COMPUTER CONNECTION

WE HAVE A NEW HOME AND IT'S A BEAUTY!

Good news. We've found a new home—a brand-new monthly meeting place! It is a pleasant environment, and it is located smack in the middle of Rockland County, a mere stone's throw from the Spring Valley Marketplace. Parking is plentiful, the area is well lit and no one will be hurrying us out the door.

Our May 13 meeting will be a shakedown cruise at our new location—the auditorium of the Rockland Conservatory of Music. On the next page Stan Smith will discuss some of the logistics and our responsibilities as guests. On page 3 you will find road directions to help you find your way.

It is fitting that at this inaugural meeting our program will be entrusted to our own members, all of them familiar faces at RPCUG. Steve Weinberg, whom many of us first encountered at one of his popular computer disassembly sessions, will demonstrate the Windows version of Traveling Software's Laplink, an invaluable tool for those of us who need to transfer material from one PC to another. (A copy of Laplink will be raffled at the end of the meeting.)

After the Laplink demo, Steve will unveil the new RPCUG Web site. He has become our first Webmaster and, working with others, has designed what is shaping up to be an extremely useful Internet presence for our group. Steve has asked for feedback on the site. Why not view it in advance by pointing your browser to *http://www.rpcug.org.*

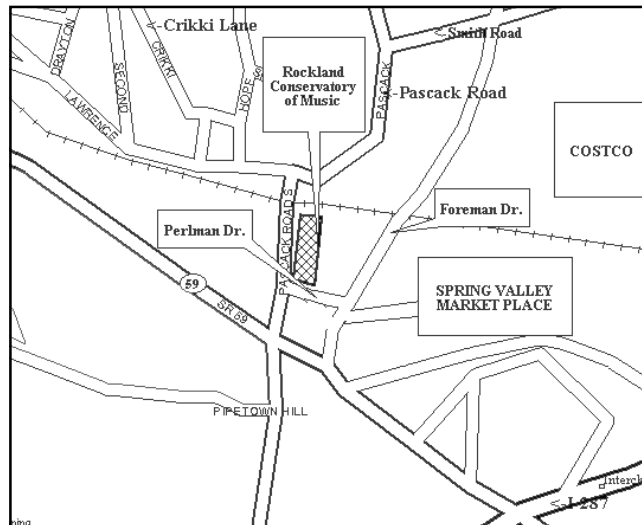Continuing the evening's theme of electronic communication, Jane Treubig, our BBS SysOp and Communications SIG leader, will discuss the many reasons for members to use a BBS and our own BBS in particular. Jane has also promised to make it easy for new users to log on to the RPCUG BBS by providing copies of a pre-configured communications program that will automatically set up and log onto the RPCUG BBS.

If time permits, Stan Smith will round out the presentation with a sermon on how hardware and application problems can be resolved by means of electronic tech support.

In addition to the raffled copy of Laplink, Traveling Software is offering special pricing for our members. We'll be able to purchase Laplink for $99 instead of $149 (that's a 33% discount!) and their Web enhancing product, Webex, for a mere $29.

So come on out! Show your enthusiasm and support by joining us at our new home at the Rockland Conservatory of Music in Spring Valley on May 13. ∎

MEETING SCHEDULE

Rockland Conservatory 7:30 P.M.

Tuesday, May 13 – Member Speakers
Tuesday, June 10 – Quarterdeck
Tuesday, July 8 – Adobe

(All are welcome)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Stan Smith

Last month I was not able to complete a President's column. That was the first one I have missed since I became President. As our editor explained last month, I was busy scouting meeting locations. That quest (thankfully) has come to a successful conclusion.

First some bad news: several members were denied admittance to our April meeting in the New City Library. I apologize for that situation, but after we pushed to (and past) the maximum safe meeting capacity as determined by fire regulations, we had to close the meeting to further members and visitors. (But, remember, I warned members to arrive on time.)

Now the good news: we have a new permanent meeting home and location. As you have seen on page one, we will be meeting at the Rockland Conservatory of Music in Spring Valley. (Directions are included on page 3 of this issue of **ComputerConnection**.)

The Conservatory auditorium will hold up to 150 attendees, so we shouldn't have a space problem. It is centrally located, has plenty of well-lighted parking, and is bright and cheerful. There are even padded chairs, so we will have additional comfort during our meetings. We have purchased a projection screen that is optimized for our type of display needs, and the Conservatory has agreed to store the screen for us so that we will not have to transport it.

As with the Church of Religious Science, we will have to set up and take down some tables and chairs. We will also need volunteers to direct people for the first few meetings. I am requesting that several people arrive at 7:00 P.M. on May 13 to assist. I am also requesting Gerry Lee, our secretary, to maintain a list of two volunteers for each meeting who will insure that the setup/breakdown is completed and that members have someone to assist them at our new location. Please contact Gerry (at meetings or at 354-3286) to volunteer to help at one or two meetings.

There are several rules: no smoking inside the building in any area; the side classrooms/studios must not be entered for any reason without the authorization of an RPCUG officer; the kitchenette must only be used with authorization from an officer; refreshments must be handled neatly, and any contact with the Conservatory staff or their students/guests must be cordial and professional. If any problems or questions arise, immediately contact an RPCUG officer.

Since we can once again offer light refreshments, we'll need a volunteer to handle that activity. No volunteer, no refreshments.

This is a fine facility, and I am looking forward to holding our meetings there.

