

# W WINNERS

## Woteepad

WINDOWS USERS AUGUST 2004

### *In This Issue*

Southwest User Group Conf . . . . .	1
Epson R300 Printer . . . . .	1
President's Message. . . . .	3
NTI CD & DVD Maker. . . . .	5
Tips from Smart Computing. . . . .	7
General Meeting & Map . . . . .	8

## My Epson R300 Printer

By Terry Currier

**A**round the start of the year I went looking for a new inkjet printer. My old one would print okay, but could not print good pictures. I thought about getting one of the all-in-one units which will also scan and copy. I had seen an Epson R300 printer at one of the computer stores, and was impressed. I rationalized that I have an HP 3150 Laser printer which will already scan and copy (which, of course, started grabbing more than one sheet at a time for printing AFTER I bought the R300). Plus, I have a scanner for scanning directly to the computer. Kind of funny—when I decided to get the printer, I couldn't. I went to Fry's and they had it on display but none in stock. I went to the CompUSA store and the same thing happened. Then, I called two of the Staples stores near  
*Continued on page 5*

## Southwest User Group Conference 2004

By Terry Currier

**T**he Southwest User Group Conference was held in the usual spot this year at the Hilton in San Diego. What was unusual was that it was not on our meeting day, so I did not feel bad being there. It started out with a dinner Friday night hosted by Smart Computing. I really was impressed with them. Sign up for one of their great magazines and you can go onto their website and view the articles from all six of their publications. Also, you can do a search on their articles all the way back to 1987. They host a Q&A board for users with problems to post and other techies to answer back on how to solve them (hopefully). Remember, you can sign up for a subscription to one of their magazines—*Smart Computing*, *PC Today*, *CE Tips*, or *Computer Power User*.

<http://www.smartcomputing.com>

Adobe hosted a breakfast on Saturday morning and showed us their latest Photoshop, Photoshop CS.



I have used their autoflash fill from Photoshop Elements and it works great. With the new CS version there are new capabilities. They call it Shadow/Highlight correction and it works even better. He showed a statue that, when taken against the sunny sky, could not be seen. CS was able to lighten it up so we could see it. The WINNERS website won grand prize (second year in a row), and I received Photoshop CS. Thank you, Adobe, I can't wait to use it.

<http://www.adobe.com>

Intel hosted the Saturday luncheon and talked about how the digital home is fast becoming a reality. They also gave away two computers. Roxio gave us a demonstration of their new Easy Creator 7.0 Suite. Their software has always been very easy to use, but the suite carries it to a whole new level with the addition of the MGI software unit they bought. You can edit photos and video before putting them onto a disc. They have a batch red-eye fix that is very impressive. They also helped to host

*Continued on page 3*

## 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 August 14  
Orange Coast College  
9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon  
in Science Room #149**

**OPTIMAL ACCESS**

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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

- ★ August 14
- ★ September 11
- ★ October 9
- ★ November 13

# President's Message

**N**ow that COMDEX has been officially scrapped for 2004, many user group members that attended this event in the past have switched to the Consumer Electronics Show being held in January 2005. Over the last several years, computer-related companies exhibited at both Comdex and CES shows. This simplifies the matter of deciding which show is best to attend.

The Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), representing many computer user groups, has decided to hold their meetings in conjunction with the CES show. The APCUG meetings will be held just prior to the CES show. With the CES show nearly as large as the Comdex show at its heyday, this will give more time for everyone to concentrate on user group activities and still get the most out of the CES exhibits and events. If you plan on attending the CES show, make sure you visit <http://www.cesweb.org> for the latest information and registration.

Last month I spoke about Sony's new dual layered DVD writer. While it may be advancement in technology, it doesn't seem to have caught on as well as Sony predicted. When first launched in May, list price was \$199 for the internal unit. Now, the price has dropped to under \$150 after applying discounts and rebates. What may be slowing sales is the anticipated release of the new blue laser DVD writers. Rumors indicate these units may be available as soon as September. The capacity of these new writers may start around 16 GB with capacities up to 50 GB in the near future on a single disk. Watch for news about the launch of these new writers.

Some changes are coming soon to computer components. A new motherboard format, BTX, will be launched this fall, replacing the old ATX configuration. It will present a new and improved platform for future hardware growth. Also, the day of the IDE interface is about to pass. The rise of the Serial ATA should take over most hard drive connections by the end of the year. Before purchasing a new computer make sure you request the most current components currently available.

