

W WINNERS

Notepad

WINDOWS USERS MAY 2003

In This Issue

Bits & Bytes & Xp.	1
CES 2003.	1
Jasc Paint Shop	
Photo Album	9
General Meeting	11

CES 2003

Part 2

By Terry Currier

DVD Writers

HP

<http://www.hp.com>

Two models. The DVD300i is internal and writes DVD+RW. Writing speed is 4X DVD and 16X CD-ROM/RW. Read speed is 8X DVD and 40X CD-ROM, Manufacturer Suggested Retail Price (MSRP) is \$300. It will write a DVD in 15 minutes. The DVD300e is an external drive with USB 2.0 or Firewire interface. It will write up to 4X DVD+R and up to 16X for CD-ROM. Rewrite speed is 2.4X DVD+RW and 10X CD-RW. Read Speed is 8X DVD and 40X for the CD-ROM. The MSRP is \$400. Both come 2Mb of buffer memory, and a one-year hardware and software warranty from date of purchase. Software they include are; ArcSoft Showbiz DVD: Incorporate your video footage, photos and music

Continued on page 3

Bits & Bytes & Xp

By Siles Bazerman



Last time I made reference to my inability to make a “Disaster Recovery” floppy disk set for Stomp Backup MyPC. I have just received the latest update patch to version 4.85. When I try to create the recovery set, I receive a message that the recovery set can not work with the version of SP1 I have installed. As far as I know only SP1 and SP1a have been released, and they differ *only* as to whether or not MS Java script is included. I never had it work pre SP1 install, or with either of the two versions of SP1. They do give you a way out.

This involves installing Windows Xp, then SP1, and then Backup MyPC. You can then restore your entire backup set for all your data and applications. There are still some windows files that will not be restored if you have modified them. It was much easier in the earlier versions of Windows and Backup Exec when you could restore from a DOS boot from floppy and your backup set.

Since many of you are new readers of this column, I will explain the hardware I have and the references I make to them. I have three computers, HAL, Barbie and Laika. Laika (Russian Space Dog) is an older Compaq laptop that I use for one model railroad program that I need to have available at the model shows I do. I prefer to run the program in DOS, but also have a

Windows98 version. This computer was a freebie, so I use it even though I prefer home built computers. It does what it needs to.

Barbie, at the present time, is a PII 233 MMX computer with 256 Meg of memory. It has both a DW reader and a CDRW. Barbie is primarily a machine for my granddaughters to play games on, although they do access the internet games on Nick Jr and Disney web sites. The name dates back to when they decided that I needed a second computer for them to use so they would not have to take turns using HAL. Barbie was originally built from leftovers, much of which came from a rebuild of my son’s machine so that it could run a Microsoft Wine CD and Speak to Me Barbie game. Hence the name. What Barbie will be in the future, who knows. This machine is upgraded with hand me downs from HAL and my son-in-laws machine.

HAL started in life as the only ready built PC I have ever bought. It was a 286 machine which was soon enhanced with parts I had after selling my Genieva (a DOS based machine built around TI99-4a and home built parts). Since then I have been upgrading one part at a time, new HD, new CPU, etc., etc., etc. At this time HAL is a PIII 600Mhz machine with a FSB (Front Side Buss) of 133 and 512 Gig of memory. It has one fixed HD and a removable bay for two different Hds. It also has a CDRW and a DVD-ROM drive. I have a printer each for HAL and Barbie, and a scanner for HAL.

Continued on page 8

Telephone Help Line

PROGRAM/SOFTWARE	NAME	PHONE	TIME
CompuServe	Cathy Grammer-Margolin	949-645-5950	6-10 p.m. & weekends
CorelDraw 5	George Margolin	949-645-5950	Most times
CorelDraw & Ventura & PhotoPaint	Sunny Lockie	949-644-0103	6-10 p.m. weekdays 9 a.m.-10 p.m. weekends
Hardware	Jonathan Means	714-542-1653	6-9 p.m.
Internet	Cathy Grammer-Margolin	949-645-5950	6-10 p.m. & weekends
Novell, NT & Networking	Jonathan Means	714-542-1653	6-9 p.m.
Quicken & Quickbooks	Max Lockie	949-720-8170	6-10 p.m. & weekends
Windows 95,98,Me,Xp	Siles Bazerman	714-897-2868	9 a.m.-8 p.m.
Word for Windows	Cathy Grammar-Margolin	949-645-5950	6-10 p.m. & weekends
WordPerfect Windows	Sunny Lockie	949-644-0103	6-10 p.m. weekdays 9 a.m.-10 p.m. weekends

General Meeting May 10 Orange Coast College 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon in Science Room #149

IOPLUS

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PURPOSE

WINNERS, a computer association, is a volunteer organization providing a forum for sharing information and experiences related to Windows-based software, encouraging ethical use of computers and software, and offering service to our communities.

MEMBERSHIP

Annual membership is \$20.00 for individuals; \$5.00 each additional family member.

MEETINGS

WINNERS generally meets the second Saturday of each month from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon at Orange Coast College in the Science Building, Room #149, 2701 Fairview, Costa Mesa.

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FUTURE MEETING DATES

- ★ May 10
- ★ June 14
- ★ July 12
- ★ August 9

CES SHOW Part 2

Continued from page 1

into DVD titles. Veritas DLA: Drag and drop files to CD or DVD. Veritas RecordNow: Create data or music CDs. Veritas Simple Backup: Reliably back up, protect and restore files. HP Memories Disc Creator: Create a photo slideshow or album disc that can be viewed on your PC or TV. Cyberlink PowerDVD: Play DVD movies on your PC

Norcent

<http://www.norcent.net>

The LHNT-DR1600 is a 16X DVD-ROM with speed up to 21600KB/second. For CD-ROM it is 42X and reaches 6300KB/second. It supports the format of DVD -R/RW. Interface is E-IDE/ATAPI, data buffer size is 512KB. The CD-ROM will write up to 748MB while the DVD will do 4.7GB single layer and 8.5GB on double layer. Norcent used to do only OEM business but has decided to market their own brand. Prices I was quoted are very competitive for all their products.