Many members made meeting location suggestions and we thank them. (The contact for the Conservatory came from Sy Ribakove. Thanks, Sy.) Numerous people assisted in the search for a new location. I also thank them.

PC Expo

PC Expo returns to the Javits Convention Center in Manhattan on June 17–19. There are changes this year: the sponsoring organization has changed from the Bruno Blenheim Organization to Miller Freeman Group USA, Inc. This change won't mean much to us as attendees, but we have had some new people to deal with in making arrangements for members' guest passes to the vendor exhibits. This year's event will be bigger and better than ever. In addition to PC Expo there will be concurrent shows featuring WEB.X, Networks Expo, and MacOS Expo. I suspect that the convention center will really be full this year. It will certainly take more than one full day to see everything!

The exhibit hours are: June 17-18 from 10:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. and June 19 from 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.. (Many vendors begin packing up their displays starting at 3:00 P.M. on the last day, so plan to see your important vendors as early as possible.)

Again this year we will have complementary, no-charge admission for our members to the vendor displays and exhibits. Mail-in forms will be available at our May meeting.

An easier way to enroll, however, is to use the Web registration site at *http://www.pcexpo.com/reg.html.* Follow the instructions and use Source Code **GP97** on the second page as the source of your information. This will authorize a no-charge registration. (If you do not use the **GP97** code, you will be required to supply a credit card number that will be charged $65 for a three-day ID badge.) This Web registration site requires a browser that supports frames (e.g., Netscape Navigator 3 or Microsoft Internet Explorer 3). If you do not have a browser with frame support, you will have to use the mail-in forms.

As in the past, I plan to be at Expo two or three days. There is just that much valuable information available and contacts to make. I recommend that anyone who has more than a casual interest in personal

DIRECTIONS TO MEETING PLACE

7 Perlman Drive in Spring Valley

Effective May 13, 1997 the Rockland PC Users Group will hold its main monthly meetings at the Rockland Conservatory of Music in Spring Valley. The Conservatory is centrally located in the county, has plenty of well-lighted parking, comfortable seating for up to 150 people, and a very pleasant atmosphere. We can count on a consistent second Tuesday of the month for future meetings. Our meeting time of 7:30 p.m. will not change.

The building, 7 Perlman Drive, is very easy to locate. It is just around the corner from the Spring Valley Marketplace. Perlman Drive lies between Route 59 and the Spring Valley Marketplace. It is a very short road that connects Foreman Drive (the entrance to the Spring Valley Marketplace) and Pascack Road. See the larger page one map for a better look.

7 Perlman Drive is located in the two-story Pascack Plaza on the north side of Perlman Drive. The Conservatory occupies the second floor in the center of the shopping center. The Educational Warehouse and Discovery Zone are also in the same center. (Pascack Plaza is directly across the street from the three-story Pascack Healthcare Institute.) There is ample parking in front of the building.

Overflow can be handled by the adjacent two-story parking structure on the right.

Each store/tenant has a separate outside entrance door. The entrance for the Conservatory is about one-third the way from the Perlman Drive side of the building—look for the number 7 on the door and the Rockland Conservatory sign in a window on the second floor.

Enter the double doors. A stairway to the second floor is on the right. An elevator is on the left for those who require it. Once on the second floor, turn left. The entrance to the auditorium will be marked.

From Palisades Parkway (North or South)

Exit onto the New York State Thruway (exit #9, North/West, toward Albany). Follow directions below from the New York State Thruway.

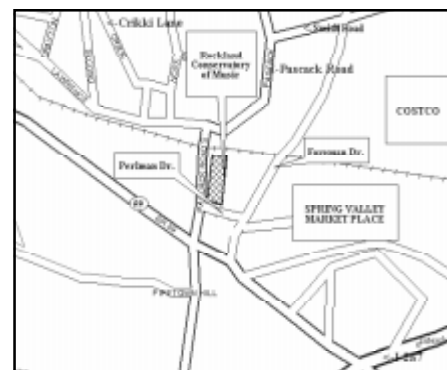### From the New York State Thruway (South/East or North/West)

Exit the New York State Thruway at Exit 14 (Route 59, Spring Valley). Turn Right (West) onto Route 59 at end of the exit ramp. Follow directions below from Route 59 Westbound.

From Route 59 Westbound

Turn Right onto Foreman Drive at the traffic light. Foreman Drive is the first traffic light after the Northbound entrance to the New York State Thruway. (Be sure that you do not turn too early and enter the Northbound New York State Thruway.) Turn left at the first traffic light, Perlman Drive. Pascack Plaza is on the right at the end of the block.

From Route 59 Eastbound

Turn Left onto Foreman Drive at the traffic light. Foreman Drive is the first traffic light after passing McDonalds in Spring Valley. Turn left at the first traffic light, Perlman Drive. Pascack Plaza is on the right at the end of the block. ■

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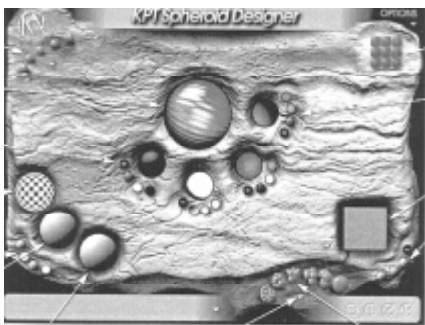|	
Review Coordinator	Stan Tishler
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DIGGING DISTORTION

by Stan Tishler

Last month in **ComputerConnection** we showed some of the magical things that can be done with Photoshop. Photoshop is based on Adobe's open plug-in architecture. This means that third party developers can create filters for Photoshop—filters that make it possible to change textures, sharpen, distort, blur or perform a myriad of other enhancements to a photo (or any importable image).

