

Editor's Word

Well here it is the middle of February and I'm back in the saddle so to speak. Jim Bigelow, our editor for this past year or two is taking a leave without pay from the editorship. Jim will still be with us though working hard for the newsletter in the background continuing to enlist members of the club to write articles for our paper. He will get all the articles together and port them to me where I'll put them in the newsletter for printing. So he gets to do the part he likes, I, the part I have fun with. There may be some other changes in the near future, but I'm not going to jump the gun on this one.

So what happened last month for all of those who missed Parson's Technology demonstration? Unfortunately those of you who missed it were probably home doing your taxes when you could have been at the meeting learning how to do them simply and quickly with Personal Tax Edge for Windows. Parson's was more than generous, giving away several of their top-notch software packages including Personal Tax Edge, Personal Advocate, and It's Legal. They left a couple extra behind which we will give away at the next meeting.

Several of us finished the evening at the Spirit of San Luis having dinner with Joan Dyal and Anne Rawland-Warner before they winged their way eastward to the next user group meeting in Indianapolis. More about that in Kathy's article, parts of which have been edited by the editor to protect him from any undue harrassment. If word gets around what Bob does to other peoples plates at the dinner table no one would go to dinner with us.

Quicken Works for Me

By Bob Illman
SLO Bytes PCUG

The ad says, "If you can balance your checkbook, you can use Quicken." That's right, folks, but if all you can do is balance your checkbook, that might be all you can do with Quicken. By that I mean that you have to have at least basic computer skills to use this user friendly program. To find out if you qualify, take this simple test:

- To install quicken you
- a. Go to the freezer and get the cheese.
or
 - b. Go to the floppy and type install.

If you chose "b", then the odds are that you can quickly become a quicken power user. Quicken 6.0, for those of you who have never opened a computer magazine or watched obscure movies on the cable, is financial management software developed by Intuit so that those of us who were not born accountants can still manage our money.

Continued Page 5

March Preview

- ☛ **Bring your kids!** Knowledge Adventure is coming to town. And you ask, "what is that"? Just ask your kids. If they know about computers they have probably heard of their software. It's fun, it's educational, and wait till you hear it on a soundblaster!
- ☛ Speaking of Soundblasters, George has promised the best he can to show us how to install one of those critters in a computer. Maybe we can show a little Wolfenstein with it. You'll like the sound!
- ☛ Neophytes, take note. We may not have a neophyte SIG in Fisher 289. Our SIG leader, Bob Hunt, may be working Sundays for the next couple months. Any volunteers to take his place? Please.

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Whaddya Want?

by Kathy Yakal
SLO Bytes PCUG

Oh no! No trade shows to report on this month! No recipes to give out! And Bob wants my column today! What do I write about?

You probably wonder what we — the officers and the refreshment captain — all do after the meeting is over on Sundays. Well, it takes us about an hour to clean up the library and the meeting room (I say “we,” but it’s usually Bob and Sam that do most of the work. I usually hang around outside and smoke cigarettes). Then we go out to dinner.

Now, we don’t go anywhere fancy usually. Just out for pizza or Chinese food or something. Although we did go out to that fancy restaurant by the airport last month because the representatives from Parsons Technology had to catch a flight. ~~Bob ate most of Ann Rawland-Warner’s french fries.~~

And we don’t use club funds for these dinners. We pay for them ourselves.

Anyways, what we do at these dinners is talk about you guys. Not personal stuff or anything, but what you might want to see the club do at upcoming meetings. So we’re going to talk about that at the meeting next month. What kinds of things would you like to see happen during the second half of the meeting?

Once (I think we were at one of those pizza places downtown) we talked about turning one of the summer meetings into a big barbecue, meeting in a park somewhere and inviting families and having chicken or burgers or something. We could still talk about computers, but mostly we’d just have a good time. Whaddya think about that?

Here are some other possibilities for the kinds of topics we could cover during upcoming meetings:

1.) Genealogy software. There seems to be a lot of interest in this. Is there a club member who knows a product well enough to do a demo, or should we try to bring someone in?

