

# HARD COPY

## What's New \_\_\_\_\_

By John Ewing

### George Is Back!!!

Although he could not stay very long, George stopped in at the beginning of the early meeting to tell us that he will be back if full force next month. George explained all of the problems he has been having lately (lightening strikes, viral encephalitis, etc.) and said he feels that things are getting back in order. George thanked all who sent cards and flowers and asked that if anyone is wishing these problems upon him to cut it out. Welcome back George. We all look forward to your wit and wisdom in July.

Bob Hunt hosted the early meeting in June. He demonstrated a product named PC-cillin. This device attaches to your parallel port and prevents viruses from entering your system memory. Bob also demonstrated Labels Unlimited from PowerUp software.

The main meeting was very entertaining. Gus Thommasson, a member of SLO Bytes, gave a demonstration of Digital Researches DR DOS version 5.0. I'm not so sure that Bob Ward was as entertained as the rest of us however, since Gus used the club's computer to give the demonstration. Gus installed DR DOS right over the top of MS DOS. Everything seemed to work just fine however, and at the end of the evening Bob appeared to be ready to at least try DR DOS for a while. One of the most impressive features of DR DOS is that even after loading COMMAND.COM, CONFIG.SYS, and several TSR's, the available system memory was 620K. Another excellent feature is the command line editor. Unlike MS DOS, DR DOS allows you to edit the command line. All-in-all, DR DOS sounds like it has some real advantages over MS DOS. Only time will tell.

Los Cerros Computer has once again provided SLO Bytes with the door prizes. This month's recipients were John Rohde, BEYOND .BAT menuing software; Jack Whalls, WORD FINDER thesaurus; CK Currey, SYSTEM MONITOR software; and Gus Thommasson (no, this wasn't a pay-off for giving the DR DOS demonstration), TRUMPET desktop presentation software. Congratulations to the lucky winners.

If you are into telecommunications or would like to learn more about it, don't miss the main meeting in July. Bob Ward will hook up the to the on-line service Prodigy. He will also try to connect to the SLO Bytes BBS. This may prove very entertaining if it is anything like the last time Bob attempted this at the meeting. It was fun to say the least.

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### Club Officers

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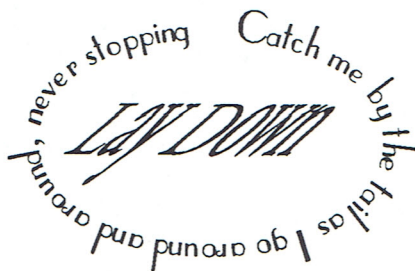




It's seldom that I get a program that is both productive and fun to use... that is until Adobe TypeAlign was delivered to my door step. This program has been around a couple years for the MAC people. Finally the orphans of graphics interfaces have a chance to use it on their PC's. It runs through Windows and you must also own Adobe Type Manager (ATM) to make it work. A fast computer doesn't hurt either.

### What it Does

With Adobe TypeAlign (I'll call it ATA for short) you can manipulate type and fonts into almost anything imaginable. Create a path with your mouse, either straight or with curves, or create loops if you wish and the



text you add follows the path. Choose the font through ATM and your creativity is almost limitless. Make small letters down to 4 points or fill the page with a 600 point letter. At any size these postscript fonts are smooth and only limited by the output of your printer. This program does it all.

## FEATURES

ATA follows the typical Windows 3.0 format with drop down windows on top and a help window to the far right. The windows include File, Edit, View, Arrange, Type, and Color. Also a tool box shows up on the left side of the screen from which you can choose path structure (straight line, freehand, follow ellipse or circle either inside or outside, clockwise or counter clockwise). Also magnify your work up to 800%, or take a "picture" of any screen with the camera tool and create background templates. All letters or words can be rotated around a central axis or distorted by pulling the handles found on the frame around the words. Create extra handles to custom distort the path. Manipulate individual letters with the kerning tool. ATA has both color and pallet capabilities. If you have a color printer, watch out, the results can be awesome!