   Kai's Power Tools 3(KPT) from MetaTools, Inc. is a uniquely weird series of filters that can be invoked directly from within Photoshop. There are parts of Photoshop that mystify me but using KPT for the first time was like trying to understand quantum mechanics. Working with the filters is not difficult (working is not understanding) as long as you're willing to make frequent use of the Undo command. **Kai's Power Tools** has to be the least intuitive software I have ever used.

   What is surprising is how well the filters

work as you press various buttons, panels and other odd-shaped objects that are scattered around the interface. The *Spheroid Designer* interface is shown below.

   Some of the controls get pushed, some get turned, some get twirled. Even after careful reading of the manual, it was still mostly trial and error. There is a good context help screen available if you can figure out what to click to turn it on.

   If all of the above sounds like I don't like the program I've misled you. It is not only fascinating and intriguing, it is also fun. The results can be startling to say the least. You need to use the filters for a while and get used to the quirky method of handling the assorted buttons and controls. After a while I found that I was making a lot less use of Undo. Note, however that KPT provides thirty-five levels of Undo. Would that Photoshop, with its stingy single Undo level were a tenth as generous.

   I've shown what some of the filters can do across the top of this page. While you may wonder why anyone would want to distort pictures of a normal looking child, these special affects can be seen all around in ads, in movies, on book jackets, on television, etc. They do make for some dramatic viewing.

   The first picture is one of the simplest; it just adds a curl to the picture. The curl

can be any size and added in any corner. I've seen this effect numerous times in magazines and on TV. The middle picture is how the photo would look viewed through a lens or through the bottom of a glass bottle. In this case the effect is superimposed on the original picture. The picture on the right ads a twirl to the original photograph.

   KPT is an interesting Photoshop accessory. Priced at around $125 (street) it's expensive for the casual user, but I would guess that every professional computer graphic designer treasures a copy.

   It runs in Windows 95 or NT, requires 16 MB of RAM and an application that supports Adobe's plug-in architecture. ∎
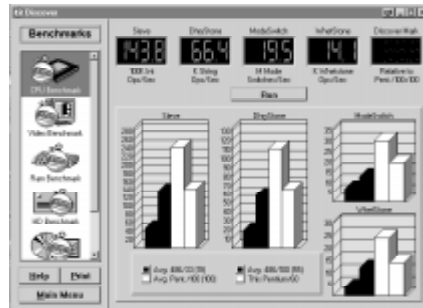
MEMORIES ARE MADE OF THIS

by Steve Weinberg

Hurricane v.2.03 from Helix Software Co. is a battery of Windows and Windows 95 utilities designed to enhance memory performance. Here's what you get:

RAM Expander frees physical memory by collecting unused memory fragments, thus allowing larger and more concurrent applications to run without evoking the dreaded Not Enough Memory message.

Winpack adds an interesting button right next to the Minimize button on the title bar of Windows programs. Its function is similar to Minimize, but it also compresses the minimized application to free additional physical memory. For me, this produced a physical memory saving of 5% to 7%. Then, there's a dynamic *RAM Drive.* Here, the emphasis is on dynamic because the RAM drive grows or shrinks as necessary to accommodate storage requirements. No more configuring RAM drives too small, too large or maintaining multiple boot configurations. I suspect that, with such speedy machines available, not many people are using RAM drives these days. However, this is a very useful utility for anyone with a slower system. At system boot, when the RAM drive is created, it is assigned a drive designation one letter past the last hard drive. For those of us with CD-ROM drives, this may mean changing the designation of the CD-ROM drive in all our CD-ROM based applications unless we've had the foresight to use a letter for the CD-ROM that allowed for growing room between the last hard drive partition and the CD-ROM.

Print Cache allowed me to continue working at normal speed in my application while my print job slowly spooled out to my printer. A bit too slow, I thought. Easy fix, just pop up the *Print Cache* window and change from Low to Medium or High priority.

Wingauge provides indicators for physical memory, virtual memory and all sorts

of memory-related items as well as CPU utilization. Lights come on when any dangerous situation occurs. Lots of nice displays for the techies. Fortunately, no lights came on for me.

Discover gave me a profile of my system that was almost accurate. It said I had three parallel ports instead of one and only one hard drive partition where there were actually four. It found the additional three in the detailed look at the hard disk. Also, it reported my CD-ROM drive to be a SCSI type rather than IDE. It also calculated file slack space for each partition and ran some generally informative benchmarks that produced nice graphs.

