PRinT SCreen

The Newsletter of Stanford/Palo Alto PC Users Group

C · O · N · T · E · N · T · S

JUST IN CASE

A useful batch file to prevent you, or anyone else, from accidently formatting your hard drive, without stopping normal floppy formating. Call it FORMAT.BAT and rename the DOS command 4MAT.COM. To format the hard drive, log onto the DOS directory.

```
@echo off
if "%1"=="" goto help
If not %1==A: if not %1==a: If not %1==B: if not %1==b: goto NO
4mat %1
goto END
:NO
Echo                    *** WARNING ***
Echo            You cannot format drive - %1
Echo    This will destroy all the data on your hard disk.
Echo    You can only format a floppy disk, in either
Echo                  Drive A: or Drive B:
goto end
:HELP
Echo    To format a floppy disk enter a drive letter.
Echo    Example:  FORMAT A:
:end
```

The President's Piece

IT'S SHOW TIME!

The Sidewalk Fair is shaping up nicely to be one of the best we've had so far. There will be outside vendors there to show off their latest and greatest, plus several club tables with plenty of bargains on software. Again, we're encouraging members to bring items to sell and trade. This is a good opportunity to get those items that you've been looking for. All usable items left over after the show can be donated to our collection that will be given to the local schools (and they could surely use our help). If you're planning on bringing items to sell, it is imperative that you let us know. We need to plan out our space requirements. Call Beverly or myself and tell us if you're attending with products to sell. Also, there will be very limited electrical power available. You must contact me if this is a need for you.

BOB IS BACK

Bob Bottini is recovering rapidly from his recent bout with the "mystery" disease. We're glad you're doing so well, Bob!

MIDI COMES TO SPAUG

The presentation this month will be a demo of the use of computers in the field of music. MIDI is an interface that was developed for the music industry that allows music to be played directly into a computer. From that point on it appears that your imagination is the only limit to what can be done with the original music. This will be entertaining as well as informative! There will be representatives from the computer and the music side of things to answer all of our questions and to give us a musical demo.

Paul Staley

WHAT'S NEW?

For those of you who use an IBM Lexmark laser printer (model 5E, 6, 6P, 10, 10P, or 10L), and run Windows you know that the standard driver has its limitations, both of speed and the interpretation of typefaces. Well Lexmark have just released their "Windows Accelerator Driver" which is a major improvement. The driver is for the IBM PPDS native mode so it doesn't emulate PostScript or PCL4, but it does a great job on fonts and greyscales, and it is fast. All the pages in this issue that don't have EPS files were printed with it. By the way it's free, as is the phone call. Call Lexmark 1-800 358-5835 (they ask for the printer serial number).

TONY ALLEN

GOING MY WAY?

Member Matt Lehman would appreciate a lift to the General Meeting on 30 September. He can meet at the Foothills/280 junction. Anyone who can oblige, please give Matt a call on [415] 968-3655.

YOUR CLUB NEEDS YOU

BE AN ACTIVE SUPPORTER

A BIG WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS

Thomas Gardner   Los Altos Hills
Barry Smith   Fremont

AND THANKS TO RENEWING MEMBERS

Beverly Altman   Menlo Park
David Altman   Menlo Park
Robert Birss   Mountain View
Donald Brookman   Palo Alto
John Egbert   Portola Valley
William Green   Palo Alto
Harry Hughes   Sunnyvale
Sam Moise   Los Gatos
Martin Molloy   Palo Alto
Eric Pearson   Santa Cruz
Ray Odell   Redwood City
Ben Swan   Palo Alto

PLANNING MEETING

October 7 (1st Wednesday) at 7:30pm
The location
1670 Oak Avenue, Menlo Park

Help us to make decisions about the club. All members are welcome. You don't have to be a club officer to get your views heard.
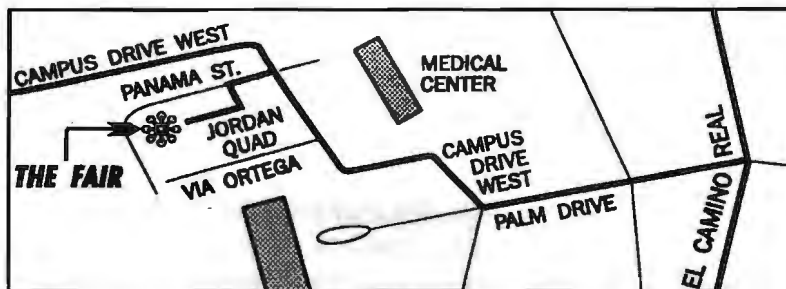
Note the early start, this is to give every one a chance to check out all the bargains. Last year we ran short of time - and daylight. Don't worry about your energy level falling through of lack of nourinshment. We have TEA & SPICE doing the catering. Sandwiches, Breads, Muffins, Scones, Deserts, Tea, Coffee, Juices, and they're delicious.

If you're bringing things to sell - software, hardware, books, whatever; don't forget something on which to display them. A collapsable (picnic/card) table, large cardboard boxes will do. We have plenty of room but no furniture.

