SLO Bytes GROUP
SAN LUIS OBISPO PC USERS

HARD COPY

Volume 6, Number 4
April, 1990

What's New

By Bob Ward

Our last meeting was held April 1st and there wasn't an April fool among us. George, alias Dr. DOS, kicked off the 1:30 meeting by talking about the DOS environment. You've heard of SET COMSPEC and all those other strange DOS verbiages; the answer to all these questions and others was at the last meeting.

The group broke for a breath of fresh air and 15 minutes later we were back at it again. Starting at 2:45 George conducted a short business meeting which was followed by a most interesting discussion on "pointing devices" by John Martinelli, President of International Machine Control Systems in Paso Robles. IMCS's latest product to arrive on the market within the past few months is the Mouse Pen. It works like a mouse and is held like a pen for better manipulation and drawing capabilities.

Mr. Martinelli, who is an engineer by trade, was on the "ground floor" in the development of mice. He gave us the history of pointing devices from the first mouse to the more sophisticated light pens and sketch pads. His presentation was followed by a demonstration of their Mouse Pen using a paint program and an IBM PS/2 with color monitor. The meeting was followed by a drawing for a Mouse Pen. Congratulations to Ernest Miller for having the winning ticket. Watch out Lotto 6/49

For those of you who wish to purchase a mouse pen, try Witco Computers who is a local distributor. Show your membership card and by one for $99.00. List price is $129.00.

By special request the topic of the early meeting in May will be the use of XCOPY, an external DOS command found in version 3.2 and above. Save accessing your floppy disk 100 times when copying 100 files from one disk to another. It's also a great way to include subdirec-

Continued page 2

bLUtil
A dBASE Utility

By French Morgan
SLO Bytes PCUG

BRIEFLY...

bLUtil is a dBASE utility program which collects a entire group of standalone public domain and shareware utilities and puts them into one package and at a very reasonable price.

Instead of using several of your 'favorite' public domain utilities, bLUtil offers most of what many dBASE programmers (beginner & advanced) need in a basic utility tool chest.

Written in 'CLIPPER'. Reasonably fast. Good context sensitive HELP (F1) facility. Easily read screens. Above average error trapping and handling. Flexible and fairly easy to use. Regardless of where you use the utility, ITS SUBDIRECTORY NAME MUST BE INCLUDED IN THE DOS PATH STATEMENT. You can be in

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Club Officers

President George Campbell
Vice President Sam Powers
Treasurer Teri Sorgatz
Secretary/Editor Bob Ward

How to Tell When to Pay for Shareware

By the Public (Software) Library, Houston TX.

Reprinted from UCLA PCUG Ctrl-Alt-Del Newsletter, February, 1989

Shareware is great because you get to try a program out before paying for it, but sometimes the line of demarcation between trying and using can become a little blurred. You might decide to register a program the first time you use it. Here are a few keys to help determine when you have passed from trying to using:

- If you never have to wonder anymore about whether or not the program can get the job done.
- If you know how to run the program as if it were second nature.
- If you rely on the program to the extent that having the program suddenly stop working would cause you problems.
- If you know the program well enough and are happy enough with it to recommend it to others.
- If you like the program well enough that you get all the new releases that come out, even when they only fix minor bugs.
- If the benefit or entertainment you have received from the program already exceeds the registration price of the program you are using.

If any of the above apply, it's time to get out the checkbook and become a legally licensed user. The last item is especially significant when testing a program that may, by its nature, normally receive only limited use, such as a program to change the interleave on a hard disk, or a computer tutor program, or a game. It is easily possible to get the complete usage out of a program at the same time you are testing it. If so, you should register it even if you do not expect to use it again.

###

What's New

tories when copying files from a hard disk.

This coming month Betty Skov, public relations manager from Logitec will demonstrate Finesse, their low cost desk top publishing package. Come see how Logitec's ScanMan Pro takes any picture and directly scans it into their publishing package. I saw this at Comdex last year and found it impressive.

