



Bits of Blue



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

Vol. 10 No. 9 September 1997

Meeting

**Internet
Advertising Computer**
September 10, 1997
6:00 PM
Museum of Science
and Industry
4801 E Fowler Ave.

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While doing the final proofreading of this newsletter, I was greatly saddened to learn of the death of John Meroth, a member of our group and the provider of our Internet site. John died of a heart attack on August 29.

John's generous contribution of the space on his Internet server for our web site made a valuable contribution to our group's visibility. Since John was the sole person responsible for the maintenance of his Internet service, our group needed to find a new location. Larry Anders has donated space for a temporary site. Other members are looking into other possible hosting sites. The new location is <http://www.canx.com/tpcug/>.

Finally, due to the change in our Internet site, some of my comments below may no longer apply.

Automatically updating Web pages

by William LaMartin, Editor, Tampa PC Users Group

M. Bryce & Associates will demonstrate the **Internet Advertising Computer (IAC)** at the September meeting. As they describe it, the IAC is a complete turnkey solution for small and medium sized businesses that wish to promote their products through the World Wide Web. It is primarily aimed at companies who are not Internet savvy yet want to capitalize on this exciting new advertising

(Comments.....Continued on page 4)

The new TPCUG Internet address is <http://www.canx.com/tpcug/>. At present this is a temporary address; however, it may become permanent. In any case, there will be a link there to any later location.

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Bits of Blue is published by the Tampa PC Users Group, Inc., a State of Florida registered non-profit corporation, to provide educational information about personal computer systems to its members. Our mailing address is P. O. Box 3492, Tampa, FL 33601-3492.

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.

Technical information found in this publication is not necessarily compatible with your hardware and software; plus other errors or misprints could occur from time to time. Therefore, the use of programs, commands, functions or anything of a technical nature appearing in this publication will be at your own risk.

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).

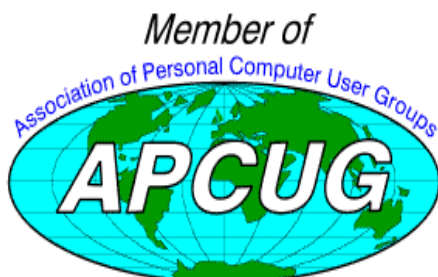
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The use of trademarked and copyrighted names herein is not intended to infringe upon the owner's rights but rather to identify the products for the enlightenment of our users.

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, be 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 limitations: 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 August 13, 1997

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

President Connie Kincaid brought the meeting to order, did introductions and announcements; then introduced Dick Kellerman from *PowerQuest*, who gave us an excellent tutorial on hard drive organization and also the use of Partition Magic, their premier product. The meeting concluded with the door prize drawing. If you weren't there; you missed a very valuable, educational meeting!

Connie opened the meeting at 6:30 sharp after a half-hour "networking" period in the computer lab at MOSI. After officer introductions, Connie asked about visitors and discovered we had five this month. Two heard about us through our web site (way to go! webmaster William LaMartin), two from flyers at Barnes and Noble (and a Way to Go! To Bruce Register too!) and one as a guest of a member. (Sorry, I didn't get the member's name, but a GoodOnYa, whoever you are!)

Connie announced a new bulletin board for exchanging information, job posting and items for sale. This new BBS is a ... board ... where we pin things on, and it will be available every meeting. Thanks to helpful member Ken Boyd and for the direction signs too. Nice job, Ken!

In another announcement we will take commercial advertisements in the monthly newsletter at new inexpensive rates.

Dick Kellerman, of PowerQuest, is a former President of the Tampa Bay Computer Society and now does presentations in Florida. As you will see, he is a wealth of knowledge on this subject and knows his excellent product very well.

I have to say that I'm an owner of Partition Magic version 2, and have used it very successfully several times. I was looking forward to seeing what the latest version 3 does, and deciding if I should upgrade. I should, and I did.

To summarize the usefulness of this product, it is a tool that does a great many things for your hard drive; Reclaim wasted space on the drive through non-destructive partitioning; Includes Boot Manager to run multiple operating systems; and organize or reorganize or move your data. (BUT ... if you are comfortable with DOS or Windows Defrag and Scandisk, and don't own a large drive and don't intend to at least for a while ... you don't need this product.)