TIPS

Have some idea of the price you would like for each item. A printed sheet is good, a label on everything is better. Go to the bank and get some $1s, $5s and $10s for change. Don't forget plastic bags (one inside the other for strength) to carry away those goodies.

EAT YOUR DOS AND HAVE YOUR

You have been using DOS since the beginning of time. You're used to it. It's a habit. Besides, after learning so many neat DOS tricks, can you "throw away" your DOS expertise, that cost you so much to learn over the years, for a new system? Also, Windows has made using DOS more comfortable. Who would be bold enough to suggest a change of operating systems? But, you do like to experiment and play with something new. If you can do this safely, and with minimal cost, why not? Well, God has been good to you. There is now OS/2 Version 2.0. What follows is a guide to your entry into paradise.

"Which Installation Procedure is Right for You?" is the first question asked by OS/2 2.0. With this kind of an opener you know you are in for a great time. You have so many options available that you can, for example, install OS/2 2.0, on a hard disk that already has DOS installed. This setup will allow you to have the use of both systems. Or you can choose to install OS/2 2.0, on a computer that has no operating system. Under this option OS/2 2.0, will be your only operating system but you will be able to run DOS from within the OS/2 2.0, system. But more. Not only will either installation allow you to use both systems, but, with the installation of OS/2 2.0 on the hard drive that already contains DOS you have several options as to how you use both systems. By choosing to use a Dual Boot or Boot Manager you can select which operating system you want to start as you are booting up your computer. Using a dual system, of whatever configuration, will allow you the use of Windows 3.1 and all your DOS applications as well as full use of OS/2 2.0 software.

As I said earlier, there are many options. Which one is best for you? Well if you try OS/2 2.0, you will have the fun of making this decision for yourself.

What are the problems that you encounter when using OS/2 2.0? My personal experience continues along the same path
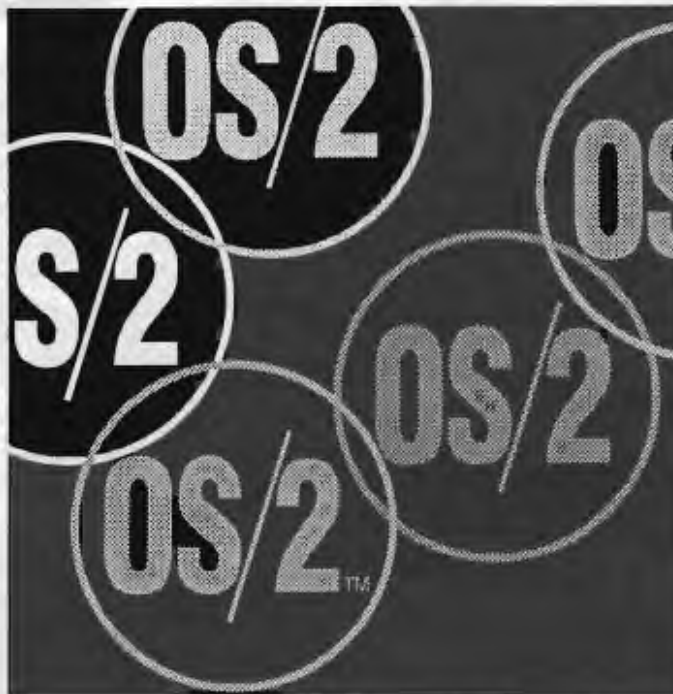
it took when I first started the installation of OS/2 2.0. My problems were ultimately solved by changing a setting or clicking on a button. My latest problems were related to my printers. The first came up when I was printing out a 72 page document on my laser printer. Every seven pages I was interrupted by a window telling me that I was out of paper. Clicking on Ignore or Retry buttons which were in the window continued the printing process but I wanted to make the correction that would eliminate the window. The solution was simple, all I had to do was to increase a timeout in the printer setting. In my case this amounted to changing my printer's wait timeout to its maximum, which was the number 999. However, it took several calls to IBM's Tech Support, as well as to the Printer Works Tech Support, to make this simple change in the right place.

The second printer problem related to getting the checks written with Intuit's "Quicken" to print on my dot-matrix printer. Here again all I had to do was to hit a button in my OS/2 2.0, printer settings changing the form feed settings of my dot-matrix printer to none. It again took several

calls to and from IBM before we found the solution.

IBM designed the OS/2 2.0, operating systems expressly for the average computer user like myself. And in my estimation they have done just what they have intended. The system is very stable and I am given to understand that it is second only to UNIX in stability. DOS, by contrast, can be found someplace down at the bottom of the stability list. This fact allows the average computer user like myself to hack away with some impunity. The counterbalance is, that because OS/2 2.0 system is quite extensive, it requires the hacker to remember more details than is customary. This is really the basis of the problems I have encountered to date with the OS/2 2.0 operating system. I might add that this is also the basis of the problems that I have with the IBM Tech Support People.

It requires time and effort to become familiar with all phases of the OS/2 2.0 system, for Tech Support People as well as end users. Time and experience is working on all sides to solve this one problem. IBM did expect this problem which is why you have 60 days of TOLL FREE consultation as part of your OS/2 2.0 package. What IBM did not expect was the OS/2 2.0 system to take off as well as it did. In next month's column I will discuss the settings adjustments that allow such applications as CorelDRAW! and Prodigy to run smoothly in the OS/2 2.0 environment.

