

HandCopy

SLO BYTES PC USER GROUP ■ SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA ■ VOL. 10, NO. 6 ■ JUNE '94

What's Been, What's Here, What's Coming

— By Bob Ward, Secretary

I WISH ALL OF YOU could have made it to the last meeting. Between what CyberMedia had to display at the early meeting and Dwight Huffman's OS/2 presentation I think we had one of the best meetings so far this year. (George thought so, he didn't have to do the early meeting). He and Kathy even left early as Kathy wasn't feeling well (too many cookies or maybe she just wanted to get an early start on her column for this month.)

We did have one justified criticism about last month's presentations... the volume of some of our speakers (human). Although the lecture room isn't overly large, when you fill it up with bodies and absorbant clothing the volume level is diminished. I hope to have that remedied by this coming meeting with a wireless mike and sound system. Hey, keep giving us dues, and we'll pour it back into the organization for everyone's benefit.

I have several options for the sound system. We might try piping it through the overhead TV's as there is a VCR behind the front desk which might take the correct phone jack. We will also try just a little ole "boom box" which may do the trick if we can avoid feedback. In any event I hope you can leave

Continued on page 4

Stacker—a Poor Man's Answer to a Rich Man's Needs

— By Bob Ward

ASK ME THREE YEARS AGO what I thought of hard disk compression programs and I would have told you to avoid them like the plague. Over the years though, the development of these programs has matured. Fewer horror stories of "missing" hard disks, corrupted files and more are being reported. To this point, I had left all my file compression to PKZIP which is nothing like the type of "on-the-fly" transparent compression now available for hard disks.

Compression programs really took off when Microsoft offered DOS 6.0. Included was Stac's Stacker in their DoubleSpace program (ask the judge!) that came with this new version of DOS. I

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BER DECEMBER JANUARY FEBRUARY MARCH APRIL MAY JUNE JULY AUGUST SEPTEMBER OCTOBER NOVEMBER

Club Calendar

July 3

1:00pm—Bob Ward on How to Navigate SLO Bytes BBS.
2:30pm—Phil Wagner - Access the Internet through SLONET Service.

August 7

2:30pm—AskMe MultiMedia will present SST Software.

September 4
OPEN

October 2
MySoftware

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New and Interesting Stuff

— By Kathy Yakal

I HAVEN'T HAD A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP in over a month. Last month I was really busy when the newsletter deadline approached, but I told Bob I'd turn in a column. When the deadline came and went and I still hadn't turned in a column, Bob left a message on my answering machine.

Worse than the fact that I STILL didn't turn in a column, I didn't even return his call. The latter is, I think, pretty unforgivable. Out of spite, Bob (or somebody in his office) ate up almost all of the peanut butter cups I'd been storing there for the next meeting. I AM NOT MAKING THIS UP. So if you didn't get a peanut butter cup at the last meeting, now you know why. Though I suppose the whole thing is still my fault ultimately.

So anyway, Bob came into our office this morning, ostensibly for the purpose of getting a recommendation for accounting software for a friend, but I know he was really checking to see if I'd started my column. I had actually written a note to myself earlier in the morning to remind myself to write it today, but Bob wasn't about to be taken in by the word "column" scribbled on a Post-It note. So I figured I'd better get it done to clear my name.

Rather than rambling a lot this month (which I think I promised last column I wouldn't do), I'm going to write a little about some of the most interesting software I've seen lately.

The Haldeman Diaries on CD-ROM, from Sony ImageSoft. \$69.95, if I remember right. The entire text of the book, plus more text that didn't fit in the book, like a 120-page letter that Haldeman wrote (but never mailed) to the prosecuting attorney in the Watergate trial. Home movies that Haldeman took, plus lots of photos. You can search through the almost million pages of text to find a particular reference or person. Interesting stuff. Haldeman was originally going to donate this material to the Library of Congress, but decided before his death to make it available on a broader scale.

Sidekick for Windows, from Borland. Remember Sidekick, one of the original personal information managers? It's back, in Windows format, and based on a quick look, it may be major competition for today's best PIMs. I'm not sure of the price, but it's under \$50. Well worth considering if you haven't found a PIM that does just what you need, in exactly the format you need it. Calendar, to-do's, address book, and a slick notes feature.

Expert Personal Roots for Windows, from Expert Software. A \$14.95 genealogy program. I haven't looked at it, but Expert usually does pretty good stuff. I gave my copy to Norma Henderson to look at it, so you'll have to ask her how it is. Maybe Bob will even talk her into writing a review for the newsletter.