2.) Simple word processors. Is everyone already using one, or would you like to see some examples of simple, inexpensive word processors that are available?

3.) Speaking of that, there’s a company up in the Bay Area called My Software Company that has a line of inexpensive home and small business applications, like a word processor, label maker, backup program, and invoice program. They also have a division that sells check blanks for programs like Quick-~~en~~ a lot cheaper than you can normally get them. Most of the programs are less than \$50, some much less. Any interest?

4.) How about someone from Microsoft? Not like Bill Gates or anything, but someone who could talk about DOS or Windows or Money or any of their other smaller programs.

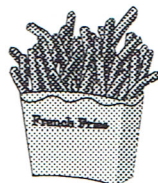
5.) Borland? Borland, anyone?

6.) Any interest in having someone come in from a company that makes small contact managers or personal information managers?

7.) Do you like hearing about high-end technologies that you’ll probably never use but might want to know about anyway, or would you prefer to hear about applications you might actually use? A little of both perhaps?

Anyways, keep it in mind. Think about what you’d like to see before the next meeting. If we don’t get enough suggestions, I’ll have to put my recipe for olive cheese nuggets in the next issue.

The editor reserves the right to delete those parts of an article that he feels defames his image or raises his cholesterol.



Library News

By your software librarian,
Bob Ward

March is almost here and I haven’t fed your software hunger. Sometimes I feel like the lion tamer feeding his lair. All of you who hunger for software, here’s a couple disks to digest at the next meeting. Remember you can avoid having to stand in line to copy these disks. They are available from the treasurer already copied for 90 cents each.

#535 AmortizeIt looks like a good load calculator with many bells and whistles. Thinking about buying something on time, maybe you need this to see if you can really afford it.

#536 WP50ART1-3 - Looking for WordPerfect clipart. Try this disk. Both WordPerfect and PCX formats. Public Domain.

#537 WP50ART4 & 6 - More clipart in both PCX and WordPerfect formats.

#538 QP50ART5 & 7 - Third and last in a series of clipart for WordPerfect. **DEBUT140** - If you want to make colorful screen, including animation, try this one out.

#539 GEMUTIL6 - A large list of self extracting utilities. Just about anything you can think of for your utility needs.

#540W Windows programs:
CMPSKIT - Compose, preview and display fonts for Windows. **WMICON** - great way to assign Icons to Windows programs. **HOTSPOT1** - launch programs quickly from Windows. **123V1_0** - For very young kids, learn your numbers. **ABCV1_0** - Elementary... learn your ABC’s.

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RIGHTWriter for Windows

By D.T. Richmond SLO Bytes PCUG

Word processing is one of the important tasks performed on your personal computer. Whether you are a serious writer or just an individual writing a letter to Aunt Elsie, a good grammar checking program essential. RIGHTWriter for Windows, will perform all the grammar checking an amateur or a professional writer will ever need. In the September issue of HARD COPY, I reviewed an earlier version of RIGHTWriter for Windows. RIGHTWriter recently brought out an update, Version 6, of that program.

To detect what changes or additions had been made to the program, I studied the manuals of the two versions, chapter by chapter and page by page. The manual for Version 6 has twenty-one more pages than the manual for the previous version. This indicates the program has been enlarged, which it certainly has.

I believe the most important addition is the ability to install a RIGHTWriter button on the Button Bar of three popular word processing programs. They are, WordPerfect for Windows, Word for Windows and AMI Pro for Windows. This should prove to be a convenience for the users of these word processing programs. I had a little trouble getting the button setup for WordPerfect for Windows. Once I got it setup, it did make it much more convenient to check my work. Installing the button on the Word for Windows Button Bar proved much easier, with Setup doing all the work. I don't have AMI Pro so I have no comment on its installation. Chapter by chapter here are the changes that I found. Chapter One, which deals with installation, has three pages added. These are necessary to instruct, the user, in the installation of the RIGHTWriter button to the respective Button Bars.

Chapters Two, Three, and Four are unchanged. They cover the Program Specifications, The Tutorial, and Basic Skills. There are no changes in these chapters of RIGHTWriter.

