PRinT SCreen

The Newsletter for the Stanford/Palo Alto Users' Group for the IBM PC

ELECTIONS

Special PRTSC Edition

CLUB NEWS

Holy Gavel, It's Time for Elections Again

Elections for club officers are here! The elected positions are: President, Vice-President, and Treasurer. The candidates are:

President
Ralph Muraca (incumbent)
Rick Altman

Vice-President
Corwin Nichols (former President)
Randy Locke.

Jared Nedzel is running for a second term as Treasurer.

The election will be by written ballot, executed at the April general meeting. If you can't make the meeting, please send in the absentee ballot on page 7.

Microsoft Word SIG

Microsoft Word SIG meetings are held on the second Monday of each month. Regular attendees are contacted by phone and informed of meeting dates and topics. To attend, contact Jeanie Triechel at home (851-0100) or work (326-7438).

Novice SIG

The Novice SIG meets the second Tuesday of the month, at a different member's home.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 9, 7:30 pm at Richard Orser's house in Palo Alto. Contact the host at 325-8441 for directions. Bring a blank disk.

Messages Overboard!

Over the last few months we have had a problem with the bulletin board's mes-

April-May Calendar

Apr. 26	Group Meeting	7:30	**Next Meeting**
May 9	Novice SIG	7:30	**Date:** Wednesday, Apr. 26
May 17	Planning Meeting	8:00	**Time:** 7:30 p.m.
May 31	Group Meeting	7:30	**Place:** Polya Hall, Turing Auditorium (Rm. 111) Stanford University

All members are welcome to attend the monthly planning meeting, where we make decisions on the future of the group. Call Beverly Altman, 329-8252, for the location of the next meeting.

DIR C:\April

Elections

Elections for club officers will be held at the April group meeting. Before the written ballot, each candidate will give a brief speech to introduce themselvs and their ideas. See Club News on page 2 for additional election details (such as who is running).

The Speaker

The speaker for the next meeting will be Mr. Stewart Alsop, who will address the question, "Where Are PC's Heading?" Certainly, many of us are confused about the strengths and weaknesses of the newest crop of PC's, but even newer models are in the offing—so, where is it all going? Will we have voice-controlled machines? Will they be so fast we can't even think about how to run them? How much will they cost? How about downward compatibility, and new software to match their power?

Just bring your questions to the next meeting. Mr. Alsop is editor and publisher of the *PC Letter: The Insider's Guide to the Personal Computer Industry;* he is also a contributing editor for PC World, and often has specially featured articles in many other periodicals.

Don't forget the new meeting time is 7:30 pm!

Program/DOS of the Month

This month, Rick Altman will combine the two mini-workshops and focus on RAM disks, beginning with the elementary — like what the heck they are and why you should use them — and working up to more advanced strategies. The disk will contain several public domain RAM disks from the library.

---

sage base — we could read messages but couldn't send any. The problem has been fixed now so you can start leaving messages again.

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.

Contribute to PrtSc

Please contact Becky Bridges (326-8605) if you are interested in writing for PRinT SCreen. You don't need any experience — just your opinions. We would love to hear about the programs that you love and hate. The more you love or hate them, the better! ¶

Messages from the Candidates

The following statements are from the four candidates for the offices of President and Vice-President. PRinT SCreen has not edited them, except for grammar and editorial style, and makes no endorsements or recommendations.

For President:
Ralph Muraca, Incumbent

It's hard to realize that nearly a year has gone by since my election to this office. As indicated in the last PRinT SCreen, the responsibility of office involved some long- range projects that need some more time for proper completion; I request to be reelected so that as many as possible of those projects can be brought to a logical conclusion.

As a typical example, recall my remark that topics for our general meetings are too dilute. When we find speakers who know how to address an audience at two levels, so that technical as well as nontechnical facets can be discussed satisfactorily, meetings tend to be long, rather tiresome, and conducive to loss of members. I've considered a substantial change such as meeting twice a month, one general and one technical.

In order to liven a general meeting, I want to eliminate almost all discussions of club business (let them be in PRinT SCreen) and proceed directly to the first speaker, who'll be given exactly 25 minutes, followed by a second 25-minute speaker. One address is nontechnical. No questions will be permitted until both have finished. Then in our customary "random access" period, questions may be addressed to speakers. Thus the entire meeting schedule is shortened to one and a half hours, and both technical and nontechnical members can participate.

As can be imagined, the success of such a meeting is heavily dependent upon the cooperation of both speakers. For example, if the topic is read/write optical disk drives, one discusses the available hardware (e.g. a vendor), and the other discusses the technology of optical inscriptions; for coherence, each knows what the other will say, and in this time-consuming process, I've been a very active participant.

I've spent hours discussing meeting format with candidate speakers; finding and scheduling pairs of mutually reinforcing speakers on a number of topics is not a trivial task! In some instances, speakers suggested displays of examples of hardware in the back of the room to reinforce their talks. And some speakers indicated they'd welcome the opportunity to address small gatherings such as SIGs. I have pledges from enough speakers for the next year — and from a few "big name" general speakers to add spice to the meetings — but final scheduling still needs to be confirmed.

Quite clearly, I haven't suffered from a lack of novel ideas for improving the current ambient within this club, nor

neglected to spend the time needed to bring them to fruition. Some things just take longer than first assumed, especially when new concepts and novel approaches are involved. I'll appreciate your vote of confidence. Thank You!

