Abort, Retry, Ignore...

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

CAEUG Computers Are Easy User Group

A Review of Animated Opal Creek Screensaver 1.0
September 21, 2001
By Brian Noon

As I write this review, today is the first day of Autumn, 2001. In addition to the gloomy events of last week, we also now have the Fall (lovely to some, but a precursor of winter to others) to contend with. Can your computer prolong the beauty and peacefulness of a summer's day by your favorite stream?

These are the claims of a new screensaver called Animated Opal Creek, which is available from a website called http://www.sensecandy.com. Here is how the author, Heun Shin, describes his product:

"Imagine being in a beautiful forest. You sit in front of a small creek under the cool shade of giant trees. The sound of the water calms your mind, and the fluttering of butterflies whisk your worries away. This is the experience that this screensaver tries to capture. The screensaver features animated, high-resolution scenes of creeks and butterflies (this can be turned off). The scenes are complimented by sounds of flowing water and chirping birds. It's like watching a movie!"

When I think about watching a movie on my computer, I am thinking about DVD quality, and this screensaver is definitely not that. The scenes seem a little jumpy, this in general detracts from the peacefulness that it aims for. As mentioned above, there are adjustments for the number of butterflies that are shown in the screensaver, and the viewer can chose between 0 and 5 butterflies. The "butterflies" are not really what you would expect: they are different colored fluttering blobs of color. Unique, yes, but not butterflies!

The sound quality is much better than the video. Among the sounds that you hear are the gurgling of the stream, and "ambient" bird noises. In the set up in Control Panel, the author cautions that "on slower computers, sound (sic) may not be wonderful. In that case, turn

---

Calendar of Events

!!! IMPORTANT !!!
Meeting dates for 2002
See page 10 for all confirmed dates.
Time and Place remain the same.

Upcoming CAEUG meeting
Saturday, January 26 2002
9:45-12:00

John Spizzirri will discuss
"What you can do with Linux"

SEE YOU THERE!!

COD Dates 2002 dates
Jan 20
Feb 24
April 21
May 26

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CAEUG Officers & Chairpersons

President . . . . Rick Scalzo
V.P. (Programs) . . . . .John Spizzirri
Secretary (& donuts) . . . . Al Skwara
Treasurer . . . . Lynn Johnson

Newsletter Editor . . . . .Kathy Groce

Membership Chairperson
& Circulation Manager . . . . Jeanne Hoesley
CAEUG COD Coordinator
& Publicity . . . . Terry Moye
Software Reviewer . . . . Brian Noon
CD of month/Webmaster
& Technical Consultant . . . . Richard Scalzo
Coffee Service . . . . Joan Thompson
Picnic Chairpersons . . . . .Mike Goldberg
                                                      Roger Kinzie

CAEUG LIST OF SUPPORTING RETAILERS

The retailers listed below have in one way or another supported CAEUG and we thank them.

COMPUTER MAINTENANCE, INC.
1433 W. Fullerton Avenue, Suite M
Addison, IL 60101
630/953-1555

AMERICAN COMPUTER
330 S. Naperville Road, Suite 310
Wheaton, IL 60187
630/260-4020

BOOKS & BYTES, INC.
Retail store is closed
630/416-0102
http://www.bytes.com/

SOFTWARE EMPORIUM
123 E. Front St.
Wheaton, IL 60187
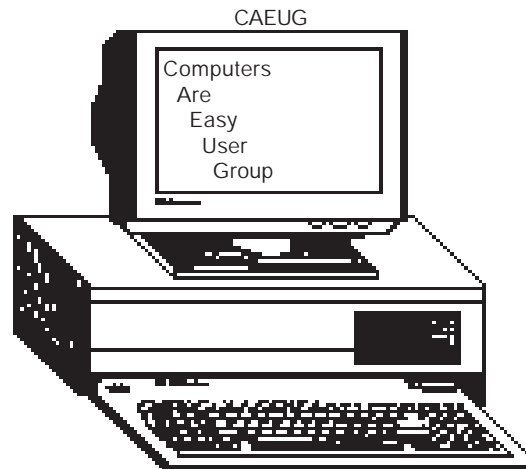630/653-0085

ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER:
        This printed version of our newsletter was laid out using Adobe's Pagemaker Version 7.0 for Windows and was printed on a EPSON EPL-7000. Our group's membership database is maintained using MSWorks and address labels are printed using PostalSoft Desktop Mailer software. Our checking account records are kept in Quicken software.
        The opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the CAEUG Officers, members or other contributors. CAEUG, its officers, newsletter editor, authors or contributors are not liable in any way for any damages, lost profits, lost savings, or other incidental or consequential damage arising from the use of the information provided herein. Every reasonable effort has been made to confirm the accuracy of the contents of this newletter, but that accuracy is not guaranteed.
        Permission is granted to reproduce any or all parts of this newsletter for personal use. Also granted is permission to reproduce for public ation any part of this newsletter provided that a copy of the publication is mailed to CAEUG, immediately following publication and CAEUG is given credit.
        The CAEUG newsletter is published eleven times annually. Contributions by members are encouraged and will be gratefully acknowledged in the newsletter. We have a policy of exchanging newsletters with other users groups across the nation. Several CAEUG member articles have already been picked up and reprinted.

CAEUG

Computers
   Are
     Easy
        User
          Group

Computer Central

Next show date
SUNDAY, Jan 20
College of Dupage
9:30 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.
Chicagoland's Oldest and Largest
Multi-Vendor PC Show & Sale for
Home and Business

COLLEGE OF DUPAGE
Main Arena of Physical Education Building
Corner of Park Blvd & College Road
Glen Ellyn, IL
FREE PARKING
Admission - $6.00
(With this coupon admission $5.00)
www.CODSHOW.COM
E-mail address:
info@codshow.com

COMPUTER CENTRAL at COD

2002 dates
January 20
February 24
April 21
May 26
June 30
July 28

In order to have your article or item for sale appear in ARI they must be received by the 10th of the month prior to publication.

MEMBERS HELPLINE

Any member with a specific expertise can volunteer to be on the Members Helpline. Contact Rick Scalzo.

Beginners Helpline..............Billy Douglas

Beginner hardware
problems.............................Dick Fergus

QuickBooks, Turbo Tax, IBM Lotus, MS Excel, Corel's Quattro Pro....Terry Moye

Win 9x, NT, 2K.................Rick Scalzo
e-mail.............mitsufan@webcentrix.net

Hardware problems
& WIN NT4, Linux...........John Spizzirri

Membership Costs.....

	First Yr.	Renewal
Individual	$25.00	$20.00
Family	$30.00	$25.00
Corporate	$30.00	$25.00
Associate	$20.00	$15.00

Start UP Discussion Group

Ask questions and discuss computer experiences with the Start UP group.
Such as:
1. New to Computers? (basic topics)
2. How to use the Web or download information
3. How to install hardware/software
4. Discuss how to troubleshoot hardware conflicts, learn boot up emergency tricks
5. What do you want to know??

Meets before regular meeting from 9:15 to 9:45

bird sounds off (or even turn all sounds off)." I did not have any problem with the sounds on my computer.

System requirements to run Opal Creek are minimal: a Pentium 2 processor and 8MB of free disk space. The operating system requirement is Windows 95/98/ME/NT4/2000 with a file size of only 4.91 MB.

The shareware version of Opal Creek has only 2 scenes, but the full version adds 5 more, for a total of 7 scenes. The cost of the full product is $7.95, however if you want to try this out before shelling out your dough, you can go to their download link, at http://www.sensecandy.com/downloads/aocssw.exe. The author is also donating $1 from the proceeds to Earth Share. It sure would be nice to know what Earth Share is!
[Editors note: http://www.earthshare.org -Global warming, ancient forests, endangered species.]

Now for the big question: Would I buy this product?

Yes. It is pleasant enough in spite of the jumpiness of the video, and the unreal quality of the "butterflies". The bird sounds and the bubbling of the stream more than make up for these shortfalls.

As I look through my office window at the approaching autumn, and then the dreaded Chicago winter, it will be reassuring to catch a glimpse of summer as my computer takes its own lazy nap to the sounds of birds, and a gurgling stream!
[Editors note: Due to situations beyond the editor's control there was a delay in printing this article.]

