SLO Bytes HARD COPY

Peanut Blossoms and A Cool Database Program

By Kathy Yakal — SLO Bytes PCUG

So many of you made comments about the peanut blossoms I brought to the meeting last night, I thought I'd include the recipe in this month's newsletter. ("Recipes?," I can hear Jim Bigelow saying as he reads this. "She wants to put a recipe in the user group newsletter?")

Bear with me, though; there's a story behind this that eventually ends up having something to do with computers. But first, here's the recipe: Cream together 1/2 cup shortening and 1/2 cup peanut butter. Gradually add 1/2 cup brown sugar and 1/2 cup peanut butter. Add 1 unbeaten egg, 2 T. milk and 1 t. vanilla. Blend together and add 1-3/4 cup sifted flour, 1 t. soda and 1/2 t. salt. Shape into rounded balls (about 1 t. batter for each) and roll in sugar. Place on cookie sheet. Bake for 6-8 minutes at 375 degrees. Remove from oven and place a solid milk chocolate kiss in center, pressing down lightly until edge of cookie cracks. Return to oven and bake 2-5 minutes longer

Now, how did I find that recipe so fast, considering I forgot about the SLOBYTES newsletter deadline this month and only had two hours to write my column? And considering that I don't cook, so I don't have a recipe file? And considering I woke up exceedingly cranky from my afternoon nap, about five minutes before Bob called and reminded me about the deadline?

Well, here's where we get to the part about computers, and a little secret about me. I once edited a textbook on dBase, and I've reviewed some database products and personal information managers (PIMs) and calendar programs for several magazines over the last several years. But do I use them regularly? Nope. Don't tell my editors, OK? I use a Rolodex and address book, a Day-Timer calendar, and a lot of Post-It notes.

Why? Simple. Same reason you probably don't use those products. I'd never found one that did precisely what I needed (without offering too many features), was easy to use, and was just as fast as my old manual systems.

January Preview

☞ **Louis Wheller will demonstrate "Remote Console." Take over someone's computer remotely with this one. This company is local and will give us a good show.**

☞ **SWAP MEET time at our next meeting. Bring all of your treasures, goodies, and junk. You will have the opportunity to sell it, trade it, swap it, or give it away. You can do your own advertising, story telling and bragging, or what ever you want to call it.**

☞ **George Campbell will make his presentation on all the latest products and latest know-how.**

In this issue...

I recently found one. It's been around for several years and I'd heard of it, but never looked closely at it. It's called TakeNote, from ButtonWare ($69.95 list price, though you can probably find it for less mail-order or at a software store).

TakeNote comes with several pre-designed formats for setting up databases for keeping track of different kinds of information; these include business contacts, credit cards, home inventory, library, personal contacts, recipes, and Rolodex cards. You select the format you want to use and save it with a name that you'll remember. For example, I've set up four small databases, one for business contacts, one for friends, one for miscellaneous personal contacts (doctors, travel agent, etc.), and one for recipes (which contains exactly two files, the Peanut Blossom recipe and the recipe for my other seasonal favorite, Olive Cheese Nuggets).

Data entry fields look just like their real-life counterparts. You enter data in the blanks, save them to the appropriate file, and you have quick access to the data from anywhere in Windows. You can print labels, reports, or just individual cards, and do searches and sorts.

Cool program. For more information, contact:

ButtonWare,
325 118th Ave. S.E., Suite 200,
Bellevue, WA 98005.
800-528-8866.

Sound Explosion for Windows

By Bob Ward — SLO Bytes PCUG

The other day I received a demo disk called Sound Explosion. If you want to wake up Windows a little, try some of their WAV files.

Although I don't need a sound coming through my speaker to remind me when I make a mistake in Windows, there is still a large market for this type of software. Most of the WAV files are small and last no more than a second or two when played. It comes with a "player" which is run through Windows allowing you to hear the file selected either through your computer speaker, or sound board.

The commercial version with 500 sound selections lists for $49.95.

Their library includes bells, whistles, crashes, squeaks, belches and worse. I was surprised to find some of the "sounds" inappropriate for a demo disk which goes out to the general public.

