



P R T S C

A newsletter for the Stanford/Palo Alto User's Group for the IBM PC

PRinT SScreen

May 1987

Volume 5 Number 5

N E X T M E E T I N G

Date: Wednesday, May 27
 Time: 8:00 p.m.
 Place: Polya Hall,
 Turing Auditorium (Rm. 111)
 Stanford University

A G E N D A

8:00 PM General Club Business
 8:30 PM Speaker: Dave Hoffman
 Topic: Stanford Computing Facilities
 9:00 PM Discussion and Random Access
 10:00 PM Conclusion

Dave Hoffman of IRIS is going to discuss the variety of computing facilities available on the Stanford campus.

P L A N N I N G M E E T I N G :

All members are welcome to attend the monthly Planning Meeting, where we make decisions on the future of the group (e.g., speakers, topics). Please call Corwin Nichols, 494-8640 or 324-9114, for the location of the next meeting, which will be held on Wednesday, June 10th at 8 p.m. If you can't reach Corwin, call any Club Officer.

CALENDAR

May 27.....Group Meeting.....8:00
 June 2.....Movie SIG.....7:00
 June 10.....Planning Meeting.....8:00
 June 24.....Group Meeting.....8:00

CLUB NEWS

Membership renewals: For the two months preceding the expiration of your membership you will find a renewal envelope enclosed in your newsletter. Use this envelope to promptly send in your \$25 check so that you won't miss an issue of the monthly newsletter. A current membership card will then be sent to you in the next issue of PrtSc.

Remember, the "Goodie Coupon" attached to your membership card is presently good for one free disk: the library catalog, Disk of the Month, or a blank disk. Trade in your coupon for a disk at a future meeting.

Xidex Precision disks are available for \$7/box. The catalog and the Disk of the Month will be offered for \$1 a disk. If you wish to purchase disks at the meetings, you will need to present your membership card, so be sure to bring it with you.

GET PUBLISHED: WRITE FOR PR T S C

Please contact Rebecca Bridges if you are interested in writing for PRIN T S C R E E N.

It does not matter what your level of computer experience is; each of you has some information, knowledge or opinion that would be of interest to your fellow members. Review your latest software or hardware purchase. Tell us how you use the PC in your work and play. Help others avoid or solve problems you have encountered.

Please submit the articles:

- o In WordStar, MultiMate, or ASCII.
- o Single-spaced.
- o Double-spaced between paragraphs.
- o Any right margin.
- o By the 15th of the month.

APRIL MEETING

J.B. Burke, president of IBM's internal PC users' group, talked to us about IBM's new Personal System/2. He described both the similarities and the differences of the four new models. The models 30 and 50 are desktop PCs while the 60 and 80 are floor-standing. Since the model 30 has the same bus architecture as the XT, it can use XT interface boards.

All the models have the following shared characteristics:

- o new level of graphics support
- o integrated functions
- o 3-1/2" disk drives
- o enhanced PC keyboard
- o advanced technology

The demo program he had running on a PS/2 showed off some outstanding graphics. Up to 256 colors can be displayed from a 262,144 color palette. The display is also faster, allowing better animation applications. The new monitors can be used on the XT and AT, but you must purchase a \$550 adapter.

Other catchy features of the PS/2 are:

- o It's self-configuring (no internal switches to set).
- o It's 2-5 times as reliable as the original PC because it has fewer components.
- o It has a smaller footprint and is less noisy than the PC.
- o It features a faster disk access speed than the original PC.

The new operating system for the PS/2 will not be available until later this year. OS/2 will offer multi-tasking, but most of the current IBM application software will still run under the new operating system. According to Burke, OS/2 will cost in the \$795 range.

NEXT NOVICE SIG GROUP MEETING - Tuesday 6/2/87, 3785 Farm Hill Blvd. Redwood City. Watch for blue light. Call Don Baird 415 365-6822 for information. Meetings are at 7PM on the 1st Tuesday of the month. People can arrive early & stay until 11PM for extra business, like copying (public domain). Current attendees will be notified in case of late changes.

As advertised, we did a run-through of fundamentals. Three attendees were new to the club, and therefore, especially benefited. Some missed the meeting, and accordingly, we will try a repeat. Perhaps we could always feature fundamentals for early arrivals (6-7PM).

