

↑ PRTSC

Print Screen: The newsletter of the Stanford/Palo Alto Users' Group for the IBM PC

PO Box 3738

Stanford, CA 94305

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 7

OCTOBER 1983

Please note that we are meeting at the Graduate School of Business on Stanford Campus.

```
*****
* Next meeting:      Wednesday, October 26, 1983 *
*                   7:00pm *
*                   Rm 46, Graduate School of *
*                   Business, Stanford University *
*****
```

AGENDA FOR THE MEETING —

7:00 General Club Business

Report on the Monday before the Wednesday Meeting
New Business

7:40 Larry Blair, VP marketing of Fontastic, will present and demonstrate their program which makes your graphics printer stand on its side. Graphics and words on the same page!

8:45 Random Access

9:00 Conclusion of the Official Club Meeting

Reminder—Don't forget about the Monday Before the Wednesday Meeting at Talbott's on California Ave, across the street from the Winery. Time is at 8:30 pm, goes on until whenever (usually about an hour and a half or so). All are invited to this meeting where great plans are made and policy discussed. We will be discussing what guest speakers to invite and what specific topics we would want to focus on in future meetings, and future club library software acquisitions.

SOME TIPS.....ON USING YOUR PC

Mike Van Waas was over the other day, and we were playing around with the keyboard. Actually, we were trying to get PC Write to work. If you don't read it later, the file which "uncrunches" the manual wasn't working properly. He later discovered that this particular file operates under DOS 2.0. But one thing that I showed him was the F3 key. While under DOS, and not in a program of any sort, you keyboard stores your last command (keystrokes, actually) and F3 lets it out. Example: type "copy b:amazing.things a:", hit the return key, and wait for the A prompt to come back. That same command will return to the screen again simply by hitting the F3 key.

I believe I first read of this in the DOS manual. After relaying this to Mike he raised his eyebrows at me and incredulously asked if I had read the whole thing... another way to release the characters in the buffer is to let them out one at a time, using the cursor control key which points to the right side of the keyboard.

I read of a bug in one of the other newsletters. It seems that Diskcopy for DOS 1.1 can go haywire if you have too much system memory. I have 384K RAM and when doing a Diskcopy my monitor started telling me that I was copying Track 46,47,48....etc. The drives didn't sound like they were having too good of a time doing this extended play copying, either. A Control-Break brought the whole procedure to a halt, and nothing seems to be the worse for it. Still, you have been warned.

Want to screen out the interference in your FM radio or television reception. According to a recent article in the San Jose Mercury, the cheapest and easiest way is to install a "high pass" filter on your antenna leads. A simple screwdriver is all it takes, and the device costs from five to ten dollars.

Is your electrical power going into the PC as clean as it might be? It could be full of spikes, or momentary increases (by up to 15 volts) in the line voltage. Spike suppressors are about \$50, but voltage spikes represent less than ten percent of the power line problems. Brownouts, on the other hand, are reductions in the line voltage by up to 25 volts. They are usually caused by heavy equipment starting up, but they could also be caused by an old refrigerator starting up out in the garage. These problems can easily cause read/write errors when the floppies are operating, or cause information (or programming) in RAM to go haywire. If you are experiencing these sorts of unexplainable problems, you may want to consider some sort of power line protection. It may also be as simple as switching to another power outlet in your house.

PERIODICAL REVIEW

New word processing packages are being released, among them Multi-Tool Word from Microsoft and VisiWord and VisiSpell from VisiCorp. They are reviewed in Softtalk and compared in PC World. According to PCW MicroSoft Word is the hands down winner, even without the mouse attachment. VisiWord/Spell will not work under VisiOn at their current release!

In Softtalk this month are very good articles on business graphics. They review eight graphics packages, five plotters, etc. complete with comments. Softtalk continues to be a great magazine for the IBM PC. On page 165 of this October issue is a reference to a \$1000 10M hard disk package—the works!

Digital Review (that's right), a new mag for the DEC Micros was released last month. In benchmark number crunching the DEC series is hardly any great threat. I like the magazine because they seem to be more interested in explaining technical terms to the reader. On page 31, for example, is a reasonably clear explanation of double precision and floating point arithmetic. Also, on page 126 is a good article on charts and graphs, and which work better for which kinds of presentations.

