

Mother Board

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This Month At NOPC

Introduction to Digital Cameras By Richard Vallon

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Lovgate Worm is on the Loose

A new variant on the Lovgate worm began spreading early Monday, posing as an authentic-looking business e-mail, according to security researchers.

Lovgate.C spreads from an infected machine using the MAPI Windows functions by answering recent mail with an infected reply. The worm comes packaged in mail with the subject: "I'll try to reply as soon as possible. Take a look to the attachment and send me your opinion!"

The worm affects Microsoft Corp. Outlook and Outlook Xpress users on Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows NT, Windows 2000, Windows XP and Windows Me operating systems.

In addition to its mass-mailing functionality, Lovgate spreads through Windows shares and can steal users' passwords, according to security researchers at F-Secure, which posted an advisory on the worm and rated it Level 2, or a medium-grade threat. The worm is spreading widely, but is easily contained and re-

moved. Lovgate also has backdoor capabilities allowing the attacker to manipulate infected machines, F-Secure officials said. The worm apparently sends private user information back to a China-based Web portal.

In a stark reminder to administrators to police their password policies, Lovgate.C copies itself to shares and shares' subfolders, and, if they are password protected, the worm tries usernames and passwords such as "guest," "administrator," and a series of simple number and letter combinations such as "abcdef" and "abcl23."

If it gains access, it will copy itself to a file named "stg.exe" in the "System32" Windows folder and will attempt to run it, F-Secure officials said. The worm also has key-logging capabilities. Lovgate is an opportunistic worm: it exploits the most common weak security policy in the world—weak passwords.

By Chris Gonsales, m "eweek" February 24, 2003

Data Bits

Introduction to Digital Cameras:

Richard Vallon has a presentation aimed at the non-professional photographer who wants to make an intelligent decision when buying a digital camera. He will discuss how many mega-pixels is need for your style of photography as well as batteries, types of flash cards and accessories such as wide angle lenses. Some sample images & a cross sectional representation of popular models will be shown.

Help Needed

The NOPC had a group of members who offered to share their knowledge of computers with the members at the meetings and could be identified by the yellow caps they wore. Attrition has worn away at this valuable group. You don't have to be a "geek", just a steady user of computers who has faced a lot of problems and is willing to share their experience with the club. See Ray Paternostro if you would like to be "capped."

Web Lab being offered by NOPCC

Sherrie K. Henne, who has been assisting Ashton C. Mouton, Jr. in his WebSIG class, saw a need for a "hands-on" opportunity for those in the class. After presenting her ideas to the NOPCC Board, a time slot was found in which to hold the Lab. It will be held the 2nd Thursday of the month at McCann's Electronics, 100 Division St., Metairie, beginning at 6:30pm-8:30pm. Assisting her will be Edward Jahncke.

Web space has been 'donated' to the Web Lab for those attending to up-load the Web pages which they have learned how to do in Ashton's class and see the results. Sherrie is a professional Web Site designer, and the club is extremely thankful for her assistance to the club in this endeavor. She will review the class' efforts and provide constructive assistance in helping them improve their efforts.

The format of the Labs will be that of open discussion monitored by Sherrie and Edward rather than a lecture format. Using the club's computer, projector, McCann's internet link, and several personal laptops, it is planned to offer a broad spectrum of Web Site, and Web related tools, i.e. HTML Editors, FTP programs.

If you have been attending Ashton C. Mouton, Jr's WebSIG and plan on attending this Web Lab, and you own a laptop, we request that you bring it with you.

*Edward Jahncke
Editor*

WEB BROWSERS

Mozilla 1.2.1 is worthy upgrade

THE LATEST STABLE RELEASE OF THE open-source Web browser Mozilla, Version 1.2.1, gains some welcome features in its browsing and mail capabilities, making it a worthwhile upgrade for those still using Mozilla 1.1 or earlier.

Among the new features I found useful in Mozilla 1.2.1 were improving keyboard short-cuts, additional user interface customizations and new options to launch tabbed site groups when launching the browser.

However, the coolest new feature in the browser is Type Ahead Find. This feature let me go to any link within a Web page simply by typing the text within the link highlights. I found this especially useful on laptops with unfriendly keyboard interfaces.

