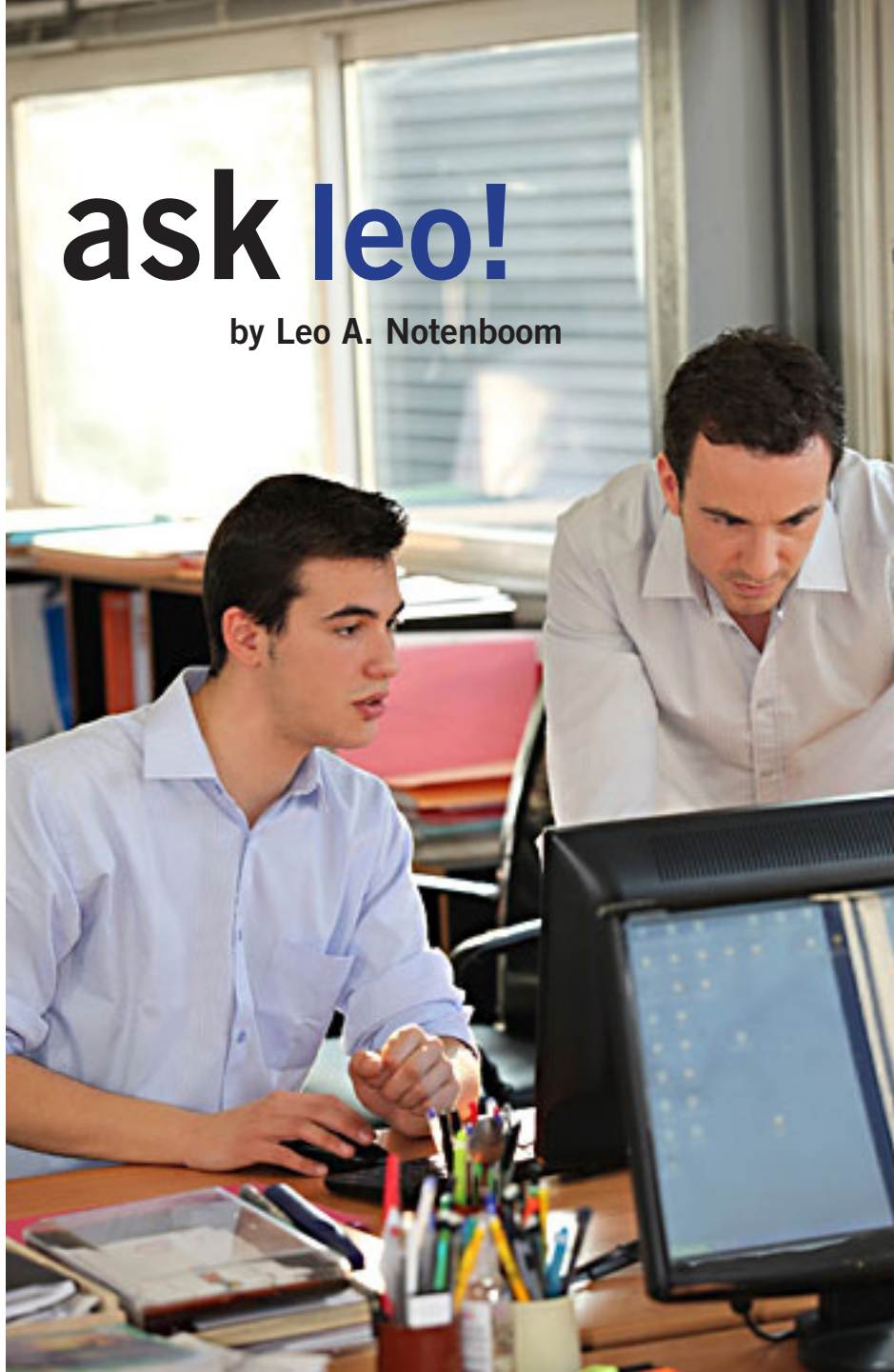
Microsoft Office Outlook 2003 and earlier versions

1. On the Tools menu, click to select E-mail Accounts.
2. Click View or change existing e-mail account, and then click Next.
3. Click Microsoft Exchange Server, and then click Change.
4. Click More Settings.
5. On the Advanced tab, click Offline Folder File Settings.
6. Click Compact Now.
7. When the compact operation is finished, click OK twice.
8. Click Next, and then click Finish.

Send your computer-based questions to Pamela Tabak, pamela@computertutorinc.net or visit www.computertutorinc.net for answers.

ask leo!

by Leo A. Notenboom



how do I remove a virus if it prevents me from download or installing anything?

I am trying to fix a computer that is running XP Pro. It has adware that is preventing me from getting into regedit and Task Manager. It will not let me boot into Safe Mode. It will not let me install any antispyware or antivirus software. Not sure where to go from here. It has stopped me from doing much of anything to get the malware off the computer. Any suggestions? I am not sure what the malware is but I think it's Antispyware 2010 or something like that. I keep getting alerts that I am infected and when I click one, a browser window opens and tries to take me to a website.

Sadly, this is all too common. Malware is getting pretty nasty. At best it may extort money from you for a real repair — at worst it'll extort money from you and do nothing.

I'll save the “prevention is so much easier than the cure” missive for another day. We just want this fixed.

There are things we can try, but there are no guarantees.

the problem: malware interferes

The problem that you're seeing is that the malware on the machine is actively looking for you to try to remove it.

It's watching for downloads that “look like” anti-malware tools, and it's watching for web or other access that might be going to anti-malware sites. It's even monitoring what programs you run. When it sees you doing that (or other things that could lead to its removal) it steps in and either

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redirects you to sites of its choosing, or simply causes the operation to fail.

We'd love to download and run anti-malware tools, but we can't.

temporarily kill the malware

One possible solution to the blocking problem is to temporarily kill the malware that's running. This won't remove it, but may allow you to download tools that will.

The folks at BeepingComputer.com have created a tool called RKill (be careful: at this writing there's an ad immediately above the download link that looks like the download link. It is not. Be sure to grab RKill itself).

You may need to download RKill on another machine (because of course it may well be blocked on the infected machine), but you can quickly copy it over using a USB drive or something else.

You may also need to rename RKill.exe to something else (like "notrkill.exe" or "leo.exe" or something else). Once again, the malware may be paying attention to the name of every program being run, and may prevent the software from running if it recognizes the name.

Run the program and do not reboot. Rebooting will "undo" the effect of having run RKill, and any malware that RKill killed will be back.

