

HARD COPY

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE SAN LUIS OBISPO PC USERS GROUP

Volume 13, Number 1

www.thegrid.net/slobytes/

January, 1997

Is This Really News?

• By Bob Ward

IT SEEMS LIKE I HAVE TO RISE to a certain level of anxiety each month before I start this column. My adrenaline has to be pumping before my fingers will work. It's time, especially with the holidays quickly approaching. Since I probably won't get a laptop for Christmas, I can't count on sitting in my easy chair and knocking something out for the club newsletter. So I will take the more traditional approach and sit in an uncomfortable chair, stare at a screen with weird colors and retype my typo's until they're no longer typo's.

First, my thanks and gratitude to Lynn Boisen for all the effort she has expended getting our speakers lined up for this coming year. It's not an easy task, but we have commitments for about the next 3 months. Also to

Here's the latest update on the Utilidor, the "trench" around campus. The road in front of the stadium on to campus is now one-way heading off campus. The only two entrances are Grand Avenue and Highland (off Hwy 1). The inner perimeter road closest to our lecture hall may also be closed as they are installing a new water line. You can call me at home the night before the meeting for those of you who use the handicap parking places on this road.

That last electrical storm took our modem on the BBS... or coincidentally it no longer works. By the time you get this newsletter, I hope we will be up and running again. I ordered a new modem, had it sent FedX and spent 3

Continued on page 5

Silicon Travel

• By Bill McNamara

AS THE COIN COUNTER for SLO Bytes, I've had the opportunity to talk to numerous members on the subject of places to purchase computer components. I have made many trips over the years (sometime twice a month) to the Silicon Valley and located some of the better, less expensive places, to purchase new and used computer components. I have not discovered all the best places to shop, but I'll drive a mile to save a buck!

Sil-i-con, as found in the dictionary has the following meaning:

1. *A nonmetallic element occurring in the earth's crust in silica and silicates, having both an amorphous and a crystalline allotrope... etc.*

Silicon Valley has a different meaning all together:

Continued on page 6

Club Calendar

JANUARY

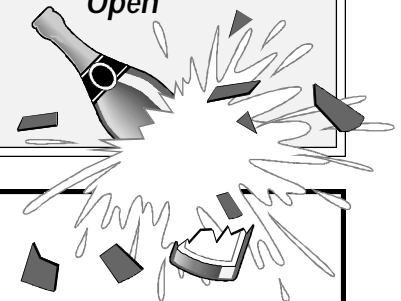
The Minden Group
IConnect

FEBRUARY

MidiScan:
The Ulitmate
Music Generator

MARCH

Open



In this issue...

Is This Really News?

Bob Ward 1

Silicon Travel

Bill McNamara 1

Parting Words

Kathy Yakal 2

User Group Facts

MindShare UPDATE 2

WhenDows 97?

Bob Hunt..... 3

Library News

Bob Ward..... 4

New Members

..... 4

Favorite Internet Sites

Bob Ward..... 5

Publicize Your WebSite

..... 6

Club Info

..... 7

Parting Words for an Old Friend

THERE ISN'T AN EASY WAY TO DESCRIBE who **George Henderson** was. His wife and best friend Norma wrote a lovely tribute to him that was published in the obituary section of the Telegram-Tribune, but like so many of you, I never knew a lot of details about George's past. I know he dearly treasured his family. I know he worked for PG&E before he retired. I know he lived a very interesting childhood, part of the time in a lighthouse at Point Sur.

George Henderson accomplished a lot in his life, both professionally and personally. And he took time to appreciate the things we often forget about as we rush around. He loved nature and babies and young animals, particularly his kitties. And he smiled a lot, even towards the end of his life. I'll never forget George's smile. You couldn't help but smile back.

George had struggled with health problems for years, but he never let them get in the way of what was important in his life. I remember a time when he had to go into the emergency room on the Saturday night before a SLOBYTES meeting. He made dang sure the doctor released him in time to go to the meeting. If I recall right, he even scheduled one heart surgery so he'd be able to make the next meeting. In my five years with SLOBYTES, I don't believe George ever missed a meeting. Maybe he never did.

I remember how upset George was when Sam Powers became ill with cancer and died. Besides the fact that George really enjoyed Sam, it just didn't seem fair to him that someone a couple decades younger than him should die, and he should live.

That was another one of the themes I saw running through George's stories and his life: fairness. People should be fair. Businesses should treat customers with respect, and fairly.