###

Bits n' Bytes

- Pick up your latest issue of Personal Systems (IBM) at the next meeting. The whole issue is devoted to microchannel architecture and OS/2.
- Other "give-a-ways" at the next meeting: Used Computer Locator (April 1990 issue) and Computer Buyer Guide (we still have 4 boxes of these)
- We have several computer books that will be given away by drawing at the next meeting
- Many thanks to French Morgan & JimBigelow for contributing articles to this month's newsletter.

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Upgrading Your Computer

A Dissertation on the Problems, Frustrations, Excitement and Rewards of Buying a New Computer.

By Jim Bigelow
SLO Bytes PCUG

My first computer was a Sinclare Timex. That was back a few years, like six. Then came the mighty "Texas Instrument 99A" with 64 kilobytes of memory which held my son David and me spellbound for a year or so. At that time, 64K was assumed to be about the end of the line for personal computers.

But soon my friends were taunting an even more awesome machine, the IBM XT clone, which sported ten times the memory capacity of my precious TI 99A. It had two floppy disk drives and a color monitor, which was more than anyone could ever, ever want or have need of. After a couple of years of struggle and fun, larger programs which required bigger computers came into existence. My computer friends kept telling me, "Jim, you need a 30 megabyte hard disk drive and a mouse." Well, after convincing my wife of my needs, I fixed up my computer so it would hold me forever and ever.....

Well, along came the computer magazines with tantalizing pictures and descriptions of the new IBM "AT" clones. Machines with awesome powers which studded the human imagination. Their speeds were beyond belief and memory capacity was unlimited. And of course I was in desperate need of such a tool. Yes, with two newsletters, mailing labels, a helping hand for Jim Jr's school papers, and Helen's postal route, I just had to have one of the new machines. (Helen will agree with me, because, well... actually it is mostly for her, isn't it?

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Upgrade...

The problems: how to get the money together. First, I found a buyer for my XT. Then I suggested to Helen she sell some of her extra jewelry, and she suggested I sell some of my tractors and other toys. Finally, with some of the milk and bread funds, and other conniving, the money became available.

Frustrations: just exactly what do I want. An IBM clone, for sure, but a 286 or 386 model, which monitor, what hard disk drive, which floppy disk drives, the memory, the style of the case, etc. The floppy disk drives, the memory. The selections were endless. And from whom should I buy the computer?

Excitement: now to look over the many models with all the extras. I drool, the end is nearer. Finally; the drive to Silicon Valley, and sitting down with a consultant at Zeny Computer Company, the factory itself, where I described to him the computer I so desperately needed. I went prepared with more money than I (or my wife) had ever dreamed of spending on a computer. The consultant was able to specially configure a computer, which sported the "best and the biggest of components, a VGA Multisync, along with an 80 megabyte hard disk drive, an extra megabyte of memory, 16 megahertz of lightning speed, Neetchip set, shadow ROM, all built into a new style case called a minitower.

Why purchase such a splendid computer when I was getting by with the XT? I was in need of something that ran faster and was more productive. I admit, I did buy more than I needed but this was looking into future needs. And I suppose I bought a little extra for the ego. Now I am the proud happy owner of a very new and splendid computer. Now we shall see if I can do a little bit better job.

###

Your Fragmented Disks

By Geoff Mitchell
CPC Newsletter

One way to tell computer nerds from normal people is that nerds worry about fragmented disks whereas normal people worry about slipped discs. Could this be language in the making? Is the usage of 'disk' diverging from 'disc'? Time will tell. Stay posted.

What is disk fragmentation? How is it discovered? What difference does it make anyway? And, most importantly, what can you do about it? Taking it from the top, disk fragmentation results from appending or deleting files on your disk. When files are written to a freshly formatted disk, they are recorded in logically contiguous sectors. Fine and dandy, but what happens if you decide to add something to a file on your disk after you have already put some other file after it? The next write to your original file is going to have to skip over the subsequent file so that when DOS finally saves the appended file, it is going to be in two non-contiguous blocks. As you add to your data files on a regular basis, they are going to become more highly fragmented as time goes by.

