

The SAGATUG

INTERFACE

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The San Gabriel Valley Tandy User's Group. The Club for TRSDOS and MS-DOS.

The Prez Says:

Happy New Year everyone!

This year, according to those who are supposed to know, should be the year for software. Hardware is now cheap and fast enough for most of us, so now it's time for software to catch up. Recent pricing and marketing schemes have made it less expensive and much more available -- especially if you have a CD-ROM.

This month I'll be demonstrating two programs: Microsoft Publisher, and WinFax by Delrina. MsP is the program Roy is using to make this newsletter. It's a mini desk top publisher that's almost as powerful as the big ones.

The advantage MsP has over the programs like Ventura, isn't just the low cost, it's the low learning curve! If you're the least bit familiar with Windows, you can be up and running in no time at all. If you're not, they give you about 60 forms for banners, greeting cards, notices, newsletters, etc. that you can modify to suit your own needs. MsP even comes with a "wizard" button that will create your project for you.

You've heard me talk about having a fax modem and only using the modem -- not the fax.

Well, wait until you see WinFax. Talk about easy! Simply define it as a printer. Anything you want to fax can be sent from the application you're in by sending it to the "printer". I'll show you how, with an inexpensive hand scanner, a fax modem, and WinFax, you have a high quality fax machine. And, add a printer and you have a "plain paper" fax.

The club disk this month will be VIRUSCAN Version 9.19 V108, the latest version of McAfee's virus scanning software I downloaded in November. It'll now detect 1,655 viruses, including 2,351 variants. SCAN takes very little disk space for the peace of mind it gives.

And finally, I'll pose the question that was asked of us in class tonight: If two identical watches are stuck displaying the same time, and one is wound tight and the other is run down, which one weighs more?

- A) the one wound up
- B) the one run down
- C) both the same

Rob Malone

PC HINTS AND TIPS

Lance Wolstrup

Of all the computer activities that I indulge in, I have the most fun when I write programs, or I discover some undocumented shortcut to a commercial program or the latest version of DOS. In a previous installment I mentioned that MS-DOS has many shortcuts. For example, by using the wild-card feature, we can copy all the files from the current directory (or floppy) to a sub directory called \SAGATUG on drive C: by issuing the command `COPY *.* C:\SAGATUG`

That was reasonably simple, but it was not a shortcut. The lazy man's way of commanding all files to be copied from the current directory to C:\SAGATUG is to eliminate the asterisks and instead use the undocumented symbol for 'CURRENT' DIRECTORY'. This symbol is the period (.). The files of the currently logged directory can now be copied to C:\SAGATUG with this shorter version of the command:

```
COPY . C:\SAGATUG
```

You can use this shortcut with certain other DOS commands. For example, to delete all files in the current directory, you would type:

```
DEL .
```

Or you can view all the directory entries with a specific extension (for example BAT) in the current directory with:

```
DIR .BAT
```

OK, we now understand that the period (.) means 'CURRENT'. If you've ever used the DIR command, you should have noticed that all directories have at least one entry. Yes, that's right, that entry is the period. If you are logged to a directory other than the root directory, you should notice that there are now at least two entries -- the period (.) and the double period (..). The double period (..) means 'PARENT DIRECTORY'. That is, it represents the directory immediately above the current directory. If you are not sure of what this means, let's stop and give a quick review of the MS-DOS directory structure.

At the very top we have the ROOT directory. Directly underneath the ROOT directory we have the directories that have been created by the ROOT directory. Then, in turn, underneath these directories, we have the directories that have created by them. It may look something like this:

```

                                ROOT
      GAMES      WP      DOS      TRSTIMES
XEEN  KQ6      FONTS      ISSUE66 ISSUE71

```

In other words, the GAMES, WP, DOS, and TRSTIMES directories were created from the ROOT directory. We then moved to the GAMES directory and created two directories from it: XEEN AND KQ6. We created the FONTS directory from inside the WP DIRECTORY. The DOS directory in this example does not have a sub directory, but the ISSUE66 and ISSUE71 directories were created from within the TRSTIMES directory.

As you can tell, if we were inside the ISSUE66 or ISSUE71 directory, TRSTIMES is our 'PARENT' directory. If we were inside the FONTS directory, our 'PARENT' directory would be WP. Being inside the XEEN or KQ6 directory would make GAMES the 'PARENT'. Each of these, GAMES, WP, DOS, and TRSTIMES, have the ROOT directory as the 'PARENT'.

