

PRinT SCreen

*The Newsletter for the Stanford/
Palo Alto PC User's Group*

November 1987
October

Volume 5, Number 11

President's Message

The View from the Top

by Corwin Nichols

Welcome to Desktop Publishing. You may be noticing something a little different about this issue of *PRinT SCreen*. There is a bit of history in the making as you read this newsletter. Do you remember the very first document that you made using a word processor? That feeling, one of liberation, of being on a new threshold, is what I get with this issue.

Actually, desktop publishing is not a radical idea. Its more the natural evolution from a primitive form to a more advanced one. The edges between what passes as old word processing and new desktop publishing are already blurring. Witness the direction of Microsoft Word toward being graphics based and displaying multiple fonts on screen in a true WYSIWYG (What You See Is What

You Get) fashion. MicroPro (Wordstar) folks have already stated their commitment to the technology. The bandwagon is rolling along. Any producer of word processing software that isn't on it is likely to be left in the dust.

This is good news for us. How many of us want to go through the learning curve of yet another completely new and complex subject like typesetting? That's really what desktop publishing is all about. Just look at the terminology: kerning, picas, leading, widows, orphans and all the rest of typeset-speak. To be effective today with desktop publishing, you must learn a completely new program like Ventura Publisher or Pagemaker as well as the new science (or is it art?) of typesetting.

Fortunately, many of the word processing companies will spare us much of the effort by incorporating these new ideas right into their existing form. Thus we'll be able to grow into this new art

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November Calendar

October 28	Group Meeting	8:00
November 2	MS Word SIG	7:30
November 10	Novice SIG	7:00
November 11	Planning Meeting	8:00
November 16	MS Word SIG	7:30
November 25	Group Meeting	8:00

All members are welcome to attend the monthly planning meeting, where we make decisions on the future of the group. Call Corwin Nichols, 494-8640 or 324-9114, for location of the next meeting.

Next Meeting

Date:	Wednesday, October 28
Time:	8:00 p.m.
Place:	Polya Hall, Turing Auditorium (Rm. 111) Stanford University
Speaker:	Borland International
Topic:	New Software

Two Borland representatives will be sneak previewing several exciting new programs, including Super Sidekick, Turbo C, Turbo Pascal 4, Quatro, and, we are told, a few surprises...

The Program of the Month: ProComm and...SPARC

This month, the Program of the Month is also Hardware of the Month, as the all-star telecommunications program ProComm will be shown off, along with the newly-named bulletin board, SPARC (Stanford/Palo Alto Resource Center).

ProComm is a highly-touted public domain modem program that has received rave reviews in virtually every national computer magazine. It does everything that commercial programs do that cost over \$100. ProComm, of course, is free for the downloading.

Club President Corwin Nichols will conduct a tour of both ProComm and SPARC on the overhead projector.

September Meeting

Those of you who came to the September meeting discovered our mystery speaker to be Ken Agle, a columnist for the Peninsula Times Tribune. Agle is also a principal of Agle & Associates and president of Technology Resource Assistance Center. His talk was titled *Confusions about the Future*, and the discussion centered around whether the personal computer as we know it today will be around in five years.

Agle believes that IBM's PS/2 is really a mini-computer on a desktop; it is not a personal computer. OS/2's multi-tasking cannot be done on a personal computer because multi-tasking/users and personal computing are a contradiction in terms. He also stated that most people don't need the power of a PS/2.

What a PC operator really needs, according to Agle, is multi-access, not multi-tasking. Rather than running several different operations at once, the average user needs to have quick access to several different programs.

Agle also believes that in the future laptops will be the true personal computers. The desktop computers will all be mini-computers.

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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 (\$10 for students) 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 *PRinT SCreen*.

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Floppy disks for sale: Xidex Precision disks are available for \$6/box. High density floppies are 4 disks for \$5. 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.

News from the SIGs

The Novice SIG:

Better at Punning than BATING

Batch files were presented as the central topic on October 13, using a two-page hand-out which contained examples of subcommand use starting with the simplest and running through the trickiest.