All in all, this is a good bundle of utilities, with a comprehensive manual that tells more than anyone needs to know about memory. There are excellent displays, an easy and non-intrusive install, an easy uninstall, and solid applications to help tune one's system to peak performance. **Hurricane** is a worthy $39.95 purchase for anyone whose system has limited memory. ∎

QUICKEN 6 FOR WINDOWS FOR BUSY PEOPLE by Peter Weverka; Osborne/McGraw-Hill; 280 pages; $22.95; ISBN 0-07-882243-2

Since Quicken 6 comes with a 116-page User's Guide and extensive online Help, why would anyone shell out $22.95 for another book on the subject?
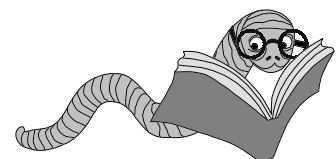
The author has obviously thought a lot about how to help the busy user, and has

come up with an approach that makes his book worth the price. The For Busy People features allow you to get into a subject only as far as you need to, to accommodate your level of expertise or your desire to explore. Each chapter starts with a short section called Fast Forwards—an outline of what is covered in the chapter with a reference to the page where the reader will find a detailed explanation. Often the Fast Forward is all you need in order to use that particular feature, especially if you are already familiar with Windows and analytical financial tools.

Margin notes identify shortcuts, cautions, definitions, and strategies for using Quicken to the fullest extent. This also is a time saver: you get the essentials without being overwhelmed with details .

There are fourteen chapters in all, starting with The Bare Essentials and ending with Going Online with Quicken. The first two chapters have you setting up your bank and credit card accounts and entering transactions. The last two chapters have you analyzing your investments and going online to update your investment data or use online banking services. In between you learn how to write or print checks, reconcile accounts, set up budgets, categorize your income and expenses, and use the built-in reporting tools.

I recommend the book, certainly to those new to Quicken, but also to those already familiar with earlier versions. The author knows a lot about financial analysis and controls. His approach should save you time and is also more fun than clicking on all of those on-screen Help submenus.   *Reviewed by Joe Reeves*

POWER GRAPHICS

by John Iurica

I really dreaded writing this review. There are so many parts to **Micrografx Graphic Suite 2** and so many wondrous things that I did not know where to begin or what to include. I can tell you this: If I were allowed to have one, and only one, graphics program on my machine, this would be it.

Installing the whole suite can consume 371MB on your hard drive. You might consider only installing some of the programs. Bear in mind that there are 250 fonts and many filters that are common to many of the programs. Also, there are four CD-ROMs containing over 35,000 pieces of clip art, photos and vintage illustrations. **Graphics Suite 2** is Microsoft Office 97-compatible, which means you can add 32-bit graphics to all your Office 97 documents. It even uses the same tools as Office 97. One of these days, I might have to give up using Wordstar.

Picture Publisher 7 is my favorite module. I use it to scan photos and other documents and then to manipulate and edit them to produce the pictures that I want. I think of **Picture Publisher** as an easy Photoshop, a program I rarely try to use anymore. I am tired of sitting with a Photoshop book in my lap to guide me through the steps every time I needed to do something. If you need to look up anything in **Picture Publisher,** the answer is so simple that you never need to look it up again.

My next favorite module is **Designer**, a vector-based drawing program. I am going to show you how **Designer** helped me through one of my jobs. A client needed a contour map of his property for calculations to be presented to the Planning Board. (Contour maps are available on disk from the government in DXF format.) I imported the appropriate contour map into **Designer**. If you buy the complete map containing all the roads and buildings you will find that a dozen layers have been imported into your drawing. Each layer contains a single element—

for example: "fences." You can change the line weights, styles, colors, etc. on every fence on the "fences" layer with a single stroke without affecting anything else in your drawing.
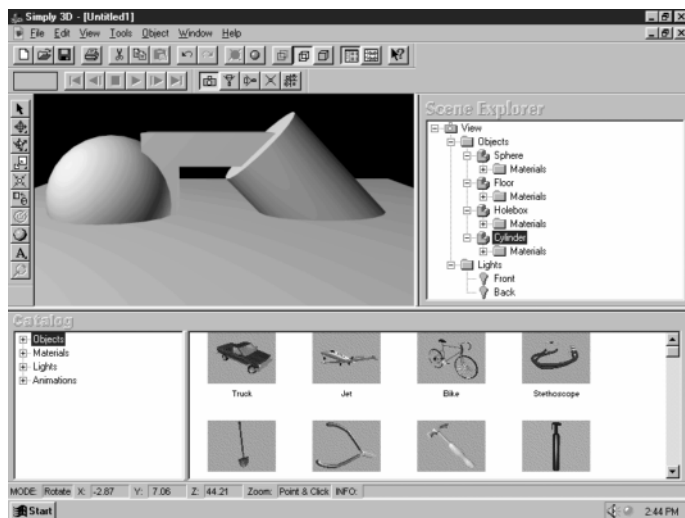
Next, I located a copy of the property survey. **Designer** was able to draw the survey (on a new layer) based on the azimuths and the length of each boundary course. Of course, whenever you plot a survey from written bearings it never quite closes, i.e., meets in a perfect polygon. You may also find that the survey is not positioned correctly with respect to the contours and roads. With **Designer** you simply "tug" at the lines ever so slightly, and by changing their lengths or angles force a perfect closure. In addition, the government contour map contains no boundary line information. I simply selected the survey layer and the survey itself as a whole and moved and rotated it so that it fit properly on the contours. Cues were taken from buildings and other physical features shown on both the contour maps and the client's original survey.

The Planning Board wanted the map drawn with two foot contours but the DXF files supplied were done in five foot contours. **Designer** solved this problem by inserting continuous lines between the five foot contours. With that done, I printed a copy to check at the site. A few spot elevations helped to verify the drawing. If I needed changes, all I would have to do is load in the drawing and tug at some of the lines. Tugging can also be used to put some curvature onto straight line segments. **Designer** can draw dimension lines and correctly mark the scaled distances automatically, thus enhancing the drawing.

