OTTAWA PC NEWS

Vol. 10 No. 10 The Newsletter of the Ottawa PC Users' Group (OPCUG) December 1993

The PUB

Finding files on The PUB

by Chris Taylor, sysop

The PUB currently has several thousand files available for downloading. While this makes for a wide variety of programs, it also makes it more difficult to find the files you want.

Unless you know the exact filename, you have to start searching. The easiest way to find a file while on-line is to go to any file area under the ombined file section and use the ist command to look for text strings in the filename or file description.

For example, if you were looking for a mouse driver, you might use the command **L mouse driver**. This would find a file that has the description "... mouse driver for the Logitech mouse ...". Unfortunately it would fail to find a description of "... new driver for the Logitech mouse ..." because it does not find an exact match of "mouse driver".

Searching for single words often has the opposite effect of finding far too many files.

A search of **L mouse** would find lots of unrelated files, such as when the file description is "... supports a mouse ...". A search of **L driver** would also find lots of unrelated files such as video drivers, printer drivers, and the like.

So, while the list command is quite useful, it has limitations. Until now, the only alternative was to download the ALLFILES.ZIP file. It contains 59 files, one for each file area on The PUB. You could use your favourite editor or file viewer to browse the files off-line looking for what you want.

FolioViews

But now there is a much more powerful and elegant alternative. In addition to ALLFILES.ZIP, we now have PUB30NFO.ZIP which is available from any file area on The PUB. It is a FolioViews 3.0 infobase of all files available for downloading.

FolioViews is a full featured information retrieval system. In a single file is the full text of all file areas (as you see the listings on The PUB or in ALLFILES.ZIP) plus a complete index of every word within the list.

A powerful search engine allows you to quickly find information. Word searches, including using boolean operators, are lightning quick, returning results in well under a second.

Phrase searches are only a little slower.

A query dialogue box provides you with a list of all words in the document. As you type a search word in the query box, a highlight bar in the word list jumps to the nearest match. When it is on the word you want, you can press [Enter] to complete the word in the query you are building.

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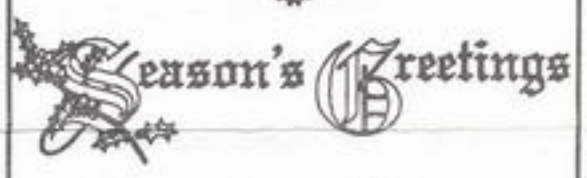
INSIDE



Finding files *continued from page 1*

Because the word list shows all words in the infobase, you can also see related words you may want to include in your query. An example may be if you are searching for accelerator information: if you start typing in the word accelerator, by the time you type acce, the following words are listed: accel, acceler, accelerates, accelerator, and accellerator. This allows you to find the file S3REPORT.ZIP where accelerator was misspelled in the file description, or MORT105.ZIP where acceleration was hyphenated.

You could also have Views return all cases of words starting with accel by typing **accel*** in the query box.

In addition to single word searches, you can use boolean operators. A search for:

mouse or joystick and game not arcade

would instantly give you the 34 records (in this infobase, a paragraph, or one filename/file description is a record) that have either the words mouse or joystick as well as the word game, but not the word arcade. Not only that, but an easy-to-follow tree diagram would allow me to see that there are:

- 182 records with the word mouse
- 13 with joystick
- 188 with either mouse or joystick
- 355 with the word game
- 39 with mouse or joystick as well as game
- 56 records with the word arcade

Allowing you to see this tree diagram as you build your search query makes it easy to broaden or narrow your search, and to end up with a manageable number of hits.

When you exit the query dialogue box, you can easy move from one hit the next.

Table of contents

Another nifty feature is the table of contents. You can access it by clicking on the TOC button. It shows the hierarchical structure of The PUB's file areas. Anything with a + beside it indicates an expandable branch, as in the application file area expanding into communications, database, etc. Double click on the + to expand the branch. It changes to a -, indicating it is collapsible by double clicking on the -. You can jump to any section by double-clicking on the text of the section title in the table of contents.