BOB BOTTINI

NOTE: There are three timeout values in PostScript, all have adjustable limits:

1. Job: the total amount of time allowed for processing a job;

2. Manualfeed: the amount of time the printer will wait for a manually fed piece of paper to be inserted;

3. Wait: the amount of time the printer waits to receive additional data before suspending the job.

A Batch File

TONY ALLEN

XCOPY (first introduced in DOS 3.2) can backup an unlimited number of files from a hard disk to a floppy disk, as long as none of the files are larger than the capacity of the floppy.

DOS sets the directory archive bit ON whenever it creates or modifies a file. When using XCOPY with the /M switch, DOS turns this bit OFF after it makes the copy. This lets subsequent backup operations skip over this file unless it has been altered.

When a floppy is full, reissuing the XCOPY command starts the backup from where it left off. When XCOPY fails because it has run out of disk space, or for any other reason, the ERRORLEVEL is set to the following:

- 0 = finished OK
- 1 = no more files to backup
- 2 = stopped with Ctrl C
- 4 = disk full
- 5 = another problem

Incorporating this into a batch file means that you can do incremental backups of a hard disk. i.e. backup all the files on a hard disk that have changed since it (the batch file) was last run.

THE XCOPY PARAMETERS

/A	Copies files with the archive attribute set, doesn't change the attribute.
/M	Copies files with the archive attribute set, turns off the archive attribute.
/D:date	Copies files changed on or after the specified date.
/P	Prompts you before creating each destination file.
/S	Copies directories and subdirectories except empty ones.
/E	Copies any subdirectories, even if empty.
/V	Verifies each new file.
/W	Prompts you to press a key before copying.
/e	create subdirectories on target disk even if empty (must use /s switch also)
/m	copy modified files and reset archive bit
/s	copy files in current directory and all lower subdirectories and create directories on target disk only if not empty
/v	verify the copy
/w	wait for source disk

```
@echo off
cls
echo BACKUP - INSERT A FORMATTED DISK
echo IN DRIVE A:
:loop
xcopy C:\*.* A:/s/e/v/m/w
IF ERRORLEVEL 5 GOTO problem
IF ERRORLEVEL 4 GOTO next
IF ERRORLEVEL 2 GOTO stop
IF ERRORLEVEL 1 GOTO nothing
IF ERRORLEVEL 0 GOTO done
:next
echo INSERT NEW FORMATTED DISK IN echo DRIVE A:
goto loop
:nothing
echo NOTHING TO BACK UP TODAY
goto end
:done
echo BACKUP FINISHED
goto end
:stop
echo WHY HAS BACKUP BEEN STOPPED?
goto end
:problem
echo THERE IS A PROBLEM
goto end
:end
```

THE FLOPTICAL

The 3M Corporation, who are the world's largest supplier of flexible magnetic media (the stuff that goes in floppy disks), has announced the commercial availability of the 21-Megabyte Floptical diskette. The 2IMB Floptical disk drive is capable of reading and writing downward to standard 3½ inch 1.44MB and 720KB diskettes and stores respectively over 14 and 28 times more data than these lower capacity diskettes. The Floptical diskette is designed for use in the 3½ inch Floptical disk drives manufactured by Insite Peripherals, the developer of Floptical technology. Insite has also licensed the technology to Iomega, the Bernoulli drive people

The Floptical diskettes are now being commercially manufactured by 3M and will be available in quantity in August 1992. They will carry a suggested list price of $31.45 per diskette. On a cost per megabyte basis this makes Floptical diskettes the most cost effective 3½ inch media available today. And they are very nicely portable.

These new 3½ inch barium ferrite diskettes are designed to be more reliable than any current floppy diskette technology. This is due in part to a special polymer binder, developed by 3M, which prevents degradation of the media caused by heat and humidity, minimizing debris generation while helping to prevent the proliferation of errors. Factory formatting also enhances data integrity, along with the drive's built-in error correction capabilities.

FLOPTICAL TECHNOLOGY

The 21MB (25MB unformatted) Floptical disk drive features a one inch-high form factor, single +5 volt power requirements and uses variable mode dual heads. It is the first and only very high capacity 3½ inch flexible drive able to read and write standard capacity 720KB and 1.44MB 3½ inch diskettes. The Floptical drive's very high capacity is achieved by combining patented optical servo tracks and magnetic recording technologies. Products based on Floptical technology include disk drives, media, host adapter and subsystem products for IBM, Apple Macintosh and Amiga systems.

MECHANICAL A-B SWITCH BOXES AND THE HP LASERJET

Your Hewlett-Packard LaserJet breaks. If a specific set of chips has been fried (the input circuitry), you are stuck with a big repair bill. Hewlett-Packard will **not** honor a warranty if your LaserJet printer has been operated from an A-B mechanical switch box.

That's because the mechanical switch boxes have a habit of frying some circuits and the Hewlett-Packard documentation contains a caveat warning people to use only electronic switch boxes with these printers. Hewlett-Packard recommends the use of an electronic switch box because its internal wiring doesn't endanger Hewlett-Packard's input circuitry.