At WINNERS, we are always trying to provide our members with better equipment and facilities. With that in mind, an investigation into alternative meeting facilities was made in order to provide high-speed Internet access during our meetings. The best solution we found so far was the Orange County library facilities locations. Unfortunately, they will not have high-speed Wi-Fi access until early next year sometime. We'll keep you informed of progress and hopefully hold a meeting there to test the capabilities of the location when high-speed access becomes available.

If you have any topics that you would like to see covered at our monthly General Meeting's, feel free to present your ideas and sources for information to any of the board members. Thanks for supporting WINNERS.

Be sure to attend the next general meeting on August 14 and share your knowledge with other members. See you there.

*Steve*

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*SOUTHWEST USER GROUP CONF*  
*Continued from page 1*

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the vendor faire Saturday evening.  
<http://www.roxio.com>

Speaking of red-eye fix, I have been a fan of Jasc Paintshop Pro for a long time. Jasc hosted breakfast on Sunday morning. Paintshop Pro fixes the red eye without just putting a black dot in the eyes. You can choose to correct them with the actual color of the eyes, including the shade—way better. They ran surveys to see what the users wanted. Turns out 47% wanted more power, while 48% wanted ease of use. The only way to satisfy that was to divide the program up. Their new Studio program is Paintshop Pro made easy, with step-by step ideas and help to do projects. The next Paintshop Pro 9.0 will be more powerful then ever. They now have a flash fill feature in their new version coming out soon. If you purchase the 8.0 now you will get a free upgrade when 9.0 comes out. Otherwise, the upgrade cost from 8.0 to 9.0 is \$49. I have seen the 8.0 on sale in the past for \$29 after rebates. If you can get it for that you got a bargain and a great program.  
<http://www.jasc.com>

At the final luncheon on Sunday, Microsoft showed us the new Security Patch 2.0. In two words—get it. It will have some new features to make it easier to secure your computer. They will have a security console showing you if your firewall is not turned on or if your anti-virus definitions are up to date. They will turn on the automatic Windows critical updates (they recommend this). Their new firewall now will be automatically be turned on. The firewall can still be turned off if you want to use a third-party firewall such as ZoneAlarm.  
<http://www.microsoft.com>

At the vendor night there were quite a number of hosts. Besides the previously mentioned vendors:

*Continued on page 4*

Ahead Software – Nero CD/DVD writing software  
<http://www.nero.com>

Cloudmark Inc. – is an immune system for your email.  
<http://www.cloudmark.com>

Computer Outlook Radio Talk Show – John Lasiuolio the host was there. They are based in Las Vegas, NV. You can listen to him on the Internet at  
<http://www.computeroutlook.com>.  
Live Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 6:00 p.m. Pacific Time.

Digital Photo Guy – who also put on another one of his great workshops.  
[www.thedigitalphotoguy.com](http://www.thedigitalphotoguy.com)

Epson America – showing their great printers (BTW they gave away a R200 printer).  
<http://www.epson.com>

Executive Software – when you don't have time to wait around for defragging use their software.  
<http://www.executive.com>

Family History DVD – help for the genealogist

<http://www.familyhistoryondvd.com>

The Ink Dot – sells inkjet refilling kits, and did a workshop on it. <http://www.theinkdot.com>

Klassic Specialties – Don Baker who also did a workshop on inkjet printing.  
<http://www.klassicspecialties.com>

MicroTek – showed two really great scanners.  
<http://www.microtek.com>

nik multimedia – showing how to enhance your printing. In fact, even the Adobe presenter praised them.  
<http://www.nikmultimedia.com>

Optimal Access – explained how to get organized with their program. Then he even agreed to come and speak to our group.  
<http://www.optimalaccess.com>

O'Reilly Publishing – always easy-to-read and very helpful books had Steve Bass there. Look for his book on *PC Annoyances*.  
<http://www.oreilly.com>

Project Dogwaffle – an affordable paint software for PC with built-in, user-defined, animated & fractal particle brushes.  
<http://www.thebest3d.com/dogwaffle>

User Group Relations – Linda and Gene Barlow who also gave a workshop on how to have a trouble-free PC. If you are wondering how, they will be presenting to WINNERS at the November meeting.  
<http://www.ugr.com>

Zip\*Linq – if you can think of anything type of cable that you have, they will have it in an easy to use retractable carrier. Put on by Dave Whittle  
<http://www.webworkingservices.com>

While they were not at the vendor faire, I have to mention Logitech, who was very generous with the donation of speakers and wireless keyboards. Also, Individual Software and Photodex Corporation donated a lot of software for the drawing.

All of the presenters did a really good job of showing their products and impressing the audience. **A big thank you to all of the vendors who helped sponsor and make the conference such a success.** If you have a chance to go next year you really should go next year.

