COMPUTER CONNECTION

ELECTION CONTROVERSY
CleanSweep and QEMM 97

Election News

At the May meeting, Nominating Committee chairman Jim Mullins announced the slate that would be presented at the June meeting. For president: newsletter editor Sy Ribakove, who had agreed to serve for one year, during which time he would continue to edit the newsletter; for vice president: program chairman Sondra Coulter; for secretary: long-time member Dick Blumenthal, experienced as Secretary of the Council of Research Scientists; for Treasurer: Paul Shapiro, the current treasurer.

The Nominating Committee had polled sitting officers; only treasurer Paul Shapiro wished to stand for re-election. However, shortly before the May meeting, with the slate complete, Stan Smith informed board members that he had changed his mind about stepping down and that he would oppose the slate's candidate for president and would, if necessary, nominate himself from the floor.

Immediately after Nominating Committee chairman Jim Mullins announced the slate to the May attendees, Sy Ribakove rose to withdraw his name. His statement to the members present follows:

"When Stan Smith let it be known that after six terms as president he no longer wished to serve, I decided to offer myself as a candidate. I thought that my energy level plus my experience as Pomona Planning Board chairman, president of Hospice of Rockland and also of the Rockland County Music

Quarterdeck Visits

Trying to keep a computer's hard drive neat has become a frustrating, futile task ever since Microsoft sweet-talked the world into using Windows. No longer do applications remain comfortably in their own directories; no longer can an unworthy application be banished with a single DEL C:\BADAPP*.* command. Now, when we invite a new application into our Windows environment, it tracks muddy footprints into the Windows and Windows\System directories. It is also likely to write to WIN.INI, SYSTEM.INI, the Registry and in the case of Windows 95, may also create a \SharedFiles directory under C:\Program Files, no matter what measures you take to prevent this proliferation.

What's a user to do? One of the better things to do is to monitor installations with Quarterdeck Corporation's elegant uninstaller, CleanSweep. Then you can see

Slate Self Destructs

MEETING SCHEDULE

Rockland Conservatory of Music 7:30 P.M.

Tuesday, June 10 – Quarterdeck

Tuesday, July 8 – Adobe

Tuesday, August 12 – Swap Meet

(All are welcome)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Stan Smith

Our first meeting at the Rockland Conservatory of Music went without a hitch. The seating was comfortable, the atmosphere was pleasant, and our new projection screen displayed a large, bright, and very readable image—even with our own outdated overhead projector and data display panel. I expect that modern, vendor-provided display generation equipment will really dazzle us.

Annual Elections

As our fiscal year ends on June 30, our June general meeting is our annual business meeting and the time for the election of officers for the upcoming year.

Nominating Committee chairman Jim Mullins will present the committee's recommendations, and nominations will also be accepted from the floor. The only requirements for nomination are that the nominee be a current member of RPCUG and have agreed to fulfill the duties of the position for which (s)he is nominated.

Be sure to attend this important meeting and exercise your voting rights.

Meeting Time

I have overheard members talking over the years about the starting time for our general meetings—currently 7:30 P.M. My sense of what I have heard is that a majority of members like the 7:30 P.M. starting time and would find an earlier start time a hardship. That feeling has been reinforced by the arrival patterns of most of our membership at past meetings: the majority has arrived between 7:20 P.M. and 7:40 P.M. So I have resisted any suggestions to start our meetings earlier.

However, since most attendees arrived close to 7:00 P.M. for our recent special-starting-time meeting held at the New City Library, and since many members arrived by 7:15 P.M. for our first meeting at the Conservatory, perhaps we should rethink this issue.

Enclosed in this issue is a simple survey allowing you to select 7:00 P.M., 7:30 P.M., or write in your own preferred starting time. There is also a place for any relevant comments. Please bring your completed survey to the June meeting or mail to be received by June 15 to: RPCUG, 169 South Main Street, Suite 384, New City, NY 10956-3358. Here's your chance to voice your opinion and be heard.

PC Expo

Although it's too late to pre-register, don't forget about PC Expo at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center in Manhattan on June 17–19. The pre-registration form can still be used at the door to save the $65 vendor exhibits admission fee, and its use will also save standing in one long line at the show. If you want to pick up a form, telephone me at 634-6618.

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 of the show, so plan to see your important vendors as early as possible.)

Secret Guide to Computers

We are expecting to have twenty copies of the new edition of Russ Walters' popular *Secret Guide to Computers* at our June meeting. They will go to the first twenty people with $9 (cash or check made payable to RPCUG) to seek out our secretary, Gerry Lee, and complete the exchange.

