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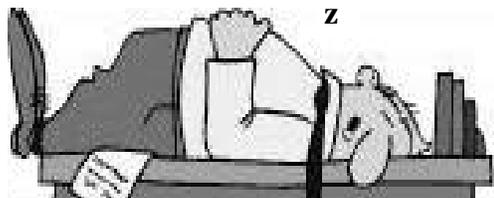
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The Outer

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Newsletter of the Channel Islands PC Users Group



May 1999
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Visit our web page at: www.cipcug.org
e-mail: helen@cipcug.org
OS/2:<http://www.vcnet.com/os2-corner>

The Friendly Computer Club Helping Make Computers Friendly

 ★
 ★ **Attendance at the** ★
 ★ **April 1999 General Meet-** ★
 ★ **ing** ★
 ★ **141 Members & Guests** ★
 ★ **We also welcome** ★
 ★ **4 new Members** ★
 ★

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COMMAND.COM

by Toby Scott, president

As announced at the April general meeting, we have a new addition to The Outer Edge this month: Symantec has purchased full page ads in the newsletters of all the members of the Association of PC Users Groups' as a way of demonstrating support for users groups (see page 4). They are paying us our full-price for the ad.

Naturally, we are quite pleased. It costs us about \$600 every month to produce the TOE and it is, by far, our largest budget item. If we could get a handful of national ads we could count regularly, we would be a long way towards real solvency.

What I'd like to ask the members of this club to do is quite simple, but can easily be misconstrued, so let me try to state it as clearly as possible: If you are thinking of purchasing a category of software that Symantec produces, and if you haven't already spent time and energy learning another program, and if the costs are nearly identical, and if the reviews are as favorable, I'll like you to give the nod to Symantec products. Please understand that you are not being requested to buy Symantec products. Only if you are planning to buy anyway, and it is a purely equal choice between products, would we request you tip the scales in favor of Symantec. Their stable of products is pretty highly rated in all the computer magazines anyway (with a few notable exceptions), so this should produce satisfactory results for you and your computer.

On a completely different note, your board is working feverishly (or as close as we ever get) on a club CD to distribute to new members and to make available for sale to existing members for a nominal charge. It will have

(Continued on page 4)

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The Association of PC Users Groups**

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Advertising is accepted for computer related materials, businesses and services only. Rates are for Camera-Ready copy (clear, clean black and white masters). Typesetting and graphics are available at an additional fee.

SIZE	Cost/Issue
FULL-PAGE (9½”H x 7¼”W).....	\$50.00
HALF-PAGE (4½”H x 7¼”W) or (9½”H x 3½”W).....	\$30.00
QUARTER-PAGE (4½”H x 3½”W).....	\$20.00
BUSINESS CARD ad.....	\$15.00

Discounts for multiple issue (minimum of 6 months) Ad copy deadline is the 10th of the month of publication.

**Contact The Outer Edge Advertising Mgr.
Gracia Marks at
(805) 484-2572
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Executive Committee Meeting Notes

April 1999.....By Paul McCaustland

The April Executive Committee meeting was held on Tuesday, April 6, at 7 p.m. at the home of George and Arline Lakes. Present were Toby Scott, George Godwin, Helen Long, Bob de Violini, George and Arline Lakes, Paul McCaustland, Ralph Duchacek, and Harold Oxman.

The meeting began with the TOE report. Printing expenses were \$472.97 and postage costs were \$49.81. After subtracting ad revenue and other miscellaneous, the cost per copy was 91 cents with the cost per member per copy being \$1.32 for 364 members. Symantec has purchased a full page ad via the APCUG national advertising plan. It will run in the May issue. Deliveries to ZIP codes other than 930xx continue to be late. Sending TOE via First Class mail rather than bulk would cost 55 cents per copy and would make our bulk rate higher by cutting the total number of pieces mailed. One possibility is to publish TOE in Acrobat format on the CIPCUG

page. Once in Adobe format it could also be sent to members as an e-mail attachment. The club does have a copy of Adobe Acrobat 4.0 thanks to Adobe Systems. Helen Long volunteered to take a back issue, convert it to PDF format and post it to the club page.

Membership chairman John Godwin reported April attendance at 129 members and 12 visitors. We had 23 renewals, four new memberships and one reinstatement. Renewal percentages are 92 percent February, 82 percent March, and 58 percent April.

Treasurer Howard Oxman reported that the club made money during March. The details are published elsewhere in this issue. Cash on hand is approximately \$4,000 with \$800 in escrow for VCOL. We will need to upgrade the overhead projector sometime in the near future. Ours is functional but is dimmer than current models and is unable to display the higher resolutions required by some software.

Vice President George Lakes said the program schedule is unchanged from last month. Enfish Tracker Pro is the featured program for May; June, Microsoft Office 2000, July, chiropractor Dr. Adam Story on ergonomics; August, PowerQuest showing Partition Magic and Drive Image 2.0 plus Lost & Found. We still need to schedule something for September and are hoping to get a genealogy program vendor to commit to this date.

SIG Coordinator Ralph Duchacek has the following SIGs scheduled:

May 6 (Thursday), Rabia Yeaman will do a SIG on the introduction to MSEXcel

May 10 (Monday), Robert Provart will do a SIG entitled DOS fun in Windows 98

May 13 (Thursday), Toby Scott will do a SIG on MSIE 5

May 20 (Thursday), Paul McCaustland will do a SIG entitled "Introduction to Linux"

WebMaster Helen Long has been busy as usual. Surf to the site (www.cipcug.org) and see for yourself. As reported above Helen will put last month's issue of TOE into Adobe Acrobat PDF format and publish it on the CIPCUG page.

President Toby Scott reported that the ISP billing is still behind schedule. Work and family obligations have prevented him from working on the project. Billing will not go out until after April 15. Terry and Bill have recently moved their ISP office from the 14th floor to the 3rd floor at 500 Esplanade Drive. When the move is complete we will have a tech session.

There is a small snag in developing the new-member CD-ROM. It cannot be read from some older model CD-ROM drives. A software upgrade should cure this. We are also finalizing the software we wish to include.

The welcoming committee appears to be working. A club member sits with visitors at their first meeting, makes them feel welcome and answers any questions the visitor may have.

The officer candidate search appears complete and the list will be published this month.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.



Find What's Missing in May

By Bob de Violini

CIPCUG members who have been with us for a while are familiar with Gary Saxer's presentations. He is a presenter extraordinaire, and this will be his fourth time with us. In the past we learned such things as the differences between a kilobyte and 1,000 bytes and all about the magic way to work with zipped files. This time he'll be showing us how to track and find things when he presents Enfish Technology's Tracker Pro software.

Gary is the Enfish Evangelist, and helps anyone interested in solving "Information Overload" to find ways to help themselves. He has been actively involved in the design, testing and marketing of Enfish Tracker Pro, the world's first Information Tracker.