## A Simple Creation

Making something unique is simple with ATA. I started out simple and progressed until I had lines of type in such knots that even I couldn't get them untangled. I started out by drawing a straight line using the tool box on the left. From here go to the top and pull down the Type window. Here you can choose both size and font style and position (left justified, centered, etc.). Then just start typing. Since Windows is WYSIWYG you'll see the fonts as they will appear in type. You can change either font or size in the middle of a line as you type or afterward by highlighting the type you want to change and going back up to the Type window. After a simple sentence is typed, just click on

the arrow key within the tool box and a wire frame appears around the text. On each corner is a handle which you can drag to any point and the type will follow. Distortion is easy, something pleasing can be more difficult. You can pull one upper corner down over the bottom corner so the type lays over itself. Think of a strip of transparent cellophane with words written on it. Then twist the cellophane and that's what you will get in ATA. This is a very simple description of just one of MANY things that can be done in ATA. I found that just "playing" with it and trying different things gave some interesting results.

## Documentation

Documentation comes in a 54 page spiral bound manual. Chapters include; Getting Started, Working with Paths, and Modifying Text. There is also appendices for troubleshooting, keyboard shortcuts and sample art. The documentation was simple to understand with examples throughout the book. The "finished products" in the back were very nice although I doubt I could reproduce them with the information given.

## CONCLUSION

Like most graphic programs running under Windows, I wouldn't try and create anything complicated on a slow machine. I used Adobe TypeAlign on both a 286-12Mhz and a 386SX-20Mhz. Probably due to no fault of ATA (I'd blame Windows) the more graphics on a screen, the slower the screen re-writes. For simple things, ATA runs at an acceptable speed on a 286. For complicated graphics, definitely run it on a 386.

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# There's No BS in "YOUR" SLO Bytes BBS (Well, Maybe Just A Little)

by Jim Bigelow

SLO Bytes PCUG

In collaboration with technical advisor Dave Zingg, who is a new member of SLO Bytes PCUG and SYSOP of the Mudhole Bulletin Board in Atascadero.

Is your computer connected to the outside world? Bringing in valuable information for you and your family? Or is it standing alone, all alone like a schizophrenic? All wrapped up in itself, with nowhere to go. I want you to know that if you are not using YOUR bulletin board you are failing to make the most of YOUR user group services.

What do you know about the services of YOUR users group? This article is another of a series of articles explaining the group's functions and benefits. In this article I am writing about YOUR bulletin board, what it has to offer you, and what it will do for you. This article is to be read as an overview of SLO Bytes Bulletin Board. It is not a treatise explaining how to do it. SLO Bytes Bulletin Board is a complete, unabridged and comprehensive utility. Its services are public and open to all people throughout the world. A look at the "Users of SLO Bytes BBS" (approximately 60% are non-members) reveals callers from all over the world. Specifically, calls have come from Sidney, Australia; London, England; Johannesburg, South Africa; Japan and Europe.

The SLO Bytes Bulletin Board was started on March 3, 1988, by George Campbell, president of SLO Bytes PCUG and Bob Ward, secretary. George has always been the SYSOP, an abbreviated acronym for systems operator. But Bob is temporarily

presiding over the board due to George's illness. We wish George a speedy and complete recovery. The service has grown steadily throughout the years and by May 3, 1991 it sported a whopping 1,132 files to download. Many are different from those found in our club library. Our BBS has received a total of 34,709 calls and has 759 users. The number of users fluctuates and routinely those who haven't called for 6 months are removed from the list. When I connected on May 29th, there were 586 active messages on the board. It stays busy and at times I find making the connection difficult. Nevertheless, the bulletin board is there and ready to serve you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Once you connect you presently have an allotment of 1 hour, within each 24-hour period.

The easiest way to get started using a bulletin board is to connect your computer to YOUR bulletin board. The basic requirements are not much. You will need a modem, preferably 2400 baud, which will cost from \$69.00 upward. You also will need software; some of it comes bundled with other software like Windows or GeoWorks Ensemble. There are also shareware and commercial packages like Telix, Procomm, Qmodem, and Mirror III. The shareware telecommunication packages are in our club library. Follow your manual, call a friend, set up your modem and get on line. A good idea for a new user is to enable the "session capture" routine found on your communications software. This saves the entire communication with the bulletin board, including all the bulletins and services to a file which can be read later.

Once you connect you will find a "Welcoming Screen" and instructions that will guide you through the directories. Follow the guidelines and answer any questions you are asked. Answer them truthfully as they provide protection for both the bulletin board operators and yourself. Read ALL the bulletins first. They are your

first guide to an unfamiliar BBS. The bulletins explain a variety of things; they welcome you on line, explain how to use the services, list the boards etiquette policy, and give you information about YOUR user group and upcoming events. In reference to shareware files on the board, the bulletins explain how to transfer files between the board and your personal computer and how to "unsqueeze" them after you have downloaded a ZIPed file to your computer.