Many of us noticed that George looked tired at the last two SLOBYTES meetings he attended. After one of those meetings, when it was particularly warm outside, George (Campbell) and I decided to just invite George and Norma over for a drink, instead of going out to dinner. Unfortunately, we neglected to tell Bob Hunt and Bill, who spent a great deal of time sitting at a table for six at Hobee's while George and George and Norma and I sat on our patio and drank wine and ate crackers and cheese. I feel bad now that we robbed Bill and Bob of one of the last opportunities they were to have to see George, but I'll always remember George Henderson sitting on one of our green plastic chairs, drinking a Michelob Dark, and grinning at our new little kitten, Scout.

I asked George that afternoon if the beer was OK, because not everyone likes dark beer. "Oh, is this dark beer?", he responded, smiling and holding the glass up. "It just tastes good to me."

That was George. Not pretentious, not an untrue bone in his body. The front row at SLOBYTES meetings won't ever look right again. I'll always wait to hear George Henderson's voice booming, "QUIET!" when Bob can't manage to keep the crowd noise level down.

So this New Year's Eve when you raise a glass, let's remember George Henderson. And Keith. And Jules. And other members we lost this year. We're only a part of each others' lives for a few hours each month, but we sorely miss our SLOBYTES friends when they leave us.

—Kathy Yakal

The Latest Facts About User Groups

*From Microsoft Mindshare
UPDATE Newsletter, Vol 2,
No. 3, December 1996*

TO FIND OUT THE FACTS about user groups, we took a survey at our Fall 1996 User Group Officers Reception at COMDEX on November 18 at the Mirage Hotel in Las Vegas. This year's survey told us what 283 of your peers (from 133 user groups representing 35,670 members) had to say.

—The average user group, of less than 1,000 members, has **268 members**.

—Within the past three years, 58% of the surveyed user groups have seen **membership increase**; 34% have decreased; and 8% have stayed about the same.

—Nearly all groups expect an increase in **membership growth** in the next three years; a handful expect a decrease; and 5% expect to stay the same.

—For 58% of those surveyed, new users represent the biggest **area of growth** in membership; business professionals and business owners, 27%; retirees, 11%; and developers, 4%.

—In answering the question, "What **industry trends** are your group members most interested in?": 155 said Internet/Web related topics; 27 said new applications/new software/direction of new software; 26 said hardware/productivity software/suites; 24 said Windows 95/operating systems; 23 said home entertainment/ multimedia; 15 said Windows NT/networks/ server software.

In total, 79% think that the rise in popularity of **the Internet** will help their groups' membership; 3% think it will hurt; 5% say it will both help and hurt; 7% are unsure; and 6% think there will be no effect.

226 respondents said their trip to **COMDEX** was funded out of their own pockets; 26 by their companies; 16 by their user groups, and 9 by a combination of funding.

In this survey, 49 were **first-time attendees** to Fall COMDEX as a user group representative; 124 have attended from 2 to 4 times; 61 between 5 and 7 times; and 46 have attended 8 or more times.



WhenDows, 97?

• By Bob Hunt

DESPITE THE POPULARITY OF WINDOWS 95 and its' wide adoption by the dominant business community, I still find many people who are holding out from upgrading until the product is "perfect." Of course, there are always some folks we call "anal retentive" who view any minor change in their lives with excessive trepidation. But I normally don't count computer owners among that class.

Neighs

They say; "I'll just wait until they get all the bugs worked out." "I don't want to be a guinea pig for unproved software." And; "All my programs run just fine on my system the way it is now." Or like Wardy says; "Can't we all just go back to DOS 2.1?" **

Yeas

1. There's never been a piece of software written without at least a bug or two. For very robust applications, blatant errors patched and work-arounds are developed for many less noxious bugs while infrequently occurring anomalies are largely ignored until the next major upgrade is released. It then follows that the revision, while adding features such as speed, power, usability, or increased functionality, usually fixes most of the old bugs and introduces another wave aberrations. That's the way it is with software, especially modern software which is comprised of squillions of lines of code and depends upon external drivers or libraries which may themselves be flawed or incomplete.
2. There are no foolproof methods for testing a new application prior to release. Inevitably it will have to be real users with varying skills actually doing work for many hours, months, perhaps years, under varying conditions to truly debug software completely. Users can find ways to break software that experts could never dream of. And software is produced by the efforts very talented individuals and teams, not by machines. Software is a modern form of artwork. The Mona Lisa is not perfect. Software, like art is never *perfect*.
3. IBM DOS version 1.0 worked just fine along with both of the programs that were available to run on it. Sure it only understood single-sided 5.25" floppy diskettes but that was all you got with the first IBM PC. With the introduction of the double-sided diskette drive came the DOS version 1.1 upgrade to support it. One didn't have to upgrade, but it doubled your storage capacity if you did. With the introduction of the XT with hard drives, came DOS version 2.0 to support their vast 10 MB capacity. Two other important features added were sub-directories and support for installable device drivers to simplify the process of upgrading DOS to support new hardware, used now for all manner of peripherals such as scanners, sound cards, CD-ROM drives and the like.
Rather than continue this chronology up through all revisions of DOS and Windows, suffice it to illustrate that each new upgrade offers increased capabilities, many of which may not be immediately apparent. The trade off is always some requirement to learn more and do some things differently. In every case, with the possible exception of the DOS 4.0, it has been worth the effort and expense to upgrade. Millions have found it so.
4. Lastly there is the case of Bobby Ward, a man of such prodigious productivity that I find myself unworthy to renounce his view on the matter. Over the