When you have performed a query, and then open the table of contents window, you see the number of hits found in each section, which allows you to focus in on the files you want.

For example, in the query "**mouse or joystick and game not arcade**", you can see that 26 of the 34 hits were found in the Games file area. Within Games file area, 2 were in adventure games, 9 in games of wit, etc. You could double click on adventure games and quickly jump to the files you want.

There are many other ways of searching. The Views program comes with an extensive help infobase that explains all the concepts in great detail.

Installation

To access the Views infobase of The PUB's files, you must also download and install the Views software, which is available as VIEW30-W.ZIP in the Text file area. Currently, there is only a Windows version available. Within a month or so, a DOS package should be available (to be named VIEW30-D.ZIP).

To install the Views program, unzip VIEW30-W.ZIP to a floppy or empty directory on your hard disk. From within Windows' Program Manager or File Manager, select File, Run, and type the path to the unzipped files, followed by SETUP. The setup program guides you from there.

A final note regarding files sizes. The file PUB30NFO.ZIP is rather large (currently just over 1.2 MB). However, when unzipped, it grows only about 87 K. ALLFILES.ZIP, which is only about 380K expands up to 1.2MB when unzipped.

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Correction

In the November newsletter, the review of the October meeting incorrectly identified the presenters from Microsoft. It was Andy Ives who presented with Bob Scowcroft, not Blair Spencer.

We would like to remind our readers that the meeting reviews are the opinion of the reviewer, and may not necessarily represent the views of the club or its members.

Multimedia: A moving experience

by Lynda Simons

The idea of a computer that sings and dances sounds great, but in real terms what use is it? On December 14th Greg Philliban of local company **Computer Aided Design**, plans to answer this question with a presentation on putting together an IBM-compatible interactive Desktop Video (DTV)/multimedia workstation using Autodesk Animator Pro and 3D Studio.

Multimedia defined

Multimedia: what does it mean to you? It's a term that currently appears in magazines and newspapers as if everyone knows exactly what it means. In fact, there are probably as many definitions of the term as there are people familiar with it. Greg, who has been in the computer graphics business for 25 years, has an interesting definition. "Think of it this way," he says. "For Desktop publishing your input device is your scanner and your output device is your laser printer. For multimedia your input device is your video camera and your output device is your VCR." This definition may surprise you: it did me, but it reflects Greg's focus on the Desktop Video aspect of multimedia.

Some graphic illustration

Greg will show us how business people and professionals are currently using these tools to communicate more effectively. We'll see how an advertising agency demonstrates with an animated storyboard how a new commercial will look. We'll see how the legal profession is using animation in the courtroom to help juries visualize events. In medical training too, doctors are using animation to show the progression of a disease or trauma. Architects can help clients who are struggling to understand blueprints by showing them an animated visualisation of the finished project.

For any of us trying to communicate with colleagues and clients, adding animation to a presentation to show the before, during, and after of a situation will surely make the message clearer, not to mention add some drama. If Greg can show us how to do this easily and inexpensively, his presentation will be well worthwhile.

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Calendar *(subject to change)*

General Meeting Location: Sir Robert Borden HS
131 Greenbank Road

General Meeting Time: 7:30 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Date and Time	Topic and Location
Tuesday, 14 December	See this page.
Tuesday, 25 January 1994	Lotus
Tuesday, 21 February 1994	WordPerfect

The first Internet SIG meeting is to take place after the general meeting on December 14 in one of the classrooms. The agenda is to determine the direction the SIG should take.

A sad loss: club secretary Robert Parkinson dies

by Lynda Simons

On Friday, November 26, 1993 at 10:50 a.m. Robert Parkinson died at the National Defense Medical Centre from lung cancer. His wife of 40 years had been taking care of him at home until just a few days before that. He was 63.

Robert had been club Secretary since January, 1992 until October of this year when his failing health forced him to resign.

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New FOX tools

by Andrew Ross MacNeill

At the last Fox SIG Meeting, members were introduced to one of the most innovative tools for FoxPro around, GENSCRNX.