Demonstrating step-by-step on the computer became a plodding affair with less success than desired. Even though only seven subcommands are involved, treating them all in one session can become a tangled affair (and we never did get to the FOR-IN-DO subcommand).

Considering the supposedly simple ECHO: It can echo its own command statement, along with any comments following, including the results of the statement, onto the screen; coupled with the power to create a new file in any location and then echo subcommands into it; might take a Solomon to understand it - and we hesitate to mention that ECHO OFF means (maybe) no echoing to screen; of commands, their statements, their comments, whether ECHO is one of the commands, and providing it's leap-year.

Though we didn't get there, this leader hoped to dazzle with demonstrations of the iterative power of the FOR-IN-DO subcommand working with wild-cards. Of great disappointment, however, is that the results of this power cannot be redirected to a file via the APPEND function (">>"). Why the programmers stopped short by producing only a novelty when they could have followed through to give a truly mighty utility for file management, creates a feeling that IBM does not take personal computer users seriously.

To cope with topics, such as batch files, it's perhaps better to underestimate the scope involved, and then chop the topic into smaller chunks, permitting more group participation. Attempting an all-encompassing approach may be challenging but tends to satisfy only a few - and also risks confusion and/or boredom.

We didn't set an agenda, therefore next time it will be "pick topics from the list" with any of the batch subcommands included as topics. Also getting a consensus, on what kind of format to use for up-coming topics, will become regular.

Finding enough adequate monitors is crucial. Of the four present, only two qualify (TV types don't). We could use (month-by-month) loans of one or two composite video input monitors. A roving keyboard might still get introduced.

— See Page 7

The Answer Man

I'm Scared of Desktop Publishing

QUESTION: I am considering getting involved in desktop publishing, but I'm scared by programs that cost \$800 and fill up 10 disks. Are there simpler programs out there and what do I give up by using them?

ANSWER: Nothing moves slowly in the computer world, and desktop publishing is certainly no exception. At last count, there were over 375 PC programs that let you design a document and see the results on the screen. And while Ventura Publisher (\$895, 11 program diskettes) and PageMaker (\$595, eight diskettes and a container the size of a bread box) are the industry leaders, they are often more software than a user can handle.

Question No. 1: What do you plan to do with your D.P. software? If the answer is that you want to send out a few party invitations, that's a perfectly legitimate answer. But you don't need Ventura Publisher for that. If you plan to publish a four-page newsletter for your church, excellent! But PageMaker is overkill.

Question No. 2: Do you plan to use a laser printer for your finished output? You don't need to own one to answer yes, as many copy shops on the Peninsula are hooking up PCs to their rental laser printers. If you're planning on using your dot-matrix printer, there's nothing wrong with that, but why not save a few hundred bucks and avoid a program specifically designed to output to laser printers.

As an entree to D.P., take a look at PFS:First Publisher, from Software Publishing. It's dirt cheap — under \$75 — and it is simple to learn. It wouldn't handle a job like *PRinT SCreen*, but it would introduce you to the concepts of publishing and it does a credible job of showing you on the screen what you will get out of your printer. It even has limited support for lasers, but if you begin to use a laser regularly, you will probably want to opt for the next level.

That next level is currently defined by the Gem Desktop Publisher, list price \$395. Gem and Ventura look alike, but Gem is twice as cheap as Ventura, twice as simple and twice as simplistic. Therefore, it is ideal for non-professionals or light professionals who need quality output for any of their projects, but don't want to learn a huge program, or more importantly, may only use the program occasionally and don't want to have to *relearn* the program once every six weeks.

We'll keep the list short, because the idea here is to simplify, not complicate. Desktop publishing is not the monster that it is sometimes portrayed to be, and anyone considering taking a crack at it need not be intimidated by the thought of having to lock yourself in a closet for a month to learn it. Today, there are very real and very practical alternatives.