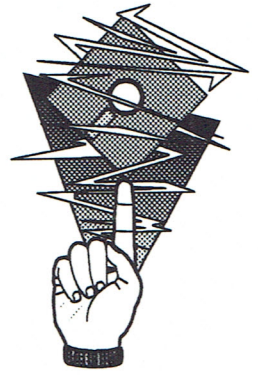
My Brochures (and Mailers) for Windows, from My Software Company. I won't say much about this because I haven't spent a lot of time with it yet, and since the company will be here to demo their products at one of the next few meetings. Designing and printing brochures can be difficult, but based on a demo I saw of this product at SPA, My Software has simplified it tremendously.

OK, what's that, like 550 words? Bob said I was supposed to write a double column this month since I'd missed last month. But we've missed the officers' dinner at the last two meetings, so I'm running out of material. I suppose I could make something up. Nah. Nothing I could make up would be better than the stuff that actually happens.

ZZZZZ ...

Library News

— From
Bob Ward,
Secretary



THIS MONTH WE'RE DEDICATING our software to communications. Included you will find some tutorials in the Internet, a RIP graphics communication program, off-line mail readers and more. Enjoy!

#606

YARN-057 - Yarn off-line Internet message reader.

BDGI201 - Big Dummy's Guide to the Internet. **WNMAIL** - Windows MDI E-Mail system for Internet.

#607

OFFLI156 - Off-Line mail reader for QWK files.

QWKTXT - QWK off-line mail reader from TomCat.

SHWRIP29 - Show RIP graphical communication files found on BBS's.

SLORIP - Ripterm communications program with RIP graphics.

SXR401 - Silver Express off-line mail reader.

#608

LISTSERV - Dartmouth's Listserv. Searches the Internet for files & subjects.

BGI13A - Beginners Guide to the Internet.

LIBRARIE - accessing on-line bibliographic databases on the Internet.

ZENINTER - Zen and the Art of the Internet, a beginners guide.

FEDUSER - Fed World, National Tech Info Server.

IYANOFF - Special Internet connections.

INTERN - A beginners Guide to the Internet (nice menu).

Parsons Technology Home Buyers' Companion

— By Dick Brandlon



SO YOU WANT TO BUY A HOUSE? Parsons Technology wants you to have one. All you'll need is an IBM or compatible PC running Windows 3.1 or higher, 4 meg of RAM, about 1.5 meg free on your hard disk, a down payment and The Home Buyers' Companion for Windows.

This new Parsons product has much to recommend it, despite several features of the program being available elsewhere on shareware (Amortize, for instance). Booting is a simple "setup" from DOS, which goes to Windows and presents you with an uncluttered screen. There is a set of icons neatly arranged along the top, labeled "Interview", "Closing Estimator", "Loanvu", "Tax Saver", "Living Indexes", "Shredder", "Calculator", "Refinancing" and, my favorite, "Dream Solver". There's also a "Help" icon, which we will get to later. Let's start from the top.

The Interview is short and to the point: How much money do you make, how much savings do you have, how much do you owe, how much of the purchase price do you want to finance and, of course, the interest rate, term, points and closing costs. After you click on "OK", things begin to happen. You are instantly presented with the "Dream Solver", which tells you whether you can afford the house or not (in which case, it presumably becomes the Dream Buster) and also gives some advice on what to do to make yourself more of a potential home owner ("increase your savings"). In the event that you could afford the house, it next presents you with a complete breakdown of closing costs. Another window shows you your tax savings over a specified number of years and the last window sums up the loan.

For the purpose of scientific experiment, I gave my wife and myself an income of \$45,000, savings of \$25,000 and \$400 per month of debt (hat). I figured the bank would give me a 30 year, 80% loan at 8% and 2 points (because I'm a pretty likable person) and that property taxes would run in the neighborhood of \$1600 a year. The program here was not too helpful, since it advised me to check with the other houses in the neighborhood and, with Prop. 13, this might be completely useless. Insurance, I guessed, would set me back another \$600 or so. All done? Off to the house market!

Presto! I can buy a home for \$104,630 with twenty percent down and a monthly tab of \$614. The Closing Estimator broke down my closing costs (to the nearest hundred) and came up with \$2400 plus the points, so all I needed to move in and turn on "Beavis and Butt Head" was a measly \$25,550. The Tax Saver window gave me my estimated tax savings over as many years as I cared to choose (my first year, I'd save around \$600) and the final window summarized the loan and gave me a chance to amortize it.