GENSCRNX is hard to define with a single term; it extends FoxPro's Screen Builder to offer developers additional language support and screen drivers. In order to truly understand GENSCRNX, it helps to know how FoxPro builds screens.

Screen builder

FoxPro's Screen builder is made up of two parts: the Screen Painting or Definition tool and the actual Generation tool.

When users draw screens using either FoxPro for DOS or Windows, FoxPro stores screen information in an SCX file. (An SCX file is a FoxPro DBF or database file.) You can USE an SCX file in the same way you use a regular database. The difference is that the structure is preset and the information is usually filled by the Screen Painter. In order to generate a screen program, FoxPro calls a program called GENSCRN.

GENSCRN takes the SCX database and reads it line by line converting each record into lines of code. This results in the SPR file. Because FoxPro uses GENSCRN to create the SPR file, it is possible to change the GENSCRN program file to perform whatever actions you may want. The problem with doing this is that when a new version of FoxPro comes out, any changes you may have made to the GENSCRN program have to be recoded into the new GENSCRN!

GENSCRNX acts as a "pre" AND "post" processor to GENSCRN, eliminating the problem of GENSCRN maintenance. You call GENSCRNX instead of GENSCRN. This may be done by placing the line:

```
_GENSCRN="GENSCRNX.PRG"
```

either into the FoxPro configuration file or simply typing it in the Command Window. When FoxPro wants to generate a screen program, GENSCRNX copies the Screen file (SCX) to a temporary file, then calls the normal FoxPro GENSCRN and manipulates the SPR file that results from GENSCRN. The result is that developers are able to "tell" GENSCRNX to add, remove or modify screen objects during the generation process and these changes are implemented in the final SPR file but invisible in the SCX file.

GENSCRNX also provides screen drivers, programs that may be called at various times during the screen generation process. One such driver, included with the sample code for GENSCRNX, creates 3-dimensional objects in FoxPro for Windows. Since the drivers are simply FoxPro programs, it's easy to write your own.

In addition to GENSCRNX, there is also GENMENUX, a tool that controls the menu process much in the same manner. To get a feeling of the additional power you can add to your applications, download the following files from the PUB:

GENSCRNX

- GENSCRNX.ZIP (the GENSCRNX program)
- GEN3D.ZIP (the GENSCRNX 3D screen driver)
- 3DSAMPLE.ZIP (GENSCRNX 3D sample code)

GENMENUX

- GENMENUX.ZIP (the GENMENUX program)
- GENMXSAM.ZIP (GENMENUX samples)

New Fox tools on the PUB

- MIGRAT.ZIP, Microsoft FoxPro Migration Kit for dBase and Clipper. This kit will help con

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FOX tools *continued from page 4*

vert your SCR, FMT and PRG files into FoxPro screen files, reducing your startup time if you use Clipper or dBase.

- FOXMAPI.ZIP, Microsoft FoxPro Workgroup Extension Kit. If you have wanted to harness the power of MS Mail or Schedule into your FoxPro application, these tools are for you. They provide examples of using FoxPro to send, receive mail and verify and schedule appointments.
- PJSEARCH.ZIP, Project Search and Replace Utility. If you have ever needed to search and replace an entire project, this tool will become a quick favourite. It allows you to search and replace any string in a project, excluding specific objects and providing a full list of the changes it makes.
- MULTIW.ZIP, Foundation Read Example for FoxPro for Windows. If you want to learn how to create true Windows applications that use an event-driven interface, download these files that will give you examples of how to implement this very much sought-after technique.

Fox Events

The Microsoft FoxPro Developer Conference "Club DevCon" took place October 10-13 in Orlando, Florida. As well as being a great reason to enjoy Disney World and see other developers, the following new products were released :

- FoxFire 2.5. The new version of MicroMega's Report Writer offers cross-platform reports (DOS/Windows), a Setup Wizard to get you started faster, and so much more. We will be showing FoxFire 2.5 at our next meeting!
- MUPET. For those working in a network environment, this one's a must. MUPET stands for Multi-User Project Enhancement Technology. From Flash Management, it makes the Project Manager multi-user and adds tools like object control, sorting to the Manager. It also makes Version Control a lot easier. We will be showing MUPET at our next meeting as well.