A similar result is achieved by deleting files. When you delete a file, it creates a blank spot on the disk, and the next time you write to the disk, DOS will proceed to fill that blank with your new data. It is highly unlikely, however, that the length of the write will exactly correspond to the size of the blank. If the write is smaller, the blank will only fill partially. When the write is larger, however, the blank will fill up completely and the remaining part of the write will spill over onto unoccupied disk space in exactly the same way as an append. The result is non-contiguous sectors. And that is fragmentation.

Although everyone's disks tend to become fragmented, the degree and pace of fragmentation depends entirely on how you use your computer and no two people use their computers in exactly the same way. The important personal variables determining the progress of fragmentation are:
1. the mix in your file lengths. 2. the frequency with which you delete or append files and which ones they are. 3. the free space remaining on your hard disk.

People analyzing the process disappear into thickets of statistics, rarely to be seen alive again.

CHKDSK tells about fragmentation. Just run CHKDSK with a filespec to see if that file is fragmented, and CHKDSK will tell you how many non-contiguous block it contains. CHKDSK also accepts global characters so you can do a CHKDSK *.* to examine all files in a sub-directory. Two or three non-contiguous blocks may be okay. When the figure rises to 15 or 20, it is time to get concerned, for when you finally do delete such a file, it will leave all those blank spots behind on your hard disk just waiting to break the next file you write into little bitty pieces. (NWA-M-CUG Ed Note: CHKDSK will only check files in the ACTIVE drive/directory. To check all directories, you need to "get into" each directory, or dirve one after the other).

A number of commercial programs such as the Norton Utilities or PC-Tools also show file fragmentation. Unlike CHKDSK, they provide a disk map so that you can exactly where the various pieces of a file are stored. Entertaining as the displays are, their usefulness to the casual user is problematic.

What difference does file fragmentation make anyway? In normal operation, it degrades disk-related performance: and by inducing wear and tear on your disk drive. It also reduces their life expectancy. Obviously, if your computer has to go to a dozen different

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the bLUtil subdirectory with sample programs and it is still necessary to include the utility in the path statement.

The 6 Major Functions of the Program can be accessed by function keys as listed:

Functions - F2

(A)dd a Headerauthor, copyright information, to 1 or more programs.
(S)hrink Code - get rid of comments, spaces, speed program execution.
(M)ass Changes - global changes to 1 or more programs.
(I)ndent Code - make editing programs easier to read.
I(n)sert Code - insert blocks or lines of code into 1 or more other programs.
(L)ow/Upper Case - convert programs to all upper or all lower case, speeds program execution, doesn't touch TEXT / ENDTEXT messages or comment lines.
(F)ind a String - locate string information in 1 or more programs, like mass changes above, but find only.
(C)reate a Proc - convert a group of program modules into a procedure, FOX SOFTWARE has a separate program to do this also.
(U)ndo a Procedure - convert a procedure file into separate program files.

Reports - F3

(A)ction Diagram - shows beginning and end of command constructs, do while/enddo, if/endif, do case/end case, etc. Easy to read, similar to WALLSOFTS Documenter or dFLOW.
(T)ree Diagram - shows program module flow. Adds databases & indices used per module, nice touch, but a little cluttered.
(C)reate Variables - if you use database fields and store their contents to temporary memory variables, this utility produces quick variables for use in program files. Produces temporary files with the names of the variables in the files. Put them into the program file you are working on.
(D)atabase Elements - creates temporary files with the names and structures of all fields in the database or databases you've asked for.
(I)ndex Structure - forgotten what that index file is all about? This utility puts the name of the index file and the index expression into a temporary file for your reference.
(F)ilter a Program - strip out major command constructs code in between, such as IF/ENDIF, DO CASE/ ENDCASE, FOR/NEXT, etc. and saves the stripped-out code in a temporary file. Use the temporary file or part of it in developing other code.

Edits - F4

(E)dit a File - edit any program file or text file. This version could only access files of 30KB or less (about 950 lines). Not a smart editor (auto indentation, auto constructs), but it works.
(B)rowse a DB - nice browse/edit utility. Also allows for locating data in a specified field. Slow, but repeated locates are possible.

Options - F5

System (I)nfo - the publisher, name, address, cost of this program, set author & copyright header info (used in header function above).
(S)ystem Params - set temporary file extensions (used in reports above), indent levels.
(C)olor Options - screen colors.