One of your greatest interests will be looking at the files. I suggest you download the instructions, and two files: PKZ110.EXE & ALLFILES.ZIP. The first file is a must and is used to "unsqueeze" files found on our board which are compressed in a "ZIP" format. The second file which is updated weekly lists all the files found on our bulletin board.

Don't attempt to download any other files unless you see something you just have to have. Disconnect from the BBS, unzip the ALLFILES list, print them out and sit down to see what we have available. This way you will be prepared the next time you connect with the bulletin board. This procedure will help you in your usage of the bulletin board services, save time and frustration fumbling at the keyboard, and be more fun. Personally, it also improves my ego.

Another main function of bulletin boards is E-mail service. What is E-mail? E stands for electronic, therefore E-mail is electronic mail or correspondence, transmitted from computer to computer. One of the computers could be a bulletin board and in this case is your SLO Bytes BBS. E-mail is the number one application on local networks. Behold! Another new era is born. Although this service has been in use for a few years, it is now becoming popular with the home computer user. E-mail is new,

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# Looking At The Docs

by Geoff Mitchell

Big Blue & Cousins, September 1989

The best program in the world is useless if there is no way of figuring out how it works. Strange as it sounds, some programmers and software publishers appear to be unaware of this. They know they must define variables and set constants before a machine can process them, but it never seems to occur to them that they must do the same for the people who use their product.

When a computer program receives improper inputs, it stalls or crashes. Well, you do too. You are a little bit better at figuring out defective coding than your machine, but you most likely aren't as good at it as you'd like to be. But why should you even have to think about how good you are at it? You shouldn't have to. Period.

When you crash, your supplier is likely to lose a customer. People in the business don't like losing customers. Some people in the business, especially in the retail end, will sell programs they think second-rate because they have good instructions. It cuts customer-service costs. A poor program with good instructions readily enables the customer to exploit its potential. A good program with poor instructions can't be made to work and so is useless.

## TYPES OF DOCUMENTATION

Most software has a manual. Manuals, however, are usually not the best way for learning to use a package, or even for figuring out what a program is for. Learning how to use even a moderately complicated program centers around the tutorial or course of instruction. Documentation almost always must be broken down into reference and

learning components. Nothing is more annoying than having to search through pages and pages or screens and screens of simple-minded material that after being gone through once or twice you never want to see again.

When the reference manual and tutorial manual are combined into a single package, the result is often an abomination. Such abominations are common within the Shareware community. As often as not, what results is a huge, amorphous document which is a pain to deal with from start to finish. If it is a disk file, it will eat a couple of hundred pages of paper if you print it, most of which you never ever want to see again - the kind of stuff which is best for sending you to sleep at night.

Don't waste paper and ribbon printing long-winded documents. Use LIST to search for keywords like setup, start, save, exit or whatever else you figure you need right then. Just ignore the structure. It will only confuse you. And don't worry about indexing or page numbering. LIST short-circuits all that.

If you do have a hard copy reference manual, on the other hand, it must contain a comprehensive table of contents and index. A glossary helps, too. It is unlikely you can learn how to use the program effectively just from a reference manual, however.

## TUTORIALS

Tutorials are simulations. A complete simulation of anything must be more complex than the thing itself. Consequently, don't expect anything more than an indication of how a piece of software will perform simply by using the tutorial. Tutorials are handy, however, for getting a complex package up and going with a minimum of fuss and bother. Once they've been gone through a few times, their utility diminishes. A good tutorial should contain descriptions with examples of all the main sequence of keystrokes and all

the various screens thrown up by the program. Tutorials that don't do this are pretty well useless, since the neophyte user is almost bound to throw up bad sequences of keystrokes which land up smack in the middle of unknown country.

Your tutorial package should also contain cross references to the full manual so that you know where to look for additional information. Finally, it should contain a question and answer section towards the end containing the most frequently asked questions and answers with illustrations where necessary.

## BUILT-IN HELP

More and more programs are coming with built-in help or user friendly interfaces to ease their use. A good interface and good built-in help all but eliminate the need for documentation, at least among people familiar with computers.

The cost of this ease of use is the amount of memory and disk space required to house the help data and the slowness of retrieving it. Providing a lot of built-in help cannot help but degrade the software's performance.

