



PRinT SCreen

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

June 1989

Volume 7, Number 6

*You are cordially
invited to participate
in the First-Ever,
Super-Huge,
Gigantic and Rather
Large SPAUG
Membership Survey.*

*To make SPAUG history,
turn to page 7.*

CLUB NEWS

It's Summertime and The Computing is Easy...

This year, SPAUG is going to take advantage of the long, warm evenings with its debut of the Summertime Sidewalk Fair, Wednesday July 26 before the monthly meeting, right outside Turing Auditorium.

This 6:00 pm gathering will be a chance for members to meet, socialize, browse the wares of several quality vendors, and peddle their own wares if they fancy. While we expect to have some major league hardware and software being exhibited and sold, anything goes in this mini-flea market. If you've got an extra copy of WordPerfect that you want to sell, this is the time. If you have been waiting to unveil your own work of programming art, this is the place.

Members and non-members will

be invited to attend, and anyone with a product to sell and/or show off is encouraged. However, those who desire to formally reserve space on Exhibitor's Row (sounds official, eh?) must reserve space ahead of time and bring your own table to hold your products. Electricity for hardware will be provided and light refreshments (hot dogs, soda, etc.) will be available.

To reserve exhibiting space, call Rick Altman (962-9270) or Beverly Altman (329-8252). We'll have more to say at the June meeting and in the next PRinT SScreen.

We think this will prove to be a terrific way to mix business with pleasure and if the Fair is well-attended, we'll do it at least one more time in the summer. So mark it on your calendar to show up early for the July meeting!

June-July Calendar

June 28 Group Meeting	7:30	Next Meeting
July 11 Novice SIG	7:30	Date: Wednesday, June 28
July 12 Planning Meeting	7:30	Time: 7:30 p.m.
July 26 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.

May Meeting

Mike Rubenstein from Lotus Development Corporation demonstrated three new Lotus products at the May meeting: Magellan, 1-2-3 Release 2.2 and Release 3.0.

Magellan is a unique file management program that has already gotten rave reviews. Like similar products, Magellan lets you mark files for copying, moving, and erasing. But Magellan has several unique features. As you highlight a file name in the directory listing, the right half of the screen shows you the contents of the file.

You can also point to a file name in the directory listing and have Magellan load the program associated with the file and the file itself. Magellan ships with "launch vehicles" to all popular programs. You can create your own launchers as well.

Mike also demonstrated and discussed some of the highlights of the two new versions of 1-2-3. For example, 3.0 offers more professional graphics, graph printing from within 1-2-3, font changes from menus, multiple files open, linking files in formulas, search and replace, undo, and automatic formatting.

Release 2.0 doesn't have as many new features but it runs on all the 8088 machines out there (3.0 requires a 80286 processor). It does have undo, search and replace, automatic file backup, and displays settings sheets. It also comes with a wonderful spreadsheet publishing program, Allways.

Release 3.0 should ship by the end

—see next page

This Month

Battle of the Spreadsheets

Last month we had a sneak preview of Lotus' two new spreadsheet programs, 1-2-3 Release 2.2 and Release 3.0. This month we will see one of 1-2-3's major rivals, Microsoft Excel. Joe Fabris from Microsoft Corporation will demonstrate Excel, a spreadsheet with a graphical interface that runs under Windows. Come to the meeting and find out if Excel is really easier to use and more powerful than the ever-popular 1-2-3.

Program of the Month

At the group meeting this month, you'll get an appetizer of "Tasty Bits"—a collection of PC Magazine's best public domain utilities. The disk will be packed full of useful *and fun* programs.

Copies will be available for \$1 each or use your "goodie coupon."

The Giveaway

Joe Fabris from Microsoft will be raffling off free copies of Excel after his presentation. We will use our exciting electronic raffling system again. All members are automatically entered, but remember—you must be present to win. Guests can join the group and be immediately entered into the drawing.

Club News

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of June. Release 2.2 will be shipped by September.

The Raffle

President Rick Altman demonstrated the new electronic raffle system that uses a 1-2-3 macro to choose the lucky winners at random. Last month Mike Rubenstein from Lotus raffled off three Lotus products, including Versions 2.2 and 3.0.

The following members won the Lotus product of their choice:

Paul Pease
Paul Staley
Nancy Helmy

The three winners would like to thank the following members for not attending the meeting (they would have won had they been present):

Shirley Gruber
Jim Caldwell
Eric Johnson
John Watson
Marty Malloy
Paul Jordan

Hurray for Paul

Paul Pease has volunteered for two much-needed roles in the club: Publicity Chairperson and Speaker Liaison. Paul will make sure notices about our group meetings get sent to the local newspapers and he will serve as liaison between the speaker and the club to assure they get properly

treated. Many thanks to Paul for his volunteering spirit!

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.

Goodie Coupons

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.

