What's New

By Bob Ward

OK, just like Kathy I've put it off long enough. It's time to sit here and crank something out as I know you are all waiting with unwavering anticipation (what ever that means).

Last month was great if you are into communications. I started the early meeting with a demonstration of our BBS; both from a 1st time log-on person to one who has been up-graded to member status on the BBS. After covering most of the points about our Wildcat BBS, Gus Thomasson finished up the early meeting with a demonstration of an offline mail reader. Now that we have TomCat up and running one can log on, get all the latest messages, new file names and bulletins and log off before the operater realizes it's a long distance call. Well, maybe not quite that fast but it does save you a great deal of online time. If you are having difficulty with the offline reader and/or TomCat, read the accompanying article by Gus and perhaps you will be enlightened. Actully you could also read the doc's that come with the software if all else fails.

After a short break Phil Wagner went back on-line to show us SLONET, which has two main purposes; it is both a means of accessing the interent and provides a means of finding a large amout of local information and news. I think I still have the county fee schedule on my hard disk somewhere. SLONET is still in the development phase but has the potential of a real information provider.

This month we're off telecommunications and on to multimedia.

Peachtree Accounting for Windows 2.0 (part 1)

By Jim Borland, SLO Bytes PCUG

Peachtree targets the small and medium sized businesses. It's a step above the checkbook-based systems because it uses the traditional double entry accounting method; every transaction shows at least one debit and one credit. An appendix in the "Guide to Getting Started" manual has an excellent Accounting Primer that reviews the basics of financial accounting.

The basics include knowing how to work correctly with debits and credits. Debits go on the left, credits on the right. Increases in asset accounts are debits and increases in liability and equity accounts are credits. Since revenue causes an increase in equity and expenses a decrease, revenues are credits and expenses are debits.

CLUB CALENDAR

• August 7 •

Super Show & Tell (SST) Multimedia Software by AskMe

• September 4 •

Borland's Sidekick for Windows

• October 2 •

MySoftware will present their software called MySoftware!

IN THIS ISSUE...

OK, Here's My Column, Bob!

By Kathy Yakal, SLO Bytes PCUG

I was just sitting here, minding my own business, trying to get some work done on a beautiful Saturday when everyone else in the world is out playing (except for Bob, who I'm sure is sitting in front of his computer even as we speak) when I decided to browse through my to-do list on Sidekick for Windows to see what I'd forgotten to do this week.

Hmmmm..."Column to Bob." What's that mean? I don't have an editor named Bob. Let's see. Bob. Bob. Bob Newhart. Bob Hope. Bob Redford. (Does anyone call him Bob, do you suppose?)

Oh, wait. BOB WARD. My SLOBYTES column. I expect that someday Bob is going to do what one of my old editors used to do: come charging into my office and push my chair up to my computer and yell, "Write the *%^&*()_$@ column!"

How could I have forgotten? It's only the 23rd, and the newsletter is usually out by now. But BOB took a little vacation HIMSELF, so I had an excuse to be kind of late.

I'm trying desperately to get someone from Borland to come to the meeting in September to demo Sidekick for Windows. Otherwise, *I'll* have to do it, and we all know what a fiasco my presentation was last time. [Shudder] We don't want that to happen again. If I end up having to do it, everyone be kind, OK? As a special bonus, I'll demo the new Crayola/Micrografx art programs.

Did anyone happen to watch "TV Nation" on July 20? It's a new TV newsmagazine hosted by Michael Moore, who made the movie, "Roger & Me." I missed it, but apparently Moore went charging into IBM president Lou Gerstner's office, and Gerstner wouldn't let him in. Moore stood outside the door and yelled something like, "Come on out of there and show us you know how to format a floppy disk!!!"

And speaking of employee evaluations, I'm looking at some software right now that I can't say much about because I'm reviewing the products, but you might be interested to know they exist. Two of them have been around for at least a year and one is brand new, but they haven't gotten a lot of attention yet. They're programs designed to help you prepare thorough employee evaluations. They help you decide what issues are important to cover in a particular review, and even offer suggested paragraphs (that you can edit for your own use(describing both positive and negative performance. They help you watch your content and language in hopes of avoiding legal problems, and suggest ways to do ongoing evaluations of employees so that you're more prepared the next time employee evaluations roll around. Their publishers claim these products can help you create better, more complete reviews, in less time than the traditional way.

They are: Review Writer, by Avantos Performance Systems; Employee Appraiser, by Austin-Hayne, and Performance Now!, by Knowledge Point. About $100 each.