Under the covers, the browser now supports the HTML link tag, which lets sites pre-fetch content when the browser is idle. This can be turned off, although with some difficulty.

The mail client now has improved drag-and-drop capabilities and supports multiple attachment selections.

We could also apply filters to messages that had already been down-loaded. Palm users will find that they can now sync to the Netscape address book – although if they implement this, they can no longer sync with the Palm Desktop application.

Mozilla 1.2.1 can be downloaded at <http://www.mozilla.org>.

*Written by Jim Rapoza
eweeek eweeek labs, "Pings & Packets", Dec 16, 2002*

PROTECTION: Know the Methods

intellectual property generally takes one of four forms: inventions, ideas, trade secrets, and goodwill. Each has its own method of protection.

>> A **patent** issued by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office grants an inventor exclusive right to an invention for 20 years from the date of application. According to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office's Web site, a patent can be obtained by anyone who "invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, man-ufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof." In addition to being new and useful, an invention also must meet one other condition before a patent can be issued: It must not be obvious.

>> A **copyright** registered with the Copyright Office of the Library of Congress gives authors the exclusive right to reproduce, adapt, distribute copies of, perform, or display literary, dramatic, musical, artistic, and certain other intellectual works. While the bulk of copyrights are issued for works in the arts, they're also granted to business ideas, such as source code and mission statements.

>> **Trade secrets** fall under state law and are defined as confidential information that provides indisputable economic value. A business owner can turn to trade-secret laws if such information is improperly disclosed-by a former em-ployee, for instance-or is otherwise illegally acquired by a competitor.

>> A **trademark** registered with the Patent and Trademark Office grants owner-ship of a word, name, symbol, or device that indicates the source of traded goods and distinguishes those goods from the goods of others. The owner of a trade-mark can prevent others from using a confusingly similar mark, protecting the goodwill that a brand carries with it. But the trademark can't be used to prevent them from selling the same goods under a clearly different mark.

*Written by Tony Kontzler
informationweek.com, Nov, 4, 2002*

Ronald Lyons Review of "C# Bible" from "Wiley Technology Publishing" NOPC VBLG Review Date: 02-05-03

My rating for this book on a scale from 1(very bad) to 5(outstanding) is a 4.75(excellent).

I am a fair programmer, but I have very limited C experience, so I found the first part on C# Language Fundamentals immensely valuable.

One problem however, is that as of this date, 2/5/3, I could not find a link for the "C# Bible" on the companion web site, so there were no downloadable code examples.

The price, \$39.99, for such a book is very competitive, since I would expect other such books to be in the \$60 to \$70 range.

The authors were a good blend of technical writers and training document writers, and they produced a book that I found easy to understand as a treatment of a complex subject. The editor, Michael L. Thomas, is a person well known in the New Orleans area as the Microsoft .Net Evangelist, and having attended many of his lectures, I believe his overview of the content was probably very helpful in the final product.

The book presented coverage of both the C# language as well as the whole .NET environment, which for me was an excellent method of presentation.

The following subjects were addressed in varying degrees of detail, but all were sufficient to provide an understanding of what they were:

- C# syntax(both introductory and advanced)
- Object Oriented Programming with C#
- Application development in the VS.NET IDE
- Winforms and Webforms
- ADO.net
- ASP.net
- Application deployment
- Wireless applications
- .NET Framework
- Interop and Remoting
- Security
- XML Primer

I believe the book is aptly named a Bible, as it is certainly a good continuing reference document to have handy.

Submitted by Manual Dennis

Need Help on the Interstate?

Dial *LSP on your cell Phone

BookWorks by Microsoft

If Microsoft had been the first to invent books:

1. Before you can open the cover of your new book, you must obtain a book activation code by phoning Microsoft.
2. Sorry, only one person may ever read your book.
3. It's full of spelling mistakes and typos.
4. When you're reading your book, the type can mysteriously disappear.
5. Libraries, which are for sharing books, are illegal.
6. You must acknowledge you have read and understood the Book License Agreement Hype (BLAH) before you can read your book.
7. Microsoft has the right to enter your premises to conduct book inspections to make sure your book is being read in accordance with the BLAH.
8. The Book Users' Group General Alliance (BUGGA) calculates that the annual loss of revenues to Microsoft arising from BLAH violations in 2001 was \$10.97 billion.
9. There are two versions of your book - the "Standard" and the "Pro" versions. In the standard version, those pages containing the most useful information have been stuck together.
10. Confidential information is inexplicably in bigger type that can be easily read by anyone glancing over your shoulder.