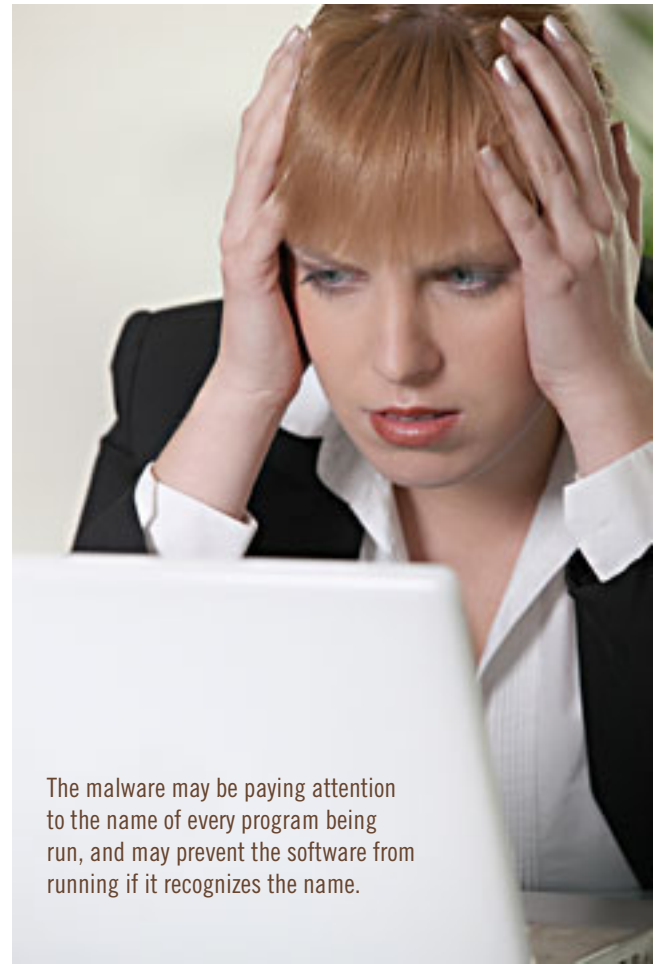
download and run malwarebytes' anti-malware

Malwarebytes' Anti-Malware is currently one of the most successful tools at identifying and removing the types of malware we're talking about here. It's not really a replacement for anti-virus software (you'll find them saying so in their support forums), but particularly in cases of infection it has a pretty darn good track record.

Download the free version, install it and run it and see what it turns up. (You may need or just want to download on the other machine and copy the download over as you did rkill.)

try other tools

After running RKill you may, or may not, be able to run some of the other tools that the malware was blocking. You can try registry editing tools, the task manager, process explorer or others.



The malware may be paying attention to the name of every program being run, and may prevent the software from running if it recognizes the name.

You can also try your other anti-virus and anti-spyware tools as well — perhaps they'll be able to download an update that catches this problem, or perhaps you can download a new tool that will.

But in general my money's on Malwarebytes.

what if it doesn't work?

If none of that works, things get complicated.

There are a couple of things you can consider trying:

Boot from a bootable antivirus rescue CD. There are several, including from anti-virus vendors like Avira, AVG and several others. If you have a favorite anti-malware vendor, check with them to see if they provide a bootable scanning solution.

The reason that these are interesting is that they boot from the CD, not your hard drive, so the malware

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doesn't have a chance to operate and block you. You can then run a scan of your hard disk and hopefully clean it off.

Remove the hard disk and place it in or connect it to another machine. Hardware issues aside, this needs to be done with care to prevent the malware from spreading, but just like booting from that CD this boots from the new machine's installation, not yours. You can then run anti-malware tools against your drive and, hopefully, clean it off.



restore from backup

If you have a recent system backup it's possible that restoring to that will take your machine back to a time before it was infected.

Regular backups are *wonderful* for this.

But beware, that they do have to be the correct type of backup: full system backups. Simply backing up your data, while better than not backing up at all, will not be helpful in a scenario like this.

And for the record, System Restore is pretty useless when it comes to bad malware infections like this (if it hasn't already been completely disabled by the malware, of course).

the final solution

It sounds dire, because it is.

As I've mentioned before, once your machine is infected it's no longer yours. You have no idea what's been done to it. And you also have no idea whether or not any or all of the cleaning steps you took removed any or all of the malware that was on the machine.

In other words, you know it was infected, but there's no way to know that it's not now.

Scary, eh?

The only way to know with absolute certainty that malware has been removed is to reformat your machine and reinstall everything from scratch.

Sadly, it's also quite often the most pragmatic approach to removing particularly stubborn malware. Sometimes all the machinations we go through trying to clean up from a malware infection end up taking more time than simply reformatting and reinstalling.

And reformatting and reinstalling is the only approach that's known to have a 100% success rate at malware removal.

If you don't have a backup of your data then before you reformat at least copy the data off somehow. Boot from a Linux Live CD if you have to (Ubuntu's a good choice) - that'll give you access to all the files on your machine and allow you to copy them to a USB device or perhaps even upload them somewhere on the internet.

aftermath

After things are cleared up and working once again, take a few moments to consider how to prevent it from happening again, or what you can do to make the next time easier:

- See if you can identify how the infection occurred, and to the extent that you can: never do that again.
- Make sure you have all the up to date security measures that it takes to stay safe on the internet.
- Consider investing in a backup solution of some sort. Nothing can save you from more different kinds of problems than a good, regular backup.

As I said at the beginning — prevention is much easier than the cure.



Used with permission of Leo A. Notenboom, Ask Leo! <http://ask-leo.com>. After retiring from Microsoft in 2001, Leo started Ask Leo! in 2003 as a place for answers to common computer and technical questions.

book review

by Neil Longmuir, WPCUSRGRP

Do you really want to know how to make complex selections? This book is all about “unlocking the key to perfect selections & amazing Photoshop effects for totally realistic composites.” This book is all about selections details and all the other details required to make a realistic composite.

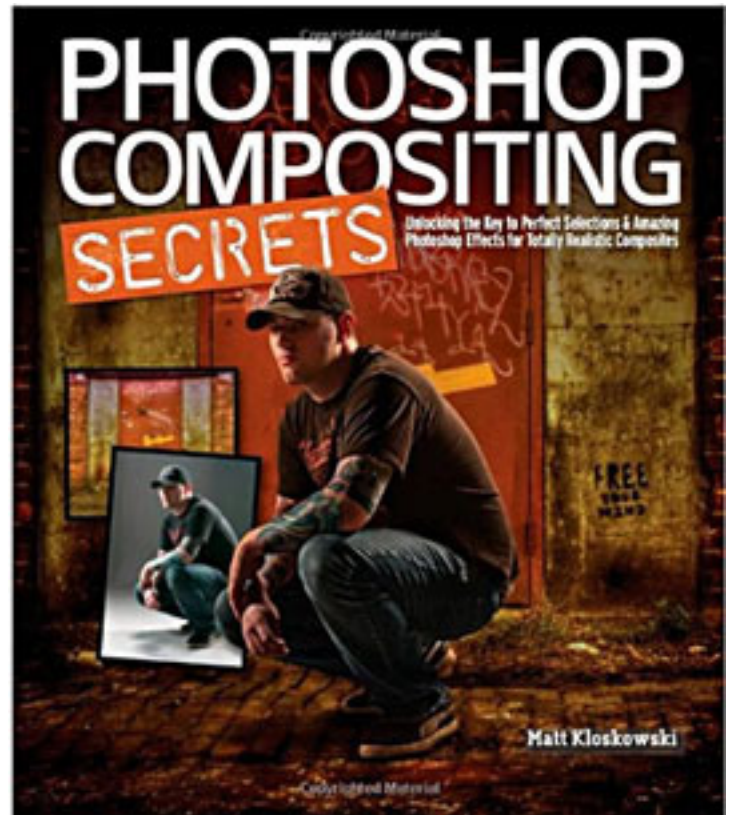
Let me give you an example. You are given a job to do an advertising composite for a local company. To start with not all the elements of the composite are going to be available to you, the photographer at the same time. The elements could be an individual who may only be available for a photo shot in a studio or on location. A second element such as a billboard or company logo etc. could be supplied by the company whom the photo shot is for. That second element could also not be supplied by the company that you are working for and instead the company says find an interesting element to work for us. There could also be other elements such as text and special effects that may be required.