For all you Peachtree fans: Peachtree Accounting for Windows 3.0 has shipped. Can't say anything yet about that one either, but maybe SOMEONE would be willing to review it for the newsletter.

Genealogy fans: Expert Software, which has been cranking out low-cost applications at the rate of about two a month, has come out with Personal Roots, a Windows family tree program. $14.95.

What else is new? I'm getting a new CD-ROM drive, and Bernice is going to take care of my old one for me. George and I have sure missed being at the last two meetings, but we'll be there in August. I've especially missed the officers' dinners, because I'm running out of material for my column and am having to resort to actually writing about software. Well, gotta run for now. I'm getting out of the office so I can stop whining about having to be here. See you at the Renaissance Festival this afternoon!

[Peachtree 3.0 for Windows??? Hmmmmm, we just finished reviewing 2.0 as you will see in this months newsletter. Naaa, we're not slow. Peachtree just sent it to us a month ago. Hope we get 3.0 before 4.0 arrives. Ed]

Bob Ward, our tireless and dedicated Club Secretary, lets his hair down and gets a great tan on his vacation.

WHAT'S NEW
Continued from page 1

Christina Howe from AskMe Software will present SST, Super Show & Tell. We'll see animation and sound effects combined for a dynamic presentation. If you wonder what to do with all those fancy peripherals you bought for your computer, come to the next meeting and watch Christina put SST through its paces.

The Car Buyers Companion Program

Review by DT Richmond
SLO Bytes PCUG

Parsons Technology, one of the most prolific software developers, recently brought out two new software programs designed to assist the home and automobile buyer. This review is devoted to "The Car Buyers Companion for Windows"

The Car Buyers Companion was developed to assist a prospective car buyer select a new automobile that comes with the number options the buyer requires and still fit the users budget. To accomplish this The Car Buyers Companion features a comprehensive database of over two hundred 1994 Vehicles, including sedans,coupes, wagons, convertibles, minivans and utility pickups.

Using the FINDER icon the user is able to look up vehicles that fit within the preferred price range and conform to the specifications as to the type of vehicle (sedan, coupe, etc., plus domestic or foreign or both), and whether front, rear or four wheel drive is desired.

The Showroom icon displays an icon for each of the 54 car manufactures. Click on their respective icon and another group of icons appears. These icons cover each of the models produced by that manufacture and when clicked on will show the: Type, Engine, Drivetrain, Airbag capabilities, Brakes F/R, 0-60 Performance, Fuel Economy, and Price Range for each of these models. In Car Finder you enter the specifications and price range of a car you wish to purchase and it will search and display a list of all cars that fit your needs.

To use the program you click the FINDER icon and fill in the blanks. The first and most likely the most important entry is the price range you wish to see. Then you chose the body style that suits your fancy. Next you decide whether you wish to Buy American or Foreign. And the last selection is for which drive option you wish. When all these options are selected click the Finder icon and there displayed is a list of all the vehicles that fit your price range and come with the options you have selected.

The other icons include a payment estimator, figuring base price, down payment, sales tax, destination charges, and gas guzzler/luxury taxes if applicable. The user can enter their current interest rate and loan term to calculate monthly payment for any make of car.

I clicked on the Payment Icon, punched up an Aston Martin Virage Volante. I found that the "Out the door" price with 7% sales, Gas Guzzler, and Luxury taxes added amounted to a modest $307,185. With no down payment, at 8% interest and the payments spread over four years my monthly payment would be $7,499.28. This is not a likely purchase for DT Richmond but it was very interesting none the less.

The Fuel saver icon proved to be even more interesting. Here I could enter a profile of my driving habits, that is how I might use my car, including how many highway and city miles I was likely to travel each day, then enter the price per gallon of gas and figures are displayed that would help me budget for the fuel used by my auto on a daily, weekly, monthly or yearly schedule. Very useful.

The Lease icon gives you a tool to work out whether it is to your advantage to lease or buy a car and what the lowest costs option will be.

The Loan Viewer icon provides a system to find information on various loan programs.

A Calculator and Help Icon complete the available Icon options. Comments: Hey I kind of like fooling around with this program. There is a load of useful information and it was very easy to use as are most of the Parson Technology programs I have worked with. It is my guess that Parsons Technology will by updating the data base yearly to give the current years makes, models, and prices for use with the basic program. Neat Program.

The Car Buyers Companion for Windows — $49.00
Parsons Technology
One Parsons Drive PO Box 100
Hiawatha, Iowa 52233-0100

Library News

Here's a little something for everyone. Hope you like it.