Submitted by Jackie Elliot

You know you are living in the year 2003 when:

- > Your reason for not staying in touch with family is because they do not have E-Mail.
- > You have a list of 15 phone numbers to reach your family of three.
- > Your grandmother asks you to send her a JPEG file of your newborn so she can create a screen saver.
- > You pull up in your own driveway and use your cell phone to see if anyone is home.
- > Every commercial on television has a web site address at the bottom of the screen.
- > You buy a computer and 3 months later it's out of date and sells for half the price you paid.
- > Leaving the house without your cell phone, which you didn't have the first 20 or 30 (or 60) years of your life, is now a cause for panic and you turn around to go get it.
- > Using real money, instead of credit or debit, to make purchase would be a hassle and take planning.
- > You just tried to enter your password on the microwave.
- > You consider second-day air delivery painfully slow.

(Continued on page 6)

Windows XP Annoyances

Paperback Book Review

by Dennis Schulman

Tampa Bay Computer Society

Published by O'Reilly & Associates, Windows XP Annoyances is a strange book—one in a series of books written by David A. Karp over the years, written as Microsoft developed Windows 3.0 through Windows XP. The book costs \$29.95 retail, but as a TBCS member, you can get it for \$18.86 by ordering online from the O'Reilly Web site.

Windows XP Annoyances is not an encyclopedia of terms, nor is it a reference for all answers. It is a plethora of useful tips, tricks, and explanations (some with examples). The book is a series of practical discussions, mostly in layman's terms, about the basic meanings and uses of Windows XP functions. It covers tips and tricks for making life easier using Windows XP, and provides solutions to problems that are not obvious.

In my opinion, the book should only be read by current Windows XP users, and I think that the most effective way to benefit from this book is to work with at least one friend (or more) on a second computer loaded with Windows XP. Working with someone else shortens the learning curve, helps you develop experience much faster, and makes your learning experience more meaningful, with more lasting impact than when learning alone. Taking a formalized class may be too demanding, and the instructor may not be able to scale down lessons to your personal learning speed.

There is too much information in Windows XP Annoyances to absorb in one sitting. It is written in a semi-casual format, and is broken into distinctive chapters so that you can select your areas of interest. In some cases, references are made to other chapters to elaborate further if you did not read them or to reinforce a point.

Although most of us recognize standard Windows Explorer utility functions, Windows XP has many new and improved features to make your work faster and easier, and to help you maintain a more focused train of thought. For the brave of heart, there is an excellent but somewhat technical explanation of the Registry structure, and how you back up, modify, and patch it.

Of course, my favorite area includes tinkering techniques that help improve file and folder usage, and reduce clutter and customization, among other cool things. Then, there is the chapter for improving Windows XP performance and reducing glitches, and for general fine-tuning of

startups, shutdowns, and running programs.

As I said at the beginning, Windows XP Annoyances is best appreciated by current users of XP, but there is a chapter with easy-to-follow procedures that tell you the best way to install Windows XP based on whether you are upgrading to XP or starting from scratch.

I only had 20 days to prepare this review, so I wanted to present the essence of content rather than cover the content in detail to prevent the review from being far longer than a page or two.

Recommendation

Suffice it to say, I strongly recommend Windows XP Annoyances for users who wish to improve their XP skills. Hopefully, readers will then be able to share their knowledge with other TBCS members who may be reluctant to take more technical steps forward, or who are just plain confused and may even be causing their own problems.

Of course, any time you share your knowledge to help fellow members, you benefit even more. Explaining concepts and providing examples helps to reinforce and solidify your own learning. And as your knowledge increases and you share what you've learned, the stronger our user group becomes and the more effective we become at helping each other, helping TBCS to continue to grow. And, that's what a users group is all about, isn't it?

To order this book yourself and get your TBCS online discount, go to the O'Reilly & Associates Web site. In the Discount Code field of the online order form, you must use the code, DSUG, to get your discount.