The Copy-Delete Syndrome

QUESTION: I am constantly cleaning up my system by organizing files and moving them into their proper places. But in order to move a file from one subdirectory to another, or from one floppy to another, I have to first copy it to the new destination and then delete it from the old location. Is there an easier way?

ANSWER: There are two answers to your dilemma, one compliments of our public domain library and one compliments of the Answer Man. First go to the library or to SPARC, our bulletin board, and get a copy of RED. RED will REDirect your files from one subdirectory of your hard disk to another, without your having to go nuts. Not only is it a one-step process instead of two, but it is much faster. This is because RED doesn't really copy anything — all it does is change a few bytes of the File Allocation Table that keeps track of where files live (i.e. in which subdirectory).

As for moving a file from one *disk drive* to another, you'll need something a bit more involved than RED or MOVE. Now you're back to having to copy the file and then delete it, however a simple batch file will make the process easier. Take this down and save it as a file called RE.BAT (or anything that makes sense to you):

```
echo off
echo          %1 moving to %2
copy %1 %2 nul
del %1
```

The command syntax is: *RE filename new destination* and it accepts wildcards as the filename and paths in both filename and new destination.

Line One: The echo off statement prevents the program from showing you the commands (instead, it just carries them out).

Line Two: This echo statement notifies you that *filename* is being moved to *new destination*. If *filename* were "WS.EXE" and *new destination* were "D:", this line would display

```
WS.EXE moving to D:
```

Line Three: Copies *filename* to *new destination* (the "nul" is optional).

Line Four: Deletes *filename* from its original location.

This is an especially useful batch file for anyone who has one hard disk that is partitioned into two or more logical disk drives. RED will not work across a partitioned hard drive, but RE.BAT will.

Hum Baby

QUESTION: I understand that computers are being used regularly in sports these days. Why couldn't Roger Craig have used his computer in the playoffs to have beaten the Cardinals?

ANSWER: Because Roger Craig uses a Mac. ❖

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

Desktop Publishing: Freedom of the Press

by Rick Altman

Is it my imagination or has desktop publishing not exactly caught on yet among members of our group? Not that it would come as too much of a surprise — after all, most of the software costs over \$500 and takes about twice as long to learn as Lotus 1-2-3. And then there is the little matter of a laser printer, which will set you back a minimum of \$1,700. Are these reasons to shy away from desktop publishing? Sure. Are they good reasons? Not really.

In only its infancy, desktop publishing has already proven to be one of the true revolutions of the computer age. Even if you have never written an essay, never cut and pasted a flier, never published a little newsletter, understanding desktop publishing has become a rite of passage for any computer hobbyist.

So what the heck is desktop publishing, other than a cliché? For starters, it's a misnomer — I've yet to meet a laser printer that can comfortably fit on a desktop. The simple definition is this:

The study and practice of typesetting and publishing documents using a single personal computer.

Eighteen months ago, nobody was doing it. A year and a half ago, if you wanted to have your one-page flier typeset and pasted up, it would have cost you a minimum of \$50 and at least two trips to a typesetting house. Now it can be done for 50¢. Now there are no less than four desktop publishing magazines with national cir-

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culations and national advertising. Now there are three major trade shows devoted exclusively to this new industry. Now there are hundreds of desktop publishing programs written for the PC.

When editor Becky Bridges suggested the idea of using this new technology to publish *PRinT SCreen*, we knew instantly that it was worth trying. Indeed, before your very eyes, *PRinT SCreen* has gone desktop. Here's how we did it:

Happily, while we made a dramatic change to the *appearance* of the newsletter, we did not have to uproot our entire process. The copy was written in its usual fashion — by the various authors' favorite word processors. Becky gathered it and edited it as she al-

**A computer hobbyist ignoring
desktop publishing is tantamount
to a gourmet chef cooking without
ever using pepper**

ways has. She placed all of the headlines, subheads and bylines right into each article — business as usual.

Now for the fun.