Fox Tidbits

If you have ever needed to give a demonstration of one of your applications, it can be a chore. DemoMaker from EL Systems allows you to make interactive demonstrations simply by taking snapshots of your application and then manipulating the slides into your own "demo". The best part is that it all takes place in FoxPro so you can call FoxPro programs from within your demo without worrying about the user "breaking" the product. For more information, download the file DMAKER.EXE from the PUB.

Need FoxPro training? Want to use Rapid Application Development (RAD) techniques in FoxPro? Lisa Slater has put together a five-tape video package that offers developers tips, tricks, and insights into developing superior applications using RAD techniques. This package is $249 US. More information on ordering is available from Andrew Ross MacNeill.

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A sad loss *continued from page 3*

At the club, we tend to know little about each other's personal lives or backgrounds. I spoke to Mrs. Parkinson and discovered a little about Robert's life: it's amazing to think of Robert attending each of our executive meetings, quietly and efficiently taking minutes and never saying anything to indicate that he had ever done anything more enterprising or exciting than he was doing right then.

In fact, his 35 year army career took him to many interesting places and included some quite dangerous work such as flying reconnaissance missions. At one time he taught US soldiers low-level flying in helicopters. He retired in 1985 as a Lieutenant-Colonel a year after completing his last overseas posting to NATO in Heidelberg where he was responsible for the installation of computer communications between the bunkers and headquarters.

His work as club Secretary was much appreciated, but his value to the club went far beyond that. When he joined our club, some time after buying his first personal computer in 1986, he quickly became a beacon of knowledge. He wrote copiously about DOS, publishing many articles in the newsletter, and was a constant source of solutions to members' problems on the bulletin board. Despite his brilliance, he was never condescending: he was polite and charming in a way that is unusual today. He was a gentleman who will be remembered not just for his intellectual prowess but also for giving so graciously and generously of his knowledge.

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A different kind of bulletin board

by Dave Loan,
aa112@ncf.carleton.ca, NCF Board of Directors

When a small group of Carleton University staff got together over lunch two years ago, they didn't know what they were getting into.

They met to plan a 3 year pilot project—a public-access gateway to the Internet, the international networks of networks connecting universities, research facilities, governments, and businesses. The Internet provides e-mail, discussion groups, file transfer services and database facilities—but only if you have access to it.

Through their Internet travels, the Carleton group had discovered the Cleveland FreeNet. Founded by Dr. Tom Grundner of Case-Western Reserve University, the Cleveland FreeNet offered—for free—the services of the Internet combined with a community information database.

According to the 3-year plan, local community, health, advocacy, and other groups would be contacted to provide information through a text-based menu system. Members of the public would be able to connect by modem to a central computer. The group expected 10,000 users would be signed on by the end of the 3 years.

The National Capital FreeNet officially went on-line February 1, 1993. To date, there are 11,000 users and over 100 information-providing organizations connected through 65 phone lines. In fact, the demand is higher than the organization's ability to keep up—you are likely to get a busy signal if you try to connect between 5 pm and midnight during the week or any time at all on weekends.

At first glance, NCF seems behind the times in terms of the user interface. The system is menu-driven and supports basic ASCII text only. In fact, this is one of FreeNet's biggest strengths: by using the most basic operating system, NCF is available to any computer system—IBM, Apple, UNIX, Amiga, or mainframes. I even know someone who accesses FreeNet from a Sears word-processor. Similarly, the 2400 baud connections may seem slow, but they provide access to the most people.

Even if you don't own a computer (admittedly unlikely for readers of this article), you can connect to FreeNet. Public terminals in libraries, Regional Headquarters, and other locations provide easy access.

Unlike traditional BBS's, FreeNet does not offer software or games. It does offer international e-mail, the Gopher database search utility, and Usenet news—a huge collection of Internet discussion groups on topics ranging from the technical (comp.apps.spreadsheets) to the specialized (bionet.chlamydomonas) to the weird (alt.angst).