#609
PAGEMS - PageMaster, Windows paging program.
POKERM - PokerMatique - Video Poker.
GPOK10 - Another Windows poker program with sound!
PROGMAN - Program Groups for Windows. Make groups within groups in the program manager.

#610
RA_202 - A computer remote access program.
1SEA - Seaschool is an elementary school program for those just starting to learn. Great sound and animation.

#611
FTYPSPL2 - Friendly Typing and Spelling.
FP_212 - FProtect virus checker.
MPAINT38 - MagniPaint V3.8: Commercial quality editor for creating and manipulating small graphic images.
SCRCHV12 - Scorched Earth VGA video game.

Free **for the taking,** past PC magazines... 1986 to the beginning of '93. If not spoken for, they will be gone after the next SLO Bytes meeting.

Instant Access to
The Bulletin Board,
The Internet and The World!

The Information Highway: The "OFF-LINE READER"

By Gus Thomasson
SLO Bytes PCUG

The most wonderful things can sometimes come in simple unexciting packages. Who would think a simple thing like the off-line reader would be so revolutionary (See "Bob Ward's Bulletin on SLOBYTES BBS).. The thing is so useful and extraordinary that one might not see the incredible advantage of its usefulness with the a first glance. So many things attack our sensibilities in this commercial world of ours that it's easy to over look the few really great things that come before us. The Off-line Reader is one of those. Why, you ask skeptically?

One The off-line reader allows you to log on and off the bulletin board very quickly. About 1 minute for the first download at 14.4 and after that only a few seconds each time you log on the system just to update. This means much fewer busy signals each time we try to access the BBS system. It will never be busy for long when you need access to the BBS. That fact means more useful communications and file resources to all of us and at less cost. Providing we all use the off-line reader of course.

TWO You still get to use your own communications software in DOS or Windows and you may even use your own editor when replying to any messages off-line.

THREE Because you are off-line when reading or responding to messages, scanning and requesting files, or reading bulletins, there is no modem lag time. Response is as fast as your computer. So even if you have a 2400 BPS modem communications become independent of modem speed. Swell!

FOUR Because the off-line Reader also sorts and maintains a record of what we've already seen, the "Tom-cat" off-line reader on the BBS system makes us more productive in a shorter period of time.

FIVE The off-line reader cost only $5.00 if you possess the moral integrity to actually pay for the software you use. A Windows version is also available for a registration fee of $40.00

This article will give a brief overview to the acquisition, installation and use of the off-line Reader. Perhaps we'll have a work shop on its use at some future SLOBYTES meeting.

I got my copy of the reader (OFFLI156.ZIP) when Bob Ward dropped by and insisted I download it from the bulletin board since no one else seemed to have noticed it. As with many new ideas, it seemed too complicated at first, with too many concepts to grasp. As I got into the thing however and realized what we had here I became more and more excited about this revolutionary program. So here's an overview or as we in education call it, an advanced organizer. Then I'll go into more detail.

First you must download OFFLI156.ZIP from the BBS or obtain it from our library at one of the meetings. Create a subdirectory on your hard disk for the unzipped files and place OFFLI156 in that subdirectory. Unzip it and type OFFLINE while in the subdirectory where it was unzipped. A rather shoddy interface is presented. No its not windows but it does have drop down menus and is moderately intuitive.

Go to the dropdown menu setup, and select directories. It will ask you where you would like your incoming mail placed. The compressed file will be downloaded to that subdirectory each time you ask the counterpart of the off-line reader on the SLO BYTES BBS to send an update. This file will be named SLOBYTES.QWK. I had the Tomcat mail reader download my SLOBYTES.QWK file to D:\PROWIN\DNLOAD subdirectory on my hard disk. The reply mail file I created called SLOBYTES.REP is placed in the D:\PROWIN\UPLOAD subdirectory. Remember you will still use your own communications software to access the BBS. So in the setup routine of the off-line reader you should use the paths which are used by your own communications program. The Off-line reader will create these subdirectories if they do not exist already. The setup will also ask you for a path to a temporary working directory from which it will unzip and zip files to transfer automatically. I chose C:\TEMP since it already exists.