The program's main feature is managing multiple partitions

(Minutes.....Continued on page 3)

WebTurbo

by Larry Anders, Librarian,
Tampa PC Users Group

If you're like me, there's never enough time left in the day to "play" on my computer. I use my computer everyday in my work, but I still get enjoyment playing with it whenever possible. Obviously, one of the most popular things nowadays is the Internet, because of the vast amounts of FREE information there just for the taking. But the problem is that there is too much information and it's really difficult to sort through it all. Well, now there's a FREE utility out there to help you wade through all this information. It's called **WebTurbo**, and it's available for the downloading.

What is it? WebTurbo allows you to query six of the most popular search engines at once using "smart queries" to quickly bring back more relevant results than if you used each search engine directly. WebTurbo identifies results delivered by each search engine and removes duplicates from the list. You can click on an individual search result, enter a URL (Web site address), or select a bookmark, and WebTurbo uses its hypersketch outline technology, and it will rapidly deliver previews of the contents of the selected Web page. These previews are presented in an intuitive outline format and are not just hyperlink lists or the first few characters of the page like most other search utilities I've used, but meaningful summaries of the page.

WebTurbo allows you to quickly preview your findings, letting you see the contents and links of a page in outline format in a fraction of the time it takes to load the entire page. When you find what you want, double-click and the full page appears. It has a side by side preview frame and page view frame that lets you view your search results and previews at the same time you review your Web pages. Double-clicking on an item in the preview frame loads the underlying Web page in the page view frame. The preview frame is always visible as you view selected pages, so you don't lose your search results and previews, or forget which pages you've already seen. You can submit searches on related topics simultaneously. For example, a query about two sub-topics such as "money" and "more money" yields results for both, organized by sub-topic. (Bill Gates' name would probably come up several times in a search like that.) Your search results and previews are organized into topic folders with each folder containing search results and previews on the specific areas of interest to you. You can move between topic folders to quickly compare information between them. You can save the topic folders (with their search results and previews) and retrieve them later for further browsing.

System Requirements: Intel-based PC or 100% compatible, Windows 95 or Windows NT 4.0, Netscape Navigator 3.x or



higher, or Microsoft Internet Explorer 3.x or higher; Disk Space: 4MB; Memory: 8M of RAM; Screen Resolution: At least 800 x 600 screen resolution recommended.

This software comes with a tutorial to get you up and running real quick. You really can't beat the cost!

<http://www.webturbo.com> ◆

(Minutes.....Continued from page 2)

on your drive. It will divide your drive to reduce your cluster size and thereby return up to 30% of your disk space back to you. It will readjust the partition sizes afterwards if needed, all non-destructively. It now handles Windows NT's NTFS, O/S2's HPFS and also the Windows 95 FAT32 format. It even will convert partitions from one format to another.

Dick described the structure of a hard drive better than anyone I've seen. He had slides that illustrated the terminology and structure; a drive can have up to four primary partitions, and only one can be active at a time, the others are hidden and are used for multiple operating systems. (I didn't know that!) You can then define one extended partition, and then define as many logical partitions inside the extended partition as you have drive letters available. Very simple.

Something else new is the ability to move software applications from one partition to another! That's a real accomplishment, and a very valuable one at that.

Dick demo'd the product on his own hard drive and showed us the good user interface, designed to do all this with an easily understood graphical interface. He then talked briefly about another product: DriveCopy. DriveCopy is used to ... guess what ... copy hard drives. It does that in a flawless manner so that you can then switch hard drives in your system and make the new one a primary drive, a fairly common need that just wasn't previously possible.

Dick then concluded and offered a special price on both products. He brought a box full of them and did some very brisk sales. Thanks to Dick Kellerman!

After the break, we held the door prize drawing. Bruce Regis-
(Minutes.....Continued on page 12)

Grabber

by Larry Anders, Librarian,
Tampa PC Users Group

Along with my review of WebTurbo, on page 3 in this newsletter, this is another review of a software package designed to make your sorting through vast amounts of data on the Internet much easier and faster. Another area of the Internet that is loaded with information is the USENET (the collection of newsgroups). One of the main problems with USENET is the proliferation of "spam". Spam is generally an article that does not belong in that group. It is anything from chain letters, to ads, to pornography and anything else unrelated and unsolicited. Well.... guess what? GRABBER has a way to handle that unwanted spam, but that's later.