PC World offers reviews of modems (p.88), an article on how they work (p.54), a review of the Dow Jones Market Analyzer (p.158) and a program for increasing the baud rate to 450 on your Hayes Smartmodem 300 (p.206).

The cover on PC Magazine this month suggests that they might shed some light on what you might do if your PC crashes; mostly these articles are just "can you top this" anecdotes of the worst things that have happened to me and my PC. Very little useful info here. I shouldn't be so hasty...there are the usual warnings about not using you PC in the sandbox or storing floppy diskettes on top of the microwave oven. Fortunately a good review a printers mistakenly found its way into this month's advertiser. Also, a good review of some software for the younger (20-100 month) set. Why am I so hard on PC? Because most of their 650 pages is advertising, and they still refuse to put page numbers on ads, making it very difficult to find my way through it all. Also, their table of contents usually refers to the wrong page, no doubt because they took some late ads.

Questions or comments?

Linda deSosa	856-6281
Mike Van Waas	325-2507
Wes Danskin	851-0277
Kevin Ohlson	494-2574

Introducing: SPACL

the software library of the
STANFORD/PALO ALTO USERS GROUP FOR THE IBM PC

DESCRIPTION:

The core of SPACL* consists of programs and associated data and documentation files which run on the IBM Personal Computer. All programs are in the public domain, which means they can be copied, circulated and used without any fees, licenses or restrictions - with the common restriction they cannot be sold commercially. [Please note some authors of some programs will ask for donations if you find them useful. While these are strictly voluntary, users are strongly urged to make them if you do use and like the program. Such donations both encourage the concept of public domain software and (additions to said) and from a very selfish motive (sigh) you're generally put on the mailing list for announcements of bugs, patches, updates, enhancements, and/or new versions of the programs).

The core of SPACL consists of one set of double sided/double density, 8-sector (320K) diskettes that have been written or copied under DOS 1.10. They are in a variety of languages (though mostly BASIC) and include EXE and COM files. We do not currently have any files or programs which run under other operating systems (e.g. UCSD p-system, or any C-based system), although if and when these do come into the library, they will be on appropriately formatted disks. There are currently 35 disks in the library, with more software continually being sought for the library. As money allows, we will continue to expand the club library drawing on both local (e.g. Silicon Valley Computer Society) and East Coast sources (e.g. Boston Computer Society, Washington Software Exchange). Tapping the various on-line bulletin boards available is not currently contemplated, primarily because of the cost of the phone bills involved, especially given the slow speed of transfer. MOST IMPORTANTLY, additions to the library also come from the club membership - see below for details on "how to".

Club disks are organized by general topic of their contents. Current categories of club disks are: utilities, games for the monochrome monitor, games for color monitors, business applications, special interest (i.e. miscellaneous) and Forth (2 disks containing a full implementation of the Forth language). New categories will be added as needed, particularly for files for non-DOS operating systems or exotic compilers.

Each club disk has a documentation file with a brief description of what the various files on that disk do or contain. Many files on the disks also have their own separate documentation files or are internally documented. A listing of the documentation files for the first 17 disks in SPACL was published in the club's June newsletter; if you missed it (or have since joined) you can contact Kevin Ohlson for a re-print. (Reprints will also be available at all club meetings. As new disks are entered into the library, their documentation will be published in the monthly newsletter.

All members of the Stanford/Palo Alto Users Group for the IBM Personal Computer have full and complete access to the library at no charge - assuming they have paid the club's \$25 annual membership fee. The set of disks are available for copying at houses of some of the club members; the disks themselves never circulate. At the club's monthly meeting it will be announced who will have the club disks, when they plan to have "open house" for copying, and their phone number so people can contact them. Members can also find out who has the disks by contacting either Kevin Ohlson (494-2574) or Mike Van Waas (325-2507), both of whom will know where the disks are at any given time. People wanting to copy disks should bring their own blank, formatted disks when they come in the interest of convenience and efficiency. In the same spirit, you should also plan on only copying full disks rather than separate programs. You can always sort out the wheat from the chaff later, and you may find something quite useful in the files you were going to erase.