Local services include: TV listings from CBOT and CJOH; local and federal government information (talk to your city councillor); community associations; environmental and health information; local library catalogues; and SIGs on over 100 topics (business, arts, sports, computers, etc.)

NCF is run by a corps of volunteers, organized into an elected Board of Directors and a variety of committees. Two support staff have been hired—an office administrator and a sysop. Funding comes from a combination of government, industry, and private user donations. (While FreeNet is free to use, it isn't free to operate. New users are asked for donations when they register).

And the future? Volunteers are currently developing an off-line mail reader, multi-user chat and, most importantly, a bilingual menu that would allow agencies to upload English and French information. There are also thoughts about developing a new interface to be more user-friendly.

You can connect to FreeNet by setting your terminal software to 2400 baud, 8 bits, no parity, and 1 stop bit. Dial 780-3733. When you connect, hit "Enter" 3 or 4 times and login as "guest". If you wish to register, type "go register" and follow the on-line instructions.

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Understanding your system: part 4, Printers

by Eric Clyde

One of the original aims of the "computer revolution" was to bring about the "paperless office." However most users find that printed output is essential, rather than a luxury. Indeed, many claim that the computer has been the cause of the use of much more paper than ever before.

Printers for personal computers fall into the following categories: dot matrix, laser, and ink-jet. All work in essentially the same way, by translating the information sent by the computer into patterns of dots representing the characters or images to be printed on the paper. The smaller the dot size and the closer together they are, the crisper the image. Laser printers commonly available can print at a density of 300 dots per inch (dpi), and some are now available that can print 600 dpi. This still does not achieve the appearance of typesetting, which requires 1,000 dpi or higher.

Dot matrix printers

Dot matrix printers have a print head with nine or 24 pins. As the head travels across the paper, the pins are pushed down onto a ribbon, pressing it against the paper. Each letter requires one or more columns of dots. The output quality of the nine-pin printers is acceptable, but that of the 24-pin printers can be good. Dot matrix printers are usually very rugged, relatively inexpensive, but can be very noisy—if you are thinking of buying one, try to hear it in operation first! They are available in narrow or wide carriage format and, because the image is produced by impact, they can be used for multipart forms, hence their popularity in small businesses. They use continuous paper stock, and can print parts of pages as well as whole pages.

Laser printers

Laser printers are page printers—the dot pattern for the whole page is calculated before printing starts. The dots are written by laser on an electrostatically charged photoconducting drum. Where there is a point of light, the charge on the drum is changed. After a row has been written, the drum moves slightly to accept the next row of dots. The charged drum then comes in contact with a bin filled with "toner" (fine black powder), with the same electrostatic charge as the original charge on the drum. The toner is attracted to the oppositely charged portion, i.e., the image. The drum continues to turn and comes in contact with the paper, where the image is transferred. To make the paper image permanent, the paper is passed against a fuser (heater element). The drum itself is recharged to its original state, and the process starts again. Laser printers can produce superb output for text, but reproduction of photographs is not terribly good, except for the new 600-dpi models. Laser printers are more expensive than other types of printers, are more expensive to operate, and use a great deal of power, although some newer ones have a "quiet" mode that uses minimal power.

Ink-jet printers

Ink-jet printers, sometimes called the poor-man's laser printer, are similar to the dot matrix printers in that they have a print head travelling across the paper, producing one line of text in one pass. The letters are produced by fast-drying ink being quickly forced out of tiny holes in the print head, usually by minute heaters boiling the ink. These printers are very quiet in operation. They cost less than laser printers, but have fairly high per-page costs in operation. The output can be almost as good as those of a laser printer, although special paper is required for the best results. The technology also lends itself readily to colour printing. In early models, problems were experienced with some of the jets in the head clogging with dried up ink, but this seems to have been solved.

This has just skimmed the surface. Excellent diagrams showing how the different types of printers work can be found in the book, *How computers work*, by Ron White. Also, in the recent printer issue of *PC Magazine* (vol.12, no.20, Nov. 23, 1993) there is a summary of the pros and cons of each type.