Graphics Suite 2 has a component called **Quick Silver** that allows you to place vector graphics, bitmaps, and text on the Web, complete with effects for interactivity and animation. It will produce transparent animated GIFs and export as VRML.2. There is also a component for investigating URLs and downloading Web pages including the page jumps. Those of you who want to do this will know what I am talking about.

Micrografx **Flow Charter** is also included. I really could never understand the bundling of this program with the above group especially since better flow charts can be produced with **Designer**. **Flow Charter,** instead of having you draw boxes and other shapes, lets you pick them from a pre-made assortment and plops them into a drawing. It allows you to connect the shapes with lines and insert text. When you move a box or a shape, the lines automatically reroute themselves. You can even plop a new shape into the middle of a connecting line and the line will break automatically and connect itself to each side of the new shape. This module is for people who need to make frequent massive changes to their

THE HEALING TOUCH

by Nancy Ribakove

Upon first looking at the necessarily simplified shiatsu lessons included in the **Digital Shiatsu** CD-ROM, the phrase "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing" kept flashing through my mind. Shiatsu is a type of pressure massage which is directed at the very same points into which thin needles are placed in acupuncture. Since I am well along in my formal studies of shiatsu, I know that it is an art which requires the kind of knowledge and sensitivity that can only come from years of study. Still, I was interested to find out whether a single CD could provide anything of value to the average user.

Digital Shiatsu is, for the most part, very nicely done. The main menu gives you a choice of Total Body (for giving shiatsu to another), Self-Shiatsu techniques and Shiatsu Therapies for a number of ailments common to those of us who are living stressed lifestyles. The Main Page also presents a graphic of a stylized human showing the acupuncture points that will be covered. Click on the arrow beneath this little guy and he turns, showing you all sides. Click on Labels below this picture, and the names of anatomical regions appear. In addition, if you click on Shiatsu Basics, you can read a minimal, albeit adequate, description of the theory behind Oriental medicine, important points on technique and some very serious cautions about when not to treat.

The real heart of **Digital Shiatsu** lies in the gorgeous and atmospheric videos. Text has been honed to its most succinct form: every word is important. For example, the few sentences on technique in the Shiatsu Basics section are the only place where you are told the all-important proper position for giving shiatsu: arms straight, stable position (you have to figure out what constitutes "stable"), lean into it. Serious students spend months getting this right. On the other hand, if you watch the films closely, you can get a good feeling for how to lean in and how much pressure to use.

So—let's go to the video tape!—for here lies the real value of this program. Each demo has a sound track describing technique and supplying information about some of the points to press. Above each film clip a written description appears and, to the side, a graphic showing the location of points. To my surprise, when I first ran the program, it took off like the Sorcerer's Apprentice. It took quite a bit of fumbling before I figured out that I could click on the Time-Line at the bottom of the screen to pause it. That particular bit of info was unfortunately left out of the rather sketchy instruction sheet. I finally came across it in the ReadMe. However, the good news is that the **Digital Shiatsu** CD is basically very simple to use and most people will probably be able to figure it out.

Occasionally the demos are a little confusing—like the place where the voice-over talks about the important Hundred-Gathering Point, but because of the way the film is edited, we never see the model actually press it. There is also at least one place where the model is incorrectly demonstrating a self-shiatsu technique, her thumb pointing in the wrong direction. These are only minor flaws, given the simplistic nature of the techniques shown. The films for the most part, are artistically done and all the information you need is pretty much there. Still, even a small booklet with a little bit of clarifying information on technique, how to find the points with respect to anatomical landmarks, how they feel under hand, how they feel for the one receiving therapy, etc., could really have brought this program to another level entirely and made it a much more powerful tool for learning.

As it stands, **Digital Shiatsu** is not going to turn anyone into a shiatsu therapist, but neither is it without value. There are 360 pressure points on the body. The diagrams showing locations of the relatively few points chosen for this program are only accurate enough to insure that anyone using it will be, perhaps, "in the ball park." For its limited purposes, however,

self-shiatsu · shiatsu therapies · therapy

5. From the inside corner of the eye, apply three-finger pressure outwards along the infra-orbital points. Press down gently on the cheekbone, and follow the points up into the temples. Follow the temple points towards the ear. Apply treatment in a similar direction along the supra-orbital points, now pressing up along the brow bone. Continue again along the temple points.

supra-orbital region

infra-orbital region

temple points

HEAD

seated position

temporal points		nasal region		cheekbone	
1	3		5		7
temporal median	2 forehead	4	eyes	6	jaw and chin

DIGITAL SHIATSU

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

(continued from page 2)

computing plan on attending. Some of our members feel that it is even worth taking a vacation day or two. I also recommend that several members car pool to save parking, toll, and gas expenses. See you there!

Secret Guide to Computers

RPCUG has several times in the past obtained for distribution to our members the popular book title **Secret Guide to Computers.** Russ Walters. the author, is currently producing a new version—due to be published in May.

This is a highly recommended reference (or tutorial) resource. Russ' easy-going, colloquial style is easy to comprehend. It is an excellent book for both beginners and the experienced. It is logically organized and comprehensive. It is also updated frequently, so if you have a copy that is several years old, it's time to update your own copy. The new version, of course, covers Windows 95.