## DEMONSTRATION PACKAGES

Generally speaking, demonstration packages are useful only to salespeople. A canny shopper who knows little about computers should study their documentation packages. It will reveal an awful lot about how well the people who built the program are put together, much more than the demos. With a reasonably complicated program, you will never be through referring to the documentation. So it had better be right.

## DOCUMENTATION CONTENT

Almost all computer software, with the exception of games, shares fundamental characteristics. Good documentation covers them in a

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## SLO Bytes Library

What's Coming Up this Month in our Library? Here's what Bob Ward, Librarian has to say.

I have a couple dandy programs to add to our library this month. Take a look what we have for you.

**#429 - 430 CONG**, which is short for Congress is a great program if you want a current database of your US representatives. Look up their committees, tag all committee members, send them all letters with mail merge and print out mailing labels to boot! Excellent program if you want to get involved (which you should).

**#431 - GAMES** - Here's a couple great games with excellent animation. **#1KEEN** and **#1MARS**.

**#432 - ASQ13** - A memory management tutorial and system analyzer from Qualitas. **RAMMAP** - maps out your RAM and TSR's. Little more extensive than **MEMMAP**. **RIR** - takes place of **DIR** command. It lists the files within **ZIP** or **ARC** files. Also searches whole hard disk for file. This is a good one! **3DBENCH - VGA** bench mark test.

**#433 - Local Programmers work.** **SYS-MON20** - monitors your system for any changes such as attack by viruses. **VIRSIM11** - create simulated viruses for testing virus trapping software. **FSTML226** - set up your database and mailing lists with this one. Supports laser printers.

### Updates:

**#002 - COMIC** version 2.0 updated to 4.0  
**#095 - PTOMB** now version 6.0  
**#384 - CSHOW** now version 8.24

### Demos

**#196 - ISYS** from Odyssey Development

## Bits n' Bytes

- » Look for our new line of disks at the meeting. Quality disks for only a nickel more than generics.
- » IBM and APPLE at the same table? Well it looks that way. They are negotiating a joint venture into the software business. What do ya get when you cross an IBM with a MAC? A big MAC.stake that won't boot.
- » DOS 5.0 is out. Microsoft made the big announcement on 6/10 plus or minus a couple days. Who really cares anyway. They said it's a cross between Windows and a MAC format. Icons of course. I sure hope it's better than that menuing system that came out with 4.0. This DOS version does more with less overhead. Suggestion: at least wait until 5.01 hits the market before buying. It should be announced anyday now.
- » The US Commerce department and the Japanese government have reached a new accord on chip manufacturing and sales. The chip treaty says the US will have 20% of the chip market in Japan by the end of 1992. This is what the US thinks the agreement says anyway. Even before the ink is dry, the Japanese say this is a goal in principle only and if it doesn't come to pass. Oh well, Signora!
- » Some of you have been experiencing some copying problems in the library. First make sure the disk slides into the disk drive easily. If it doesn't, then you probably have the disk in crooked. Last month one of the library disks looked like a pit bull had wrestled with it. Secondly, make sure the hole in the center of the disk media is centered in the middle of the disk jacket. If they are skewed too much to one side, they may not center causing mis-reads and writes. Also if you hear the computer making beeping noises like a penny arcade, open the disk drive drawer. The computer is trying to tell you something, and it ain't good news! Ask Sam, VP and library monitor for help.
- » We looked into the possibility of obtaining a second phone line (Santa Margarita) with call forwarding so our north county members could access the BBS for free or at a reduced toll charge. Well, unfortunately Bob Hunt lives 500 feet from the border on the wrong side, so we can't put the phone in his house. And he is unwilling to move 501 feet so we can get our Santa Margarita number! Can you imagine that! So until we can get someone in Santa Margarita to put a second line in their home, all expenses paid by SLO Bytes, we'll have to do with our Los Osos number.
- » **SLO Bytes BBS is back home at George's place. CALL 528-3753 from nowon.**

### Adobe Type Align

Adobe TypeAlign is easier and more intuitive than Corel Draw, although the latter is probably more powerful. For simple text manipulation where you want to dress up your publication, ATA is the way to go. This program retails for \$99 with street prices considerably less. You must consider the added expense though if you must buy Windows and Adobe Type-Manager, both of which are needed for this program. I'm surprised Adobe didn't bundle ATM with Adobe TypeAlign or at least offer ATM at a reduced price since both are needed to make the program run.

