



OTTAWA PC NEWS

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The newsletter of the Ottawa PC Users' Group

February 1998

Club News

PUB II update *by Chris Taylor*

In the January newsletter, I announced that PUB II might be up by the time you read that notice. I am happy to repeat that news—by the time you read this, PUB II may be up in operation. I now have an installation date from Bell of Thursday, January 29th for installation of the ADSL we will be using for our Internet connectivity. Add a couple of days for configuration of the system and we should be up and running.

For the pilot period, we will be taking the last line in the chain from The PUB (228-8951) and moving it over to PUB II. This means that if the first two lines on The PUB are busy and you call the main number for The PUB, you will end up connecting to PUB II. If you really do want to connect to The PUB, please just hang up and try again.

Or better yet, go ahead and log onto PUB II and let us know what you think!

I have been looking a bit closer at some of the options you will have for PUB II. It appears that the most attractive client software to use to access PUB II will be Mustang's Navigator client. There are versions for Windows 3.1 and Windows 95 and they tie into an existing web browser (Netscape Navigator or Microsoft's Internet Explorer.) You can use this client software even if you don't have access to the Internet, since it includes a virtual Winsock that allows you to use the browser while coming in on the dial-up line. It provides a very rich online experience. It will be available on PUB II for downloading.

If you prefer not to use Mustang's Navigator product, you can use either a standard browser if you want to connect from the Internet (you must already have an ISP for this) or you can use a standard terminal program such as Telix, Telemate, HyperTerminal, etc. to connect through the dial-up line.

When using the Internet and a standard browser, you have full functionality provided by HTML. Note that this is not as slick as the Mustang Navigator client which feels more like a standard Windows application than a browser. When using a terminal program through the dial-up line, you get a standard character mode interface.

Please keep in mind that we will be in pilot mode for a month. There may be significant changes from one logon to the next. It may also be necessary to have both The PUB and PUB II down for periods of time for configuration, moving files, etc. We will try to keep downtime to a minimum.

Hope to see you on-line!

Fly West for chicken wings after the meeting.

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Next meeting: **WEDNESDAY, February 4th, 1998**

Centrepont Technologies by Bob Cross

Our February 1998 meeting will take place (as always) on the first Wednesday of the month, February 4th at 7:30 pm in the auditorium of the National Museum of Science and Technology, 1867 St. Laurent Blvd. Everyone is welcome! You do not have to be a member to attend.

Concero

A representative of Ottawa-based **Centrepont Technologies** (<http://www.ctrpoint.com>) will be on hand to present their acclaimed product, "Concero Switchboard". Centrepont describes this highly acclaimed product as follows:

"Concero is a computer telephony, micro-PBX communications command center. More precisely a PC enhanced, 2 line/6 extension telephone system and line sharing device with Auto Attendant, advanced mobile telecommunications and fax scanning capabilities. Based on DSP technology, it is comprised of hardware, firmware and software (Win 3.x/Win 95). It integrates telephone lines, standard phones, remote telephonic devices (e.g., cellular/PCS phones and pagers), fax machines, modems and the PC into a single, manageable system."

"Concero provides the most extensive and advanced Remote Call Features Suite for mobile professionals and frequent

travelers. The Selective Call Forward Series allows for the forwarding of calls, either manually or automatically, to any outside phone number (e.g., cellular/PCS phone or pager)."

"Concero works with or without a PC, gives an automated environment of 'hands on or off' call answering, switching and routing. It is readily applicable to the SOHO setting — no rewiring or upgrading required. You just plug in your devices, configure it to meet your needs and let it take care of you."

Product Reviews:

Editor's Pick of the Year for *Phone Systems*!

"...a winner..."—*Home Office Computing*, December 1997

"... Smooth Operator..."—*Newsweek*, December 1997

"...A major-league PBX for your small office budget... enriched mobile telecommunications."—4 Star Rating for *PC Computing*, November 1997.