To start with, you photograph this individual in a studio location using a neutral background so that you can select the individual later to include in the composite. What do you have to do to make this work?

First of all I would record all the setup in a notebook, smart phone or laptop. I would measure the exact distance from the background to the subject. I would measure the exact distance and high of the camera from the camera to the subject. Better yet, I would use a second camera to take a image of the setup I was shooting which would include the lighting. One further detail to note would be the shadow of a shoe in the image. Why? This shadow will have to look realistic in the composite image.

Next on the agenda is a background to place the subject you photographed in the studio. Given, what the company wants for it's advertising, you must now search out a suitable background. Suppose, you found an old wall of a building that you feel would work great for the final product. Here's where that notebook comes in handy because the wall has to be taken from exactly the same position and height as the picture taken in the studio.

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**Photoshop Compositing Secrets:
Unlocking the Key to Perfect Selections
and Amazing Photoshop Effects for
Totally Realistic Composites**
by Matt Kloskowski

Paperback: 408 pages
Publisher: Peachpit Press
1 edition (August 8, 2011)
ISBN-10: 0321808231
ISBN-13: 978-0321808233

\$39.99

(35% Discount for UG Members)

The composite has to look realistic and if the elements don't fit, the composite will not work.

Another quick scenario could be that you're asked to do a family group picture. The only problem is that not all the family will be available at the same time. Your only solution will be to take individual images of each family group and combine all the images into a realistic composite that looks like everybody was present when the photograph was taken.

This book is all about selections and details to selections. The sample images used in this book are available at www.kelbytraining.com/books/compositing. This book is extremely well organized with complete tutorials on each of the composites.

Each tutorial includes the primary or background image, detailed instruction on how to make the selection and finally the finished composite. Remember, that background could be just as important as the people in the composite because you want the composite to be realistic.

This book shows Matt's lighting setups, incredible Photoshop tips to create certain effects. Matt also gives additional terrific tricks that most of us probably did not know existed. One thing is for sure, if each of us could sit down and reproduce each of the tutorials in this book like Matt did, then we would have a very good idea on how to use Photoshop really effectively.

On a side note, I'm still working on the first tutorial and it's not as easy as it looks. Matt shows how to make great selections including what he refers to as "wispy hair." Do you want a real challenge?

The cover of this book is one of the tutorials. This composite has it all, take time and try it. This book is not for the beginner but would prove beneficial to someone with some Photoshop experience. I personally love a challenge and this challenge is one I'm enjoying.



Two of the book's tutorials include **Creating Motion** and **the Basic Composite**.

Matt Kloskowski is a Photoshop guru and author of nine books on Photoshop, Elements, and Illustrator. Matt teaches Photoshop and digital photography techniques to thousands of people each year. He co-hosts the top-rated video podcast Photoshop User TV and also hosts the Adobe Photoshop Lightroom Killer Tips and Photoshop Killer Tips podcasts. He's built a massive library of DVDs and online training courses, and writes regularly for Photoshop User magazine. Matt is an instructor at the world's premier Photoshop event, the Photoshop World Conference & Expo, and works in Tampa, Florida, at the National Association of Photoshop Professionals.

watch free tv and movies legally on your smart device

by *Ira Wilsker*

I was recently helping a disabled Viet Nam veteran with a not so unusual problem; he wanted to be able to watch live streaming sports events for free. His favorite free streaming live sports website now showed a frightening image stating that the domain had been seized by ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) for copyright infringement.

Since he was living on his disability income, money was in short supply and the various legitimate subscription websites were beyond his means. The cost to watch all of his favorite football and basketball games that were unavailable on his TV was prohibitive, considering his personal circumstances.

I did a search of the free streaming sports websites, and while there were several, including NFL.com that displayed videos of past games, I was suspicious of those that offered free streaming of live games, as ICE, along with the FBI and other law enforcement agencies, have been actively seizing domains and servers, and arresting the purveyors engaged in intellectual property theft.

Somewhat discouraged, he asked about getting free TV and movies on his smart device, a gift from his daughter. I showed him the free content on Hulu (hulu.com), and the free full length movies and TV shows on YouTube. While lacking the live broadcast TV shows and sports, they did have the capability of providing countless hours of entertainment without incurring any significant expense.

I later showed him another free streaming service that is explicitly for Apple iOS and Android smart devices, including phones and tablets, which quickly became his favorite source of free online entertainment, TV, and movies; this service is Crackle (crackle.com). Crackle is a free download from the iTunes and Play Google stores.

While not as comprehensive as Hulu or YouTube, Crackle does offer a respectable selection of movie and TV titles. The Crackle app for both Apple and Android smart devices has been downloaded over 13 million times. The most recent Android release on October 24, and the Apple release on November 3, incorporated several improvements, enhancements, as well as better video quality.

The newest version of Crackle supports HDMI out, if the smart device is so equipped, such that it can play on most modern TVs and other HDMI equipped devices. There are also free versions of Crackle

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Crackle is a source of
**free streaming
TV and movies** for
Apple iOS and Android
smart devices, including
phones and tablets.



Crackle on the iPhone

available for the Nook Tablet, Kindle Fire, Windows smart phones, Roku boxes, Playstation 3, and Xbox 360 consoles.

In terms of full length TV shows, Crackle has classics such as All in the Family with the ubiquitous Archie Bunker, Married With Children with Chicago's most famous shoe-man Al Bundy, the acclaimed 1967 series of an imprisoned former secret agent Patrick McGoohan in The Prisoner, and dozens of other TV series from the U.S. and Japan.

The clichéd phrase “Dyno-mite” can be heard on Good Times, while 13 full episodes of Rescue Me dramatizes the life of a post 9/11 New York Firefighter, both available on Crackle. Sanford & Son and The

Three Stooges offer a lot of humor on Crackle, but one of the most popular TV series, Seinfeld, is also available on Crackle. Dana Carvey provides Crackle viewers with satirical comedy sketches, while dozens of other TV series complete the full episode TV offerings.

The TV offerings on Crackle are dynamic, in that they frequently change with new shoes being added, and some shows cycling off Crackle. A link on the top of the TV page will show the most recently added shows, while some other shows indicate the date that they will be leaving Crackle.

