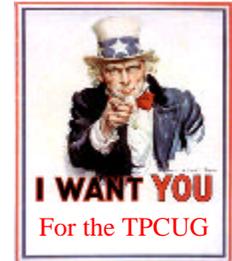




Bits of Blue



A Monthly Publication of the Tampa PC Users Group, Inc.

Vol. 10 No. 5 May 1997

Meeting

**Corel presenting
Corel Graphics 7 &
Word Perfect Suite 7**

**May 14, 1997
6:00 PM
Museum of Science
and Industry
4801 E Fowler Ave.**

Newsletter Comments

by William LaMartin, Editor, Tampa PC Users Group

Kinko's had no blue paper when it came time to print last month's newsletter, so since we were on a tight schedule, the newsletter went out covered in white—albeit a better grade of white paper than usual (at no extra cost). That inspired long time member Ed Buzza to post the following on the BBS. I can't match that, but my comments will appear on page 7.

(Comments.....Continued on page 7)

Bits of Blue No More

By Ed Buzza

*Harken whilst the bugles blow tatoon,
Oh claborous, oh frabjous day,
For there's not a bit of blue
In the Bits of Blue today!*

*With teary eye and palsied hand
Did I hunt that treasured azure band,
Nay, nay, say canst not be true
Nary a bit of blue in Bits of Blue?*

*For seven years and fourteen moons,
At half past of those yesternoons,
Golden words wrapped in blue I'd seek,
By the postal box I'd read - just a peek*

*The years are many, the years are long
When first I heard the siren song,
The golden words from the magic quill
Of Robin, Barbara, Marylee and Bill.*

*Precious words writ and writ for me alone,
More hallowed than if carved in stone,
Each month I'd wait for what was due
In blue wrapped paper, the Bits of Blue.*

*Gather round whilst heralds sound,
Ka-loo, ka-lay, oh grizzlizound,
With volume ten, number four,
Bits of Blue is blue no more*

Tanem, sur tanem

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**June 11 - Pilgram Software presenting Pilgram's ISO9000 software.
Visit us on the Web at <http://www.tbos2cla.com/tpcug/>.**

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However, for business concerning this newsletter, Bits of Blue, please contact the Editor, William LaMartin, at 821 S. Boulevard, Tampa, FL 33606-2904; 813-251-3817; lamartin@ix.netcom.com.

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Contributors are asked to submit articles as an ASCII, Microsoft Write, Microsoft Word, or Word Perfect file to the editor at 821 S. Boulevard, Tampa, Florida 33606-2904 or upload to the BBS (News section of FILES).

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The use of trademarked and copyrighted names herein is not intended to infringe upon the owner's rights but rather to identify the products for the enlightenment of our users.

Commercial advertisements will be accepted. For rate information please contact the Editor by one of the above listed methods.

All advertisements must be prepaid by check payable to TPCUG, in camera ready format (actual size, black ink on white paper), and be submitted on or before the 20th of the month preceding the month of publication. Commercial advertising is usually limited to 25% of the total space of an issue. The Editor reserves the right to hold ads if the total space for ads exceeds this limit or if they are not received on time.

Members may insert non-commercial ads at no charge with the following imitations: no more than 4 ads per member per year; no more than 40 words (240 bytes including spaces); must be camera ready copy or an ASCII file on diskette or uploaded to the BBS as a message to the Editor. Those wishing to place ads are to contact the Editor, William LaMartin, at (813) 251-3817 for space availability and for further information.



SECRETARY'S REPORT & MINUTES OF MEETING April 9, 1997

*Minutes and Comments by Merle Nicholson,
Secretary, Tampa PC Users Group*

The meeting was convened by Ford Bond in President Connie Kincaid and Vice President Mike Hodge's absence.

Announcements: The Geneology SIG is meeting at MOSI, combining with the MOSI group. It meets the second Monday of the month.

The evening program - PC Diagnostics - was presented by Robert Hurt of Data Depot. "Data Depot was founded in 1990 by Robert and Karen Hurt to develop and manufacture leading edge PC diagnostic test products, particularly hardware." (a quote from their "Press and Catalog Information") They produce four hardware devices MiniPost, PocketPost, PocketPost MCA, and PC PowerCheck., and a variety of software utilities and diagnostic programs.

Richard started by giving us a historical outline of the PC diagnostics industry in Clearwater, the products they made - and make. Then a very interesting dissertation on the anatomy of a PC's BIOS and the boot-up (POST) process. He showed off two products that diagnose problems with POST. These products are designed to accurately diagnose 60% of dead PCs. (Dead PC's happen 5% of the time.)

Other products - PC PowerCheck is a card that measures and displays the quality of the power supply voltages. Robert even drew electrical diagrams of a PC's power supply to illustrate the need for a diagnostic card.

Their main product, PC Clinic Pro, is a collection of utilities for professionals that tests all aspects of a computer. One version even has remote control software for remote diagnostics.

Robert is a very entertaining speaker. He kept our attention a full two hours and we would have enjoyed more if we had the time. He's offered to come back and speak again. It was a thoroughly informative and interesting program.