Continued on page 4

Library News

• By Bob Ward, Secretary

LIBRARY SELECTIONS FOR DECEMBER
#705

HACA035—this one's called Happy Calendar. A simple PIM for happy people using Win '95

#706

FIT12116—16 bit Frame generator. Frame-It is an HTML frame generator. Generate complex framesets, using only your mouse.

FIT12132—Win '95 version of same program.

JWLINR12—Prints CD jewel box liners (Win '95).

#707

DANCE10H—Screenance Ver 1.0H is a Music Animator & CD Player. Turn your computer into an audio entertainment center with integrated CD player and mixing board.

#708

DATA_REC—Tiramisu v3.01, data recovery software.

CPROMPT5—Right click in Win '95 and drop to DOS in your current directory.

PROTX300—Protect/encrypt COM & EXE files.

MODMN101—shows real time information about your modem.

Other files which look interesting but are too large to include in our library. They can be downloaded from the internet software sites listed below.

WTCHR10A—Prompts the user to take breaks & displays exercises. It is designed to help people avoid or recover from repetitive strain injuries. (www.simtel.net/pub/simtelnet/win95/health/wtchr10a.zip) 3.4 Meg.

STICKY12—Sticky notes for your Win '95 desktop. (www.simtel.net/pub/simtelnet/win95/desktop/sticky12.zip) 2.2 Meg.

WB96J32I—WinBatch 96j is Win '95 batch language. (www.simtel.net/pub/simtelnet/win95/util/wb96j32i.zip) 1.9 Meg.

You can copy disks #705-#708 during the meeting in our club library or purchase them on disk for \$1.00 each.

Win97

Continued from page 3

years, he has written a zillion batch files to do his numerous tasks. Often he forgets the name of the batch file, so he creates another on the fly, and he types like lightning. I have seen his system, and I believe he still has every batch file he ever wrote on his hard drive. Same for icons. Could be that Bobby can do nearly anything with DOS 3.2 faster than I could do with the latest operating system. Except keep a US Robotics modem functioning. ***

Ways

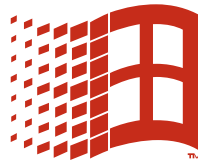
Aside from that, what's keeping the rest of you from getting on with the move to Windows 95? It's now 97 and the OS is over two years old,

three if you count betas. In computer terms, four months is a generation. So backup your system, turn off your screen savers and catch up to the world.

Snail or Email me your objections via the club address, Website, or BBS and we'll see if a future article can be made from the responses.

** Actually you can probably run DOS 2.1 as long as you aren't running Win '95 which has a mind of its own.


*** God made hands before computer mice. My philosophy is, "learn to type, then when your mouse dies you can still do something with your computer." DOS LIVES (somewhere)



New Members

Here's a couple new members who got in on last months Christmas give-a-way. We thank you for joining our club.

Alice Hammond

Eugene Yuan 

Donations

OUR THANKS to the following individuals who brought us a little closer to our new projection system.

**Sawyer, Wilson, Vivrette,
Bates, Tardani, Jarl,
Wallenstein, Watts, Rew,
Breglio, Smyth, King, Faeth,
Wallace, Cornel, Gold, Day,
Ward, Prince, Kuncir, Ludwig,
Brandlon, Romanelli, Vore,
Clark, Sicher, Cookie \$\$\$.**

Really News? Continued from page 1

hours trying to get it to work with our BBS Wednesday night. After spending another half hour with a tech from Practical Peripherals we concluded the new modem was bad. So another trip to UPS and another wait for another modem. Sorry for any inconvenience this might create for you BBS fans, but my extra 2400 baud modem just won't cut it on the BBS.