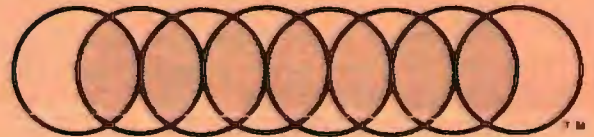
We noticed a certain unawareness of familiar DOS functions. Many people don't know that by simply using DIR filename, a directory becomes a bonifide file which then can be concatenated via COPY filename1+filename2+....etc. to produce a single bodacious file containing a list of all files.

If each initial directory was that of a floppy, then searching the big file with a word-processor (or LIST) allows one to determine which floppy has a fugitive file. I use this method to document my disk library, but I addend it with files such as ALLFILES which have terse descriptions of each file. Thus, a repeat search for a filename also finds the description.

Having mentioned LIST (or really LIST60J.COM), I found that permanently setting the colors means just that (they can't be changed). To change them, requires a re-extraction of LIST60J.COM from LIST60J.ARC, renaming to LIST.COM, and then re-selecting colors. Setting the colors can easily be done by extract-

ing LIST60J.DOC & then list via LIST. Hit F for find, & enter the word "color" and return. Pressing A will repeat the search until the procedure for setting colors will eventually appear.

Next meeting, we will focus on modem use. This should be apt if our bulletin board is unveiled by then. ProComm 2.4.2 will be the reference package discussed. By now, many of you have discovered that most modems will work with any package; and that dissimilar packages can talk to each other. However matters get stuffy where protocol is concerned. We will use two computers, each with its own modem and telephone line.



Professional Computer Graphics

Professional Computer Graphics provides full service graphics production with the IBM PC. Our hardware consists of a Lang VideoSlide35 for the production of 35mm slides. The Lang produces a professional quality 35mm slide with higher intensity than available on a standard CRT and raster fill to reduce the effect of the raster lines. We use an HP 7475A Six Pen Plotter for hard copy and overhead transparencies. We also have extensive software for the original generation of the screen images. We sell a special slide making kit which permits designing screen images and saving them so you can send them to Professional Computer Graphics to produce the hard copy.

Whether you generate the screen images or we do, you will find our convenience and quality unsurpassed. We are here to serve your graphic needs. So give us a call for information or a sample slide.

Professional Computer Graphics also provides consulting and system configuration, specializing in the business and graphics areas of the IBM PC.

P.O. Box 50070 • Palo Alto, CA 94303
(415) 856-0873

DISK OF THE MONTH

The Disk of the Month features CED, a DOS command editor which allows you to edit previously executed DOS commands. Simply press the up arrow key until the desired command is displayed. CED also allows you to assign synonyms to DOS commands.

The disk will be available at the back of the room for \$1 (or use your Goodie Coupon).

THE BULLETIN BOARD
IS BACK!!

The new club BBS should be up and running in the next couple of days. The number is 723-7995. Give it a try; if there's no answer, try again in a few days. Further announcements will be made at the meeting.

HELP WANTED

Please contact Becky Bridges if you would be interested in selling ads for PRint SCreen. The job would entail contacting local computer stores, repair shops, etc. to see if they would be interested in advertising on a regular, periodic, or one-time basis. Call Becky at 326-8605 if you are interested.

FREE ADS

Don't forget that as a member you are entitled to free classified ads in PRint SCreen. If you have old/unused hardware or software, place an ad here. Members have reported good responses to their ads.

(reprinted from the HAL-PC newsletter, 12/86)

by Jim Null

1. DO NOT roll labels backward in a printer. Ever. Cut the labels off and use the extras to relabel disks.
2. DO NOT move paper in a dot matrix printer with the printer on-line. Better yet, turn off the power before moving the paper. Remembering this will save a \$225 repair bill on a Toshiba.
3. DO NOT reboot the computer when it is connected to a printer that is on and on-line. This can blow a fuse; my repair bill was \$48.
4. DO assume that your hard disk will crater on a weekly basis and back up all important data. Within two weeks, my hard disks at work and at home had to be reformatted. Don't ignore the considerable time it takes to recreate menus and batch files. Back them up as well. Remember also such things as config.sys files and autoexec.bat files.
5. DO use a logical, consistent method of naming data files. All copies of your resume, for example, might have the extension RES. With minimal work, you can use the DOS copy command to back up selected files.
6. DO use a park or shipdisk command for your hard disk drive and cardboard spacers for your floppy disk drive(s) prior to moving the computer. In fact, consider parking the hard disk every time before you turn it off.
7. DO learn one new (at least to you) DOS command every month. Start with common ones such as copy, chkdsk, edlin, etc.