MURPHY'S LAWS OF COMPUTING

1. When computing, whatever happens, behave as though you meant it to happen.

2. When you get to the point where you really understand your computer, it's probably obsolete.

3. The first place to look for information is in the section of the manual where you least expect to find it.

4. When the going gets tough, upgrade.

5. For every action, there is an equal and opposite malfunction.

6. To err is human . . . to blame your computer for your mistakes is even more human, it is downright natural.

7. He who laughs last probably made a back-up.

8. If at first you do not succeed, blame your computer.

9. A complex system that does not work is invariably found to have evolved from a simpler system that worked just fine.

10. The number one cause of computer problems is computer solutions.

11. A computer program will always do what you tell it to do, but rarely what you want it to do.

Some GREAT advice for the New year!

1. Throw out nonessential numbers. This includes age, weight and height. Let the doctor worry about them. That is why you pay him/her.
2. Keep only cheerful friends. The grouches pull you down.
3. Keep learning. Learn more about the computer, crafts, gardening, whatever. Never let the brain idle. "An idle mind is the devil's workshop," the devil's name is Alzheimer's.
4. Enjoy the simple things. When the children are young, that is all that you can afford. When they are in college, that is all that you can afford. When you are on retirement, that is all that you can afford!
5. Laugh often, long and loud. Laugh until you gasp for breath. Laugh so much that you can be tracked in the store by your distinctive laughter.
6. The tears happen. Endure, grieve, and move on. The only person who is with us our entire life, is ourselves AND GOD. Be alive while you are alive, don't put out a mailbox on the highway of death and just wait in residence for your mail.
7. Surround yourself with what you love, whether it is family, pets, keepsakes, music, plants, hobbies, whatever. Your home is your refuge.
8. Cherish your health. If it is good, preserve it. If it is unstable, improve it. If it is beyond what you can improve, get help.
9. Don't take guilt trips. Go to the mall, the next county, a foreign country, but not to guilt country.
10. Tell the people you love, that you love them, at every opportunity.

AND ALWAYS REMEMBER Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away.
[Editors note: Received via my email]

The Lamp Post   Number 25 by John Spizzirri
January 12, 2002

You may have heard that Microsoft (MS http://www.microsoft.com) has offered to settle the 100+ private citizen class action law suits by offering computers and MS software to 14,000 of the poorest school districts in the country. MS's contribution will be $1 billion, with half being hardware and half being MS software. Wait a minute, think about it. $500 million in software?? That half billion in software is valued at retail. That's the same retail price that the DOJ said in its settlement with MS was ok, even though the appellate court ruled that MS used it monopoly position to gouge consumers with high prices. My guess is that the actual cost to MS will be somewhere in the area of less than $3 million for the software. Figure it out. WinXP Home is $199 per unit for a box that contains a booklet and a CD. The actual production costs of a box, booklet and CD are slightly over one dollar. Who knows what 'partnership' agreements will bring down the hardware expense to MS. Even if the figures were actual, MS has an estimated $35 billion in cash. This is little more that a tap on the wrist let alone a slap. Red Hat (http://www.redhat.com) played a little (self-serving) one-ups-manship after the MS announcement. Red Hat offered to provide open-source software to EVERY school district in the United States for free. Red Hat suggested that MS give the full billion in hardware. When questioned, Red Hat stated that regardless of what MS does, its offer still stands. Steve Jobs, CEO of Apple, said that MS should give the billion dollars to the school districts in cash, so they could decide what to spend the money on. MS, you may remember, bailed out Jobs last year to the tune of $150 million. Jobs is also self serving, hoping the districts will spend on Apple equipment. The InfoWorld story is at http://www.infoworld.com/articles/hn/xml/01/11/20/011120hnredhatoffer.xml?1121weam . Just as I was finishing this article U.S. District Court Judge J. Frederick Motz blocked this out of court settlement forcing the issue back into the courts. The way the courts have been ruling in MS cases of late, this may be a major benefit to MS. The story about the new ruling is at http://www.infoworld.com/articles/hn/xml/02/01/11/020111hnmsdoj.xml?0111frpm .

Just a note on typing in long URL's (Uniform Resource Locators). Anything after the slash after the .com, .gov, .edu, .net, .biz, or .mil must be typed EXACTLY as shown including upper case.