OK, now that we understand directories, here are are a few more shortcuts:

To move from the CURRENT directory to the one directly above (the PARENT directory), type:

```
CD ..
```

To copy all files from the CURRENT directory to the PARENT DIRECTORY, type:

```
COPY . ..
```

Or, the reverse, to copy all files from the PARENT directory to the CURRENT directory, type:

```
COPY ...
```

To delete all files from the PARENT directory, type:

```
DEL ..
```

To view the PARENT directory, type:

```
DIR ..
```

The biggest help that the double period shortcut provides, in my opinion, is that it allows easy changing to another sub directory of the same level. For example, imagine that you are in a directory several levels deep, such as C:\TRSTIMES\ISSUE66, and you wish to change to ISSUE71. This would normally be done with the command:

```
CD\TRSTIMES\ISSUE71
```

With the shortcut method, you could change to this directory with this abbreviated command:

CD ..ISSUE71

While all of these capabilities become more and more helpful the further down a directory tree you find yourself, I must caution you to be careful with the DEL .. shortcut. Do NOT try it if you are in a sub directory immediately off the ROOT directory, as that would delete all user files there, including the AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS files -- not a real good idea. Otherwise, the shortcuts are real time and type-savers, and I now type less and enjoy it more.

PIBMUG Report for December

Jack Nock

PIBMUG is the Pasadena IBM users group. We meet every third Wednesday starting 7:00 p.m. Steve Bass is the president, (by self-appointment), and founder. Typically about 300 people attend, with many more for big names (Phillippe Kahn - Borland for example). A normal meeting has presentations by Vendors, mainly programs. There are usually special offers for those attending, some good, some not so good. Let the buyer beware. Membership is \$48 a year or \$5 a meeting. MOBBS BBS, 818-5781-0853, supports PIBMUG.

Special Note - Microsoft will be at the January 19, 1994 PIBMUG meeting, to show off Microsoft Office. They will be giving away free copies to all who attend. NOT !

The last session was Dec. 15. Microsoft showed some of their games. Many were old "favorites" in a slightly new dress. Flight Simulator is good, with improved images. Encarta was not mentioned. Space Simulator was mentioned but not shown. Nothing very exciting. Creative Writer for kids was different, but it seemed to require a reading level too high for the program's target audience. If a child could follow the screen instructions, he could use standard word processors.

The shareware demos were livelier, and VERY NOISY. Apogee's Blake Stone and Doom. Shoot 'em ups. My age is showing.

Bill Gross, president and founder of Knowledge Adventure gave his usual lively show. His demos always work, and the programs are fascinating. For Dinosaur 3-D they supplied the colored glass to give us an extra thrill. I bought Under-

sea Adventure and kids' Zoo after the show, at a good price. These programs are fun AND educational. A word of warning - they take about ten megs. of hard disk space, and they do not compress. They are already squeezed to the limit. How else could they include music, speech, and moving pictures and load from floppies? The programs decompress on the fly. The CD versions take less hard disk and give you more images. I'm looking forward to having the grandchildren test drive them.

Intuit showed the latest Quicken and Quickbooks for Windows. The Inventory and Calendar features are nice, if not overwhelming. They claim to be the largest of the suppliers, but still have only a small share of the market. Bookkeeping programs are very personal, you either like one or hate it. Quicken is popular, and the price is reasonable.

A good meeting that ran almost 30 minutes overtime. They usually end at 9:30.

Give yourself a Christmas Present

Jack Nock

Parsons Technology has several programs I can recommend for your library. They are modestly sized, specialized programs, with very limited documentation -- no fancy tutorials. As such, it is important that they be instinctive FOR YOU. Some of their choices suit me, some don't. In any case, the price is right, and Parsons offers a 30-day money back guarantee. Parsons does not advertise in the usual magazines, and sells mainly by mail order.

Personal Tax Edge was my introduction to the company. I had tired of the shareware programs -- too awkward, and expensive, too. It is currently advertised at \$19 for the 1994 tax year. The State return costs \$19 more. I have commented on these programs before, and the Windows version are even better, with cleaner, easier interfaces. I personally like having the Government instructions handy, on-line. Others have complained about this same feature. You can input your information directly into the 1040 forms, or as copies of the 1099, W-2, etc., forms, switching as you please. The linked work sheets feed back into the tax forms and leave you a record of where numbers, like charity receipts, originated.

Appointment Calendar for Windows is a recent addition to my collection. It shows at \$49 in the catalog (I paid \$29 with some bonus stuff). This price difference is typical -- they ALWAYS have specials on, so be patient. Catalogs arrive monthly once they get your name. The calendar suits me very well and is particularly easy to get started on. It

replaces my old DayTimer, at about the same cost, except it lasts forever. I was particularly impressed by its ability to post repetitive appointments automatically for months in advance -- like SAGATUG on the second Friday each month. By opening it first thing each day I am reminded of appointments and chores. That can be a pain, but it's the only way I remember to do things. A feature is rolling chores forward to the next day until you check them off as done. Or you can cheat and wipe them off, undone! The program produces a beautiful printout of the weekly calendar, with all the repeating events already in place. My one problem has been with the times -- I can't get the AM/PM option to work (PM doesn't show), so I use the 24 hour system.

