

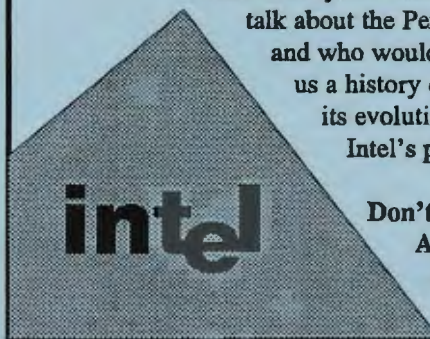
# PrintScreen

## SPAUG Presents Intel!

*Unless you've been living in a cave the past few months, you've undoubtedly heard about Intel's brand-new processor, the Pentium. But what's so special about it?*

### The April Presentation

John McIntyre of Intel will be with us in April to talk about the Pentium processor, what it does, and who would want one. He will also give us a history of the chip and Intel's role in its evolution. Finally, we'll hear about Intel's plans for its (and our) future.



Don't miss Wednesday night, April 28! Intel will tell all about chips, and why you can't buy just one!

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# CLUB NEWS

**SPAUG** would like to thank:

## **PRACTICAL PERIPHERALS, INC.**

of Westlake Village, CA for their most generous help with a V32/42 modem for our BBS

## **OCTAVE SYSTEMS**

of Campbell for helping us with the hard drive for our BBS

## **SPAUG Member Info**

**Individual Member: (\$35)**

An Individual Member can vote in elections, is eligible for all club privileges, and if 18 years of age can hold elective office. Dues are based on one full year of membership.

Please see Beverly Altman or call her at (415) 329-8252 to become a member of the club!

# THE PRESIDENT ELECT'S PIECE

## **Campaign Promises**

Paul's presidency will be a tough act to follow. Two successful terms: let's hear it for Paul everyone...and now as the applause dies down it's time to move forward.

Should you folks vote me in as president at the next meeting I shall try to maintain the traditions of the club while taking advantage of the many talents of the new members we have been signing up.

Here's a few things that I'd like to see the club do:

Guest editorials in PrintScreen every now and then, your chance to air your views (and take a bit of the load off your president!)

If you have ideas of your own on the direction that you'd like to see the club

move in let's hear them (leave a message for me on the bulletin board -my login is Cookie Cook-, phone me, talk to me at the club or raise the issue at Random Access)

One of the club's most successful recent endeavors has been the Pledges Dinner at Bev's house. Let's have more events like this for the energy, ideas and enthusiasm that they generate.

We all know that work goes easier if you make it a party so lets make some of the club's tedious tasks into a party. Disk of the month labeling, mailing and phone work could all benefit from this approach.

In closing thank you for this opportunity to serve the club.

*Cookie*

## **INTERNET**

InterNet is a world-wide computer net-work used to transfer files and mail to people all over the globe. Users can contact other users personally (EMail) or join a distribution list for a managed organization.

If you are interested in joining InterNet, write to:

NetCom Communications  
4000 Moorpark Ave., Suite 209  
San Jose, CA 95117

Their voice number is 554-UNIX.

The Fees? \$15.00 one time setup fee; \$19.50-1st month; then 17.50 the 2nd month on. There is no Connect Charge.

To Submit Articles, Editorials, Cartoons or other "news-worthy" items for the PRinTScreen, call, write, fax, or send a file via disk or BBS to:

Jennifer Wildman  
1224 Quarry Road  
Felton, CA 95018  
Home: (408)335-7892  
Work: (415)967-8612  
Fax: (415)967-0540

Please contact me at home first, whenever possible. Also include a "hard copy" of anything submitted on disk.

## **WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS**

Michael Chan      Dick Harding

## **AND THANKS TO RENEWING MEMBERS**

Charles Brown      Denise Delange  
Matt Lehman      Bob Macedo  
Dirk Van Der Linden      Mike Van Waas

**May 5th (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.

# A BYTE OF HISTORY

By Don Baird

A little reminiscence on early computing from one who was around back then. Electronics was all-pervading, with digital methods occupying a small part of it. Analog computing was big because of its need in World War II mainly for radar, artillery control, and aircraft design. Communications perhaps was largest - or seemed so because that was my main field (I've designed every kind of receiver known). But, back to computing. If you didn't know, Roger Bacon's secretary was probably the first programmer. She operated a little computing machine that he had made. Now that "really" was before my time. Computers have taken many forms, but the electronic ones hit the scene soon after DeForest's vacuum tube did. The whole concept revolves around "how to make a flip-flop". Creating the "ones" and "zeros" is a big deal. The power required, speed, heat management, and size all depend on it.

The first electrical computers used relays. The switching logic got pretty complex - and that's where I first came in. The Psychology department at the University of Wisconsin could not mathematically cope when a subject guessed on multiple-choice tests. I succeeded with a lot of relays, but nobody seemed to understand the switching logic that I used. I was really proud when the dean of the Psych. dept. said that it behaved like a moron. Getting a machine to behave human, even at that level, must be some kind of accomplishment.

In the late forties, the University set up a big computer project next door to my research lab where I did noise studies. We all conferred a lot in each other's projects, so I contributed some to that gigantic effort next door. The word gigantic suits if you can visualize the day we gathered around to see the latest in a miniaturized flip-flop. The little wonder used twin triodes within a single glass envelope mounted on a 2 cubic inch box. Now-a-days, you get millions of flip-flops on a single chip, and they're still shrinking. The transformers had solid sheets of copper rather than wire to furnish current for the filaments of the thousands of flip-flops lining the walls. Tens of thousands of lamps "hung on every bit" and flashed just like in "War Games". The "hard disk" was a large rotating cylinder that vibrated the floor.