Floppy disks for sale

Xidex Precision disks are available for \$6/box. High density floppies are \$10/box (10 disks). 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.

Become a Writer

Please contact Becky Bridges (326-8605) if you are interested in writing for PRinT SScreen.

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. Help others avoid or solve problems you have already encountered. ¶

THE VIEW FROM THE TOP

Hey, Who're You Calling a Nerd?!

by Rick Altman,
Club President

My fiancée, Becky — of PRTSC editorial fame — loves to call me a computer nerd. This is because usually when she visits me, the sun has long since set and yet I'm still sitting in front of my computer screen. Make that computer screens, plural, and as Becky would say, make that a double-nerd.

While I would prefer to think of myself as a computer *jock*, I accept the vicious slam on my character in stride. I look forward to 11:00 pm, so I can dial up bulletin boards at lower rates, and I am incredibly proud of my Word-Perfect macro that prints out addresses on envelope labels. "I like doing these things — they're fun," I say to Becky. "Boy do you have a warped sense of fun," Becky responds.

But more recently, Becky has had

to walk a mile in my shoes, as we have been using our PC knowledge to streamline many of our wedding arrangements. I produced the invitation in much the same way that I put together each edition of PRTSC, and Becky turned her Lotus 1-2-3 prowess on the tasks of maintaining the guest list and keeping the schedule of deadlines in order.

And guess what — she says it's fun. And guess what else — her friends now call her a nerd. "I'll bet she answered his proposal by modem," was the classic remark that will live forever in the Nerd's Hall of Fame. (P.S. it was at 2400 bps, too.)

Well, if Becky is a computer nerd also, then maybe being a nerd isn't so bad. Maybe you're a nerd too, eh? In light of these dramatic revelations, we need a new definition of a nerd, perhaps a kinder, gentler one. A computer nerd is anyone who uses his or her PC for a task that 1) is unrelated to work, and 2) could have been done without a PC. Based on that definition, we're all a group of nerds.

Remember the movie, *Revenge of the Nerds*? This is not the time to deny it, this is the time to be proud of it. And in that spirit, I would like to hear from other computer ner-, uh, club members who use their PCs in non-traditional ways. I can't promise that you won't be kidded during Random Access, but I will say this: just like in the movie, soon there will be more of us than them! ¶

*Maybe we're all a
bunch of nerds.
Maybe soon there
will be more of us
than them.*

What To Do With That Old XT

by Peter Foiles,
Westchester PCUG

With 80386 computers becoming fairly common and with 486 machines on the way, a lot of PC users are wondering what to do with their aging XTs. Personally I find the standard 4.7 Mhz 8088-based machine painfully slow for all but the simplest of tasks. So

should you junk that old XT? Not necessarily.

Upgrading an old XT to improve its performance is an option that makes sense for a number of users. The question is how. There are essentially three options: 1) speedup (turbo) card, 2) replace the motherboard, and 3) buy a barebones 286/386 system. I will cover the advantages

and disadvantages of each approach in general terms without giving specific product recommendations.

Speedup cards are the simplest option. The usual setup involves adding a card to your XT and possibly removing your old 8088 chip. The card will have an 80286 or 80386 chip that will replace the 8088 in your machine. One of the most popular of these cards is the Microsoft MACH 20 board. Sota also makes very good accelerator cards.

The advantages of this approach are relative ease of installation, compatibility with existing equipment and low cost (\$300+). These cards should boot performance at least 4 fold over a standard 4.7 Mhz

Personally I find the standard 4.7 Mhz 8088-based machine painfully slow for all but the simplest of tasks. So should you junk that old XT? Not necessarily.

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The 1989 SPAUG Membership Survey

So they may serve you better, the new President and his conspirators would like to know more about you, both as a computer enthusiast and as a member. We want to know what type of computer you use and what your favorite software is. We want to know what you want out of your membership with SPAUG — what type of speakers you would like to see, what type of programs you would like to see exhibited, what kind of events you would like to have planned. You can even use this survey to tell us what an awful survey you think it is.

And to make the event as painless as possible, all you have to do when you're done is remove the page from the staple, fold it and toss it in the mail (not the trash, the mail!). We have even provided the stamp for you, just to show how much we want you to participate.

We'll publicize the results in a future edition. So grab a pencil and start answering...



The 1989 SPAUG

You and Your Machine

Please list the following items, and rate from 1 to 5, your level of satisfaction, 5 being very satisfied. If you have more than one of any item, list both or your primary one.

	Brand or type	#
Type and brand of PC	_____	_____
Version of DOS	_____	_____
Type of Graphics Card	_____	_____
Size of Hard Drive (0 if none)	_____	_____
Modem (list speed)	_____	_____
Type and brand of printer	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____

→ → → → → → → → → → → → → → → → →

The Soft Stuff

List the names of the following types of software, how long you have been using them, and your level of satisfaction, from 1 to 5.