I said I'd discuss the "Help" feature, but the discussion will be a short one. Clicking on the "Help" icon gives you a list of subjects on which to click. It matters not where you are in the program, the list is the same. I would say that "adequate" is pretty apt in describing this. It's nothing to

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*Used with permission from the
Pittsburgh Area Computer Club*

PC INTERNET TOUR GUIDE Book

— Review by Phil Cutrara

THE AUTHOR OF THIS BOOK, Michael Fraase, uses a GUI called Minuet. He says that Minuet and its functions will help you cruise the Internet the easy way. A disk with these programs is included with the book. He calls the GUI a collection of power tools to streamline travel on the Net. Minuet is the first all-in-one Dos package that features e-mail, FTP, news, Gopher, and more. The book is also about how to locate, and make use of the most interesting places in cyberspace.

Fraase's book is about 284 pages long that include: eight chapters, appendix, quick reference, disk info, glossary, and a bibliography. The text is highlighted with tidbits of information that the author calls "wayfinding elements." These tidbits, and highlights that are also captured screen inputs from the Minuet program, make the book easy to comprehend. Another reason, why I enjoyed reading the PC INTERNET TOUR GUIDE is because Mr Fraase is cheerful.

Often times he uses the metaphor of a tour bus ride to describe ones travel through the chapters of his book. He writes, "we've been rolling along for some time," now let us get off the bus...and look at the valley from this viewpoint to see everything below. This is how you can write home about it...and this is how you can tell the world... B:) My smile!

Internet began with the interchange of electronic messages, yet e-mail has the advantages of freedom to respond, and the ability to talk to "billions?" of computers with one call. The Defense Department built it in the early 70's, so that this first national network could withstand area outages, and yet be

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WHAT'S BEEN

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your hearing aids home by the next meeting. (6/17 - just tested out a wireless mike with use of a "boom box". Think you will see some improvement. Next we'll try running our speakers voice through the TV's. Monday's project)

Has anyone tried PC911 which was demonstrated at the last meeting? I had the opportunity to install it on a members computer the other day. It's really a slick program. I look forward to writing an article about it in the near future when the next version is released.

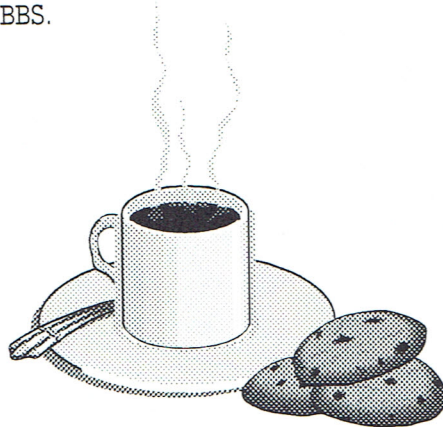
If last month's meeting wasn't up to your expectations, watch out for the next one. It's COMMUNICATIONS SUNDAY! I'm really looking forward to showing you the club's bulletin board system during the early meeting. That's right George is off again this month. Perhaps with all this vacation he is preparing an early meeting disk for August... hint, hint !']

Have no fear that we won't be able to log on because the BBS is busy. I'll fix that or my wife will at home when I call and tell her to bump that person right off the board. I plan on logging on as a new user for those of you who haven't had the opportunity to log on to the board before. I will then log back on as a "club member" to show you what is available in all the different areas of the BBS. This will not be a demonstration of telecommunications software though. We can't do all that in one session. So don't expect a step by step demonstration of which key I press to start a download process from my computer. Both ProCom 2.4.2 and Qmodem are in our library as shareware products. You may also be familiar with some of the software that comes with your modem although I usually recommend the former two products.

I have added a couple new futures to your bulletin board after some proding by the board's users. We now have TomCat or was that Polecat off-line mail reader. No longer do you have to run through

all the message bases or file areas to see what has happened since the last time you were on the board. Just hit (D)ownload Tomcat mail in the message section of the BBS and all new messages, filenames & descriptions, and new bulletins are put together in a nice neat package (QWK extension) and downloaded to your computer for reading while off-line. To efficiently read TomCat's mail you also need to download one of several off-line readers. I will be featuring OFFLINE (what an appropriate name) as part of my demonstration.

The second addition to the board which will not be completely implemented but may be available for show 'n tell is RIP graphics. If your communications package does not support these special graphics then the board will look the same to you as the BBS can automatically detect if your computer supports this feature. So what's so hot about RIP graphics? Well, besides the new enhanced graphics on your screen, how about the use of a mouse. Yes you can choose BBS features by moving your mouse cursor to the appropriate button and clicking. Almost like having Windows on your BBS.