Gene Amdahl's dissertation formulated the computers architecture. The transistor helped reduce the hardware a lot. I remember Schockly (in a loose sweaty "T" shirt) talking to us engineers in mufti, and describing his trip to an electronics store to see if one could actually buy a transistor.

I loved applying theory to practice, so consequently designed tons of analog and digital equipment. I progressed from knowing hundreds of vacuum tubes intimately, to about a thousand transistors, to maybe five hundred integrated circuits, and was designing among a few microprocessors and wondering how I was going to keep up with all the new ones coming out. The work required knowing the instruction sets of each microprocessor and a bunch

of high level languages. I remember the frustrations of using time-share languages like RUSH, SON OF RUSH, and later APL, FORTH, & PROSE. Finally, FORTRAN made main-frame computing almost a joy and it became my "sledge hammer" with BASIC as the "tack hammer". There were CAD programs and circuit analysis programs like SPICE that one got proficient with. We had to know the operating language of each type of main frame that we used. My lack of sympathy for those today needing "friendly software" is no surprise when recalling the tussle with each main-frame's idiosyncracies and documentation.

Every company had its own peculiar computer setup. At IBM, you felt in touch with all the data banks in the world, and further, didn't sense the sharing with the multitudes actually on the system. At Sperry-Univac, punch cards were still common, and I often ran from building to building to get my print-outs. If I used too much RAM or my program ran too slowly, big brother - or sister, would summarily cut off my program. At Xerox-Parc, they handed me a disk about three feet across and put me on my own. California-Microwave was the worst, mainly because the system crashed hourly and lost data even when it stayed up.

The programmable pocket calculator appeared, and it was amazing how one could squeeze out the limit of its potential. It permitted for the first time, a sort of pseudo-computer-freedom away from mainframes and mini-computers. The Wang and other desk types began to appear as forerunners to the personal computer. Engineers were terribly treated, and their escape was into management.

My escape went momentarily that way, but finally into full-time consulting with a big multiplier in income as well as respect.

However, leaving one's work on someone else's mainframe was unsatisfactory. The advent of the AIM-65 computer development board partly solved that because it enabled me to build one of the first portable computers. This was lugged from client to client. It had two whole Kbytes of RAM, and again it's a wonder what one can do with limitations when you have to. I incorporated two little tape recorders and made a controller board to operate them from the keyboard. It even sported a ROM burner (a ROM chip programmer). Eventually, a TV set served as a monitor. If there is enough interest, I will lug it to a club meeting.

Personal computing has been, and is still, a revolution. The farthest I can see ahead, is having the house computer put your sleeping capsule through its paces to optimize your physical state and to enhance your IQ in preparation for the tasks of the day.

## ELECTIONS:

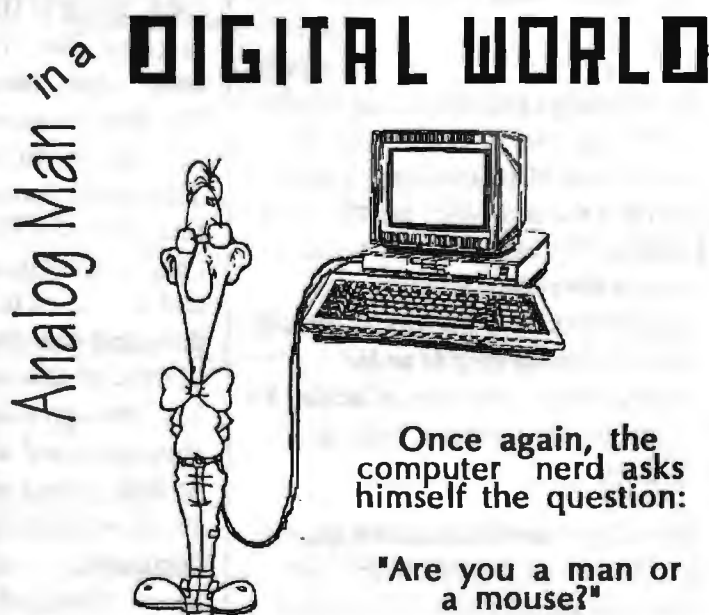
The nominees are-

Richard Cook - President

Jan Altman-Vice President

Beverly Altman - Treasurer

Since there are no opposing candidates, the election at the April meeting will be just a show of hands and a speech by the incoming president.





## Communications SIG News (And some bits on OS/2)

by Bob Bottini

The first meeting of the Communications SIG was held on Tuesday the 6th of April and was attended by 9 people. We first settled as comfortable as possible in my computer room and turned on the computer. The computer went through its paces of checking memory etc. and then the OS/2 logo flashed on the screen. I have OS/2 come up in the Windows mode because my most used applications are Windows versions. In the lower left hand corner of the Windows screen is the OS/2 Desktop icon. Clicking on that brings up the OS/2 desktop upon which the Windows icon appears. Windows continues to run as well as any Windows application I use.

All my communications applications are on the OS/2 desktop. Even running under OS/2 I have trouble with Windows running communication applications so I therefore run comm apps under OS/2.

Clicking on the communications group icon, a box opens that has five icons three of which are communications applications. Two of the icons are devoted to my laser printer which is a PostScript printer but can emulate the HP LaserJet II. Clicking on the icon labeled PCL activates a batch file that turns the postscript printer into a LaserJet. This is necessary because some of the communications programs do not have PostScript compatibility and relate only to an HP LaserJet. The other icon is labeled PS for getting the computer back to PostScript.