On the BBS you will find a new section called UP/DOWN_LOAD

```
                +-+     +-+                              _
Welcome to... |+++-+|   +++ |                          /"/
              -++- -+-++-++_ 3.02                      \"\
                                          /\_/\          |"|
   The QWK-Compatible Mail Door          ( _"_ )":":":"|
   for Wildcat! BBS                      ___-___ : : : W
                                         |_. :_:_:_:.|
                                         |.|.|      ||.|
                                         |.|.|      ||.|
                                         #/#/       #/#/

Compile Date: 92-02-28 at 03:02am

Commands:  [D]ownload QWK packet
           [U]pload REP packet
           [C]onfigure your settings
           [H]elp with Tomcat
           [G]oodbye, hang up
           [Q]uit back to SLO BYTES BBS
                                                        (Fig 1)

TOMCAT MENU [D  U  C  H  G  Q]: D
```

Tomcat Mail. Make that selection and do your first download. (fig 1.) The download file SLOBYTES.QWK will be placed in your default download directory.

After you have downloaded the Tomcat reader file, log off the BBS and exit your communications program. Go to your off-line program and load it. Select the the FILE dropdown menu and select LOAD QWK file. You have previously told the program where that file resides. In my case it was placed in D:\PROWIN\DNLOAD. Immediately the file will be decompressed and the system will ask you which message area you would care to read. I selected personal mail. Off-line shows the number of messages received and the number you have read. Here lies a little obtuseness. In the upper right corner is a small box which displays an "R", "A", "E" and "M". These letters define hot keys active in the view message area. The messages immediately are displayed. "R" represents reply to the present message, "A" is for Area list, "E" is for enter a message and "M" is for the message list.

In the setup you may choose the editor you want to use. I found the default editor provided by Off-line to be somewhat obtuse. Therefore I chose the DOS 6.2 (edit.exe) editor by specifying it in the setup menu. By pressing "R" to reply to the displayed message the complete message is loaded into the editor so it can be included as part of your response. After all, it may be days or weeks before the originator of the message receives the response. The original message might help the original sender remember what the response is about.

I have noticed difficulties in running this DOS off-line reader under Windows. It does not seem to update the message pointers or load the editor properly. Perhaps this problem will dissappear as I am now in the process of learning a Window's Off-line Reader.

I'm so enthusiastic about this system that I will be happy to help anyone who might need it as best I can without charge for 30 days after this article appears in the newsletter. I hope you enjoy using the TomCat off-line mail reader as much as I do. Good Luck and Happy Computing.

[*This program appeared last month as a shareware library offering. You can download it from the BBS as OFFLI154.ZIP or copy SLO Bytes Disk #607 at the next meeting. Ed*]

CNYPCUG Newsbytes, 2/94
Windows TIP:
# Free Those Control Panel Icons!

CONTROL.EXE holds a lot of applets that users need to frequently access, and I don't think anyone understands why Big Redmond decided that the average user must have access restricted to, say, the fonts control by obliging us to click on the Control Panedl icon first. I suppose it's for organization's sake, but I want to be one click away from the controls for System, TrueType, as well as how my printer is shared across Workgroups for Windows. To break these invaluable control utilities by substituting their name at the end of the string:

1. Pick the active Program Manager Group in which yhou want the congrol utility to reside.

2. From the Program Manager, select File, New...

3. Click on the Program Item in the New dialog box, and OK.

4. In the Description field, type TrueType, and in the Command Line field, type the following line exactly;

CONTROL.EXE MAIN.CPL FONTS

5. Click OK and you'll have Control Panel's fonts utility at your disposal.

Now, by default, Program Manager will assign the goofy icon of the Control Panel PC to the New TrueType icon. If you decide to free Des,ktop, Colors, and other utilities, you'll wind up with a lot of icons that look the same. To assign Control Panel's icon to your new TrueType icon, go to the File Properties. Select the Change Icon button. Type C:\WINDOWS\SYSTEM\MAIN.CPL in the File Name Field. Hit Enter, and all the "hidden" system icons will appear. Choose your favorite.
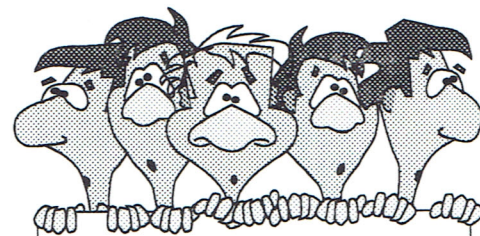
NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to the two new members who joined our club last month. We hope we can be of service. If you have any questions, just ask anyone who look like they might have the answer!

Nolen Harter
438-3464

John Romanelli
773-0665

PEACHTREE (part 1)

All financial transactions are recorded in a journal. When making a journal entry, someone decides what accounts should be debited or credited and the amounts of the debits and credits. Also, total debits must equal total credits.

Information from the journals must be "posted" (copied) to the appropriate accounts in the General Ledger. Every journal entry affects at least two accounts. Information in the accounts is used to create the various financial statements and reports.