Robert very generously donated a variety - actually a box full of software and hardware, including a complete PC Clinic for the membership to check out. Many of the items donated went to the door prizes. The winners were - Larry Anders - Carmen Sandiego, Ken Boyd - Lotus, Wil Goble - a CD database and William LaMartin - PocketPost Jr. ♦

Windows 95 Peer-to-Peer Networking

by Merle Nicholson, Secretary,
Tampa PC Users Group

I really haven't any idea of how many of the homes in the US have more than one PC, but I'll bet it would be a surprisingly large number. My own house has one PC per adult - three when our son Matt is home from college summers and Christmas break. To print from my wife Valerie's notebook, we have a cable switch and a cable lying next to the PC desk so she can plug the cable into the printer port, flip the switch and print to the deskjet. Well, that works very well for the light printing she does; exactly one page per workday. For other things— heavier printing, tape backup and file (and product) sharing, you need more. So when Matt's here, the two Pentiums are networked. We're constantly exchanging files — especially program updates from the Internet.

Microsoft has made networking easy for you software-wise. The hardware is a little more complex.

You need a wire connection from PC to PC. Ours are simple internal ethernet cards, plugged into expansion slots in our PC's, and using RJ45 connectors and UTP (Unshielded Twisted Pair) cable between them. RJ45 connectors are just like telephone jacks, but larger, for six wires. You can also use the more fragile ethernet coaxial cable. Some ethernet cards support both coax and UTP. Be sure you read the box the card comes in to make sure what you're getting.

You can get very inexpensive cards as low as \$25 up to \$100 for an expensive PnP 3-Com card. They're available as ISA or PCI cards; as PCMCIA cards and even as a small device that plugs into your parallel port. For two PC's you need just a \$3 crossover cable, about six inches long. For more than two PC's, you need a "hub" instead. A hub is a small box, about the size of a large modem, with six or more ports to plug in all the PC's. Plug and Play (PnP) cards are the most desirable cards if your PC supports it. It simply makes life easier configuring the software and software support for the card.

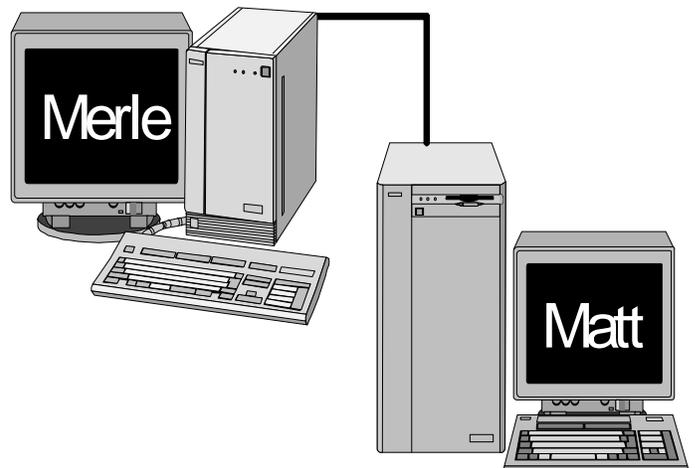
The cable needed to go the full distance between the PC's is fairly expensive. You can get this cable in various lengths from the superstores in the area that have the connectors already crimped on. You can have cables terminated by several custom cable companies in town, or you can buy a crimping tool yourself. It's \$30 or so, if you have a hankering for owning an obscure tool.

Now for software - this is the easiest part of the process. Windows 95 has all you need built right in. Incidentally, Windows 95 is network-able with Windows NT and also with Windows For Workgroups 3.11. Get the hardware installed first. Win 95 has the drivers for most cards built in, but if you've bought

something unusual, make sure the Windows 95 drivers are included with the card when you buy. Then add new hardware through the hardware wizard to make sure Win95 recognizes the card. OK - we're ready. In Win95, if you go to Start, Settings, Control Panel, Networks .. there it is ... the Printer and file sharing button. Press this and there are just two things to check. "I want to give others access to my files" and "I want to be able to allow others to print to my printers" Check the first for sure, and the second on any PC with a printer. While you're there, select the "identification" tab and give your PC a name and workgroup name. For our simple household, we use the same workgroup for all PC's. This all installs more software from the Win 95 CD-ROM.

OK .. now you have a use for that Network Neighborhood icon on the desktop! Open it up and you should see a computer symbol for each of the computers on your little network by name. Walk to the other PC, open Windows Explorer, right-click on, say, the CD-ROM in the directory tree. You'll see a new item in the selection list now - Sharing. Select that and select Share, and click Read-only, and don't give it a password. Go to your own PC, open Network Neighborhood, open the other PC and you'll see the CD-ROM on the other computer! Can you run Diablo from it? Sure! So share your tape backup - or go buy one - you should have one anyway. Now, you can't share the tape, but you CAN share drives. That is, if the other PC has shared the entire C drive then you can map to that drive from your own PC, and run your tape to back up that mapped network drive!