Adobe Systems  
 Adobe TypeAlign, Widows Version  
 1585 Charleston Road  
 Mountain View, CA. 94039-7900  
 1-800-344-8335



# Hard Disk Initialization

by Dave Schubert

Bits & Bytes, July 1990

Let's review the sequence for setting up a new hard disk drive, or a drive that requires re-initialization. To perform these steps, various commercial programs such as "Disk Manager," "Speed-Store," and "V-Feature" are Available. If you choose one of these it will perform all three steps discussed in the following initialization procedure.

## 1. Low Level Formatting

This procedure writes control information onto the drive which must precede any partitioning or DOS formatting.

To perform a low-level format, there is often a program resident in the ROM of your hard-disk controller board such as a Western Digital or DTC. These brands and some others have a program built into their ROM to allow a user to perform low-level formatting. To access this program, you can use DEBUG to execute a single command "G=C800:5" or you can create a small program to run this ROM-resident program from DOS.

```
debug lowlevel.com <RETURN>
-a <RETURN>
xxxx:0100 jmp c800:0005 <RETURN>
xxxx:0105 <RETURN>
-rcx <RETURN>
5 <RETURN>
-w <RETURN>
    writing 0005 bytes
-q <RETURN>
```

An alternative method is to make a file of the keystrokes to send to DEBUG like this:

File Name : DEBUG.IN

```
N LOWLEVEL.COM<RETURN>
A<RETURN> J
MP C800:0005<RETURN>
```

```
<RETURN>
RCX<RETURN>
5<RETURN>
W<RETURN>
Q<RETURN>
```

This file can be then executed like this:

```
DEBUG <DEBUG.IN
```

You now have "LOWLEVEL.COM" that will run the low-level format program on your hard-disk controller ROM directly from DOS without having to call for the DEBUG program.

There are a couple of important things to watch for when doing this procedure. One, don't forget to *lock out any bad track* locations listed on your disk drive or accompanying test report. These *head and cylinder* locations have been defined by the manufacturer as being incapable of reliably holding your data and will only come to be a nuisance if not blocked from being used by DOS. Secondly, watch for the *interleave* value. This value is an important factor in how fast your data will be later accessed on the drive. If you aren't sure about the best value to set the interleave at, try "3:1" or "4:1" to start.

## 2. Disk Partitioning

After the low-level format is completed, the disk drive needs to be partitioned for DOS. "FDISK", which is included with most versions of DOS, is the program designed to view, add, or delete the partitions of hard disks.

Usually, with the exception of DOS 3.30 and up, only 32 megabytes per DOS partition is allowed, but certain programs will allow various methods of making full use of larger capacity drives. FDISK with the newer DOS versions allow you a chance to partition each hard disk into one or two logical drives. If you want more than that, then one of the

prior mentioned commercial programs would be required.

## 3. DOS Formatting

After the disk is partitioned, your first DOS partition should be formatted as a "bootable" drive. This is done with the following DOS command: `FORMAT C:/S/V`

The above command will prepare drive "C" for DOS plus add the files to make it "bootable" for the system and allow you to name the volume.

## Conclusion

With all of the above steps completed, you should now have a disk ready to accept most of your DOS programs.

# Meeting Happenings

At the early meeting George will conduct a Q & A session on DOS. Let's not be too hard on him though, he's still recovering.

One reason for starting the meeting early is to give Bob, our librarian, a few minutes to show the highlights of our best library shareware. He'll take only a couple minutes this month to show you CONG - short for Congress. A great database of all your bureaucrats, that's short for representatives. Check the library section of this newsletter for further details.

If you haven't had enough of Bob at the early meeting, stick around for the general meeting where he will demonstrate Prodigy information service, owned and operated by Sears and IBM. Time permitting he will also try and get on to our BBS for a quick tutorial.



# Computer Magazines

by Dave Appel

Indy PC News, August 1990

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Every other week I receive a piece of junk mail inviting me to subscribe to some new kind of computer magazine. There seems to be a specialty magazine for every niche market.

I'd like to describe my favorite magazines and why I think you might want to subscribe to one of them in addition to Indy PC News. Indy PC News is the best local computer magazine, but I also need the information in the national magazines. Subscribing to a magazine such as one of the following is important in order to keep abreast of the changing nature of personal computers.

All of these magazines are mainly geared to the IBM PC lines and compatibles. They also cover the major announcements by Apple and Commodore, but do not go in depth in regards to those product lines.