Panasonic

<http://www.panasonic.com>

The DMR-HS2 DVD/Hard Disk Recorder combines a DVD-RAM and DVD-R recorder with a 40GB hard disk drive. It features simultaneous record and play, automatic recording, on-disc editing, and PC card slot. The sleek DVD-LV65 PalmTheater™ portable DVD player can play back DVD-Video discs, video and audio CDs, DVD-RAM, DVD-R, and CD-R/-RW discs. It features a bright, freestyle 5-inch, LCD screen, built-in stereo speakers and a built-in battery recharger, which provides approximately 2.5 hours of playback time. Additionally, an SD Memory Card slot lets users enjoy a wide variety of stored media wherever they go.

Pioneer

<http://www.pioneerelectronics.com>

The DVR-A05 DVD/CD-R/RW computer drive is a powerful, fast DVD recording tool. Its 4X recording speeds for DVD-R will record a 4.7GB DVD-R disk in about 15 minutes. The

2X recording speeds for DVD-RW let you burn a DVD-RW in about 30 minutes. It can also handle 16X CD-R and 8X CD-RW with fewer under-runs and over-runs, with a large buffer memory size of 2MB and a unique loss-less linking feature.. Separate lasers are used for DVD and CD writing and reading, also for better accuracy

Pioneer has created two new DVD recorders. Due out in the summer of 2003, the DVR-002H will let you play a DVD while recording onto its 80GB drive. The hard drive lets the user copy video to it and then transfer to a DVD. A one hour video can be transferred to DVD-R in 2.5 minutes. It has a firewire connection on the front panel, and entry price of \$1,000. The DVR-001 has no hard drive but is an entry level DVD recorder with a manufacturer's suggest retail price of \$625. Both come with a 181 channel cable TV tuner for instant one-touch recording from the TV onto a DVD-R or DVD-RW disc, make recording easy. Pioneer is working on a blue light DVD writer/reader that will do 23GB, no word on when it will come out.

DV-C505 is a 5-Disc DVD/CD/Video CD Changer. Its Twin-Wave Laser Pickup allows playback of DVD, DVD-R/RW (DVD Video Format), CD (including MP3s), CD-R/-RW, and Video CD. Comes with Dolby Digital and DTS surround processing and a 192kHz/24-bit D-A converter. Advanced control features include Still Play, Still/Step Play, and Slow Motion Playback (some exceptions on Video CDs). MSRP is \$249.

Sharp

<http://www.sharppusa.com>

Recordable DVD (model DV-RW2U) delivers one-touch digital video recordings onto re-writeable DVDs for storage and long term archiving in a digital format. As an integrated product it offers progressive output and plays back DVDs, CDs and MP3. The enhanced Disc Navigation System with thumbnail display provides the user with a Title Menu, allowing the user to instantly choose what he or she wants to watch from the recorded table of contents. Available in

March 2003 at an MSRP of \$800. The combination DVD/CD Player (model DV-SL20U) is a progressive-scan player with a built-in CD player. It will play CD-R/RW, DVD-R/RW and even MP3 files with 3D surround sound, available in April at an MSRP of \$180.

Help

Distinctive Technologies

<http://www.pcpinpoint.com>

PC Pinpoint Family of Products and Services announced a partnership with The TAG Group, Inc. stands for "Techs and Geeks" (TAG) and combines state-of-the-art automated remote tech support with onsite service, anywhere in North America. This partnership provides "cradle-to-grave" service for hardware, software and consumer electronics devices. PC Pinpoint begins the problem resolution process with its three-step Web-based technology that utilizes automation, Self-Help Tutorials and remote tech support to solve problems. In rare cases where PC Pinpoint cannot solve an issue or a part must be replaced, TAG finalizes the process by dispatching a technician for an on-site "tech support service call."

First, Web and server-based PC Pinpoint promptly tests PC components and automatically identifies and fixes the most common hardware, software and consumer electronics problems. Second, Self-Help tutorials provide users with simple instructions that educate and empower them to personally repair problems that are not solved automatically. Third, where problems are not fixed by the first and second steps, customers can at any time contact 24/7 live technical support via telephone, Web chat, or e-mail to work with technical support specialists until problems are completely resolved. Fourth, when hardware, software and consumer electronics products require onsite support, users can contact PC Pinpoint and TAG will send an onsite tech to resolve problems.

If onsite repair or replacement is required, TAG relies on tested and qualified independent support professionals capable of handling all problems for nearly every hardware, software, networks and consumer electronics device on the market. And

PC Pinpoint arms these technicians with all the diagnostic data and machine history they need to focus on immediate problem resolution.

LCD Monitors

Norcent

<http://www.norcent.net>

New LCD monitors were introduced and an LCD television at 2003 CES. The 14-, 15-, 17-, and 20-inch monitors feature a TFT Active matrix display screen, while the 15-inch (diagonal) TV has a high resolution Panel that offers over two times more pixels than standard LCD Televisions. The units feature XGA resolution (1024 x 768), a high contrast ratio of 350:1, and no electromagnetic wave emission, assuring that no signal distortion and no harmful radiation is released. Each comes with built-in stereo speakers and OSD digital control for all functions. Optional features include composite video and S-video inputs, a USB connection, and a TV tuner. Choice of colors: Pearl gray, beige, or black/ Silver. A flat stand with flip-down capabilities is included. All have 2 2 watt speakers attached.

The 20" LCD TFT monitor display size is 17" with a resolution of 1280 X 1024 pixels. It accepts input from VGA, NTSC /PAL/SECAM system (3 in 1), RCA jack & S-video mini-din jack. Contrast Ratio is 400:1, Brightness: 250 nits, Refresh rate: H/30 80KHz,V/56-76Hz.

Four new plasma models were introduced at this year's show. The units are equipped with a built-in digital visual interface (DVI) allowing direct digital-to-digital video connectivity with PCs equipped with a DVI video display adapter. The selection includes a 32-inch XGA, 42-inch WVGA, and two 46-inch models, one WVGA, the other XGA. Each space-saving unit is less than 4 inches in depth. The 46-inch plasma monitors also feature SRS® Labs WOW™ technology. This sound enhancement combines three advanced sound technologies into one. The resulting technology significantly improves the width, height, and depth of any stereo image,

producing an enriched audio experience. Other features found in selected Norcent plasma monitors include high contrast ratios of from 850:1 in WVGA models to 1800:1 in XGA units, picture-in-picture, a greater than 160-degree viewing angle, and special color rendering technology that provides the most realistic color rendering available in both NTSC and PAL systems.