Most of the variations of the same sound file were distinguishable from each other. A few such as "explosion" had 4 of the 6 files sounding very much alike. Perhaps they would sound different to a WAV gourmet, to me they sounded the same. If sounds are what you need for your computer you might want to give this program a try. At only ten cents per file you have only $50 to lose.

Sound Explosion
Programmer's Warehouse
1-800-323-1809
Price $49.95

Copying to Floppy Diskettes

By Ellen Sever — (Article taken from Greater Victoria Personal Computer User's Association, Sep't. 1992

From Steven Levy comes the following two tips to facilitate copying to diskette:

XCOPY Command I use the XCOPY command to create floppy diskettes that have identical directory and subdirectory file layouts. Assume that the directory on the hard drive is /AI and that you want to copy files, maintaining the appropriate directory and sub-directory structure, to a floppy diskette in drive b: Type:

```
XCOPY\AI B:\AI/E/S
```

A message appears: "Does AI specify a file name or a directory? (F=File name, D=Directory)" Press D The directory structure created on the diskette will be identical to the structure on your hard drive. Use Verify If the verify attribute is on in DOS all copies are verified after they are written.

This feature does make copying more time consuming, but it is worth it if you are not getting 100% accurate copies of files.

Verify can be turned on by typing Verify at the DOS prompt. Likewise, it can be turned off by typing Verify Off. Lower quality diskettes are sometimes a problem, But with verify on copies are more likely to be accurate even with problem diskettes.

(Editor's note: you can also use the /V flag with XCOPY or COPY commands to turn verify on for that command.) CP Report May 1992.

###

Personal Advocate

*A Review By D T Richmond SLO Bytes PCUG*

Today the ability to communicate via the personal computer is surging ahead in leaps and bounds! We have E-mail, Fax and Modems at our disposal. Still there comes a time when a folded sheet of paper, in an envelope, deliv-

Using Personal Advocate you will have over 35 customizable letters, as well as a "free form" letter, at your finger tips. These letters will cover consumer affairs, credit matters, government benefit programs, divorce related situations, and many other issues commonly encountered by consumers.

Personal Advocate also offers an on-screen Address Book,

5. A daisy-wheel, dot-matrix, ink-jet, or laser printer.

Installing **Personal Advocate** is easy! I encountered no problems. I just followed the instructions in **Personal Advocate's** Users Guide. When installation is completed the opening screen (the predominate screen of the program) containing the Personal Advocate Welcome Box is displayed. Close the Welcome
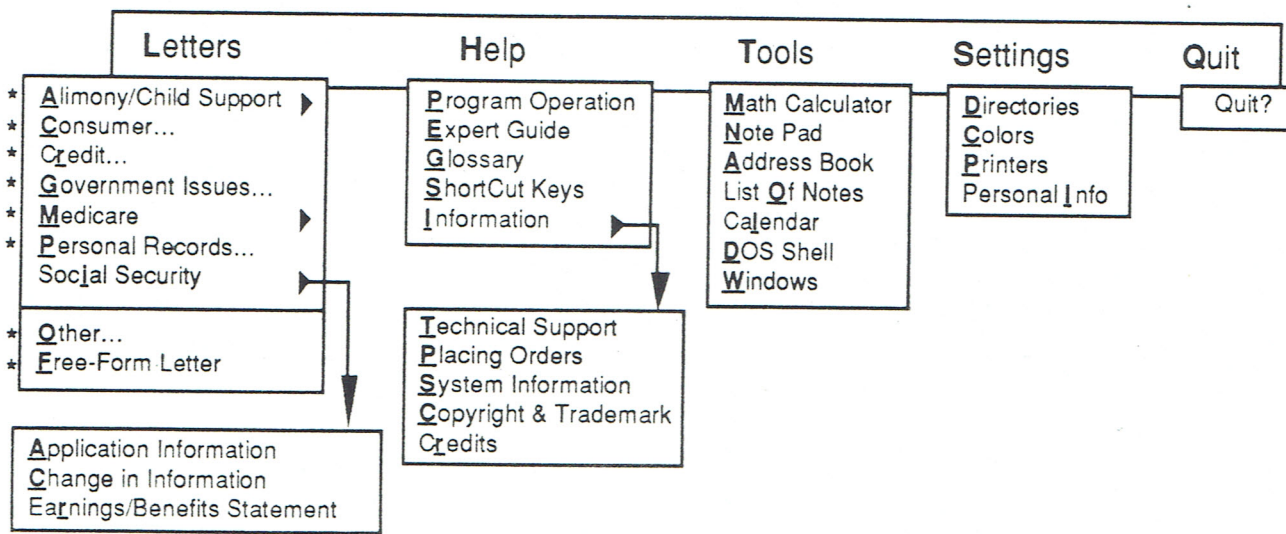
Personal Advocates's Main Menu.