**Easy Does It With
Your Power Switch**

QUESTION: I spend about three hours on the computer each day, but usually in five or six sessions. Which is best: To turn the power off after each session and then turn it on when I'm ready to start the next session, or to keep it on all day?

ANSWER: I know someone who bought a computer and NEVER TURNED IT OFF. He reported no failures at all and it lasted five years (it finally died when he dropped it down a set of stairs...) Normal persons prefer to sleep at night without listening to a computer fan, but the fact is that the less you turn your computer on and off, the better it is for your circuitry and your drives. Each power-up sends a spike of current through your system that will eventually take its toll on your disk drives, especially a fixed disk.

Here's a good rule of thumb: If you work on your computer in a relatively normal time-frame (like a 9-5 job), turn it on at the beginning of the day and then turn it off only once, when you are done computing for the day. The power drain of an inactive computer is insignificantly small, and you will appreciate being able to pick up where you left off and not having to wait through a cold boot.

If you leave your computer for an extended period of time, make sure to turn off your peripherals and any lights around you (the light bulb at your computer station draws more power than the computer itself).

It is most important that you turn your monitor off (or use a screen blanker), because a constant image over a period of time tends to burn out your monitor's phosphor. Like the smart computer user that you are, you save your

work before leaving the computer for any prolonged period, right?

A related thought: If your computer does not have a reset switch, it would be a worthwhile (and inexpensive) project to rig one up. Especially if you're like me and you experiment with dozens of memory resident programs at the same time and you lock your computer up a lot. A reset switch will save you from having to power down and then back up again. Radio Shack sells "momentary on" switches for about a buck and the club has several people who can tell you exactly where the switch should be connected on your motherboard.

Automation 1A

QUESTION: I intend to package and market a Lotus 1-2-3 application and have designed into it a high degree of automation. Ironically, I can't seem to find a good way to automate the way it starts. I use hundreds of Lotus macros in the program, but they won't help me until I'm actually in Lotus. How do I get the user into Lotus and into my application faithfully? What DOS commands do I need to know? Help!!

ANSWER: DOS can help in many ways--you need to decide if you want your application to start up totally clean and professional, or if it is okay to show a seam or two. The challenge is to accommodate the fact that your customers will be using their computers in entirely different ways before starting up your application.

Let's say that your application is a program that analyzes possible real estate ventures and you have named it PayDirt. Assuming that you're using version 2.01 and a fixed disk, here are the steps you need to take: 1) Create a subdirectory in your customer's computer

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called PAYDIRT and copy the six 1-2-3 files into it. 2) Modify (or create) the PATH statement in his AUTOEXEC.BAT to include C:\PAYDIRT. That way, no matter where he is in his system, he can run a file that resides in PAYDIRT. 3) Create a batch file called (you guessed it) PAYDIRT.BAT.

The batch file will begin with the command CD\PAYDIRT, which will bring the user into the PAYDIRT directory regardless of where he was or what he was doing previously. Then, optionally, PAYDIRT.BAT can display a sign-on message or greeting of some sort. (The aesthetically minded programmer could use ZAPITUP from our library to design a customized screen.) Finally, PAYDIRT.BAT starts 1-2-3.

Every time 1-2-3 starts, the first thing it looks for is the presence on the current directory of a file called AUTO123.WK1. If AUTO123 is found, it is automatically retrieved, and if AUTO123 contains an auto-start macro, that macro is automatically played back. Presto, we've gone from a DOS prompt all the way into your 1-2-3 application simply by typing a one-word command. We did it by:

- 1) Creating a new subdirectory
- 2) Adding the new subdirectory to the PATH statement in AUTOEXEC
- 3) Copying 1-2-3 into the new subdirectory
- 4) Creating a batch file that logs onto that subdirectory and runs 1-2-3.
- 5) Using AUTO123.WK1 and an auto-start macro.