Address Book for Windows is the other side of the coin -- I personally don't like it, although it links to the Calendar. To me it is like an old DOS program. I failed to succeed in transferring the addresses from my Word Perfect files. This is a fatal flaw for me, since about a hundred names, addresses, phone numbers and other facts are already entered there.

Money Counts is Parsons' accounting program, for Windows or DOS. Alice uses the DOS version for our check books. It links your saving and checking accounts, so one entry puts the data in both lists. It is another program I find intuitive -- it works the way I expect it to (but not necessarily the way Alice would like!). It is easy to edit and correct entries to reconcile with the bank statements. The program attempts to guess the rest of the entry as you type. Since many of the checks are repeated each month, it is often successful in saving a lot of keystrokes. Money Counts could keep up with credit cards and your stock portfolio, too, but we don't use it that way. At \$29 it is cheap enough, and even though it is not as well known as Quicken, I prefer it. Again I come back to using what is comfortable.

Family Origins for DOS or Windows is a mainstay for keeping up with our family tree and all the third generation children. This was especially useful when my second cousin visited from England. As second cousins we share a common great-grandmother, I discovered. It is easy to add people to the listing, linking them as children, spouses or parents, with any additional facts you may have. The output listings are essentially automatic, in family tree or pedigree form. A narrative form is available that reads remarkably well, using whatever facts you have entered. It handles the standard Mormon needs (I believe) and writes standard GEDCOM disks for data transfers. Family Origins is currently priced at \$35.

So pick one that sounds interesting, phone 1-800-223-6925 and have it waiting for the holidays. Expect an extra \$5 or \$6 for shipping.



Long Ago and Far Away

-or-

DX From the Other Side of the Band Opening

Jack Nock, VE6AOP

January 6, 1963, seems like a long time ago, put down in black and white, and Punta Arenas, Chile almost as far away. To find Punta Arenas, take your Globe, turn it upside down, and there it is! Right next to Tierra Del Fuego. The world's southernmost city. This was my first time on the air, and K6VIZ is the first call in the log, so my California connection goes a long way back. I was CE8CG and Alice was CE8CM (Cake Mix).

Punta Arenas is on the southern tip of South America, with a clear, over-water shot at most of North America (and all the Pacific). We were in the Oil Exploration Business and Punta Arenas is the center of oil production for Chile. There is more oil, easier to get at, in Argentina, but that is another story. Chile, at that time, allowed foreigners to get Ham licenses; the local radio club submitted names to the licensing bureau, and eventually the magic paper came along. I had not held a ticket before, although I had always been interested in radio, knew some CW and had a Physics degree.

For a beginner, I had pretty exotic equipment: A Collins KWM-2 transceiver with a 30L1 linear. Tubes gear all the way, of course, but very nice. I even had a Collins noise blanker (a necessity with all the spark plug static). It was interesting in concept -- it received in the 40 meter band,

and muted the receiver for a few milliseconds when noise was detected above a preset level. It was very effective against broad band noise, but one more antenna to maintain.

Noise was particularly troublesome because of the antennas I used. Since we were temporary, we always rented houses, which means no permanent masts. (How I envy John his setup!). Punta Arenas is located in the "Roaring Forties", which means the wind ALWAYS blows. Peak gusts over 80 MPH are routine. This meant vertical quarter-wave, all band antennas to me. They are quite effective for transmission, but great receivers for noise, not so hot for signals. I built several wire models that worked well enough (except I could never combine 10 M. and 20 M. on the same feed line). A HiGain 14AVS was neater, and worked well until the wind got it. Wire quads in a diamond configuration were better, but hard to keep up.

Often in the evenings 20 M. would be wide open to the U.S.A. -- a virtue and a problem. For getting messages "back home" it was great, but the QRM could be unbelievable! I don't think I ever got WAS, but it would not have taken long -- the whole country would be available at the same time. The sun spots must have been favorable at the time. The openings would sweep across the States to the west coast, then Alaska would take over, after the skip passed over the California Kilowatts heads. During contests you could hardly tell where the openings were, so many stations could be heard. I would specify "W3 only, please" until most had their contact, then switch to W4, and so on, back and forth across the country. The operators were amazingly, pleasingly, cooperative.