Quit - F6

As it says.

The program is primarily written for CLIPPER programmers. There are several command constructs that are available only with CLIPPER. The program appears to work with any dBASE III PLUS clone or program. The manual is well printed with a table of contents and clearly labeled pages. The examples are brief, but offer enough information to assist most programmers.

Many say a true test of friendliness is if the program can be run straight from the 'package'. In the case of bLUtil, is passes the test except for the strict requirement of including the program subdirectory in the DOS path statement.

The only annoyance discovered was in 2 areas and common (at least consistent): Whenever a filename is expected for program editing or database browsing, the file extension is required. For example, when prompted for the program filename to be edited, the complete filename must be entered, as MENU.PRG. bULtil does not expect the extension of .PRG as default. The same is true for browsing or editing a database file. The extension of .DBF is required on the end of the filename. An appropriate and clear error message appears.

bLUtil by B & L Systems:

Good set of utilities at a decent price. Since this program was written in dBASE and compiled with CLIPPER, it would be fun and educational to look at the source code, especially for programmers looking for clean implementations of dBASE code.

bLUtil version 1.08
B & L Systems
PO Box 4234
Prescott, Arizona 86301
Orders: 602-445-7219
8am to 8pm MST
Price: $39.95 plus $3.00 shipping

###

DOS Directory Shortcuts

By Jim Kochmann
Epson User Group.

Reprinted by the Boston Computer Society, August 1988

Did you ever wonder why a subdirectory file listing always begins with "." and ".."? The single period represents the directory you are in (the current directory), while the double period represents the "parent" directory, or the directory that is one level up from the current directory.

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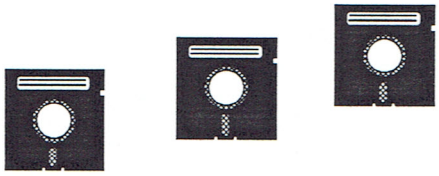

SLO Bytes Library

Here's what's new in our shareware library this month:

#376 MASter DIRectory System. creates nice disk labels.
#377 Pony Express - Find shipping costs for any package being mailed by US Postal Serivce or United Parcel Service. Handy program. You provide the scale!
#378 XACT Series Calculators. changes your computer into one of many calculators.
#379 Doctor Data Label - A professional mailing list management system.
#380 Family Tree Journal - compile genealogical and biographical information in this database.
#381 The whole 'family' of **Virus Scan** programs will be on this disk; including NetScan for networks.

Updates:

#308 PKZIP updated to version 1.1 - now do a verbose listing from within the EXE file.
#311 BASSTOUR updated to version 3.0 and 2 lakes added!
#324 MICROTXT updated to version 4.0. Added GREEKER. DRINKS moved to #346
#325 VIRUSCAN removed
#350 VSCAN55 deleted. Updates on #381

###

Making Your Connections

By Geoff Mitchell
Greater Victoria PCUG Big Blue and Cousins, June 1987

Many years ago when I was an electrician's apprentice, I spent some months running around Prince George answering residential service calls. I quickly learned that the most frequent cause of service calls was tripped circuit breakers. People would overload their circuits, trip the breaker, and when they went to their panel to reset it, they would attempt to just switch the breaker to the ON position. No circuit breaker should be treated in such a way; some brands will not reset doing that. You should reset a circuit breaker by first switching it to the OFF position and then turning it ON.

When I was green and I found this situation, I would take the householder down to their electrical panel and show them how to reset a circuit breaker. Before long, I was called into the front office by my boss who asked me to stop doing that. He said that the people I clued in were refusing to pay for the service call. What he said I should do is reset the breaker and when people asked me what was wrong tell them they had a bad connection in their panel. Which was perfectly true, of course.

With computers, the most common cause of service calls are bad connections.

With computers, the most common cause of service calls are bad connections. Cable hook-ups and board connectors are big culprits. Check your cable connections. If giving them a wiggle doesn't turn things on, they should be disconnected and plugged in again. Check for physical damage. The janitor could have caught the cable with the vacuum cleaner. If that doesn't fix it, then open up the cabinet and tap the edges of the boards and see what that does. Still no results? Get a screwdriver and loosen the boards and move them in their connectors. Only after having systematically gone through all the obvious electrical connections in your machine should you call the serviceman. Quite often, you'll find you don't have to.