What is GRABBER? Grabber is a tool to allow a user to easily collect attachments to USENET news articles without having to use a newsreader. Sounds, pictures, movies can be automatically *decoded* and stored without much effort. I have always had trouble decoding files. I installed this program, read the tutorial and was up and running it in less than five minutes. And, believe me, the USENET has never been one of my specialties.

The first time you run the program it asks you for your mail server name, which you get from your preferences section of your browser, and for your user name and password, if required for your server. Once the setup is complete, it then downloads the newsgroup headers, and, with a dual window setup of Newsgroup and Group, you can choose to download the entire group or just one article at a time. There is a different icon associated with different types of articles, i.e. attachments or text, complete multi-part or incomplete multi part. Just read through the list and click on the ones you want to receive. If it is a rather long list, just let it work in the background while you work away on something else.

As I mentioned previously, the biggest problem with the USENET is the spam. This reduces the enjoyment of USENET if you have to download 100 files to find 5 of what you want. GRABBER tries to address this by attempting to help you avoid the other 95 (and hence save connection time, which will make your fellow user happier if he/she can download his/her articles faster because you're not tying up the bandwidth, and so on).

The simplest way to avoid spam is once you find a piece you're not interested in, do not collect any articles from that person again. Simply clicking on the *Kill Person* button will add the author of the selected article to the exclude list. No articles will be collected from this author again. This is also good if the person posts articles or attachments that are not of interest to you. Sometimes, though, the better spammers post under a different name all the time. But they usually post from the same originating domain. GRABBER collects the origin of the mail (and this

GRABBER

Grab USENET news attachments the easy way.

can't be faked by the sender) and puts it in the article list. Simply clicking the *Kill Site* button will exclude any articles from the selected articles origin. *But watch out for public ISP's as many people use them and they could also be "killed"*.

GRABBER also logs details of each file or article downloaded. The user can then use the *Browse button* to show the Browse window. The browse window can be used to hunt down the senders and origins of already downloaded files or articles. The Kill Person or Kill Site button can then be pressed to avoid more spam from them.

GRABBER isn't free...but almost. This is Shareware at its finest and the registration fee is only \$15. I don't think you could find an equal off the shelf for that price. The downloaded copy is complete but limited to 30 uses. And that is more than enough for you to decide that this is an indispensable tool. The primary requirement is access to a newsgroup. This software comes to us all the way from Australia but you'd never know it when you're online. Ain't the Internet GREAT!

For more information on Grabber, go to:
<http://www.trontech.com.au/grabber> and **enjoy!** ♦

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

medium. The IAC offers a simple and cost-effective approach for advertising to a substantial marketplace. It consists of the computer, software, digital camera and an Internet site.

If the small businessman can use the IAC along with its digital camera and software to update the content and photos on his Web page automatically, why can't the TPCUG do something similar at ours? Are we computer experts, or not? Anyway, here is the plan as I conceived it.

Several members have voiced a desire for a TPCUG discussion group at our Internet site, which would be similar to the Main conference on our BBS where members read and leave messages. To those familiar with the Internet, it sounds a lot like a Usenet newsgroup, doesn't it. But to have a newsgroup someone would have to go through whatever procedure is required to get the OK for such a thing and then set it up. Thus, I don't envision that happening anytime soon. I often wonder, though,

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

SOFTWARE AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW

1. **American Greetings CreateaCard Gold** - Micrografx - Create greeting cards, certificates, etc. - Win 3.1/95 CD
2. **G-NOME** - 7th Level - Pilot more than 20 different mechanized vehicles in war action- Win95, Pentium 90, 16 MB RAM & 4X CD required (13+)
3. **HELI COPS** - 7th Level - Helicopter war game simulation - Win95, Pentium 100, 8MB RAM, 4X CD
4. **Magic Cap** - General Magic - Organize all your communications: email, fax, etc. - Windows 95 CD
5. **Work Safe Office for Windows** - Production Technology Engineering & Management Services - Ergonomic risk analysis for computer work stations - Windows 3.1 & 95
6. **On File** for Windows - Arranges your files into fun-to-use "notebooks "
7. **How Would You Survive?** - Grolier - Multimedia Adventure (ages 7-12) - Windows CD
8. **Jump Start Preschool** - Knowledge Adventure - getting a head start on education (ages 2-5) - Windows CD
9. **Space Adventure**- Knowledge Adventure - up to the moment exploration of outer space (8-adult)
10. **Aviation Adventure** - Knowledge Adventure - complete

world of flying (8-adult)

(Call 251-3817 for information on review software)


People with software reviews due--we need them!