Chapter Five, dealing with Analyzing Documents had two pages added to cover changes made in the dialog boxes, due to the addition of the spell checking feature. The Inserting Comments, Removing Comments, and the Producing Summary, dialog boxes have also been changed. They now show seven reckonings of, Average Sentence Length, Average Work Length, Punctuation Comments, Usage Comments, Grammar Comments, Style Comments, and Capitalization Comments. There are no changes to the Summary of Document dialog box. It still returns the Readability, Strength, Descriptive and Jargon indexes.

Chapter Six has been enlarged by five pages. This chapter deals with the use of RIGHTWriter's Menus. This is the real heart of RIGHTWriter, here is where the user sets the method and extent that the rules will be used analyzing their work. The Writing Style menu has three added categories. You now have eight styles to choose from. They are, Fiction, General, Manual, Newsletter, Proposal, Scholar, Technical, and Technical Manual. (Styles in bold type have been added)

A Grammar Equalizer is an addition also covered in this chapter. This is an option on the Style menu, which is a dialog box resembling a graphic equalizer. It has six scroll bars, one each for: Punctuation, Usage, Grammar, Style, Capitalization, and Structure. The Grammar Equalizer is designed to be set according to the users writing skills. Weak in an area, set the Equalizer to High. Strong in an area, set the Equalizer to Low. (This looks like a totally useless addition. I can't visualize using it to any extent.)

The ALL RULES option, also new, from the style menu, contains an on/off

option for all 110 flaggable offenses RIGHTWriter might find. You can see by using first, one of the eight Style selections, then a variety of All Rules on/off options. It is possible to obtain an almost endless combination of style and rule applications to be used in judging your writing.

Chapter Seven, A Guide To Better Writing, has been expanded by nine pages. This chapter gives the user a guide to understanding the comments RIGHTWriter gives when it analyses a documents. By the studying the comments RIGHTWriter makes, the user can learn how to improve their writing skills.

Chapter Eight, Interpreting RIGHTWriter's Summary has no changes.

Chapter Nine deals with Compatible Word Processors. Three pages less in this chapter. This is due to the reduction in the list of compatible word processors. Evidently, problems arose using some programs.

Appendix A and B have no change.

Appendix C The Edit Language Rules Command is new. This appendix deals with the method to be used in customizing the comments RIGHTWriter gives when it flags words or phrases. This is accessible from the File menu. The comments include, Slang, Jargon, Misused, Negative, User Flag, or Misspelled. This is useful when using terms unfamiliar to RIGHTWriter, (legal, computer, mechanical etc.) This appendix also deals with instructions

Next Page Please

Flash!

Have you heard about the latest Virus. Called Paul Revere, this revolutionary virus doesn't horse around. It warns you of impending hard disk attack: once if by LAN and twice if by C. :>)

Submitted by Betty Boyce (Blame her folks!)

IRQs and DMAs

Do You know where yours are?

By Stephen J. Kayner, Humboldt Users Group

I had free time on my hands the other day, so I decided to find something to do on the computer. I fired up the old killer-watts and sat facing the blank screen. There were several things I needed to do, and several things I wanted to do, just for the fun of it. There was the newsletter (needed to do), the homework for a class I'm taking (needed), the animation scene I started months ago (wanted to do), some photo scanning and retouching (wanted), video driver conflict resolution (needed), mouse driver upgrading and memory fine tuning (wanted). So what do you suppose I did? I played 137 hands of Tri-Peaks, an addictive form of Solitaire that is part of the Microsoft Entertainment Pack for Windows. Did I win? Let's just say I got some excellent practice.

Speaking of conflict resolution (I was, wasn't I?), I did something about a year ago that has saved me untold hours of time. I created a text file that has all the IRQ and DMA channel assignments, port addresses and assignments, and other I/O addresses. The importance of documenting these settings lies in the ease with which I can install new hardware and drivers, and the information I can provide to tech support if I ever have to call for help. Failure to document these settings can make installing new hardware and software a nightmare, and conflict resolution a daydream.