You'd think that once a board was properly installed or a cable plugged in, it would stay that way, but not so. As a machine is turned on and off it heats up and cools down so that metal parts expand and contract and work the connectors in the same way as light bulbs sometimes actually unscrew themselves in their sockets.

One more thing. If you remove your boards or unplug your cables, lightly coat the electrical contacts with an electrical lubricant such as Tweek or even WD- 40. These compounds exclude moisture and preserve the electrical integrity of the contact. You can also use them on the pins of ICs when you are trying to fit them into their sockets. You will find the ICs slip in a lot more easily.

###

Shortcuts

Here are some little known shortcuts that take advantage of the periods and will save you some keystrokes.

"DIR .." produces a directory listing of the parent or one level up.

"DIR ..\PATH" does the DIR for the subdirectory "Path" that is one level below the parent (on the same level as the current directory).

"DEL ." is the same as DEL *.*

"COPY Filename.Ext .." copies the specified file to parent directory

"COPY ..\Filename.Ext" copies the specified file from the parent to the current directory.

"CD .." changes directories to the parent.

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Hard Disk Fragmentation

blocks scattered around the disk in order to read or write a file, it is going to take longer to assemble or disassemble the data and the mechanism of your disk drive will have to work harder. Quite often, you can detect fragmentation just by listening to the added chatter of your disk drives.

The worst thing about fragmentation, however, is that it complicates disaster recovery. If you you wish to undelete a file or recover data from a crashed disk (and all hard disks eventually crash), then fragmentation makes it difficult. Ease life by keeping neat and tidy disks.

How is this done? First of all, if you have a hard disk and are using DOS 2.X, then upgrade to 3.X. Knowing the reason for this is one of those things that separates computer nerds from real people.

Until version 3.0, DOS wrote file to disk using a First Fit algorithm. That meant that every time DOS searched for blank space on a disk to put a file, it would start at the beginning of the File allocation Table (FAT). If the file was too large to fill in the available space, then once the first blank spot was filled, DOS would have to to back to the beginning of the FAT to look for the next space. And so on. If spaces were small, that is, if the disk was highly fragmented, then it might have to go back to the beginning of the FAT fifteen or twenty times over just to write a single reasonable-sized file. This is not very smart. Like many not-so-smart things, it was also very slow.

With DOS 3.0, Microsoft introduced a Next Fit algorithm. the Next Fit algorithm utilizes a RAM pointer, indicating the end of the last search. DOS starts the next search from this point rather than going back to the beginning of the FAT. Although it does not sound like a substantial change, it has profound effects on your machine's performance.

First of all, if a file does have to be written into a number of non-contiguous blocks, DOS does not have to drop back to the beginning of the FAT to find the beginning of the next block every time it fills the last one. On a floppy disk with a small FAT, that may not make much difference. On a large hard disk with a big FAT, it makes a lot of difference. This just speeds things up though: it does not combat fragmentation.

The Next Fit algorithm combats fragmentation by tending to write new files in unused disk space while leaving the holes created by previously deleted files alone. Intuitively, it is hard to see why this should make any difference. Every time you turn your machine off, the pointer in RAM is reset to zero. That means that even with DOS 3, when you turn your machine on, the first write is always a First Fit. It is as if you performed a split shuffle on a deck of cards. If you were to never turn your machine off, then the writes would be seen across the entire face of your disk and the pointer would reset to zero again when it reached the end of the FAT. Yet when this activity is simulated with a representative mix of file, the difference in fragmentation produced between DOS 2 and 3 is significant. Speaking most generally, over the course of time with DOS 2, contiguity of file sectors tends to be fifty percent while with DOS 3, it tends to be eighty percent.