After we gulp down a cup of coffee and swallow a couple cookies without chewing, club member Phil Wagner will be back on the computer showing us the local SLONET connection to the much publicized Internet. I did one of these demo's about 16 months ago. It was frustrating to many of you as not everyone could get an Internet account at that time. Ac-

tually it was available to Poly faculty, students and staff but not many others. It was about the time of my demo that Phil too felt frustrated at not being able to get onto the Internet. But rather than sitting back and doing nothing about it, he made several inquiries including those to the right people at Cal Poly.

Times are now changing. Internet can be accessed through Delphi and now locally through SLONET for a small monthly fee. If communications is your thing you must make this meeting. Bring pencil and paper and take copious notes. Sort of like being in school.



HOME BUYERS'

Continued from page 3

get excited about. If you're still stuck after clicking and reading the VERY short manual, then you can reach Parsons through Compuserve or via a pay call. You can order, however, toll-free at (800)223-6925.

An added feature, the Shredder (not to be confused with the New Times feature of the same name), allows you to print a form where you may list all your bills, credit cards, etc. and let the program tell you how long it will take to pay each of them off. This Parsons calls "a free copy of personal credit report."

Verdict? Not bad. Worth \$49? I would say no. However, given Parsons' frequent mailings and user discounts, the price could well come down to where it would be a nice thing to have in the file. It's certainly an easy and "user friendly" program and if you're in the market for a home, it can give you a real inexpensive "what if" tool for dreaming.

**The Home Buyers' Guide
Parsons Technology
One Parsons Drive
Hiawatha, Iowa 52233
319-395-9626**

The Hardware Handyman

— By Bob Shanteau, MBug,
Monterey PC User's Group,
June 1994

IF YOU HAVE EVER opened the case of your computer to install a new card, you probably know that you usually have to resolve hardware conflicts. Such conflicts come in 3 flavors: address, IRQ, and DMA. Most PC's are based on the ISA architecture. This architecture evolved from the original PC/XT standard in 1980, before micro-computer hardware design became sophisticated enough to handle such things by itself. We are now starting to see "plug and play" ISA cards being introduced, but it is unlikely they will become a standard in the near future. EISA motherboards are supposed to accommodate plug and play cards, but that is still not a reality for most users. Plug and play is standard in IBM's proprietary MCA design, but MCA motherboards are expensive. Most users are still using ISA or one of its variants, like VLB or PCI.

Each input or output device in a computer needs an I/O address. Not two devices can use the same I/O address.

IRQ stands for Interrupt ReQuest. When a device issues an IRQ, it's telling the CPU that it needs attention. The ISA architecture does not allow two devices to share the same IRQ at the same time.

DMA stands for Direct Memory Access. When a device uses DMA to gain access to memory, it is bypassing the CPU. Again, two devices should not share the same DMA channel, or else a conflict will result.

The most common conflicts occur with IRQ settings. Unfortunately, the ISA design provides for only a few IRQ settings. The serial ports COM 1 and COM 2 use IRQ 4 and 3, respectively. The parallel ports LPT1 and LPT2 use IRQ 7 and 5, respectively. The system uses IRQ's 0, 1, 6, 8, 13 and 14. That leaves

only 2, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 15 as possibly available. Every card I've seen is limited in what IRQ it can use. Most 8 bit cards (these have only one set of card edge connectors on the bottom) cannot access IRQ's 8 and above. It is possible that an IRQ conflict cannot be resolved, which means that either you buy a card with more choices, or take out a card before you can put a new one in.

Although a single tasking environment such as DOS can sometimes accommodate two cards with the same IRQ, it is not a good idea to do that. And if you use Windows, OS/2 or other multitasking environment, you must use separate IRQ settings.

The key to resolving address, IRQ, and DMA conflicts in your computer is to know your hardware. I suggest the following steps:

1. Never put any card in your computer for which you do not have the documentation. If your computer was assembled by a store, make sure they give you all the documentation for every piece they install. Some cards are self documenting, with jumpers and switches clearly labelled on the printed circuit board, but these are by far the exception. I keep all my paper documentation in a box next to my computer on my bookshelf.
2. In the documentation you should find tables or figures showing the jumper or switch settings for the card. If any jumpers or switches are not in their default positions, pencil notes for those in the documentation. Also, keep a master list of the settings for each card in their computer. Make sure to keep this list up to date, and keep it with the rest of the documentation. Do not lose it! Some people use software designed to find the address, IRQ's, and DMA channels of the various cards in their computers, but I find these programs to be notoriously unreliable.