Calendar

Meetings	Date	Time and venue
OPCUG General Meeting	February 4: - Centrepont Technologies - Annual General Meeting	7:30 p.m. - National Museum of Science and Technology, 1867 St. Laurent Blvd.
	March 4: - DTP Presentation	
Desktop Publishing SIG	February 10: - Adobe Power Trio	7:30 pm - Griffin Computer Training Centre, 275 Slater St. (at Kent)
Ottawa Paradox Users Group	To be announced	6:15 pm - Inly Systems, 1221a Cyrville Rd.
FOX Pro/Developers SIG	To be announced	7:15 pm - Sir Jean Talon Building Conference room, Tunney's Pasture, Holland Ave. (north of Scott St.)

New deal from New Deal Inc *by Harald Freise*

If you remember a while back we had New Deal software in to show their amazing product called New Deal Office 97. If you can also remember they all worked on a 286 and provided a feature rich GUI interface and an excellent suite of products which worked quite well with one another. At that time there was a hint that Internet browsing might be possible. They haven't let you down. Yes it is true!

Not the fastest browser around but hey, this works! I loaded New Deal Office 98 on my trusty old 286 and with very little configuration was able to dial up my ISP and browse the net with a browser named Skipper. It only supports HTML version 2.0 and some of the graphic rich sites didn't appear the same as they would normally using a Netscape or IE, but none the less, the performance was good. Actually, INCREDIBLE, if you consider it was a 286 with a dual twist plasma display. It worked much better when I hooked up a 14,400 modem instead of using the 9600 baud modem that I tried initially. On a test 486DX2-66 with a 28.8 modem, browsing was quite acceptable. I then loaded New Deal Office 98 on my Pentium and 56K US Robotics X/2 modem and browsing didn't go any faster at all.

In writing this review I am using NewWrite while listening to the CD-ROM play music. I imported the following list of new features from files saved on my server over my network. New Deal Office saw ALL of the available network drives. I didn't ask it to... it just did it. How about that! Anyway here's that list of new features (and I quote);

- ♦ Internet Browser - HTML 2.0, drag & drop (Even on those old 286's)!
- ♦ NewBanker - a full featured banking application - keep track of your money!
- ♦ CD Player - play your favorite musical CD on your computer.
- ♦ Configure - customize the look & feel of your computer.
- ♦ File Finder - a small utility to help you find lost documents. A real life saver.
- ♦ Media Viewer - view all your graphics with this easy-to-use powerful application.
- ♦ Directory Lister - list all your files with this neat little application.
- ♦ Crossword Puzzle - another fun filled game for the whole family
- ♦ RTF filter - Import/export more documents to and from Windows & Mac applications

- ♦ HTML importing filter - Import HTML documents from the Internet
 - ♦ JPEG filter - Import/export JPEG graphics
 - ♦ New Video Drivers - Go all the way to 16 million colors in 1280x1024 resolution.
 - ♦ New Printer Drivers - Support for many new color printers. Ask about yours.
 - ♦ Sound Blaster Driver
 - ♦ 100% document compatible with previous versions.
 - ♦ Office Templates and Clip Art included.
 - ♦ New 300 page printed manual included.
- plus many more new features..."

New Deal Office 98 offers the same user-friendly benefits of previous versions and those of Geoworks Ensemble. So if you were waiting to upgrade to that Pentium II 300MHz so that you could browse the Internet, wait no longer. It is possible; it is now; even on a 286.

There is more good news. Ken Lemay, of New Deal Software, has extended the New Deal Software User Group special offering until February 15th. If you wish to take advantage of this offer; Here's how to order:

Call 1-800-985-4263 and ask for extension 553 (Offer expires February 15th, 1998) mention that Ken Lemay has graciously authorized this extension and state that you are a member, in good standing, of the Ottawa PC Users' Group.

Toll Free: 1-800-985-4263 extension 553
 Tel: 1-514-633-6370
 Fax: 1-514-633-6315
 Price: \$39.95 (limit of 3 per customer)

E-mail: orders@newdealinc.com

Canada: New Deal

P.O. Box 965

Pointe-Claire, Quebec H9R 4R6

Canada

(add \$8.95 S&H)

Continued on page 4

Living with Iomega's Zip by Duncan Petrie

After using a Zip drive for many months, I am happy to report that it has exceeded my desires as an inexpensive, reliable, "super floppy."

There are now several flavors of the Zip; the classical variants are: a parallel port (mine), an internal SCSI, an external SCSI and an internal IDE.