Gerry will also be recording pre-paid orders for those who aren't lucky enough to be among the first twenty. We will then order enough additional books for delivery in July to cover the pre-paid orders. If you can not make the June meeting and want a copy of the highly recommended volume (at a great price!) telephone Gerry Lee at 354-3286.

Our Great Volunteers

This month we feature Jim Mullins and Phil Van Riper.

A long-time member, Jim has served RPCUG in many capacities. He has served on your executive board as a member-at-large; he prepares meeting bulletins that are displayed in businesses in Rockland and are distributed to the libraries in the county for posting on their activities bulletin boards; he has produced name badges for RPCUG's leaders; he has represented us at computer fairs; he produces the maps that locate and publicize our meeting sites; he has produced several product reviews for newsletter publication; he has served on and as the chairman of the Nominating Committee; he maintains and transports (along with John Iurica) our literature library; and he has participated in some of our best member-led meeting presentations. As one can see, Jim is a valuable member and volunteer.

Phil is the longest-term, active member that I know. Phil's participation in RPCUG dates to the mid 1980's that I know of. Over the years Phil, like Jim, has participated in many ways in RPCUG—on our executive board as our membership chairman for many years,

Up until last month I had never encountered a computer virus. Then the screen went black and my antivirus program warned that the floppy disk I had just inserted was infected with the AntiCMOS.B virus. While I was phoning to inform the disk's owner of his problem, I disinfected the diskette and checked my entire hard drive to make sure it was still clean. It was, but my colleague had to deal with two contaminated machines. When the virus program he borrowed wasn't successful, it became necessary to reformat both hard drives, reinstall their operating systems (plus all the tweaking he had done) and every one of his applications. Then he had to check and disinfect his entire library of floppies, several hundred of them, to make sure his restored system wasn't reinfected. So here's a message for all you daredevils who are living dangerously: Get yourself a virus checker that is compatible with your operating system. And back up—at least once a week!

———

Now, for my final column on producing professional typeset documents (if anyone out there is still interested), here's how to separate sentences and paragraphs and place punctuation when it falls next to parentheses or quotation marks.

Separate sentences, when using a proportional font such as Times Roman and Arial, by tapping once on the space bar, just as you do to separate words. Tapping twice is a leftover from typewriter days and is best avoided in typeset documents. If you put two spaces between sentences you are likely to find unsightly rivers of white winding downward through your pages, especially if you fully justify the text (flush against the right and left margins).

Press Enter twice to separate paragraphs, or indent the first line of the second and subsequent paragraphs. Combining the two methods—pressing Enter twice and *also* indenting the first line of each new paragraph is definitely overkill and will wrinkle the nose of any knowledgeable person.

(There is an even better way to begin a new paragraph. To use this method you need to understand your word processor's Styles function. Once you've worked with styles, you'll never go back to formatting text with the space bar. Check the documentation and your word processor's Help utility to find out how to create and use Styles. They will save you time and work and give all your documents a consistent professional look.)

Every modern word processor or page layout program provides a method for setting a first line indent. A rule of thumb is to indent the first line the point size of the type you use for body text. If you are using 10-point type, set the first line indent to 0p10 (the typesetter's abbreviation for no picas, ten points). If you are using 14-point type, set the indent at 1p2 (one pica, two points, since a pica is equal to 12 points). If you are working in inches, a pica is one-sixth of an inch—in decimals that would be about .167 inches.

The Rockland PC Users Group, a tax-exempt educational organization, meets monthly, usually on the second Tuesday. Meetings begin at 7:30 P.M. The Rockland PC Users Group supports the computing interests of the community as well as the interests of its own members. The latest information about meeting programs and dates is available to all on the RPCUG BBS at 359-6178 and on the Internet at http://www.rpcug.org.

OFFICERS

President	Stan
Vice President	Charles
Secretary	Gerald F.
Treasurer	Paul
Programs	Sondra

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INTERACTIVE SCI-FI

by Charles and Erick Wendler

The lights dim, the music starts, and up goes the curtain. "...*the Wing Commander saga applies improved cinematic techniques and photo-realistic graphics...*" says the box jacket, and they aren't kidding. This CD title is dubbed an interactive movie, and you certainly feel like you are watching the latest installment of *Star Wars* on your monitor, lacking only a wrap-around theater screen and the smell of buttered popcorn. The Chris Roberts computerized movie **Wing Commander IV: *The Price of Freedom*** delivers an exciting and realistic computer/movie interactive game based on the novel by William Forstchen and Ben Ohlander. At the movies, the watcher is but a watcher. Here the watcher is also a player who actually has some control over the script and game process.