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Ottawa PC News

Ottawa PC News is the newsletter of the Ottawa PC Users' Group (OPCUG), and is published monthly except in June and July.

Deadline
Deadline for submissions is the last day of the month prior to publication.

Mailing Address
3 Thatcher St.
Nepean, Ontario K2G 1S6

Telephone Answering Machine	723-1329
PUB (BBS) 8N1 2400 bps	228-0665
PUB (BBS) 8N1 9600 bps	228-1247
PUB (BBS) 8N1 14.4 kbps	228-8550

Chairman
Harald Freise 828-3411

Past Chairman
Doug Poulter 745-8768

Treasurer
Stan McRoberts 722-0849

Secretary
Claude G. Jarry (temporary) 521-3366

Membership Chairman
Mark Cayer 224-8031

Convenor
Lynda Simons 739-9318

Software Librarian
Norman Dafoe 723-1909

BBS Sysop
Chris Taylor 723-1329

Hardware/Software Broker
No appointment

Newsletter Editor
Chris Seal 831-0280

Assistant Editors
Julie Dustin 823-1552
Lynda Simons 739-9318

Newsletter Mail Coordinator
Herb Kelland 733-4259

Beginners' Corner
Eric Clyde 749-2387

FOX SIG coordinator
Andrew Ross MacNeill (voice/fax) 596-3313

DTP SIG coordinator
To be announced

WINDOWS SIG coordinator
Philip Baker 247-9555

Group Meetings
OPCUG meets monthly except in June and July. Check the answering machine, the PUB and the newsletter for the date and place of each meeting. Meeting times are 7:30 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Membership fees
$25 per year

Disk-of-the-Month
$25 for 5.25 ins. diskettes and $35 per year for 3.5 ins. (for 10 diskettes)

Finding files *continued from page 2*

Newsletters too?

There may be other Views infobases available in the near future. A pilot project is currently underway to evaluate the feasibility of having the old newsletters in Views format. Imagine the benefits of being able to easily find that old article with the information you desperately need right now!

Troubleshooting

When you run the Folio Viewer, if you get an error message indicating it can't find a file with a pattern of VWERxxx.DLL, where "xxx" is some three letters, your language code in Windows is set to something other than English American. There are two ways to fix the problem. You can change the language setting in Windows to English American, by choosing the International icon in the Control Panel (Windows' Main group). Or, if you look in the directory where Windows was installed, you can find the file VWERENU.DLL. Copy this file to the filename that the viewer complained was missing (such as VWERENG.DLL for English International, or VWERFRC.DLL for French Canadian).

Normal sort order of text is by ASCII code. For accented characters, this causes poor sorting, where a word beginning with an accented character is sorted after all the lower ASCII codes. When Folio releases their other language DLLs, this problem should be fixed, with the accented characters and non-accented characters sorted correctly.

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

Membership # *(if you are renewing)*

First name *Last name (please use caps.)*

Address *Apt. #*

City *Province* *Postal Code* *Country*

( ) *Home phone #* ( ) *Business phone #* ( ) *Fax #*

I use the following hardware: ☐ XT ☐ AT-286 ☐ 386 ☐ 486
(Check those that apply.) ☐ 300 baud modem ☐ 1200 baud modem
☐ VGA ☐ EGA ☐ Herc. ☐ 2400 baud modem ☐ 9600 baud modem

I would like to help in the following club activities:
(Check those that apply.)
☐ Programming Instruction
☐ Hardware techniques
☐ Newsletter Input
☐ Software library
☐ Promotion/Publicity
☐ Bulletin Board
☐ Other .....

I use the following software:

MEMBERSHIP FEE $ 25.00

Disk of the month subscription _____
($25/yr. for 5.25" or $35/yr for 3.5" 10 disks per year) _____

Cheque ☐ *Cash* ☐ TOTAL $ _____

Mail to: Ottawa PC Users' Group
3 Thatcher St., Nepean, Ont. K2G 1S6