PRinT SCreen

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

September 1987   Volume 5, Number 9

NEXT MEETING

Date: Wednesday, September 30

Time: 8:00 p.m.

Place: Polya Hall,
            Turing Auditorium (Rm. 111)
            Stanford University

AGENDA

8:00 PM   General Club Business

8:30 PM   Speaker: To be announced

9:00 PM   Discussion and Random Access

10:00 PM   Conclusion

You will have to come to the meeting to find out who this month's
mystery speaker is. Unfortunately, information regarding the speaker
and topic for this month's main meeting was unavailable at press
time.

PLANNING MEETING:

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,
October 14th at 8 p.m. If you
can't reach Corwin, call any
Club Officer.

CALENDAR

Sep. 30....Group Meeting........8:00

Oct. 13....Novice SIG...........7:00

Oct. 14....Planning Meeting.....8:00

Oct. 28....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 ($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 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 $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.

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GET PUBLISHED: WRITE FOR PRT SC

Please contact Becky Bridges if you are interested in writing for PRinT SCreen. 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.

DISKS OF THE MONTH

The Disk of the Month will be the program **SRCH.EXE**. This program will search through files and sub-directories for words or strings. If you enclose a string with quotation marks and then specify a group of files or a directory to be searched, it will locate all the files containing the specified string. *.* may be used to search all files.

Corwin Nichols will be demonstrating this program at the Sept. 30th meeting. The disk will be available at the back of the room for $1 (or use your Goodie Coupon).

HANDY UTILITIES

We will also be selling two library disks that have basic boilerplate utilities. Some of the utilities included are: the popular Procomm communications program; Archiving/de-archiving programs; and some information about "Trojan Horse" files.

The disks are numbered #00 and #01 in the library, and will be available at the meeting for $1 each.

AUGUST MEETING

Rick Probst, a representative of Lotus Development Corporation's Educational Accounts Program, talked to us about Signal, a product which gives real time stock market quotations. This hardware and software product receives information over FM sideband and displays the price of any stock, commodity or option almost instantaneously.

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NOVICE SIG

NEXT NOVICE SIG GROUP MEETING - TUESDAY 10/13/87, 3785 Farm Hill Blvd. Redwood City. Watch for blue light. Call Don Baird 415 365-6822 for information. Meetings are at 7 PM on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. People can arrive early and stay until 11 PM for extra business, like copying (public domain). Current attendees will be notified in case of late changes. Bring 360K floppy to receive current favorite files.

REPORT for NOVICE SIG meeting held 9/8/87. Again, a topic list was used to choose from. It's proving to be a good guide; however, so is a pre-announced central topic.

Ram-drives became the main topic, but as is typical, it spawned other beneficial side issues.

Next time, by request, batch files will be the main course. We hope to get everyone solidly based in simple uses before progressing towards the esoteric. One can get very creative just by using commonly known rules, but real power comes from using all the commands. The revelation of this can make it difficult keeping BATs from our belfry (sorry). Some time back, Rudy Polacek gave us all a copy of BATTUT & RUNME to improve our use of batch files. Now is the time to to dust them off. BATTUTOR exists on disk 016 of the club library for those interested in priming before the next meeting.

Fundamentals (or file copying) is a routine feature for early arrivals (6 - 7 PM).
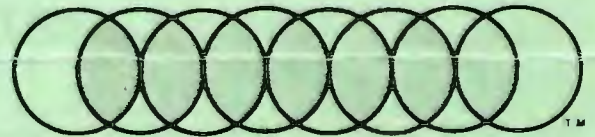
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S.O.S. AND RESCUE: HELP FOR LOTUS FILES

Have you ever tried to retrieve a Lotus 1-2-3 worksheet and gotten the "Part of file missing" or "Illegal file format" message? When this happens all cells to the right and below the damaged area are lost....but not if you use RESCUE. RESCUE is a sophisticated utility that recovers damaged Lotus spreadsheet files automatically. No manual editing or tinkering is required.

Another utility, called S.O.S., will save your 1-2-3 files at regular intervals so that you will never again be a victim of a lost file due to a power outage or surge.

RESCUE sells for $49.95 and S.O.S. for $59.95. Available through Spectrum Computer Consulting, 9 Burditt Road, North Reading, MA 01864, (617) 664-0337.

BULLETIN BOARD
Q & A

Q. What do you do if you want to send someone a message on our bulletin board, but you don't know the person's user name? It won't let me send a message unless I know the exact way the person is registered on the board.