After upgrading to DOS 3, the next thing to do is to delete some files from your disk. You should always try to keep the top ten percent, say, of your disk empty. If your disk is crammed full, and DOS has to pick over the whole thing looking for the occasional crack in which to squeeze a file, you're going to have to sit there and wait for it. With First Fit, time spent searching for empty sectors is directly proportional to disk fill. With Next Fit, it is exponentially proportional.. That should bad, but it isn't really. Even with a disk that is 95% full, DOS 3 is still going to find empty sectors over ten times faster than DOS 2. But it will also be taking two or three times longer than if the disk were only 90% full.

That's about the extent of what you can do about fragmentation with DOS. There are a variety of programs, however, which will defragment your disks and every computerist should use them.

Installing some copy protected software, Lotus 1-2-3 in particular, creates hidden files on your disk. Defragging software that can not handle those hidden files will muck up your disk and wreck such programs. PC-Tool's COMPRESS and Norton's SD are intelligent enough to leave such files alone. Whichever program you choose, be sure to fully back your disk up before turning such a utility loose on it. Also be prepared to wait a while for it to finish. Defragging a disk is hard work for your computer.

###

dSLO Meeting Monthly Report

By French Morgan

Our last meeting started at 6:30pm. Newsletters and magazines for database users were shared. Some are expensive as from Pinnacle Publishing and offer optional software. Some periodicals are from software publishers (Ashton- Tates's TECHNOTES & Nantucket Corporation's NANTUCKET NEWS) and offer software with a company BBS (Ashton-Tates is now toll free and without membership charges). Two popular magazines for all levels of dBASE users were mentioned, Databased Advisor and DBMS.

Part of our discussion from the FEBRUARY meeting was on character string manipulations . . . using SUBSTR(), LEFT(), RIGHT(), TRIM(), and RTRIM() to get last and first names (and other strings) to look as we would like them during a LIST, REPORT, or LABEL. The MARCH meeting continued with the same manipulations, but continued with creating case sensi-

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dSLO Report

tive label information. How can you create a label that always has the first letter uppercase and the remaining characters in lowercase? And how can you do that with first and last names? And how can you do that with addresses? HM.m.m.m.m.m.m!

You're INVITED!

Are you interested in better understanding databases in general and Ashton Tate's dBASE series? Come join us.

For the next several months all newsletters will be complimentary. So if you know of anyone who would like a free newsletter, call French Morgan (phone.

###

'Hard Times for SLO Bytes BBS'

By Bob Ward

Which do you want first; the good news or the bad news? Heads you lose, tails I win. Coincidences? or should one not use a computer on Firday the 13th. Our dutiful Sysop awoke Friday morning, and as usual, made a B-line for the computer to see what unusual gifts the nite owls had uploaded to the bulletin board while he slept. Oh horrors! the bulletin board had taken a nose dive sometime during the wee morning hours. (I already knew it as I tried about 5:30 am and the BBS wouldn't answer) George, you know the one, he's the SYSOP, tried rebooting the computer but all the hard disk could do is emit a few strange sounds and that dreaded error message, "Not ready error reading drive C: Abort, Retry, Ignore." Quickly with all the skill Dr. DOS could muster, he tried several tricks to revive our poor Seagate, but CPR was of no avail.

Now for the good news. (Most of you probably didn't even know anything happened to the board before this newsletter anyway.) That very same day, within 5 hours of the fatal crash, our new BBS computer arrived on my doorstep; a 286 with 2 MEGS of 80 nanosecond RAM and a 40 MEG hard drive, and no finger prints on the new keyboard! Within 24 hours George had the BBS back up and running. Since we're a little shy on hard disk space (we had 80 MEGS, you know) some of the file areas have been temporarily locked out. Much of the data has been restored from our tape back-up and we will await the repair of the crashed hard disk before being in full operation. Then George will have 120 MEGS of storage space for all the BBS fanatics that haunt our board.

Now you say, "there's that x#$%/*& BBS taking up all our treasury funds again." But wait there is more good news. Remember, Friday the 13th is past. The Seagate 4096 is still under full warranty and will be in the mail for repair long before you read about this. There's more..... The old XT computer that was being used for our bulletin board will be added to our small but growing flock of computers used for copying shareware disks from our library during the meeting. Now tell me, didn't we do good? A round of applause for the SLO Bytes officers!