The book retails for $14.95. Once again, we are going to have copies available for our members at $9. If you are interested in a bargain copy of this worthwhile book for your own library, or for a friend or a gift, contact Gerry Lee, our secretary, at meetings or at 354-3286 . We might have copies at the May meeting, so bring nine dollars or your checkbook. And our treasury gets a modest boost from each purchase. A win-win situation for all.

Beginner's SIG

For personal reasons, Thom Kirby, our Beginner's SIG leader, has moved to California. We wish Thom and Allison well in their new home. And thank both of them for the support they have given to the group!

However, that leaves us without a leader for this important group. Until this situation is resolved, there will not be any more Beginner's SIG meetings.

Is there a PC instructor among our members? Have any of you wanted the opportunity to share your PC knowledge with others? Have you been frustrated and disillusioned by other PC courses you've attended and thought, "I could have done a better job than our teacher?" There are many in our group who have the requisite knowledge to lead a beginner's group. How about one (or several) of you stepping up and volunteering to guide this important activity. Assisting and teaching newcomers is a large part of what a user group is all about. Help us and your fellow members out.

RPCUG Internet Presence

Steve Weinberg and his Web team have been hard at work creating our Web site. Even though it is still under construction, you can view it at *http://www.rpcug.org.* Isn't that easy to remember? Please visit the site soon and often. We are interested in your thoughts and ideas. Each page provides a convenient way to send comments to Steve, our Webmaster. If you see something that isn't working quite right, have an idea for something to be added or improved, or any comment at all, just click on the Webmaster link to open an e-mail window and communicate your thoughts to Steve and the rest of us. There is still time to get involved in this activity if you desire to learn and contribute. Contact Steve Weinberg at meetings or at 638-3608.

We also want to thank Ron Bucell, President of American Computer Distributors, Inc. (ACD), for volunteering to host our Web site. ACD is generously providing the necessary hardware and access resources for RPCUG to have an Internet/Web presence. Show your appreciation and support of this RPCUG benefactor by visiting the ACD Web location at *http://www.acd-pc.com* and considering them as your local Internet Service Provider. ACD offers a complete range of personal and business Internet services, including designing commercial Web sites and providing Web-based electronic commerce capabilities.

Our Great Volunteers

Recently I have acknowledged the contributions of volunteers Sandy Coulter, Buzz Lorch, Sy Ribakove, and Stan Tishler. This month it's time to sing the praises of Steve Weinberg.

Steve has served as our secretary, our PC disassembly class leader and our coordinator of computer fair representatives. He is a prolific product and book reviewer. Most recently, Steve has become our Webmaster. Steve has seen the opportunities and acted: for example, he has arranged for several outdated computers from merchants he patronizes to be donated to RPCUG when he saw that they were about to be discarded. He is always willing to assist another member with a problem and answer questions. In short, he is a volunteer's volunteer. Thanks, Steve; your help is appreciated!

I also want to mention Ken Whittaker's continued contributions to RPCUG. Ken, alas, is also moving out of our area, so we will miss his participation. Ken was a regular product reviewer and the Whittaker family was always ready and willing to prepare our newsletters for mailing. Whenever the Clarkstown South Life Skills Students were on vacation, I could depend on Ken, Colleen, and their kids. We'll miss you Ken. Good luck and stay in touch with us.

These members (and more of you to be identified in the future) are what makes a good user group. Volunteers provide life

(continued from previous page)

and sustenance to a group like ours. Thanks guys and gals. Keep it up! Persuade others to play a role!

Meeting Notes

I have, again, been long-winded, so I will keep these meeting notes short.

In March, the Prio representatives were most generous, providing eight pairs of glasses (including frames) valued at about $200 each to our members. I am looking forward to the reviews that will soon be completed by our reviewing members. We thank Prio for their generosity.

Last month, U.S. Robotics (USR) showcased their X2 technology which allows modems to communicate at up to 57,600 bits per second (bps) over standard voice-grade analog lines. And how many of you knew that they also manufactur palmtop computers and superior conference-grade full-duplex speaker phones? USR was also very generous to us. They gave all attendees a user group discount form that offered really unbelievable pricing. All models in their modem line were available. USR offered pricing well below reseller wholesale pricing (e.g., they offered for $111 modems that retail for $229 and are sold every day by discounters for $180). They also provided fifteen T-shirts and eight coffee mugs as door prizes. Again, thanks USR.

In May we are reviving our popular member-led presentations and discussions. See the front page for details.

See you on *Tuesday, May 13* at 7:30 P.M. at the Rockland Conservatory of Music, 7 Perlman Drive, Spring Valley, NY. ∎

COMPUTER TRAINER'S PERSONAL TRAINING GUIDE by Bill Brandon, et al.; Que Education & Training; 312 pages; $49.99; ISBN 1-57576-253-6

If you are a computer trainer or are considering becoming one, this is the reference book for you! It is designed and written by twelve expert computer trainers for both the new and experienced computer trainer. The personal experiences of the authors combined with the sidebar training tips contribute to the book's effectiveness.

The fifteen chapters cover everything from training basics to the future use of the Internet. The material is organized in an easy to read, jump-in-anywhere style. The comprehensive table of contents and index enables readers to find just what they need.

I teach telecommunications courses for NYNEX in Westchester and have already tried several of the guide's tips and methods with my class. I checked out the pace of the class by pro-

viding a piece of paper with check boxes for the students to fill out at break time. Were things proceeding too slowly, too quickly, or did it seem just right? After scanning the results, it was clear that I had to slow down. A great tip! Backward chaining is another suggested training technique. I had my students use a computer to troubleshoot a fiber multiplexer. Then step-by-step, I was able to build their understanding of what they had just accomplished. Start with success!