Of the three communications applications that I use, two are written for OS/2 and the third is a DOS applica-

tion. The DOS application is the Comp-U-Serve CIM.EXE application that I use for accessing Comp-U-Serve no fee services such as stock listings etc. The two OS/2 applications are a general communication application that I use for accessing the BBS world.

This application called PMcomm was written up in the April 27th edition of PC Magazine.

The second OS/2 application is called Golden Compass and is designed to go into a complicated BBS such as Comp-U-Serve and Ziffnet to snatch out the information that you request it to secure. It goes into the fee areas in seconds, gathers the information that you want and keeps your charges minimal.

We first clicked on the PMcomm communication and chose to access SPAUG. As the former sysop I had this BBS scripted and I am certain that many of the people attending were quite annoyed at the ease and simplicity of the access of our BBS. I logged off and accessed our BBS several times to show them that it was not a fluke. Then to drive the point home I accessed several other of the BBS listed including a long distance BBS, the IBM BBS. I also logged on to a local BBS, Toad-Hall for the first time. Again there were no problems. The whole session was printed out on my laser printer as we went along. This was to demonstrate one of the features of the PMcomm application. I also printed from the scroll screen and also saved to a file. One other thing that was demoed was the ability of OS/2 to download a file from a BBS through a communication application and also, at the same time, be in Windows and using Word for Windows to compose and to print a document, all while the downloading (or uploading) of a file continues. I

could have also been playing a game while the other two operations were happening if I had thought of it.

What we all learned from this meeting is that most of the people who attended want help in setting up their communication software. Secondly most of the people really needed help in working a BBS for the first time. Getting on to a BBS for the first time is a formidable task.

We passed around a legal pad for names and phone numbers and we also asked the questioned them on what they would like to get out of our SIG. All except one wanted help with their communication software. The exception wanted help with FAX software. FAX software is a problem all of its own. If only Windows didn't have so much trouble with communications the FAX question would be a snap. With OS/2 there is no problem, but you do have to buy an OS/2 FAX application. I would like to work from one of my Windows apps through OS/2, but this gets us back to the old Windows communications problem. More on FAX later.

The meeting went very well. We will be concentrating on helping people with their individual problems such as getting them started with their software and then helping them log on to a BBS. I also must say that along with software problems there exists hardware problems. I stopped by at one members house and found that his serial mouse was on Com 2, along with an internal modem. This, surprisingly, was the doing of the technicians where he bought his computer. So as you can see we have a lot of things to go over in The Communications SIG.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, May 4th at 7:30 P.M. Same place.

# Software Reviews

## Product Interest Survey

To: Product Reviewers  
From: Larry Turpen  
Chairman, Product Review Committee  
Subject: Guidelines for Product Review



Larry Turpen  
PO Box 20064  
San Jose, CA 95160  
PHONE (408)268-7200 FAX (408)268-7671

It is the intention of the SPAUG PRODUCT REVIEW COMMITTEE to request programs from the various manufacturers that are of particular interest to our members. If a program is advertised or promoted that is of interest to you, you are encouraged to let us know. Please complete your request on the form below and return it to me as soon as possible. We will then make every effort to secure that program for review.

Reviewers are generally allowed to keep the program after they have submitted the review for publication. When the report is returned to us, it will be exchanged for the product "registration card" and you will become the happy owner of the software.

The process of product review is important to the software manufacturer as well as the reader of your report. The manufacturer is interested in the initial response to his product and to see if the "novice" user can take the program out of the box and put it to use. Without some degree of success in this simple process, he will not meet his sales projections.

The reader of your report is interested in how you, as an end user, found the product to be. He will probably base his decision on whether or not to purchase it, in part on your experience. So, in order to help the reader we would like to give you some guidelines on the production of the report.

1. It should be short. We would like no more than 500 words. We will want to run the report in the next issue of the newsletter and do not want to take up all the space in each issue with product reviews.

2. It should be written to the level of the general end user, and not to the high end technical wizard. To be honest there are more of us than there are of them, and buyers of the product need to know that it will be useful to each person who chooses to make the purchase.

3. It should address the following general areas of interest.

A: Was it easy to load or did you need to call customer service and get help from them to get the program up and running? What problems did you have?

B: Was it intuitive? That is, could you use it right away without a lot of extra reading or practice? Did it have a good and effective on line help program and was that intuitive as well? Was there sort of a natural flow to it when you began to use it?

C: What were the special features that made this a good investment for the general end user? Is this a program that will make the user more productive in his business life or give the personal user the results he might expect?

D: If this is an upgrade of a familiar product, were the features that were added to this version significant or did this seem to be another effort by the product manufacturers to hook us into buying a new version more in their sales interest than in the satisfaction of our needs?

### PRODUCT INTEREST QUESTIONNAIRE:

Please secure the following software for review:

Name of Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Software Manufacturer: \_\_\_\_\_

Size of Disks: 3 1/4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 1/2 \_\_\_\_\_ Windows \_\_\_\_\_ OS/2 \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this to  
Larry Turpen by mail,  
phone or fax  
if you are interested  
in submitting a product  
for review!

## One Bug Too Many!

*A*fter an interesting experience with the scanner last month, I wondered just who is out there making up all of these words associated with computers. Take the word "virus", for instance. Who first coined that phrase? Somebody, somewhere, must have an explanation for all of this computer talk...