*Did you see Google this week?*



**FREE PHOTO  
PRINTS  
FROM TARGET**

This news flash just in from APCUG Board member, Ira Wilsker.

Target has an online coupon for 25 free digital prints.

The coupon expires on 8/22/04. The site is Tech Bargains—a good site to put in your Favorites (and check it often).

[http://www.techbargains.com/news\\_displayitem.cfm/33859](http://www.techbargains.com/news_displayitem.cfm/33859)



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## EPSON PRINTER

*Continued from page 1*

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me—the first gave me the same result. The second one, however, had one in stock and held it for me. I went down right away to pick it up and was really surprised. Normally, it sells for \$179 everywhere, but they had it on sale for \$149. In fact, I still see it being sold for \$179.

The printer comes with built-in memory card slots that support CompactFlash® Type I and II, MultiMediaCard, IBM Microdrive™, xD-Picture Card, Sony Memory Stick®, Memory Stick PRO, Memory Stick Duo, MagicGate™ Memory Stick, SmartMedia®, and Secure Digital memory formats. I can print directly from the media without the need of the computer. To be precise, there are two different models, the Epson Stylus® Photo R300 and R300M. They both have the built-in memory card slots, but the R300M additionally has a 2.5" color preview monitor for viewing and selecting images before printing them. I really did not need the viewer, but if they had it I would have bought that model.

I liked that there were six individual ink cartridges for better color printing. The two extras are a light magenta and a light cyan. The only thing is that I wish the black would have been double sized, since you use twice as much black.

The printer prints at 5760 x 1440 optimized dpi for some great prints. I can print BorderFree images at 4" x 6", 5" x 7", 8" x 10", 8.5" x 11", and panoramic-size photos. A 4" x 6" photo will print in about 37 seconds. The printer is rated to print a black-only text document at up to 15 ppm (pages per minute).

There is a control panel on the printer where I can choose paper type, paper size and number of copies without having to use a computer. I can also choose from nine paper types and eight different photo layouts, plus manual adjustments, filters and frames. The control panel

also gives me the ability to save favorite print settings with a simple "one-touch" button. I can also do this on the computer.

Of course, what attracted me to it was being able to print directly onto CDs. What you have to keep in mind is that you have to print on printable discs, not ordinary ones. I tried, just for the heck of it, printing on a normal CD. The image looked terrible since it had no background and the ink was still wet after over a month of letting it sit. The printable disc looks just like the others except there is a white coating on the top for you to print on.

Epson includes a program for making the printing/labeling of the disc. You can add text and whatever graphics or photos you want to add. After that, you put a printable disc into the holder, line it up and tell the program to print. The printer sucks the disc in (okay it draws it in, but the sucking part sounded cool) and prints onto the disc. Could not be easier. The printers carry a one-year warranty. 800-GO-EPSON or <http://www.epson.com>

They now have another printer out—the R200—that also prints on printable discs. It does not have the built-in media reader, but will do the

same quality printing for a selling price of only \$99.

My son laughed when I told him I brought the printer and its ability to print on CDs. "Yeah, you'll be doing a lot of that," he said. I told him, "It's not that I will, it's that I can." I still follow a rule I adopted a long time ago: Get more than I need and I won't wish I had it later. Besides this is my son who, when I gave him a USB 32MB thumb drive, said, "What do I need this for?" He just brought a 256MB thumb drive last week. Nice to have it when you need it.



# NTI CD & DVD Maker Platinum 6.7

By Terry Currier

While it is not as high end as other CD- and DVD-burning packages, because it does not have as many plug-ins, the NTI CD & DVD Maker is very good for burning discs, and isn't that what you are buying it for?

Besides just burning or copying discs, it comes with other useful modules. FileCD lets you write incrementally directly to the disc (drag and drop). The CD can be used like another hard drive with the user being able to copy and delete files (yeah, I know it will be slower.)

JewelCase Maker helps you create labels for the discs, or covers for the disc holder. Music Café will play WAV, WMA, MP3, or CDA format. I liked working with the Wave Editor. I still have some old vinyl record albums (no wise cracks, please). I had tried recording with another program to the computer straight from the turntable. The recorded sound was so low I had to turn the volume all the way up just to barely hear it. Wave Editor let me pump up the volume and filter out

most of the needle noise. With the Wave Editor I could Trim, Normalize, Fade, Echo, Filter and Amplify. So now I can back them up to CD so I can play them in my car. With the Live Audio feature, I can record any sound from the line-in on the sound card direct to CD or to the hard drive. It is easy to create your own CD mix from WAV, or CDA file formats, but for WMA you have to create a WMA CD.