ViewSonic

<http://www.viewsonic.com>

The VX2000 is a 20" HDTV-ready LCD with a metallic-on-black design. With a 20.1" screen it features SuperClearMVA™ technology and full multimedia capability for the ultimate in full-motion video. Fast video response time, wide viewing angles (I could see it very well at about 160 degrees), ultra-high 600:1 contrast ratio and 250-nit brightness create exceptional screen realism. In addition, OptiSync™ technology (multimode input technology supports both digital (DVI) and analog (VGA) signals) provides dual analog and digital inputs for system flexibility. Optimum resolution is 1600x1200 scalable resolution from VGA up to 1600x1200. Displays HDTV 1280x720p format with advanced scaling options. Bezel-integrated speakers and built-in microphone.

The stylish 17" VX700 is loaded with high-tech features. Comes with SuperClearMVA™ technology, an ultra-high 500:1 contrast ratio and XtremeView 170° viewing angles for deep, true-to-life colors. Once in motion, ultra-fast video response time keeps images vibrant. And bezel-integrated 3-watt speakers give you a full multimedia experience without detracting from the sleek design. Full 17" viewable screen with OptiSync™ technology, 1280x1024 optimum resolution, and 250 nits of high brightness.

For a 15" LCD, look for the ViewSonic VX500+. With a sleek metallic-on black design and UltraBrite™ technology, your video, DVD, graphics and gaming applications burst off the screen with vibrant, bright colors. Videoconferencing is easy with the

bezel-integrated microphone and speakers. With OptiSync™ technology you have digital (DVI) and analog (VGA) input configuration options. Full 15" viewable screen, 1024x768 optimum resolution, 300 nits of ultra-high brightness, and 500:1 high contrast ratio. Sleek metallic soft-touch buttons utilize capacitive sensors to respond to the slightest touch for easy adjustments. AutoTune™ Function automatically monitors video input and optimizes display settings without requiring user adjustments. All of them come with a three-year limited warranty, 24/7 free technical and customer support.

Miscellaneous

CorAccess

<http://www.coraccess.com>

The Mobile Companion will let you monitor local expressway traffic, display digital photos, and keep an eye on your home security cameras. You can do all this and more from a single, full-color, wireless control center stationed anywhere in the house. You can also check your online stock portfolio, grab a dinner recipe, and control your thermostat, lighting and home alarm system from the same screen.

This 8.5" high-tech home appliance sits upright, easel-style, requires no wires, consolidates all home media and premise management as well as Internet surfing on one easy-to-use touchscreen. AutoMate gives you a simple graphical interface that can be controlled by touch to arm or disarm your security system, dim your lights, and much more. The system retails for under \$2,000.

iCEBOX

<http://www.icebox.tv>

The first product available in the Beyond™ Connected Home Initiative is the Westinghouse™ branded iCEBOX™, a web-enabled kitchen entertainment center that provides busy families with quick and easy access to information, communication and entertainment (I.C.E.). The new iCEBOX™ CounterTop will be available at retail stores in the second

quarter of 2003. Beyond™ will also showcase several new items in the product line, including a web-enabled clock radio known as “HomeHub”, and a microwave, bread maker and coffee maker which can be managed or automatically updated by the HomeHub.

SmartDisk

<http://www.smartdisk.com>

PC photostory lets you create musical slideshows you can share with everyone with up to 20 photo transition effects. Open PC Photo Show and explore your digital photo collection in a familiar Windows style. Simply drag your photos to the slide sorter window and put them in the order you'd like them to be shown. You can adjust this order later using the drag-and-drop or simple Up and Down arrows. Add captions, and music (choose from WAV, MP3 and MIDI files.) You then can create files (.EXE) which are a simple way to share your slide shows with friends and family. You can also create a screen saver of your slide show complete with music.

Navigation

Kenwood

<http://www.kenwoodusa.com>

It's a major software upgrade for its DVD-based touch screen vehicle navigation system—the Kenwood Excelon™ KNA -DV2100 - offering improved graphics for route maps and increasing its mapping database with 40 new cities in the U.S. and Canada, over a quarter-million more miles of roads and highways, and the addition of more than one million points of interest.

The new DVD software release, model KNA-MP212, covers the continental U.S. and Canada and in an improvement over earlier software, provides more detailed coverage of areas. With the new software it now provides mapping of 5.8 million total miles of roadways in North America, with dynamic route guidance over more than 1.86 million miles. Preprogrammed points of interest in the location database have been increased to 1.8 million. Other improvements, such as one-touch access to “Detour”

route navigation, reduced screen brightness for evening driving, and new color schemes to improve map and screen visibility, have also been made. The suggested retail price is \$2,550.00.

Pioneer

<http://www.pioneerelectronics.com>

AVIC-90DVD Navigation System with DVD Player is a slender in-dash DVD-ROM/DVD Video player that fits in a single DIN-sized space. It instantly feeds you details on over 2 million points of interest (restaurants, hotels, gas, and more) plus driving directions for the continental US and Canada. With GPS it knows where you are, and via voice control you can even ASK it for directions. And when you're not navigating, use it to play DVD movies for rear-seat passengers. MSRP is \$2,300.

TeleNav

<http://www.TeleNav.net>

Their system works with your Nextel phone. Enter the destination by pressing (1), or saying (2), and it asks you for the city and state, then street address. Then as you drive the system will be giving you directions through your phone. Price varies whether or not you have a GPS enabled phone.

Networking

IOGEAR

<http://www.iogear.com>

Their HomePlug Ethernet Powerline Networking Bridge enables you to network your home computers through the most pervasive medium in your house—the electric power lines. Share Internet connections, printers, transfer files, play games, and more. The USB Adapter allows you to network your home computers through the electric power lines in the house. Easy to understand step-by-step instructions are included.