My supervisor came in the other day with a worried look on her face and said, "I think we have a virus!"

As a former school teacher, I cooked up visions of the entire office coming down with a cold or the flu. But I came back to reality with a virus scanning program in hand. I assured my boss that I was sure we didn't have a virus. They are just not that common, you know.

After putting the scanning disk in the drive, I waited patiently for the program to check each drive. I had done this at least four or five times before. It's pretty mindless work; just stick it in and wait . . . WAIT . . . What's this?

We had the Michelangelo virus.

Luckily it was two days after D-Day and we didn't lose a bit of information. I scanned it again to be sure.

We had the Stoned virus.

Huh?

After several calls to our director, consultant, my husband and the BBS, we finally had our virus cleaning program and were well on our way to recovery.

Just to be sure these dreaded diseases did not spread to our other machines, I headed to each office with a scan disk to check for more diseases in our company's computer systems. They all checked out clean.

Except the one in the front office.

There we had a mysterious illness called the "Parity Var" virus.

Huh?

It seems that no-one has heard of this one. After calling around (and around and around) we can't seem to find it. We have left this problem to our Dr. Consultant. After reformatting the entire computer the virus STILL exists. Figure that one out!

*But what I'm really curious about is how the word "bug" came along and why bugs and viruses are not the same thing...*

I've got this really weird problem in Paradox for Windows that won't allow our company logo to show up in the graphics object on the screen - only on my computer. Everyone else seems fine with it. It could be my video driver, I'm told. (That's the answer I got from my own personal technical support person, my husband.) I guess I'm at the mercy of technology, waiting for my software to catch up to my super fast video screen. Until then, my husband says "Hmmm...There must be a reason for that. I'll work on it."

*And speaking of bugs and viruses, I only have one more question: "When is this three week cold I have going to go away?"*

I guess some things are just too hard to explain.

## MedSure!

(Or Not So Sure?)

A Product Review by Floyd Kessler

Keeping track of medical expenses today can be more complex than balancing your checkbook. MedSure by Time Solutions is a DOS based program that promises to: help you understand your health insurance, file and track medical claims, compare policies, show tax savings from your benefits, maintain a family immunization record and family history, and keep a record book. That's a big promise that MedSure keeps to some extent, but not with ease of use.

Installation is easy but you must scan through a lot of unnecessary verbiage in the main manuals (there are two) to find out that you type INSTALL at the floppy disk prompt. There are few choices to make, i.e. printer, color, etc.

The program is easy to navigate with mouse or keyboard. Unfortunately, it is not intuitive, in my opinion. There's a pull down menu with all of the chapter subjects (yes, it's organized like a book). It took me a while to find my way to the PAGE numbers to be able to input data. There is a demo file included. It has help (and Superhelp) neither of which I found very useful in operating the program. One would expect to be able to easily input a visit to the doctor with all of the related information in a straight forward manner, but no, you must fill in a number of forms for each visit to the doctor or dentist.

This is not a problem until you realize that most of the data to be entered must first be 'loaded' into three different records: Names of family members, Policies and Providers. Two additional record: Expenses and Incidents, can be loaded directly into the forms. It appears to me that the design is inverse. The user should be allowed to enter any pertinent data into the form and have the program store it into the appropriate database. After entering information to make a claim, it gets a little more complex. The intention is to show your 'out of pocket' expenses after entering the total cost, less the payments from Medicare, Medigap, and other insurance.

The available reports are quite inclusive, sorting the data many ways but with no report design options.

The policy analysis comparison feature could be very useful if your employer has a 'cafeteria' system whereby you must choose the provider.

It will print a claim form accepted by insurance companies providing it's prepared on a laser printer.

It tracks claims from the initial billing to final payment and shows your out of pocket expense.

It provides for keeping a record of family immunizations, health history and includes a glossary of medical insurance terms and an index to where the terms are used in MedSure. This is a useful feature.

MedSure runs under DOS or Windows and lists for \$69.95. If the design and screens have a familiar look, then you may be a user of Tobias' Managing Your Money (MYM). The same person designed both programs. Unfortunately, MedSure does not interface with MYM or any other personal financial program which is one of my personal prime requirements for a medical records program. Until such a program appears, I'll stay with my own database design with its free form entry (on a single page or line), and its easily designed reports.

## *What's In A Name?*

**Q:** What are Gif, Mac, Pic, Tif, Fli, GL, etc. files?

**A:** Filenames - Descriptions and/or Extensions - Software Source & Program

Some common extensions include:

.ART PFS First Publisher Clip Art, Ashton-Tate Byline Clipart  
 .BAS Basic Blood/Bsave (also basic programs)  
 .BSG Fantasy (same as .RAW)  
 .CA NewsRoom Pro  
 .CGM Computer Graphics Metafile  
 .CUT Dr. Halo, Cut files  
 .DAT PrintShop  
 .DBF dBase (or xBase) database file  
 .DCX Panasonic Fax PCX Libraries.  
 .DD CBM Doodle  
 .DHP Dr. Halo  
 .DIZ SPACE BBS upload description file: FILE\_ID.DIZ  
 .DRW FreeLance, MicroGrafx, NBI Legend  
 .DXF AutoCad  
 .EPS Encapsulated Post Script  
 .EVNCN Execuvision  
 .FG Slidewrite Plus  
 .FLI AutoDesk Animator 3D  
 .GAL HP Gallery on Exhibit, Graphics Gallery  
 .GEM GEM draw  
 .GIF Compuserve Graphics Interchange format  
 .GL Picture files GRASP Graphics Animation System 3D  
 .GMF Computer Graphics Metafile  
 .GXI PC PaintBrush  
 .HAM Hi-res Amiga file 4096 colors - used by 'Deluxe Paint'  
 .HPC(L) Hewlett Packard's LaserJet Graphics  
 .HPG(L) Hewlett Packard Graphics Language  
 .IFF Amiga Interchange Format File (graphics)  
 .IMG DataCopy Wips, GEM Paint, IBM Image support Facility, Boeing  
 .LBM Amiga Interchange Format File (graphics)  
 .MAC Apple Macintosh Macpaint  
 .MAK Apple Macintosh Macpaint, No Header