The principal ingredient used was Ventura Publisher, one of the acknowledged kings of desktop publishing programs. Using Ventura to publish *PRinT SCreen* is a matter of inventing a wheel, but once invented, the wheel is good for every issue we choose to publish this way.

Ventura does three important things: 1) It allows you to design not only the words, but also the pages; 2) It accepts text in every major word processing format, as well as ASCII; 3) It can send output to over three dozen laser printers.

Ventura is a page-oriented program. You decide what dimension your page is to be, and Ventura will show it to you on the screen. We told Ventura to show us our tried and true 8 1/2 x 11 inch page. We thought about getting fancy, but we remembered the Golden Rule of Desktop Publishing: Just because you have a program that allows you to set type in 144 pt. Zapf Bold Italic Magenta doesn't mean that you have to.

Alas, desktop publishing puts the power of the press into the hands of thousands of people who have no production and design skills whatsoever. Therefore, being conservative is almost always the best approach, until you develop an eye for what looks good and what doesn't. We chose the traditional typefaces of Times for copy and Helvetica for headlines, kept all of our heads and subheads flush left, and eschewed all temptations to use polka dot type or guava colored paper. About as exotic as we got was the Century typeface adopted for the *PRinT SCreen* logo and the shaded boxes around the main heads.

When we commanded Ventura to show us our page, it did so on a bright, visible background, with a clear dotted margin around the entire page. Then we went to work reserving space on each page for the various articles — in VenturaSpeak, we "created frames".

— See next page

Diskoveries: Desktop Publishing

-From previous page

Each of these so-called frames was instructed not only to hold a specific article, but also to search the hard disk for the article and load it into place. Once the articles were in their respective frames, we went about the task of distinguishing the main headlines from the subheads and the bylines from the regular story text.

Ventura allows us to actually give a paragraph a name — a "tag". For instance, we tagged all of the main heads "MAIN-HEAD". That way, when we changed the attribute of any one paragraph called MAINHEAD, every paragraph with that tag changed as well. This is how Ventura gives a consistent look to a long document with repeating elements. And once you develop a format for your heads and your copy (i.e. invent the wheel), it is a simple matter to tell Ventura which blocks of text should be tagged MAINHEAD, SUBHEAD, BODYTEXT, etc.

We threw in page footers, a few lines here, a box there and we were ready for printing.

While we don't own a laser printer (yet...), we were able to use one at a local copy shop. So we fooled Ventura into thinking that it was printing to a laser printer, when instead it was sending all of its print instructions to a diskfile. Then we took that diskfile down to the copy shop, shoved it into a PC, sent it to the laser, and presto, the November issue.

Becky has bigger plans for next month, as well. She's hunting for a shop that can print PRinT SScreen on both sides of 11 x 17 paper. That way, we can fold it once and make it look like a real