Dennis Schulman, has been involved with TBCS for over 10 years and has been a computer consultant in the Tampa Bay area for over 23 years. He has been a guest presenter for many groups in the area.

Borrowed from "Bits & Bytes" Official Newsletter of the Tampa Bay Computer Society, February 2003 issue.



Ask Dr. Bombay

Dear Dr. Bombay: I have been bombarded with pop-up messages from Windows Messenger, and I can't seem to make them stop. Please help before I lose my mind.

Certifiable

Dear Cert: Just when I thought there were no new underhanded marketing schemes to rail against, the tiny-brained weasels who drizzle their daily dreck onto our desktops come up with something so insidious it makes my skin crawl: instant-messenger spam. Instant messaging was such a juicy target, I wondered why it took the marketing people so long to exploit it. Perhaps they're not really as smart as they tell their clients they are. I think that can be borne out by the fact that they continue to hawk incredibly ludicrous, overpriced products that no consumer in his or her right mind would touch with a 10-foot pole. To top it off, the method in which they peddle their tripe is so blatantly offensive; it ticks off any potential customers instead of enticing them.

If you have Windows XP, 2000 or NT and an Internet connection, you probably have something, called 'Messenger Service'- not to be confused with MSN Messenger - running in the background: Messenger Service was intended to allow system administrators to send out status pop-ups to everyone on their networks. It didn't take long for spammers to see the potential.

The spammers scan IP addresses -- your unique iden-tifier on the Web - and when they find one With Messenger Service enabled, they fire off an ad for herbal Viagra. Sound sophisticated? Nope. You cant. buy the soft-ware for about 700 bucks. No, Poindexter, I'm not going to tell you where.

If you have a firewall such as ZoneAlarm or Norton Firewall, you can block ports 131 and 139 to reject the spam (plus all other Messenger Service pop-ups). If not, go to the Control Panel, open Performance and Maintenance, go to Administrative Tools and double-click on Services. Find Messenger and double-click it, then click Stop to turn it off. Now change its startup type to Disable. Those instructions are for XP, 2K and NT only. Don't whine about not being able to find that stuff on any-thing else. Unfortunately, that trick does nothing to stop the spam you see on instant-messaging services like ICQ, Yahoo Messenger, AOL Instant Messenger or MSN Messenger. I haven't found any effective blocking software yet, but you can be assured some indignant programmer somewhere is pounding down caffeine and churning out code. If you find something before I do, let me know.

In the meantime, CNET has a pretty good roundup of d e f e n s i v e m e a s u r e s at www.cnet.com/software/0-5566362-8-9835148-1.html.

If you mess up that incredibly complex address, don't complain to me. It's CNET's fault.

By Dr. Emilio Bombay
FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM
New Orleans Times-Picayune
December 4, 2002

What Version of Windows OS are You running?

To determine the version of Windows 95, Windows 9, or Windows ME that you are running:

1. Click **Start**, point to **Settings**, and click **Control Panel**.
2. In Control Panel, double-click **System**.
3. Click the **General** tab.
4. Locate the version number under the Systems heading and then refer to the following table:

Release	Version	F i l e
<u>Date</u>		
Windows 95 retail OEM	4.00.950	7/11/95
Windows 95 retail SP1	4.00.95A	7/11/95-12/31/95
OEM Service Release 2	4.00.1111 (4.00.95B)	8/24/96
OEM Service Release 2.1	4.03.12-12-1214 (4.00.95B)	8/24/96-8/27/97
OEM Service Release 2.5	4.03.1214 (5.00.95C)	8/24/9611/18/97
Windows 98 retail, OEM	4.10.1998	5/11/98
Windows 98 Second Ed	4.10.2222A	4/23/99
Windows ME	4.90.3000	6/08/00

Reference Microsoft Knowledge Base Article- Q158238
<http://support.microsoft.com> Submitted by Editor

System Support

What's Safe to Remove from Windows Startup?
http://www.pacs-portal.co.uk/startup_index.htm

Click here to see a flagged list for disabling programs to enhance performance. The recommendations: entries highlighted with an '!' should be left active, those highlighted with a '?' should be disabled at your discretion, and those marked with an 'X' can be disabled safely." All applications installed using the default installation procedure start when Windows starts. Too many of these programs running in the background may slow other programs down sufficiently to be unusable. Since all programs use a portion of the system memory and resources, this leaves a smaller percentage that can be used for other programs once they're opened.