This information can be gleaned from a variety of sources. I used the Manifest utility included with QEMM386, the System Info feature of PCT (version 7.1), and QA Plus, a set of testing and diagnostic tools. There is an undocumented feature in **Windows 3.1**, a file named MSD.EXE (Microsoft diagnostics) that can be of use in determining your system resource allocations.

These tools are great, but I have found that it generally takes more than one of them to get all the information needed for a complete and accurate survey of

system settings. It takes some doing to gather all this data, but it is worth it, and you can learn a lot about your system in the process.

The text file I create starts with a list of the IRQ assignments from 0 to 15 (it will be only 0 to 7 on an XT type machine). This list just indicates what piece of hardware uses which IRQ.

The second part of my survey lists the serial (COM) and parallel (LPT) ports, which piece of hardware they are assigned to, and the address of each.

The next part lists the DMA channels, and their hardware assignments.

Then I have each piece of hardware listed with the various assignments for its addresses, IRQs and DMA use. To illustrate the value of having this information, just imagine trying to install a CD-ROM drive, or another hard drive interface without the following:

SoundBlaster

I/O address = 220
IRQ = 7 sound
DMA channel = 3
CD-ROM DMA channel = 0

Fax/Modem

Fax
I/O address = 310-31F
Fax IRQ = 10
Port = LPT3

Modem

I/O address = 3E8-3EF
Modem IRQ = 5
Port = COM3

Scanner

I/O address = 300-304
DMA channel = 1

Tape Drive

I/O address = 180
IRQ = 6
DMA channel = 2

There are four DMA channels, and these three cards have all of them occupied. The cards use four addresses. They use four IRQs. If there were a conflict during the installation of new hardware, would you know where to start resolving it? If you answer yes,

then go to the head of the class. If you answer no, then grit your teeth, and resolve to document your system settings. You have to create it only once, and update it when you change settings, or hardware. It's nearly as important as making regular backups, and I can't tell you how many times I have pulled out my "cheat sheet" to keep things sorted out.

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RIGHTWriter, cont.

on adding words and phrases to the Users Dictionary.

That sums up the changes made to Version 6 manual.

Conclusion: I found that this version is much stricter in flagging my rule infractions. I still use the default settings in analyzing my writing. I will soon experiment in customizing several style settings that might speed up the document analysis for my writing. Caution: Care must be taken when using Editing While Analyzing. Several times while editing documents, when a sentence is flagged, (highlighted) I have deleted full sentences when I only wanted to delete a word or a letter. I have yet to figure out just how to keep this from happening, but it is only a minor annoyance. RIGHTWriter for Windows is a very useful grammar checking program.

QUE software

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Quicken, Cont...

As advertised, Quicken works like a check book, but allows you to recall those check book entries in reports that will tell you all you want to know about how you spend and save your money. After choosing "categories" for your income and spending (accounting nuts call this a chart of accounts), you can go ahead and keep your checkbook on quicken, even writing your checks on your printer. (Most printers are supported by quicken, but you have to buy special checks from Intuit or a third party vendor.) Then the fun begins. At the end of the month, quarter, year, etc., push the button and find out just how much you really spend on computer peripherals during that time.

If you set up categories for normal home expenses, Quicken has already got them built in for you. If like me, you keep the books for a small business, then you have to know more than how to balance your checkbook, but it is still not difficult to master Quicken. The documentation, while not something to take along to liven up a party, is well done, and if you read through it you will be prepared to use many of Quicken's powerful features. The latest version comes complete with one manual, one "executive summary" type of getting started book, and one supplement for business users.

The current DOS release is Quicken 6.0. I have been using Quicken for about three years, and each release brings more bells and whistles to the basic program. This release is no exception. You can use the built in Check Free software to pay your bills electronically over the modem, take advantage of the "Quick Fill" feature, which essentially looks at what you are typing, matches it against things you have typed before, and finishes for you with a suggested entry. This is a real time saver for repetitive payments, but those of us not used to it from earlier releases will find it takes getting used to. If you are a real power user who in-

cludes sub-categories in your financial reports, Quickfill quickly becomes Quickpain. QuickZoom is a handy feature that allows you to view a report, and then see the ledger entries behind a specific budget total. For example, if you printed a report of monthly expenses, and utility expenses totaled \$250.00, Quickzoom would take you to a list of all the transactions that added up to that total. Finally, Quicken will display your reports in graphical form, but for some reason known only to those who want to sell version 7, it will not print them out!