For President:
Rick Altman, Challenger

My platform is simple. Monthly meetings should be more fun and more entertaining. I could end this message right now and be confident that my point would have been made. When this group was formed, the PC industry was a fresh, vibrant, and turbulent body. New discoveries were being made constantly, and user groups like ours were the best place to go to get up-to-the-minute information and feel a part of this exciting community.

But that's not the way it is anymore. Now we can subscribe to two dozen magazines, chat on 25 different bulletin boards, call technical support for every software product we own, and go to a bookstore and choose between 300 titles. Information flow is not as precious as it once was, and I believe that our waning numbers is a clear result of that.

So why do you belong to this group? If you're like me, you joined and you attend the meetings so that you can have a sense of community, maybe pick up a tip or two, and hopefully enjoy yourself.

If elected President, I would like the following to happen: You come to meetings because they're a lot of fun, you enjoy yourself, and you always learn something new. That "something new" that you learn wouldn't have to necessarily be the data transfer rate of a Winchester drive; it could be the fact that one of the

country's leading columnists thinks that OS/2 is dead in the water. Or that four out of five consultants recommend Desqview over Windows. Or that Corwin Nichols thinks that Unix is where it's at. I've seen the heads nod off when a speaker has gone on too long about a topic remotely interesting to 10 percent of us. If it means going less technical, I'll do it — above all, I want you to be entertained by our meetings, not bored by them.

We may not be able to get the biggest and the brightest to come speak to us, at least not until we boost membership, but getting capable, entertaining speakers and developing a lively agenda for meetings will be my top priorities.

I don't want you coming to meetings on the off chance that something mildly amusing will take place, or in the hopes that I will say something completely outrageous during some demonstration (although I will, I assure you). I want you to genuinely look forward to meetings because they will have something that will interest you, educate you, stimulate you or just plain entertain you.

I want you to be able to celebrate the fact that you own a PC.

For Vice-President:
Randy Locke

What are "seeing much, suffering much, and studying much"? They are what we do as computer hobbyists, right?

Perhaps. But Benjamin Disraeli knew nothing of computers in the 19th century when he identified these as "the three pillars of learning".

Nor did Philip Chesterfield know of

user groups when, in the 18th century, he observed: "There are three classes of people. The first learn from their own experience — these are wise; the second learn from the experience of others — these are happy; the third neither learn from their own experience nor the experience of others — these are fools."

What we can take from these historical perspectives is: 1) As computer hobbyists, we are learning; and 2) As SPAUG members, we are happy.

Indeed, I am happy just to belong to SPAUG. I don't seek, but neither do I shun, service as an officer; it may lay in the plain path of duty.

Certainly I have received very much more than I have given: more than a hundred programs downloaded, and not one uploaded; hours spent listening to speakers, and not one moment given to the work of arranging for them; numerous insights taken, and none tendered.

Such disparity begs redress; and whether as an at-large, associate member, or under the title Vice-President, I intend to give more time and energy — as so many of us might — to the work of furthering the purposes of SPAUG.

N. Machiavelli knew nothing of SPAUG officers when, in the 15th century, he noted: "Titles do not reflect honor on men but rather men on their titles."

For Vice-President:
Corwin Nichols

(Former President and current VP candidate Corwin Nichols is in France on business and will not be present for election night. He will be back in early May.)

I am sorry to say that I won't be able to attend the next meeting where I'm up for election as Vice-President so I want to tell you now why you should vote for me.

The club has been running with no sense of direction. Not to discount the effort that Ralph has given as president, but it is effort without a clear purpose.

My purpose is to emphasize and promote new developments in the realm of personal computing. Although I use PC compatible equipment, I believe that novel and important work is being made on equipment that is not IBM compatible. It is interesting, and I will pursue it. Likewise with non- MS-DOS operating systems. Its not that I feel DOS is dead, far from it. I do think that many of the best new developments are happening on OS/2 or Unix. Lets find out about them.

We, being the *Stanford/Palo Alto* PC Users' Group, are sitting on a mighty reputation. If Silicon Valley has a body, then Stanford/Palo Alto is surely considered the brains. We can, as we have in the past, attract major speakers. Its just up to us to take advantage of this situation. The other side of this issue is that we should be living up to this reputation. I frankly don't think we are.

The club has been losing members. Gradually, one here, one there. Why is this? Where is the enthusiasm? Clubs like ours run on intellectual energy. When the energy is gone the club stops. I'd say our tank is running low. I don't think many of you can deny the energy of Rick Altman. I do demand of you that if you wish to elect me then you must also elect Rick. Thus my running is conditional.

So think about it. I know that as I sit in a cafe in gay Paris, sipping French roast and inhaling the April air, I'll be thinking of you. Uh huh. Cheers. ¶

ABSENTEE BALLOT

For President, I cast my vote for:

☐ *Ralph Muraca*

☐ *Rick Altman*

☐ _____
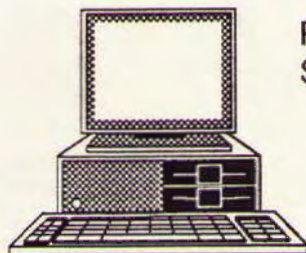

For Vice-President, I cast my vote for:

☐ *Randy Locke*

☐ *Corwin Nichols*

☐ _____

Complete and send ballot promptly to:

**ELECTIONS
1994 Valpariso
Menlo Park, CA 94025**

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

P.O. Box 3736,
Stanford, CA   94309

Club Information

Membership	Louise Greer Bolitho
	322-3850
	$25/year fee (Students $10)
Bulletin Board	723-7995
Newsletter	Becky Bridges
	326-8605
	P.O. Box 982
	Palo Alto, CA 94302