*Excerpted from "Bits & Bytes" Tampa Bay Computer Society
February, 2003 Newsletter*

(Continued from page 3)

- > Your dining room table is now your flat filing cabinet.
- > Your idea of being organized is multiple-colored Post-it notes.
- > You hear most of your jokes via e-mail instead of in person.
- > You get an extra phone line so you can get phone calls.
- > You disconnect from the Internet and get this awful feeling, as if you just pulled the plug on a loved one.
- > You get up in the morning and go online before getting your coffee.
- > You wake up at 2 AM to go to the bathroom and check your E-mail on your way back to bed.

Submitted by Don Herrmann

Less is More: Flat monitors enter mainstream

Excerpted from an article by Mike Musgrove of the WASHINGTON POST

Monitors are like other computer equipment. Every year it seems you can buy a little more for a little less.

That has meant that you saved a few dollars on the same old monitors with cathode-ray tubes. This year, it's allowed many people to upgrade to flat panel, liquid crystal displays.

The prices of desktop LCD monitors have fallen so much that they hit the mainstream this year. Some of the cheapest models are down to \$300 after rebate...

..Aside from occupying less desk space and generally looking cool, flat-panel displays have other advantages. LCD's use about a third the power that CRT's do and exhibit none of their flickering, which users say reduces eyestrain.

Although the price of an LCD monitor still tops that of a CRT with the same viewable area, some argue that when you factor everything in—from shipping costs to power bills—flat panels come out ahead.

"Ultimately the flat-panel display is less expensive than the CRT," said Scott Hardy, manager of desktop-peripherals marketing at Dell.

But all LCD monitors are not built the same.

Screens vary in their viewing angles. Early models required that you be more or less directly in front, while newer models remain viewable from more angles. A perfect score would be 180 degrees; the current generation of LCDs range from 140 to 160 degrees.

If you're a gamer or like to watch DVDs on your computer, consider the LCD's refresh, which indicates how quickly its transistors can receive and transmit information. Many panels are down to a 25-millisecond refresh rate, which some think is fast enough. Others think the magic number will be 16 milliseconds.

"Lower is better," SAID Bob O'Donnell, director of

personal technology at research firm IDC. "When it gets higher you get a smearing effect".

Then comes an LCD's connection options. Beyond the standard, analog VGA plug, some LCDs include digital connectors that send video directly from computer to screen without digital-to-analog conversions—which LCD experts say delivers a cleaner picture. The catch: many computers, especially older ones, lack digital outputs.

Size is another thing to consider. Most consumers buy 15-inch LCD screens, which approach the viewable area of a 17-inch CRT, but prices for 17-inch flat panels are dropping fast.

"If you look at the American consumer, they really prefer a large screen. Seventeen-inch screens really start to get their attention," said Rhoda Alexander, director of monitor research at iSuppli/Stanford Resources...

LCD monitors might not be for everybody, though. Despite their advantages, they are a little more fragile than CRT screens.

"Some kids get in the habit of tapping their CRT screens with their pencils," Alexander said. "You don't want to do this with an LCD, so this might not be the ideal product to put in front of your 2-year-old".

Mike Musgrove
The Washington Post
New Orleans Times-Picayune

Looking for a Template?

A great website that you may want to visit:

<http://search.officeupdate.microsoft.com/TemplateGallery/ct113.asp>

This site offers 32 Templates ranging from Birthday cards to Birthday Party Invitations, Shower announcements, Thank-you cards, etc. Note that the requirements are identified for each template such as "requires Word 2000 or later, Works with Avery 3255," etc.

Borrowed from Cajun Clickers Computer News
February, 2003 issue

How much memory is in your computer"

Your System Information includes the amount of memory or RAM, installed.

In Windows 98 and ME, from the Start Menu, select Settings, and Control Panel. If you are using Windows XP, the Control Panel is accessible from the Start Menu.

In all three systems, double click on the Systems icon. On the General Tab, you will find the amount of ram.

