Merry Christmas

OTTAWA PC NEWS

OPCUG Needs You!

by Doug Poulter, Chairman

Haven't you always wanted to be well-paid and important executive? Okay, maybe you just want to be able to play golf at the Hunt Club. Well, we do have an executive position available with the Ottawa PC Users' Group which is a key volunteer position with OPCUG. Sorry, no golf clubs yet! The position up for grabs is the Facilities Convenor who manages publicity for the club, meeting facilities and logistics.

Running an organization of 450 people solely with volunteers requires co-ordinated team work, participation and compromise. Everything from technical communications issues, budget control, human resourcing and practical PC-based solutions get tackled. OPCUG needs you as a team player on our executive to broaden our perspective and to make sure your objectives are met.

Facilities Convenor

The Facilities Convenor's role is an excellent opportunity for a person to get an understanding of the inner workings of the Club with the potential of moving onto another executive position. And move on is exactly what incumbent Paul Green would like to do. Responsibilities include publicity of our meetings in the media and at computer stores, ensuring meeting facilities are available for the various activities of the Club, co-ordinating the availability of local rental equipment for out-of-town

speakers and co-ordinating the provision of refreshments for the monthly meetings.

The role does not need to involve a major time commitment. The new Convenor can gather a support team from the members by word-of-mouth or with a sign at the meeting. Note also that the location of meetings is now established at Sir Robert Borden High School and is not expected to change within the foreseeable future.

Executive Aspirations

If you are interested in an executive position other than Facilities Convenor, please let us know. The executive positions are listed on the back of the newsletter. Our executives are flexible and willing to be shuffled around a bit to accommodate a new person in any of the following positions: Facilities Coordinator, Treasurer, Membership Chair, Secretary and Chair.

Please call me or Dave Terroux with your name and preferred position. OPCUG welcomes you!

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NEXT MEETING : **TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1991** *details on p. 3*

Writing Words on Windows

by Julie Dustin

Despite being beaten to the market by other WYSIWYG software, WordPerfect Corp. has used the time well to improve on functions that other packages offer in WordPerfect for Windows (WPWIN).

Pricing

The WPWIN product, shipping on November 11, 1991 will list for $595 or a tradeup on DOS for $120.

Memory Requirements

WPWIN takes 7 to 8 Mb to store its program files so a 40 Mb drive is a minimum requirement. Allen Biehl in **WordPerfect, The Magazine** (November 1991 issue) advises, "You need a fast 80286 with 12 MHz or higher and 2 MB of RAM. In fact, choose a 286 machine with 4 Mb over a 386 with 1 Mb. And make sure you configure it all as extended memory."

Button Bar

The new Button Bar is a customizable row of icons which can contain any function, menu item or macro. If you're not sure what each button does, check the bottom of the screen for an explanation when you click the button with your mouse.

The Ruler

The WPWin Ruler where you set tabs, select fonts, build tables and determine line spacing, is also customizable. You can add any well-used items or delete others. Place it on the left of the screen or across the top. Pick your favourite fonts and styles to store on the ruler. For users of columns, just grab the arrows and move them to the right or left for new widths.

Macro users beware!

To convert your 5.1 macros to a Windows environment, you will need to use a special convert program. Macros (600 available) use a "tokenized macro language" - the operation of choosing an area on the screen which is not a string of text. WPWIN macros are regular documents - you can open, edit, save and print them.

Codes, Codes, Go Away

Didn't you just love having to constantly clean out your old codes in the Reveal Codes screen? The new version has automatic code placement (ACP) which means old codes are automatically replaced by your new ones.

Kudos to Jamie Simzer for a smooth, quick-paced presentation despite the many questions tossed at him from a very curious, WordPerfect-wise audience. And the chocolate Button Bars were excellent too.