You - as a user - can choose what to share to the network. If you go to your "My Computer" you can right-click on it, select share and share the whole drive. Or you can choose to share just one or more directories in the drive by sharing from Windows Explorer. You can choose read-only or read-write with separate passwords (or no passwords) as you wish. Have fun! ♦





Software Review

ASAP WordPower

by Frederick O'Keefe,
Tampa PC Users Group

Up Front Summary:

Product - ASAP WordPower™, ver. 1.95

Publisher - Software Publishing Corporation (SPC)

Class - Presentation Software

PC requirements - WIN 3.1/95/NT; 486 recommended, 3.5MB HD space; 1MB free RAM; VGA 16 or 256 colors. Comes on 1 diskette, plus one optional spelling dictionary diskette. Works well on laptops.

Rating (0-10) - 9

Recommendation - Buy it, even if you don't "need" a presentation package!

Microsoft PowerPoint™ (PP) and other powerful presentation packages are as complicated to learn and use as their output is extensive. Most of us in small business or education don't have time to spend becoming knowledgeable enough to fully use those packages. Yet, we want, and sometimes need, an effective sales tool to lift a presentation above the humdrum.

Help is here -- ASAP WordPower™ (WP). From the folks who bring us the potent Harvard Graphics™ program, and now the PagePlus™ desktop publishing powerhouse.

Putting together an attractive, professional presentation in short order is satisfying, and, for a business person, cost effective. The program is so "intelligent" in its doing the grunt work that it is more fun than most computer games! Yes, WP is fun to play with. I spent more time repeatedly redesigning (tinkering) a "show" than it took to lay it all out. It's a great way to learn. Keywords applicable to WP are: easy, quick, extensive pre-formatted display, intelligent, automatic, artful, pleasing, effective, functional....

Few software programs have performed so well, and right out of the box. The first action to take when you open the box is watching the brief videotape. It shows a bit of what you can do. Then, browse the "Presenting Visually" booklet for good ideas about making interesting presentations. The recommendations are to the point, and right on the mark. If you aren't an artist or designer, WP will do the work for you. Where's the manual to labor over? None is included, and none is needed. The help file is more than enough. You'll rarely need it.

"What is intelligent formatting?" asks the box cover. Answer: Lay out your outline, then let WP format it all for you. Touch it

up, and you are done. (It takes some playing to shape everything to one's satisfaction, but playing is just what it is. Non-frustrating, too.) There are 22 layouts (bulleted list, table, organizational chart, etc.), 14 designs (styles, backgrounds), and 18 color schemes. If you don't like outlining, then start with the layouts, and "fill in." The layout of each page can be different, as needed. And with just a click or two of the mouse button.

Some capabilities are: drag and drop objects, with immediate "drag here to..." instructions; import tables and spreadsheet cells; text and associated background resizing to suit you; insert objects (logo, clipart, header/footer... to one or to all pages); a wealth of page-to-page transition effects. WP pages can be imported into other programs, too. There is too much to mention.

"I have PowerPoint. Why use WP?" Because WP is easier and faster for design work. You can swap entire presentations back and forth between PP and WP. And the run-time player lets you safely send out diskettes to prospects and clients with compelling presentations. You will "look great" through your "silent sales person." Heck - e-mail me a copy of your best WP work so I can enjoy it! Use fredrick@tech-center.com to reach me.

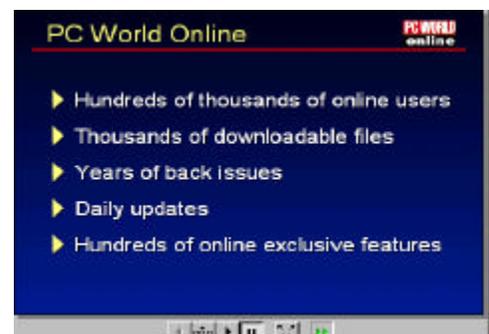
Is WP perfect? Nearly so, for its intended market. But I would have liked the ability to vary the color scheme and design scheme page by page; and I want to see word processor-like text drag and drop in the outline mode. That's my one, big suggestion to Software Publishing Corporation. Otherwise, folks, congratulations on an exceptional job.

SPC also published Active Office™, which is a super add on to MS Office 95/97. When I receive my copy, you'll read about it here.

Go to SPC's home page <http://www.spc.com/> for information and an online demonstration.

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To the right is an example of one slide from an Internet Web presentation by PC World created using SPC's ASAP WordPower and WebShow.



SOFTWARE AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW

1. **Magic Cap** - General Magic - Organize all your communications: email, fax, etc. - Windows 95 CD
2. **Tracer** - 7th Level - Launch into cyberspace with a deadly virus on your heels-Windows 95 CD.
3. **Work Safe Office for Windows** - Production Technology Engineering & Management Services - Ergonomic risk analysis for computer work stations - Windows 3.1 & 95
4. **On File** for Windows - Arranges your files into fun-to-use "notebooks "
5. **Family Fun Pack** for OS/2 Warp CD
6. **How Would You Survive?** - Grolier - Multimedia Adventure (ages 7-12) - Windows CD
7. **Jump Start Preschool** - Knowledge Adventure - getting a head start on education (ages 2-5) - Windows CD
8. **Space Adventure**- Knowledge Adventure - up to the moment exploration of outer space. (8-adult)
9. **Aviation Adventure** - Knowledge Adventure - complete world of flying (8-adult)
10. **SFPD Homicide: The Body in the Bay** - Grolier - Murder Mystery Game (ages 13+) - Windows CD

(Call 251-3817 for information on review software)

People with software reviews due--we need them!