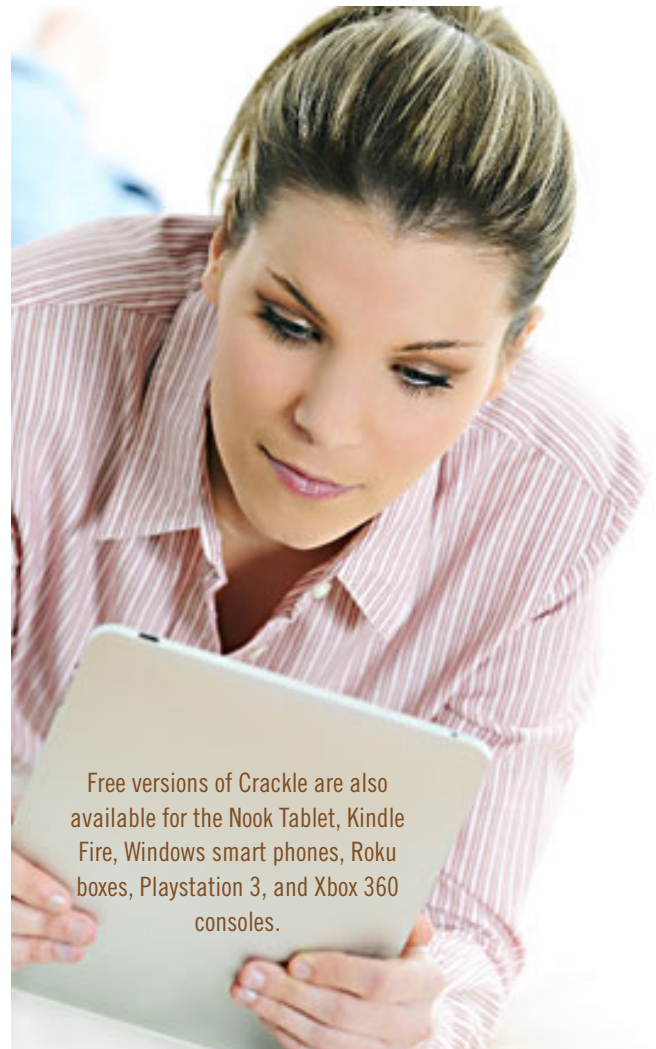
Crackle offers over 300 full length, uncut movies of all genres. As when watching the commercial TV networks, the movies on Crackle are periodically interrupted for a commercial; it is this sponsorship that keeps Crackle free to the user. While many of them are lesser known titles, many were box office successes.

Movie fans will recognize Jacqueline Bisset and Robert Shaw in the Bermuda treasure thriller “The Deep,” while the camp comedy classic “The Gods Must Be Crazy” dramatizes the effect a Coke bottle can have on a primitive society.

Serpent loving horror aficionados may appreciate the nine different Godzilla movies available along with a companion pair of Mothra movies, while zombie followers will appreciate the cult classic “Night of the Living Dead.” Michael Chiklis, currently known for his parts in “The Commish,” “The Shield,” and “Vegas” plays Curly in the 2000 biography of The Three Stooges, as seen from Moe’s perspective.

Crackle also offers 44 different “original series,” many with multiple episodes. One humorous but risqué original series is “Crash Comedy,”

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Free versions of Crackle are also available for the Nook Tablet, Kindle Fire, Windows smart phones, Roku boxes, Playstation 3, and Xbox 360 consoles.

with Charlie Murphy (Eddie Murphy's brother). The popular Las Vegas and television magician Penn Jillette has an original series of 58 short but snappy satirical commentaries on controversial subjects in "The Best of Penn Says." Unabashed and often politically incorrect, Penn Jillette leaves no doubts as to where he stands on issues, often injecting comedy and satire into his analyses.

For those willing to put up with the same commercial interruptions as they have on the network channels on their home TV, Crackle is a worthy free app for Android, Apple, and Windows smart devices, including phones and tablets as well Kindle Fire, Nook, Roku, Playstation 2 and Xbox 360.

With over 300 full length movies, and over a thousand episodes from dozens of TV series, as well as original content, Crackle is definitely worth a try.



Ira Wilsker hosts "My Computer Show" a call-in tech support show on KLVI radio, 560AM, from 4-5 p.m. Mondays, Pacific time. The show streams live over the net at KLVI.com and on the free iHeartRadio app. His call-in number is 800-330-5584.

WHAT IS A RAW FILE?

RAW is NOT an abbreviation so writing it as RAW is actually wrong. But JPG is an abbreviation. A raw file is literally a raw file. (raw: In its natural state; not yet processed or purified.)

There's a sensor in your camera. When you take a shot, the shutter opens (if it's a DSLR) and the sensor is exposed to the light depending on your shutter speed. Then the shutter closes and the sensor collects the information and sends it to the processor to process it. That's where the option comes in use. You can shoot in two formats: raw and JPG. When the data comes in the processor, the processor needs to decide on what to do to the data. Save it on the memory card the way it is or 'manipulate' it. If you set it on RAW, the data comes from the sensor to the processor and directly goes on the memory card WITHOUT any modification. This is why it's called raw. It means the photo is NOT modified by the camera at all.

But if you set it on JPG, when the data comes from the sensor to the processor, the processor has to apply a series of modifications on the image. JPG is an 8-bit image. RAW files are 12- and 14-bit images. It means that your sensor captures a lot of information then sends it to the processor. The processor then needs to convert the raw data to JPG.

JPG does not support 14-bit images. So the processor literally removes data from your image in order to convert it to an 8-bit image and in order to minimize the file size. Then it applies the options you have chosen like white balance, sharpness, clarity, HDR, vibrance, etc. Then the camera sends the information to your memory card to be saved. This is why some say shoot in RAW because you have the very raw and original data.

There are also lots of advantages to RAW. You can always change the exposure up to five stops with RAW files, change the white balance without seeing banding (color fringing). Also your RAW files are absolutely indestructible. You can never overwrite a RAW file. Also in case of copyright violation, you can prove that you own the copyright by bringing the RAW file. The RAW files cannot be produced by computers so if you have a RAW file, it means you have taken the photo and therefore you own the copyright.

But don't forget that there are also disadvantages. RAW files occupy more space on your hard drive because they contain a lot of information. An 18MP raw file can be up to 25MB but an 18MP JPG file can be about 8MB. Another disadvantage is that many devices do not read raw files. (RAW is NOT an extension. Every company has its own RAW extension. For example, Canon's raw extension is CR2 and Nikon's raw extension is NEF.)

But the question is: Do you have to shoot in RAW or JPG? Well, that's totally up to you. If you retouch your images a lot then it's better to shoot in RAW. If you go out for a vacation and want to shoot and then print photos on your PC and upload them on Facebook without retouching your images one by one then you should shoot in JPG, because you don't need to convert them. You always have to convert your raw files to JPG or any other format to be able to publish them online.

Submitted by Neil Longmuir. Source: Yahoo! Answers at <http://yhoo.it/Y5jUIm>

holy cow! is this a virus?

by Linda Gonse

I recently added a second external hard drive to my computer system. I use one for backups of InDesign files and the other one for Acronis True Image system backups.

As I browsed through the files I'd saved to the drives, I ran into something peculiar. Both drives had folders with names that were long strings of random letters. And each folder contained one file: mrtstub.exe at 89KB on the Iomega drive, and MPSigStub.exe at 227KB on the Seagate drive.

