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

PO Box 3738

Stanford, CA 94305

Volume 2 Number 8

August 1984

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* Next Meeting: Wednesday, August 29, 1984 *  
* 7:00 P.M. *  
* Polya Hall - Turing Auditorium (Rm.111) *  
* Stanford University *  
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AGENDA FOR THE MEETING _

- 7:00 General Club Business
Report on Monday before Wednesday Meeting
- 7:30 New Business
- 8:30 Random Access
- 9:00 Conclusion of the official Club Meeting

CLUB OFFICERS

Treasurer: Beverly Altman 329-8252
Speaker's: Mike Van Waas 325-2507
Soft Copy Librarian: Jim Caldwell 692-7181
Hard Copy Librarian: Joe Wible 497-6831
Bulk Purchases: Greg Tinfow 493-7404
Membership: Dave Casto 326-7006
Bulletin Board: Lindsey Puckett 967-3101
Newsletter: Jackie Carr 858-1641

Meetings: Last Wed. of Ea. Month

Membership Fee: \$25. (Includes club library listing)

Newsletter: Deadline for submissions 15th of each month

Club Bulletin Board: 968-1809

RESOURCE PEOPLE

Tony Nunez (857-0836) - PC Write
Jackie Carr (858-1641)-WordStar
Les Weil (321-5541) Public Domain Software
Jeff (Days: 321-5930) Pascal; Dos 2.0
Paul (968-8283) APL
Jim Webster (326-3365) Multiplan
Corwin Nichols (494-8640) - "C"
Greg Tinfow (493-7404) AST Boards
Curt Carlson (941-5680) Expansion Boards

Advertising Rates

\$25. (Full Page - 8½ X 11)
\$15. (Half Page - 8½ X 5½)
\$10. (Quarter Page - 4,2 X 5½)

Bits and Bytes

by Bill Weil

Here's an important warning to all DOS 2.0 users. Last month I mentioned problems with a hard disk on a new IBM PC XT. Although my problem was hardware related, I also found out about an error in the DOS 2.0 FORMAT routine. If you have DOS 2.0 with a date prior to 10/83, the FORMAT routine will not correctly mask out bad sectors.

This is a serious error that has received very little publicity. IBM knows about the error and will correct it through your dealer. I don't know if this problem affects MS-DOS 2.0 on compatibles.

When you format either a hard disk or a floppy you get a message that tells you the number of bytes on the disk, the number of bytes in hidden files and user files (if you formatted with the /S option), and the number of bytes in bad sectors, if any. You usually don't get any bad sectors, but if you do, it means that part of the disk can't be used reliably to read and write data. These parts are marked as bad sectors and are not used when you write a file to the disk.

The older version of DOS 2.0 does not correctly mark bad sectors. The result is that files are written to these bad areas on the disk. You then get data errors when you try to read the file. In effect, you have lost the file.

Even if you recently bought DOS 2.0, check the date. Do a DIR on your DOS disk and see what date is displayed. I got my XT in February and the date of DOS was 3/8/83. IBM has a correction to the FORMAT command on what they call a ZAP disk. You can get it free from the dealer that sold you your PC.

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More DOS 2.0 problems from Chuck Harrington in the Athens Area IBM PC Users Group Newsletter:

There is a very serious bug in the BACKUP and RESTORE pair of programs provided with DOS 2.0 for use with the IBM fixed disk. If you use the BACKUP program and then use the RESTORE program, you may find that a file will be incompletely restored to the fixed disk. The file exists on the backup diskette but the RESTORE program is unable to get all of it restored to the fixed disk. Apparently, the links between the file sectors on the floppy diskette are somehow damaged. What's worse, no error message warns you of the problem so you won't discover it until you attempt to use the file in question. The problem apparently occurs at random and there is no known way to predict which file will be clobbered.

IBM in Boca Raton has acknowledged that they have a problem and are working on it. Until the problem is fixed, the BACKUP and RESTORE pair can not be counted on. It is necessary to backup your files manually to diskette. This can be somewhat laborious, but it's the only safe way.

This isn't a bug in DOS 2.0 but a warning if you use it. Be careful if you convert from the PC to the XT or just trade up from DOS 1.1 to DOS 2.0. When you copy files from your old DOS 1.1 disks to the hard disk (or floppies formatted with DOS 2.0), make sure you don't copy any DOS 1.1 files or utilities. If you use COPY A:*. * C: and the disk in A: is a system disk, you won't copy the hidden files but you will copy COMMAND.COM and any utilities such as CHKDSK.COM or FORMAT.COM. This can cause all kinds of unexpected results because of incompatibilities between the two operating systems.

To be safe, do a DIR on any DOS 1.1 disk before you copy it to a DOS 2.0 disk. Then only copy the files that won't clobber your DOS 2.0 files.

The Club Bulletin Board

Thanks to Lindsey Puckett for his 24 hr./7 day service! Thanks to Jim Caldwell for soft copy that can be downloaded from the BB. Do you want to join us?

Here is what you'll need and some ideas about how to go about it.

- (1) A modem - A Volksmodem (300 baud) costs \$59.95 at ACOM Electronics, Palo Alto
You need the number from your expansion board to buy the right
adapter cable (\$9.95). (Includes a free \$100. membership to The Source.)
- (2) PC-Talk - freeware available from the club library
- (3) Dial 968-1809 (When you hear the beep, move talk button to Data)
- (4) You will type in your name and a "password" - Then follow simple directions on screen.

THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO IT. You can send or receive messages, read about club activities, get help, ask questions. The board is a forum for members.

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NEW LOTUS NEWSLETTER!!

ONE OF YOUR FELLOW MEMBERS IS STARTING UP A NEWSLETTER ON LOTUS 1-2-3 AND SYMPHONY WHICH WILL BE PACKED FULL OF TIPS, PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS, NEW PRODUCTS, BOOK REVIEWS, AND MUCH MORE.

CONTRIBUTORS ARE WELCOME. IF YOU ARE AN EXPERIENCED LOTUS USER AND WANT TO SHARE YOUR PERSONAL APPLICATIONS, WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU. WE CAN CONSIDER YOU FOR A REGULAR MONTHLY COLUMN, OR YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE PERIODICALLY. AUTHORS OF ARTICLES ACCEPTED FOR PUBLICATION WILL RECEIVE FREE ONE YEAR SUBSCRIPTIONS.

SUBSCRIBERS ARE WELCOME. PLEASE CONTACT US NOW IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SIGN UP AS A CHARTER SUBSCRIBER. WE WILL NOT BILL YOU UNTIL YOU RECEIVE YOUR FIRST ISSUE. YOU RESERVE THE RIGHT TO CANCEL YOUR SUBSCRIPTION AT THAT TIME. CHARTER SUBSCRIPTIONS WILL COST \$30/YR (12 ISSUES).

PLEASE CONTACT:

REBECCA BRIDGES
SYSTEMS CONSULTING
P.O. BOX 982
PALO ALTO, CA 94302

OR CALL:

(415) 326-8605

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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: Would you be willing to write a ½ page review of a library disk for publication in this newsletter?

With over 150 members, a core group of about 12 people do all the work. Would you be willing to make a contribution? Write a review of a magazine article?

**The Stanford/Palo Alto
Users Group for the IBM PC**

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