Hyde Park Avenue, Tampa FL as pictured on a postcard post-marked in 1906. This postcard is one of approximately 15,000 images available from the Florida State Archives Photographic Collection on the Web at <http://www.dos.state.fl.us/fpc/>. I chose this particular card since I live only a few block from this location. Note the inscription of "I do not forget you" on the card written 91 years ago.

May's Interesting World Wide Web Locations

Tampa PC Users Group (that's us)	http://www.tbos2cla.com/tpcug/
University of Tampa	http://www.utampa.edu/utmain.htm
Hillsborough Community College	http://www.hcc.cc.fl.us/index.stm
Research It - your one stop reference desk	http://www.itools.com/research-it/
Cyndi's List of Genealogy Sites on the Internet	http://www.oz.net/~cyndihow/sites.htm
Maps On Us (A map, route & yellow pages service)	http://www.mapsonus.com/
Ticketmaster Online	http://www.ticketmaster.com/
Florida Report on Physician Discipline & Malpractice	http://www.state.fl.us/fdhc/hpcc/hpolicy/malpractice/medrpt.html
Tropical Hibiscus Home Page	http://www2.trop-hibiscus.com/trop-hibiscus/
NCSA Virus Technical Labs (the computer type)	http://www.ncsa.com/virus/
Central Europe Online	http://www.centraleurope.com/
ArabNet (online resource for the Arab world)	http://www.arab.net/
Butterfly Website	http://www.isit.com/butterfly/indexfr.htm
Open World City Guides	http://www.openworld.co.uk/cityguides/
Vietnam Pictures Archive	http://sunsite.unc.edu/vietnam/vnpic.html
HomeArts (Hearst publications)	http://www.homearts.com/
Microsoft Technical Support - Knowledge Base	http://www.microsoft.com/kb/
Clip Art Connection	http://www.ist.net/clipart/index.html

Most of these links will join the many already on the Links page at our Web site.

Software Review

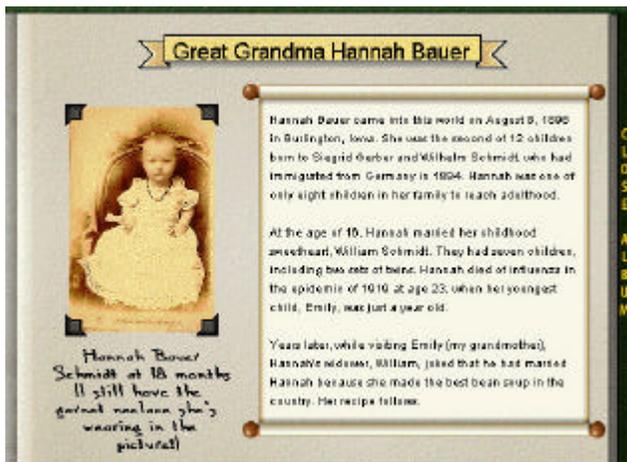
Editor's Note: *Software sometimes stays a long time waiting for a reviewer here at TPCUG. That was the case with Delrina's Echo Lake. By the time someone decided they would like to do a review, Delrina was absorbed by Symantec and Echo Lake was sold to Creative Wonders and renamed Family Album Creator. Normally I would not print a review of a program that no longer exists; however, Bruce, after looking at the demonstration version of Family Album Creator available on the Internet, has assured me that Family Album Creator is the same as Echo Lake. Therefore, since he thought so much of the program, I am going to break my rule and print the review.*

Echo Lake (Family Album Creator from Creative Wonders)

Delrina's ECHO LAKE attracted my attention because it was billed as a novice book writer's dream; at least that is how I saw it. This software guides one through the planning and layout process for a novel or "how to" book.

THE PROGRAM is a great program. I did not know that such a program existed so you can imagine my delight. When the program is opened, a room, called the CABIN appears. Visible icons include: picture on wall hiding a security safe, bookshelves for books you are writing, rolling index to create a new book, story plate for creating a new (chapter) story, drop and drag icon, trash can, planning format to lay out your book, and many other clickable icons.

I really got excited over this program. I have published pamphlets and manuals from long ago with the old mimeograph system cranking one page at a time; later, an electric motor was attached. In fact, my first teenage effort to self publish was with hectograph jelly in the biscuit pan. In those days there were no copy machines. I went through the "tin" plates that we "burned" and later the paper mats. I even owned an expensive off-set printer "burning" my "paper plates" on the



Xerox Copier. Reflection on the "good ole days" surely makes one realize that now is the "best of the ole days". Therefore, I thought that I had died and gone to an authors heaven when I obtained Echo Lake.