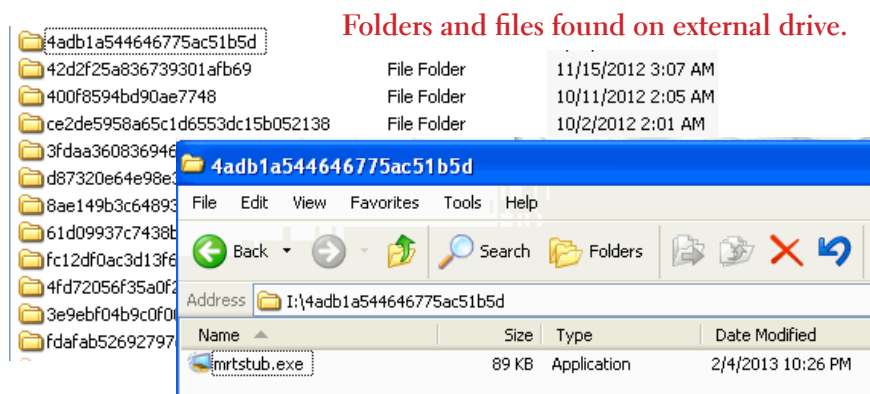
Fearing these might be malware or a virus, I quickly did a Google search. Interestingly, the search turned up conflicting opinions in different forums. Some people said it was a virus and highly dangerous, some said the folder and file(s) inside were benign, some said the files were leftover from when Microsoft Malicious Software Removal Tool (MRT) was run and had not been deleted automatically, and some said Windows created them.

Although I only found one file in the folders, other people have seen as many as four at one time: mrtstub.exe, mrt.exe._p, MRT.exe, and \$shtdwn\$.req.

I found a link to information about the Malicious Software Removal Tool at <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/890830#FaQ>. In particular, it gave instructions on how to remove the Malicious Software Removal Tool.

The Malicious Software Removal Tool does not use an installer. Typically, when you run the Malicious Software Removal Tool, it creates a randomly named temporary directory on the root drive of the computer. This directory contains several files, and it includes the Mrtstub.exe file. Most of the time, this folder is automatically deleted after the tool finishes running or after the next time that you start the computer. However, this folder may not always be automatically deleted. In these cases, you can manually delete this folder, and this has no adverse effect on the computer.

I also learned that MRT is not a substitute for a resident antivirus for various reasons: 1. MRT only removes malware AFTER infection, it doesn't BLOCK malware like an antivirus does; 2. MRT is designed to target a small



set of malware only, while an antivirus takes care of most malware in the wild; and 3. MRT can only detect actively running malware — an antivirus can also detect dormant malware.

Microsoft's Knowledge Base (<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/890830>) also said a new version of the Microsoft Malicious Software Removal Tool is released every month. After you download the tool, the tool runs one time to check your computer for infection by specific prevalent malicious software (including Blaster, Sasser, and Mydoom) and helps remove any infection it finds.

This KB article contains information about how you can download and run the tool, and what happens when the tool finds malicious software on your computer.

Even though I did not intentionally download the Removal Tool or run it, I read that Windows Update may do that when it downloads automatic updates. Further, it uses the largest hard drive on the system to create the temp folders; and in my case, the external hard drives are the largest with each being 2TB.

The upshot of this was I checked each file's Properties and confirmed Microsoft had signed them. Then I deleted the folders and files manually and nothing bad happened. In the future, I'll disconnect the external drives before downloading or installing Windows Update.

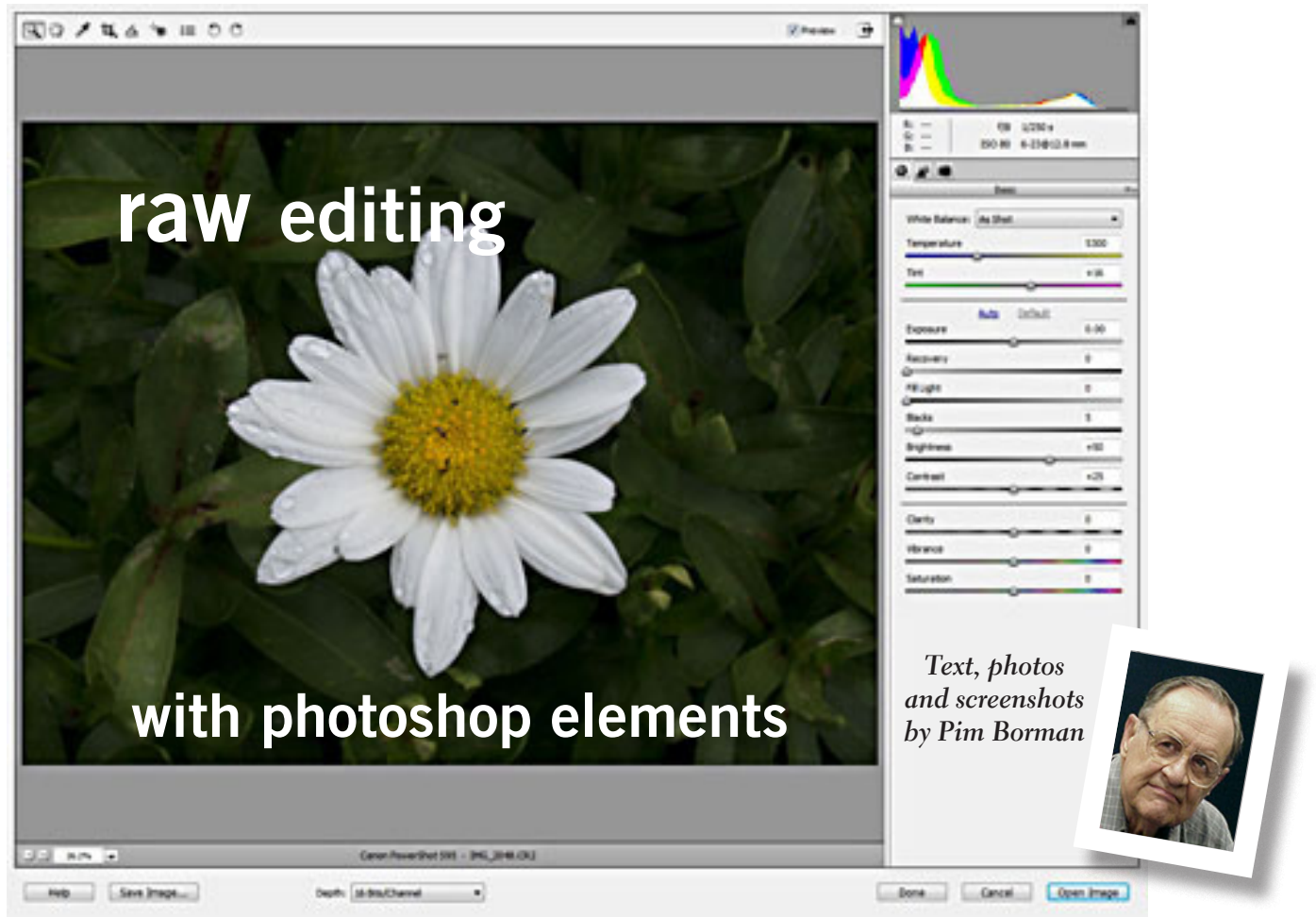


Figure 1 — Inside the RAW editor



nce a digital camera has captured light rays from an object on its photo-electric elements, a great deal of computer processing has to occur to provide an accurate rendition of the shape and colors of the object.