Creating and burning discs is very easy. Just click the type you want: Audio, Video, Data, or do Diskcopy or Backup. Video lets you create a video CD, Slideshow CD, Super VCD and Slideshow SVCD. First thing to note is that no, it will not burn a video DVD. To get DVD authoring, you have to buy their Suite version.

I did have some initial problems trying to do a video CD. To make a video CD, it will read AVI, or MPEG-2 and convert them to MPEG-1. Using drag and drop, I tried to add both types to the setup. Each time it said they were the wrong type. I finally tried going through the add-files-way (clicking on the plus) and it took both.



For creating data CDs or DVD it works great. NTI includes some of the latest CD/DVD-burning technologies available, like Overburn™, BurnProof™, and JustLink™ support. Never heard of the JustLink so I look it up. It is something to the effect of controlling the gap between successive data writes so there will be fewer errors. Easy drag and drop for selecting the files I want to copy to disc. A "fill-bar" on the bottom of the screen lets me know how much



space is left on the disc. I thought the interface is clear and easy to understand.

Where it did really shine was in backup. When choosing to do backup, there is a choice of File Level or Drive Image Level. I highly recommend clicking on the Drive Image Level so you have the chance to create a bootable image disc. From this DriveBackup module you can also create a drive image or restore files from a previous image. Choosing the File Level takes you to their NTI Backup Now! module. This gives the user a familiar setup just like the data module. The user can click whole folders or drag and drop individual files for backup.

Some price comparisons below

Roxio 7.0 is \$90

Nero \$100

NTI 6.7 \$50

<http://www.ntius.com>



## Tips from Smart Computing

**Editing shortcuts.** Within a word processing document or text environment, press CTRL-C to copy, CTRL-V to paste, CTRL-X to cut, and CTRL-A to highlight all text. Press and hold the SHIFT key and use the arrows to highlight just a portion of the text. Once you select a section of text, press CTRL-B to make the text bold, CTRL-U to underline the text, and CTRL-I to italicize the text. You can use CTRL-S to save a file, CTRL-O to open a file, and CTRL-P to print a file.

**Get Closer:** Ask any professional photographer what amateur photographers do wrong, and the answer will almost always be the same: They take pictures from too far away. Most of us try to place the subject in the middle of the viewfinder (or LCD), taking care to include the surroundings to give the picture a good context. The resulting picture almost always disappoints because it's too much context and too little subject. From now on, get closer-much closer. As a rule, as soon as you think you're too close, cut the distance in half, until you can barely stand what your viewfinder tells you. Take your picture and move closer still, and then print some of the shots and see the difference. Immediately, your pictures will have a far stronger personality.

**Excel Tip:** To hide a column, point your pointer at the right edge of the column header and drag it to the left until the column vanishes. To retrieve the column, click just to the right of the leftmost side of the column header that replaced the original and drag to the right. To hide a row, point your pointer at the bottom edge of the row header and drag it up until the row vanishes. To retrieve the row, click just below the top of the column header that replaced the original and drag downwards.

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# August 14 9 a.m. to 12 noon Orange Coast College Science Building Room #149



They have two products.

**Optimal Desktop** integrates the functions of a Web browser, file manager and program launcher all into one application and puts everything three clicks away! Similar to a filing cabinet, Optimal Desktop stores everything in a structure of drawers and sections. Create custom cabinets and simply drag your files, folders, web pages into personally defined drawers and view each in its own window.

Organize shortcuts to files, folders and web pages in a user friendly tabbed interface and open each in its own window. Optimal Desktop shortcuts are stored in cabinet files. Each Cabinet stores up to 30 Drawers and each Drawer up to 30 Sections. Section tabs store the actual shortcuts inside of them. Each Section tab is a new window. Within each Section you can create temporary Page Tabs to navigate web pages and files quickly. With Optimal Desktop you can customize your screen layouts, keyboard shortcuts, skins, file filters. This means you can switch to an optimum configuration depending on the task at hand.

## Optimal Access

***PIG SIG: After the meeting we will go to the  
Soup Plantation on Adams Avenue, Costa Mesa.***

**Mobile Desktop** lets you carry your desktop on USB flash drives. You install Optimal Desktop on your removable drive (Mobile Desktop) and launch it on any windows-based computer. With Optimal Desktop you can carry all of your Internet favorites, Internet passwords, custom desktop settings (toolbar, keyboard shortcuts, skins), plus your file viewer, zip application and popup blocker on your USB drive.

You can check them out at <http://www.optimalaccess.com/>