A little over 2 years ago I mentioned eEye Digital Security Company (http://www.eeye.com/html) in this column. That company exposed a security hole in a MS product. MS was outraged and blasted the company in the press (taking the heat off themselves in the process). eEye did it again in late December 2001 exposing the Universal Plug and Play (UPNP) security hole in Windows XP, ME and 98. This time MS was not upset because eEye found this hole in October, told MS about, and waited until MS had a patch before it announced the hole to the world. For about 6 weeks crackers using this security hole could remotely take total control of any computer connected to the Internet and running one of these products to do what ever they wanted, having supervisory access. Remember that XP is also a server product that handles Internet activity like email and Web pages. eEye demonstrated what could be done by taking control of an Associated Press employee's laptop and directing it to access the National Security Agency's Web site (http://www.nsa.gov/). The laptop was on a desk in AP offices in New York while the eEye offices are in California. I would highly recommend that you get the MS patch at http://www.microsoft.com/technet/security/bulletin/MS01-059.asp or disable UPNP on your system. Disabling UPNP is similar on each version of Windows but not exactly the same. I will

describe the process for Windows ME. Click Start, Settings, Control Panel, Add/Remove Programs. Click Windows Setup TAB. In the Components box click Communications. Click the Details button. Scroll down the list until you come to Universal Plug and Play. If it is checked, uncheck it, click Okay, click Okay again and reboot. If it is not checked, click Cancel twice. The process to do this in Win 98 or Win XP requires that you get to the Windows Setup area and uncheck the UPNP box. Getting there is just a little different in each version. The Infoworld article is at http://www.infoworld.com/articles/hn/xml/01/12/20/011220hnmspatch.xml . Paul Thurrott, of WinNetMag, says that this problem has been overblown in the press and he will prove it in an upcoming article. Read the next paragraph to see what else he has had to say.

Paul Thurrott, a notorious MS supporter and Linux/Apple basher, admitted "The term Microsoft security is a joke of sorts in many circles, an oxymoron that geeks can knowingly nod their heads over and laugh about." He was reflecting about this past year and MS's response to security and privacy problems in virtually every product they produce. Since I have started this article in the beginning of December 2001, there have been at least 3 more detected and admitted security problems with MS software. This does not count the rumor that al-Queda operatives got jobs at MS to purposefully put bugs in the XP products, a rumor BTW I do not believe. His articles can be found at http://www.winnetmag.net .

The XP Professional Edition Step-Up product is MS's additional way to extract money from you. If you purchase a new PC with XP Home pre-installed before February 28, 2002, you can get a $75 rebate on the purchase of XP Professional Edition, either by coupon or directly from the manufacturer. Wow, that means you can get XP Pro for $224, after you have already paid for the home edition. Some deal.

If you are thinking of getting Windows XP, check the Windows SuperSite by Paul Thurrott. He has an article called Windows XP The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly. The article is, surprisingly, honest. Find it at http://www.winsupersite.com .

I am constantly getting pop up and pop under advertisements as well as email come ons. Occasionally, some pique my interest. But how can you tell if they are real or a scam. If you want to check an offer, drop by the Federal Trade Commission (http://www.ftc.gov) or the Better Business Bureau (http://www.bbb.org/library/internetbus.asp).

I recently came across a site that is an eye opener. Crime.com (http://www.crime.com/) has statistics on crime by state, county and zip code. Click on crime stats to check out where you live. You may not feel as safe as you once did.

After checking Crime.com you may want to read the Bible. You can get your own cyber copy at http://members.tripod.com/proagency/freebible.html for free. It is a 12.2MB download (about 35 minutes at 56kbps). It is the King James Version. If you wish to read on line, you can see the New English Translation at http://www.bible.org/ and then click on Net Bible. If you want to read the Koran (Qur'an) on line, you can at http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/koran.html (an English translation).

What is the Best joke on the net? LaughLab in the UK held a vote and this joke was voted the best:
Famed fictional detective Sherlock Holmes and his gruff assistant Doctor Watson pitch their tent while on a camping expedition, but in the middle of the night Holmes nudges Watson awake and questions him.

HOLMES: Watson, look up at the stars and tell me what you deduce.
WATSON: I see millions of stars, and if there are millions of stars, and if even a few of those have planets, it is quite likely there are some planets like earth, and if there are a few planets like earth out there there might also be life.
HOLMES: Watson, you idiot! Somebody stole our tent.
The jokes can be seen at http://www.laughlab.co.uk/home.html .