3. When you install a new card, compare the default setting against those in your list. If there are no duplications, you can be confident that the new card will not cause any conflicts. More commonly, though, there will be a conflict, usually with an IRQ. If you are not using LPT2, then you can use IRQ5. If you are not using one of the COM ports, then you can use the IRQ usually assigned to it. There may be other choices, depending on your hardware.

With every new card, you can run into conflicts. There are modems, sound cards, network cards, video capture boards, additional hard drive and floppy drive controller cards, CD-ROM cards, cards for bernoulli or magneto-optical drives. Some programs even require that your video card use an IRQ. Sometimes avoiding conflicts seems hopeless. Take heart. Maybe someday we will have smarter computers. Until then, keep smiling as you shuffle those cards.



STACKER

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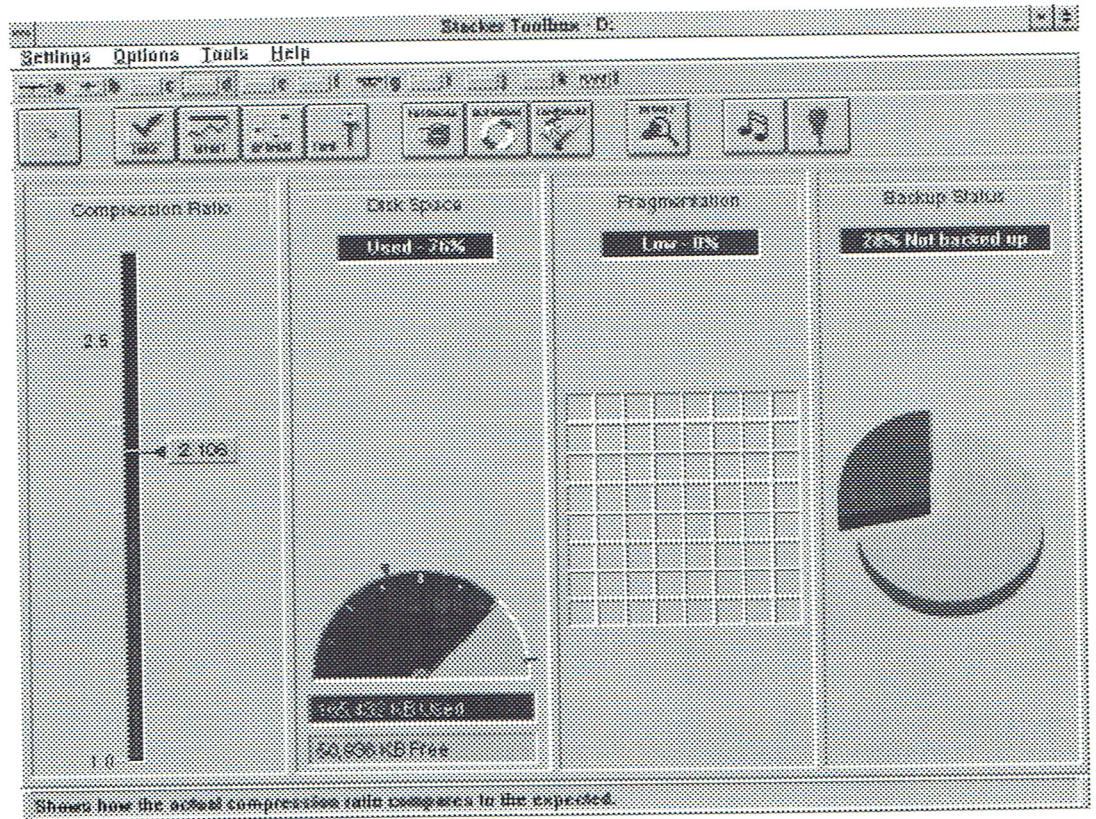
thought if Microsoft puts it out, it's got to work. For many of you though the horror stories were still circulating and came closer to home. Mostly because of the write-back cache in SMARTDRV. It didn't take me long to put the /X after that one. Rest assured, I didn't worry about turning off my computer while it was still writing to the hard disk. Then came 6.2 which addressed that problem and all lived happily ever after..... until the court case and the loss of DoubleSpace in DOS 6.21. But then Stac Electronics took their program back and enhanced it to be much better than DoubleSpace.