.MOV AutoDesk Animator  
 .MSP Microsoft Windows Paint  
 .P Ashton Tate Draw Applause  
 .PCR OPTIKS/PCRGB  
 .PCX .PCC PC Paintbrush (ZSoft) format  
 .PDA Palantir Scanner Graphics Files  
 .PGA IBM Pro. Graphics Adaptor image file  
 .P11 .P12 Atari Degas uncompressed images  
 .PIC Lotus, Mouse systems PC Paint  
 .PIG Ricoh Pixel Image Generator file  
 .PRN Post Script, Any print image file  
 .RAS Show file RAS format  
 .RAW Basic Array format (OPTIKS reference only)  
 .RLE Compuserve, Teletext Run Length Encoded  
 .SLD AutoCad Slide  
 .SFL Soft Font Single Letter  
 .SFP HP Soft Font  
 .SHP Printmaster, Newsmaster  
 .TIF Aldus/Microsoft Tag Image Format (TIFF)  
 .WPG Word Perfect Graphics 5.0

Files with an extension of GIF, MAC, PIC, TIF, etc. are usually still pictures encoded for storage on computer media and require some sort of executable VIEWER program to be loaded before you can see the picture.

You can, of course, view the images in the programs that were used to create them.

A few of the many viewers you can find on a BBS are:

PICEM by John Bridges, FreeWare - *General purpose picture view program for PIC, PCX, GIF files.*

VPIC by Bob Montgomery, ShareWare - *VPIC is a file viewer for EGA, MCGA, VGA and SuperVGA, and Views CUT, GIF, Deluxe Paint LBM (of IFF), MAC, PIC, PCX, SCx, TGA files.*

CSHOW by Bob Berry from Canyon states systems and Software. *CompuShow will view GIF, RLE, MAC, PCX, PIC, CUT, SCx files.*

OPTIKS by Graham Systems, ShareWare - *Optiks will read, write, convert, and view just about any image format we've seen.*

GRAFWORK by Alchemy Mindwords Inc., ShareWare - *Graphic workshop is a simple, menu driven environment which will let you view, convert, print, dither, reverse, rotate and flip, and scale MAC, PCX, GEM/IMG, GIF, TIFF, EPS, WPG,*

*MSP, IFF/LBM/CE and BMP files.*

After you have downloaded the viewer and uncompressed it, you should look for operating instructions in one of the uncompressed files. The most likely sources have extensions of DOC or TXT. Many, if not most of the viewers have a menu interface or offer the choice between menu interface and command line interface (CLI). The menu interface viewers usually show you all of the files in the directory and allow you to highlight the name of the picture you want to view.

FLIs, GLs and MOVs are similar to other forms of picture files with one major distinction... they are animated.

FLIs are created with AutoDesk Animator and require a viewer such as QUICKFLI.EXE or AAPKAY.EXE, shareware programs from AutoDesk, Inc. to see these amazing creations. Most of the FLIs appear in three - dimensional splendor.

MOVs are created with AutoDesk Animator and require a viewer such as AFEGAP.EXE, also from AutoDesk, Inc. to watch the movies.

While most GLs are also animated, created using GRASP Graphic Animation System for Professionals by Microtex Industries Inc. for Paul Mace Software. Most of the ones I've seen aren't as noticeably 3 dimensional as are FLIs. GLs require GRASPRT.EXE or GRASPRN.EXE to view them.

To locate files on SPACE there are two commands: (Z)ippy search and (L)ocate. (Z) searches for a description CONTAINING the keyword.

(L)ocate searches for a word that STARTS with the keyword. For more details on 'L' and 'Z', use the (H)elp command.

This article was reprinted by the courtesy of Shareware Magazine

## **CompuMentor**

This non-profit organization matches volunteers with "needy" computer users.

Volunteers of varying skill levels are needed to help non-profit organizations like schools and churches set up databases, hook up to bulletin boards and networks, learn specific software programs, and more. If you want to more information, please contact them at the number below or pick up a CompuMentor Interest Card at the next meeting.

**(415)512-0173**

**(800)659-3579**

# WORD RAPPING

With  
**JAN  
ALTMAN**

❑ Why is there a File Open command when I get into Windows Help? What files can you open from there?

❑ When you go to the Help menu or press F1 within a Windows application, you launch the Help "engine." All Windows programs use the same Help engine, but each one loads a different Help file (the file ending in .HLP). By default, the help file for the current program is loaded. For example, when you're in Word and press F1, the Help engine is launched and WINWORD.HLP is loaded.

Once you're in Help, you can load any other help file you like. Go into Word for Windows and press F1 to launch Help. Now select File Open, and find the file EXCELHLP.HLP in the Excel directory. You can get help on Excel while in Word! And you can do the same to get help on any program you like while Help is running.

❑ In Windows 3.1, there's a new accessory called "Character Map." What does it do?