This six-CD disk set is a DOS production, and it comes with a manual and charts. You can play it with only a keyboard and mouse, but a joy stick is strongly recommended. VGA color, 6x CD, at least 8MB RAM and a 486 or faster machine are all a must. Once the game starts, stopping it becomes a major problem: the player simply does not want to stop playing, even though sunrise is imminent.

Wing Commander IV: *The Price of Freedom* stars Mark Hamil (of *Star Wars* fame) as Colonel Christopher Blair who is retired from the Confederation (similar to the Federation on *Star Trek*). He is being actively recruited by Maniac as played by Tom Wilson, another Confederation hotshot pilot who once flew with Colonel Blair. Acts of terrorism are being conducted against the Confederation and the Colonel's leadership and combat skills are needed to restore peace. Colonel Blair agrees to reinstate his wings and follows Maniac out of the solar system toward Confederation headquarters. This is where they meet up with Major James "Paladin" Taggart (Malcolm McDowell of Star Trek *Generations* fame). From this point onward you play! The interactive movie's variables and possibilities assure that you never know what's next. We might tell, but we haven't been there yet.

Throughout the interactive movie you will pilot Colonel Blair's many fighter bombers through intense combat situations. The video quality is superb and will definitely leave you feeling as if you have just spent the afternoon at the movies. Optimal SVGA video requires that your computer be a Pentium with a VESA driver. For optimal sound quality you're going to want to have a sound card installed. We use the SoundBlaster 16-bit sound card powering two amplified Bose speakers. We also recommend the 6x or faster CD-ROM drive for smooth video quality.

Wing Commander IV: *The Price Of Freedom* ($39.99)is published by Origin Systems Inc., a subsidiary of Electronic Arts. Electronic Arts makes great video games and this interactive movie is no different. Playing it is like interacting with a high-quality science f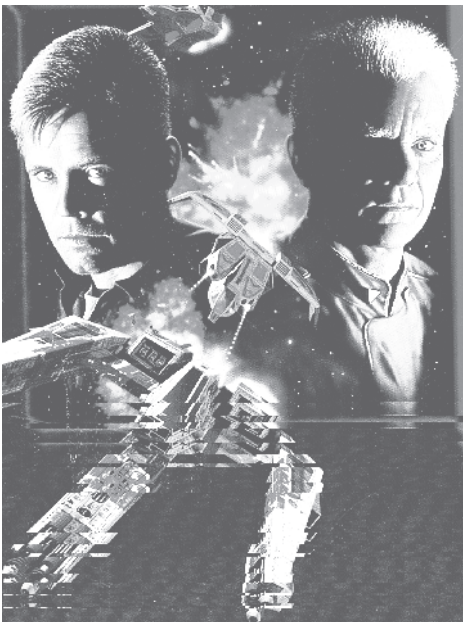iction film. Game play is smooth and the sound effects are in Dolby Surround Sound. This is a high quality CD-ROM that delivers. ■

Election

Teachers Guild could prove beneficial to our group. I also wished to avoid the embarrassing scene that took place last year when Stan Smith said he would no longer serve as president and the Nominating Committee had no slate to present. At last June's meeting we were faced with the prospect of electing a stranger, a non-member guest who was present, who said, "Hey, if no one else wants to be president, I'll do it." (I recall that there was even some support for that person's candidacy.) To avert this catastrophe, and because several other members finally came forward to join the Board, Stan agreed to serve for one more year.

"That year is now over and the Nominating Committee has come forward with a qualified slate. At the eleventh hour Stan Smith has decided that he cannot trust the management of our group to anyone but himself. He says that, if necessary, he will nominate himself from the floor at the June meeting. That would be yet another embarrassment for our group. I therefore withdraw from the slate and offer the suggestion that the Nominating Committee give careful consideration to replacing my name on the slate with Stan's."

Immediately following Ribakove's withdrawal, Dick Blumenthal, the slate's candidate for secretary, rose to announce that he also wished to remove his name from the slate—upon which Sondra Coulter stated that she was staying on. Some applause, laughter and bewilderment at these events followed, but no other action on the election ensued. The formal election is to be held at the annual membership meeting on June 10. ■

GRAPHICS GRAB BAG

by Jack Asher

Opening up the **Presto!Print Suite** is like entering a variety store. You get six programs ranging from clip art to image editing. I'll describe each of these modules.