Between the use of their LZS compression technology and the ability to take all files less than 1K and put them together in a single cluster, they really squeezed the juice out of your hard disk. Where DoubleSpace can get a 1.9 compression ratio at best, Stac broke the barrier with an optimum compression ratio of 2.6:1 with some programs.

My poor ciling hard disks (yep that's 2 X 320 megs) were about full. I had less than 10 megs available on my D, E, and F partitions respectively. After replacing DoubleSpace with Stacker, which it does effortlessly I might add, all the sudden I had an extra 160 MEGS! Yes I was back in business, trying to place every file known to man on one computer. (Actually I think George Henderson takes that prize).

THE PROGRAM

Stacker can be run from DOS or Windows. I tried both ways on two computers to see the difference and found the results the same although I liked the installation in-



Shows how the actual compression ratio compares to the expected.

terface in Windows better. Within a matter of a minute or two, it really doesn't matter if you started in Windows as it leaves Windows to do most of the installation from DOS anyway.

Like any reputable company who believes in their software, they still suggest that you make a complete backup of all data before installing Stacker in the event that something unexpectedly might go awry. Hey, I was brave, I didn't back up anything.

In their setup you can choose from Express or Custom. I chose Express as I wanted an intelligent installation without me guessing on how to answer a bunch of questions. A custom installation does have some advantages though as you can compress only the free hard disk space, decide how much space to leave uncompressed or compress only the free space left on the hard disk. You can also change the cluster size of your Stacked drives.

Stacker performs several safety checks even before compressing your files. It runs Microsoft's ScanDisk which can take an hour

or two to perform followed by other checks of your hard disk integrity. After installing Stacker I expected to see a large increase in disk space and was disappointed in not seeing any increase. But, not was all finished to my relief.

After re-entering Windows, a Stacker program group was formed with a Stacker Toolbox Icon and Help file within. Herein lies the best part of Stacker.

TOOLBOX

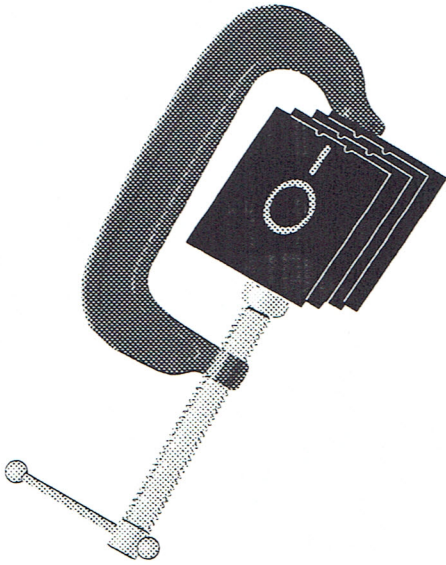
The ToolBox is the gauge on how well Stacker is doing. It displays 3 bars across the top: the Drive Bar, Tool Bar, and Status Bar. The ToolBox frame shows Disk Compression Ratio, Disk Space, Fragmentation and Backup Status. All these gauges are necessary to accurately assess the performance of Stacker on your hard disk compression.

The Compression Ratio is an average of the compression of all files combined. Double click on the bar within the box and it will show

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STACKER

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you the extra bytes received by using Stacker. The Diskspace gauge shows the amount of hard disk space used and the amount estimated to be free using the existing average compression ratio. You can further see exactly which files are compressed the most by entering your Window's file manager and clicking on the Stacker Icon at the top of the manager.

The Fragmentation box gives you an idea of how much of your hard disk is fragmented. The backup pie chart shows how much of your software has not been backed up. This depends on your backup software's ability to change the archival bit after the

files are backed up.

Alarms can be set for limits on all these gauges. For instance if you wanted to be notified when your hard disk becomes 10% fragmented this can be set up to sound an alarm or initialize a wave file alerting you to this problem. You can also set a time limit for updating your gauges. If you set it to update infrequently, any changes to the status of your hard disk may not be apparent until the gauges are refreshed at a predetermined time.

The Stacker Toolbox can also be accessed from DOS. Here you can compress additional drives, run integrity checks, optimize stacked drives and more.

TOOLBARS

Here's where I found out I wasn't finished with Stacker. There are several choices on the Toolbars. From here you can compress a disk, print reports, set up passwords so no one else can mess with your compression setup, and configure autosave so the data in the toolbox is periodically refreshed with current stats. Clicking on optimize gives you the opportunity to defragment your hard disk while recompressing your data or you can choose the quick optimization method which just defragments the clusters. The Full-MaxSpace gives you the best results but takes the longest time to complete. Each partition on my hard disk took over 1.5 hours... still worth it considering the extra 50 megs I gained on each partition.