Hawking Technologies

<http://www.hawkingtech.com>

Announced the introduction of new Gigabit networking switches and a new Gigabit Ethernet Network Interface Card (NIC) to break the pricing barrier to the next generation of networking technology—Gigabit networking. The

release of Hawking's 4- and 8-port Gigabit Switches as well as its 32-bit PCI Network Card makes high-performance networking more accessible to a larger base of consumers—at much lower prices. The Hawking Gigabit switches have full 10/100/1000M auto-sensing ports and perform at the same speed and throughput as more expensive brands that retail up to \$1,000.00. Estimated street prices for the Hawking 4-port switch, part number H-GS4T is \$99.00; the 8-port switch, part number H-GS8T is \$199.00; and the 32-bit PCI Network Card, part number H-GA32T runs \$29.00.

NETGEAR

<http://www.netgear.com>

With the Powerline USB Adapter (XA601) and Powerline Ethernet Adapter (XE602) you can easily connect computers all through the house without drilling any holes in the wall.

Speakers

Altec Lansing

<http://www.alteclansing.com>

Long known for their high quality, I was surprised to find that they are now making speakers priced down all the way to \$20, and yet still with the Altec Lansing quality. The 621 system has 143 watts of total continuous power (200 watts peak), two shielded satellites speakers, Mylar Tweeters, ported wooden subwoofer with an MSRP of \$150. The 2100 PC speaker system has a ported subwoofer to deliver rich, accurate sound to keep the music pumping with 35 Watts total continuous power RMS (50 Watts Total Peak Power). Two satellites, digital controller with an MSRP of \$100.

The AVS300 system is a 3-piece system that connects quickly and easily to your PC for improved sound. High performance 3" drivers, satellites magnetically shielded comes with a MSRP of \$40. For good sound at an affordable price, try the 220 system. This two-piece system works well for music and gaming. 11 Watts total continuous power RMS (20 Watts of total peak power), with two shielded satellites all for a MSRP of \$30.

When two- and three-speaker systems just don't cut it, look at the Altec Lansing. This 5.1 highly stylized, six-speaker system features five sets of 1" neodymium drivers. A dynamic center speaker with a subwoofer that cranks out deep rumbling bass. With 73 watts of total continuous power (100 watts peak), get ready to strap yourself in for a wild ride. 73 Watts total continuous power RMS the MSRP is \$180.

EV Sonic

<http://www.hardcoremultimedia.com>

Owned by Telex has been in the professional audio industry for over 75 years, doing the sound for bands like Rolling Stones, etc. Now they are taking the rock concert experience and putting in on consumers desktop with their EV SonicXS 2.1 (\$99), and EV SonicXJR (\$99) speakers with 5.1 surround sound system for the PC and Mac. The XS side speakers have one 4" satellite woofer, with a 1" horn tweeter and 60 watts per channel. The base unit has a 6" long throw subwoofer with 125 watts. The XJR satellite speakers have a 1" dome speaker, 30 watts per channel while the base has a 5.25" woofer with 60 watts.

Sonance

<http://www.sonance.com>

Elliptical footprint design, Sonic Eye™ Technology make for most ingenious in-ceiling loudspeaker on market. The Sonance Ellipse 1.0 LCR footprint makes for an angled baffle design that is recessed into the ceiling. This design creates a highly accurate, enclosed driver array with controlled dispersion to allow the tweeter/midrange array to pivot up to 20 degrees – greatly enhances speaker placement options. The user can precisely control the directivity of the critical mid- and high-frequency range of the speaker regardless of room acoustics or the listener's position in relation to the speaker. Suggested retail price is \$350 per speaker.

Unwired Technology

<http://www.unwiredtechnology.com>

Unwired Technology LLC, announced from CES 2003 that it has received commitments from several automotive Original Equipment (OE) providers and major aftermarket manufacturers to use Unwired's WhiteFire™ wireless headphone technology in their upcoming entertainment systems beginning in late 2003. It delivers up to four stereo or eight monaural audio channels simultaneously via wireless headphones or speakers. The technology allows users to select audio from various on-board vehicle entertainment systems such as DVD players, CDs, video games, radios and other devices. WhiteFire code can also be transmitted via well-known radio frequency formats such as IEEE 802.11b.

Scanners

HP

<http://www.hp.com>

The HP Scanjet 8200 series comes with a automatic document feeder. It is quiet and fast with preview scans in four seconds, helping speed the total scanning task. Capable of true 4,800

The 8200 scanner (\$500) is geared toward users who perform primarily image-intensive scanning. This model— with up to 4,800 optical dpi resolution and 48-bit color—comes with a transparent materials adapter built directly into its lid. The 8250 scanner (\$900) is intended for users with both document and imaging scanning needs. Fast, efficient paper handling with an ADF gives users the ability to scan up to 15 pages per minute (ppm) and two-sided scanning capabilities. The 8290 scanner (\$1,500) is designed for users with document-intensive needs and comes with an ADF that can process scans at up to 25 ppm and can duplex with the flip of a switch. The Scanjet 8290 comes with a wide variety of in-box software, including Kofax VirtualReScan (VRS) image enhancement.

Expected to be available beginning June 16 in North America

I saw the HP 5500c scanner at the ShowStoppers and was impressed with the automatic photo feeder (3 x 5 and 4 x 6 inch photos only). Goes for an estimated retail price (ERP) of



optical dots per inch (dpi), it comes with six convenient one-touch operation buttons. Tasks that can be initiated with a simple press of a button include easy save, e-mail, optical character recognition (OCR), copy and scan photos and documents. The HP Scanjet 8200 series includes three different models, each with software to meet specific user needs.

\$300, it will scan up to 2400 dpi and 48-bit color. It can scan 35 mm negatives and slides using included lighted adapter. Preview speed is 7 seconds. Comes with a one year warranty. The 3570c ERP is \$150, and will scan at 1200 dpi and 48-bit color. It can also scan 35 mm negatives and slides using the included lid with built-in lighted

adapter. Preview speed is 10 seconds, and has a 90 day hardware warranty. The HP Scanjet 3500c flatbed scanner will do 200 dpi and 48-bit color with an ERP of \$100. The 2300c will do 600x1200 dpi and 48-bit color. Preview time is 15 seconds, the ERP is \$70.