Internet picture of the month

This photo is from the London Times Web site at <http://www.the-times.co.uk/>. The photo is of the coffin of Diana, Princess of Wales, arriving in England August 31, 1997.

September's Interesting World Wide Web Locations

Tampa PC Users Group (that's us)	http://www.canx.com/tpcug/	
AutoWeb Interactive	http://www.autoweb.com/	
Beyond Computing (Online magazine & resources)	http://www.beyondcomputingmag.com/	
Comedy Central Online	http://www.comedycentral.com/	
Creative (Home of Sound Blaster)	http://www.creaf.com/zonemenu.html	
CyberHomes(Real Estate)	http://www.cyberhomes.com/	
Epicurious (Food and Travel)	http://www.epicurious.com/	
Get Dressed Interactive (Interesting JAVA App.)	http://www.gap.com/gap/gapstyle/summergirl.html	
KGON 92.3 Portland - Classic Rock	http://www.audionet.com/radio/stations/station.asp?station_id=25	
Law Net	http://www.law.net/	
National Fraud Information Center	http://www.fraud.com/	
Net Grocer (Online grocery store)	http://www.netgrocer.com	
Photography through a microscope	http://www.pbrc.hawaii.edu/~kunkel/	
Restaurant Scene	http://www.restaurantscene.com/	
Tom's Hardware Guide	http://www.sysdoc.pair.com/	
TV Guide	http://www.tvguide.com/	

Most of these links will join the many already on the Links page at our Web site, where you need only click on the name.

Hardware Review

Corex's CardScan 300 Plus

by Eric "The Viking" Hirtriter, Houston Area League of PC Users

Editors Note: The author contacted me after seeing the newsletters at our Internet site and asked if we accepted articles from members of other user groups. I said we did if we had room after using our own member's material. Well, this month we have room and are happy to have a guest writer.



sions and country addresses, other than the United States addresses, into their respective fields in Goldmine version 3.2. Corex is currently working on a solution. However, I very easily changed them manually and then transferred them. It also has the ability to transfer to over 25 different contact management programs and/or versions.

CardScan 300 Plus' additional features include: its own backup, drag and drop text, supports vCard and Twain standards, dialing capabilities with TAPI, smart zoom, password

Spend too much time after networking typing information from business cards into your contact manager program (e.g., Goldmine 3.2)? Want to save a lot of time? I ran across this device with software that can reduce data entry by over half. This should increase a businessperson's, small or large, productivity.

A business card scanner and software combination should be: small, able to scan any business card, run as a Twain-compliant device, use a parallel port for the major compatibility, have a pass-through connector for the printer, and be extremely accurate in scanning in text to reduce manual typing.

The software should be able to do the following: rotate the card automatically to identify text, run an OCR program that will accurately identify the text and fields printed on the card in different fonts, save images to a database, save/export/import/transfer contacts to and from many different Contact Management programs, manually modify the text prior to transfer/export to a Contact Management program, export as comma-delimited ASCII format, zoom in on the business card images to verify text, scan many cards at once before running the OCR, customize database fields for entry, and provide a word/name search throughout the database.

Corex's CardScan 300 Plus: It can do ALL the items above and MORE! I connected the CardScan 300 to the parallel port on the computer and loaded the CardScan software. It was very easy! I then called up Goldmine for Windows 95, a great contact management program which I use, to be in the background. I inserted a business card into the scanner and it automatically started to scan. The image was saved automatically and asked if I wanted to do another before the OCR was run. The OCR feature records the characters in digital form into an electronic simulation of a good old desktop Rolodex, sorting the data by name, title, address, phone and fax numbers, even e-mail address. After checking the text for accuracy, which it was most of the time, I transferred it to Goldmine with only two problems: it didn't put the phone exten-

sions and country addresses, other than the United States addresses, into their respective fields in Goldmine version 3.2. Corex is currently working on a solution. However, I very easily changed them manually and then transferred them. It also has the ability to transfer to over 25 different contact management programs and/or versions.