Recently announced is the premium-priced Zip Plus; it has a power switch and the ability to run as a parallel port device or as a SCSI device (with a card). SCSI units offer the best speed; however, for those who lack SCSI on their system the IDE or parallel port are the least expensive options.

The parallel port unit offsets (in my mind) the lack of speed with convenience; merely attach it to a computer's parallel port, install a single driver (GUESTEXE) and "do it." For those loathe to open the system unit or who have a portable this is easy. EPP/ECP parallel port equipped computers can implement an accelerator to speed data transfer.

The unit is light. Road warriors can obtain a smaller, lighter, power supply or a rechargeable battery. If you need to take work home; carry a Zip disk with data - not a portable - and work on your home machine.

Why a Zip? In these days of program bloat try to use a floppy for programs (even some data or graphics files). Backups of an operating system are possible - more convenient than 70+ floppies and easier for a novice than tape. The supplied software utilities offer 1-step backup/restore, disk-to-disk

copy, an application mover, a program cataloguer to speed retrieval and (some versions) a file synchronizer. Norton Utilities version 3 will implement an automatic boot disk creator utility (emergency boot disk) using a Zip.

Yes, there are other choices: Syquest's Easy Flyer has more capacity but is less readily available. The Shark is more compact, requires no external power supply and has greater capacity but is more expensive. The Imation LS120 is more expensive. The cartridges for any of these are significantly more expensive than the Zip's (individually about \$17 Cdn and less in quantity) and less widely distributed. The remainder of the offerings in removable storage are primarily high capacity devices (most hold 500+ MB) that are not in the same market: either capacity or price.

Recently, Blue Sky Innovations (Check them at www.blueskyinnovations.com) has offered ZppA and ZpA software that allows using the drive as a boot device (time-limited, trial versions are on the club BBS); other utilities present the Zip as a fixed hard drive to allow running recalcitrant applications from it.

Yes, time marches on and Zip will be replaced; however, given the installed base (over 6 million and counting) I expect that it will "hang tough" for many years.

Disclaimer: The author has no interest, financial or otherwise, directly or indirectly, in this company or its products.

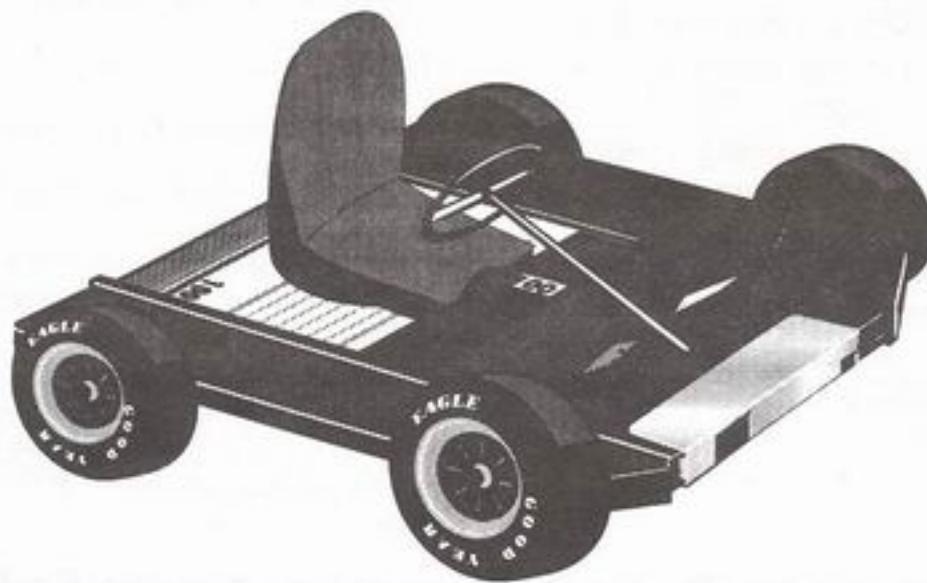


New deal from New Deal Inc (continued from page 3)

One of the shortcomings of previous versions of the program was that it saved its files in a propriety file format. Well no longer. As soon as I am finished this review I shall save it on another network drive. Export choices include a variety of popular word processors as well as RTF 0 and 1 as well as several versions of Word and WordPerfect.