❑ Character Map allows you to capture any symbols you like and bring them into any Windows application. When you first launch the program, you'll see a large table of characters. This table changes depending upon the font you've chosen. If it's symbols you're after, try the TrueType fonts Symbol and Wingdings; they have the best selection. Point to any symbol you want and hold

down the left mouse button. The symbol magnifies. You can drag the mouse button up and down rows to see all the symbols. Once you've found the one you want to use, click on it and click the Select button. You can select several if you like. When the symbols you've selected appear in the Characters to Copy field, click on the Copy button to place them on the clipboard.

Switch back to the application that needs the symbols, position the cursor, and select Edit Paste. Don't be surprised - they're likely to come in looking very differently. That's just because upon arrival, they acquired the default font for this application. Select the symbols, and give them their correct native font (either Symbol or Wingdings). In the correct font, they'll show up as symbols.

❑ Is there any way to hide errors that show up on my Excel spreadsheet? A few formulas generate a #DIV/0! error because the dependent cells are empty. I don't want the errors to appear, but I want to keep the formulas in place until I assign values to the dependent cells.

❑ Using the IF function, you can hide the resulting value when (and only when) the formula generates an error. The idea is to test for an error by nesting an ISERROR function inside the IF. The ISERROR function returns TRUE if it finds any of the Excel error values: #N/A, #VALUE!, #REF!, #DIV/0!, #NUM!, #NAME?, or #NULL!. Otherwise it returns FALSE. Example:

=ISERROR(5/0) returns TRUE (5 divided by 0 generates an error),  
whereas  
=ISERROR(2\*8) returns FALSE.

Let's say the cell J4 sometimes has a value and sometimes does not. The function =ISERROR(5/J4) results in TRUE when J4 is empty. (Dividing by an empty cell, which has the value of 0, generates a #DIV/0! error.)

Watch what happens when you add an IF. The IF function has the syntax:

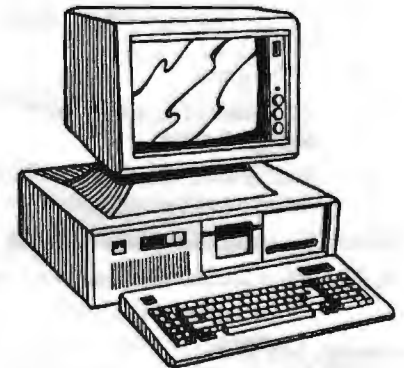
=IF(ConditionToTest,ActionIfTrue,ActionIfFalse)

Using the ISERROR function as the *ConditionToTest*, you can specify what to do when there is an error (the condition is true), and what to do when there isn't an error (the condition is false). Following the above example with J4, here's the formula I would suggest:

=IF(ISERROR(5/J4),"",5/J4)

In English: Test the result of the formula 5/J4. If the formula generates an error (as it does when J4 is 0 or empty), display nothing (the *ActionIfTrue* field, which is two quotes with nothing inside). If there's no error (when J4 has a value), display the result of 5/J4 (the *ActionIfFalse* field). When J4 is empty, the above formula displays a blank cell (instead of an error). When J4 has a value, the formula displays its result.

Note: Though we used the #DIV/0! error in this example, this procedure works the same with any of the Excel error values (see above for a list of them).



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Jan is the Vice President of SPAUG and a certified Microsoft Trainer.

Send your questions on Windows products to 3655 Pruneridge Avenue, No. 135, Santa Clara, 95051, (408)243-5955.

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# **Quicken** International

version 6.0 for DOS

By Dr. Larry Turpen

My business activity, that of International Business Consulting, requires that I have an office in London and that we use the British Pound Sterling as our Home currency. Since I am a user of Quicken here in our United States office, I was very interested in the possibility of using Quicken International in our foreign offices.

It is not my intention in this review to go into all the many features of Quicken. There are many users in the area and our Quicken Sig is a sign that there is a lot of interest. However with the world market for investments opening up and United States investors looking to foreign investments in record numbers, a look at the use of Quicken International might interest you.

The feature that is vital to its success as a tracking tool for international investors is that of currency conversion and the production of reports in a certain pre-selected currency. In the rest of the world it is common for a business or an individual to have investment accounts in several different currencies. In order to determine the company or individual net worth at any given time it is necessary to convert the balances in all of the accounts to the reporting currency and to produce the report showing the value in the home currency.

Imagine that you have accounts in Britain, France and Switzerland; and that these accounts are held in the currencies of that country. In order to know at any time the real value of your investment portfolio you would need to enter the conversion factors into Quicken and then produce your net worth report in United States dollars. Quicken would do all the conversions at that time and would produce the report in its usual format.

As our interest in international investing grows, and we as United States citizens see the need and advantage of foreign accounts in a variety of currencies we will welcome the inclusion of this feature in the United States version of Quicken as well.

Since we operate dozens of small international investment companies for our clients in a variety of foreign currencies, you can readily see how important this feature is to our company operations. My only disappointment was that it is not available in Windows version. However, most of us learned Quicken in DOS and we have something to look forward to. There is no question in my mind that the people at Intuit will see the need to add this feature to the United States version soon, or produce a Windows Quicken International, and we will simply convert to the international version and name the United States dollar as our home currency.