The color sensitivity of the chip differs from the color sensitivity of the human eye. The system also has a narrower dynamic range of sensitivity between the lowest intensity of the light it can output, and the highest it can register without being overloaded.

Colors also vary with the light that shines on them. The human eye automatically corrects for that, but the camera has to adapt depending on whether the ambient light is sunny, overcast, incandescent, fluorescent, or flash.

Good digital cameras do an astoundingly good job converting the signals received into a natural photo. Once it has done its job, most cameras compress the image into a much smaller file for storage in the common format, JPEG, that greatly reduces the file size, with a significant loss of data. It also reduces the color depth from 16 bits (or more) as shot to 8 bits, another loss of information. For most everyday use the resulting pictures are perfectly acceptable.

If you are not totally satisfied with the picture as the camera produced it, there are a number of computer programs that allow you to modify the picture in many ways to fit your purpose. Often that involves cropping, brightening or darkening, increasing or decreasing color saturation, and sharpening

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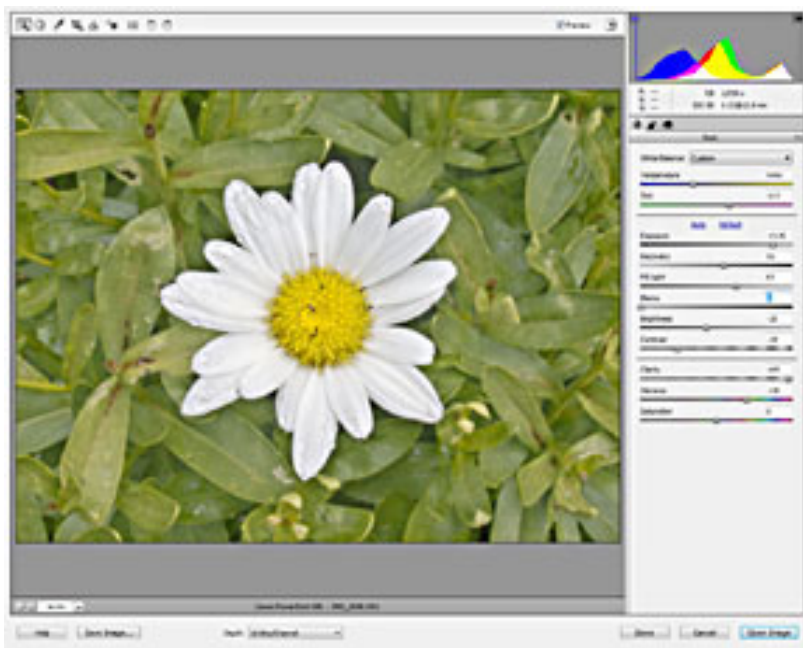


Figure 2 — Color optimized in RAW editor

of the image. Any number of programs are available for that, but I want to concentrate on Photoshop Elements (PE), especially version 9 that I have available, the lower-cost version of the professional standard bearer, Adobe's Photoshop.

Sometimes the improvements possible with even PE are not able to make up for shortcomings of the photo. The dynamic range, i.e. the difference between the brightest and the darkest part of the image may be too great, or the color of the ambient light is wrong.

There are ways to improve such shortcomings to some extent in the editor, but because so much of the original details of the picture have already been discarded by the camera, the options are limited.

Some of the more expensive cameras, even pocket-sized ones like my Canon Powershot S95, optionally save the image with a minimum of editing and without discarding any details, including the full color depth of 16 bits, versus the 8-bit depth of JPEG images. Such images are generally referred to as RAW files.

RAW is not a standard format and may vary between makes, and even individual models, of digital cameras. RAW pix taken with my older Canon DSLR camera worked fine with PE9, but pix taken with my newer Canon S95 in RAW format did not work at first. I had to download a newer version of the RAW editor from the Acrobat web site. RAW files may have different extensions, depending on the make of camera. My

Canon S95 uses the extension CR2. RAW files loaded into the PE Editor open in a special RAW window (Figure 1). Editing in the RAW editor replaces the preconditioning normally done by the camera. After the RAW editing is done, the picture is transferred to the regular editor for final optimization.

At the top of the RAW editor window are mostly familiar tools. The eye dropper, when touched on a white or neutral gray object, corrects the ambient color of the image. The angle icon allows straightening an image if the camera was tilted. The rectangle tool allows cropping the picture. It should be noted that none of the changes made in the RAW editor affect the original image file. Changes are listed in a separate file and combined with the original when the picture is subsequently opened in the regular PE Editor.

The menu column at the right is where most of the work takes place. At the top is a histogram that shows the range of color intensity that is within the limits of the electronic chip. Anything to the left is too low to be registered, anything to the right is overloading the electronics. Most of the tools are intended to change the histogram so that all the colors are evenly spread out, as much as possible, without clipping.

First you want to decide on the lighting color (tempera-
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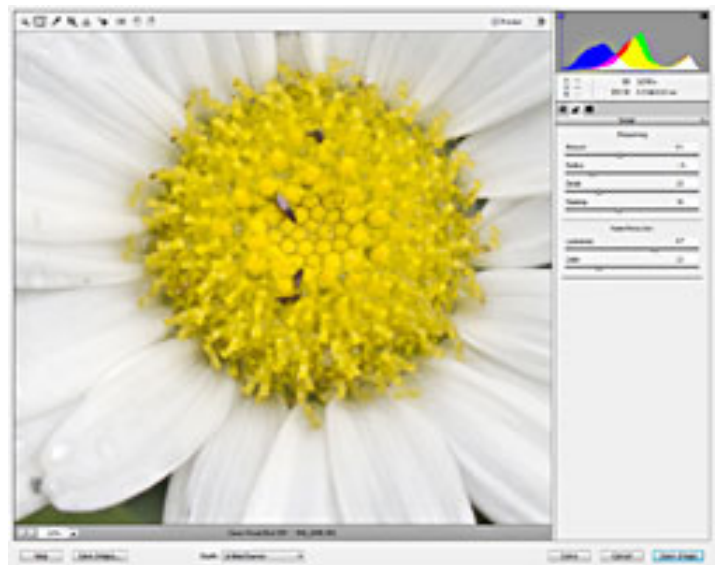


Figure 3 — Using Detail In RAW editor

ture) of the image, using the options under the White Balance menu, using the aforementioned eyedropper, or manually moving the two color sliders.

The picture shown is severely underexposed, as shown by the clipping on the left side of the histogram. The Exposure slider helps to correct that. If some of the colors slip over the right side of the histogram, they can be recovered with the Recovery slider.