CardScan 300 Plus' additional features include: its own backup, drag and drop text, supports vCard and Twain standards, dialing capabilities with TAPI, smart zoom, password protection for each contact file and the ability to share contact files over a network, e-mail capabilities, ability to browse Web sites, synchronization of files to the latest update, and the software can be used by other scanners.

The ONLY other area to worry about is the ability to scan very specific types of cards. CardScan only has a problem with text printed on very dark or speckled paper, very small text or light printing, text printed in script or stylized typefaces, text embedded in logos or graphics, text printed diagonally, and text printed both vertically and horizontally on the same card. None of the other products can do this to date. This only affects ~15% or less of all cards.

Special Features:

- CardScan 300 Plus is a 32-bit application designed to run on Windows 95
- It takes advantage of advanced features in Windows 95 such as long file names, tabbed dialog boxes and OLE 2.0.
- CardScan requires a Windows compatible network that supports file and printer sharing,
- CardScan for Windows 3.1 requires a Hayes-compatible modem. CardScan for Windows 95 and Windows NT 4.0 requires a Telephony API (TAPI) compatible modem. (Most Hayes-compatible modems are also TAPI-compatible)

System requirements:

- Intel-compatible PC with a 486 or Pentium processor,
- Microsoft Windows 3.1, Windows 95, and Windows NT version 4.0,
- 8 MB of memory, 16 MB is recommended,
- 12 MB of free space on a local hard drive,
- When using Windows 3.1 as your operating system and having exactly 8MB of RAM in your computer, CardScan also requires a permanent swap file of at least 6MB.

(CardScan.....Continued on page 7)

(CardScan.....Continued from page 6)

The CardScan 300 Plus is very accurate! It even associates images of the cards with the computer records, giving you a fallback when the scanning process fails. CardScan 300 Plus is very good but needs a little more work on the card reading capabilities to make it GREAT! I have been told a new release to improve this will be available in August/September 1997!

To purchase this terrific device with software, call Corex at 1-800-942-6739 and mention "HAL50", to receive a HAL-PC discount, and you will only pay \$249.00 plus shipping. If you just want the software, the HAL-PC price is \$79.00 plus shipping.

Corex Technologies Corp., 130 Prospect Street, Cambridge, MA 02139, (617) 492-4200 , <http://www.cardscan.com> ◆

(Comments.....Continued from page 4)

what would happen if a group of individuals, like us, looked over the 15,000 to 20,000 Usenet newsgroups, found one that had little or no activity—I have seen many such—and sort of took it over. That is, the group just started posting their messages to it. I suppose someone somewhere started the thing and might object to all the off-topic messages; however, it appears that there are some newsgroups out there that are basically orphaned and are, thus, candidates for adoption—but not by us, since I hatched a different idea.

My idea is as follows. Most of you have probably seen, if not filled in, the survey I have at our web site. Such a survey form can easily be turned into a message posting device, where the first few input fields are for your name, date, subject, etc., and the last much larger input field is for your message. When you submit your message form, the data is put into a comma delimited text file on the server.

Now, all I need do is write a program that on a regular basis, say, every hour, will do the following:

- Connect to the Internet and, using File Transfer Protocol (FTP), retrieve this data file from our Internet site.
- Add the newest data to the older message data and turn all of the data into an HTML file that, when viewed with a browser, will display all the messages in order with the latest at the top.
- Again using FTP, send this HTML file up to our Internet Site to replace the older one there.

I am sure all you programmers already have the program written in your mind. Well, it has taken me a bit longer. First, I

wrote a Visual Basic program to turn the message data into an HTML file. Here is what the data for a typical message looks like:

```
"William", "LaMartin", "lamartin@ix.netcom.com", "Yes", "August 24, 1997", "Setup", "At present I am updating this page manually. I have to FTP to the site, get the message data, then on my home computer I run a program to turn it into an HTML file, then FTP it back to the Internet site."
```

I will now try to write a program that automates that process. Then we can update the site every, say, 30 minutes. When I have done that we can "beta" test it all with the other members."