All in all, one amazing product that performs very well on any of the Intel family of processors from a 286 on up to the latest

model. It outperforms many of the existing suites today while maintaining a pleasant user interface. It also goes a long way to extend the life of older machines while providing a feature rich GUI interface. Check out their website at [HTTP://WWW.NEWDEALINC.COM/](http://WWW.NEWDEALINC.COM/)



Q&A session *by Bert Schopf*

We started the new year off on January 13th with an open question and answer session at the DTP SIG. A three-person panel consisting of **Roy Chartier** (Art Director, JCA Design & Communication), **Dunc Petrie**, and **Bert Schopf** fielded questions from the small but charged group present. The ice storm seems to have thrown everybody's schedule off!

Hot questions (and answers) included:

- ✦ What are recommendations on buying a new scanner?
- ✦ What are the relative merits of SCSI vs parallel peripheral connections? (*Differing points of view*)
- ✦ Are Zip drives the way to go? (*A unanimous YES! See article page 4.*)
- ✦ How can I make my web graphics colour look good while maintaining small file size? (*Resolution and colour depth adjustments in paint programs*)
- ✦ I lost my toolbar in CorelDraw! How do I get it back? (*Reset user preferences*)
- ✦ Who makes a really good HTML editor? (*many varied responses*)
- ✦ How can I convert obscure graphics formats into a common standard? (*try CorelDraw or Photoshop import filters; also try Hijaak or DeBabelizer*)
- ✦ Recommendations on good guidelines for presentations? (*read Quantitative Display of Statistical Information by Edward Tufte, also look into How to Lie with Charts and Graphs*)
- ✦ Are PostScript emulators any good? (*sometimes*)
- ✦ How can I generate realistic drop shadows? (*various techniques*)
- ✦ Do you know any good comprehensive resource web sites? (www.i-us.com)

February 10 DTP SIG meeting

The DTP SIG welcomes Colin Smith and Paul Thériault of Adobe Systems to the February 10 SIG meeting. They will demonstrate Adobe's power trio of DTP tools: Adobe Photoshop, PageMaker, and Illustrator.

For more information, contact Bert Schopf at blackbird@cyberus.ca or by phone at 232-8427.



Wanted - HTML authors and artists

You always wanted to create or LEARN how to create HTML WEB pages but did not have a suitable opportunity? Well, wait no longer, because that opportunity is NOW!

With the new PUB coming on line we need someone to modify existing or create new HTML pages. If you really want a

challenge redesign the site for us!

If interested, please contact David Reeves. Worried that you have never done it before? Well, at one time no one knew how to do it but if you are willing to invest the effort, we will find someone to coach you along.

Don't wait because the site is going up fast....



We need the help of a graphic artist

The new PUB will have both a DOS and HTML interface. We are in need of someone to help modify existing or create new icons for some of the links of the HTML interface. Another option is collecting suitable icons from some of the public libraries on the Internet.

If you are interested in helping out, please contact David Reeves.



*Remember ...
Your talents are also welcome in the Newsletter
Phone Newsletter editor Bert Schopf*



Publicity Directors' report *by Bob Cross*

Over the past couple of months you will have undoubtedly noticed that our club has undergone some important and exciting change! This is largely the result of the efforts of the club executive implementing the recommendations contained within the Core Strategy Committee report of last year. The board has taken this report to heart and has made every effort to begin implementation of these recommendations as soon as possible. One change that is particularly noticeable resulted from the excellent work that David Reeves and the PUBII committee undertook in bringing our club into the 90's with the creation of our new website. I think you will agree that this is something that was long overdue and therefore a priority for us. Their efforts have resulted in a website in keeping with the high standards to which we all strive to maintain within the club. Over time, it will continue to evolve to meet the needs of our members.

One of the things that came as a pleasant surprise to me over the past year as OPCUG's Publicity/PR director was how well respected we are within the community. There is always need for improvement, but we are generally viewed as providing an excellent service to our members and to the public. As a simple example of this, look at our relationship with the National Museum of Science and Technology. Has it ever occurred to you that this relationship is, in and of itself, something we can be very proud of? How many other organizations do you see with a similar cooperative arrangement? Do you think this would be possible if we were not doing something right?