If you're like me, you might feel funny about having the heart of your

Lotus application be in a file named AUTO123. After all, shouldn't you have a file called PAYDIRT.WK1? You can--all you have to do is create a tiny little AUTO123 file. This little file would have only thing in it: an auto-start macro that reads /FRPaydirt. In this case, AUTO123's only job would be to retrieve PAYDIRT.

P.S. A keyboard macro program, like SuperKey or ProKey, would allow you to design more elaborate and elegant sign-on messages. You can not only create professional looking screens, you can also collect keyboard input, pause for a specified amount of time or even accept passwords.

P.S.S. If you really wanted to get personal, you could rig PAYDIRT.BAT to return the user once he's done to the place where he was before he started PayDirt. This is done with another piece of SPAUG freeware, NEWDIR.COM. All you do is make NEWDIR the very first command in PAYDIRT.BAT and as the very last command, type OLDDIR.

QUESTION: My husband has never liked my computer ever since it beat him in a game of chess. He constantly threatens to melt it down and turn it into a toaster. Should I get rid of my computer or my husband?

ANSWER: Yes.

Send your questions to: The Answer Man, 25200 Carlos Bee Blvd., No. 428, Hayward, CA 94542.

S Y B I L:
SCHIZO AND WORTH EVERY PENNY OF IT

By Rick Altman

No, Sybil is not the name of the author of the program, or even the wife who inspired the author. In fact, this is not a program at all. It's 14 programs, compiled by a group in Boulder, CO called Sophco. And Sybil was the name of a character in a drama who had multiple personalities. Without a doubt, Sybil is about as schizophrenic as a software package can be, and the company makes no bones about it--you may use some of its programs every day and never use others. We'll start with my favorite:

GPRINT

This dinky 6k file revolutionizes your PrtSc key by allowing the user to dump a bit-by-bit image of the screen to an Epson FX-80 or FX-100 printer. Simply put, GPRINT brings full graphics capabilities to the Shft-PrtSc operation. All you do is load GPRINT into memory and forget about it.

When you type Shft-PrtSc, a line on the bottom of the screen lists your options for you: a normal screen dump as you are used to, a graphics dump or an "emboldened" graphics dump (a little better resolution). Dumping graphics takes about five times as long as a normal screen dump but the result is an attractive, accurate representation of your screen images, including reverses. It will handle the entire range of ASCII graphics. The only aspect of the screen it doesn't acknowledge is the difference between bright and dim lettering.

Sybil costs \$49.95. Gprint is worth \$100.

The Disaster Recovery Program

This is the program that Sophco seems to give top billing--life insurance for your hard disk. Once loaded into memory, DRP can restore a hard disk after an

accidental format. (No, I didn't test this program...would you?) There are two requirements: DRP must be in memory before the accident; and the recovery must be done immediately, before any other disk writes.

Like most of the Sybil programs, all that is required is that DRP be thrown into memory, by your AUTOEXEC.BAT file for maximum protection. Once there, you forget about it--just like an insurance policy. But if you are ever so unlucky to suffer an accidental format, DRP will save your ASCII...just like an insurance policy.

Okay, here are the catches. Just like an insurance policy, you pay hefty premiums. I quote: "DRP takes up memory. For a 10Mb hard disk, approximately 30k of memory. Larger hard disks take up more memory." Also, DRP only works with PC-DOS, not MS-DOS. So the clone owners of the world will have to decide if this program is worth making a switch in operating systems.

WHEREIS

There are many public domain programs that will find files on a hard disk or even a crowded floppy, and they all work reasonably well. This one does just enough over and beyond the call of duty to earn a place in my Utilities sub-directory, no small honor I assure you.

It earns this honor by allowing the user to search for files using any of its attributes. For instance, you could find only files that are hidden, or are system files, you could search for files that were created after 8/20/86 or after 11:00 at night. You could list only those files that are over 35k or, according to the manual, "find all files that are dated today and start with the letter "M" and have up to four characters and end in an .EXE suffix."

I dare a piece of freeware to do that.

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COMBINE

This is a weird one, but maybe just what you power users are looking for. In conjunction with WHEREIS, COMBINE acts like a multi-tasking program that will perform two things at once. For instance, you could use COMBINE, to find all of the .BAK files on your hard disk and then erase all of them. Or you could find all the files that end in .WK1 and move them to the sub-directory 'LOTUS.