Quicken also allows you to organize your payments in groups, and the program will automatically remind you at boot up if you have payments to make. For example, if you write a mortgage check, a phone bill check and a water bill check at the same time each month, then pushing a button to "execute this transaction group" will send these recurring checks to the register and the printer as well. You have one last chance to cancel them, alter the amounts, or print them as memorized from the past.

Quicken will track multiple accounts like savings and checking, and even do the work in reconciling your checking account at the end of the month. Quicken also has the ability to track credit card payments, set up liability accounts (if this makes no sense, skip to the next paragraph), investment accounts, and now Intuit will even issue you an Intuit Master Card or Visa and download into quicken your monthly statement. (If you prefer, you can get the statement on disk.) Naturally this last feature is an extra cost item.

Although Quicken claims to allow you to track accounts receivable and accounts payable, doing so, as I have for two years, is sort of like using your best spread sheet program for a word processor. (Intuit has remedied this problem now by introducing a more business oriented version of Quicken called Quickbooks, and I hope to tell you all about it next month.)

Finally, Intuit has add on modules that disappear into Quicken and enhance its ability to take care of business. Quickpay and Quick Invoice (the latter only for Windows) are two examples of these modules which you can add to Quicken and do payroll and accounts receivable.

Quicken is a lot more than a simple checkbook balancer, but it doesn't cost much more. Although it lists for about \$59.00, nobody pays retail for Quicken except the people who call the 800 number in their television commercials. It is discounted at all the usual places, including COSTCO. High tech, low price,—you've got to love it! Quicken won't give you any more money monthly, but you can sure keep track of it better while you have it!

Intuit
Quicken v6.0 M
Menlo Park CA .

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DOS Capital

by Saint Silicon

If/Then "Brother Square-Roots"

If you can park your head when all about you

Are crashing theirs and blaming it on you,

If you can trace yourself when all men doubt you,

And make a linkage from their doubting too;

If you can be in wait state and not be tired by waiting,

Or using line feed, don't just deal in lines,

Or being automated, not give way to hating,

And yet don't lock your code, or patent your designs.

Next Page Please (if you dare!)

Capital...

If you can scroll—and not make
screens your master;

If you can blink—and not make dots
your aim;

If you can meet with thruput and
with raster

And read those two impressions just
the same;

If you can bear to see the code
you've written

Pirated by knaves, to make a product
for fools,

Or watch the strings you gave your
like to smitten

And loop to build them up with
worn-out rules.

If you can make one heap of all your
winnings

And risk it on a product based on
MS-DOS,

And lose, and start again at your
beginnings

And never breathe a word of it to
your boss.

If you can force your hard-disk,
nouse and Windows

To serve you even when the power is
gone,

And stay online when there are no
more undos

And a cryptic message says: "All
memory is gone!"

If you can talk at trade-shows and
keep your virtue,

Or talk with bankers—nor lose the
common touch,

If neither journalists nor shareholders
can hurt you,

And the IRS knows of you, but not
too much.

If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With a trillion picoseconds of code
that's run,

Then yours is the Earth and
everything that's in it,

And—which is more—you'll be a
Nerd my son!

Now that the Evil Empire has collapsed
and IBM is known as the Unified Team
a new enthusiasm is spreading
throughout the dingy cubicles of cor-
porate America, That champion of

Democratic values, Chairman Bill, is
preparing to spread another wave of
pseudo-macintoshism, with an upgrade
to Windows—so called because it is a
pain to use. I mean really, what is a PC
with Windows? A Hackintosh? A
MacInDOS? A Xerox of a Macintosh?
How about a PC in drag—or is it click
and drag? What a GUI guy. The Nerd
knows how to dress. And guess what
you see when you look inside Win-
dows? Curtains for IBM. But hey no
problemo, they can just make a Home
Computer. IBM Home Computer, is
that like McDonalds Home Cooking?
The PS/1, which stood for: Please Sell
One.