Seriously folks, everything I said above is true; this isn't just white space filler. The second phone line will wait until the hard disk returns. On the outside, give us about 3 weeks and we should be fully operational.

DON'T FORGET

MAY 13th

Horse Sense Column

By Trev Beard
Personal Computer Club of Toronto

Reprinted by the PC Report, March 1990

A Song for the P.C.C.T (to be sung to the tune of My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean.)

My Clone has me over a barrel.
It takes all my time up, you see.
With WordStar and Lotus & dBASE
and soon there'll be DOS 4.3!

Chorus:

Shareware, Oh Shareware,
*it's nearly as good and it's free, it's free,**
Shareware, Oh Shareware, it's nearly as good and it's free, it's free,

I've never quite mastered the DEBUG
I've dabbled in BASIC and C
But migraines are sending a message
That languages aren't meant for me!

Chorus

I've learned how to speak
with a difference
From "default to old "WYSIWYG"
But only a few understand me
The rest think it's most infra dig.

Chorus

Our PC Club meets on the Tuesday
We sit down for two hours plus
On benches so hard and unyielding
It's tough on my glut' maximus!

Chorus

One day life will get back to normal
I'll leave my machine all alone
And phone up my spouse
who has left me
To ask her to please come back home.

*Shareware, although economical, is not free!

###

The Computer Wizard

By Bob Morrison
The Monitor Newsletter
Capital PCUG, November 1989

The phone rings.

"My computer is broken."

"What is it doing?"

"It won't start."
"I turned it on and the menu doesn't come on the screen."

"What is it doing?"

"it says something about a non-system disk, and the menu doesn't show up. I've already tried turning it off and back on again two or three times, and it does the same thing every time."

"is there a floppy disk in your drive?"

"No. My computer doesn't take floppy disks. It uses those little ones in the hard case...."

"Take the diskette out of the floppy drive and press any key."

"Any key?"

"Try the space bar."

"Hey! It's working.
Thanks a lot, Bob, I'm always amazed at how much you know about computers."

###

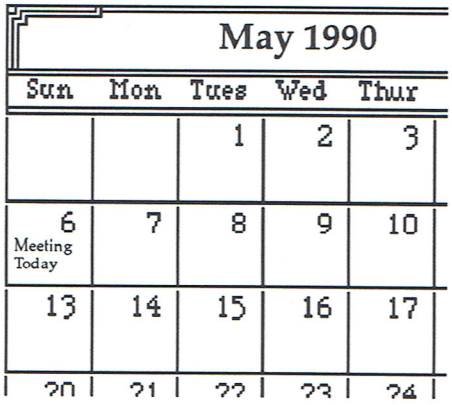
Shortcuts

Don't enter "*.*" when you want to copy all the files in a directory. Just add a backslash to the front of the full path name: COPY \Directory[Destination]. If Destination is not specified, all the files are copied to the current directory. An example is when you want to copy all files in a directory (other than the current, where "*.*" is fine) to drive A:

COPY \Somedir A:

These are a few helpful hints. Now that the work is out, try a few of your own.

###



May 1990

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur
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6 Meeting Today	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24

Calendar

May 6th — Betty Skov, public relations manager from Logitec will demonstrate Finesse.

June 3rd — Suzzane Frieder, representative from Toshiba will feature their laptop computer line.

New Members

Welcome to those of you who joined SLO Bytes during the month of April. We hope we can be of service to your computer needs. We also hope you will contribute your couuter talents and knowledge to others at the meeting.

Joan L. Hayes	528-1279
John Schuster	466-8751
Max Sicher	528-5065
B.M. Spier	916-738-4372

Did the IRS get your last $18? For those of you below, you will be dropped from our mailing list after the next meeting if we haven't received your renewal.

Ben Bertram
Victor & Tammy Chen
John Dalbey
Rance Danell
Jim Godfrey
J.W. Kleinhammer
David K.Smith

Printer Tear Bar

By Mel Weber
Houston Area League

Reprinted from PC Report, August 1988

Attached to each Saran Wrap box is a metal tear bar. This bar can be used to make a tear bar for your computer.