We have made provisions for people with only single-sided drives on their system. Whenever possible (and there are exceptions) there are two "BAT" files for each disk in SPACL. Each will copy about 160K of files and data, enough to fill a single-sided disk. On disks entered into SPACL since 1 October 1983, these BAT files are on each new disk. For disks already in the library before October the relevant "BAT" files are on a separate disk.

ACQUISITION AND DONATION POLICIES:

Members and other friends are strongly encouraged to make original contributions to the club library. To date, over 97% of the files in SPACL are ones we have gathered from other PC clubs. We do have a responsibility to carry our share maintaining and increasing the pool of public domain software and we really haven't been doing so to date. SO PLEASE CONTRIBUTE STUFF!!!! For budding software writers, the club can offer an open, receptive,

* SPACL : Stanford/Palo Alto Club Library!

and responsive audience for trying out your programs (we're suckers for beta testing!) Also realize that there's a phenomenal amount of expertise in our membership in a wide number of applications (and games) which you can draw on by circulating your software through us.

A second source of donations is public domain software (sigh) that is not already in SPACL. Public domain software is readily available through other clubs (SPACL already covers SVCS quite well) as well as innumerable bulletin board systems around the country, some (but not) all) computer magazines, places like the Source, CompuServe, etc. Please be sure, though, if you collect software from these places, that it is truly in the public domain and can be acquired and circulated without charge (see below).

The only restriction on donations to SPACL is that all code be utterly legitimate and already in (or for original software, now being put into) the public domain. SPACL cannot and will not in any way be involved in circulating "pirate" copies of commercial software or software whose copyright does not explicitly put it into the public domain (e.g. the "Freeware" software like PC-TALK). If you're interested in making a contribution, please contact either Mike or Kevin at the above numbers and we'll be very happy indeed to discuss your contribution.

NON-DISK PARTS OF SPACL:

Yes, there is more to SPACL than our disk software! In particular we have up to date copies of all of IBM's product announcements and user updates. These are contained in a 3-ring binder which travels with the club disks. Also in the binder is a small "bug book" which contains notes (and hopefully examples, and even better fixes!) of bugs in commonly-used software packages. The "bug book" is small now, but folks should contribute anything they have or know - you can save other folks hours of grief! Generally we want to supplement rather than duplicate bugs already widely known or announced, for instance in columns or articles in PC Magazine or PC World. On the other hand, if someone wants to put in the effort to collect and organize these published bugs and patches, please contact me - we'd love to have them!

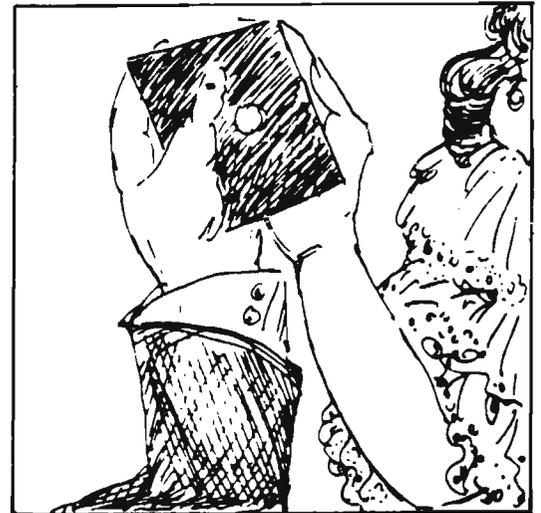
Questions about SPACL? Call Mike (if you can find him home) or Kevin (or his answering machine) and we'll be glad to get back to you with anything you want to know! Also SPACL is an item on the agenda for each club meeting (though generally a short and small one) and questions will be fielded there as well.

Compatibility

- PC-Write uses standard MS-DOS files
- Both DOS 1.00 and DOS 2.00, including 2.00 pathnames, are supported

Requirements

- 80 Column, monochrome or color card
- One disk drive. PC-DOS 1.xx or 2.xx
- 128KB RAM (can edit 8KB files in 64KB)



PC-Write, a shareware word-processing system

Current Limitations

The file being edited must reside in memory. Maximum file size is 62KB.

Horizontal scrolling is not supported; lines can be of any length, but only the first 80 characters are visible.

No direct support for underline or bold fonts, but printer codes for these and others can be inserted.