Consider for a moment why this is so. Why have we continued to grow and develop as a club? Why can we lay claim to being the oldest computer user group in the region and one of the oldest on the continent? The answer is quite simply, great people - our members ... YOU! The strength of any organization are the people at the foundation. NOT the people that "run the show". Look around you at the next meeting at the incredible pool of talent and experience seated nearby! OPCUG is nothing without you and your fellow members. The executive could sweat blood while working for the club, but without your support what would be the point? How could it work hard, how could the directors stay motivated without your physical (not just verbal) assistance?

Please keep this in mind when the club needs and asks for help from time to time. Especially keep this in mind at the upcoming Annual General Meeting in February. There will likely be a few openings on the executive board. Many of the current club directors and SIG coordinators have been "at it" a long time and have made the difficult but responsible decision to step aside to make room for some fresh faces, energy, talent and ideas. Consider helping in some way - no matter how small. I am certain all of you reading this have

something to offer your fellow members and probably a bit of time to spare? If you have an idea—share it, better still, offer to help make it happen. As I stated, our success lies with those of you reading this newsletter. Give it some thought! Heck, you might even have some fun in the process!

This being said, a variety of circumstances have made it necessary for me to tender my resignation from my position on the board. Upon reflection, I have concluded I can better serve the club in ways more suited to a VERY busy schedule. I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of you my sincere best wishes for the future, especially those of you who helped with the various projects for which I was responsible during my term. The friendship and camaraderie all of you exhibited during your participation provided many cheerful moments and made the sometimes difficult tasks at hand seem trivial.



Club news

PIG SIG *by Chris Taylor*

For years, the executive has often gone out for beer and wings after the OPCUG general meetings. While we never discouraged others from attending, nobody ever thought to encourage others to attend. I would like to rectify this by declaring the formation of a new SIG (Special Interest Group) to be known as the "PIG SIG"!



Due to its unique nature, the SIG will not meet at the museum. The location is the "Good Times" cafe at Shoppers City West, Baseline and Woodroffe, right behind the MacDonalds. They have a menu, but most people seem to favour the wings, which are very tasty and a bargain at \$.20 ea.

Membership, as with all SIGs, is purely optional. Attendance will not be taken and, like all other SIGs, there is no additional charge to join the PIG SIG (other than your consumables, of course.) There is no planned agenda beyond having a good time. The meeting starts when the first person arrives (generally after the other SIGs shut down) and ends when the last person leaves.

It's a great way to relax and have some fun. Why don't you join what promises to be the largest SIG of the Ottawa PC Users' Group.



OTTAWA PC NEWS

Ottawa PC News is the newsletter of the Ottawa PC Users' Group (OPCUG), and is published monthly except in July. The opinions expressed in this newsletter may not necessarily represent the views of the club or its members. Deadline for submissions is four Saturdays before the general meeting.

Group Meetings

OPCUG normally meets on the first Wednesday in the month, except in July and August, at the National Museum of Science and Technology, 1867 St. Laurent Blvd, Ottawa. Meeting times are 7:30 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Fees

Membership: \$25 per year.

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Club News

Swapmeet a success!

Thanks to all who helped with the Computer Swapmeet at the National Museum of Science and Technology on Saturday, January 17. It was a great success and gave the OPCUG added exposure to the public. Many people at the swapmeet stopped by our booth to inquire about the club, and others stopped by to pose computer-related questions to our knowledgeable booth staffers.

Many thanks to booth volunteers Bob Herres, Bob Cross, Morris Turpin, Bert Schopf, Duncan Petrie, Bob Walker, William van Dijk, and Fred Francœur.



Prize from the January OPCUG Meeting

by Mark Cayer

Jean Vaumoron was the winner of a copy of the DriveCopy software donated by PowerQuest.



Reuse, recycle

Bring your old computer magazines, books, or any other computer

paraphernalia you want to GIVE AWAY to the general meetings, and leave them in the area specified. If you don't bring something, you may want to TAKE AWAY something of interest, so look in on this area. Any item left over at the end of the meeting will be sent to the dumpster.