Several chapters deal with remote instruction: using the Internet to teach students how valuable the Internet can be as a resource. There are also listings of sites of special interest to trainers and tips about where additional information can be found on the Internet. If you are a trainer, use the Computer Trainer's Personal Training Guide to introduce the Internet to your students. I did. It works!   *reviewed by Robert Jenks*

Graphics Power *(continued from page 6)*

flow charts. If I were in this boat, I would ask the Lord to sink it.

Finally, there is a program called **Simply 3D**—a three-dimensional drawing program. This is your reward for mastering everything else in the suite. **Simply 3D** is quite different from the Ray Dream 3D program. In Ray Dream, I could build my individual objects as extrusions, lathe turnings or by using some other standard process. **Simply 3D** supplies you with an inventory of pre-drawn shapes that you can assemble into your finished product. As a longtime engineer and draftsman, I had a certain amount of prejudice in favor of the Ray Dream working screen in which I could simultaneously work on an object in space and with its projections on three perpendicular grids. **Simply 3D** tries to approximate this by giving you a panel of four pictures, providing essentially the same information. This is OK, but sort of distracting for someone accustomed to working differently. It is just a matter of familiarization. **Simply 3D** is easier to use and will get the person working in 3D for the first time to the point of producing a usable product.

Because the **Micrografx Graphics Suite 2** is so vast, I haven't been able to cover all of its components. If you buy this product, you will be discovering features for the next couple of years. This suite is real bargain when you compare the **Picture Publisher** module to Adobe Photoshop which costs $559.95 and the **Designer** module to AutoCad which costs over $3,000. Trust me on this one.

The full version of the suite is available from Micro Warehouse (1-800-367-7080) for $349.95. The upgrade is $149.95. ∎

SAVED BY THE UTILITIES

by Ken Whittaker

It's true, accidents happen! In my case, I was preoccupied thinking about the tasks I had to accomplish when I arrived at the office. I booted my computer and went to work. I had taken work home the night before and was anxious to update the files on my office computer. Not wanting to waste a second with that drag and drop nonsense, I clicked the MS-DOS icon on my Windows 95 desk top, dropped to the DOS command line and quickly copied my work to the hard drive. Preparing the floppies to be recycled for the next project I typed DEL *.* and hit enter. The second I heard the clicking sound of my computer I knew my hard drive was the default drive. I smashed Control-C but it was too late. When I ran Undelete I learned that I had deleted more than 200 files. Using Undelete was out of the question. I knew I could never remember the first letter of each file name. "No big deal," I thought, "that's why I make backups." However, to my surprise, when I started to restore from a recent tape backup, the tape began to squeal and the restore failed. The tape had gone bad. That's when I realized the value of programs like **Norton Utilities 2.0 for Windows 95.** When it comes to your data you can never be too safe.

Going back into Win95, I double-clicked on the Recycle Bin icon and, to my relief, discovered that **Norton Unerase** had enhanced the Recycle Bin's capability by monitoring all deleted files, even those erased from the DOS command line. Whew! A narrow escape! The deleted file names were listed complete. I had only to select their names, click on Recover and I was back in business.

Actually, **Norton Utilities** had been at work protecting my data from the moment I installed it. It had begun by diagnosing and testing my hardware and the integrity of my file system. Then it checked my system for virus infection. Finally, it

prompted me to make a Rescue Disk. The Rescue disk is more than a boot disk with a few disk utilities like the Windows 95 Startup Disk. In addition to a boot disk, Rescue includes the Windows Registry and Norton AntiVirus definitions, preparing you to deal with most contingencies. Unfortunately, although **Norton Utilities 2.0** clearly advertises the added virus protection on the box, it was not as readily apparent that the program would not *remove* a virus. For that task you need Norton AntiVirus or similar product.

Once installation was complete, the prevention protection begins. Norton System Doctor runs in the background, continually monitoring the system for potential problems. Once a problem is detected, a dialog box pops up alerting you to the problem. What's more, the dialog box recommends which utility to run to correct the problem.

Although Norton System Doctor configured itself with some default sensors including CPU usage, DOS free memory, as well as sensor for showing free hard drive space, percent of file fragmentation, disk integrity, etc., it is customizable. I found it necessary to manually add my other hard drives.

Generally, I don't like utilities that run in the background because of the adverse impact they have on system's performance. However, degradation of system performance was only noticeable when I first started the system. I start my machine as soon as I walk into the office, giving **Norton Utilities** a few minutes to run through its tests and checks before I use my computer. For those that never turn their computer off there should be no noticeable performance slowdown.

Norton Utilities also improves performance with a comprehensive set of tools which can be manually launched to analyze the Windows 95 environment: Speed

Disk, Registry Edit, and System Genie, to mention a few. I must admit, I did not have enough courage to edit the Windows Registry. However, I was disappointed and annoyed to find that System Genie would not work on my system which has Internet access and Netscape Navigator installed. *This program requires Internet Explorer, which you chose not to install during Norton Utilities setup,* I was told. If you use Internet Explorer or don't mind installing it to take advantage of this option you won't have a problem.