The main problem here is dealing with the carriage return symbol ¶, which could either represent the end of one message data packet or just a line break in the message field of a message data packet. But that's what programming is all about, and once that is figured out, the program yields the html code

```
<P>message <B>9</B>
<P>From <B>William LaMartin</B><br>
At <B>lamartin@ix.netcom.com</B><br>
On <B>August 24, 1997</B><br>
Concerning <B>Setup</B>
<P>At present I am updating this page manually. I have to FTP to the site, get the message data, then on my home computer I run a program to turn it into an HTML file, then FTP it back to the Internet site.<BR><BR>I will now try to write a program that automates that process. Then we can update the site every, say, 30 minutes. When I have done that we can "beta" test it all with the other members.
<P><hr align="left" width="80%">
```

And when your browser displays this, you see:

message 9

From **William LaMartin**
At **lamartin@ix.netcom.com**
On **August 24, 1997**
Concerning **Setup**

At present I am updating this page manually. I have to FTP to the Site, get the message data, then on my home computer I run a program to turn it into an HTML file, then FTP it back to the Internet site.

(Comments.....Continued on page 9)

Your Tax Dollars at Work for You

by Don Patzsch, Tampa PC Users Group

I want to tell you about how your tax dollars are used for extremely worthwhile projects. Often we hear of waste in government spending, but read this and then check it out on the Internet for yourself.

Back about thirty years ago, we were in the cold war period. DARPA, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, started paying out grants for research in computer graphics and virtual reality.

DARPA has been awarding these grants for all these years. Why?

- To improve the military. For example improving all the instruments on a fighter plane dashboard.
- In order to accomplish that purpose, many little research grants must go to many companies! Why?

To understand this, I want you to think for a minute.

FM radio operates at a frequency of 88 to 108 MHz. Now the CPU chips are operating at 300 MHz. 300 MHz antennas are very short, and so the wiring on a chip could be an antenna and radiate the energy into the air. The zeros and ones would not make it to the other end of the wire! Radiation is always present in small amounts so your computer cabinet is a shield against that, but you hear the radiation when your computer is very near a TV set that is on. So these things must be taken into consideration. This would be just **one of the grants - i.e. study the wiring on a microchip to reduce radiation of radio waves.**

The people who make motherboards use the technique of layers. To make wires go to each and every item on the motherboard without crossing another wire (creating a short circuit) they use four to five layers to make up the board. Now at 300 MHz they have to run the wires in a special way or they find that the wire is an antenna and it radiates the energy into the atmosphere, rather than moving the zero's and one's from the one end to the other of that wire! The people who design motherboards, CPU's and other computer components have to be very well trained, either at a university or on the job. **Another grant - determine the routing for wiring on a four or five layer circuit board to minimize radiation.**

Each of the following processes is improved because of grants for military needs, and of course the private industry people

benefit from these military grants by using the processes developed by the military through DARPA.

- As the CPU becomes larger (more millions of transistors), the operating voltage becomes smaller, less than 3 volts now. They must reduce the voltage to keep the power expended down to reasonable values, especially for notebooks that are battery operated. There must be a "limit" somewhere, and by the time we reach that, someone will be making components from glass or some other material. IBM is right now researching the use of a solid cube of material to use it as a hard drive.
- Sometimes we need to stop and elevate our sights. At first we talked of 10 Mb (mega bit) Ethernet (network cards), now with financial help from DARPA we are thinking not of 100 Mb but 1 gigabit per second network cards. With-

out that infusion of cash, and the suggestion of major improvements, we could be stuck in one place (10 Mb) network cards for a long time.

- When you use telephone wires to interconnect the Internet, you can have electromagnetic interference. Lightning or "transients" can place a magnetic field around the

wires and induce foreign voltage or "noise". One way around this is to use glass fibers to transmit the signals. Glass fibers are not affected by magnetic interference.

Now think for a minute. Which country leads in computers? Japan, Europe? No, the U.S. leads, and the reason is that the government starts out a research project, maybe for the military as DARPA does. Private industry picks up the ideas, and private industry adds more billions to the total amount spent on research. That is what has kept our country in the lead.

I will make this brief. In 1995, the Internet (NSFnet) backbone was shut down and the Internet given to private operators who interconnected at a series of Network Access Points, "NAP's". That is our present INTERNET. The National Science Foundation then issued another contract to build a Very High Speed Backbone Network, VBNS. The goal is a 2 Gbps network. In other words, a separate NEW very FAST Internet is under construction right now. [WOW, isn't that something?]