Popular Mechanics Magazine (http://www.popularmechanics.com/) turned 100 years old this month. The Web site features old issues and articles as well as the Consumer Electronics Show that was held in Las Vegas. And don't forget Kim Komando's Basic Computer column. Kim has a call in radio (WLS, http://www.wlsam.com/) Saturday evening at 9PM and her own Web site at http://www.komando.com/ .

Lindows sued by MS for unfair business practice? Lindows is a Linux distribution that can natively run Windows applications. MS claims that consumers may think that there is a business agreement between the two companies because of the name similarity. You can get a small article about the suit at http://www.theregister.co.uk/content/4/23484.html .

I had a problem with a relatively new WindowME machine. It became very sluggish, Defrag would stop responding and it would not shut down. What caused the problem is still a mystery but here is the solution. By the way (BTW) most of this stuff works on Win98. Do these steps in this order for best results. (The APC Powerchute Plus program will cause Defrag to hang.)

-First scan ALL files for a virus using a compatible virus checker. If a virus is found, clean it. Restart the computer to see if that solves the problem.

-Check the bootlog.prv and the bootlog.txt files for errors. These are hidden files in the root directory of the C:\ drive. To unhide them run Windows Explorer. Select Tools from the menu, Folder Options on the pulldown, View tab then select Show hidden files and folders then click ok. Double click on bootlog.prv (use Notepad to view it) and search for the word Fail. If the word is found, read the lines where it is found for a clue as to the problem. Do the same to the bootlog.txt file. Usually, the line will indicate a software load failure. Find the file and reinstall it.

-Disable the Windows Exit sound. Click Start - Settings - Control Panel - (if necessary, View all Control Panel options) - Sounds and Multimedia properties - Exit Windows - in the name pull down box select (none). Restart the computer. If it solved the problem, the sound file you were using is corrupted. Replace it from the Windows installation CD.

-Check the Startup folder at C:\WINDOWS\Start Menu\Programs\StartUp. Remove or move all programs or shortcuts there. Restart the computer to see if that solves the problem. If it solves the problem, add one program or shortcut back in the Startup folder at a time restarting the computer after each to see which one is the culprit. BTW if Find Fast is in the Startup folder do NOT add it back - it uses too many system resources.

-Run MSConfig selecting standard VGA. Click Start - Run - type in msconfig - click ok. Select the advanced button and check the VGA 640x480x16 box. Restart you machine. If this solves the problem, you need a new video driver.

-Run MSConfig selecting selective startup. Click Start - Run - type in msconfig - click ok. Undo what

you did in the previous step. Select Selective Startup and un-select Process System.ini file and Process Win.ini file. Click ok and restart your machine. If that solves you problem, repeat this step un-selecting only the System.ini. Restart your machine. If that solves the problem, then something inside the system.ini file is causing the problem. If not, rerun MSConfig un-selecting only the Win.ini file. If that solves the problem, something inside the Win.ini file is causing the problem. If you have problems in either of these files, check the MS knowledge base on the Web at http://www.microsoft.com for advice.

-Check all hardware profiles to make sure all are working correctly. Click Start - Settings - Control Panel - (if necessary, View all Control Panel options) - (double click) System icon - Device Manager tab. Any devices that are not working correctly will have a red or yellow icon in front of them. If any device has the red or yellow icon in front of it, check that device to see what the problem is and restart the computer. If all are working correctly, try disabling the network card if you have one. Restart the computer. If that did not solve the problem or you do not have a network card, try disabling the sound card. Restart the computer. If either of these solves the problem, you need a new driver for the device.

-Another factor may be corrupt files, folders, or bad sectors on your hard disk. To correct this the first thing you need is a Windows startup disk. You should already have one, but if you don't here is how to create one. You'll need a formatted floppy. Click Start - Settings - Control Panel - (if necessary, View all Control Panel options) - Add/Remove Program Properties - Startup Disk tab. Insert the disk and click Create disk. Next you'll need to run Disk Cleanup. Click Start - Programs - Accessories - System Tools - Disk Cleanup - select the c: drive. Disk Cleanup will have pre-selected files to delete, click ok to delete them. Shutdown the machine. Start up the machine using the startup disk. Configure ScanDisk to detect disk timeouts and check each cluster five times in the Scandisk.ini file. Find the file in the c:\Windows\command folder. Edit the file using Edit. In the [Environment] section in the file edit or create these two lines.
ScanTimeOut=On
NumPasses=5
If the section does not exist, create an [Environment] section with the above two lines below it. The ScanTimeOut= and NumPasses= lines may already exist, but with different values, if they do, change the existing values to On and 5, respectively. Exit Edit. Start Scandisk by typing its name. Make certain it is operating on the C:\ drive. Depending on the size of your drive, the time required for the surface scan may be upwards of 2 hours. Although Scandisk reported that there were no errors on my drive, my machine was cured of sluggishness and Defrag worked perfectly after a reboot.