Word Processor

Spreadsheet

Data Base Management

Communications

Other

Membership Survey



*Siskel and
Ebert Come
to SPAUG*

*Ask not what you can do for
your user group, but what your
user group can do for you...*

**On a scale of 1 to 5, rate the following
purposes of our group, 5 being the most
important reason you participate.**

**On a scale of 1 to
5, rank the follow-
ing qualities of
guest speakers, 5
being your most
preferred quality.**

- ☐ Technical expertise
- ☐ Sense of humor
- ☐ Presentation skills
- ☐ Breadth of knowledge
- ☐ Number of visuals
- ☐ Number of handouts
- ☐ Free software
- ☐ Other

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Answer your questions | <input type="checkbox"/> Have a large public domain library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help with emergencies | <input type="checkbox"/> Have an active bulletin board |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entertain you | <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate hardware |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Educate you | <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate software |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offer a phone roster of experts | <input type="checkbox"/> Have a good newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inform you about PC news | <input type="checkbox"/> Have many SIGs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Provide a forum of issues | <input type="checkbox"/> Offer good job contacts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offer you product bargains | |

Your favorite aspect of SPAUG _____

Your least favorite aspect _____

Name and Phone Number (Optional)

Stamp

The 1989 SPAUG Survey
1670 Oak Avenue
Menlo Park, CA 94025

The XT Upgrade Path

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XT. The primary disadvantage is that you are still limited by the slow 8 bit bus of your XT. Because the AT data bus is 16 bits wide and the XT bus only 8 bits wide, data transfer on an XT (for example to the hard disk) will always be 50-60% slower than on an AT.

A feature to check if you choose to go this route is how much fast 16 bit memory you can install on the card. An additional disadvantage of these cards is that, with the exception of the MACH 20, these accelerator cards will not run advanced operating systems such as OS/2.

The next option is to replace your motherboard. There are a number of "baby" AT motherboards available. The "baby" indicates that the board is the same size as the original XT motherboard and so can be swapped into your existing case. These boards will convert your XT to a true AT.

You may not be able to transfer over all of your old XT cards however. AT motherboards have a limited number of 8 bit (XT) slots and not all XT expansion cards will run in the 16 bit AT slots. You will also need to add an AT hard disk controller to take advantage of the faster transfer rates available on an AT.

One last thing to remember is that most ATs will not recognize an XT keyboard so you may also have to get a new keyboard. All of this can add up to \$600 or more. It also requires that you be willing (and able) to completely dismantle and rebuild your system.

*Upgrading an old XT
to improve its
performance is an
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sense for a number
of users. The question
is how.*

This brings us to the third option, buying a "barebones" 286/386 system. A typical "barebones" system will have a case, power supply, 512K RAM, single floppy, keyboard, and monochrome video adaptor. These systems are available for \$800+. They usually carry a much better warranty than is available for component parts. Then you can transfer the CGA/EGA/VGA video card, monitor and possibly hard disk for the XT to the AT to fill out the system.

This is a thumbnail sketch of the upgrade options available. Which is best for you will depend on how much expertise and exactly what equipment you have on your current XT.

Has your old system undergone a transplant recently? PRinT SCreen would like to know about it. Write to us at P.O. Box 982, Palo Alto, 94302 and we'll share your experiences with the membership. ¶

PRTSC POTPOURRI

AT Clone Setup

by Ron Sutton, FOG

All AT clone owners should take a minute to run through the SETUP program and note the configuration of their machine, especially the hard disk number, the amount of extended memory installed and any other non-standard configuration.

The SETUP furnished with my Wells American AT clone gives a summary screen at the end before reboot; a Prt Sc will give a hard copy.

The battery holding the configuration data will eventually fail, usually at the worst possible time. With this data at hand, the machine can be easily reconfigured after replacing the battery. You do have a spare battery, don't you? If not, get one!

If you need more convincing, read Ezra Shapiro's column in the September, 1988 Byte. He has a real horror story. The battery went dead while the machine was being moved. He knew neither the hard disk number nor had a spare battery. When he finally obtained a battery, he apparently destroyed the data on his hard disk trying to find the correct number by trial and error. Meantime, the backup disks could not be located.

The people at Wells American use AA-size batteries instead of the hard-to-find lithium started by IBM and continued by some of the clone makers. For this I am thankful.

PRTSC Editor's note: I can testify to the usefulness of knowing the hard disk number when the battery dies. I had rented an AT clone and of course the battery failed over the weekend when the store was closed. I tried the trial and error method for finding out the hard disk number—to no avail. Luckily, I didn't destroy anything, although I feared I had. I just had to wait until Monday morning and the store quickly supplied me with the right number. A happy ending...