Storage

Maxtor

<http://www.maxtor.com>

I had a 40Gb hard drive with over 20Gb of free space, but when I saw a Maxtor 120Gb on sale for \$90 after rebate I bought it. Besides, that gave me a push to finally install Windows XP Professional.

Maxtor DiamondMax® 16 hard disk drive is designed to efficiently meet the need for capacity. Comes with Maxtor-developed Parallel ATA/133 Interface giving a maximum data transfer rates of 133 MB/sec. The Maxtor Quiet Drive Technology provides users with superior disk drive acoustics by reducing noise levels and improving sound quality. The Shock Protection System (SPS) and Data Protection System (DPS), give the drive enhanced protection against both operating and non-operating shock to eliminate costly drive returns.

Their latest additions are the The DiamondMax 16 and the DiamondMax Plus 9 are designed for capacities from 60 GB to 160 GB. Both feature industry-leading 80 GB per platter areal densities. Give the user high performance with data transfer rates up to 150 MB per second. Built on the same platforms the parallel ATA DiamondMax Plus 8, the company's first single head, single disk performance 7200 RPM drive, and the Fireball 3, a single head, single disk 5400 RPM drive. Both drives will be available at 20, 30 and 40 GB capacities.

At 150 MB per second maximum data transfer rate, serial ATA improves hard drive performance to keep pace with the rapidly increasing performance. With a point-to-point connection architecture, and a rich command set for managing hard drive activity and data flow along the interface, serial ATA advances the performance and efficiency of the drive

to system interface. Serial ATA are scheduled to begin in December 2002.

SmartDisk

<http://www.smartdisk.com>

Their new line of FireLite™ portable external hard drives is palm-sized, durable and stylish. They feature a unique combination of software and hardware to help you get the best possible performance. When a typical FireWire hard disk receives a read or write request for an odd-sized piece of data, it stores the data to a buffer and performs complicated operations to resize it. FireLite FireWire drives eliminate this process by ensuring that all data is correctly sized and aligned – before the data is sent to the drive. It uses FireWire or USB 2.0. They feature a blue “brow” logo that lights when the drive is connected; it turns off when it's safe to unplug. Available in capacities of 20 Gigabytes (GB), 30 GB and 40 GB.

Their desktop hard drive allows you to take advantage of extremely fast data transfer speeds and spacious storage capacities. Available in 60, 80 and 120 GB with plug and play installation. Works with FireWire, USB 2.0 or USB 1.1. Air mount design suspends the disk in a cushion of air, protecting your data while also keeping drive noise to a minimum.

Tablet PC

Norcent had a cross between a PocketPC and Tablet PC using Microsoft CE for a MSRP of \$500, but it is not listed on their website.

ViewSonic

<http://www.viewsonic.com>

The Tablet PC V1100 is a fully functional network-ready PC in a convenient tablet form factor featuring integrated WAN, LAN and Wi-Fi. It uses the Microsoft® Windows® XP Tablet PC edition software. It has handwriting recognition capabilities and compatibility with Microsoft Office applications. At only 3.4 pounds it is light, easy to use, and carry. Optional dock adds one-touch access to common USB peripherals, local area networks, integrated CD-ROM and AC power adapter. Comes with a 866MHz Mobile Intel® Pentium® III Processor,

20.0GB hard drive, and 256MB RAM. New bezel design features eight, one-touch access buttons. The screen is a high resolution 10.4" XGA color display for bright, crisp images providing a rich multimedia experience (just what you would expect for ViewSonic.) One year limited warranty on parts and labor. Built-in microphone and two speakers. System includes Firewire, two USB ports, one Type II PC card, and one Type II Compact Flash.

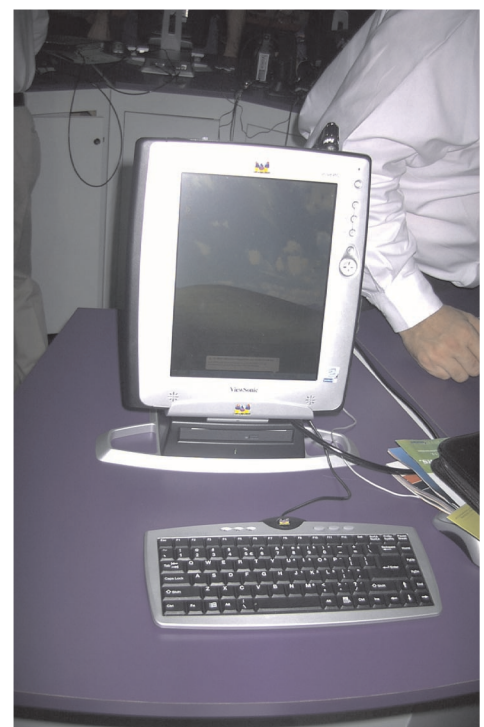
Wireless network

The big thing at CES was the announcements of companies releasing systems with 802.11g. Although the standards for it are not officially released, many companies are releasing product based on the standard. It was felt that they were close enough to release with maybe just a minor updated driver needed in the future. They operate up to 54Mbps in the 2.4GHz frequency, and are compatible with the 802.11b standard. The 802.11g standard is expected to be ratified by the second quarter of 2003 (although one vendor thinks it will be the third quarter.)

ActionTEC

<http://www.actiontec.com>

Announced a complete family of 802.11g products. This includes a



54Mbps Wireless Gateway combining an DSL modem with a wireless networking router, a 54Mbps PC Card, Access Point, Router and Ethernet Adapter. They will feature plug-and-play installation with ActionTEC exclusive Connection 1-2-3™ and/or the ActionTEC Installation Buddy™ software.

Support is given for Wi-Fi Protected Access (WPA) security standard with data encryption and first-time user authentication, as well as 40-bit WEP, 128-bit RC4 and 152-bit RC4 data encryption. A unique second PC Card slot in the 54Mbps Wireless Gateway will support a variety of network expansion cards, such as a Bluetooth-based card permitting Internet access for handheld computers. The PC Card ranch will reach up to 412 feet indoors and 1870 feet outdoors.