Tracker Pro is a completely new type of software. It integrates all your information from your hard drive, your network, and the Internet and lets you work with it based on what it's about, rather than how you created it, what you named it, or where you put it. The program continuously monitors all your information sources and actually reads everything for you.

It finds, cross-references, prioritizes and displays all relevant e-mails, Web pages, and user-created files in an organized environment where you can view them instantly (including graphics) and work with them more effectively. Plus, it alerts you to any relevant new information you may have missed. It doesn't matter whether the information resides on your hard drive, local network or the Web. It automatically keeps track of everything for you, without ever touching your original files.

So be here for an enjoyable and informative presentation by Gary Saxer. I am sure he will have some special pricing and a number of door prize items available for the members.

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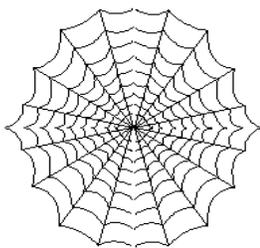
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CIPCUG'S Web Page News

By Helen Long

Have you checked out the Web Site lately? I seem to have a problem with getting the revision dates on the index page to match those on the individual page, so I am going to remove the dates from the bottoms of the page, and the most frequently revised pages will then have their revision date at the bottom of the front page, with the latest revision on top. Occasionally my "spotters" will remind me of misspelled words and when I make a "cosmetic" change to a page, I may not list it under the page revisions. (Keep up the good work—that way I know the pages are read once in a while!)

Another new item: Be sure to especially check the CIPCUG site in the last two weeks of the month. The minute John Weigle picks up the TOE from the printers, he calls George and Arline Lakes to set up the folding committee. When they call me, I post it immediately on the front page with a blinker. It would save Arline a few phone calls if you would call her when you see the posting, so she doesn't have to call and beg for help. She has done an outstanding job in coming up with 10 or more volunteers, which speaks very well for club members who do help us out. It takes volunteers to make the club work smoothly!

I just received a new "toy"—a copy of Adobe Acrobat 4.0. As soon as I can figure out what makes the program go, I will be posting the TOE on the Web page. This was decided by the board members as it seems the members living "over the hill" (Newbury Park, Moorpark, and Thousand Oaks) do not receive their copy of the TOE prior to the meeting, in spite of the fact that it is mailed a full 10 days before the meeting. It should happen with the June issue. Keep your fingers crossed for me.

Those of you signing up for our CIPCUG Online Service need only contact one of the Tech Support people from the Web Page or from the F1 Help column in TOE. They will take your application over the phone and sign you up. If you are interested in a Web site and have it ready to go, send Terry an e-mail message requesting him to set up your Web site. VCOL doesn't do that until you ask for it, but it is only a few computer entries and can be taken care of quickly.

.....(Continued from page 1) *COMMAND.COM*

Netscape 4.51, Microsoft Internet Explorer 5 (complete with a CIPCUG install, with our graphics replacing Microsoft's), the shareware version of NoteTab Pro 4.60a (the text editor I demonstrated at the November meeting), Pegasus 3.01d, the Microsoft Office 97 service packs (1 and 2), Winzip 7.0, WS_FTP 32 LE 4.60, a graphics viewer (anyone have a choice of freeware or shareware?), Acrobat Reader 4.0, Spike 5.0 (a freeware Internet connection tool) and Text Print 1.0 (a freeware text print enhancer). We are looking for freeware Y2K tools but haven't settled on any.

Have we missed anything? Please let me know via e-mail if possible (toby@scotts.net) or by phone at (805) 981-1212, before we finalize it.

I have added a new section to the left hand column of the front page called Virus Info. That is where I have moved the Happy99 and Melissa links that I listed on the front page with blinkers. These are now under their own heading. We want to keep our members advised of these nasty little beasts as they crop up. It would behoove us all to keep our anti-virus checkers current.

Anytime anyone changes their e-mail address they should notify John Godwin <membership@cipcug.org> and/or John Weigle <editor@cipcug.org>. John is working toward updating the e-mail list published last year. Be sure to keep these two people advised of any address or e-mail changes. Some of these days, John is going to surprise me and print that list so I can stop mentioning this.

The SIGs for May are posted. Remember, if you are not on the Internet and you want to know the schedule, please don't hesitate to call me at 642-6521 to verify any classes.

Finally, a message from my brother:

Hot off the press for Genealogists! The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Utah is making some of its data files available online. If you are interested, check out the Web site at <<http://www.familysearch.org>>. Happy hunting!" This is news that genealogists have been waiting for.

Make your club's Web site work for you! Visit it often. And when you do visit, drop us a line with your suggestions or comments. It's the only way we can offer the service you want and/or need.

Q&A: From macro viruses to printers

Reported by Paul McCaustaland

The Question-and-Answer session began at 9:30 with comments by Toby Scott about MS Word macros and viruses. Macros can be used to add a letterhead, insert a return address, reformat e-mail and strip out extra characters, etc. with just a keystroke or two. Very useful. The downside is that, if the macro engine is enabled in Word, you are vulnerable to macro viruses. The macro program allows access to commands that can do bad things to your computer, delete files for instance.

If you get an e-mail with a Word attachment that contains a macro virus and you open this attachment in Word, the macro will run, and the virus will do whatever it is programmed to do. Some viruses will erase files, some will do other things. The Melissa virus was written to close the macro warning option, go to the Outlook address book, take the first 50 e-mail addresses and send itself as an attachment to those 50 names. As the recipients opened the "Important message from" attachment, the cycle would begin again.

The macro warning option is the Word default setting. When you open a Word document containing a macro an option window should appear saying, "This document contains macros, what do you wish to do?" Click cancel or do not open, and treat the document as a virus until proven otherwise. This is especially true if it is an e-mail attachment. If you do not execute the macro, you will not get a virus.

Save the document to disk and run your virus checker on it. You could also open the *.doc in WordPad. It will read the Word document but it has no macro engine and thus cannot run the virus.

Q. How do I change a file association? I want WordPad to open *.doc files when I click on them.

A. Double-click the My Computer icon, on the View menu, click Options, and then click the File Types tab, scroll to and highlight the Microsoft Word Document icon, and then click Edit, click the command in the Action box that you want to modify, in this case OPEN, and then click Edit again, Click Browse, go to \program files\accessories and double click Wordpad.exe, click OK, close and close again.

Q. How do I delete files in WordPad?

A. The best way to perform file management in Windows 95/98 is with Windows Explorer. Go to

Start, then Programs, and click the Windows Explorer icon or right click the Start button. A window will open with a drive/directory listing in the left panel and directory/file listing in the right panel. You can then use the mouse to highlight and delete files. All common file management commands can be performed from the Explorer.