ered by the "Cliff Clavens" of the US Postal Service is the only means of communication that will get the job done! The average person, today, does not possess the writing skills necessary to produce this combination of ingredients called a LETTER. Fortunately there is a software program **Personal Advocate** that will go a long way in assisting its users in overcoming these shortcomings.

Personal Advocate is designed to answer the needs of those who want to write forceful letters that will obtain prompt attention and get results. **Personal Advocate's** letters are designed by attorneys to help attain maximum impact and result using the written word.

complete with a database of many business and government office locations. With a few keystrokes, you can transfer one or more address right into your correspondence.

Personal Advocate will help you keep your home records in order. You have two record-keeping documents in which you can log financial and emergency information in one place for easy storage and reference.

System Requirements for **Personal Advocate:**

1. IBM PC, XT, AT, or compatible computer.

2. A hard disk

3. 512K or more RAM

4. MS-DOS or PC-DOS version 2.11 or higher

Box and a Personal Information Box opens. The first time user now has the option to enter their personal address information. This information then becomes the default data to be used in the addressor fields for all letters that are created.

With these initial steps behind, you are ready for a study of the Main Menu structure. This Main Menu contains these six basic elements the Menu Bar, Menus, Submenus, Pick Lists, Highlight and Function Bar. These elements should be familiar to most computer users, if not the Users Guide covers them very well. I do not believe this is a program a user must learn to use as they would a

Catalogue Your Floppies The Easy Way

By Ron Hirsch, Boca Raton Computer Society, May 1992

I'm sure that many of you have stacks of floppy disks either in disk cases, or like most people, stacked up on the shelf, or in drawers. Since I am a very organized person, I've always kept my floppies in cases such as those made by Curtis or Fellowes. However, that's only part of the problem/solution. The flow of disks for new programs, upgrades, etc. is high, and it seems like an impossible task to keep things orderly. Even if you spend lots of time to sort and label the whole works, it gets out of kilter very soon.

I have come up with a way to straighten out this whole mess. It's not only elegant, but simple. It makes reorganizing your whole library an easy task, and you never have to relabel the compartments in your disk files. Also, you can double the size of your library, and the system will allow a complete reindexing without changing a single label.

I am not addressing the aspect of indexing/labeling individual floppies, with their contents. Most of the floppies in my collection are original or backup program disks, and need no index on each disk. The key to the system is that the floppy cases are labeled, the interior sections are labeled, and then a library listing is generated on the computer using virtually any spreadsheet, word processor, or write program. The steps are as follows:

1. Label all the file cases you have. I called them Program Disks #1, Program Disks #2, etc.

2. Label each interior separator. I used letters: 1-A, 1-B, 2-A, etc.

I used all the separators which came with the case, and spaced them equally in the bottom slots. NOTE: I used WP51 and Avery labels to print out labels for the cases and the compartments.

3. Take out all your floppies, and stack them on the desktop. Organize them any way you

> I have come up with a way to straighten out this whole mess... It makes reorganizing your whole library an easy task ... Also, you can double the size of your library and . . ..

like, and then start putting them into the various "bins" you have. It's generally a good idea to keep allied disks together, but not necessary. I didn't distinguish between disk sizes in my disk case numbering. It really doesn't matter which is case 1, or case 4, but again that's your choice.