The threat to input circuitry on any peripheral exists when a mechanical box is used to switch between the peripherals. Hewlett-Packard LaserJets are known to be sensitive to this condition. Comparable difficulties have been reported on Okidata printers and surely affect others.

The equipment is at risk whether the connectors are serial or parallel, 25-pin or 36-pin and regardless of the type of mechanical switch box being used.

Scenario:

Two printers are attached to one computer through an A-B mechanical switch box. One is a Hewlett-Packard LaserJet, and the other is a conventional dot matrix. The operator works on the computer, using the switch box to change between the two. All equipment is turned on all the time.

When either printer is used, The signal (or logic) ground to the other is disconnected. In other words, when the dot matrix printer is being used, the signal ground between the LaserJet printer and the A-B box is interrupted. Since it has its own power source, the LaserJet's internal logic ground level settles to a slightly different level than when

it is connected through the box.

When the box is switched to connect the LaserJet printer, if the power happens to go to the signal pin first, the LaserJet input chips and circuitry must absorb the energy required to equalize the levels. These chips cannot handle the transient energy and are stressed. The damage is cumulative and may eventually destroy the chips.

Whether the power first goes to the signal pin or the ground is a function of the switch box. Usually it is random. To determine if there is a power-switching hierarchy requires looking at the power switching with an oscilloscope. Not a realistic choice for many people.

Turning off the LaserJet printer when it's not being used, and not changing the A-B switch box position when it is plugged in will not necessarily isolate the printer from all surges. This is because EMI filters on the computer connected to the printer can bleed into the printer's input circuitry. It is possible for the computer ground to pass voltage from the computer (on) to the printer (off).

To eliminate the hazard, make both the signal ground and the shield (chassis) ground contiguous between the printer connectors to the computer connector within the switch box, regardless of the unit which is operating.

1. Connect a wire in the box to make the signal ground circuitry contiguous from connector to connector within the switch box.

2. Also make sure that the shield ground (carried by the cables) is good from one printer through the box to the other printer. Tighten all screws connecting the cables and check continuity with an ohmmeter.

Another option:

Use an electronic A-B switch box. For design reasons, the logic ground in these boxes remains intact regardless of which printer is on-line. The "newer cheap ones" are about $100.

The following describes the pins to be wired, depending on the connector type. It involves soldering between the pins within the box. Do not attempt to do this unless you have some experience soldering electronic components.

While it's fairly simple it should not be attempted by the novice. For one thing, should you do it incorrectly, you jeopardize some expensive equipment. While every effort has been made to clearly describe this procedure, if you attempt it and damage your equipment, the authors of this piece cannot be responsible.

Mechanical boxes come in two different types; those with 25-pin "DB" connectors (either parallel or serial) and those with 36-pin Centronics (parallel only) connectors. In effect a "Y" structure, the box has a connector for the computer and, in our A-B example, two connectors for the printers.

Solder a minimum length of insulated wire from ant one of the pins on the computer connector to the corresponding pins on the printer connectors, i.e., pin 19 to pin 19. On the serial connector, all pins to pin 7. Then check your work with an ohmmeter. This will ensure that the signal ground is contiguous, regardless of which unit is connected.

Appropriate Pins: any one of the pins noted is appropriate to use with standard cables.

25-Pin Parallel wiring: Signal ground pins = 18 through 25; use only one of the eight pins available.

25-Pin Serial wiring: The signal ground pin (ANSI standard) is pin 7; the shield ground is pin 1.

36-Pin Centronics parallel wiring: Signal ground pins 19 through 30; use only one of the 12 pins available.

NOTE: Once you've hardwired the grounds on the boxes that have 25 pins you have, in effect, converted the box to either a parallel or a serial box. Once it is so wired you may not use a box converted to parallel with a serial hook-up and, vice versa. Label the box clearly, so that no one can use it incorrectly.

JIM BAKER and EMERALD JONES
UCLA PC User's Group
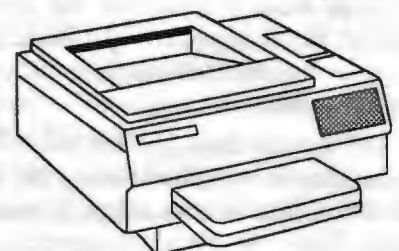
Dr. Watson and the Dreaded UAE

HAROLD A. DRISCOLL

Chicago Computer Society

(downloaded from the APCUG BBS by Nancy Helmy)

As you will see this article was written before the release of Windows 3.1 which now includes, and automatically installs, Dr. Watson. Some differences: The, now uncute, icon shows an eavesdropper with a stethoscope, and Windows no longer has UAEs - just Application Errors, which occasionally are recoverable! ED

In years past, computers 'Crashed' or 'Aborted,' but Microsoft Windows is much more sophisticated; it has an 'Unrecoverable Application Error' (UAE) instead. Some users are plagued with them frequently; in my personal experience, nearly all have occurred while I was debugging my own code. Microsoft has recognized the problems and frustrations of UAEs, and has committed a large amount of resources to their elimination from future versions of Windows. Some UAEs, are caused by bugs in application programs; some result from bugs in Windows; and many result from a misunderstanding between the application program and Windows.