Belkin

<http://www.belkin.com>

Introduced its complete lineup of 2.4GHz/54Mbps 54g Wireless Networking products. Consisting of a 54g Wireless Cable/DSL Gateway Router (F5D7230-4 – ESP \$150), 54g Wireless Network Access Point (F5D7130 – ESP \$140), 54g Wireless Notebook Network Card (F5D7010 – ESP \$80), and 54g Wireless Desktop Network Card (F5D7000 – ESP \$80). They will provide a wide wireless range, requiring 75% less access points to cover the same wireless area as an 802.11a network, and include 64-bit and 128-bit WEP encryption.

What sets the Belkin line of 54g Wireless Networking products apart from the competition is their included software programs. Designed to assist the end user in using these products they include its Easy Install Wizard, which eliminates the need for users to deal with complicated information such as IP addresses and host names in order to connect the router to the Internet, and takes the guesswork out of setting up a router. Once the user inserts the CD into the computer's CD-ROM drive, the Easy Install Wizard takes over the job of determining what type of connection

is being used and setting up the router to connect to the Internet Service Provider. Once the router setup is finished, the user has an option to set up more computers, or just begin surfing the Internet. It is compatible with Windows® 98, 98 SE, Me, 2000, XP, and Mac® OS 8.6.

In addition they include the Belkin Parental Control: Web Content Filter Software Program. This software allows users to protect their children and family members from potentially harmful web content and to guard employees on the job from objectionable websites. It allows users to simply select access rights from over 30 categories of possible questionable websites; it does not require the user to add each individual website to restricted access status.

D-Link

<http://www.dlink.com>

Demonstrated its AirPlus Xtreme G networking line including the DI-624 Wireless Router with 4-port switch and the DWL-G650 Wireless CardBus Adapter. D-Link gives both 64/128-bit WEP encryption for a secure transmission. They used Orthogonal Frequency Division Multiplexing (OFDM) modulation to split the signal into specific frequencies that are evenly spaced to reduce interference. Using it ensures a cleaner signal throughout the wireless network compared to the .11b standard. Based on the Intersil Prism GT chipset that combines both the 802.11b and 802.11g into each unit. The DI-624 comes with firewall security and four 10/100Mbps auto-sensing ports. It includes a embedded DHCP server that when enabled with automatically assign IP address to wireless clients. Additionally parental control features are offered to allow parents to block web sites with specific words, or web sites. The DI-624 ESP is \$130 and the DWL-650 is \$70.

BITS & BYTES

Continued from page 1

All three computers can be networked through a router/firewall even though I very rarely have more than one running at any time. The network exists mostly so that all can share my DSL line and high speed internet access. I also have a 56k modem in HAL for use in faxing my Doctor.

I have been promised a DVD+RW/+R for my birthday, so who knows where HAL will evolve to next. I am considering an AMD Athelon XP and suitable motherboard, both because it is less expensive than Intel and it is more easily overclocked. Why overclock? Because I can. I keep telling you computers are some of the toys I play with.

Next time, if nothing earth shattering occurs in the computer world, I will talk about the programs I use, and also explain why I prefer them. Till then.



Jasc Paint Shop Photo Album

Public Beta

by Ken Kamber

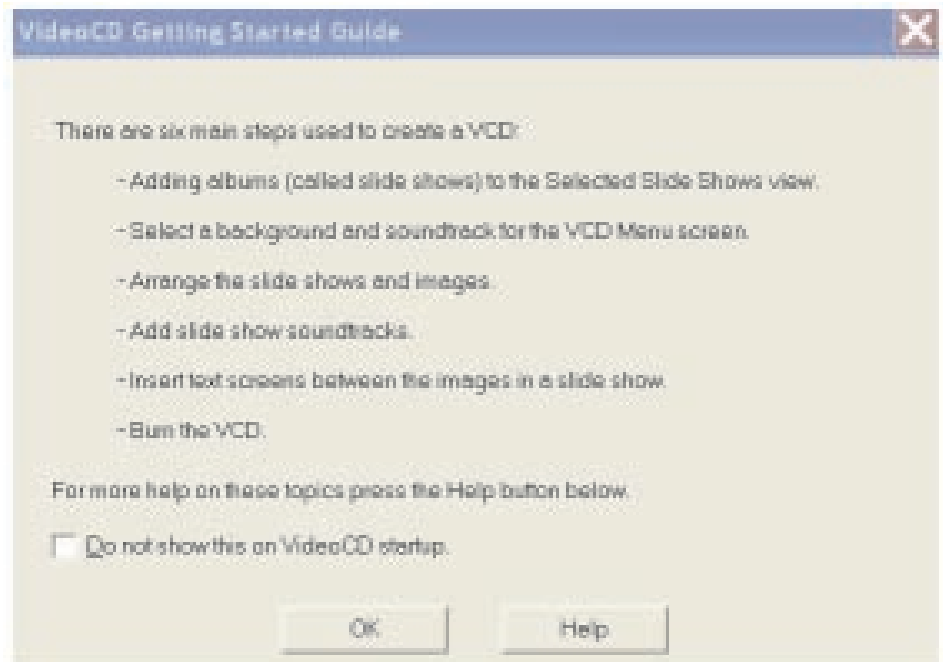
Jasc Paint Shop Photo Album is a new name but it is not a new product. It is a significant improvement on a good product that has several names. Previous versions were called Image Expert 2000, Jasc After Shot (a rename of the product after purchase by Jasc) and Dell Picture Studio, Image Expert Premium. Jasc Paint Shop Photo Album is the best product that I have used to enhance, organize and share images. Although I have reviewed a beta product, I have found no bugs and would consider it ready for final release.