Another article borrowed from Cajun Clickers Computer News
February, 2003

NOPCC Directory

Elected Officers

President	Ray Paternostro	president@nopc.org	737-9099
Vice President	Ashton C. Mouton, Jr.	vp@nopc.org	246-7759
Secretary	Carl Henderson	secretary@nopc.org	466-3954
Treasurer	Don Herrmann	treasurer@nopc.org	831-1284
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Director At Large	Clarke Kissel	director2@nopc.org	828-5678
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Standing Committees

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Publicity	Jackie Elliott	publicity@nopc.org	455-6203
Webmaster	Manuel Dennis III	webmaster@nopc.org	835-7656

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Internet	Ray Paternostro	internet-m@nopc.org	737-9099
New Users	Ashton C. Mouton, Jr.	new-user-m@nopc.org	246-7759
Suites 2000	Ashton C. Mouton, Jr.	suites2000@nopc.org	246-7759
VBLG	Manuel Dennis III	vblg-owner@listbot.com	835-7656
WADSIG	Manuel Dennis III	wadsig-owner@listbot.com	835-7656
Web Development	Ashton C. Mouton, Jr.	web@nopc.org	246-7759
Web Lab	Sherrie K. Henne		913-5638

Other Important Numbers / Addresses

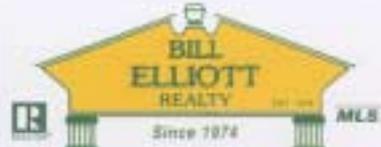
Club Hotline	Recorded messages. Meeting Information. Open 24 Hours	887-5746
NOPCC BBS	Bulletin Board System for members. The original way to PC communicate.	486-7249
NOPCC Web Site	On the World Wide Web. Our own home page and club information.	www.nopc.org



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March 2003

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Living with Electronics WTIX 690 AM 10-11am
2 Computer Solutions WSMB radio 1350AM 11-12am	3 VBLG SIG 6:30-8:30 PM McCann's	4 Mardi Gras	5 NOPC Meeting 6:30-9:30 PM J.D. Meisler School	6 Web SIG 6:00-9:00 PM McCann's	7	8 Living with Electronics WTIX 690 AM 10-11am
9 Computer Solutions WSMB radio 1350AM 11-12am	10 VBLG SIG 6:30-8:30 PM McCann's	11 Genealogy 7:00-8:30 PM McCann's	12 NOPC Board of Directors Meeting McCann's 6:30 PM	13 Web LAB 6:30 -8:30 PM McCann's	14	15 Living with Electronics WTIX 690 AM 10-11am
16 Computer Solutions WSMB radio 1350AM 11-12am	17 VBLG SIG 6:30-8:30 PM McCann's	18	19 Suites 2000 6:00-8:30 PM McCann's	20 New User's SIG 6:30-8:30 PM McCann's	21	22 Living with Electronics WTIX 690 AM 10-11am
23 Computer Solutions WSMB radio 1350AM 11-12am	24 VBLG SIG 6:30-8:30 PM McCann's	25	26 Digital Media SIG—Cancelled for this month only	27 Internet SIG 7:00-9:00 PM McCann's	28	29 Living with Electronics WTIX 690 AM 10-11am
30 Computer Solutions WSMB radio 1350AM 11-12am	31 VBLG SIG 6:30-8:30 PM McCann's					

The New Orleans Personal Computer Club (NOPCC) is a private non-profit organization chartered under the State of Louisiana. Its purpose is to provide an open forum for discussion and education of the membership in the use and application of PCs, peripheral equipment and software. The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the author (s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the NOPCC, its members or its officers. The club does not verify for accuracy the articles in this newsletter and leaves verification of accuracy to its readers. Articles in this newsletter may be duplicated as long as credit is given to the author (s) and the NOPCC. Annual Dues Schedule: Regular Member, \$40/yr.; Family Membership, \$60/yr.; and Students (under 21), \$20/yr. Meetings are held at 6:30 on the 1st Wednesday of each month at J.D. Meisler Jr. High School on Cleary Avenue in Metairie, Louisiana.

New Orleans Personal Computer Club
P. O. Box 8364
Metairie, Louisiana 70011