Q. How can I refine my Web searches? I need to be more specific.

A. Four times a year Toby Scott is host of a SIG on searching the Web. The next one will be May or June. Plan to attend if you would like to learn more. AltaVista (www.altavista.com) is the most powerful search engine available. Click the advanced search button in the upper right corner of the home page. Enter your search key words in the space provided and Boolean expression in the window below. The Boolean expression is used to limit the search. Advanced help instructions are available on the search page.

The Yahoo (www.yahoo.com) search engine is a little more presorted in that it returns only Web site matches to your query rather than the text matches returned by AltaVista.

Q. How can I exclude language sites I do not understand from my search results?

A. Look at a few of the foreign language sites returned, cut a couple of repeated words and paste to an AND NOT statement in the Boolean expression window. Some of the other search engines will do specific-language-only searches. HOTBOT (www.hotbot.com) is one.

Q. I have a new computer and would like to install an antivirus program. Will I have to periodically update this program?

A. Yes. At the very least you should download virus definition updates. This will enable the program to detect newly written viruses. Most AV programs have monthly updates. Symantec is supporting CIPCUG by purchasing a full page ad in TOE. All other things being equal, we recommend you support the companies that support your club. The Norton Antivirus product is one of the top AV programs available. Many reviewers have said it is the best.

Q. I downloaded one of the MTU tools talked about at last month's meeting. I ran the program, went through three screens and I do not understand what I did.

A. I went www.download.com, searched mtu,

and selected MTUSpeed Pro 4.10. The download page had a short review which read "MTUSpeed Pro enables you to change the Registry settings to maximize your speed on downloads. It adjusts the maximum transfer unit from the default setting of 1,500 bits to 576 bits, which is more compliant with the TCP/IP rate. For this reason, there will be fewer slowdowns caused by fragmentation of packet information. MTUSpeed Pro can speed page and file downloads by as much as 200 percent by keeping packet size aligned with the transfer unit size. This program works on Windows NT as well as on Windows 95 and has the helpful feature of pinging to find out what your optimum MTU is for greater precision, as well as the ability to quickly edit your modem initialization strings. This version adds support for network cards in Windows 95/NT and fixes some bugs."

I installed the program and ran it. It said my registry (Win98) had no current MTU setting defined and it would update the registry for me. I then rebooted and logged in to the Internet. It did not seem to make any difference.

If your phone line is known to be noisy or you always seem to have a slow connection or have one or two sites that are slow, run this program, select utilities and experiment with different MTU values.

Try setting the MTU value as high as possible while keeping the ping return time low. If you get a lot of timeouts you should increase the Time To Live setting. I do not believe the average user with the average phone connection will get much benefit from one of these programs. DO NOT answer one of the banner ads and buy a program of this type thinking you will automatically speed up your Internet connection. Try the freeware/shareware version first.

Q. I have a 56K modem. When I log on to AOL I get a window showing my connect speed. It varies from 37,000 to 28,000 or so. Is something wrong? Is the phone company or AOL at fault?

A. This is normal. The fastest you usually will get is about 48K, but this is download speed only. Uploads are 33.6K maximum. If there is any noise on the phone line, the modems will slow the connection speed until they establish a reliable connection. The V.90 modems do not renegotiate to a faster speed once they slow down. Slide the mouse over the DUN icon in the taskbar and read the speed in the little window that pops up. If it is too slow—let's say less

than 28K—hang up and redial your ISP. See if the connection speed is better.

Q. There were two questions about monitors and sleep mode problems.

A. A search of www.dejanews.com for the keywords sleep mode yielded 896 results. You are not alone. The most common things to check are: Is the BIOS support for sleep mode turned on? And what are the wake settings? Does the monitor support suspend mode? Do you have the latest video card drivers and do they support suspend mode? Did you turn it on on the Display Properties/Screen Saver/Settings option screen? Contact the computer/monitor manufacturer if the above do not help.

Q. When I try to print from my HP 855 I get an alert message saying the cartridge is not installed properly. I click OK and the printer prints fine. Will it hurt the computer if I ignore the alert?

A. No, it will not harm your computer. Try cleaning the cartridge contacts with denatured alcohol. If you have aligned the cartridge and followed the HP diagnostic steps and the alert remains then replace the cartridge.

The Q&A ended at 10:20 with officer reports.

... LATE ENTRY. . .

Producers of Yeah Write offer e-mail program

By Word Place Inc.

Word Place Inc., the makers of Yeah Write for Windows, has released E-mail Workshop for Windows ("EW"). The new program is available immediately on the Internet at <http://www.emailworkshop.com> for \$89 without media. Ingram Micro will have a boxed version in stock later this month (SKU 479304), with an expected street price of \$99.

The software comes in a 32 bit version for Windows 95, 98, and NT, and a 16 bit version for Windows 3.1. In addition to a full-featured message editor, a database with virtually no size limits, and a number of broadcast options, EW will automatically process adds, removes, and bounces (messages returned with an error), and automatically report the results of a broadcast. EW requires a Windows PC, a connection to the Internet (dial-up is fine), a working SMTP server address (some ISPs, notably AOL, do not allow other programs to send mail through their server), and only 4 MBs of hard disk space. The product has a 60-day, unconditional money-back guarantee.

For more information, call or write Word Place Inc. at www.wordplace.com, 11 E. 200 North, Suite 201, Orem, UT 84057; phone (801) 221-7777 (voice), or (801) 221-7707 (fax).

OS/2 Corner

By Steve Carter, SIG leader

May 8 is the next gathering of enthusiasts for the best Operating System in the world—OS/2 Warp 4. We meet to share solutions and experiences, as any CIPCUG SIG does. What makes us unique is that we have been doing this for six years.

Len Zakas reported that he had to reload Windows 98 last month after only three months, but that his Warp 3 installation on his 486-50 is in its fourth year without a crash! Reliability, stability and ease of use—what more should (could?) you want.

CIPCUG members and visitors are always welcome on the second Saturday of each month to stop in at the OS/2 Corner for a chat, information and/or a donut and coffee. We meet at Computer Training Center of Ventura County, 642 Las Posas Road, Camarillo, CA. Starting at 9:30 a.m. and going until noon, there will be a Q&A and a Warp 4 computer available to help with problem solving.

WarpStock 99 in Atlanta

The Board of Directors of WarpStock Inc. <<http://www.warpstock.org>> has set the date for its third annual OS/2 WarpStock 99. The event is set for Oct. 16-17, 1999, at the Georgia International Convention Center <<http://www.gicc.com>>, one mile south of Atlanta's Hartsfield Airport. The event was officially announced on an Internet Relay Chat channel—the host is OS/2 Voice <<http://www.os2voice.org>> -- and attended by OS/2 users from around the globe.

With the recent release of Work Space on Demand 2.0 and the anticipated release of an entirely new version of OS/2 Server, Warp Server for e-Business, there is renewed interest in this powerful operating system.