The first item on the list of new items for Jasc Paint Shop Photo Album is the capability of making Video CDs (VCD) for the distribution of image shows. I tested this by using a slide show I had prepared with the use of Microsoft Power Point. The PowerPoint presentation had 424 images with text descriptions for each image and had been saved as JPEGs. Thus I had a folder with 424 JPEG files that each contained a photographic image with a text description for each image. When I opened the folder containing the 424 JPEG images in Jasc Paint Shop Photo Album, I found I had a sorting problem. PowerPoint assigns numbers to slides using a variable number of digits. This means that slide 2 did not follow slide 1 in the Jasc Paint Shop Photo Album name sort. Slide 2 followed slide 199. I had to rename many of the PowerPoint JPEG files so that all slides had 3 digits. Slide 2 became slide 002 and slide 20 became slide 020. Once I had renamed the 1 and 2 digit slides into three digit slides, the sort by name worked properly. An email from tech support at Jasc gave me an easier solution. I sorted by PowerPoint by date and then did an automatic rename. I still had to

rename a few files, but it was a far easier solution for using PowerPoint files.

A left mouse click on the Video CD icon at the top of the Jasc Paint Shop Photo Album screen opens the VCD layout screen and an additional VideoCD Getting Started Guide window to help those new to creating video CDs. It is nice that one can turn this window off when is no longer needed.

chose a single album and found it easy to follow the directions to add a sound file and create the VCD. Once started, the program took about 25 minutes to create the VCD containing 424 images. It looked like the CD burner software installed on my computer was not used. The one problem I had was the text on the bottom was not seen in most images on the VCD. This was due to the television display not showing the edges of the images. It was solved by



One has a choice of having a single album or multiple albums in the VCD. A single album in the VCD has the advantage that inserting the VCD in a DVD player or computer will result in the show being self starting. The disadvantage is that, if one has many images, one must have a very large sound file or the sound file could be repeated enough to become annoying. Having multiple albums on the VCD results in a menu appearing after the VCD is inserted. One can adjust the number of images in each album to match the length of the sound file. I

going back to the PowerPoint presentation and moving the text block up from the very bottom of the image then saving the presentation as JPEG images and creating a new VCD using Jasc Paint Shop Photo Album. The second time through was a breeze.

The resulting VCD was self starting, producing great sound and video signal when used in my APEX DVD player which was supposed to be able to play VCDs. The VCD almost worked in my older Phillips Dual Scan DVD player. On this player the video was great but

the music was horrible. The Phillips player plays excellent MP3 files and did not claim to play VCDs.

The VCD, using Jasc Paint Shop Photo Album, has become my primary method of distributing images to friends and family. The addition of the ability to include image titles, image descriptions and variable timing for each image in the VideoCD is suggested for the next version of Jasc Paint Shop Photo Album.

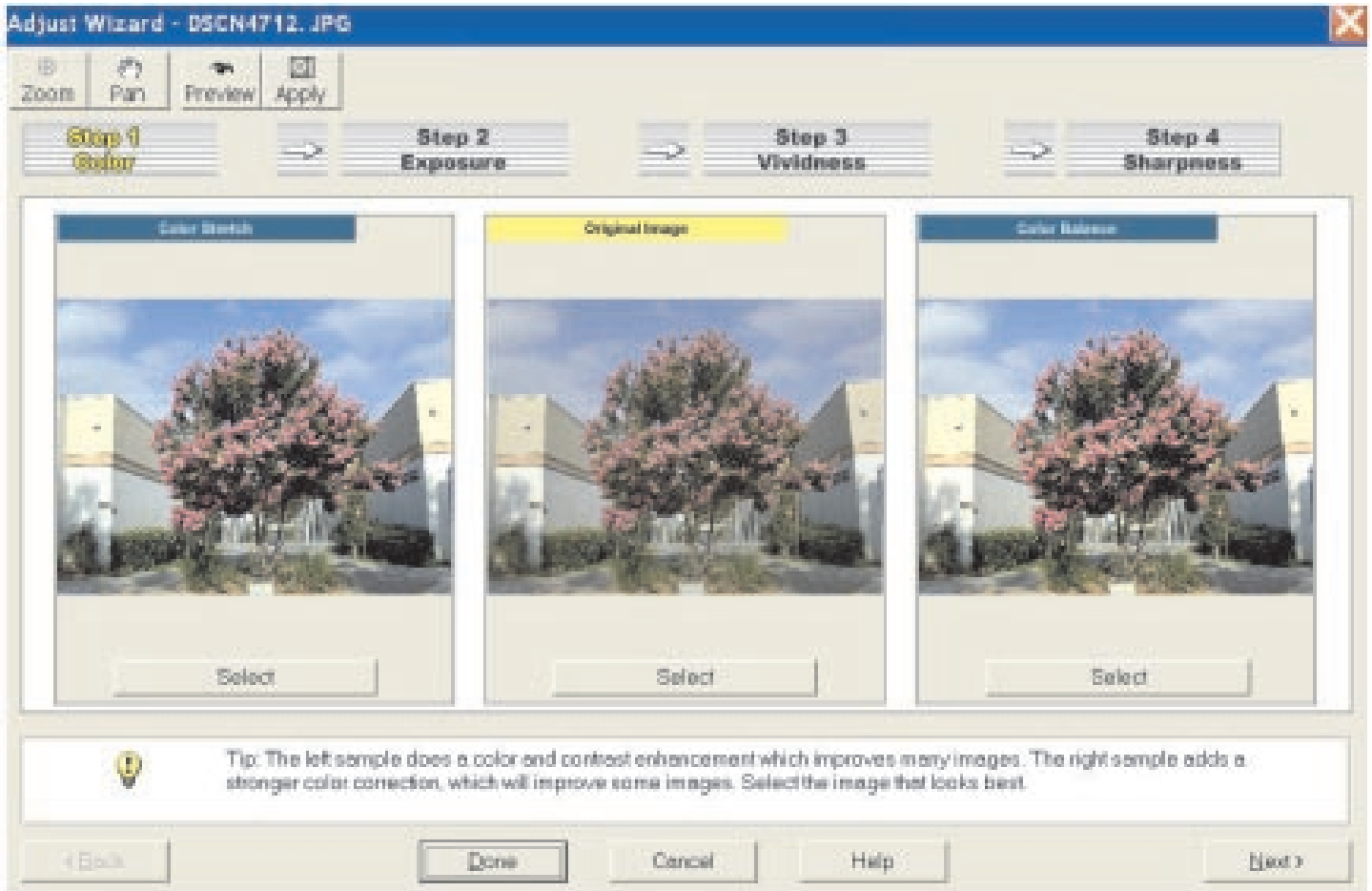
The second new item listed by Jasc is the Adjust Wizard, which is reached by left mouse clicking on the adjust icon.

most good images, I see no change. On bad images, I find great improvement. The use of “Quick Fix” on portraits is a manner of personal taste.