If you want to get ONE national computer magazine, I would recommend one of the following three, depending on how technical and detailed you want your information. All three of these magazines cover the major announcements in the personal computer market and offer product reviews. They also have useful ads containing the latest prices from the large mail-order firms. They are PC World, PC Magazine, and Byte. I will also describe a weekly publication for those who want their news on a more timely basis than once per month, and a specialty publication for mail-order buyers.

The least technical is PC World. It is published monthly. According to the subscription reply cards it costs \$19.97 for a year for a new subscriber, and the "basic" subscription rate is

\$29.90. If you are interested in "executive overviews" more than detailed technical reviews, then this magazine is for you. They purposely avoid getting too technical. The drawback to this is that they avoid getting too in-depth in their reviews.

If you are a computer user who never plans on opening your computer case, or if you have to call your computer store to find out how much memory you have on your system, then you would find this magazine geared towards you.

On the next rung up in technical detail is PC Magazine. Although I don't know circulation figures, this magazine is the most popular among people whom I know. PC Magazine is published two times per month. The initial subscription cost, according to their business reply card, is \$29.97 for one year of 22 issues. Their "basic" subscription rate is \$44.97.

I would consider PC Magazine a "must have" for computer-support people or any business that supports the technical aspects of their own personal computers. If you design your own configurations or make your own purchase decisions instead of relying on outside consultants and computer store salesmen, then this magazine is for you.

Reading this magazine will teach you enough to know when your computer salesman is lying, er, I mean exaggerating.

The longest running technical personal computer magazine that I am familiar with is BYTE magazine. I have been subscribing to BYTE since 1978. BYTE is the most technical of these three magazines. BYTE has basically the same PC announcements and product reviews that the others have, but, BYTE goes into very technical detail. Unless you are familiar with terms like pin-outs, leading edge strobe, and negative acknowledgement, you might find BYTE a bit too technical and too in-depth. BYTE seems geared more towards

programmers and hardware technicians than the average computer user.

BYTE is published monthly and costs \$24.95 for the first year to a new subscriber. Their basic subscription rate is \$29.95.

If you absolutely need the most up-to-date information of what is happening in the PC business, then PC WEEK is for you. The technical level of PC WEEK is somewhere in between PC World and PC Magazine. PC WEEK is very heavy on product announcements and business news. It seems geared to resellers, consultants, and corporate level computer support. PC WEEK is one of those publications that are "free to qualifying subscribers". The regular subscription rate was \$160 per year the last time I looked.

If you are a regular mail-order buyer, you might be interested in a specialty publication that contains just about every mail order company. It is COMPUTER SHOPPER. This monthly magazine is about one inch thick and is over 99% ads. Computer Shopper has hardware and software reviews. It also has articles of an educational and tutorial nature. Once you have already decided what to buy, then you can use this magazine to find the best price. The subscription card says it is \$21.97 for 12 issues. This magazine is pretty much a "must have" for those who regularly search for the best mail-order bargains.

All of the above magazines, except PC WEEK, can be purchased at computer stores and at magazine racks like the ones at Hooks drug stores. Purchase a single copy of the one that you think would be the most benefit to you. If you like it, pull out one of the subscriber cards and send it in.

If you want to subscribe to PC WEEK, write them at P.O. Box 5970, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034 and ask them for a subscription application form. Remember, "reading is FUNdamental!!"



## "YOUR" BBS

exciting, fast as the telephone line, and fun and useful. E-mail becomes exciting, especially when you go on-line and find a message for you stating, "YOU HAVE MAIL WAITING," This makes you feel important, that you are now a full fledged user and a significant member of the users group, and no 29 cent stamp!

The board allows you to use the E-mail services to make your messages open to the public for everyone to read, or private for one or more people of your choice. This means that your message can be left by you and then picked up by the receiver at his or her convenience. Also, you can type your message before connecting to the BBS and then upload it, saving considerable time. You will find the public messages both interesting and educational. They are categorized into various "folders" ranging from technical to contemporary. You can also leave messages for the "SYSOP".

Keep one thing in mind; if you choose to send a "private message" it is still available to the SYSOP for reading. Although it is not a practice for SYSOPS to read private mail, the BBS software does not allow totally private messages. If you have a private "private" message, use the telephone or US Post Office. There are other services your local BBS provides. They are too numerous for this article, so I will let you explore the board for yourself, and find the many surprises that are waiting. Once you have been on line and feel comfortable with your modem you may want to explore other uses of your modem by connecting to other computer users at their homes or make use of the many Information services. If you really become "hooked" on telecommunications, do yourself a favor, get a second phone line. For \$15 a month you'll have peace-of-mind and the rest of the family won't get mad at you for tying up the telephone.