Recent cross-platform application upgrades available for OS/2 include StarOffice 5.0; Netscape Communicator 4.04; and Symantec AntiVirus 5.0.

According to event organizers, paid attendance was greater last year than the previous year and is expected to nearly double this year.

The previous two events included workshops and presentations designed to provide the kind of community support that is usually associated with the Linux phenomenon. WarpStock has also provided Independent OS/2 software developers a forum to exhibit and sell directly to users.

Social events are slated at the Atlanta Sheraton Gateway, which adjoins the convention center. Registration costs and early registration discount information was to be released in early April. WarpStock Inc. is a nonprofit organization dedicated to bringing the OS/2 community together every year. Point of contact for organizational issues is Gordon Roland, (212) 979-8228, <groland@ibm.net>.

Linux as an alternative

The relatively new Simi and Conejo Linux Users' Group is now meeting in Simi Valley on the evening of the second and fourth Saturdays of each month at the NorTel offices (SCLUG used to meet at Borders Bookstore in Thousand Oaks). Check the SCLUG homepage at <<http://www.psilord.com/sclug>> for directions.

My 20+ reasons to use OS/2

In "Just my \$0.02," Fernando Cassia <fcassia@theoffice.net> from Buenos Aires, Argentina, writes:

Security

1. HPFS is more immune to viruses because OS/2 limits direct access to the Hard Drive to DOS/Win16 programs.
2. In the case of a server, the security of OS/2 can't be matched. Just go to any exploits/security search engine like <www.rootshell.com> and enter 'OS/2.' Then compare the results with a similar query for "NT" or "SCO."
3. There are no known Trojans like BackOrifice or NetBUS, which affect Windows 9x/NT in the OS/2 platform, making it more suitable for mission-critical servers.
4. Immune to WINNUKE, SMURF and other "brain-damaged Microsoft TCP/IP stacks" bugs that allows hackers to crash windows 9x/NT systems remotely.

HPFS vs. other file systems

5. Benefits of HPFS (that Win9x lacks) vs. FAT16/FAT32: Performance and less prone to HD fragmentation due to HPFS's design. (To get comparable performance in the Win32 world, one has to go with NTFS under WinNT4).

Windows 9x users have to defrag their HDs once a month. I have the same HPFS HD since 1996. Add to this the ability to have foreign file systems like Linux Ext2FS NTFS, FAT32, etc., using third party IFSs (installable file systems).

Desktop

6. Object-Oriented WPS (templates, work-areas, drag-and-drop everything, the new nice color tabs in settings notebooks), built-in VTD for navigation. (I don't consider speech of much use myself). Nothing like this comes bundled with Windows.

Great pure Java performance

7. Best open-Java performance (as recent Java-World MAG benchmarks show).
8. Java apps run from the desktop not inside a browser (shameless plug: see <<http://os2javashow.cjb.net>>

Open source support

9. Can run most open-source software out there (Apache, GIMP, SANE, CDRRecord) without the high learning curve and complexity of Linux.

Open-source from Linux can be easily recompiled using the GCC compiler + EMX Libraries and Xfree86 for OS/2, so it is expected that the flow of ported apps from 'nix to OS/2 will continue growing.

10. Makes a great development platform for the Internet and WWW. Integrated REXX scripting with the included REXX socks and FTP interface DLLs makes it possible to create custom Internet apps with a minimum of time and effort and without learning C/C++. All the most popular open-source Web servers (Xitami, Apache) are ported to OS/2 and can use OS/2's REXX for scripting. All major Unix scripting tools/languages (PERL, TCL, Python) are available for OS/2 and can also be used.

Peer support

11. Level of tech-savvy community support and friendliness can't be matched. Besides, most OS/2 wizards often run multiple platforms. (Not that I'm talking of myself)

Low cost of ownership. (Ideal for Home/SOHO LAN or intranet use)

12. A copy of OS/2 Warp 3.0 can be obtained for the same price of a cheap serial mouse. Updating this to the latest service level using publicly available FixPaks makes an exceptional intranet server, proxy server, fax/voice mailbox, fax-on-demand server etc. (Dialogic supports OS/2, allowing creation of multi-line services).
13. OS/2 v3.0 can give a new life to legacy hardware

that is too slow for Windows 98 and its FAT CPU-hogging Active Desktop and bundled IE4.

14. A copy of OS/2 Warp 4.0 gives you all this, plus the power of much nicer GUI, Communicator 4, etc.

Support for mission-critical servers

15. Industrial-strength databases available as well as commercial and home: Lotus Approach, several FoxPro-like databases, Commercial-Enterprise: Oracle7 for OS/2, DB2 v5.2.

Proven and mature productivity apps available

16. Free bundled apps in the BonusPak (IBM Works PIM, FaxWorks are the most useful to me).
17. Plus major Office Suites (StarOffice 5.0, Lotus Smart Suite). E-Suite and others if you decide to run Java. (StarOffice 5 for OS/2 offers a full MS Office97-compatible suite, plus free e-mail, Web browser and more!).
18. Most apps have been converted to OS/2 32-bit and debugged over the years since IBM OS/2 v2.0 came out. One example: PMView v1.05 has been released. Yet, despite its low version number, it started as v0.x back in 1992. This means it has been tested and improved over seven years.

Connectivity

18. Can connect to NetWare, Unix, and Microsoft Windows networks, supports all protocols (IPX, TCP/IP, NetBIOS, and NetBEUI) out of the box.
19. Drive and printer sharing easier to set up and configure than SAMBA on Linux.
20. Free, easy remote control of Win32, Unix, and Mac systems remotely over a LAN using public open-source software (PM VNC viewer and VNC servers for every of these platforms).
21. Official continued and ongoing driver development by IBM (USB, video, printer. Other technologies like Twain by third parties).

And also

22. I like making my own decisions. :-)
23. I could go on talking about new technologies in Aurora but since it's a beta, I focused on shipping products. :)

Alternatives

What would I run if suddenly all OS/2 users died, CPUs were unable to run OS/2 or all the open-source apps suddenly couldn't be ported to OS/2? Probably FreeBSD 3.0, Solaris x86 or Caldera OpenLinux (in that order of preference).

Review: Blue's Birthday Adventure

By James S. MacArthur

There is both good news and bad news from Humongous/Microsoft in this new children's software title. The good news is that if your kids/grandkids love the TV show "Blue's Clues," they will love this software. The bad news is that, unlike previous titles, which were compatible for Win 9x and Win 3x, this is only for Windows 95/98 and Macintosh.

Let's start with the basics. This program is targeted for the 3-6-year-olds. Because younger children may have difficulty using a standard mouse, it is recommended that you use a child-sized mouse or other pointing device like the Easyball (from Microsoft). The main activity is exploring by pointing and clicking on every little thing on the screen.