Norton recovery and Rescue Disk utilities provide a comprehensive set of extended DOS tools which can be used to perform analysis and repair even when the Windows 95 operating system can not run. As we have seen, this welcome collection of MS-DOS repair tools can even recover files accidentally deleted while in a DOS shell.

In conclusion, I suspect many Windows 95 users, like myself, are searching for new utilities to fill the gap now that our tried and true Windows 3.1 utilities either do not function properly or do not work at all in the new Windows 95 32-bit operating system. Norton's arsenal of utilities is a fine addition to the standard utilities already offered in Windows 95.

However, although Norton Utilities demonstrates a good understanding of the Windows 95 operating system, it demonstrates an equal lack of desire to satisfy the customer by offering key components like System Genie that will only work with Internet Explorer and a virus detector without the remover.

Norton Utilities 2.0 is the version you need if you have a new computer that is running the second release of Windows 95 and using the 32-bit file system. It sells for $79 with a upgrade price of $49. For more information check out Symantec's web site at *http://www.symantec.com.* ∎
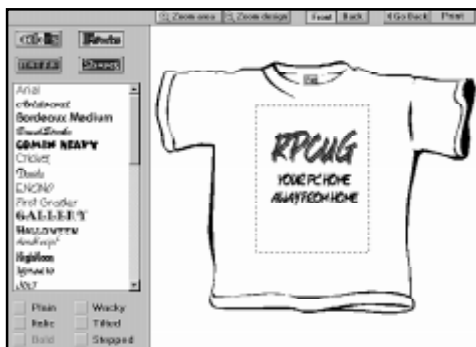
Let's Pretend Volumes 3 and 4 from Mind Magic are designed for children at least three years old. On the plus side they are interactive with lots of items to click on and many animated scenes complete with sound and music. They have excellent graphics and there is a clever coloring program. On the minus side, you're never sure when you click on an object if you will get a scene or a word to spell; also, you need to read the abbreviated instructions to find out what to click to change scenes—not very appropriate for three- to five-year–olds.

Volume Three, **Many Lands, Many Playgrounds,** takes a child to nine countries: Australia, Brazil, England, Germany, India, Japan, Spain, Sweden and Tanzania. (One of the cuter things in the visit to Japan is a short match between two Sumo wrestlers.) Click a country's flag and you get an instrumental version of its national anthem. Unfortunately, once you're in a country and you click on an object it may or may not be related to that country. They could have done better here.

Volume Four, **Our Backyard is a Playground,** takes the child to nine different areas in the USA—Hawaii, the suburbs, the Southwest, the Rockies, a city, the Midwest, New England, Alaska (not mentioned in the guide) and the Southern Bayou. The totem pole in the Alaska scene was a big hit with the children I observed playing this game.

The Mind Magic games require Windows, a SoundBlaster-compatible card and a CD-ROM drive. They will keep a youngster entertained for several hours and so are well worth their $19.95 price.

The **Hanes T-Shirt Maker & More,** while not technically a child's game, will delight both children and adults. You'll need a color ink jet printer and the usual Windows configuration. The package comes with a few sheets of special transfer paper, lots of attractive images and one heavy-duty T-Shirt.

It's all ever-so-easy to use; the setup slid flawlessly into Windows 95. There is a ten-minute tutorial; anyone who has used a computer should become proficient in that short time. First, you develop a design or adapt one of the provided designs. Next (if desired) print a proof. If you like what you see, print the T-shirt on the special paper. The program handles "flopping" the picture so that text appears right side up on the finished item.

The only challenging part of the procedure is using a hot iron to transfer your design to the shirt. It's a good idea to read the instructions before you begin.

This program is a winner. I scanned in pictures of Barney and Elmo and made shirts for my younger grandchildren who really loved them. I also made shirts with pictures of the children for their parents. The **Hanes T-Shirt Maker & More** is available at Staples and CompUSA for $39.95. They also sell the transfer paper you'll need for the shirts. Heavy-duty T-shirts are available in a variety of sizes from Hanes.

As a limited time offer, I will transfer any photos you have (prints only) into a file readable by this program. Provide the picture and a self-addressed, stamped envelope at the next meeting. Be aware that the scan is only as good as the picture you supply. ■

AND KEEP IN MIND

May
13   General Meeting; Quarterdeck; 7:30 P.M.
20   Windows 95 SIG; 7-9 P.M.; Pearl River Library
21   OS/2 SIG; 7:30 P.M; VMA Building in Congers
22   Communication SIG; 7:00 P.M.; Caffeine Jones in New City

June
10   General Meeting; Adobe; 7:30 P.M
17   Windows 95 SIG; 7-9 P.M.; Pearl River Library
18   OS/2 SIG; 7:30 P.M; VMA Building in Congers
26   7:30 Communications SIG, New City Library

Shiatsu *(continued from page 7)*

that is probably enough. As a teacher of mine once said, you may not be on the point you think you are, but chances are very high that you will be on something else that has therapeutic value. In addition, if you make an effort to capture the respectful and gentle "feel" of the films presented and try to maintain an attitude of openness and sensitivity, the chances for a positive outcome should be extremely high.

One final note. Merely by limiting myself to the directions supplied, I was able to clear my stuffed sinuses and put an end to, as they say on tv, an uncomfortable bout of irregularity. Not bad for an hour or so browsing **Digital Shiatsu**. This unusual and very interesting CD is a product of Lifestyle Software Group (800-289-1157). Its list price is $49.95. ■

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