A. It's actually fortunate that the BBS doesn't allow you to send messages unless you enter the correct user name. If it let you send messages to the wrong user name, the person would not be notified he/she had messages when logging on. So to find the correct user name, use the BBS' J command (User Journal), followed by U (Users). It will list all registered users' names.

Q. How can you download a message on the bulletin board?

A. You cannot download a message like you normally download files, but depending on the communications program you use, you can save to a file as the message is displayed on the screen. Use your communication program's "capture" or "log" command.

For example, ProComm has a "log" function which you can use to, in effect, download messages. To set up where you want the logged information (actually everything that appears on the screen) to go, enter ProComm and press Alt-S. Choose the 4th option (General Setup). Then Item 3 (Default log file) can be left as the default log filename, or changed as desired.

The log file ends up in the same directory as ProComm. After escaping, choose the S option to save setup changes. (You might have to exit and then re-enter ProComm for the changes to become effective.)

Hereafter, when Alt-F1 is used, everything that shows on the screen gets logged into the log file. Thus, if you request messages to view, they get logged into a text file which can be viewed or edited later. At the bottom of the screen, you will see whether the log file is open or closed.

USER FRIENDLY AT A GREAT PRICE

Bob Blumenthal

I made the move from CPM to DOS last January. A demonstration of an IBM clone at a CPA meeting sold me on the concept, and personal inquiries pointed me toward the SAMSUNG AT (later confirmed by PC magazine). On the recommendation of one of the fellows who had dealt with him, I met with Ahmed at Advance Computer in Sunnyvale, and, with fingers crossed, threw myself at his mercy. The deal he gave me, I learned later, was excellent.

A few days later, at the suggestion of a friend, I questioned the adequacy of my 10 MB hard disk. For $15, Ahmed exchanged my 10 MB drive for a 20 MB drive. A month or so later something went wrong with the drive (I don't remember what). Rather than hold me up while it was being repaired (Advance does its own servicing), he gave me a new Seagate for my "WINCHESTER" at no charge.

Because of my long-time use of 10-key pads (though I was actually a CPA long before the 10-key pad was designed), I found the IBM 10-key pad that acted both as a cursor mover and a number register very distracting; it always seemed to be in the mode I had wanted sometime ago, but didn't want now. When I saw the new 101 key keyboard with its dedicated number pad (plus lots of other pluses), I asked Ahmed what he could do for me. Immediately, he said he would swap for $55, which to me seemed incredible.

When I picked up the keyboard, I chatted with one of Ahmed's associates who assured me that Advance Computer will NOT be undersold, and that goes for software as well as hardware. Get your best price and they will beat it. I believe it, just as I believe they will act reliably, which I thinnk is more important than price.

Rick Altman ─────────────────

DISKOVERIES

No self-professed power user will be happy until the computer can automatically write letters, print the envelopes, lick the stamps and maybe drive to the post office. Humor aside, one friend of mine successfully rigged her computer to turn her coffee machine on at 7:15 every morning. Indeed, the power user seeks maximum productivity with a minimum of keystrokes. One preferably. Given that, Peter Norton's latest program, The Commander, is either the best thing since sliced sub-directories or a misguided effort that gets in the way more than anything else. You decide...

The Commmander is a slick, powerful DOS shell that can manage an entire hard disk or both floppies in a dual-drive system. It allows you to view entire directories of files; copy, redirect, and delete files by pointing to them; and change sub-directories without having to type CD \(directory).

It utilizes two "panels" that cover the top 75 percent of the screen, and you can command each of them independently. For instance, if you are backing up a sub-directory on a hard disk to Drive A:, you could view both the sub-directory and the floppy in Drive A: simultaneously. You could delete unwanted files from either panel and copy the critical ones with ease.

The Commander provides uses for all 10 function keys, displays a key line on the bottom of the screen and has on-line help. You still have your DOS prompt and can issue any valid command at any time.

The Commander goes an extra yard that many of the public domain SWEEP-like programs do not--viewing and editing files. Here's the scenario: You are in your root directory and you want to modify the letter SPAUG.LET that is in your LETTERS sub-directory. The Norton Commander screen, being at the root directory, shows you all of your first-level directories. Moving your cursor to LETTERS and touching <Ret> instantly logs you onto that directory and shows you all the files there. Now you move your cursor to SPAUG.LET and touch <F4>. You are promptly sent into that file and have access to a full array of cursor and WordStar-like control keys. Without a doubt, this is one of the smoothest, quickest ways to view and edit a file.

Usable with both a keyboard and a mouse, The Commander certainly adds a degree of simplicity to file management that all-too-often becomes complicated. The Commander puts all the various file commands at your fingertips. The Commander seems to save time and keystrokes. Do you get the impression that there is a gigantic "But" on the way?