System requirements:

- Windows 95/98
- Pentium CPU -- 90MHz or faster
- 80 MB hard drive space (actual footprint is 12MB "ini" file to track progress)
- 16 MB of RAM (8 MB free)
- SVGA video card (640 x 480 with 256 colors)
- Sound card
- Quad speed CD-ROM player

I ran the program on a Pentium 166 with 32MB of RAM, a Sound Blaster 16 sound card, SVGA video card and a 32X CD-ROM drive, using Windows 98 operating system.

Installation was just a matter of point and click to options offered on screen. This was probably due to the fact that my grandson has several other Humongous titles and a large "Hegames.ini" file already on the computer and Windows 98 utilizes the Autorun feature.

The program runs from two CD-ROMS, but it is not necessary to change disks while playing. Each disk contains two complete "paths" or puzzles to solve about Blue and her birthday party plans. Within the puzzles, which you must solve by finding Blue's Clues, there are nine directed activities and four creative activities. These include Pizza Making; Where's Turquoise; Find My Friend; Tickety's Puzzles; Party Toys; Hide and Seek; Mixed up Music; Treasure Hunt; Flower Picking; Puppet Show; Coloring Book; and Blue's Birthday Card.

The main activity is the interaction between the child and the characters and objects on the screen. Whenever the cursor becomes a solid arrow, there is

some action in the object. Clues are marked with a blue paw print. Generally the clue is revealed after the child helps one of the characters with a task.

Within the sign-in section, there is a report card so parents can check on the child's participation and level of difficulty for each activity. Difficulty level is automated but can be manually adjusted. The default starts at medium, and there are three levels.

When the kids get bogged down and can't find everything, there is an excellent help section to help the parents direct the kids.

I had only two points of dissatisfaction. First, it seemed to take a long time for the cursor to return after changing frames. (My grandson found that by hitting the escape key it would skip some unnecessary redrawing and bring the cursor back quicker.) Second, some of the synchronization of the speech and the live character was way off. (It didn't seem to bother my grandson.)

The MSRP is \$29.95, but the street price varied from \$15 to \$20 at the major chain stores. (Target, Best Buy, and Comp USA). I recommend this program for the younger crowd.

PhotoSuite glitch with IE 5.0

By Randal Whittle <rwittle@usa.net>

I just wanted to let you know that there is a minor problem with PhotoSuite II when a person installs Internet Explorer 5.0e. PhotoSuite II has such tight connections to Internet Explorer 4.0 for its interface that some changes in 5.0 caused some hiccups, creating problematic issues with certain interface sliders, switches, etc. in PhotoSuite II.

I thought I should let you know that MGI has now released a patch/fix for that, and it is freely available on the Web site, which is at <www.mgisoft.com>. There is a prominent link right on the front page.

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Membership Report

By John Godwin, Membership Chairman

Please welcome the following new members:

Joan Wilson
April Wilson
Stephanie Coffelt
Brian Elster

March 1999 renewals due:

(You will receive TOE through May 1999)

Last Name	First Name	Member #
Housley	Mitzi	855
Jones	Bob	856
Keenan	Bob	857
Kelly	Scott	573
Ludes	Tad	196
Ross	Linda	190
Smith	Gloria	574
Van Sickle	Michael	575

April 1999 renewals due:

(You will Receive TOE through June 1999)

Last Name	First Name	Member #
Carter	Steve	865
Conlin	Bill	200
Cowley	Jeri	872
Cowley	Bill	437
Lee	Terry	66
Leighton	Charlie	918
Mulligan	Champ C.	317
Parma	Robert	674
Pearson	Floyd	676
Roman	Elodia	451
Simon	Hal	452
Terry	William L.	450
Zapf	D.P.M. Michael	863

May 1999 renewals due:

(You will receive TOE through July 1999)

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Bergdahl	Louis A.	206
Bircher	Andrea	584
Birkenshaw	JJ	207
Burger	Lou 3	40
Curry	Rick	926
Dane	Marti	924
Davis	Ward	698
Dinsmore	Bob	456
Hafer	Dianne W.	549
Hamor	Gerry	783
Harmon	Richard	691
Hudson	Larry	335
Kumler	Bob	329
Kurowski	H. "Ski"	781
Lee	Bill	145

Livingstone	Robert	331
Maidel	Mark	692
McCaustland	Paul	782
Neunuebel	Bob	922
Norris	Lorraine	923
Norton	Bill	925
Pass	Jim	873
Penney	Kathy	921
Penney	John	920
Provenza	Richard A.	454
Ruebe	Bambi	927
Trotter, Jr.	Edgar S.	212
Vanicek	Bob	459
Weigle	John	211
Widney	Fred	697

Total Membership: 365

Attendance at the April 1999 General Meeting:

129 members

12 visitors

4 new members

Treasurer's report March 1999

By Howard Oxman Treasurer

Expenses

Self Storage Depot	\$	55.00
Computer Training Center		50.00
Bill Norton (labels)		36.14
V.C. Rose Society (label software)		123.30
Mike Shakley (donuts)		28.00
John Weigle (newsletter)		486.49
Eric Foohes (Notetab)		28.00
TOTAL		806.93

Income

Jerry McLoud (Software sales)	80.00
Notetab sales	30.00
Donut sales, donation	44.75
Used books sale	5.50
New members (3)	120.00
Renewals (25)	635.00
TOTAL	915.25

Net income 108.32

VCOL Escrow Account as of March 31, 1999

Balance from January 1999	\$1,155.00
Payment December 1998	(220.00)
Payment January 1998	(230.00)
Harold Colter, 3-6-99	60.00
John Forder, 3-9-99	105.00
TOTAL	870.00

ODDS AD ENDS - Part 4

Jim Thornton (jthorn@gte.net)

COMPUTER RADIO PROGRAM CHANGES

Local radio station KVEN (1450 AM Ventura) has dropped their three-hour live Sunday morning "On Computers" program. The replacement program is the "Komputer Klinik with Kim Komando" and is tape-delayed from Saturday morning. The Kim Komando program may be heard live on KLSX (97.1 FM Los Angeles) and on KTMS (990 AM Santa Barbara). A full listing of locally heard computer radio programs is provided in the February 1999 TOE (pages 14-15).

A PROBLEM WITH A WORD MACRO

PC World magazine published a Microsoft Word 97 macro that will automatically display the standard Open document menu whenever you start Word. The intent is to save keystrokes when displaying a listing of your Word documents and the macro works fine. However, there is a problem should you use the alternate method of opening an existing Word document by clicking on Start from your desktop, then Documents, and the Word document of your choice. What happens is the Open document menu completely covers the previously selected document and it doesn't viewable until the Open document menu is cancelled. The PC World macro appears in their April 1999 issue (page 278).