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A "Not Quite Ready for Prime-Time" Player

by Chris Taylor

I recently tested Zy INDEX for Windows, version 1.0, on our LAN at work, where we need to index a 46 Mb shared directory containing 2,100 files, mostly word processing, but also database files, APL models, spreadsheet files, and graphics in various formats. The many problems in this release of the product out-weigh the advantages.

What is it?

Zy INDEX consists of two main modules: Zy BUILD and Zy FIND. Zy BUILD is easy to use to create (and update) indexes of existing documents. Zy FIND provides powerful searching capabilities, from simple word searches with boolean operators to proximity searches where one word has to be within a given number of words of another word. Certain "noiseø words, such as 'and', 'the', and 'have' are not indexed, and you can add to the noise word list.

Problems: too slow, too big

Apart from minor problems such as menu options located in unusual places or not working, and incorrect messages there are major problems with speed. Zy INDEX was slow building an index, including slowing down the network, and created a very large index file, approximately 1/3 the size of the files being indexed. Not only that, but it crashed the system while the index was being built. To compound the problem, the error message covered the progress screen. It crashed on the same files every time, standard WordPerfect files without complex formatting or graphics embedded.

Garbage indexing

I included Lotus worksheets in the test, hoping that Zy INDEX would index only the text and numbers. Unfortunately, it does not interpret any file formats other than those produced by most word processors which means you end up with a lot of "garbage" indexed.

If a search string cannot be understood, it should not be indexed.

I would not recommend this version of Zy INDEX.

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Annual Swap Meet and Member Presentations

by Lynda Simons

At our next meeting, Tuesday, November 26th, we are meeting in the Cafeteria at Sir Robert Borden High School, not the Auditorium. Why? Because the cafeteria has the vast number of tables we'll need for the mountain of goodies that will be for sale at our Annual Swap Meet.

One ~~man's~~ person's meat...

This is your chance to get rid of all that old computer junk you never use. Your mistakes may be just what someone else needs - they may even give you money for them! So check through your basement, spare room and closets - wherever you hide away those old components or slightly-used software packages. Bring those boards, cables, monitors, Hyperions, printers, books, adapters, switches - anything at all that you don't use any more and make money!

A reminder about selling software

You can only offer for sale the original diskettes and manuals of licensed software - unless it is software you developed yourself, which brings us to the other portion of the meeting.

Member Presentations

Before the Swap Meet portion of the evening Avery Gimble and Thomas Tai will demonstrate software they have developed. Avery has designed a client database program called C-BASE and Thomas has a graphics package to show us.

Post the Poster!!! Let as many people as possible know about the Swap Meet

Participation is the key to a successful swap meet: we need as many people as possible to take part. So enclosed with this newsletter you will find an 8½" x 11" poster about the swap meet which you can post in your place of business or local computer store. If you have the time and inclination, make copies and post them in a number of places. But DO IT TODAY - the meeting is only a few days away!

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Tell us what you think. You could win a prize

by Lynda Simons

- *Do you wish you could use a faster modem on the bulletin board?*
- *How long has it been since we had a speaker you wanted to hear?*
- *Does the newsletter cover the software you use?*

Let us know and we'll do something about it. To make it easy for you to do this, we have enclosed a survey with this month's newsletter. Not only that, but to encourage you to find the time to complete the survey, there's a prize attached. At the November meeting all completed surveys will go into a draw for one of two prizes.

What about the information on the Membership Application?

Yes, you completed a similar survey when you joined, but chances are, that information is out-of-date now. Also, many new members don't complete the whole membership form and when renewing, some members don't have time to answer all the questions. In any event, the questions on the membership application don't cover everything we need to know to give you what you want.

Download Your Ideas

Your executive works hard. It takes a lot of effort to provide what you do and don't want. Please let us know what you do want. So grab a pen and start checking off those boxes - it shouldn't take more than 10 minutes.