Peachtree's forms-based graphical user interface shields the user from most of the raw accounting. Much of the data input uses dialog boxes on screens that look like the forms they represent, and the data is automatically entered into the appropriate journal. Debits and credits are handled transparently by the program, and the journal entries are automatically posted to the proper accounts. Complex tasks such as month-end closings are also dealt with automatically.

Data entry can easily be performed by someone with little accounting knowledge, but somebody in the office needs to understand double entry accounting to set it up properly and deal with special circumstances.

Installation of the software was clean and straightforward, with one unusual feature: before the program would run the first time, I had to call an 800 phone number to register the product. You can only use it a limited number of times without registering. A week or two later I received a post card in the mail giving me the name and phone number of my local support center (in Simi Valley, CA).

In Peachtree the highest level of data grouping is by company. You must set up a new company for each "set of books" you plan to keep, so each business or office will have its own "company" files. Several sample companies are provided with the program for inspection and study.

There are a few initial decisions to make when setting up a new company. The first is a choice between operating on a Cash or Accrual accounting basis. The choice between them is final, it cannot be changed later. If you choose cash basis accounting, the program will update your revenue and expense accounts when you receive or disburse checks.

Another important step is the act of setting up and maintaining your chart of accounts (you also need to enter budget amounts and a starting balance for each account). The chart of accounts is a list of places to enter transactions; it's the items you wish to keep track of. Peachtree comes with twelve sample companies for a variety of businesses, each with a suggested chart of accounts already set up. You can use any one of these as a template for your own company and customize it as necessary to fit your company's needs.

Another decision is the choice between using batch or real-time posting method. In batch posting, the transactions you enter are saved to a temporary holding area and get posted to the accounts in the General Ledger all at once as a group. With real-time posting, the transactions get posted one at a time as you save them. Batch posting is more efficient and results in better performance. You can switch between these two options at any time.

The program comes with an on-line tutorial and a written tutorial in the Getting Started manual. I never looked at the on-line tutorial, but the written tutorial is excellent. All the written documentation is quite good.

A nice feature is something called Smart Guides. At various points in the program the friendly accountant, a cute icon showing a bald guy (I like that part) wearing a green visor, pops up and gives context sensitive suggestions, hints, and advice as you move through the program. This option can be turned off if you wish.

Another helpful feature is the Navigation Aid, a bar at the bottom of the screen (just above the status bar) that produces graphical flowcharts as an alternative to the main menu. It contains icons representing the major functions (receivables, payables, general ledger, payroll, inventory, etc.) and if you click on any one of them, you get an on-screen picture showing how information flows through the accounting system.

For example, click on payroll and you'll get a picture showing that a payroll entry generates paychecks as well as updating the payroll journal, the general ledger, and the employee file. Click on any one of the items in the picture and you activate that function (it's a different way of using a menu to select your task). This option also can be turned off if you wish.

The first step in learning a new program is to fool around with the menus to see what features are available. The two most frequently used menu items are "Maintain" and "Tasks." Maintain gives access to your customer files, vendor files, employee files, chart of accounts, inventory items, jobs, and so on. Tasks is where you go to do actual accounting transactions.

It is important to have a record in your files for each customer, vendor, and employee your business deals with, so you can pick their names from a list when you need one for an accounting transaction. If you typed the name each time you needed it, there would be spelling errors or different nicknames, causing it to appear that the same person was more than one customer. Also, keeping lists of customers, vendors, and employees allows you to record biographical and historical information for each. All these operations take place on the Maintain menu.

Next month... Peachtree's transaction methods.
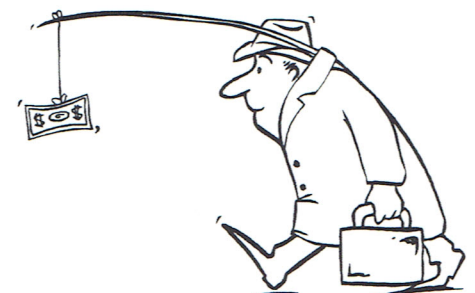
Dirty Mouse? Maybe Not!

By Marsha Huntsinger
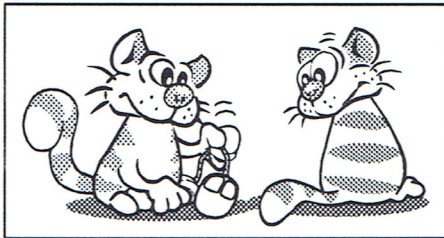
It was just a BABY. Only two months old. It stopped responding, just a little, once in a while. Then one day, all it would do was move the cursor up and down, not forth and back. The salesman said it just needed cleaning. I opened the back, look in vain for all the crud, goop, and hairballs he said I'd be amazed to find in there, and cleaned it anyway. No change.