Normally, you would have to perform these steps one after the laborious other. COMBINE turns these and other similar projects into an easy two-step task. It could be a one-step task, but COMBINE builds in a safeguard against accidental disaster like ERASE *.*. First COMBINE finds all of the files that it plans to act on and creates a batch file that will do the dirty work. When you run the batch file, the operation actually takes place. Fool around with this one; it's fun.

COMPARE

This program leaves DOS' COMP in the dust. It will compare files, entire directories and report back with very detailed findings. You can command COMPARE to show only those files that are identical or only those that are not. You can view differences byte by byte or block by block. Used in conjunction with COMBINE, you can rig up sophisticated and efficient back-up systems for copying sub-directories to floppies.

SYBSPOOL

This is a run-of-the-mill print spooler, except that it allows you to support two separate printers, printing two separate projects simulatenously, while you work on a third project.

The great thing about this program is its description: "...a direct disk access editor which allows you to edit your disks at the byte/sector level. This is useful for all sorts of things, most of them illegal."

Actually, MODIFY was useful for very few things because you could only access files if you knew their head, sector and cylinder numbers. I found DEBUG or the Norton utility easier to use than this one, but I sure got a laugh from the documentation.

UNERASE

The one real loser in the bunch, this totally unweildy program requires you to go through a long and involved series of steps just to unerase a stupid file. The manual takes up four pages discussing how to use this program.

Some of the other utilities included in Sybil are ASCIIGEN (a Graphics Editor), CHMOD (lets you change any attribute of any file), DATEDISK (lets you change the date and/or time of any file), and SYBDISK (a RAM disk).

*

On the whole, Sophco has put together a winning package of utilites, the kind you always wished you could find on somebody's bulletin board, but haven't. Reasonably priced and totally worth it.

(Rick Altman is a software consultant living in Hayward. He can be reached at (415) 581-7563.)

Sybil
Sophco, Inc.
P.O. Box 7430
Boulder, CO 80306
(303) 444-1542

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Speaker's Bureau:	Jim Wampler	323-7365

SIGS:

Novice:	Don Baird	365-6822
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LIBRARY:

Public Domain Software	Les Weil	321-5541
Soft Copy	Jim Caldwell	692-7181
	Ralph Muraca	365-1659
	Turley Angle	369-1981

RESOURCE PEOPLE

Application Packages:

MicroSoft Word	Jeanie Treichel	851-0100
KEDIT	Arthur Naman	408-374-1700
Lotus 1-2-3	Bruce Coddling	367-8642
	Arthur Naman	408-374-1700
Symphony	Sally See	941-1378
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Perfect Series	Stefan Unger	321-7319
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"C"	Corwin Nichols	494-8640
	John Watson	325-7632
	Mel Cruts	408-263-6099
Fortran	John Watson	325-7632
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	Stefan Unger	321-7319
	Paul Berry	494-2043
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MSDOS, CP/M	Mel Cruts	408-263-6099

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Hard disks	Jim Caldwell	692-7181
Epson printers	Jim Caldwell	692-7181
Toshiba printer	Paul Berry	494-2043

CLUB INFORMATION

MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. Box 3738
Stanford, CA 94305

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION: Louise Greer Bolitho 322-3850
\$25/year fee (\$10 for students)

NEWSLETTER: Becky Bridges 326-8605
P.O. Box 982
Palo Alto, CA 94302
Deadline for submissions: 15th of each month

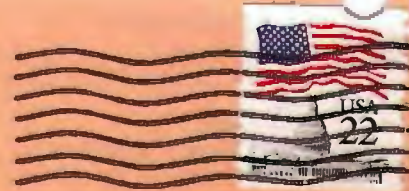
ADVERTISING

If you are interested in advertising in PRINT SCREEN, send camera ready copy to P.O. Box 3738, Stanford, CA 94305 before the 8th of the month. All ads are payable by check in advance. Rates per issue are:

- Full Page (8.5 X 11) \$25.
- Half Page (7.5 X 4.5) \$15.
- Qtr. Page (4.5 X 3.5) \$10.

Classified ads are free to paying members.

The Stanford/Palo Alto
Users Group for the IBM PC
Box 3738 STANFORD, CA 94305



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