The left side of the histogram can also be shifted to the right with the Fill Light slider. Notice that some of the numerical parameters are already preset in anticipation of expected corrections needed when the file is loaded. Those are the ones used by the camera by default in processing pictures.

Figure 2 shows the result of optimizing the image for color. Increasing the exposure and sharply increasing fill light made it necessary to reduce the overall Brightness. Contrast was reduced to bring up the left side of the histogram. Increasing the Clarity and Vibrance restored much of the contrast and color. The drastic changes made to this image were necessary because of its poor initial quality.

After the pre-processing all image data originally present in the RAW file have been retained and made available for further editing.

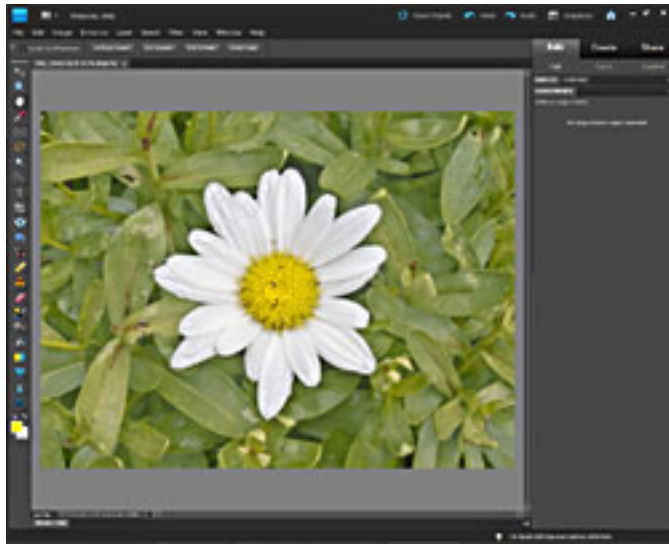


Figure 4 — In Photoshop Elements editor

Notice that the data now cover most of the width of the histogram. A small amount of clipping on the left, originating in the heart of the flower, is acceptable since it won't be noticeable.

To sharpen the image, we change to a different page of the RAW editor, by clicking on the small icon with the two rectangles at the top of the menu. The menu heading changes from Basic to Detail and a new set of parameters shows up (Figure 3).

First of all, increase the size of the image to 100% so you can see what you are doing. Make sure the screen shows a significant part of the image to be sharpened. In this case I zoomed in on the heart of the flower.

The first three sliders are intuitive, but the Masking slider needs explanation. Sharpening the image with

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Figure 5 — The Final Result



the Amount slider tends to cause mottling to show up, especially in the darker parts of the image.

The Masking slider masks the smooth portions of the image but not the outlines. To use the slider, hold down the Alt key while moving the slider to the right. The initially blank screen gradually darkens until only the outlines are barely visible. Let go of the Alt key and use the Amount slider to only sharpen the outlines, without affecting the smooth portions.

Even so, some mottling will probably show up when you apply a healthy dose of sharpening. The Luminance slider is designed to reduce the mottling. Don't overuse it, or your picture will start looking pasty. Sometimes sharpening also introduces colored mottling. The color slider can reduce that.

By now you have done as much as you can in the RAW editor and you'll finish the job in the regular editor. Transfer the image by clicking on Open at the bottom right. The RAW editor closes, and the picture appears in the regular PE editor (*Figure 4*).

It may still be in 16-bit format, if it was an original RAW image, and it needs to be reduced to 8 bits at this point. Click on Image ... Mode...and select 8-bits.

You now have a head start in the PE Editor for adjusting whatever else may be needed. The last step should be resizing the image to suit your needs. Remember that the original RAW file was not changed, so you can always go back later and do it over again, if needed. *Figure 5* shows my final result.

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tips for RAW editing

- **If** you only have pictures in JPEG format, you can still load them into the RAW Editor by using “Open as...” and specifying the RAW format from the submenu. That way you still have access to the advanced tools of the RAW editor, although you'll have less of an image to work with.
- **I save** all my photos by default in both RAW and large JPEG formats, using that option with my camera. The file sizes may be large, but even with a modest 2GB chip I can store many photos before they must be offloaded to the computer.
- **RAW** editing can usually be done in a minute or so, once you get the hang of it. The photo used in this article was intentionally poorly shot to demonstrate the power of extreme RAW editing. With properly exposed photos, RAW corrections are minimal and quickly done. The RAW option is not available if you use the camera in automatic mode.
- **When** viewing a photo on the camera screen, with many cameras there is an option to see technical details, including the histogram. If the histogram looks very one-sided, you may be able to change the camera settings and shoot the picture again, if possible.

CELEBRATING ITS 20TH YEAR!

southwest technology & computer conference has new location for 2013



After 19 years in San Diego, the Southwest Technology & Computer Conference has moved to Kellogg West Conference Center & Hotel at Cal Poly Pomona for the 2013 conference to be held June 21-23.

Kellogg West Conference Center & Hotel is uniquely located on a wooded hilltop overlooking cereal magnate W.K. Kellogg's former ranch estate.

The \$85 Early Bird registration fee covers all meals (Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast, lunch and dinner and Sunday breakfast) and includes all workshops, Expo, Welcome Bag, and more.

The room rate in the recently renovated two-story hotel is \$89 per night single, \$95 double, \$105 for four, and features many amenities.

In addition, there is free parking and free Wi-Fi in the Conference Center and Hotel rooms. For attendees who fly in, there is a free shuttle from Ontario International Airport.

The Kellogg West Conference Center & Hotel is located at 3801 W. Temple Avenue, Pomona, CA 91768. Check here for directions and local attractions, <http://www.kelloggwest.org/kw-directions.aspx>

For conference details and registration information go to <http://www.theswcc.org/registration/registration.htm>



look at what we found on the internet!



interesting finds

by Steve Costello, BRCS

In the course of going through the more than 200 news feeds in my Google Reader, I often run across things that I think might be of interest to other user group members. The following are some items I found interesting during the month of October 2012. (Long URLs shortened with the Google URL shortener <http://goo.gl/>)

- The Best Three Public Domain Clipart Galleries — <http://goo.gl/DGNMq>
- HTG Explains: How Antivirus Software Works — <http://goo.gl/Yjp38>
- Why I bought my wife a Mac — <http://goo.gl/FDzmM>
- How To Get Free Movies Online - Legally — <http://goo.gl/jc8Nw>
- Secrets for successfully narrating a presentation — <http://goo.gl/USl4m>

unusual sights

- intelliPaper®. Paper marries digital technology and the wireless USB thumb drive — <http://bit.ly/YG1qPP>
- Hummingbird Nest Cam — <http://phoebeallens.com/>
- Moving Art — <http://bit.ly/XH46cO>

- The 10 Weirdest Animal Discoveries of 2012 — <http://www.livescience.com/25707-10-weirdest-animal-discoveries.html>
- Animal Babies, cuter than cute! <http://pinterest.com/maureenjordan/animals/>
- Live! From the Eagle's Nest — <http://eaglecam.dnr.state.mn.us/>

Submitted by Linda Gonse

not science fiction!