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Calendar *(subject to change)*

Date	Location	Topic
Tues., Nov. 26	Sir Robert Borden H.S.	Swap meet
No meeting in December ❄❄❄ *Happy Holidays!*❄❄❄		
Thur., Jan 30	Sir Robert Borden H.S.	Folio Views
Tue., Feb. 25	Sir Robert Borden H.S.	

The PATH Command

by Andrew Clyde

Discussion this month was started by Micheline Johnson who had a problem with a 386 computer that kept exhibiting "Out of Environment Space" errors. The culprit was an abused PATH command (150+ characters long) intended to enable different people to use the same application with their own data directories.

Solution

Robert Parkinson's solution was to put the application in the PATH command and to write batch files for each project involving the application. This launches the application from the appropriate data directory, giving the application access to the appropriate data, since it searches the current directory first.

If more than one data directory is required for the same project, Robert suggested using the APPEND command, making it memory resident in the autoexec.bat file with either the /X or the /X /E options, though without any appended directories. The project batch file would then append the appropriate directories when launching the application, and deactivate APPEND once the application was terminated.

Short PATHs are best

Extremely long PATHs can be created (127 characters with the DOS command line, and longer ones with the utility ADDPATH in the PTHMAINT.ZIP bundle on the PUB), but the most efficient PATHs are the shortest ones. Since the PATH command is an attempt to access executable files in other directories, the smaller the group of files it has to search, the faster DOS will be able to locate a particular file. A PATH command that even approaches a complete list of all the directories on a Hard Disk is defeating the purpose of the directory structure for DOS.

Directories

The only directories that should be included in the PATH command are those with the group of executable files that you will need to access from other directories (for example, DOS and Norton Utilities). The root directory should not be included in the PATH command; it should only contain the files required to boot the computer. All applications should be run from batch files kept in a common directory included in the PATH. The PATH command should start with the most frequently accessed directories first, and proceed to those directories accessHed less often.

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Babbage's Reputation Redeemed

Susan Phillips

Paul Cooper drew our attention to an article in the June issue of the IEE Review about the construction of a replica of Charles Babbage's "Difference Engine No. 2", by the Science Museum, London, England. The article describes the some of the problems Babbage experienced in trying to build what was in effect the first automatic computing device.

Misunderstood Genius

The general perception of Charles Babbage is of the misunderstood genius ahead of his time. Most histories of computing present him as the irascible mathematician who, together with fellow mathematician Lady Ada Byron Lovelace (after whom the language ADA is named), designed a way to program machines to do computations and so eliminate the effect of human error. His engines were never built because of the crude limitations of the manufacturing technology of his time. It was left to the developments in electronics in the 1930s and '40s, and the later silicon technology to produce his brainchildren.

Plus ça change!

In reality the computer pioneers in the 1930s and 40s evolved the basic principles of general purpose programmable computing machines in ignorance of the work Babbage had done a century before, and it is more likely that Babbage's project failed through a combination of personality conflicts, lack of government vision, infighting, professional jealousies, muddled financial management and an unfavourable entrepreneurial climate. (Some things never change.)

200 years later

When the building of the first "difference engine" was halted most of the 12,000 parts had been completed, but less than a tenth of the machine had been assembled. Analysis of the tooling of these parts suggests that they were well within sufficient tolerances. The Museum's historical project duplicated the construction of the engine from Babbage's designs, using the tolerances of the 1840s, to test the performance and utility of the mechanism. The three tonne machine is on exhibit until December 31, 1991.

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INTRODUCTION TO DOS COMMANDS, continued

by Eric Clyde

Last month's column outlined the rules for naming files, and introduced examples of internal and external commands. Here's more on these frequently used DOS commands.