4. I now went into a spreadsheet, and laid out a form which looked good to me. The first column heading was "Program/DiskName/Description". The second and third columns were labeled 3.5" and 5.25." The fourth column was labeled "Quantity of Disks", and the last column was "Location". The "Quantity" was used since I chose not to enumerate the various disks in any group, such as my WP51 disks. I then went through each compartment, and entered all the information for the disks. I put an "X" under the disk size heading. Remember, if you're using a spreadsheet, use a label prefix before trying to enter 3-A. I used "^" in 1-2-3 to center the labels in the cell. When I was all done, I sorted the names alphabetically. After you've sorted it, look it over. You may find that you have disks which should be together, but they aren't. Simple to fix - move the disks around all you like. Then change the location label in the

listing for all the disks you've moved. As you add disks, put them in any "bin" with space, and then add them to the library listing. If you run out of space, get another disk file, and give it the next number in the series. Then number the separators, and use the "bins". The system is so simple. Why it took me all these years to come up with it - I don't know.

I have approximately 300 disks catalogued now, and I can see what I have, and retrieve any disk in no time at all. The system works, and is easy to maintain. If you have a case of diskitis, try it out - you should like it as much as I do.

###

word processing program. The Hint Pane in each different letter's subject Window Title screen will help you in entering the data needed to complete that letter. The F1 Help key is always there should help be needed. Speed, in composing this type of letter, is not the paramount purpose of this program. Results are what you are after.

To compose a letter using **Personal Advocate** select Letters from the Main Menu screen, click on it and the Submenus box drops to offer your choice of letter subject matter. Make your selection. Once into the actual letter simply follow the instructions in the Hint Pane in the lower portion of the letter window. Fill in the information asked of you and you will have your letter written in no time.

One thing is certain **Personal Advocate** will not let you complete a letter until you have entered all the data needed to get the results you want. If you omit a bit of data **Personal Advocate** will prompt you to go back and enter that data before you can continue.

When the occasion arises and you need a well written, result getting letter to argue your cause, this is when **Personal Advocate** will prove its worth.

Personal Advocate's Address Book contains a database with the names and addresses of government agencies and officials, medical organizations, major corporations, and consumer and advocacy groups. In addition the Address Book feature lets you keep a record of address information of friends, relatives and business contacts.

All information in the Address Book is stored in a topic/sub-topic listing. This will let you select the right address and enter it into a letter in progress.

Conclusion: I have not had the occasion to actually use **Personal Advocate** to write a real letter, yet I can see a need for almost anyone to have the program. It was easy to use when I wrote several test letters.

Personal Advocate does not really require all that much memory (just over two meg). Should space be a problem in your computer, it could be loaded only when needed.

If letter writing isn't your strong point, then **Personal Advocate** would be a useful addition to your computer programs.

Personal Advocate

PARSONS TECHNOLOGY
One Parsons Drive
P.O. Box 100
Hiawatha, IA 52233-0100

###

SLO Bytes Library

I dug into the back of my hard disk to find a couple program in which you might be interested.

#525 DEBTFREE - home mortgage manager and calculator, EZPR1402 Easy Project Manager, ver 402.

#526 LGMGR10 - OK boys, so you never made it to the big leagues. Here's a program that lets you manage your very own baseball club. POPDBF40 - A TSR that gives you the structure of any dBASE file.

#527-529 WOLFENSTEIN - The most popular Apogee shareware game out there. I'm not one for games but this one made me go out and buy a joy stick! Great animation, uses sound cards also.

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DISCOUNTS

Will Your CD-ROM Get Fried?

By Kenneth J. Hopkins, — Sacramento PCUG, (Sacra Blue)

The following was the lead portion of Mr. Hopkins' column in the September 1992 issue of Sacra Blue, published by the Sacramento PC Users Group. Several of our members have added CD-ROM drives to their computers, while others are thinking about adding them. Thus these words should be of interest to all.
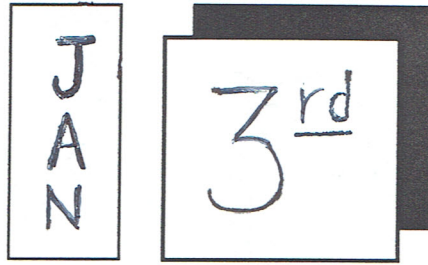
I have experienced something that I hope no one else has to experience. CD-ROM drives are heat-sensitive. When I got my CD-ROM drive (NEC CDR-82) in May 1990, there were not many CD-ROMS available. As a result, I did not use it much. But even with the little use that I gave it, I found that the drive did not work as well when it was warm as it did when it was cold.