This coming month, I will host a short demonstration on Acrobat Reader during the early SIG's. The latest version will be available for copy or purchase in the library. Come see how you can read our newsletter which was created with Acrobat exchange. Our past newsletters can also be downloaded from our homepage for your viewing with Acrobat Reader.

You've heard the story. We're looking for one good person to do a job and it might be you. No, I'm not an enlistment officer in the Army, just a person looking to share the club responsibilities with other volunteers. Here are the qualifications: You must

have an internet account using either Netscape or Microsoft Explorer, an email account and know how to easily send both messages and attachments, be willing to subscribe to a couple shareware listservers through your email account, know how to use cut & paste between two Windows programs and be willing to spend 3 or 4 hours a month looking at shareware. You will be responsible for choosing shareware for our club library, grouping programs to fit on 1.44MB disks and providing me a list of filenames, short descriptions and locations at which they can be downloaded. This will be a monthly project that must be completed on the 10th of each month so shareware descriptions can be placed in the newsletter. I'll do the easy part... Continue to download the files, copy the disks for the library and create the README statements for the binders.

Wow, how do I make the CHALLENGE a "challenge"? Robert Robinson has become our first 2X winner finding the answer in about 2 days. (I'm sure he didn't spend 2 days looking for it though). You realize that we created the challenge to ferret out the best Internet Guru's and then we

will enlist as a SIG leader for the internet :-)

After some consultation with other club officers we have decided to change the eligibility to one year. Hopefully this will inspire some of you budding Internet users to be more challenged.

So what's happening next month? The Minden Group will be here Sunday, January 5th. They make a great product called IContact. Everyone has heard about "video phones". Even Flash Gordon used them! Well they are now reality, and with the explosion of the Internet they are within the reach of anyone with a computer. This is a desktop video telephone, movie recorder and video capture all in one. The software installs in minutes and you are ready to go. All you need is an Internet account. You dial through a local phone number (no toll charges... sorry AT&T) and can talk to anyone with a similar setup any where in the world! Pretty exciting stuff. And how can you help the club? Just show up to the meetings. A full house assures us of returning vendors and speakers for years to come. Have a joyous and safe holiday. I will, as soon as the newsletter is in the mail. [REDACTED]

Favorite Internet Sites

• By Bob Ward

THIS IS THE SEASON OF GIVING. Why not send a "virtual" floral bouquet to a friend. Just logon to:
www.virtualflorist.com/
and send those Cyberspace flowers to a friend.

OK, now that you have sent virtual flowers, also send along some greeting cards to all your Cyber buddies. No charge involved here. Try www.pacprod.com

I've looked at several "multiple" search engines this past month. Try one of these and see what you think:

metacrawler.cs.washington.edu:8080/index.html
searches multiple search engines at the same time.

<http://guaraldi.cs.colostate.edu:2000/>
sends your query in parallel to many search engines. This will even search for shareware with same name. [REDACTED]



Silicon Travel

Continued from page 1

1. An industrial region, approximately 20 miles long between Palo Alto and San Jose, and home to numerous microchip manufacturing and design companies.
2. An area of great enjoyment where fun can be had discovering stores filled with computer components (Bob and Bill definition).

We enjoy shopping the valley and the adjoining east bay community of Fremont. Most of you have all heard of Fry's Electronics and CompUSA. Both computer chains have value prices on a small number of items. The free magazines, Microtimes and Computer Currents, are an excellent source for finding smaller stores with periodic dynamite sales. On Wednesday, Friday & Saturdays, The San Jose Mercury News has a variety of ads from local computer companies. It has been my observation that starting with the month of October, the prices on many computer components stabilize or even go up in price during the Christmas Season, with prices falling below average after the holidays.

Computer prices are good for five feet or five seconds after you purchase them, then the prices seem to fall as you look over your shoulder. It's rare to see components go up in price. So do not be discouraged when you purchased a hard disk six months ago for \$ 269.00 and now the price is \$189.00. This is the way of the computer business.

Enough ramble for now. Sit back and let Bill do the driving (that's what Bob Ward sez anyway. He has trouble finding the bathroom north of Paso Robles). In Sunnyvale, on the Lawrence Express Way going west, you will find Fry's Electronics on Kern Avenue. Its approximately 3 to 4 city blocks from Hwy 101. Weird Stuff computers was across the street, but they relocated and took their Weird Stuff with them. Directly across the Lawrence Express Way from Fry's is a

small re-marketer called Action Computers. NCA Computers is approximately a half mile further west on the Lawrence Express Way at the corner on Kifer. By now Bob is getting car sick but hastens to hurl by planting his head in a Computer Shopper.