ZIP DRIVE TEST PROGRAM

Apparently there is a problem with certain Iomega "Zip" and "Jaz" drives. The problem is described as the "Click of Death" and may cause a loss of data on the drive's cartridge. These drives normally make an unusual sound when the cartridge is inserted into the drive, but that sound is normal as the drive is recalibrating its heads, cleaning the cartridge of excessive oxide deposits, eliminating all electrostatic charges, etc. The Click of Death may be caused by a bad external power supply, loose power connectors, radio frequency interference, etc. There is a free software program that will test your drive and provide a report of its health. The web site is <http://www.grc.com> and Steve Gibson, the designer of the standard hard (fixed) disk testing software "SpinRite", provides this special "removable disk" testing software. Should you experience the "Click of Death", Iomega will replace your defective drive regardless of its warranty status.

FREE E-MAIL

There are several free e-mail providers and GTE has joined the list. The GTE e-mail service is available from <http://www.gte.com>.

There are no hidden charges, no advertisements, and you do not need to be a GTE Internet user nor a GTE telephone subscriber. You can have the gte.com automatically forwarded to your regular e-mail address without the sender knowing his mail is being forwarded. The only requirement is that you have access to the Internet by any Internet provider of your choice, i.e., CIPCUG, AOL, etc.

FREE INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDER

Just as there are free e-mail providers, now there are free Internet service providers and one of the first ones is NetZero. This ISP provides free Internet access and e-mail service to its subscribers. This service will display advertisements and promotions that will be specifically targeted to each user. The service is available from <http://www.netzero.net> and they have several local Internet access telephone numbers in the Thousand Oaks and Oxnard area. Special Internet browser software is required and may be downloaded from their web site. The minimum system requirements are Windows 95/98/NT, 486 or Pentium system, etc. The service also supports multiple users and profiles on a single PC. One reason why you may be interested in this service is to test the access time, the modem speed, and the download performance of your current ISP as compared to NetZero in order to determine that you are receiving the best service for your money.

PRETTY GOOD SOLITIARE CORRECTION

In the March 1999 issue of TOE (pages 8-9), the file VBRUN300.DLL is only required if you are using Windows 3.1. The later versions of Windows (95/98/NT) do not require this file.

RADIO SHOWS

Best computer radio programs

By Jim Thornton (jthorn@gte.net)

I recently conducted a totally unscientific survey to identify which of the six locally heard computer radio programs provided the greatest help or information. For the purposes of this survey, I defined the best program as the one answering the largest number of calls within a one-hour period.

Also, the first question asked by each caller is included so that you can evaluate the quality of the questions. The results are ranked from the highest

number of callers to the lowest and whenever the number was the same then the programs are listed alphabetically:

9 Callers - "The KABC Computer Show with The Marck Brothers" heard Feb. 7, 1999, at 12 p.m. The questions were: a WinZip problem; moving Apple files to a PC; a Pentium upgrade; a PC that loses time; a question on DVD; an Apple sound problem; lost MSIE favorites; buying a combo fax-printer; and buying clones. Also, a software vendor was interviewed during the hour.

8 Callers - "The EarthLink Internet Show" heard Feb. 14, 1999, at 12 p.m. The questions were building a home page; setting up an e-commerce account; sending Internet messages to a mail program; accepting credit card charges; junk or spam mail; credit card companies; Quicken-Built Web pages; and credit card transfers. This is a very specialized Internet-related program and a software vendor was interviewed.

6 Callers - "Dr. Computer PC" heard Feb. 13, 1999, at 11 a.m. The questions were: a defrag problem; how to install a program; how to update software; is there a single telephone number to update more than one program at a time; a BIOS problem; and a WIN98 problem. Also, a software vendor was interviewed.

6 Callers - "KFI On Computers" heard Feb. 14, 1999, at 9 a.m. The questions were: partitioning a hard drive; a keyboard/speaker problem; a laptop keyboard problem; adding clip art to the Internet; buying a new PC; and missing icons. Jeff Levy asked every caller to comment on the free PC offer (if you would provide your Social Security number and other personal information).

5 Callers - "Komputer Klinik" heard Feb. 13, 1999, at 8 a.m. The questions were: buying a new PC; turning PCs on and off; copying data from a CD-ROM; slow modems; and Web-TV. Kim Komando provides computer news stories and asks every caller to answer her question of the day.

5 Callers - "On Computers" heard Feb. 14, 1999, at 10 a.m.. The questions were: buying digital cameras; changing Windows NT passwords; a 386-video card problem; dial-up network problems; and resolving Windows NT user problems. Also, a software vendor was interviewed.

I recommend Jeff Levy's (KFI) program as providing the most complete answers and the Marck Brothers' (KABC) as providing the most technical answers. In addition, both programs offered to provide additional off-the-air help to callers having more complex problems.

Adding drives and peripherals

By Jim Pass

I am not writing this article as an expert or one who has a lot of knowledge on the subject. But because it seemed to take a lot of footwork to attain my goal, I thought it would be good to pass along my experience and perhaps cut out a few steps for anyone who might face the same problem.

I had purchased and installed several IDE devices in my computer, including an Imation Super Disk 120MB floppy drive and a Memorex CD Writer.

With my hard drive and my CD drive, all the connections for IDE devices were used. In order to make Audio CDs with the CD writer, you first need to place the music on your hard drive in the form of wave files. My hard drive is a fairly new 6.4 GB Maxtor, but I wanted to add another hard drive, (a 4.3 GB that I had replaced), so as to have a large storage space for the wave files. Each audio CD holds up to 650 MB of music or information.

Therein lies the problem of how to add a fifth etc. IDE component. Several computer-builder-type-shops told me that there was a PCI card out there somewhere that could solve my problem, but no one knew exactly where I could find it. Talking to some club members, I got the advice that I should purchase a SCSI card and replace my CD-ROM with a SCSI unit. To me, this was not an option because the card would cost upwards of \$250 and I would have to basically throw away a perfectly good CD-ROM.

After much searching, I found an Ultra DMA/ATA Bus Master IDE Accelerator made by Promise Technology (www.promise.com). The Computer Spirit shop in Thousand Oaks had the Ultra33 unit in stock for about \$60. This PCI card allows you to attach up to four hard drives to it. The company suggests that you use the mainboard IDE connections for the other devices. Minor problems occurred, but were solved by e-mail to the company's tech support. After taking many weeks and many miles in search of the card, I noticed on the Internet that several sites offered this type of card. They seem to have a prefix of Ultra on the cards which will use their own IRQs and not conflict with the ones assigned to the mainboard IDE connections.

MGI PhotoSuite

Reported by Paul McCaustland

(This report on February's program was delayed because of Paul's computer crash and miscommunication on the editor's part. We apologize to our speaker for the delay—Editor)

The February software guest presenter was Randal J. Whittle, an independent consultant. He demonstrated two award-winning products from MGI Software, MGI PhotoSuite II and MGI VideoWave II.