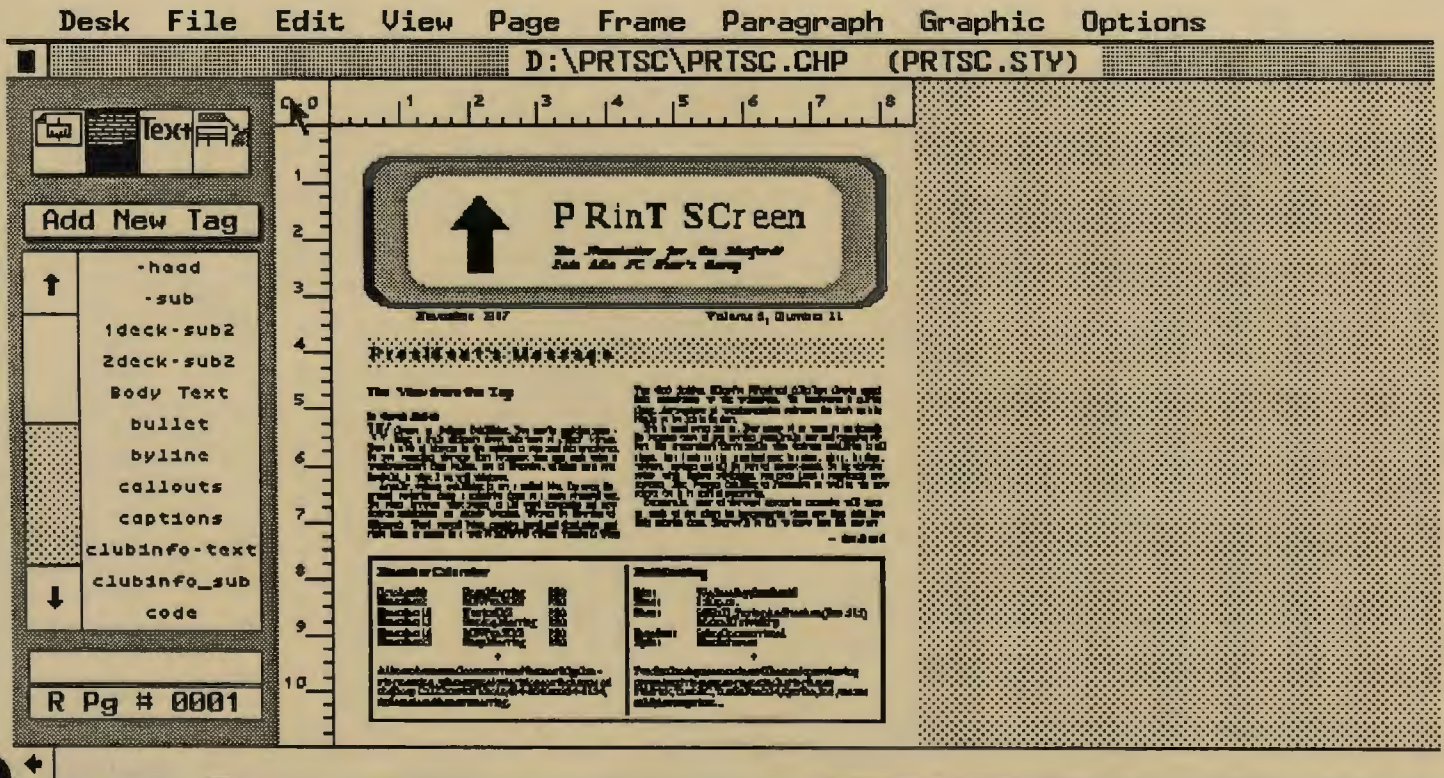
Using Ventura to publish PRinT SScreen is a matter of inventing a wheel, but once invented, the wheel is good for every issue

newsletter. And as always, she's looking for a few opinionated souls out there willing to share their thoughts. We can do all the prettying up we want to the package — it's the content that has made this newsletter good, and that's what will make it better.

Meanwhile, if you have carefully avoided the subject of desktop publishing, reconsider. A computer hobbyist ignoring desktop publishing is tantamount to a gourmet chef cooking without ever using pepper. Soon, it will be everywhere: advertisements, annual reports, business cards, company brochures, fliers, letterheads, logos, restaurant menus, newsletters, party invitations, press releases, price lists, sales catalogs, and about 100 other things that you mail out or receive in the mail.

This is one ripple of the computer age that will not go away. ❖

Rick Altman teaches desktop publishing to corporations and individual users throughout the Bay Area.



The front page of PRinT SScreen, receiving its face lift, compliments of Ventura Publisher.

President's Message

— Continued from Page One

without too much trauma. It won't be completely free though. You will learn about fonts and point sizes, proportional spacing and kerning and perhaps a little more. Also, you may have to invest in some type of graphics card, and I don't mean a CGA. At the bottom end, a regular Hercules or clone monochrome graphics card (HGC) will work. EGA is better, though slower and more expensive. And, there are even nicer monitors available for those who can afford them. I don't want to discourage you though since you can really do all you need on an el' cheapo HGC card.