Commands to organize files
* MD (or MKDIR): make a directory (or subdirectory)

```
md \dirname
```
will make a new directory

After you have created a directory this way you have to use the command 'cd' (see below) to move to the new directory.
* CD (or CHDIR): change directory

```
cd \text
```
will go to the directory called 'text'
* RD (or RMDIR): remove an existing empty directory

```
rd \text
```
will eliminate the directory 'text'

You can't remove a directory that has any files or subdirectories in it.
* DIR: List files

```
dir
```
lists all files in the current directory

```
dir c:\wp
```
lists all files in the directory 'wp'

```
dir *.bak
```
lists all the files with the extension '.bak' in the current directory

```
dir c:\wp\*.bak
```
lists all files with extension '.bak' in the directory 'wp'

```
dir t*.txt /p
```

lists all files starting with 't' and having extension '.txt' in the current directory. The switch '/p' pauses the listing when the screen is full.

```
dir /w
```
adding the switch '/w' runs the listing across the screen.

NOTE: The command DIR doesn't display hidden files, however one of the options in DOS 5.0 can do so. DOS 5.0 also allows listing of the files in a number of different sequences.

Commands to manipulate files
* COPY and XCOPY: Both of these commands copy files. COPY does so one file at a time, or, for large files, in portions up to 64K bytes in size; XCOPY can use all available memory. It reads what has to be copied into memory, then copies from memory to the destination. Thus XCOPY reduces disk wear, especially with floppy disks.

```
copy a:*.bak c: or xcopy
a:*.bak c:
```
copies files with extension '.bak' from a: to default directory in c:

```
copy c:\wp\*.doc a:*.bak
or xcopy c:\wp\*.doc
a:*.bak
```
copies files with extension '.doc" in directory 'wp' to drive a: and gives them the extension '.bak'
* REN: Renaming a file

```
ren newfile.txt old-
file.bak
```

changes the name of the file from newfile.txt to oldfile.bak
* PRINT: Print out a file on your printer

```
print newfile.txt
```

After this instruction has been given, you can continue to use your computer while the printer is working.
* TYPE: Display a file on the computer screen

```
type newfile.txt
```

If the file you want to see is a binary file, or was created by an application, you may get very strange and unreadable characters on the screen.
* COMP or FC: Compare files

The need to compare files to see if they are identical arises from time to time. Depending on the version of DOS being used, either or both of these commands can be used. COMP compares files byte by byte and reports up to ten differences, using hexadecimal locators. FC compares two files and gives a line by line report of matches and mismatches.

```
comp newfile.txt old-
file.bak
```
compares file 'newfile.txt' with file 'oldfile.bak'

```
comp a:*.bak c:\wp\*.txt
```
compares all files on drive a: with extension '.bak' to files in directory '\wp' with the extension '.txt.
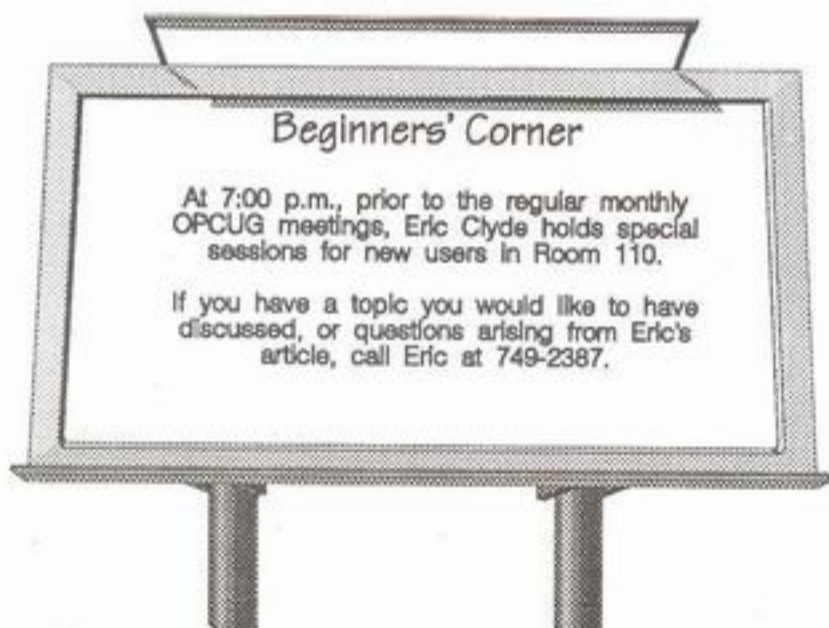
The FC command has a number of parameters including those that allow you to compare files byte by byte or line by line, to treat tabs as strings and to ignore the difference between upper and lower case.

```
fc newfile.txt /B old-
file.bak
```
compares newfile.txt to oldfile.bak on a byte by byte basis