Dr. Watson is a program, provided by Microsoft, which collects data on any UAE which occurs while it is running. It writes a detailed record of the state of the system to the log file DRWATSON.LOG each time a UAE occurs. Included in this report is a description of what was happening, provided by the user at the time of the failure. For software developers, Dr. Watson provides details of the failure which are not otherwise available. By default, Dr. Watson provides a vast amount of gory details for each UAE. This output can be restricted by adding a [Dr. Watson] section to the WIN.INI file, to focus on what is needed for problem resolution.

For application users, Dr. Watson allows them to document problems. In many cases this documentation will help developers to isolate the problem and get it fixed. Users can also use the output from Dr. Watson to support their complaints and problem reports. Please, however, resist any temptations to hit the developers over the head with a pile of Dr. Watson reports.

Let me illustrate how I used Dr. Watson recently. While running a demo version of a product called ASCEND I'd encountered UAEs while attempting to use several program options. After reading through the file DRWATSON.LOG, I called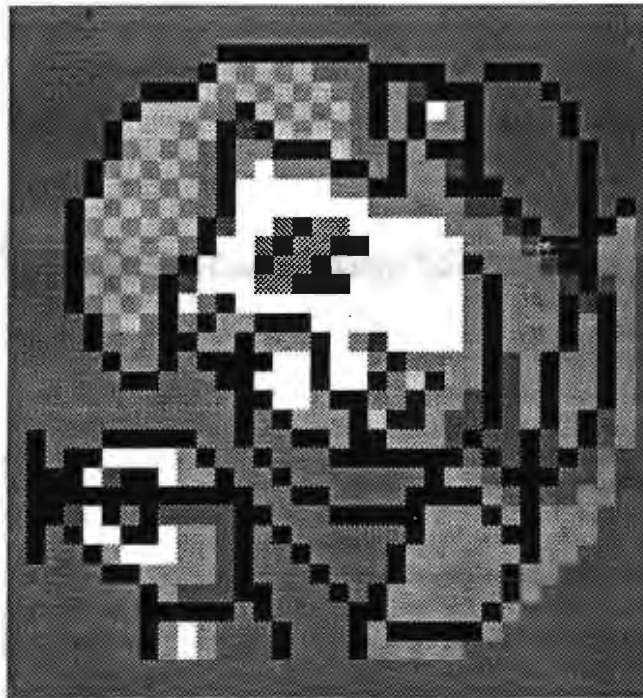 the 800 number for NewQuest and told them that I'd tried their demo program but was getting UAEs. They promised to have technical support call me back, and I told them Dr. Watson reported that "Planner had a Null Selector (RMW) fault" each time. A few minutes later a technician called back; he immediately asked if I was running an application named 'Wired for Sound.' Since I was, he explained how to disable one feature of that other program, and the problem went away.

The Dr. Watson program is available from a number of Bulletin Board Systems, including the CCS BBS. It will probably be included in retail versions of the forthcoming version 3.1 of Windows. Installation is quite easy. There are two files needed to run Dr. Watson, DRWATSON.EXE and TOOLHELP.DLL. A third file, DRWATSON.TXT documents the [Dr. Watson] options for WIN.INI; it will typically be used only by software developers. To install Dr. Watson, copy the files DRWATSON.EXE and TOOLHELP.DLL into your Windows directory, which typically is C:\win. Edit your WIN.INI file to add Dr. Watson to the Load= or Run= line of the [Windows] section. You can use NOTEPAD or your favorite text editor. After you save the WIN.INI file, start (or restart) Windows. A cute icon of a smoking pipe will appear at the bottom of your screen.

If you look in the DRWATSON.LOG file, you'll see a brief note for each time that Dr. Watson was started. For each UAE which occurs you'll see a considerable amount of information, in a format which only a computer nerd could love. Dr. Watson writes new data to the end of the log file; you can delete or rename the log file whenever you wish. Dr. Watson will give you a polite warning after several UAEs, suggesting that the file has become rather large. Ideally Dr. Watson will have the same effect as an umbrella; it seems to rain only when you don't have one handy. If you do get UAEs, at least you get a clue, albeit cryptic, of what happened.

DESQview 386

CHARLES OLSEN

Houston Area League PC Users

Do you need (or want) to run several programs at once, but you say "phooey" to GUIs? Or perhaps you think Windows is an acceptable environment, but it turns your 386 with 2M of RAM into an XT (or worse)? There is an alternative: DESQview 386.

DESQview 386, from Quarterdeck Office Systems, is actually three programs: DESQview 2.0, QEMM-386, and Manifest. (They can also be purchased individually.)

QEMM-386

The Quarterdeck Expanded Memory Manager-386 (QEMM-386) is an expanded, extended, and high (640K - 1024K) memory manager. It transparently transforms your computer's memory into whatever memory your programs need. If your system has shadow RAM, QEMM will make it usable. Most other memory managers require you to specify at boot time how much memory will be EMS and XMS (requiring you to re-boot in order to change the mix). QEMM allocates EMS and XMS as needed, making it easy for you to run software in different memory configurations without re-booting the system.