## Looking At The Docs

straight-forward manner. There is an invariant sequence to the learning procedure which the documentation, tutorial documentation particularly, should follow.

Computers are information processing machines, and the information they process is called data. Software exists in order to create and manipulate data objects.

The accompanying instructional information should first of all clearly state what kind of data the program has been built to handle. That is, it should make a statement of purpose. What is it supposed to do?

The second step is to define all the prerequisites and conditions necessary to make it do it. That is, clearly and specifically state the hardware configuration required, and software incompatibilities. A subsection should detail installation procedures.

The third step should inform the user how to start the program. Knowing how to start it includes knowing how to stop it. If you start a program up without knowing how to stop it, you may find yourself having to reach for the big red switch when you want to go on to something else. A subsection of the start-up section should include how to get help if it is built in. Once you know your way around computers a bit, knowing how to start, stop, and get help will enable you to get the feel of a piece of software quite rapidly. You may not have to refer to hard copy material at all until you wish to start exploiting the software's finer points.

The fourth step should tell you how to create, edit and save data objects. This is usually the major part of the instructional material.

The fifth step should tell you how to fetch already created data objects,

merge them, back them up, delete them, and inventory them.

Manuals tutorials, even instruction courses that are laid out along the above lines are usually easier for people to handle. The student needs to have the information directed to him in the order he uses it. If it comes in some other order, he'll get confused. If you have a manual or some other form of documentation that does not follow the above schema and with which you are having difficulty, try redoing it, re-ordering the pages, or moving blocks of text around in a disk file. You may find that the program starts making some kind of sense after all.

## **Best Wishes for the July Birthday Folks!!**

A Big Happy Birthday, and I know you're glad you are a year older!  
Ho Ho Ho!

Philip Amborn	07/04
Larry Bakkum	07/30
Daniel Bowlin	07/11
George Campbell	07/29
Vince Salvador	07/27
Eric Schug	07/14
Jeff Spry	07/21
Linda Taylor	07/14
Ed West	07/23
Arlene Jutras Williams	07/04

## **Calendar**

July 7th	Bob Ward will demonstrate Prodigy, the information service jointly owned and operated by Sears and IBM. Time permitting and with a little luck we will also get on SLO Bytes BBS for a little demo.
August 4th	Open
September 1st	Max Sicher, SLO Bytes member will show us how he uses his computer in conjunction to HAM radio.



## 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 \$20 per year. Newsletter only is \$12 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.

Editor: John Ewing, 1710 15th Street, Los Osos, Ca. 93402. Phone 528-7196.

## 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 1:00 - 2:15 pm.

New User's SIG - F.H. 286

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

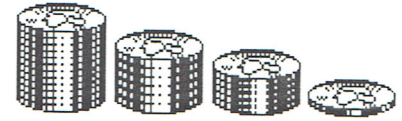
### SLO BYTES BULLETIN BOARD

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

PC Files & Message Section

SYSOP: George Campbell

All Welcome - 24 Hours



## Treasurer's Report

SLO Bytes PCUG Expenditures  
June, 1991

Beginning Balance:	+1166.58
Expenses:	
Newsletter 05/23/91	- 132.10
Disks	- 394.40
Postage	- 135.15
	=====
	- 661.65
Deposit 06/07/91	+188.25
	=====
	+188.25
Balance 06/07/91	+ 693.18

## DISCOUNTS

<b>Star Computers</b> 855 Morro Bay Blvd. Morro Bay 772-7827	5%	Any software in stock.
	10%	Paper, ribbons, cables, and other supplies.
<b>Computer Logic</b> 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.
<b>WITCO Computers</b> 3563 Sueldo, Blvd. B San Luis Obsipo 549-0811	\$100 10%	Off regular prices on Whitaker computers Off service Meet nearly any advertised price on same or similar computers. Bring ad to store.
<b>Los Cerros Computers</b> 11545 Los Osos Val. Rd #A3 San Luis Obsipo 544-6399	15% 20%	Above cost on computers and computer peripherals. Above cost on software & supplies (Cost includes shipping & handling)

### Ziff-Davis User Group Magazine Discounts

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