*Editor's Note: A BIG thanks to the numerous contributors: Bob Bottini, Don Baird, Larry Turpen, Floyd Kessler and Louis Brossard for submitting their articles; Cookie, Jan and Brian for their regular features; Keith Smith for the PKZIP logo creation, and Brian for sending along the articles on PKZIP and File Extensions.*

*As you can see, this newsletter is full...no room for the article on MSD I promised...we'll see if there's room next month. Keep up the good work! You make editing fun!*

# **A Lesson** From Louis

(A Frustrating Story with a Poetic Ending!)

by Louis Brossard

I got the MPC bug in January and bought a CD-ROM Drive and Sound Board from our Windows/OS2 booth co-sponsor, Computers at Large. They have the best deal I could find for the latest technology, double speed drive (Texel DM 3024) and 16 bit sound board (Pro Audio Spectrum 16). With only minor "pilot error" goofs and a couple of misprints in their manual things got up and running fine. With a bit more coaching I was able to play classical disks on my CD-ROM while trying to figure out the crooks and crannies of some Cretan cranialware from other sources. I am considerably impressed with the potential of multiware and eagerly await either a price decrease in one of the new interactive encyclopedias or a significant increase in the government stipend for us former workers. Never mind that both I and my computer engineer daughter spend more time enjoying *Just Grandma and Me* (a great preschooler reading and entertainment program on CD-ROM) than we did on *MS Bookshelf* (a reference library for Windows). This is the way education should (and will) be; one on one with an ever patient and very smart teacher. Everything was copacetic and I was a happy camper.

That is...until last week. I invited a fellow volunteer from the Tech Museum to come and see my fancy new stuff, since he has a similar set up to mine...except he hasn't taken the multi-leap (Dumb Disk Dance?) yet. Now I must admit that I was too cheap to buy several CD-ROM disk caddies which are required for my drive. They cost \$7 at Fry's or CompUSA so I decided to just use the one that came with my kit and change the disk each time I wanted to put in a new program. During the demo with my friend, I started to have some problem reading the CD-ROM and even had to re-boot once. He was none-the-less considerably impressed and intends to do the deed as soon as he can find something of comparable value to assuage his wife.

That same afternoon, I was unable to access my CD dictionary and the other references on MS Bookshelf were erratic. I panicked! Without going into the details of why my wife was unable to get phone calls for two days because the line was busy while I was on hold with tech support, I will just say that I got Media Vision to replace the board (a trip to Fremont) and Texel to test and put in the latest upgrades to the drive (three trips to Santa Clara) even though both said that their hardware seemed to be all right. The problem was still not solved.

Finally on Tuesday while changing disks for the umpteenth time, I noticed that the bottom of the disk had several smears on it. I guess I just dropped it too many times or mauled it with greasy fingers. A quick cleaning and the frustration of four days was replaced with the utter disgust at being so damn dumb.

Some of us must learn the same lesson many, many times. I had envisioned an insidious invasion by every virile viral vagrant possible; blackened boards accompanied by acrid aromas; fragmented files flung far afield. Oh disk, where is thy string? Oh gramercy, where is thy valentine? (With apologies to St. Paul.)

I bought 5 disk caddies Tuesday afternoon.

# THE SPAUG FUNDRAISER

**T**here were some really great bargains at the Sidewalk Faire and here are some more. Are there computer users on your shopping lists? To purchase any of these items call Beverly Altman at (415) 329-8252 and it will be brought to the next meeting or you can arrange to pick it up.



## What is the significance of .ZIP and why is it used?

A program called PKZIP, created by PKWARE, has been used to create the files you see on this system with the .ZIP extension. Each of those files may contain within themselves one or more files in a compressed format. There are other compression programs such as LHarc, ARC, ARJ, etc., but SPACE has standardized on ZIP since it is fast and very popular.

## What are the reasons for ZIPing a file?

- 1) it creates a smaller file which saves disk space
- 2) the same file, being smaller, takes less time to download
- 3) because the file can contain entire groups of files (even directories) inside of a single file it is easier to download one file and get all of the necessary components of a program or system at one time.

## What do I do with a ZIP file after I've downloaded it?

To extract the files from a ZIP file you use the companion program to PKZIP called PKUNZIP. An example might be: PKUNZIP SPACEKIT which will extract all the files into the current directory. Note: some zips contain sub-directory information in which case they should be

unpacked using the "-d" option. To check first, use 'pkunzip -vb filename'.

## What is an 'AV' zipfile?

AV stands for 'authenticity verification' and is a special 'seal' used by authors to let you know that the zip you get is the original that they created and has not been modified by having files added or deleted. If you unpack the zip or test the zip, you will see the 'AV' message. An example of an 'AV' zip would be one of the SCANxx.ZIP files.

## Where do I get PKZIP and PKUNZIP?

These files are available from SPACE and are 'free' downloads. For more info,

Use the (F)iles command and check the Free Files Directory #2.