Why is (was) it called Echo Lake? Click on the steaming coffee cup with the upward curl of steam to open the cabin window for a ringside seat to view a lake with eagles and other birds flying, squirrels dancing on the window sill, ducks swimming across the lake, even a Nessie swims by, etc. Echo Lake wants the author to view the peaceful tranquillity of nature while contemplating the intellectual, philosophical inner being. The desk with the three drawers has accessories for click linking to functions. An outdoor garment hangs on a coat rack near the door; click on the coat to go outside; that is, exit the program. With all the easy links, one can click new book and begin writing. Later one may "plan" the book after the writing begins. Echo Lake provided the after the fact opportunity to plan the book because they know that one's uncontrollable enthusiasm prohibits planning ahead; we just jump right in. Remember, "If you do not have time to do it right now, when will you have time to do it over!" One may "play" around with Echo Lake while getting the feel.

One may choose even the style of book cover. Graphics, audio and video are said to be easy to add. My system does not permit me this luxury. Graphics can be manipulated, cropped or otherwise creatively adorned. For the autobiographers, this program inserts memory jogging notes to assist the remembering of those "Oh, I forgot all about that" afterthoughts. The "inspirator" is activated by clicking the red button on the light. Did you get the connection? A light bulb flashes an idea in your head; the programmers have a sense of humor. A cross cut of a tree trunk provides the "Tree Ring" (annual rings) at the end of the book. One uses this for an additional review of the book so that reorganization of the stories (chapters) can be accomplished. The "Tree Ring" should be used in planning before commencing writing. Echo Lake has too many features to include in this review. There are restrictions that I do not think I understand like the warning: "an Echo Lake book cannot be used for any commercial purpose." That I do not understand; if I write and print it, I expect to do whatever I want with the printed copy. Another is that "these books" can be distributed to "no more than 10 people". The legal department may have failed to communicate with the manual writers.

Echo Lake is one of the best and most exciting programs that I have. One of the bonus philosophies is that family researchers can get information from otherwise reluctant family members. When uncooperative family members at reunions

(Family.....Continued on page 10)

(Comments.....Continued from page 1)

This is the first time in three months my contributors have left me more than a column of space to make my comments.

Of course, the big news is that Corel Corporation will be demonstrating their software at the May meeting. This is one of the computer world's premier software vendors. They established their reputation in the graphics market with Corel Draw and its associated programs. Now they have done the computer community a favor by buying a much deflated Word Perfect and pumping new life into it; thus, reintroducing competition to the office suite market. There is nothing like competition to benefit the consumer (us).

Frederick O'Keefe's review of ASAP WordPower from SPC in this issue led me to the SPC Web site, where I saw a demonstration of how this presentation program, along with their Web Show program, can be used to create online presentations. We've had presentations to our group where the presenter used a presentation program such as Power Point or Harvard Graphics to give us what is basically a slick slide show. The above mentioned software now allows you to post such presentations on the Web. Then, individuals using Microsoft Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator can, after a one time download of either an Active X control or a Netscape plugin, view the presentation on their home computer--with sound if the author provided for such using the Real Audio technology.

This technology from SPC along with the Net Meeting idea from Microsoft is moving us closer to the possibility of a virtual meeting, where members could simply sit at their (well-endowed multimedia) computers and take part in the meetings from their homes. The presentation mentioned above is a one way affair. The Net Meeting, however, is interactive, where files, programs, talk, and video can be shared. Unfortunately, Net Meeting at this point only allows these features between two individuals--and has a tendency to crash. If more than two want to meet, the best they can do is a keyboard chat with the group. But, give Microsoft time, and they will probably have all of the above and more for many people in some future version of their browser.

If we had this technology now, and we all had advanced machines, Corel could stay all snug around their furnaces up there in chilly Canada, from where they could send us a virtual presentation. If that were the reality, then, of course, you would no longer be reading this newsletter in hard copy, but would have gone to our Web site and be viewing it on your computer—or, if preferred, in the color copy you just printed.

This leads me to ask, "Why do we have meetings anyway?" Well, we have them, I think, because people with a common interest in computers and a desire to get out of the house once in awhile find them a useful way of gaining information and

meeting others of like interests.

In the time before the Web, user groups and their associated BBSs with their computer related conferences were about the only way of getting computer information other than the computer magazines. You would come to the meeting, see a software product demonstrated, ask a member about the problem you were having with your computer, and possibly get an answer.

Now, you can see software demonstrations at COMPUSA or another mega store. And most of all you can go on the Internet and find not only the answer to your computer questions, you can find information about almost anything.

Let me give you several examples. Recently I needed a new battery for one of our IBM ThinkPads. I went to the IBM Web site, found the page for ThinkPad parts, clicked on my model number and was presented with a parts list with prices and a schematic of the insides of the laptop. I called the 800 number listed, gave them the appropriate part number and had the battery two days later.

Just yesterday, I noticed that if I double clicked on a PDF file, nothing would happen. This must have happened because of a recent installation of Acrobat 3.0. Being a knowledgeable Win95 user, I then did what was required to set up Acrobat as the program associated with the PDF extension. Now, a double click on the PDF file got Acrobat up and running, but also produced a system error message—and no file open. I was stumped. So it was off to do a search on the Usnet Newsgroups with DejaNews. Within 10 minutes I had my answer. I needed to put "%1" at the end of the path to the Acrobat executable file when I did the file type association mentioned above. I frequently more easily find the solution to software problems this way than by going to the software vendor's own site.