I hope none of you were hurt by the collapse of Enron Corporation. It seems that most of our federal lawmakers made out quite well. Now, these same people are going to "investigate" the dirty deals made with Enron execs. To get some perspective on who paid who what, go to the Center for Public Integrity at http://www.publicintegrity.org/ .

Internet Advisory Corporation, an Internet Services and Web hosting company for small businesses, is expanding into the sex business. Since its bankruptcy last year, it has purchased the Scores "night club" chain. Scores is actually a "gentlemen's club" i.e. nudie bar. Why is this of interest to our readers? A Scores just opened at the northeast corner of DuPage County airport. I'm wondering how that got past the zoning ordinances.

MS is still trying to discredit Linux. Thomas C. Greene in an article published by The Register quotes an internal memo from Brian Valentine, an MS VP, to the sales staff. It is a must read. Check it at

http://www.theregister.co.uk/content/4/23518.html.

Needle point and sewing crafts get you going? SweetAnnie in East Dundee has the site for patterns and finished goods. Catch her at http://www.sweetannie.net . Don't confuse her with http://www.sweetannie.com , which is an herbal concoction sales site.

Between you, me and The Lamp Post that's all for this month.

Minutes of CAEUG Meeting December 1, 2001

Rick Scalzo called the meeting to order at 9:56 am.

There were 40 in attendance. There was one visitor who found out about the club from the newspaper.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 26, 2002.

Raffle items included 17 items, too many to list. There was also a HP laser printer that was auctioned.

Volunteers for the COD show were discussed. Anyone willing to represent the club at the show can get a free admission. The show lets two members in free and the club will reimburse two other members who work at our table. The reimbursement does not happen until the next monthly meeting.

The minutes were approved as published in the Newsletter with the correction of the July ending balance of $5,062.74.

The Financial Report showed a starting balance in of $4,745.91, income of $198.50 and expenses of $61.45 for an ending balance of $4,882.96.

There was discussion of Excite and its cable Internet access.

Rick did a technical update about new software.

Members' Forum addressed several problems that members were having with both hardware and software. It was followed by our traditional break with coffee and pastry.

OLD BUSINESS

Rick is still looking for a projector for the club.

New Business

There was CD of the Month.

The presentation was made by William Douglas, a member of the club, on the Registry in Windows.

Respectfully submitted,

Al Skwara

WIN! WIN!   FREE!!!   WIN! WIN!
Must be present at January 26th meeting to win.

Chance to win a FREE CAEUG CD of the month contest!!!

When CAEUG was first formed in 1984, what did the original acronym CAEUG stand for?

If you think you know the answer, come to January 26th CAEUG meeting to submit your answer for a chance to win a FREE CD of the month.

CAEUG
P. O. Box 2727
Glen Ellyn, IL 60138

FIRST CLASS MAIL

Meeting place and date information:

The next REGULAR meeting will be held at the Glen Ellyn Library in Glen Ellyn at 9:45 am on
Saturday meeting January 26, 2002
The library is located 1 block west of Citibank at the corner of Prospect & Duane FREE PARKING
Directions: Park to Duane; go west on Duane to Prospect Street. Please park at the West end of the
lot, away from the building. Thank you.
The meeting(s) are not library sponsored and all inquiries should be directed to Rick Scalzo at .
Individuals with disabilities who plan to attend this program and who require certain accommodations
in order to observe and/or participate in the program are requested to contact CAEUG president,Rick
Scalzo at , at least five (5) days prior to the program, so that reasonable accommodation can be made
for them.

Confirmed Meeting dates for 2002:   January 26, February 23, March 23, April 27, May 25

CD OF THE MONTH: Available at the meeting or by ordering previous CD's via the CAEUG website.

January 26th CAEUG meeting - John Spizzirri will discuss
"What you can do with Linux".