QEMM also uses a ROM detection technology called Stealth, which can find (depending on your hardware) approximately 20K - 115K of high memory (memory addresses between 640K and 1024K) which can be used by TSRs and device drivers. QEMM's Optimize feature will automatically determine what TSRs and drivers can be moved from conventional to high memory. QEMM can map slow ROM code into RAM, to speed up BIOS services. And QEMM is compatible with Microsoft Windows real, standard and enhanced modes. Even if you prefer Windows over DESQview, QEMM is probably your best choice for a memory manager.

DESQVIEW

Whether you need to be running multiple programs at once (such as communicating in the background as you run your spreadsheet in the foreground), or simply need an efficient way to switch between programs when you're interrupted in the middle of a job, DESQview can help you. DESQview can swap programs to EMS or disk. If you have a 386 (or 486) and QEMM-386, programs that have been swapped to EMS can continue to execute. Adding new programs to your DESQview menu in simple -- DESQview is already familiar with many of the popular programs. If you need to add a program that DESQview isn't familiar with, you just need to tell DESQview the name of the executable file and the start-up directory. There are other options that may need to be set, but DESQview's default values will usually handle these quite well. You can bring up the DESQview menu by tapping the Alt key. If you have more than one program running, tapping Alt twice will switch through the programs, bringing each in turn into the foreground.

DESQview can record keystroke macros and assign them to various keys. If you want to use the macros in future sessions, they can be saved to disk. It can also dial phone numbers displayed on the screen. Popular opinion holds that multi-tasking environments will cause more frequent system freezes and re-boots. My system froze occasionally before I used DESQview, and it froze occasionally while I was using DESQview -- I didn't see an increase in problems when I used DESQview.

Naturally, DESQview is at its best with EMS for swapping programs. I found that 1M of EMS (2M total RAM) was usually enough to run two programs without swapping. The programs ran a little slower, but the performance was completely acceptable even on my slow (16 MHz) 386. With only 1M of EMS, I found Windows to be intolerably slow.

MANIFEST

Manifest is a memory analysis tool, telling you everything you ever wanted to know about your system memory: how much you have, what kind (conventional, EMS or XMS), how it is being used, and how fast it is. It also provides hints on how to optimize your use of memory. Manifest can be run from the DOS prompt, or from the DESQview menu while other programs are running. The information can be displayed, or printed to the printer or to disk. Manifest can give you the following information about your PC:

❑ The hardware in your computer
❑ The contents of your AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS files
❑ Detailed information on how your first megabyte of memory is being used
❑ What kind of expanded memory you have (EMS 3.2, EEMS, or EMS 4.0), how much you have, and how it is being used. There are benchmark test for determining how fast your EMS is
❑ Extended memory availability and usage
❑ Information regarding how DOS is using memory (DOS kernel, device drivers, etc.)
❑ If you're running QEMM-386, information about how QEMM has configured your system memory - If you're running DESQview, a report on the status of all the memory that DESQview controls - Hints to optimize the use of your PC's memory
❑ Information regarding video and disk adapters
❑ Signal states of serial and parallel adapters
❑ CMOS information

Some of the information provided by Manifest is highly technical, and not needed by most users. But it can be valuable in troubleshooting. And the optimization hints are provided in simple English that anyone should be able to understand and use.
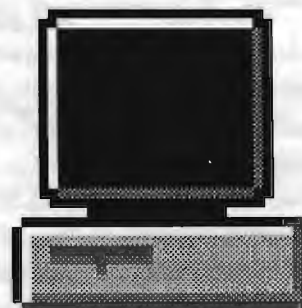
CONCLUSION

If you're looking for fast, efficient multi-tasking or task switching, DESQview can provide it. If you're not interested in multi-tasking but you need a good extended memory manager, or need some help in tracking down weird problems in your PC, QEMM and Manifest are probably what you are looking for. I wouldn't hesitate to recommend these programs.

DESQview 386, version 2.4. Quarterdeck Office Systems 150 Pico Boulevard Santa Monica, CA 90405 (213) 314-3222

Requires: 80386-based PC or PS/2, 640K RAM (2M or more recommended), two floppy disk drives or one floppy and one hard disk, DOS 3.0 or higher.

List price: DESQview 386 (includes QEMM-386 and Manifest, $219.95;

Separately: DESQview, $129.95 QEMM-386 (includes Manifest) $99.95; Manifest, $59.95 Not copy protected

Lightweight Guides for Windows 3.1

Rod McKenzie
Madison PC User's Group

Here are two lean, useful books that are filled with good information for the user who wants to run Windows without hauling around the full-size manuals. A lot of users still don't find the on-screen help screens as easy to use as a written manual. Kris Jamsa has written the Concise Guide to Microsoft Windows 3.1, from Microsoft Press. The second book is called 101 Windows Tips & Tricks, by Scott Dunn, Charles Bermant, and Jesse Berst, from Peachpit Press.