Remove the bar by cutting it off the box - do not pull it off. Trim away the excess cardboard with a razor blade to expose about 1/8 inch of cutting edge. Cut the tear bar to the correct length with a pair of tin snips. Apply contact cement to the cardboard side of the tear bar and to the printer component. Allow the cement to dry. Press the tear bar into place.

Presto! You now have a very effective printer tear bar at no additional cost.

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Club Information

The SLO BYTES Newsletter is a monthly publication of SLO BYTES PC User's Group located in San Luis Obispo, California. Information in this Newsletter is derived from both our own membership and other PC User Group Newsletters. The purpose of this publication is to inform our members of meetings and provide information related to the use of IBM PC's and compatible computers.

Membership: Dues are $18 per year. Newsletter only is $10 per year. Full membership entitles you to our monthly newsletter, full use of the public domain software library and discounts at local computer stores.

Article Submission: Deadline for submission of articles is the 15th of each month. Articles should be provided in ASCII format without any type of formatting from your wordprocessor including tabs, indents, extra spaces, or highlighting. We prefer articles on disk but will accept hardcopies if necessary.

Disclaimer: Neither SLO BYTES PC User's Group, its officers, editor, or contributors to this newsletter assume liability for damages arising out of this publication of any article, including but not limited to the listing of programming code, batch files and other helpful hints.

Reprinting of this Newsletter: Articles from this newsletter may be reprinted by other user groups if credit is given to both the author and newsletter from which it was taken. Reproduction of articles with a specific © Copyright notice is prohibited without prior permission from the original author.

Advertising: Commercial advertisers, request ad packet from Bob Ward. Members may advertise personal computer equipment or software for free. Submit your ad to Bob Ward.

Direct all correspondence to Bob Ward, 2100 Andre Ave., Los Osos, CA. 93402. Call (805)756-2164 M-F 7:30am - 5pm and (805)528-0121 all other times.

Treasurer: Teri Sorgatz, 832 S. 7th Street, Grover City, CA. 93433 Phone 489-2516

Meeting Times

General meetings are held the 1st Sunday of every month, unless noted otherwise in the newsletter calendar, at 2:30 pm in the Cal Poly University Biology Department, Fisher Hall 286. Special Interest Groups (SIGS) meet at 1:30 - 2:15 pm.

New User's SIG - F.H. 286

Our Public Domain Library is in Fisher Hall 292. Hours 12 Noon till closing.

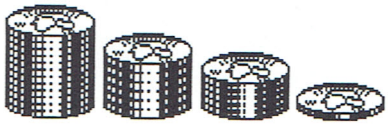
SLO BYTES BULLLETIN BOARD

(805) 528-3753 2400/8/N/1

PC Files & Message Section

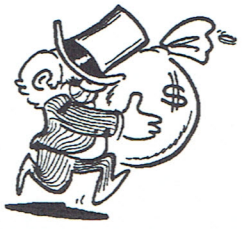
SYSOP: George Campbell

All Welcome - 24 Hours



Treasurer's Report

Beginning Balance	+2583.97
Expenses:	
Computer& other equip.	1529.62
Newsletter	151.58
Bulk Mail	150.00
Income:	
Deposit (4/3)	419.50
Dividend	26.77
Petty Cash	23.04
Balance 4/19	+1222.08



DISCOUNTS

Paradise Computers 3485 Sacramento, unit B San Luis Obispo 544-7127	5% 10%	All computers. peripherals and software. Ribbons, paper, disks & other expendable items.
Star Computers 855 Morro Bay Blvd. Morro Bay 772-7827	5% 10%	Any software in stock. Paper, ribbons, cables, and other supplies.
Computer Logic 973 Foothill Blvd. #4 San Luis Obispo 544-8347	10%	Off list - all computers, software, computer peripherals, and products. Contact Bruce, Paul or Dave for discount.
WITCO Computers 3563 Sueldo, Bld. B San Luis Obsipo 549-0811	10% 5%	Off complete systems, peripherals, supplies but not including software. Off computers alone.

Ziff-Davis User Group Magazine Discounts

PC-Magazine - $24.97
PC-Computing - $14.97
Have your mailing label handy for renewals
Call 1-800-777-2547 and ask for your
user group discount