However, vendor sites are good for one thing: Software updates, patches, and drivers. Do you remember the days when you had to call the vendor and ask them to mail you a floppy with the appropriate driver on it, or, more recently, search for it at your long distance expense on their BBS site. Now, not only can I get the updated software mentioned, I can get entire programs, sometimes limited time trial versions and sometimes complete programs free of both cost and restraints on their use. I must have downloaded at least six such free and very useful programs from Microsoft and various driver updates to my Hewlett Packard printers and scanner.

So, in this day of the Internet, what can a user group do for you? Send me your thoughts. We need to make our group even more relevant. ♦

Software Review

by *Don Patzsch, Tampa PC Users Group*

I received four CD Roms from IBM that are targeted at computer resellers. Each disk covers a separate topic.

The quality of sound on the IBM disks is excellent. The graphics are FULL SCREEN, and the graphics are top notch.

The first of the four disks is the Marketing Disk. There is over one hour of multimedia information on each of these disks. The disks are intended for resellers to use. There are sections that can be used as is, to set up a computer on the sales floor and place the movie on it to allow continuous running advertisements, describing OS2 WARP Version 4.

This marketing disk is set up with presentations, product literature, and Camera Ready art. The presentations allow the salespeople to put these shows on their computers as demos. The product literature gives the description of OS2 and what hardware you need to run it. A text file tells you how to view and how to copy any section on the disk. Many of the files are .pdf (acrobat) files, full color and excellent graphics.

The second of the four disks is the Interactive Demo of OS2 WARP version 4. This disk contains the demo of the operating system in its entirety. It is very long and it is complete. It shows you how to set up the voice recognition and all the other features of OS2. More on the details later.

The third disk is the World Tour. You are presented with a map, and with various objects on the map, each of which is in a different country. Click on any country and you will be listening to and watching Chip Ramsey, a rock singer. Chip and Roxanne Rolls will give you a story of how OS2 works. A globe rotates in the center of the screen on most of these presentations and is used in a very unique way to add interest to an otherwise very dry story, with much repetition as to how OS2 works and what it will do for you.

The fourth disk is marked Back Stage Pass. It starts by telling you this disk is for resellers ONLY. Once again you have Chip Ramsey and Roxanne Rolls giving you the story of OS2 WARP version 4.

So, using only the disks to find out— What is this OS2 WARP Version 4?

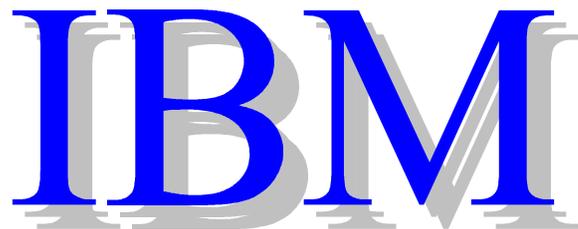
- Each disk shows you how to use a microphone and not your mouse or keyboard to do whatever you want to do. Dictate a letter, change the URL that you are going to see next, and calling up any program on your computer. The voice system is in six languages. That is, any of six languages can be used and there is no "training" needed to

start out and do dictation or any of the other things you can do with just your voice.

- Plug and Play is supported by OS2. IBM began using plug and play in 1986 with the PS2 computers. I have one I bought in 1987, and it works fine.
- Multitasking. OS2 warp supports multitasking and does it differently from that in windows.
- OS2 is the first operating system to support Java, Sun's new object oriented language.
- IBM can use this program to run your computer remotely as a service tool. The technician can check your program and see what you have been doing in order to correct a problem.
- Networking. OS2 supports networking and also infra red so that you can update your notebook without wires.
- Power management, pcmcia support, and a Java development kit, are all included in OS2 WARP version 4.
- Internet support is excellent.
- A bonus pack is included.
- An Internet Browser is included.

All these features are completely described and demonstrated in the four disks. Much repetition is to be expected because this is a series of helpful materials intended for resellers to use to make up short demos. In full screen you watch a person dictate a letter by bringing up the program with speech and then writing the letter with only the microphone and his voice. He also shows you how to change to a different URL or, for that matter, get on the Internet by simply voicing his commands.

I am going to stop here, and I would like to tell you that this is the most unusual review I have ever done. It took an awful lot of time to listen to and watch all these demos and try to make a sensible report from that— there is much repetition. The graphics and the sound are terrific, and anyone who wants to use the disks are welcome to have them for a time. I have a copy of OS2 WARP Version 4, and use it. I did not use that copy as material for this review, as I am writing about the four disks mentioned above, and not the actual use of the operating system in practice. Microsoft gave me a copy of their competing system, and so I can easily compare the networking and security and stability of both systems and also compare them both against Linux or any other operating system. ♦



Recommended Shareware/Freeware

by Larry Anders, Librarian, Tampa PC Users Group

Well, I didn't get any complaints from my column last month so I thought I'd try to do it on a regular basis. I visited some of my favorite Shareware hangouts this past month and came up with a few more interesting tidbits that I thought you'd like to know about.