The other nice feature found in the Toolbar is the Tune function. Choose any of 10 settings between maximum speed and maximum space and any future writes to the hard disk will be treated accordingly on that respective drive or partition.

STACKER ANYWHERE

A nice feature about Stacker is the ability to compress floppy disks. How about making a high density 1.2 Meg floppy hold 2.7 Megs of software. By compressing floppy disks you can more than double their carrying capacity. And you don't need to run them on a machine with

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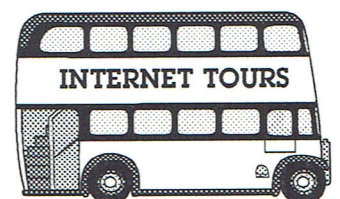
INTERNET

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able to function properly. The highlights to the rest of the story are in the chapter called, What Is The Internet? In the next chapter he tells us about Getting Connected, and then about the Network Infrastructure. Each chapter builds upon what you have learned as you read the "tour guide" or "how to use the Minuet interface and make things more enjoyable."

Since there is so much to know about a global community that has many different ways to express its ideas, it is a pleasure to find someone who shows us how to make Internet a lot more easy to understand. It is very strange to be asked to enter something on the Internet that you just got done entering, or get ready to do something as the menu is erased. Yet Minuet and its updates will save the Net user many keystrokes, and all that frustration. Internet is so vast that many more volumes will have to be written to help us discover better maps to the treasures, and Fraase is more like the real Indiana Jones!

This "tour guide" will always be remembered by me; because the author remembered to show us where the novice has difficulties. He makes clear the difference between the numbers, the dots, and the addresses. He tells us that Gopher can find the files, the documentation, and it can also help us get them into our PCs at home. You too will appreciate this extra care that Michael Fraase gave through out this book, and will undoubtedly continue to give it to us in his next book. The user group discount price for the PC Internet Tour Guide, and disk is \$17.50, with the use coupon. You can also order it from Ventana Press by calling 1-800-743-5369.



STACKER

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Stacker installed. Just type STACKER from your floppy and the disk becomes mounted and ready to accept all that extra data. On any computer using Stacker you can even make Stacker Anywhere transparent by changing the STACKER.INI file.

Just a little note about compression. Since ZIP files are already compressed they will show very little if any further compression using Stacker. Other files are compressed according to their makeup. For example the Toolbox report showed compression ratios of 17.4:1 and 15.4:1 for .ICO and .BAT files respectively and 1.8:1 and 1.7:1 for .EXE and .PCX files. The report format counts all the files with each extension on your

hard disk drive and gives you the average compression ratio for that type of file.

MANUALS

Stacker comes with two manuals. Actually one is a User's Guide of 75 pages, the other extolling the virtues of Stacker over DoubleSpace. The second book is almost as large as the guide. Personally I found the "Why Stacker Over DoubleSpace" manual a bit out of place. For one thing if you are reading why Stacker is better than DoubleSpace then you have probably bought the program anyway. Stac can rest on the fact that they make a better product and leave it at that. Why harass the sleeping giant, Microsoft. Although they lost the first round in court they have more lawyers and

much more money!

CONCLUSION

Although the price of hard disks is at an all-time low, most of us never have enough hard disk space to store all our programs (my hard disk looks like my garage). One answer is Stacker 4.0 for Windows and DOS which appears to fill the niche for those who don't want to purchase another hard disk. I found it well behaved and transparent while using my computer. I couldn't ask for more.

Stacker 4.0 for DOS & Windows
Stac Electronics
5993 Avenida Encinas
Carlsbad, CA. 92008
619-431-7474

Rescued by C++

— Book Review by Bob Stephan, MBUG

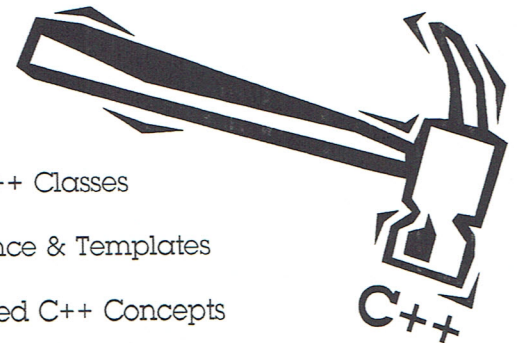
I NEVER THOUGHT I'D SEE a C++ book for beginning programmers, but this one might fill the bill.