The smart phone and your health — <http://nbcnews.to/XDmpCz>

Submitted by Tony Lake

free ocr service

Free-OCR.com is a free online OCR (Optical Character Recognition) tool. Use this service to extract text from any image you supply. The service is free, no registration necessary. They also do not need your email address. Just upload your image files. Free-OCR takes either a JPG, GIF, TIFF, BMP or PDF (only first page). The only restriction is that the images must not be larger than 2MB, no wider or higher than 5000 pixels and there is a limit of 10 image uploads per hour.

Source: HHICC newsletter, Island Computing

secret keyword raffle resumes

A new Secret Keyword Raffle begins this month. There are two prizes: A 48-sleeve CD Wallet, and a Home Ranger Shoulder Pulley. The keyword is hidden in the newsletter or somewhere on the website at www.orcopug.org. Find the keyword and be ready to say what it is if your name is called and take home the prizes!

thank you

newsletter contributors!

Carl Westberg, Charlie Moore, Frank Bollinger, HHICC Island Computing, Ira Wilsker, Judy Taylour, Leo Notenboom, Linda Gonse, Mike Lyons, Neil Longmuir, Pamela Tabak, Pim Borman, Ron Hirsch, Sharon Parq Associates, Steve Costello, Ted Wirtz, Tim O'Reilly, Tony Lake, Wes Taylor

april deadline
MARCH 23

thank you 2012 vendors!

Thank you Acoustica Software, At Home, iolo, Memorex, nik Software, Smith-Micro, Office Depot, and User Group Relations for generously donating your products to our 2012 fundraising raffle!

MEET THE NEW CISPA. SAME AS THE OLD CISPA.

Last year, thanks to a public outcry, the effort to pass overreaching cybersecurity legislation stalled in the Senate. Now supporters have reintroduced the House version of that legislation — the Cyber Intelligence Sharing and Protection Act (CISPA).

The “new” version is in fact identical to the original CISPA — and poses the same threat to our digital civil liberties.

If CISPA becomes law, it will be a major blow to our online privacy. But more than that, CISPA’s passage would have a chilling effect on our freedom to connect online. We won’t feel as free to state unpopular opinions, or to speak truth to power, if we know that Big Brother could get a feed of everything we say and do.

This is not what the free and open Internet is about. We must tell Congress: Vote NO on CISPA and bury this bill for good. **Sign the petition to our Congressional lawmakers at <http://bit.ly/ZG8eM8> — The FreePress Action Fund**

this isn't summer camp

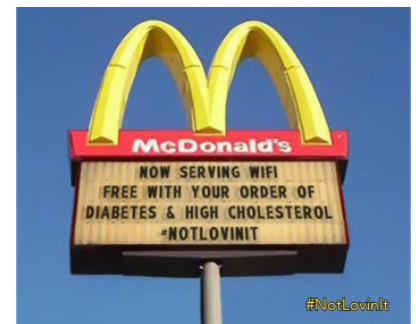
The percentage of households with broadband access in the United States trails behind many other countries. Those Americans who do have internet access generally pay far more for far less service than our counterparts in other parts of the world.

It is a national embarrassment that kids in this country living in low-income and rural communities have to rely on fast food chains like McDonald’s because they can’t get affordable internet access in their homes.

Some would like to think that America’s broadband is doing just fine, and that it’s improving slowly but surely. But as our Senior Vice President Harold Feld has pointed out, “this isn’t summer camp. This is our digital future.”

To add insult to injury, many of the underpowered, overpriced connections available to you come with data caps. These caps are not only confusing to consumers, but lend themselves to unfair and anti-competitive behavior by internet service providers.

We are fighting everyday to make sure that Americans have access to real, reasonably priced internet access. As a first step, **sign the petition at <http://bit.ly/WvznN8> asking the FCC to investigate the data caps that are reducing the promise of broadband access for all.** — The Public Knowledge Team



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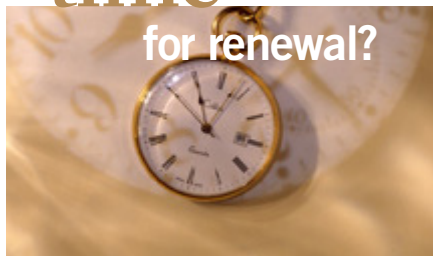
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time for renewal?



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MAY 1	Lloyd Boutwell
JULY 1	Gary Covington III Walter Jackson

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no february raffle results

There are no February meeting raffle results. Due to a lack of time following the program, the raffle was not held.

BRING USED INKJET PRINTER CARTRIDGES

to meetings for our ongoing fund-raising project: Hewlett Packard, Canon (BC-02, BC-05, BC-20 or BX-3), Lexmark, Dell, Compaq, Kodak, Samsung, Sharp; or any laser printer cartridge.

check out our website
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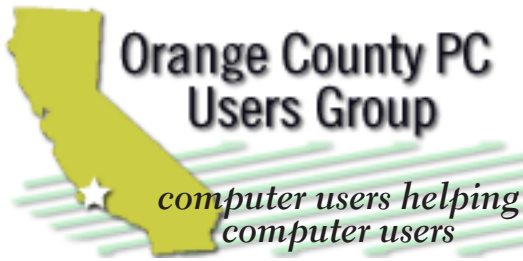
Home Phone () _____ Work Phone () _____ E-mail Address _____

Areas of Interest/Comments _____

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User groups represent the spirit of the frontier, a community getting together to do things that no individual ought to have to do alone. The pioneers of the American west got together for barn raisings, cattle roundups, and the occasional party. The pioneers of new technology get together for installfests, new user training and support, and just plain fun. Being part of a user group is the best way to get more out of your computer, and lets you make friends while you're at it.

Tim O'Reilly, President
O'Reilly Media

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- membership application • Members' Only! page

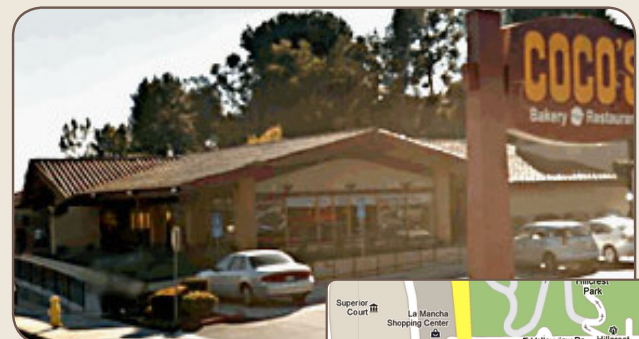
our website has everything you need!

where are the meetings, when are they held?

next meeting: Tuesday, March 12, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. — Coco's Bakery Restaurant

Regular meetings are held the second Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m. at Coco's Bakery Restaurant, 1011 North Harbor Blvd., Fullerton, CA. Meetings are free and the public is welcome!

Planning meetings are held the second Wednesday after the regular meeting every month at 6:30 p.m. at Carl's Jr., 3240 Yorba Linda Boulevard, Fullerton, CA 92831. All members are welcome to attend planning meetings!



Go to www.orcopug.org for the Yahoo! location map, or check the Google map at <http://bit.ly/J9Kcm3>