PrintMagic enables the design of personalized greeting cards, calendars, envelopes and signs. It performs the same functions and uses the same terminology as Print Shop, a program I am currently using. I found PrintMagic a little more difficult to use especially when it comes to clip art. I missed having a catalog and I found placing the clip art into the available space to be a little clumsy. PrintMagic also can't produce banners which is something we do a lot of in my house. I am not an experienced computer user and I found this section of the suite to require more time and effort for the same results I am able to get in Print Shop. Then again I may just be accustomed to using Print Shop.

PhotoAlbum enables you to set up and transmit photos, accompanied by voiceover and text. These can be assembled into albums which can be viewed onscreen or sent via e-mail to anyone you desire.

ImageFolio allows you to create, edit and add special effects to all kinds of graphics. Whether you use the paintbrush tool or edit digital photographs, this program has the tools you need. It would take some time to learn how to do all the things ImageFolio can do. You can create pictures from scratch or manipulate the size, transparency, shape, feathering, style or pattern of one. In many ways it sounds similar to the Photoshop program reviewed a month or so back.

The suite also comes with a stripped down version of *Kai's Power GOO* [Ed: see page 7] which lets you warp, distort, mess up and even animate graphics and photos. In many ways it reminds me of some of the things we were able to do with silly putty. Fooling around with this can be a lot of fun, but I'd suggest you leave your spouse's image alone.

PageManager allows you to scan images directly to your printer or to your fax or Windows application. It is useful for storing and finding your files and graphics as well as the stuff you've done with ImageFolio and GOO.

The clip art can be put on your hard drive but it takes up 100MB of disk space. Better to access the 1,500 images when you need them from the CD-ROM.

For $49 you get a lot of graphics power. **Presto!Print Suite** from NewSoft, Inc. is for Windows 95 or 3.*x* and you'll need a CD-ROM drive. ∎

THE WINDOWS 95 REGISTRY, A SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR USERS by John Woram; MIS Press; $24.95; ISBN: 1-55828-494-X

This is neither a handy reference manual nor a tutorial. Written for the intermediate to advanced Windows 95 user, it describes the Registry, the beating heart of Windows 95, in excruciating detail. For the rest of us, there are some worthwhile recommendations and sensible cautions for dealing with the Registry in the everyday world.

In Chapter One a bit of history covers the use of INI files in the Windows 3.*x* world and how these files have taken on new significance in the Windows 95 world. (Yes, INI files are still with us, serving as a necessary bridge between the 16-bit and 32-bit worlds.) We are also introduced to the structure and purpose of the Registry. What is the Registry Editor? What are keys and values?

The following chapters provide detailed technical descriptions of each of the two master keys, and the four derived keys that are created every time Windows 95 boots. Frequent warnings caution against the careless use of the Registry Editor. (Tinkering with the Registry can result in having to reinstall Windows 95.) Worthwhile, though, is a discussion of which files comprise the Registry and how to back them up. It's a good idea to back up the Registry files (system.dat and user.dat in the Windows folder) before installing new software should there be a need to revert to the computer's former state when an installation goes awry.

Finally, on page 287, we get to Troubleshooting the Registry and learn that many of the Registry values can be repaired by simply rebooting or uninstalling or reinstalling software. To sum up, this is a good book for anyone needing details of each and every Registry key. It is not for the general reader or the idly curious. I'm putting it on my reference shelf.

reviewed by Steve Weinberg

AND KEEP IN MIND

June

10	General Meeting; Quarterdeck; 7:30 P.M.
12	Investment SIG; 7–9 P.M.; Fielding Room at Finkelstein Library
17	Windows 95 SIG; 7–9 P.M;.Pearl River Library
18	OS/2 SIG; 7:30 P.M; VMA Building in Congers
26	Communication SIG; 7:00 P.M.; New City Library

July

8	General Meeting; Adobe; 7:30 P.M
10	Investment SIG; 7–9 P.M.; Fielding Room at Finkelstein Library
15	Windows 95 SIG; 7–9 P.M.; Pearl River Library
16	OS/2 SIG; 7:30 P.M; VMA Building in Congers

CARDS ANYONE?

by Stan Tishler

CardScan Plus 300 for Windows 95 and Windows 3.x from Corex Technologies Corp. consists of a small scanner and OCR (optical character recognition) software that converts the information on business cards into a database of names, addresses and phone numbers.

The scanner connects to your parallel (printer) port. It has another connection that allows you to use your printer also. Installation was problem-free. After you've installed the software you're ready to begin. You feed cards one at a time into a small slot on the top of the scanner. You have to be careful to get the card moving in straight and you must not feed a second card while the first one is still in the slot. If you are too quick, the two cards will be treated as if they were one.