TYPE	ITEM	DESCRIPTION	SPAUG PRICE	RETAIL PRICE
Software	AMAZON MS DOS Version	A new interactive cinema adventure game with full sound track	40.00	49.99
Software	BUDGET EXPRESS For LOTUS	Goal tracking, Instant summary	20.00	
Kit	COMPUTER CHECK Ordering Kit		7.50	39.95
Software	DESIGNER For Windows (by Micrografix)	A technical illustration program for Windows	80.00	399.99
Software	hDC FileApps for Windows	Undelete, view, search encrypt, share, transfer files	10.00	
Software	File F/X for Windows	Enhance File Management Utilities for Windows	12.50	
Software	FOXPRO Version 2.5 by XTree	Relational Database Management System for Windows	250.00	339.99
Software	JUST WRITE	Fast Easy Word Processor	30.00	
Software	LINKS 386 Pro	"State of the Art Golf Simulation" MS-DOS Version	40.00	49.00
Software	MENUWORKS SECURITY	Complete data protection	25.00	99.99
Software	NORTON ANTIMIRUS For Windows and DOS	Comprehensive Virus Defense Detects over 1000 viruses	35.00	
Software	NORTON BACKUP 1.2 For DOS	Backs up multiple drives; flexible and fast; award winner	30.00	
Software	ON TIMES For Windows	A calendar and list manager	30.00	99.99
Software	QUICKMENU III	Program Manager	5.00	25.00
Software	SYMANTEC GAME PACK	Fun for Windows: Jacks, Hangman Pick Up Sticks, Code Breaker, etc	15.00	
Software	SQZI PLUS For Lotus	Spreadsheet File Utility System; compress spreadsheet files by up to 95%.	15.00	
Software	TRADING POST by LaserTools	A PostScript printer manager (PCWorld Best Buy)	5.00	79.00
Software	VIRTUAL MONITORS	Desktop expansion for Windows	12.00	39.99

## CLASSIFIED ADS

### FOR SALE:

### DESKJET 550C - Color Printer

Hardly used. (We liked it but needed a post script printer.) Original packaging box and all manuals included. Works great!

Lists at \$750, Frys has it at \$699,

**\$595 or best offer**

Call Jennifer (415) 967-8612

**BARRY A. SMITH**  
SENIOR ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE  
415-926-7696

### SMITH BARNEY

SMITH BARNEY, HARRIS UPHAM & CO. INC.  
3000 SAND HILL ROAD  
MENLO PARK, CA 94025  
800-624-7248

# THE SPAUG RESOURCE CENTER

## OFFICERS

President	Paul Staley	[415] 941-5872
Vice President	Jan Altman	[408] 243-5955
Treasurer	Bev Altman	[415] 329-8252

## MANAGERS

Bulletin Board (SPARC) Sysop	TBA
PRinT SCreen Editor	Jennifer Wildman [408] 335-7892
Resource Center	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
Borland Products	Quinn Wildman [408] 335 7892

## 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

## Club Events in May

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 / 30	24 / 31	25	26	27	28	29

**April 28** Last Wednesday - **GENERAL MEETING**

**7:30pm** Building 7 at Varian, 3075 Hansen Way, Palo Alto  
See the adjacent map for directions

**TOPIC:** Intel and the Pentium Chip!

**May 4** First Tuesday - **COMMUNICATIONS SIG**

**7:30pm** The group meets at 3636 Hoover Street, Redwood City. Directions: Take Hwy 101 to Marsh Road, head toward Atherton. At the first light, just after exiting 101, make a 180 degree turn, go a short distance to a "T" with Hoover.

**May 5** First Wednesday - **PLANNING MEETING**

**7:30pm** At Beverly Altman's house in Menlo Park

**May 10** Second Tuesday - **WORD FOR WINDOWS SIG**

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

**T.B.A. QUICKEN SIG**

Floyd Kessler, [415] 493-7780

For the latest meeting information see the notice on the Bulletin Board System..

**May 18** Third Tuesday- **PARADOX SIG**

**7:30pm** This SIG has become a "joint" SIG with the Silicon Valley Users Group. The group meets at 10100 N. Tantau in Cupertino. Please contact Scott Jackson at (408)738-0424 for more information.

**May 19** Third Wednesday-

**7:30pm MAILING PARTY**

Call Jim at (415) 494-0631 for more information to verify the time and date. Show up at Wednesday's party and help mail the PrintScreen!

**May 26** Last Wednesday —  
**GENERAL MEETING**

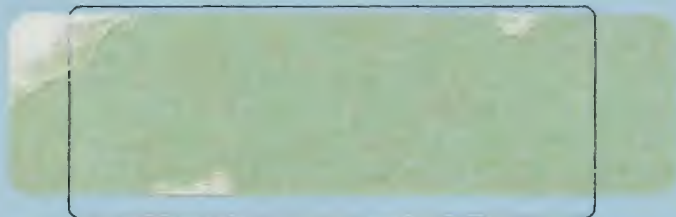
**7:30pm** Building 7 at Varian, 3075 Hansen Way, Palo Alto.

Classified ads of a non-commercial nature are free to all members. The rates for commercial ones are:

Business card	\$10
Quarter page	\$60
Half page	\$100
Full page	\$170

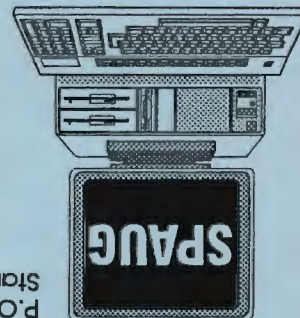
For further details contact:

Beverly Altman [415] 329-8252  
or Jennifer Wildman [408]335-7892



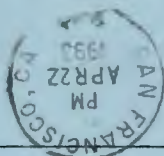
**CLUB INFORMATION**

Meetings	Cookie Cook (415) 282-0474
Membership	Beverly Altman (415) 329-8252 \$35 per year
Bulletin Board	(415) 321-4497 Jennifer Wildman (408) 335-7892
Newsletter	



P.O. Box 3738  
Stanford, CA 94309

The Stanford/Palo Alto  
PC User Group



## SPAUG MEETING INFORMATION

SPAUG meets the last  
Wednesday of each month at  
Varian in Palo Alto. The ad-  
dress is 3075 Hansen Way,  
Building 7.