So I took it back to the store. They said something about "invisible oils," cleaned it again, shot the poor thing with something from an aerosol can, put it back together, told me to clean it about once a month, and said "those cheap mice that come with the computers sometimes malfunction, and you will probably want to get a better one eventually." (I pointed out that I had a generic mouse that came free with some software, and it was still working fine, having been cleaned about twice in four years.)

Anyway, he plugged the mouse into a machine and showed me it worked fine. (Just like our cars always do when we take them in for service.) Actually, to be fair, it worked pretty well for a few more days. When it quit again, I unscrewed the back and took it off, hoping to discover something meaningful (other than dirt). Everything appeared to be in order. Just to be sure, I cleaned the rollers again, put it back together, and found that the stupid critter hadn't changed its behavior a bit. However, the left button didn't click normally, so thinking I had overtightened the hosing screws, I loosened them. Then the button clicked normally, AND the cursor moved normally! Curiosity killed the cat, maybe, but I HAD to open the thing back up and snoop some more; this time I pulled the circuit board out of the front part of the housing.

For those of you who have never performed exploratory surgery on a mouse, there are three metal rollers controlled by the rubber ball; one has a spring behind it, and the other two are stationary. In this case, the two stationary rollers turn two little wheels mounted in slots in the circuit board, and two little groves are cut into the front half of the housing, so the wheels can spin freely. If one were to get the housing screws just a hair too tight, and if one of the groves is at the WRONG END of the mouse, it stands to reason that the wheel would rub against the housing, right?

What? You say no mouse-maker in his right mind would put a housing groove where there's no wheel and a wheel where there's no groove for it to spin in? Well, they do things differently in China, where this $50 Logitech mouse was born. No, you can't turn the circuit board 180 degrees, because of the screw placements. When my husband explained the predicament to the store manager, he pulled one off the shelf and replaced it, just like that. When my husband brought it home, I found it was exactly like the old... one grove in the wrong place! So if you think I have a mouse with a few screws loose, you're right! But it works. Probably want to get a better one!!!

CMOS: More Than Complementary Metal Oxide Silicon

By Bob Schmidt

Inside most IBM AT clones sold, there is an elegant solution to the problem of configuring the computer system: the internal CMOS RAM. A major problem for the early PC or XT ;user was figuring out how to set the motherboard DIP switches. Motorola solved this problem with a new integrated circuit, the MCl46818. It not only replaced the switches, but also made available a clock. Integrated circuits made of CMOS material need very little current to operate; thus, they make excellent memory circuits. With the help of a small battery, they will retain their programmed values almost indefinitely. Now software can be used to configure your computer. This software takes the form of a setup program provided by the BIOS. With this program you can install or remove equipment and use the setup program to record the changes. What kind of information is stored in this RAM? The following list is a good example:

1. Clock information
2. Diagnostics status byte
3. Shutdown status byte

Computer Industry News—Darlene Ells, NEOPC, April 1994

Don't A$$ume $upport I$ Free. In theory, today's computer pro-grams are supposed to be easy to use and self-explanatory. And there is also a Tooth Fairy and an Easter bunny. Fact is, even the most user-friendly program is sometimes daunting. A growing number of software companies— and some hardware companies—are now charging for technical support. Competition has required companies to offer their products at lower price points. In some cases, such as programs that are bundled as part of computer systems, the profit per unit is quite low. They can wipe out that profit on a single technical support call. This shift does raise some issues when shopping for software. The next time you consid-er buying a program, ask about technical support policies so you know—in advance—what to expect. The trend could prove to be a competitive advantage for some smaller companies seeking to lure customer from the larger software publishers. By offering free technical support, companies can buck the trend and distinguish themselves. Another trend is to use online services such as America Online, CompuServe and the PRODIGY service to provide support.

Is Your Upgrade Degradable?

By Louis Ritz, SouthWestern Indiana PC Users Group, Evansville IN.

To upgrade or not to upgrade, that is the question: Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to place reliance on The allega-tions in the ads that all has been made well, Or hold to that with which we are familiar. An upgrade we must first install... Install, perchance to crash; ay, there's the rub; The hours ill spent in learning new embel-lishments Which save but seconds in the execution, Or even seeking succor from the manual This must give us pause.....