If you're reading this from the printed newsletter, type in the link address in your **URL** address area exactly as you see it with NO spaces. If you have downloaded the **.pdf** file and are using Adobe Acrobat Reader to view the newsletter just highlight the link address and copy it into your **URL** address area. If you are using Word 97 you can copy the link address from within Acrobat and paste it into Word 97 and the link will become **hot**. (Just click on the link and you'll be taken there automatically.) I double checked all these links, and they worked at the time I check them out. But the Internet is so dynamic, it changes on a daily basis. In case you go to one of these links and you get a message that says it can't find the file or link you can usually find an area at the bottom of the page that will let you search for the file. Just type in the name of the file as listed and you should be transported to the download area for that file. (If you should have any trouble – call me. My number is listed in the front of the newsletter.)

<http://www.download.com/PC/Result/TitleDetail/0,4,0-24900,00.html>

Personal Screensaver

Personal Screensaver is a customizable screen saver that lets you personalize your PC's napping time with your own photos and sounds. Your idling computer will come alive with sights and sounds of your own selection. The endless combinations of images, sounds, titles, and reminders let you create a showcase of your family pictures and memories. The Snap2it feature is a built-in event reminder which will pop-up with images, sounds, and captions on the day of your choice.

Requirements: Windows 3.x or later. Free

<http://www.download.com/PC/Result/TitleDetail/0,4,0-25861,00.html>

WebWhacker

Personalized Internet content delivery is the key feature that distinguishes WebWhacker as an effective offline browsing

product. By preselecting the Web sites that you want to monitor, you can set a schedule for Web pages, text, graphics, and HTML links to be delivered to your desktop computer automatically and unattended. The evaluation software expires after adding and/or grabbing 20 URLs to the Whack list. Each URL can be set to "whack" a maximum of two levels of the Web site. All data collected during evaluation can be used with the permanent (purchased) copy of WebWhacker. WebWhacker 3.0's enhanced speed, site storage on removable media, and automatic updating heighten the performance, flexibility, and portability of offline browsing.

Requirements: Windows 95
Shareware – Fully functional demo

<http://www.download.com/PC/Result/TitleDetail/0,4,0-27022,00.html>

Free Agent (32-bit)

Free Agent is a robust newsgroup reader that can be configured in many ways. It provides multipane viewing, and news can be read online or offline. There is flexible article purging, database compacting, carbon copying for email and article posting, editing of all fields, and canceling of posts.

Requirements: Windows 95 Free

<http://www.download.com/PC/Result/TitleDetail/0,4,0-21550,00.html>

VoicePad

Kurzweil's VoicePad can be used to dictate memos, letters, reports and other documents. Users can also format text, navigate through VoicePad menus and dialogs, change its settings, and preview and print documents using intuitive voice commands. VoicePad combines continuous digit recognition with its dictation capabilities so you can always use the keyboard to quickly enter telephone numbers, street addresses, zip codes, dollar amounts, social security numbers, and other numerical data into documents.

Requirements: 5 MB RAM, Windows 3.x/95, microphone, 16-bit sound card, high-quality PC speakers
Shareware – Fully functional demo

<http://www6.zdnet.com/cgi-bin/texis/swlib/hotfiles/info.html?fcode=000DWO>

Dipstick

(Shareware.....Continued on page 12)

Special Interest Groups

Microsoft Access SIG — **Canceled** (temporarily we hope)

Lotus Notes SIG

This SIG meets every Thursday at Reflectone at 8:30. It is a professional SIG focusing on Lotus Notes certification. Directions: Proceed west on Waters from N. Dale Mabry across the railroad tracks (which is about 1 and 1/2 miles), take second left on Savarese (United Technologies bldg. is just beyond it). Proceed on Savarese until you reach the Reflectone bldg. Take the North door. If you need to ask directions, there is a security guard at the location. *Contact Mike Hodges at hodges@reflectone.com.*

(Family.....Continued from page 6)

are presented with the Echo Lake Family Album (your book), they do not want to be left out. What a hit this would be at a family reunion! Creative Wonders told me that the subsequent program, called "Family Album Creator", is very, very much better.

The new program is available from Creative Wonders, P. O. Box 51790, Livonia, Michigan 48151. Their support can be reached by email at cwsupport@cwonders.com. Their website is www.cwonders.com. CompUSA carries the program for \$39.95—with a \$10 mail-in rebate sticker. I asked for a review copy of their new Family Album Creator to review. I did not get a copy. I have not test driven Family Album Creator, but I did have an opportunity to test drive the "mini-version". . I went to the web site and downloaded the new "mini-version" of Family Album Creator. The "mini-version" permits one to try the program for "5 hours", then, one may decide to purchase it or the program will do something--self destruct, I guess!