Vocal-tec, the Internet telephone program was written in Israel. We don't have a monopoly on software writing, but most countries learned their skills here. Our U.S. companies have very large groups of programmers working all over the world. Scotland has many large groups of programmers working for

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U.S. companies. So do Israel, Russia, and also India. Still, there is a real shortage of computer programmers. Maybe after the year 2000 problems are solved, things will slow down a little in this category.

Lets end this by saying that the ARPANET and the TCP/IP protocol developed by DARPA in the early 1970's has evolved into what we call the Internet!

What else has DARPA done?

- A disk drive gets a big boost in capacity by read/write arms fitted with microscopic inertial navigation arms that position the heads so accurately data can be packed many times more densely.
- Two million mirrors, each one-fifth the diameter of a human hair, are mounted on a memory chip and act as mobile digital switches. Each controls one pixel for large, high resolution displays. You see this at MOSI each month.

Want to see dozens more examples? Go to <http://www.darpa.mil>. ◆

(Comments.....Continued from page 7)

I will now try to write a program that automates that process. Then we can update the site every, say, 30 minutes. When I have done that we can "beta" test it all with the other members.

So far, so good. Next, to write a visual basic program to connect to the Internet and use FTP to download the message data and then to upload the completed HTML file after it has been generated. This cost me several hundred dollars since I had to upgrade from Visual Basic Professional 4 to Visual Basic Professional 5 to get the FTP programming ability.

As with any new programming tool, I made a few false starts, but I finally got my program up and running. And it was a real pleasure to watch as the program connected to the Internet, then to the tbos2cla.com server where our site is stored, downloaded the message date, created the HTML Message file and uploaded it back to tbos2cla.com. A quick check with my browser at the test page there (I have not provided a link to it yet since it is not yet ready for prime time, as you will momentarily read) revealed that everyting was working fine. And I went to bed happy.

As with all well constructed stories, you know that the next day brought disaster. And it did. The program would not FTP to the tbos2cla.com server and returned the message

“HOST NOT FOUND”. Some checking with the FTP component of the program revealed that it would not connect to any FTP server requiring a username and password—even though I programmed them according to the Visual Basic specifications—and in the same manner that had worked the night before with ftp.tbos2cla.com. The FTP component, however, worked perfectly with any FTP server that allowed an anonymous longon, like ftp.microsoft.com does, for example.

Believe me, I have pondered this problem a great deal to no avail, except for a lack of sleep and a headache. I am not even sure it is a Visual Basic problem. It may be a Windows 95 problem, since my son installed my program on his laptop running Windows NT Work Station, and it performed flawlessly. Oh, for a Visual Basic SIG with someone who knows the subject better than I. I have checked the Usenet Newsgroups, the Microsoft Knowledge Base and, of course, the Visual Basic help files and come up with nothing.

So, for the time being the TPCUG Discussion Group on the Internet will have to remain on hold. Updating it manually, while it only takes a couple of minutes, would be difficult for me to do at timely, regular intervals.

Now, you might ask why I am going to all this trouble when, as the possessor of Microsoft FrontPage, I have the ability to create such a discussion group using this program. Unfortunately there is one problem with this. To use a FrontPage created discussion group on an Internet server, the server needs to have what are called Microsoft FrontPage Extensions installed—and such extensions don't exist for OS/2 servers—and the tbos2cla.com server where our web site is located is such a server. The extensions, to the best of my knowledge, only exist for Microsoft 95, NT and UNIX servers.

I hope the above was not too specialized for most of you. It will give you some idea of how I spend my spare time. We all need a hobby, and programming is mine. With the Internet being the newest item to come along, it is only natural that we programmers have a turn at seeing what can be done with it. Right now, though, I have had to put all such attempts on hold so as to do a little toward my real occupation and also toward the completing of this newsletter. After I catch up on those two items and do a little work around the house, then I can return to the mystery of the inoperative password and username.