The person who really deserves credit for moving the newsletter (as well as moving me) headlong into the desktop publishing fray is Rick Altman. It is he, along with the consistent efforts of editor Becky Bridges, who is producing this new and hopefully pleasing format. More changes are in the works even as you read this, and I'm sure that he or Becky would like to hear your comments about it at the next meeting. And about the next meeting...

I would like to highly encourage all of you to attend the next meeting. It could be one of the most interesting of the year. Borland will be modeling their new fall fashions in computer software, including Turbo Pascal Version 4, Quattro, Super Sidekick, and more. Don't miss it.

Perhaps I should mention that this is also the first installment of a regular "President's Message". Don't be alarmed by the length

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of my first submission. I'm sure that in future issues it will be a bit shorter. (*That's a promise — Ed.*) I mean, how many times have you known me to wax enthusiastically over a computer topic? I'll keep away from highly technical issues and will, of course, avoid controversy. We do of course all agree that before long it'll be hard to see any difference between a Mac and a PC. And we all agree that Darwin didn't know that he was really talking computers when he was musing about natural selection. And how does your computer spell relief from loneliness? TELECOM... ah. I may be getting ahead of myself. These stories, along with a few others will be spread before you in the months ahead.

I'd like to leave you a last thought about all this. I hardly need to mention the speed with which new becomes old. How long till desktop publishing is old hat, or even an item at all? It could be so incorporated into the underlying structure of a graphic interface, as to become invisible as a separate entity. After all, who among us blinks anymore at the thought of word processing? So, savor the feeling, the first steps along a new path. For me its not the end that matters, its the journey. Be seeing you. ♦

Make Your Computer Smarter, Faster and Friendlier with *CustoMenu*

There are a lot of menu programs today, but most of them make you do all the work and they were written by someone who knows nothing at all about you or your computer.

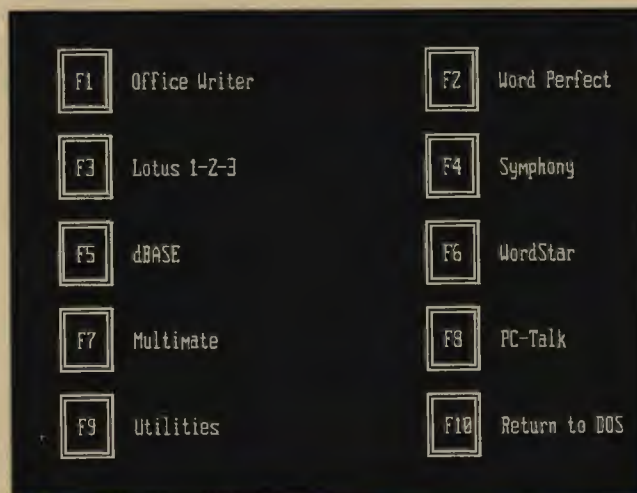
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CURRENT DIRECTORY: C:\LOTUS

MY COMPUTER



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PRinT Screen Potpourri

SeeMORE for 1-2-3

SeeMORE FOR 1-2-3 is a unique new program that doubles, triples, or quadruples the number of cells displayed on screen at one time. All that is needed is the See More program (\$79.95 list price) and a micro that has some form of graphic capability (Heracles, CGA, EGA, VGA).

See More has several modes that offer different amounts of shrinkage. It also allows you to view the spreadsheet in reverse video, modify the 1-2-3 command lines (eliminate or keep at full size) and perform other things all without leaving 1-2-3.

SeeMORE is one of the new "add-in" products for 1-2-3. Using one keystroke (The ALT key plus F7, F8, or F9), it pops up and lets you see more of your spreadsheet on the screen without scrolling back and forth. More importantly, it allows you to do this without having to buy a new video card.

For more information, contact Personics Corp., 2352 Main Street, Concord, MA 01742 or call (800) 445-3311.