When one finishes with these stores, head west on the Lawrence Express Way to CompUSA which is located just south on El Camino after it goes under the Lawrence Express Way (the road, that is).

Bill's Short Descriptions

CompUSA: A great place to get diskettes on sale with mail-in rebates for further discounts. They have a large selection of disk storage boxes, giant software displays and competitive new printer prices. I've found better prices on CD-ROMs, hard drives, modems and cables elsewhere.

Action Computers: This is a re-marketer. They deal mostly in used components with a few new parts and programs. Their prices on out-of-date programs are excellent. Would you like Microsoft Bookshelf '94 for \$10.00? They have it. Also find a good selection of inexpensive CD ROM programs for kids. Computer cables are reasonably priced. Also find add-on batteries for your motherboard. Finally check out all their switch boxes for monitors, printers, and telephones.

Fry's Electronics: Well we all know this one. Computer memory (both 72 and 30 pin simms) has been going real cheap. Modem prices are competitive. Here's a sample from the December 14th, San Jose Mercury News: \$59.00 for 33600 fax modem. Hard drives are also inexpensive. Printer selection and prices are good, especially when they are on close out. There's a great selection on CD-ROM kits along with CD-ROM's sold separately. Sound

Publicize Your Web Page Here For FREE!!!

THE **HARDCOPY** EDITORS would like to do an article in the near future featuring **SLO Bytes members' personal or business WebSites**. If you would like your WebSite URL to be included please e-mail Bob Ward at bward@thegrid.net as soon as possible. *Members only please!*

cards are available in a variety of prices. Video cards can be purchased in generic boxes that are brand names for a reduced price. For those of you that have tape backups in your computers, I have purchased 2120 tapes for as little as \$5.00 each. If you walk in at the right time you might find some accessory items mark down as much as 66 percent below the every day retail price. Fry's has many computer systems set up and running. It is a great place to try out a system before looking elsewhere for a better price.

NCA: Some of the best 72 pin memory prices in town. Every time they have a sale on memory, they try to beat their old price. Usually I've found better prices on components at other stores. But don't write them off. When they get an oversupply, you might find it heavily discounted.

Ok, we're on our way home. We've stopped in San Jose for dinner at Original Joe's, filled ourselves with great Italian food and put the car on auto-pilot for Atascadero. Bob Ward will take over the driving half way home as I've had too much wine to drink. And Bob Hunt... we'll he's in the back seat sleeping all the way home.

Next month join me in another trip north to Silicon Valley and look at another group of stores we frequent.

Club Information

HARDCOPY 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 \$25 per year. Newsletter only is \$16 per year. Full membership entitles you to our monthly newsletter, full use of the public domain software library and discounts at local computer stores.

Article Submission: Deadline for submission of articles is the 15th of each month. Articles should be provided in ASCII format without any type of formatting from your word-processor including tabs, indents, extra spaces, or highlighting. We prefer articles on disk but will accept 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:

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 Info SIG / Internet SIG:
Fisher Hall 286

Win95 SIG / Beginners SIG:
Fisher Hall 287

Slo Bytes Officers

President	Geo. Campbell
Vice President	
Treasurer	Bill McNamara
Secretary	Bob Ward
Editors	B. Ward

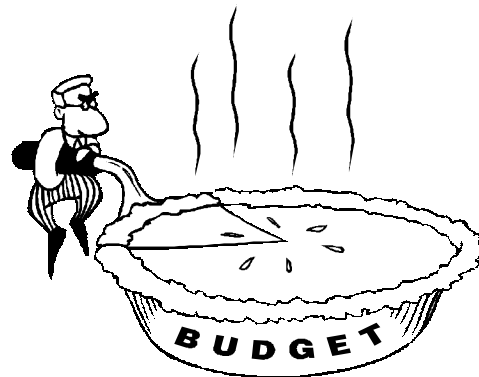


SloBytes BBS

(805) 528-6172
28,800 / 8 / N / 1
PC Files (16,000+)
and Message Section

SloBytes WebSite

www.thegrid.net/slobytes/home.html



SLO Bytes PCUG

Expenditures
December, 1996

Beg. Chk. Bal.	+	956.54
Expenses:		
Newsletter 11/96	-	134.49
BBS Phone	-	10.70
Long Dist. Cgs.	-	26.05
Membership Cards	-	46.65
Corporate renewal	-	10.00
Room Rent	-	375.00
	-	602.89
Deposit 06/04/96	+	486.20
		486.20
New Balance	+	839.85

Projector Fund

Opening Balance	+	133.18
Donations (Dec)	+	271.00
	+	404.18

Goal: \$4,000

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

All Disks fully guaranteed against defects.