At "<http://www.cwonders.com>" I was afforded the opportunity to view several programs that Creative Wonders sells.. However, my interest was in Family Album Creator. Several components of the program are available for trial. I downloaded the mini-version of Family Album Creator (3.7 MB), Sample Album--Julia's School Days (3.7 MB), Wing10.zip, Help File (288K), Interaction Tour (2.3 MB), and Personal Template (3.12MB). I opened the "new Echo Lake" now called Family Album Creator. Everything that I saw was exactly the same as Echo Lake. Any change from Echo Lake would have to be in the components not available for download.

The Family Album Creator Help File that I downloaded is designed to answer "all" questions about the product. The Help File installs directly into the Mini-Version. The Interac-

Communications SIG

This SIG meets the first Monday of the month at 6 PM at the Reflectone Building. You must sign up to get on the list and to get by security. See Microsoft Access SIG for directions to Reflectone. *Contact Charles Howe: at 968-1207 or HOWE@INTNET.NET*

Genealogy SIG

This SIG meets the second Monday of the month at 7:00 PM at the Museum of Science and Industry. *Contact Jenny Lind Olin at 960-5723 or Ford Bond at 987-6309 .*

tive Tour permits one to "point and click along the way". The voice-over and video helps the learning process. The Christmas Album Template and Birthday Album Template will install into Family Album Creator. The Personal Album Template helps in creating a multimedia album. I have seen enough of the new program, Family Album Creator, that I may acquire the upgrade. I may enjoy it even more than Echo Lake.

Now, I will lean back and click the steaming coffee cup. Maybe something will rub off on me. The philosophical, intellectual contemplation while viewing nature on the lake is worth the cost. Pardon me while I reheat my real cup of coffee in the microwave and click the steaming coffee cup on the screen. I want to watch the birds, squirrels, ducks and Nessie!



Member Ad

Before you buy a 486 computer part, call Merle! I have a small collection of used surplus I/O cards and VL bus video cards and a few odd 486 processors. Not quite free, but I'll install for the labor, or whatever.

Merle Nicholson 879-3602.

Friends of the User Group

We acknowledge the following firms for their support

Museum of Science and Industry
 BCD (Brainchild Computer Distributions, Inc.)
 MerSoft
 Reflectone

And these national software vendors for their demonstrations and contributions of evaluation software to our group

Access Software	Micrografx
Adobe Systems, Inc.	Microsoft
Borland	Quarterdeck
Broderbund	Regnis
Corel Systems	Symantec
Grolier	Traveling Software
Knowledge Adventure	Xerox

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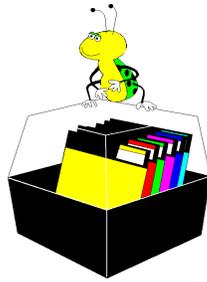
MEMBERS HELP-LINE

The following phone list is provided for our Tampa PC Users Group members in an effort to establish local support for those frustrating times which we have all encountered while using our PC's. Please note that these are members that have volunteered to help you; treat them in a courteous manner. Be sure to ask if it is convenient for them to help you now, or if you should call another time. It would also be helpful to have your documentation and have it handy when you call. (Don't expect help if your software is an illegal copy or you do not have documentation!) TPCUG is not responsible for the information or advice provided by volunteers. Volunteers may or may not be experts in the subject matter. You are on your own with any advice received. Be aware also that some of these volunteers may be consultants in their area of expertise. If you are interested in volunteering to answer members' questions, either leave a message on the BBS or fill in the forms provided for this purpose at the meetings.

Name:	Phone No:	Day:	Time:	For help on:
Ed Buzza	685-5898	Mon-Sun	10am-9pm	WordPerfect 5.1 and 6 for DOS
Jim Clark	986-3888	Mon-Sun	10am-9pm	Express Publisher for Windows, Word for Windows
Charles Howe	968-1207	Mon-Fri	9am-5pm	Modems, BBS & Internet
Tom Cone	949-3716	Mon-Sun	7pm-9pm	Alpha 4 & Compuserve
Larry Anders	989-9119	Mon-Sun	6pm-9pm	Lotus 123 for Windows
Connie Kincaid	661-8185	Eve.+ Weekends	Leave message	MS Professional Office Suite
Merle Nicholson	879-3602	Mon-Fri	6:00pm-10:00pm	Hardware Memory Management, DOS, Windows 3.1 & 95, Visual Basic, Delphi
John Meroth	831-7878	Mon-Sun	Anytime except 6-8pm	OS/2, Database (general), Clarion, DTP (limited)
William LaMartin	251-3817	Mon-Fri	10am-9pm	Win 95, MS Office Suite, Internet

Tampa PC Users Group, Inc.

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- Member: Your membership is up for renewal
- Vendor: Your product was reviewed on page ____

(Shareware.....Continued from page 9)

Dipstick, a free utility, answers the question: "Which site should I download the file from?" When presented with multiple Internet site locations to receive files from, you'll want to use the fastest connection. Drag the URL links onto Dipstick, and the program will test the speed of multiple connections, by pinging them, and show the fastest link. You can adjust the number and size of pings, plus time-out parameters. Dipstick returns the host IP address, minimum average and maximum round-trip time, as well as packet-loss percentage.

Requirements Windows 95 Free. ♦