(Reprinted from *Diablo Valley PC News*, September 1987)

WordPerfect 5.0

WordPerfect Corporation is not "telling all" about its new version of its popular word processing program, but it has released a few teasers for us. The entire printing portion of the program has been rewritten to take full advantage of individual printer capabilities--especially laser printers. Parallel text columns will span page breaks, and the on-screen document preview feature will be improved.

Version 5.0 will also include many desktop publishing features, though it will not be considered a desktop publishing system. The company's current plan is to continue improving WordPerfect's desktop publishing capabilities.

Beta testing is to begin this month, and the test period will last at least two months. The update will cost approximately \$50.

Correction

In the August Print Screen we reprinted an article from another PC User's Group newsletter about changing dates of existing files. However, as written this method will DELETE any file with EXE, COM, or ARC extensions. After setting the computer to the desired date and time), use the following to change the date of any file:

```
COPY FILENAME.EXT/B,, + FILENAME.EXT NUL
```

If you have a lot of files to change, you might want to make a batch file called STAMP.BAT, as follows:

```
COPY CON: STAMP.BAT
```

```
COPY %1/B,, + %1 NUL
```

Press F6 to save this file. Then, to restamp a file, type:

```
STAMP FILENAME.EXT
```

Classifieds

Donations Wanted: Do you have an idle or ignored computer (IBM or compatible) and/or printer? Our non-profit rehabilitation organization will give you a tax deduction for a donation. Put computers and people to work in one (key)stroke. Contact (or leave message for) Bruce Neben at (415) 323-1401 or (415) 328-0515.

For Sale: Hayes 1200B internal modem and Smartcom telecommunications software. This is the real thing, not a clone. \$150. Call Rick at (415) 581-7563. ♦

The SIGs

From Page 2

Next Novice SIG meeting: Tuesday, November 10, 3785 Farm Hill Blvd. Redwood City. Watch for blue light. Call Don Baird 415 365-6822 for information. Meetings are at 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. People can arrive early and stay until 11:00 for extra business. Current attendees will be notified in case of late changes. Bring 360K floppy to receive your favorite files. (Can you believe it - someone down the block also had a blue light on. We may have to change colors).

Fundamentals (or file copying) is a routine feature for early arrivals (6 - 7 p.m.).

— Don Baird

Microsoft Word

The Microsoft Word SIG got off to an enthusiastic start last month. The group meets every other Monday (some members wanted to meet every week!) at 7:30 p.m. Each meeting has a main topic of discussion, such as outlining and style sheets. The upcoming meetings are October 26, November 2, and November 16. For details on the meetings call Jeanie Treichel at home (851-0100) or work (326-7438).

Have a Special Interest?

Have a SIG...

We're not talking about flying to Washington and lobbying on Capital Hill. We're talking about getting together with others who share your love (or is it lust?) for a particular program. Those interested in starting up a special interest group should contact Club President Corwin Nichols (494-8640) or *PRinTScreen* editor Becky Bridges (326-8605). ♦

The Resource Page

Club Officers

President	Corwin Nichols	494-8640
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C	Corwin Nichols	494-2043
DOS 3.x	Rick Altman	581-7563
Fortran, Pascal	John Watson	325-7632

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Hard Disks	Jim Caldwell	692-7181
Toshiba Printers	Paul Berry	494-2043
Epson Printers	Jim Caldwell	692-7181

Club Information

Mailing Address P.O. Box 3738
Stanford, CA 94305

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

Bulletin Board 723-7995

Newsletter Becky Bridges
326-8605
P.O. Box 982
Palo Alto CA 94302

Advertising

If you are interested in advertising in *PRinT SCreen* send camera-ready art or copy to P.O. Box 3738 Stanford CA 94302 before the 8th of the month. All ads are payable by check in advance. Rates per issue are:

Full Page (8 1/2 x 11)	\$45
Half Page (7 1/2 x 4 1/2)	\$30
Quarter Page (4 1/2 x 3 1/2)	\$15

Classified ads are free to paying members.

**The Stanford / Palo Alto
User's Group for the PC**

P.O. Box 3738, Stanford, CA 94305