It seems that every mail contains at least one flier which pro-claims that programs you have grown to love are now outdated, and that unless you part with a pittance (plus, of course, an addi-tional pittance for shipping and handling), you will be, too.

Is this a come-on, or for real? Or perhaps a bit of both? Who dreams up all of these "improvements", and why?

Well, the software publisher is in business to sell software. If you have a word processing or spreadsheet program with which you are not completely disgusted, it is unlikely that he can sell you another just like it. So it is to his best interests to devise new bells and whistles to tempt you.

Furthermore, no program is perfect; and as millions of users find new ways to screw it up, or exhume obscure bugs missed by the beta testers, fixes are incorporated into the code. (Did you realize that you can receive every interim release and upgrade from WordPerfect for only $200 a year?)

Finally, the competition is adver-tising features which might cause you to consider switching your allegiance; and so similar features find their way into upgrades.

So the product gets bigger and perhaps less buggy (although the bugs in the features added tend to offset those removed) But is it better? This is for you to decide; and it may be better not to be too anxious to be the first kid on the block with Version x.xx. Word gets around when there are problems (as Point Central conceded by mailing Version 7.1 to everyone who had registered 7.0, without asking permission, let alone compensation, to prev-ent a stampede to Norton).

The situation has been com-pounded by the gradual, grudging ac-ceptance of Windows, which has caused such giants as Lotus and WordPerfect to become schizoid, issuing differing versions for DOS and for Windows. (WordPerfect is even publishing separate monthly maga-zines for its Dos and Windows versions.) Who needs both?

Before you send for the new toy, it would be worth asking (or checking some reviews to find out): (1) Will the upgrade require investment in additional hardware (like more memory, or maybe a mouse?) Will it overwhelm my hard disk? (2) Do the additional features speed things up or slow them down? (3) Does it contain more than the permissible panoply of bugs? (4) Are the new features something you need, or even want? (5) Will you have to relearn proce-dures with which you are now com-fortable?

Some things may be just too new.

CMOS

4. Diskette drive type byte - drives A & B
5. Fixed disk drive byte - drives C & D
6. Equipment byte (# of diskette drives, display adapter, and math coprocessor)
7. Low and high base memory bytes.
8. A checksum byte to confirm the validity of the stored data.

This is wonderful, but what happens when the battery fails after three or four years? Your machine will halt the boot process with an error message. It is time to replace the battery and then reconfigure the computer. Of course you know the type and size of floppy that you have in your machine, the type of hard
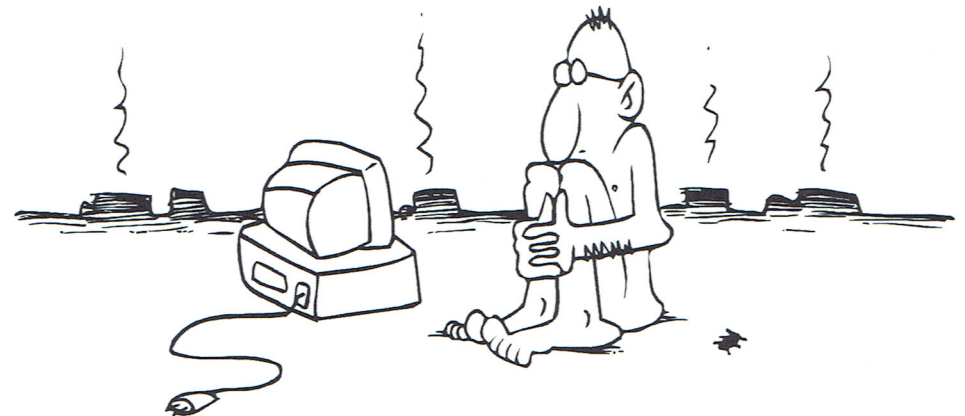
drive, the number of heads and cylinders, right?

This is the hard part. Most people do now have this data at hand. They have to examine their hard drives, sometimes by checking the original paperwork, sometimes by examining the hardware its self. Once the drive manufacturer and model number are known, a call to one or two computer stores can get you the information required to the setup program, (the number of cylinders and heads on the drive.) Most people know that their 3.5 inch floppy is A: or B:, so this is not a problem. Is there an easier way? Yes! Run the setup program now, copy down ALL the information on a small piece of paper and tape it to the underside of your computer. **It will be there when you need it.**

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.