Experiment with all of these commands. It is always useful to have tried them out before you need to use them. Next issue: how to check for disk errors and file fragmentation, and how to set the attributes of a file.

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Beginners' Corner

At 7:00 p.m., prior to the regular monthly OPCUG meetings, Eric Clyde holds special sessions for new users in Room 110.

If you have a topic you would like to have discussed, or questions arising from Eric's article, call Eric at 749-2387.

Puzzle

Word Search Theme: Disk Operating System

```
Y F I R E V R D T O I S N A F S
P O I R N T O E E H Q U I T I T
O R O N D U X L S L C T E T L P
C M R E D I R E C T O T S R L U
K A S S I G N S B I O S A I N R
S T S Y S T E M E X H R R B O R
I O C H K D S K P E C Y A S I E
D I R E C T O R Y H E O T E T T
E E R T I M E C T N I R P T I N
D N E P P A R O U T P U T Y T I
N I L D E I C E S U A P E B R G
A O S T H R P G C K M B M D A O
M J A K T T U N N O E G A P P S
M D E U C B A I R F V O N S H P
O Y P M E O L P T P L E E A I A
C N E D O M M I I C S A R E M C
I P U K C A B P F I L E N A M E
```

The words listed below are hidden in the puzzle in a variety of orientations: normal (left to right), backwards (right to left), top to bottom, bottom to top, and along diagonals. The letters may be used more than once (ie. words may intersect) but the smaller words are not meant to be subsets of larger words (ie. DISK is not included in DISKCOPY).

Once all the words have been located a number of letters will remain unused. These letters will, when suitably rearranged, form the answer to the folowing clue: REDWOOD GIANT.

ANSI, APPEND, ASCII, ASSIGN, ATTRIB, BACKUP, BASIC, BATCH (X2), BIOS, BIT, BYTES, CHKDSK, CLS, COMMAND, CPU, DATE, DEBUG, DEL, DIRECTORY, DISK, DISKCOMP, DISKCOPY, DOS, ECHO, EDLIN, END, EOL, ERASE, EXIT, EXT, FILENAME, FILL, FIND, FORMAT, HEX, INPUT, INTERRUPTS, JOIN, KEY, LINK, LOAD, LPT, MODE, MORE, OUTPUT, PAGE, PARTITION, PATH, PAUSE, PIPING, PRINT, PRN, PROMPT, QUIT, RECOVER, REM, RENAME, RESTORE, RUN, SET, SHARE, SORT, SPACE, SYSTEM, TIME, TREE, TTY, TYPE, VERIFY, VOL, XCOPY

Price Check

The "Phone-Shopper" made some calls around town to a few of the popular sources of computer equipment and supplies to determine what the "street prices" were of several popular software items. From time to time this column will provide some idea of pricing for computer needs around town. For questions or comments you may correspond to the "Phone-Shopper" c/o our regular club address or upload as an article c/o "The Newsletter".

Murray Kreisman

Product	Future Shop	Steals	Inly	Competition
Phone #	727-8881	228-7383	744-8307	592-2259
Dos Upgrade	$ 80.00	$ 88.88	$ 79.00	$ 80.00
Dbase III+(1.1)	N/A	598.00	475.00	520.00
Deskview 386 (2.4)	N/A	168.88	165.00	179.00
Deskview 386 (2.3)				150.00
Wordperfect 5.1	"280-ish"	298.88	295.00	300.00