I talked with some experts and they told me that the drives are indeed heat-sensitive. They suggested that the drive be mounted below the hard drive because hard drives generate a lot of heat. I Have a tower box, and this is not an option for me. The second suggestion was to place the drive as far as possible from the hard drive. So the CD=ROM was moved to the top of my box.

That helped, but the drive was still unreliable when the room got hot. As time went on, the heat sensitivity got worse. Finally, the drive has gone from unreliable to unusable. I now have a dead, cooked, CD-ROM drive. The only good thing about this is that I can now buy better technology.

I have found that my situation is not isolated. Tower cases and CD-ROM drives do not mix. It may be acceptable in tower boxes where the hard drive can mount in the back of the case, but I have no data available. If you have a desktop case, mount the CD-ROM drive below or beside the hard drive, not above it. The best solution seems to be an external drive. I dislike the idea of more desktop clutter, but I want a drive that works. I managed to find a surplus SCSI box for $40 as a home for my new drive.
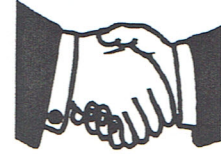
One last warning, CD-ROM drives generate a large magnetic field. Be sure the case is well shielded before you buy it. Imagine placing floppies on top of your computer only to find out that they are erased when you try to install them.

Kenneth M. Hopkins is president of Hopkins Computing, a company that specializes in process-control applications of personal computers.

###

Calendar

January 3rd - Louis Wheller will demonstrate **"Remote Console."** Take over someone's computer remotely with this one, and here's a local company to boot!

February 7th -

March 7th -

Unscheduled -
**Harvard Draw
Ventura Publisher**

###

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 word-processor including tabs, indents, extra spaces, or highlighting. We prefer articles on disk but will accept hard-copies 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.

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Direct all correspondence to Bob Ward, 2100 Andre Ave., Los Osos, CA. 93402. Call (805)756-2164 M-F 7:30am - 4:30 pm and (805)528-0121 all other times.

Editor: Jim Bigelow
1515 Kiler Canyon Road
Paso Robles, CA 93446
(805)238-6335

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 - 2:00 pm.

New User's SIG - F.H. 286
Our Public Domain Library is in Fisher Hall 292. Hours 12 Noon till closing.
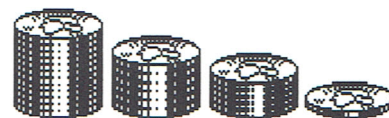

SLO BYTES BULLETIN BOARD

(805) 528-6172/2400/8/N/1

PC Files & Message Section

SYSOPS:
Bob Ward
George Campbell

All Welcome - 24 Hours

Treasurer's Report

SLO Bytes PCUG Expenditures Nov. 1992

Beginning Balance	+2684.22
Newsletter & Manual	-170.53
Stamps	-29.00
Bulk mail deposit	-200.00
Modem for BBS	-325.74
Christmas Gifts	-154.03
NTSC video converter	-297.86
	=====
	-1177.16
Deposit 12/08/92	+669.00
	=====
	+669.00
New Balance	+2176.06

Editor's Notes

With one year ending and a new year coming in, it is time to reflect upon the days that have gone by and what we have done with them.

Looking over SLO Bytes PCUG's HARD COPY, I find a place in my heart to give great consideration and thanks to those who have contibuted to its makeup. There are several who have spent long hours writing articles and reviews for us. They have, in small ways, rewards for their work, but I think the greatest reward of all is that they know they are important and contributing members of the biggest computer user group in this county. (This group has been complimented by many in other areas of our country as being one of the most active in attendance.)

In regard to attendance we can thank several others, who have put many hours of hard work into the process of making each meeting lively, fun, successful, profitable and educational.

Thanks to all of you for a great year. May the year 1993 be just as good.

Jim Bigelow

SLO Bytes Officers

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