And what is DOS anyway? Just CP/M
with an attitude right. You know DOS
was written by some stoned out
programmer, because upper memory
can only be used by operations that
load high. Yes it is a DOS eat DOS
world. And the difference between the
DOS 640K barrier and the Berlin Wall
is the Berlin wall is gone. Yes, DOS
uses a colon, for reasons that should be
obvious. C, which means anything
would be greater than DOS. Me, I'm
DOSTrophobic, that's the fear of being
locked in a small room with an XT run-
ning MS-DOS. But I get by on my 386
SX with a DOS shell and Windows.
Sure I use a PC and a Mac, I'm
RAMbidextrous and Mathochistic. I
mean DOS is everywhere, like Herpes.
If you do a lot of interfacing you're
bound to have it.

Why even the Russians have DOS now.
It's called DOSvadanya 5.0. It says
goodbye but it won't let you out of the
program. Divides the hard disk into
two large inefficient blocks—Eastern
Block and Western Block. "Ees 256
KGB comrade." Was originally written
for ICBM's. Ees twisted-pairestroika.
Also the Germans has a DOS. It's a
query based system: Vas is DOS? Ya
volt mein herr. Eine Pixel (a pixel is a
male pixie.) And the Swedes have a
DOS now—Hagen DOS. And there's a
New Age DOS: RAM DOS. Beep
here now. When you open a file it
asks: "Why have you created this for
yourself?" And when you logoff it
says "Thanks for sharing." My favorite

is the new Mexican DOS—DOS Equis:
It runs real slow and goes down from
one 'til three in the afternoon.

When I think of where we're going I
just get carried away. CD ROMs,
multi-media answering machines,
HDTV where everything ends the way
you want. Cyberspace, virtual reality,
Christmas in the year 2000.

Slobber space—the ultimate journey,
the frontal-lobe frontier. That shopping
mall in the human brain where seduc-
tive neon teenieboppers of the mind
await. Where violent gangs of free-
radicals roam the dark alleys of your
subconscious mind. And the clever
sub-locations of renegade cells invite
you to join their cancerous rebellion
against the powers that be, in a grim
struggle for physical immortality. Slob-
ber space, that drooling creation of zit-
faced technofiles with nothing better to
do than jack themselves into oblivion.
Their maggot white bodies rotting from
years of dietary neglect. Simpering
casualties of the Cartesian split. Latter-
day Calvinists, Methodists, Press-any-
key-bertarians. leaders of the Proces-
sant reformation, late in the age of PCs.
They wait for the final rapture to be
swept away in one great apocalyptic
synapse Or gate orgasm, lewd and las-
civious logic, trigonometric wet dream,
asexual asymmetrical, clone with the
wind. Scarlett O'Hara in a Styrofoam
cup of synthesized neurotransmitters.
This is cyber-bunk, where no one gives
a damn. Yogi-Bear Yogis, mind by Dis-
ney, body by mistake, the lost boys of
never-never LAN. The scrolly-grail
and a Merlin who programs in C.
Trying to storm the walled fortress of
the human mind. Storm troopers of
Aristotelian logic, Symbol-Simons,
PI'd pipers, leading the children to Bi-
nary Fairyland. Where Synth-derella
dances with the Clone Prince NOTzis,
SIG heil! Ve have vays to make you
think. Post-industrial anarchists—
nothing exists except my computer.

Typer, typer burning bright, in the of-
fice late at night, what immortal wand
or key, could frame thy failsafe cir-
cuitry, in what distant factories burned-

There's more —>

the fire of thine ICs. Ice seas of frozen emotion, great desserts of data, arid alpha-numeric moon, circling a green planet that is just out of reach.

Slobber-space the ultimate frontier. Training wheels on a five-year-old mind driving in circles around a body it doesn't understand. Slobber-space, an asphalt parking lot in an astral shopping mall, designed to sell hardware no one needs—hyperspace!