CONCISE GUIDE TO MICROSOFT WINDOWS 3.1

Both books pack a lot of tips and hints between the covers to improve the user's efficiency when using Windows. Each of these books has its own character. If you like the straightforward approach to manuals and guides, have a close look at the Concise Guide to Microsoft Windows 3.1. It has condensed all of the essential information to learn how to use Windows into a book that is only five-eighths of an inch thick. It does a very good job of explaining to the user the new features that can be found in Windows version 3.1.

The Concise Guide covers all of the functional components of Windows 3.1, starting with an easy-to-follow introduction for using the standard features, the mouse, opening files, switching between applications, closing windows, and the Windows Help system. Part II introduces the user to the File Manager and the other standard applications, such as the Print Manager. The third part goes on to describe to the user how, by using the Control Panel, Windows can be customized. The setting for printers, comports, memory management, wallpaper, adding fonts, and controlling the mouse, all of it is given brief but essential coverage.

Over 60 pages are devoted to the desktop applications, which include Write, Calendar, Notepad, Paintbrush, Terminal, Clock, Calculator, and the other programs that users will find useful when using other applications

such as the Object Packer and Character Map. Even though these applications are limited in their features, users can easily become familiar with how to use them. The author does not dismiss them because he thinks that another Windows application is the ''real'' program to use in that instance. This section of the Concise Guide gives enough orientation to get the application running and make good use of it. The on-screen Help files cover much of the same material, but I find a book easier to use when I'm just browsing and want to learn the general features of an application.

The Concise Guide to Microsoft Windows 3.1 is a complete, no nonsense reference for general topics, but not a troubleshooting resource for unusual combinations of hardware and specific third-party applications. It's thin enough to be carried along with a notebook PC without being a burden to the user. It's well illustrated, and unfamiliar parts of the setup or customizing of Windows will not seem so strange with this book by your side.

101 WINDOWS TIPS & TRICKS

101 Windows Tips & Tricks takes a little less structured approach. There are chapter headings like Blast Off, Prints Charming, and Fun and Functional. The authors have put most of their energies into showing the user how to cut through the unnecessary extras. They show how to run a streamlined Windows that will have no opening MS flag-waving logo (start Windows with win :, that is win (space) (colon). They remind users that dispensing with wallpaper will free up system resources. OK, so if you have limited RAM, and who doesn't, skip the wallpaper.

In the section on printing, the authors devote a fair portion of the space to PostScript printers, which are still, unfortunately, a tiny minority of the printers attached to PCs running Windows. There's even a tip for those fortunate few who have a Linotronic at their disposal. Not a single word for the huddled masses that use a dot-matrix printers with their systems. There are good suggestions for improving the speed of printing by downloading the fonts that you plan to use before sending any print jobs to a laser printer.

Not a word though about TrueType fonts or downloading Intellifonts to the HP-LaserJet III.

The book highlights many topics in the Custom Made Windows chapter.

Unfortunately they hit some of them so lightly that it does the user little good. Some are product recommendations, without any critical review. Is this a tip or just a cheap trick? In the chapter on Optimizing Your

System, for example, the user will find the table of shortcut key combinations is buried on page 121. It belongs much earlier in the book.

They got off to a good start with the Blast Off, which gives the user a pretty good grounding in the File Manager. The information about faxing documents from Windows is only a half page of text that tries to cover scanning and OCR, and finally tells the user that the best buy in fax-modems is Intel's $399 SatisFAXtion board. Well, that's excellent hardware, but not everybody's best buy. There are too many factors to dispose of the topic so quickly.

Another example where 101 Tips takes a rather breezy approach is the one about setting up a permanent swap file. The authors tell the user where to find the 386 Enhanced icon in the Control Panel, but they merely say to use the recommended settings or to ''enter your own specifications.'' Users need to know more about the factors concerning swap file size. The authors only offer the comment that swap files will take away disk space from applications. True enough, but they fail to mention that the size of the swap file affects how well Windows will execute programs, and especially how well it will multitask. The authors could enlighten users to the trade-off that they need to make if they would acknowledge that the hard disk is a shared resource.

Having made numerous recommendations for third-party products, commercial and shareware, the authors fail to give any addresses or phone numbers interested readers can contact about these good ideas. Too bad, because most users buy these books precisely because they don't have a Rolodex full of contact names and numbers.

THE SPAUG FUNDRAISER

You may purchase any of these items by calling Beverly Altman (415 329-8252) and it will be brought to the meeting or, if you want it sooner, you can arrange to pick it up.