If you have been reading the newsletter regularly you will have noted that over the past year a reliable group of our members have been contributing articles. You could almost say we have a stable of writers. I am very appreciative of that, and I invite any other members out there who have tried a new piece of software or hardware to put your thoughts down in your computer and email them to me. ◆

Special Interest Groups

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

Communications SIG

This SIG meets the first Monday of the month at 6 PM at the Reflectone Building. **Directions: Proceed west on Waters from N. Dale Mabry across the railroad tracks, about 1.5 miles, take second left on Savarese. Proceed on Savarese until you reach the Reflectone building. Use the north door.** You must sign up to get on the list and to get by security. *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 .*

Internet E-Mail for the UnConnected!!

*by Merle Nicholson, Secretary,
Tampa PC Users Group*

Do you need Internet e-mail? Do you need more e-mail accounts in your family? Do you want it free of charge? It's here, it's good and it's free. It's called **JUNO**, and it really works well. It has some very minor disadvantages, but they provide good software and good service. I know eight or so people who are using it, including my spouse and oldest son, and I haven't heard one complaint. I've used it some and like it. It's not a substitute for full-blown Internet access, but if you just need Internet e-mail ... it's terrific. I've been asked this question ... can I send e-mail to someone that's not on JUNO? Yes. It's Internet e-mail just like any other. You send and receive to any e-mail account ... anywhere. Here's how it works.

The company provides a very good small e-mail software package free of charge. They provide local access numbers - more than 400 all over the country. All you do is get the software from their Web site on the Internet or from a friend or from JUNO itself . They encourage you to redistribute the software to anyone as long as you give it away in its original form. The current version is 1.38, by the way, so you can check if you're giving away the latest version.

It's paid for by selling advertisements that every user sees whenever he uses the software. In my opinion, the advertisements are relatively unobtrusive. You may get one that you must clear out on startup, but it's just a mouse click and it's gone. Otherwise you see various adverts in the top quarter of the program. That's it .. no hardship.

The software is what's called an "offline mail reader". You click on a send/receive button and it dials the modem, sends

all the outgoing mail you've composed, and checks for any incoming mail and then logs off and disconnects the modem. It also downloads all the advertisements it displays. But they're small and it goes quickly.

It manages multiple users. So each member of your family can have his or her own private account. When you start the software you select who you are (in the list of users) and (optionally) provide your password. It manages multiple inboxes and outboxes, one for each account. Also, you sign up online and even find out what your local access number is, identify your modem and a whole bunch of other ways to customize. You can arrange to send software to a friend within the program too by notifying JUNO through e-mail or calling them. They'll send a diskette!

You can send an e-mail message with your friend's name and full postal address (including zip code) to signup@juno.com. You can send as many names and addresses in a message as you like. They'll send you a reply to let you know your message has been received. OR Call 1-800-654-JUNO (1-800-654-5866) and give them your friend's name and full postal address (including zip code). They'd prefer e-mail, since that's the easiest way for them to handle a large volume of requests.

Now, some final observations about the program. It doesn't do file attachments. It doesn't use the Windows 95 modem configuration. It uses its own, just like you used to do with Windows 3.1. It does have what looks like a comprehensive list of modems. It installs for Windows 3.1 and Windows 95 from the same executable, so I suspect (I don't really know) that it's a Windows 3.1 application. But it has worked flawlessly for us. Obviously it must share the modem, and a modem does one thing at a time. My wife must check first to make sure the modem isn't connected to our Internet provider before she uses it. And yes, she can use our Internet account for mail, but she likes JUNO. It's HER mail.

(JUNO.....Continued on page 12)



Friends of the User Group

We acknowledge the following firms for their support

Museum of Science and Industry
BCD (Brainchild Computer Distributions, Inc.)
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*And these national software vendors for their demonstrations
and contributions of evaluation software to our group*

Access Software	Micrografx
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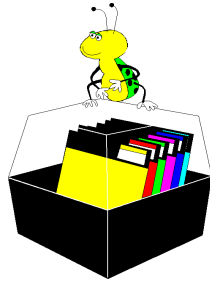
MEMBERS HELP-LINE

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

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(JUNO.....Continued from page 10)

Have fun .. get your kids on e-mail with their own private accounts .. get connected .. free. ♦



(Minutes.....Continued from page 3)

ter won a copy of DriveCopy; Roger Waters, OnFile; Wil Gobel, a much needed mouse pad; and Charles Howe, a book on Word for Windows 95. By the way, doesn't Wil win something every month? ♦