Sometimes people say to me "Get serious, St. Silicon." And I say "I thought you'd never ask."

Mainframe brain, my neural-net,
This computer is all wet.

Wet-ware, share-ware, mind on line,
Hard-disks stacked within my spine.
Semi-conducting bones, the rack,
The next instruction in the stack,
Parallel-processing runs this dream,
Teraflops, this earth machine
Edits programs on the fly,
Read the data with your eye.
Fiber-optic, laser disk,
Cryptic message: life is risk.
Instructions written in our genes,
Heuristic, cybernetic, machines,
Plug-compatible, full of juice,
A virus able to reproduce,
With subroutines and code that's tight,
The angels program late at night,
With wires leading to the source,
That Hacker in the sky, of course.
And there a mighty dynamo
Spins the light that makes it glow,
Computer with one extra part,
The algorithm of the heart.

Jeffrey Armstrong AKA Saint Silicon, is a humorist, published poet, screenplay writer and songwriter and an internationally known professional speaker. He worked for seven years in Silicon Valley for computer firms in sales and marketing. After that experience, he was given the divine mission of bringing laughter into the endless corridors and cubicles of the corporate world. To this end he founded the world's only High-tech religion, C.H.I.P., the Church of Heuristic Information Processing. Since then, in the guise of Saint Silicon, he has been performing for corporate groups around the world as the first High-tech comedian. He has had numerous appearances on national television and radio. As a creative consultant to technology firms he produces radio commercials, special promotions, trade show events and specially tailored comedy to enlighten, enliven and entertain.

Creating an Emergency Boot Disk

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An emergency boot disk allows you to boot your computer from the A: drive, thus bypassing the C: drive which may be damaged or otherwise inaccessible. In such a case, a boot disk can allow you to get into your system and diagnose (and hopefully solve!) the problem. An emergency boot disk is especially critical if you are modifying your system configuration and/or "experimenting" with your AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS files. One small mistake and you may be unable to boot off your C: drive.

An emergency boot disk contains the hidden DOS system files IO.SYS and MSDOS.SYS (or their generic equivalents) and COMMAND.COM. It should also include a modified AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS, also any device drivers and utility programs you might need. Create your emergency boot disk with these steps:

1. Format a disk in the A: drive with the /S switch (FORMAT A:/S). This will format the disk and copy the DOS system files and COMMAND.COM to the disk.
2. Copy your AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS files to the A: drive, then modify them to remove any programs or device drivers that aren't necessary to get your system running. For example, in an emergency it probably isn't necessary to load ANSI.SYS or a print cache, or connect to a network. Also change any path references in the AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS from the C: drive to the A: drive, since you'll need those programs and drivers on the boot disk.

3. Copy programs and drivers that remain in your modified AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS files from the hard drive to the emergency boot disk. For example, if you are running a program such as Stacker or Disk Manager, you'll need their drivers on the boot disk to access your hard drive.

4. Copy any utility programs you might need to the emergency boot disk. These should probably include a text editor, UNDELETE, UNFORMAT, and MIRROR, and diagnostic programs you use such as MSD or INFOPLUS.

5. Once you have your emergency boot disk set up, make at least one copy of it with DISKCOPY (DISKCOPY A: A:). Write protect all copies of the boot disk and put them in a safe and convenient place.

Kenneth Johnson is Training and Support Manager at the law firm of Mayer, Brown & Platt in Chicago. He writes a monthly Beginner's Column and is contributing editor for Hard-Copy, the Journal of the Chicago Computer Society.

DOT's a Pretty Good Idea

By Bob Ward

One of the easiest ways to navigate on your hard disk if you choose to work from the prompt rather than Windows program manager or other file menuing programs is to take full advantage of the DOTS. That's right, those little periods (.) you see at the top of a subdirectory when you type DIR.

Two periods at the top of your subdirectory represent the parent directory just about the directory in which you currently reside while one DOT represents the directory in which are currently in. If you want to list the parent directory type [DIR ..] (without the [] of course). If you wish to delete all files

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