One of several new features not listed is the ability to switch rapidly between three different sized thumbnail sizes. In the last version of this program one could determine the thumbnail size but could not switch rapidly to another size. It is handy to rapidly switch from a very small thumbnail for large folders/albums to large thumbnails when it is necessary to see more detail in the thumbnails to

and last images. This is much better for slide shows with voice narration attached to each slide. With fixed slide duration, one must use fairly long slide durations and time each slide narration so as to not exceed the slide dwell time. This version has made a good slide show even better. The ability to make and distribute slide shows with options of having titles, descriptions and being able to determine the slide duration is one of the strong points of the program.

Being able to find to find images with a minimum of work is important when one has thousands of images.



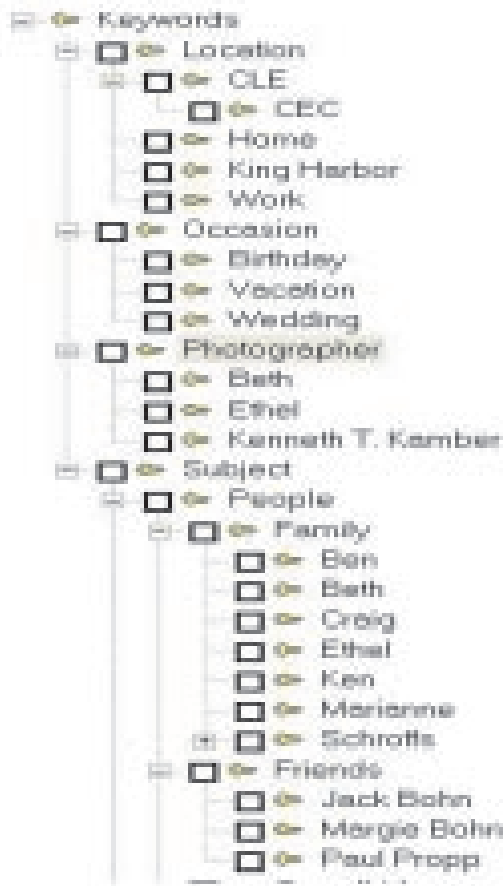
The adjust wizard permits one to easily adjust images by simply choosing the best image out of the three images presented in each of the four steps. It was very easy to use. The end result appeared very similar to the correction I got by choosing the “quick fix” icon. I will probably go to the Adjust Wizard when the quick fix icon doesn’t satisfy me. In my use of previous versions of this program I have found the “Quick Fix” to be excellent. If I use the “Quick Fix” on

determine which one to choose or open.

The slide show feature was one I used a lot in previous versions. When I had to go to manual mode, I didn’t like having to left mouse click on the very small forward or reverse icons in the menu. The new version allows the use of the keyboard space key and “enter” key to manually advance the slide show and the arrow keys to go forward and back as well as to the first

Image Expert/After Shot was the program I used. Almost all programs permit the use of assigning key words to images and allowing a search of key words. The problem is in not having multiple key words for the same item. If I had a picture that I was in, I could assign keys words like Ken, Kenneth, self, me, kkamber, Kenneth Kamber, Kenneth T. Kamber. To find all the pictures I was in, I would have to do a search of all the key words. Jasc Paint Shop Photo

Album put a structure to key words that can be changed as needed.



If I wanted to find all of the images containing both my wife and me, I would do one search on the two words "Ken and Ethel" and get the results of searching through 5 to 10 thousand

images in seconds. The automatic backup of this valuable database is a big plus. One of the problems with data base is that file movements must be made within the program for the database to be valid. Using another program to move files creates errors in the data base. If one puts all images in one folder, one can right mouse click and export data to each folder and sub folder as pspa.dbt files. If these folders are moved to new locations with another program, the Jasc Paint Shop Photo Album data can be made current by importing the information from the pspa.dbt files. If one wants to make room on their hard drive by saving images to CDs as slide shows and then deleting the images on the hard drive, one can preserve the key word data by exporting the information to each slide

show folder and placing the corresponding pspa.dbt files in the slide show directories prior to the burning of the CDs. This results in each folder of images in the CD

containing both a pspa.dbt and an ixdb.txt file. Paint Shop Photo Album has made the database even better with the incorporation of the database backup feature.

The outstanding printing capabilities present in previous version of this program appear unchanged. The program presents many choices of stander sizes, custom sizes and multiple prints per page. The ability of adjusting the exact image position on a page has made the use of a paper trimmer unnecessary.

SUMMARY

Jasc Paint Shop Photo Album has taken a good program and made it better by significant improvements in the new version. Some of the outstanding parts of the program are the VCD/Slide Show capabilities, the image editing capability, the database capabilities, the printing capability, and the ease of use. I consider it a worthwhile upgrade.

The final product is available now from www.jasc.com for \$49 for new users and \$29 for upgrades. Jasc continues to offer free unlimited technical support for all users, by both phone and email. I have never had to use the phone support but have found the email support to be excellent. A free trial version is available at the Jasc website at <http://www.jasc.com>. One may use the trial program for 30 days before upgrading to the regular version with no loss of data when upgrading.

General Meeting Speakers

IOPLUS

IOPlus makes the PocketDisk, a revolutionary new way to share and transfer files between PCs and Macs. Using the power of USB technology and flash memory, the high-speed, compact and portable PocketDisk allows you to instantly store up to 512MB of data and transfer it to any other computer. PocketDisk is easy to use and install. Simply plug in PocketDisk and the PC instantly recognizes it as a new removable drive and its ready for use. To transfer files, save them to the PocketDisk as you would with any mass storage device and plug into another PC. Computer companies such as Dell are already phasing out the floppy drive and replacing them with these USB storage devices.



May 10 – 9 a.m. to 12 noon Orange Coast College Science Building Room #149

IOPlus



P. O. Box 9274
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