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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:

BOB WARD, SECRETARY
2100 Andre Ave.
Los Osos, CA. 93402
(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.
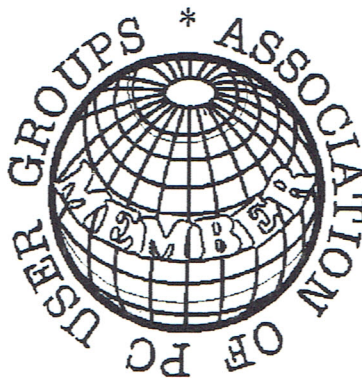
Special Interest Groups (SIGS) meet at 1:00 to 2:30 pm.
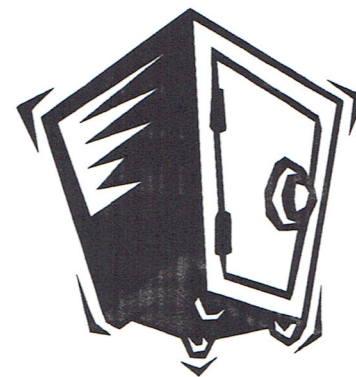
General Information SIG:
Fisher Hall 286

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 — June, 1994

Beginning Checking Balance	+	1855.04
Expenses:		
Newsletter 6/94	-	129.18
BBS Phone Bill 6/94	-	8.91
Club Long Distance 6/94	-	14.49
Mustang Software BBS Upgrade	-	170.00
Facilities Rent	-	257.00
	-	580.46
Deposit 7/6/94	+	416.00
Dividend 6/30	+	13.62
	+	429.62
New Balance	+	1704.20

Slo Bytes BBS
(805) 528-6172
14,400 / 8 / N / 1
PC Files (9,000+)
and Message Section

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
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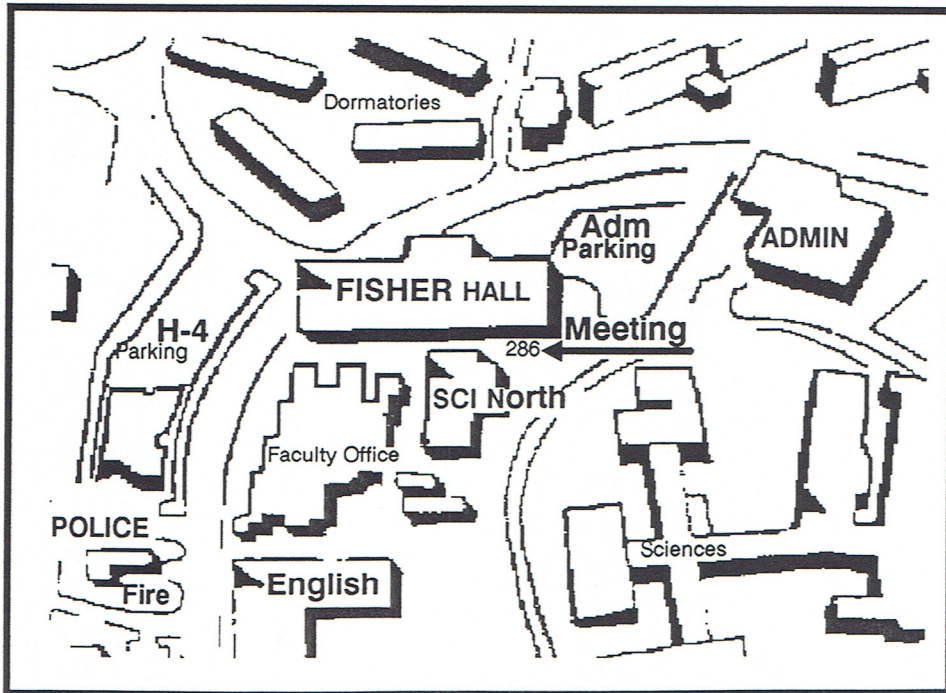
To Grand Avenue

GRAND AVE. - Enter campus via Grand Avenue. Proceed until the street dead-ends on campus. Turn right. Continue past the Administration building, and Fisher Science located to your left. Turn right just beyond Fisher Hall into the H-4 Faculty-staff parking lot. Walk across the street through Fisher Science. The meeting is on the opposite end of the building. Refer to the map for meeting locations.

Hwy 1 / Highland Ave. - Enter campus via Highland Ave. Proceed under the railroad bridge and bear to the right at the fork in the road. Drive past the Library which should be on your right. Continue on North Perimeter road through 2 stop signs. Take the 2nd left turn beyond the Fire Station into the H-4 Faculty/Staff parking lot. Walk across the street through Fisher Science. The meeting is on the opposite end of the building. Refer to the map for meeting locations.