Rescued by C++, Kris Jamsa, Jamsa Press, 1993, 250 pages, \$19.95.

Jamsa is a prolific author on computer subjects, and knows whereof he speaks. This short book lives up to its subtitle "The Easiest Way to Learn C++", and would be useful to beginners or experienced programmers who are transitioning to C++. The examples and exercises are short and to the point. It is interestingly organized into 35 short lessons, each of which teaches one salient point and should take only minutes to complete. Beginning with the first lesson you will start creating C++ programs, and by the time you have finished the last lesson you will have mastered an arsenal of C++ concepts that you will be ready to put to work.

The lessons in the book are organized into 6 sections ranging from basics to advanced:

- Learning The Basics
- Building Programs Using Functions
- Storing Information Using Arrays & Structures



- Using C++ Classes
- Inheritance & Templates
- Advanced C++ Concepts

Section 4 gets you started into object-oriented programming (OOP) by introducing classes. The class is the primary tool in C++ for OOP, and understanding classes is essential to using the powerful OOP concepts. Jamsa presents a sufficiently clear introduction to the idea of classes to understand the concept and get you off to a good start. Each lesson builds nicely on the information preceding it.

Overall, this book is a "startup" book and it accomplishes that purpose very well. It does not teach computer science or programming in general except as necessary to illustrate the C++ concepts. Putting all these concepts together into an application that would be useful to you is left as an exercise for the reader, as it should be in a book of this nature. Becoming familiar with the concepts in this book is like buying a tool chest and learning how to use each tool. Once you have the tools, then you are ready to go on to building something that would be useful to you or others.

Club Information

HARD COPY 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, editors, 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 and newsletter submissions to:

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 (805) 756-2164

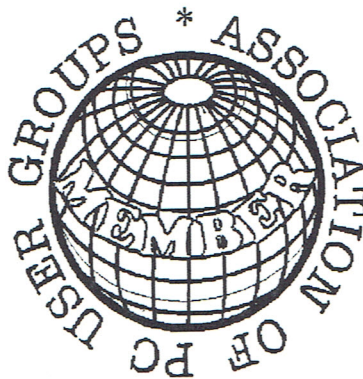
Meeting Times

General meetings are held the 1st Sunday of every month, unless noted otherwise in the newsletter calendar, at 2:45 pm in the Cal Poly University Biology Department, Fisher Hall 286.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGS)
 meet at 1:00 to 2:30 pm.

GENERAL INFORMATION SIG:
 Fisher Hall 286

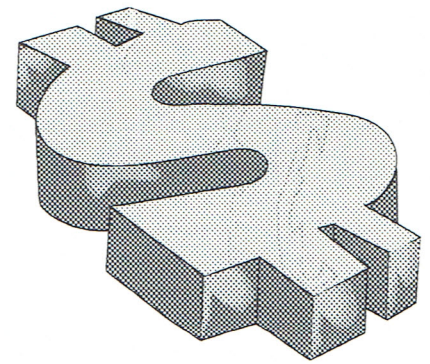
NEW COMPUTER USER SIG:
 Fisher Hall 292



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 Teri A. Sorgatz
 Computing Assistance*

Slo Bytes Officers

President Geo. Campbell
 Vice President Sam Powers
 Treasurer Marilyn Jenkins
 Secretary Bob Ward
 Editors B. Ward & T. Sorgatz



Treasurer's Report

**SLO Bytes PCUG
 Expenditures for
 May, 1994**

Beginning Balance	1,887.68
Expenses:	
Newsletter 05/94	(129.18)
BBS Phone Bill 05/94	(8.91)
Club Long Distance 05/94	(21.55)
Liability Insurance	(397.00)
	<hr/>
	(556.64)
Deposit 06/08/94	524.00
New Balance	<u>1,855.04</u>

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Floppy Disks 4-Sale at the meeting

DSDD 360K Formatted Floppy Disks with labels, tabs, & sleeves	55¢ Each
DSDD 360K Formatted Label Over Floppy Disks	45¢ Each
Generic High Density Formatted Floppy Disks (5.25" X 1.2 Mb)	70¢ Each
Generic 3.5" X 720K Formatted Floppy Disks	70¢ Each
Generic 3.5" X 1.44 Mb Formatted Floppy Disks	70¢ Each
New Library Disks	\$1.00 Each

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