See us at the SIDEWALK FAIRE

TYPE	ITEM	DESCRIPTION	SPAUG PRICE	STREET PRICE*
Software	NORTON BACKUP v1.2 For DOS	Simultaneous Backup of Multiple Drives Flexible and fast; Award winner	40.00	**
Software	NORTON BACKUP v1.2 For DOS and Windows	Automatic schedule for Windows backups. Restores from damaged diskettes.	52.00	**
Software	NORTON DESKTOP For Windows v1.0	Integrates Program Mgr, File Mgr., Backup, data recovery, and many utilities	38.00	**
Software	THE NORTON EDITOR Version 2.0	Simple, Easy-to-Use Text Editor Pull-Down Menus; Search and Replace	50.00	90.00
Software	THE NORTON EDITOR Version 1.0	Created to meet the needs of programmers Written entirely in Assembly language; fast	.25.00	**
Software	JUST WRITE 1.0 by Symantec	Fast & Easy Windows Word Processing WYSIWYG, Spell Check, Thesaurus etc.	80.00	**
Software	THE BUDGET EXPRESS 1.1 by Symantec	Goal Tracking, "what if", Instant Summary Views, etc. for Lotus 1-2-3	35.00	**
Software	SQZ! PLUS by Symantec, for Lotus	Spreadsheet File Utility System; compress spreadsheet files by up to 95%. Load and unload in RAM without leaving Lotus	25.00	**
Software	DESIGNER v2.0 by Micrografx	A top rated drawing and technical illustration program for Windows.	120.00	309.00
Software	ALLSAFE by XTree	An integrated security program, including password protection, keyboard locking, etc	40.00	89.95
Software	RESOURCE WORKSHOP	A designing and compiling resource for applications running under Windows 3.0	18.00	99.00
Software	VENTURA CONTROL!	Utilities for Ventura Publisher	15.00	—
Software	MAGELLAN v2.0 by Lotus	Lets you find and see all the text in every file on disk, including graphics files.	35.00	79.95
Software	TRADING POST by LaserTools	A PostScript printer manager (PCWorld Best Buy)	15.00	—
Software	FORMWORX for Windows by Power Up!	An excellent forms processing program.	54.00	199.99
Software	MORE WINDOWS v3.0 by Aristoft	A Windows untility that adds 300% more. Transforms your monitor into a giant screen.	20.00	59.99
Book	HANDS-ON VENTURA 2.0 C. J. Wallia (1989)	A Self-Teaching Guide and Reference	5.00	26.00
Book	CLIPPER 5	A developer's guide to "The ultimate dBase compiler" (1300 pages! with disk)	10.00	44.95
Book	HOW TO BACK UP YOUR PC Murach Press (1992)	Basic techniques, tape backups, network commands etc.	8.00	25.00

* *The current discount price - where available.*

** *These items are not latest versions. They're marked at 60% below the current version price.*

CLASSIFIED ADS

THE SPAUG RESOURCE CENTER

OFFICERS

President	Paul Staley	[415] 493-1864
Vice President	Jan Altman	[408] 243-5955
Treasurer & ASSU Representative	Alex McMillan	[415] 322-4543

MANAGERS

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Financial Manager	Bev Altman	[415] 329-8252
Librarian - Public Domain Software	Les Weil	[415] 321-5541
Newsletter Editor (PRinT SCreen)	Tony Allen	[408] 739-2953
Resource Center Manager	Rich Madden	[408] 253 2075

SPAUG members are encouraged to make themselves available to other members to answer questions about hardware or software. Your area may be general or specialized. If you are willing to have your name added to this list, please contact the Resource Center Manager, Rich Madden at [408] 253-2075.

SOFTWARE

Accounting	Larry Mehl	[415] 329-6037
Lotus 1-2-3	Larry Mehl	[415] 329-6037
Quicken	Floyd Kessler	[415] 493-7780
Windows Products	Jan Altman	[408] 243-5955
R:Base	Larry Mehl	[415] 326-6037

LANGUAGES

C	John Watson	[415] 325-7632
Fortran	John Watson	[415] 325-7632
Pascal	John Watson	[415] 325-7632
Smalltalk	John Watson	[415] 325-7632
QuickBasic	Don Baird	[415] 365-6822

CLUB EVENTS IN OCTOBER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

October 7 First Wednesday - *PLANNING MEETING*
7:30pm Beverly Altman, [415] 329-8252 or
Paul Staley, [415] 493-1864

October 13 Second Tuesday - *WORD FOR WINDOWS SIG*
7:30pm We meet at Oakridge Appartments Rec. Room, 3655 Pruneridge Ave. Santa Clara: just west of Lawrence Expressway.
The group is led by Jan Altman, a Certified Trainer in Word for Windows. For more information, please call Jan at [408] 243-5955.

October 20 Third Tuesday - *QUICKEN SIG*
7:30pm Floyd Kessler, [415] 493-7780

NEW LOCATION
The new location is 1830 E. Embarcadero Road, Palo Alto. Take the Emabarcadero East exit off 101/Bayshore or come straight up Embarcadero Road from Palo Alto. Pass the frontage road heading for the bay. Pass Mings and 2 auto dealers on the right. Then turn right into the HARBOR complex find #1830 on the left.
For the latest meeting information see the notice on the Bulletin Board.

October 28 Last Wednesday - *GENERAL MEETING*
7:30pm Turing Auditorium, Polya Hall, Stanford University

THE SEPTEMBER PRESENTATION

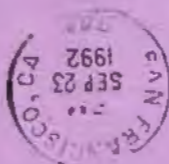*Last Wednesday: September 30 at 7:30pm in the Turing Auditorium*

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Membership	Beverly Altman	[415] 329-8252
	$35/year (Students $10)	
Bulletin Board		[415] 321-4497
Newsletter	Tony Allen	[408] 739-2953

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The Stanford/Palo Alto
PC Users Group

P.O. Box 3738 Stanford, CA 94309

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