If you pride yourself on being a power user, you may be less than convinced that this program will save you time and keystrokes. Without a doubt, it is an effective tool for the novice or inexperienced computer user, making a trip through a hard disk educational and less frightful. But if you make extensive use of batch files and/or keyboard macros, you can probably beat the Commander to the finish line.

Case in point--moving from the root directory to a sub-directory labeled STORIES\SPAUG. With The Commander, you must first point at STORIES, move there, then move your cursor to SPAUG and move there. Depending upon alphabetics, you might have to touch the <Down> key a half-dozen times. Now if you are a macro addict, you no doubt have a key defined as "CD \" and maybe even "CD \STORIES" if you make many trips to that well. And

DISKOVERIES

(continued)

it's probably easier for you to type on the QWERTY keyboard than to journey over to the cursor pad. I'd bet you save five seconds performing this task without The Commander.

There are less tangible traits to this program that also may nag at you. First of all, you have practically no screen left (until you enter a program at which time The Commander gives your screen back to you). I was uncomfortable with this invasion of "my" territory and often put out.

I ran a special horizontal directory program so I could see all of the files in one screen, but as soon as it completed, The Commander panels popped in front of it. I was able to toggle The Commander panels off, but that is the very type of extra time and effort that I try to avoid in my computer time. I suppose I could always keep one or both of The Commander's panels toggled off, but then what is the purpose of having it there in the first place? That way, it costs me two more keystrokes (Ctrl-0) to use it.

If you are as fanatical as I am about effeciency of time and keystrokes, The Commander may get in your way more than aid you. And at $75, it isn't quite in the "what the heck" category of utility programs. The bottom line is this: If you feel like your hard disk or your general file management is your boss rather than the vice versa, The Commander might bring a new and better perspective to your plight. If you are a devout batch file user and/or macro maker, The Commander probably won't help you enough to justify its cost.

The Norton Commander
Peter Norton Computing, Inc.
2210 Wilshire Boulevard
Santa Monica, CA 90403
(213) 453-2361

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DISK AND FILE CONVERSIONS

Want to read those old Wang archived files in your IBM-PC? Or read a formatted word processing file into a desktop publishing program? Typehaus in Sunnyvale will convert files and disks to over 20000 formats. They can convert thousands of disk formats into formatted Microsoft Word text files that can be placed in Ventura Publisher or PageMaker.

Conversions start at $17.50 per disk. Call (408) 773-9447 for details.

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WORDSTAR CLASSROOM

MicroPro just announced two special purchasing programs for the educational market: WordStar Classroom and Personal Purchase. WordStar Classroom is a limited-use instructional site license, while Personal Purchase offers discounted pricing for students and faculty members.

Through the Personal Purchase program, the complete commercial version of WordStar Professional Release 4 or WordStar 2000 Plus can be purchased for $120 (regularly $495). Student purchasers must submit a photocopy of their Student I.D. card along with one other form of identification. Faculty members may submit similar identification or a business card.

WordStar Classroom permits schools to license a MicroPro word processing product with the rights to duplicate the software on groups of 10, 20, or 30 computers within a single classroom or lab environment. Included with the package of master diskettes and documentation are keyboard overlays, personal command cards and student training guides. A 10-station license has a one-time fee of $400; a 20-station license is $600; and a 30-station license is $800.

CLUB OFFICERS:

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Newsletter Editor:	Becky Bridges	326-8605
Speaker's Bureau:	Jim Wampler	323-7365

SIGS:

Novice:	Don Baird	365-6822

LIBRARY:

Public Domain Software	Les Weil	321-5541
Soft Copy	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 Codding	367-8642
	Arthur Naman	408-374-1700
Symphony	Sally See	941-1378
Framework	Jim Caldwell	692-7181
Financial Software	John Van Deman	854-1167
Perfect Series	Stefan Unger	321-7319
Q&A	Elaine Meyer	325-8057
Rbase System V	Jack Kahoun	349-4696
	Tony Pabon	408-866-4815
Desktop Publishing	Rick Altman	581-7563

Languages/Operating Systems:

BASIC	Ralph Muraca	365-1659
Pascal, DOS 2.0	Jeff	321-5930
	John Watson	325-7632
DOS 3.x	Rick Altman	581-7563
"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
PC-LAN	Paul Berry	494-2043
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Hardware:

Expansion Boards	Curt Carlson	941-5680
Columbia computer	Stefan Unger	321-7319
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   Louise Greer Bolitho   322-3850
INFORMATION: $25/year fee ($10 for students)

BULLETIN BOARD: 723-7995

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.