MGI PhotoSuite II is your complete PC Photography software. It has been enhanced to provide new and more powerful tools, enabling users to be creative with their pictures. PhotoSuite II has a very user-friendly interface. Designed for ease of use, the interface provides an intuitive way to get access to the features you use most.

There are six modes in PhotoSuite II. All six modes of the application are readily accessible from the main menu. Edit your photos, create projects, organize them into albums and/or slide shows, browse the Internet from within the application and use the guides to walk you through the most common photo tasks and activities. It is all there in this complete package.

Randal demonstrated removing red eye, touching up dust and scratches, using the edge finder and using the clone tool to retouch a damaged photo or to improve a picture taken under adverse conditions.

You can duplicate advanced darkroom techniques that used to be available only to professional photo developers. PhotoSuite II supports most graphics file types currently in use.

MGI VideoWave II was the second product demonstrated. MGI VideoWave II takes a unique approach to PC video. Its intuitive Storyline allows you to focus on telling a story. It provides an uncomplicated, but powerful, way to edit and create videos, quickly and easily. It has powerful editing features that allow you to apply special effects, titles, transitions, audio tracks and even mix two clips as one. And, with its real-time preview, you'll never have to wait to see what you've done.

Video is about telling a story. A story expressed by piecing together moving pictures, photos, graphics, sound, music and narration. It is one of the most powerful communications tools available today. Powerful, yes, if you are a professional videographer with a big budget and lots of time. MGI VideoWave II turns your multimedia PC into a video production

studio at a price anyone can afford. Engineered for unprecedented ease of use, MGI VideoWave II will do more than let you produce top quality videos. MGI VideoWave II provides unprecedented flexibility in capturing video from both analog and digital video sources. DV is the future of video. MGI VideoWave II is now the first product in its class to offer both traditional (analog) hardware and native DV (Digital Video) support.

The software is designed to enable the coexistence and cross-compatibility of both, so you can work in both formats seamlessly using your current video capture hardware, while moving to the new digital realm. MGI VideoWave II supports 11 major video capture and TV tuner cards, letting you easily capture analog video, digital video, still frame or sequential frames from any VCR, Camcorder, Laserdisk player, TV or Digital Video Camera.

Step into the cutting room to trim the length of a video clip or split a clip in two. Extract video from a clip to create a new video file or extract the audio from a video clip to create a separate WAV file. Create professional looking titles, captions, and credits with MGI VideoWave II's powerful text animator. With MGI VideoWave II, it's easy to create and add text to any video, including your choice of text size, font, color, and transparency level. Includes 10 additional video fonts. Insert titles over images or video. Includes nine popular special effects, including swirl, ripple, tile, oil paint, and more. MGI VideoWave II even lets you build up special effects over a series of frames, or animate a still image using an effect for amazing results.

Mix video using image blend or color removal. Take any video clip or still image and magically float it across another. Set animation direction, duration, transparency type and level. Add that professional look to your next video with studio quality transition effects. Choose from over 50 transitions such as dissolve, vertical, horizontal and diagonal wipes and more. Enter the dark room to adjust the brightness, contrast and color of video clips. Also select from 10 preset color filters, including black/white, sepia and selenium. MGI VideoWave II includes a full range of easy-to-use audio recording features. Support for DV and CD-quality audio captured with video along with the support for six stereo audio tracks, make story telling simple and easy. Support MGI VideoWave II supports all the leading video, audio, and graphics file

formats and codecs including Video For Windows, QuickTime, MPEG1, MJPEG, WAV, JPEG, TIF, PCX, and BMP. Enjoy the flexibility of producing AVI, MOV, DV and MPEG movies.

The MGI multimedia library comes with everything you need to get started in PC video production, including full-screen digital animations, videos, music, sound effects, photos, cartoons, borders, textures and more. It does require a video capture card and a lot of free hard drive space, at least 1GB minimum.

Both MGI products featured are well-written, easy to use and very competitively priced. The club membership would like to thank Randal for an entertaining and informative presentation.

Portions copyright 1999 MGI Software Corp.

SIG information

The schedule for May:

Thursday, May 6: Rabia will present an Introduction to Excel

Monday, May 10: Robert Provart on DOS fun in Windows 98

Thursday, May 13: Toby Scott will show MSIE 5.

Thursday, May 20: Paul McCaustland will present Introduction to Linux.

(Special Interest Groups (SIGs) are sponsored by CIPCUG and led by volunteers from the membership. There is no charge for members to attend a SIG, just a willingness to learn and share. Classes are held at the Computer Training Center of Ventura County at 642 Los Posas Road, Camarillo (behind Las Posas Plaza), near Calle La Roda and Daily Drive. If no moderator is listed for a SIG, it is not officially scheduled. Check the Web site before you attend to make sure there will be a moderator.)

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Enfish Tracker Pro Review

By Paul McCaustland

Did you ever want to find something that you knew was somewhere on your hard drive, but you did not remember where it was stored? Introducing Enfish Tracker Pro (<http://www.enfish.com>), a software program that indexes just about everything on your computer and acts as a search engine, an organizer and a database.

Tired of reorganizing your file locations/directory structure so you can find things? Save files wherever you feel like, and Enfish Tracker Pro keeps track of where they are. Imagine being able to search your whole hard drive for all instances of a specific word, phrase, or even a picture. It saves you time by finding what you need when you need it. Tracker Pro will automatically group your related e-mail, files and Web pages by whatever criteria you select; project name, person, company name, subject, etc. It will then quickly find that specific word or phrase or subject in any number of documents. It will search the Web for you.

Enfish Tracker Pro will view the contents of your e-mail, files and Web pages instantly, without launching any other program. It works without actually opening the files, so it's totally safe. Track and view over 100 applications, including all major word processing, e-mail, spreadsheet and graphics programs.

Track information on your removable media or network drives. (Quickly solves the "I know I put it on the server somewhere" problem).

Tracker Pro can search/index AOL Mail, ccMail, Eudora, Exchange, Lotus Notes, Netscape Mail, Outlook and Outlook Express. It will also search inside attachments. Search Act!, Goldmine and Outlook databases. It also indexes your bookmarked Web pages.

A 45-day trial version is available for download or Enfish Tracker Pro is available on CD-ROM at your favorite retailer. List price is \$79.95. I would recommend it for anyone who has disorganized information on his or her computer. It's also helpful to those who are involved in keeping abreast of many issues and events.



“What? Me Worry?”