Since Alice and I were Canadians, we had a special interest in contacting the far north, especially Calgary. Even with the private band portion of 20 M. that Chile and Canada shared, it was often impossible to get through. Years later we moved to Calgary and I found that it is a dead area for radio signals, even when you live there. Something to do with the proximity of the mountains is my guess. Oddly, there were always some Hams who refused to acknowledge calls from outside their special area of interest. You would almost believe your rig had failed, when someone would break in and restore your faith.

It is vital to have some test equipment along on foreign trips. You can't rely on nearby Hams to give you reports. Even worse is trusting the DX community to tell you what is wrong with your signals -- they are too afraid they won't get their precious QSL card if they tell you your signal stinks (as it did, sometimes). Over modulation is always a temptation. I had a Heathkit (remember them?) 'Scope and a homemade SWR bridge. I always used SSB, so the S9 signal in the hi-fi (this was before stereo, remember) was just Duck Talk, not a reliable quality check. There were not many Hams active in South America at that time, especially not in English. Most of those I talked with regularly were displaced Americans, like me, in the Oil or Diplomatic business. Most evenings, after the other signals faded out, we would talk to the fellows

in Antarctica. They really appreciated the company. Nothing was sadder than to hear Pole Station say, "Well, the sun set today". They meant set for the next six months! Palmer station was our nearest neighbor, on the peninsula that extends up almost to Tierra Del Fuego.

Twenty meters was our usual band, but we did use 15 M. in the afternoon with some good results. For years we had a schedule with Beam, W5FXZ in Jackson, Mississippi every Sunday afternoon on 21.420 MHz. Many of the Americans in Punta Arenas worked for Delta Exploration, a Jackson company; they really appreciated a patch home. Long Distance phone calls were so bad the radio was often the only practical voice link. (The phone link to Santiago was also by radio, and when the skip was wrong, the phone was out! No Satellites then!). When 10 M. was open it was spectacular, but then as now, you took your chances. The local hams used 80 meters AM to talk between the ranches and to the Falkland Islands, where some had relatives.

A few thoughts on equipment. While Collins was considered about the best at the time, it had problems. Using tubes meant lots of heat. This meant turning on the rig at least half an hour ahead of time, or spending a miserable time trying to follow the other guys signal as it slid across the band. Remember, these were analog tuning devices, with a crystal oscillator to give you a couple of calibration points, far away from the part of the band you were using. Collins had a peculiar permeability tuning system, not the usual variable capacitor type. I believe its supposed virtue was more linear tuning, but the mechanics of moving a core in and out of a coil was too heat sensitive to suit me. Years later I had a Heathkit SB-101 with plain variable capacitor tuning that was much more stable, and half the cost.

Some band openings were beyond belief: June 1, 1432Z: XE1KE, EL6A, DL5AO, G8UG, PY2CUB, DJ0BY, UA1KBW, LA5LG, G3PEU, I1RB, HB9ZY, F7IG and all with conversations, not just signal reports. This was between 18:35 and 21:50 Z. It was just as well, because there wasn't much other entertainment in town. We didn't participate in contests as a rule, but in the ARRL International DX Competition, Feb.-Mar. 1965 we won foremost phone station in Chile with 18,444 points. Not bad. During contests, it was common to log a station a minute, which gets tiring for one operator! Alice was number 2 for Chile, if I remember correctly, using the same rig.

Now I sit, grounded by my own laziness. When we decided this was our last move, we took out U.S. citizenship. A good move, but American citizens are not allowed to operate using Canadian licenses in the U.S.A. There is no reciprocal licensing, either. All we have to do is re-pass all the exams again. Wish me luck (and give me a boost to get started). 73.

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Upcoming Events:

Jan 29, 1994	TRW Swap Meet
Feb 5, 6, 1994	Fairplex, Pomona
Feb 26, 27, 1994	Fairplex, Pomona
Feb 27, 1994	TRW Swap Meet
Mar 18, 19, 20, 1994	Fairplex, Pomona
Mar 27, 1994	TRW Swap Meet

Club Officers and Board Members:

President	Rob Malone
Vice President	Art Molz
Sec'y-Treasurer	Harry Boller
INTERFACE Editor	Roy T. Beck
Past President	Rob Malone
Members at Large	
Disk Librarian	John Tufts III
Bylaws Committee	John Phillipp

Meeting Time and Place:

7 to 10 PM, January 14, 1994
Arcadia Park Senior Citizen's Center
405 South Santa Anita Avenue, Arcadia
Meetings held second Friday, Monthly

SAN GABRIEL VALLEY TANDY USER'S GROUP
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FIRST CLASS MAIL