MS Word Tip

by Jim Moran,
Marin / Sonoma PCUG

A little-known feature in Microsoft Word allows you to redraw the screen if something like Sidekick trashes your display. It only happens if Word is running in graphics mode, but the screen can be restored by hitting Shift-Ctrl-Backslash. It's also useful if you bring up Word using PC Anywhere and the user happens to be in graphics mode.

Color Graphics Adapters

by Don Simpson,
Tucson Computer Society

Q. In color/graphics monitor cards, what are the differences between CGA, EGA, VGA, etc.?

A. The difference between each of

these adapters is in the resolution (number of pixels) each is capable of displaying, and the number of attributes and colors available. Following are listed the different adapters; the first figure is horizontal by vertical resolution, the second is the number of attributes/colors:

CGA

(Color Graphics Adapter): 640X200, 2/16

EGA

(Enhanced Graphics): 640X350, 16/64

VGA

(Video Graphics Array): 640X480,
256/262,144

The EGA and VGA also have memory on board to increase capabilities and speed. MCGA(Multi-Color Graphics Array) has the same resolution and color choices as the VGA but only 64K memory compared to (usually) 256K. So called "Super VGA's" have 512K or more memory and allow resolution of 800X600, or even 1028X768. You can be sure that this is not even close to the last word, and by year-end IBM will have created a "New Video Standard."

Book Review: DOS Power Tools

*John Gould,
PCUG of Boca Raton*

I just picked up a new book called *DOS Power Tools: Techniques, Tricks and Utilities for DOS* by Paul Somerson (Bantam Books, \$39.95). Somerson is the executive editor of PC Magazine. This 1,275 page book in-

cludes everything to turn an intermediate PC user into a power user.

Its information is geared toward all levels of proficiency. It takes up where the DOS manual left off, expanding and explaining those things that are not very clearly described, and adding utilities that DOS left out. It includes a disk with over 200 utilities from PC Magazine to make life with the computer a little easier.

Some of the utilities included are:

PRT2SCR - Allows programs to check whether a printer is attached before beginning execution.

CLSEGA - Clears the EGA screen and sets it to the 43 line mode.

CONFIRM - Intercepts a Shift-PrtSc and asks for confirmation (one of my favorites).

FFEEED - Sends a form feed following a Shift-PrtSc screen dump.

MOUSEKEY - Lets the mouse act as cursor keys.

PCMAP - Shows memory usage.

SWEEP - Executes a command across all directories.

UNCRAASH - Breaks out of endless loops (good when working with C).

The book also explains hard disk subdirectory organization, batch file techniques, implementations of DEBUG, EDLIN, ANSI and other DOS drivers and environment commands. It offers detailed explanations of I/O redirection using DOS filters and what can and cannot be done using them. It describes techniques for recovering data that was lost when inadvertently leaving a program without saving or some such

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PRTSC Potpourri

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catastrophe and gives some tips to help prevent this from happening.

This is a very worthwhile investment for anyone who wants to gain proficiency with DOS and the com-

puter. Although these utilities are available by other means, having them all together on one disk and having complete documentation is well worth the \$39.95 cover price. ¶

Editor's note: Many of these utilities are on the Disk of the Month, available at the June meeting.

The SIGS

Microsoft Word SIG

The Microsoft Word SIG has been temporarily suspended until further notice. If you are interested in being a member of the SIG please call Jan Altman at (408) 243-5955.

Lotus SIG

This new SIG is in the planning stages right now. If you didn't sign up for the SIG at the May meeting, please give Jan Altman a call at (408) 243-5955. An announcement with further details will be made at the group meeting this month.

Novice SIG

Last Meeting: Ron Johnson hosted the June 13th Novice SIG meeting. Four members listened to Don Baird differentiate between machine, assembly, and high- and low-level languages. One example given was how "Agenda" operated within the MS-DOS shell. Numerous other questions were fired at Don and other members who could answer them.

Ron, while not well-versed in

Framework II, did explain some of the advantages of this integrated software package; the usual spreadsheet, graphics, data management, and telecommunications combination along with FRED programming and outlining features. Ron also explained how he uses macros in his Leading Edge Word Processing program. Ron utilizes a macro to move information from one window or file to another.

Another topic, 286 vs. 386: *Which to Buy?*, was discussed with no clear answer. One article suggested having a 286 with a 16-20 MHz speed and the All Chargecard (for memory management) as a cheaper yet rough equivalent of a 386. Mention was made of building a 386 via Rick Altman's method in the March PRinT Screen.

Next meeting: The next Novice SIG meeting will be held July 11th at 7:30 PM. Tentative places have been suggested but not verified as of press time. We will make a detailed announcement during the June group meeting. ¶

The SPAUG Resource Center

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The Stanford / Palo Alto PC Users' Group



P.O. Box 3736,
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Club Information

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