Multiple partitions and 2 hard drives

By Hal Simon

My innocent computer power-on did not produce the usual single chirp (all is well). Instead, I heard two beeps and got the ugly error message of “Hard drive 2 cannot be accessed. Press F1 to resume.” I did that and a completely normal boot resulted but ... a lot had changed. I had lost a partition, and all the others had been re-alphabetized. This means that all the Windows paths (including Windows accessories) pointing to any application could no longer be found since each was now in a different location.

This happens because:

DOS is unvarying in its assignment of drive letters. The master drive, which has the system files, boots the computer and performs all the start-up tasks, must be on C:\. When a second hard drive is present, it automatically is assigned D:\, then DOS labels further partitions on drive No. 1 as E, F, etc. Any more partitions on drive No. 2 start where those letters left off.

So all my partitions were one letter less and my CD-ROM drive had no designation at all. DOS does this without asking. My original configuration was:

- Drive No. 1: C, E, F, G
- Drive No. 2: D
- CD-ROM: H

I now had:

- Drive No. 1: C and D, E, F (containing files of my old E,F,G)
- Drive No. 2: Out to lunch
- CD-ROM: Non-operational, nothing pointed to it

Please be aware that no files were damaged or deleted. They were all just in the “wrong” place for functional use. I didn't panic and reached for my copy of Partition Magic. That, FDISK, and about two hours resolved the problems. I did choose to let drive No. 2 (old partition D) go since it was essentially empty with just a few odds and ends on it. It was also about eight years old and probably not worth sweating over.

The general recovery strategy is as follows:

Partition Magic does not create or delete partitions but resizes and/or moves them. First, I reduced the size of each partition, taking into account that I would need enough room to handle the storage transfer. Then, with FDISK, I created one more logical drive (partition) in the space generated. It was now G. Realize it's just an empty space and has to be format-

ted. I then moved the contents of each partition to the next higher one.

Bingo! I now had, on hard drive No. 1, partitions D, E, F, G (thank you, DOS) and H (my CD-ROM) was back where it belonged. The files had returned to their previously designated locations. The superb Partition Magic was then used to move the last three partitions all the way to the right and the new D partition all the way to the left. The new D is totally empty and the others are a bit smaller than before but still adequate for my needs. Most important of all, Windows was happy again.

I realize this may be difficult to visualize (all those letters bouncing back and forth) so I am offering to assist anyone who encounters a similar problem by coming over to their home, Partition Magic in hand. It is likely impossible to do it over the phone, what with unique arrangements and partition sizes.

My copy of PM is only for FAT16 formatting and should work for Win 9x that is not FAT32. Although Microsoft has stated that Win 9x is self-standing, I believe that, so far, it depends on a kernel of DOS to function. It's also possible that the newest version of PM will handle FAT32.

Election will be June 5

By George and Arline Lakes

(George Lakes is the chairman of the Nominations Committee assisted by his wife, Arline, so both of them are designated in this report as occupying the chair.)

The nominations will be made at the May 1 meeting and election of all directors (President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer) will be at the June 5 meeting. All other positions are appointed.

The nominees will be:

President:	Paul McCaustland
Vice President:	George Lakes
Secretary:	Bob Fischer
Treasurer:	Art Lewis

We need a quorum of one-third of all members at the June meeting to meet the bylaws requirement. If this number is not attained we shall have to mail ballots, and that will not only take time but also be very costly to the club. So mark your calendar with a big star so you won't forget to attend that one very important meeting on Saturday, June 5.

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F1—Your Help Key

(Revised April 16, 1999)

GENERAL INTERNET

(See VCOL Support for technical support group for our Internet Service Provider agreement.)

World Wide Web...DM, TS

Compuserve....DM

Note Tab Pro...TS

Procomm Plus....DM, WB

DATABASES

dBASE...GM

DOS...RP

EDUCATIONAL / CHILDREN...TZ

E-MAIL

Lotus:CCMail...DM

FINANCIAL

Quicken....JD

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Editor's Column

Some of us should work with computers (use the software), and some of us should work on computers (open the case and putter around inside). Some of us can even do both. I may not fit the third category.

I recently tried to replace a dead CD-ROM drive in a Pentium machine that I bought from one of our members. The drive was an older one and I finally ran the final CD-ROM it was willing to read. I'd plugged in cards before and watched other people add things, so, even though I'm not the handiest man around, I thought it should be a fairly simple task.

I got the old drive out easily enough, put the new one in and thought I very carefully plugged the same wires back into the respective plugs on the new drive. I turned the computer on and got ... SMOKE!

OK, even a rank amateur knows that's not a good sign. I punched the off switch, checked plugs and tried one more time. Same result. Oh, boy: There went the mother board and who knows what else, I thought.



But I put the case back together, unplugged everything from the drive and hauled it off to the repair folks who have done work for me before (shameless plug: It was M.P.I. at 2008 E. Thompson Blvd., Ventura, and, no, they didn't know I was going to do this).

When I got home from work, there was a message on my machine from Debi Hemphill, one of the techs, who said the machine was fixed, the cost was \$65, "and wait until you find out what you did." Great news! We had talked about possibly having to replace mother board, the Pentium chip and memory chips if it was a worst-case scenario.

When I picked up the computer, she said I might yet find a power supply problem but that everything seemed fine as the beast ran on the work bench.

The problem? I had somehow grabbed the wrong wire and plugged the power supply into the

sound card. That chord was touching the ribbon cable to the hard drive, so that had to be replaced.

The lessons: If you aren't sure what you're doing, ask for help (in my case, maybe it should be pay for the pro in the first place or ask one of the many qualified people in the club before jumping into the pool). If you plunge ahead, figure out a way to mark the wires you remove so you know where they go (a gummed label would work, as would a piece of paper and some cellophane tape (as long as you take it off before closing the cover).

I've picked up the machine but haven't had a chance to set it back up, so I don't know how it's going to last. But at least I know the worst cost is likely to be replacing a power supply if I did any still unfound damage there. And even that, plus the work already done, is a heck of a lot cheaper than what I feared I might be facing. (Oh, yes, it made me feel a little better when Debi told me she had done the same thing once early in her career. Maybe there's still hope.)
John Weigle, Editor

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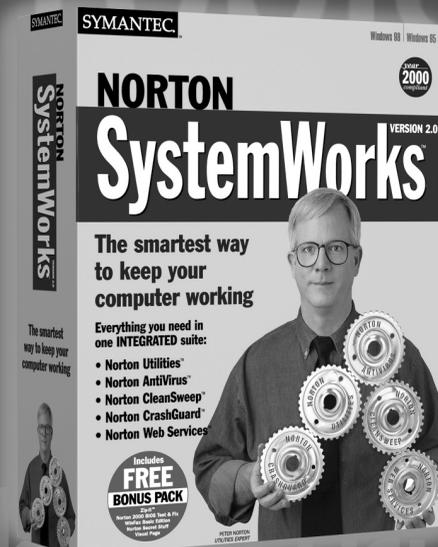
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