It takes thirty-five seconds for the hardware to process each card. That's from the time a card is put in until the screen prompts you to insert another. I put in thirty-one cards, which took close to twenty minutes. After twelve cards were put in I got an error message telling me that the scanner had "timed out." This only meant that the cards had to be processed through the software in batches of twelve. The entire process was fairly easy and the software did create the database. However, OCR processing took about one minute per card on a 486/33 machine.

One interesting thing the software does is keep an exact image of the scanned card along with the name and address file. You can look at the card, enlarging portions of it if needed, to edit or review information. Of the thirty-one cards entered, thirteen were handled perfectly, sixteen were usable with only very minor corrections and two were totally useless.

OCR-ing business cards is no easy task. Some cards have graphics that cover names and numbers; some have fancy fonts and others may be printed in a portrait mode (one of the cards I scanned was). On the whole, the software did its job okay. It did have trouble with multiple names on a card (like three doctors in an office) and surprisingly had trouble with multiple phone numbers—if there were two phone numbers on the page it assumed one was a fax number. This is an error that should not occur since I've never seen a fax number that was not labeled "fax" which should make the number selection easy. I would have expected the software to be at least that sophisticated. It also places e-mail addresses into the database. In one case it left out the "@" sign in an address. I was surprised to see that the vertically-printed card went through without errors.

Editing would have been easier if I had been able to highlight an item (such as a company name) and then drag it to its proper place in the database. Editing was done by correcting or replacing, which meant a lot of data entry.

Once set up, the software becomes a nice PIM (Personal Information Manager). Through a modem you can dial directly from the database and you can interface with your e-mail software to send messages directly from the PIM. Note that while online help is available, the printed manual is a six-page brochure covering the basics and not much else.

All in all, this combination would be of great help to a purchasing agent, sales representative or a personnel manager —anyone who accumulates a lot of business cards. It performs well enough so that the extra time needed to edit is not a deterrent. Once entered, the actual cards can be thrown away since their image remains on file. The **Cardscan Plus 300** hardware/software unit sells for $279. ■

Golden Opportunity

I would like to hear from people who might be interested in helping to arrange programs for our group. This visible and rewarding activity has been great experience for me. I've made interesting contacts in the computer industry, enjoyed a voting seat on the RPCUG executive board, had first crack at review software and, best of all, enjoyed the gratitude and respect of my fellow members. The job has taken a couple of hours each week, but no out-of-pocket expenses since a generous phone allowance is provided.

What do you have to know to help with this? You certainly needn't be a computer techie. You do need to have some time and the ability to make and receive phone calls, faxes and e-mail on weekday afternoons. (Some employers permit community service during working hours, so even people with day jobs can do this.)

These tasks are essential to the well-being of our user group. It is hard to overestimate their importance. I began with some misgivings but quickly learned the ropes. There was plenty of guidance available. If you'd like to know more, contact me by voice at 914-446-3444 or send e-mail to MsCoulter@aol.com. I am looking forward to talking and meeting with you.

Sondra Coulter, Programs

MAKING MUD PIES

by Sy Ribakove

Kai Krause is definitely what you would call a free spirit. In the world of image manipulation, he is the acknowledged master of the weird and the wonderful. Last month Stan Tishler reported on *Kai's Power Tools,* a powerful set of Photoshop plug-in filters. Listen to Kai describe one of those Power Tools: *At first glance, the Spheroid Designer interface may seem like a bunch of balls dropped into a pile of mud....(it) is actually a bunch of spheres dropped into an old, stale brownie. Duh.* You get the idea.

Power Tools is meant for professional designers and putterers. Kai's application for the masses is **Kai's Power Goo.** According to its manual, a large poster designed and written by Kai himself: "GOO is a program to take images and, in a playful way, turn them into liquid 'goo.' It could be any picture, but faces in particular are cool to goo. There is also a second part to the program called 'Fusion,' where a face can be created out of bits and pieces from two source images, i.e., the eyes of one and the nose of another. GOO itself has one more facet: all the changes can be made into smooth animation—a 'Goovie'—with literally one mouse click for each 'frame' and one more click to play it back."

Basically, that's it. You may have seen some of Kai's "Goofie" faces (like the

winking Mona Lisa) in ads but the silliness hides some remarkable computer technology. How can it be possible to stir, twirl, stretch and enlarge (to gigantic proportions) parts of an image without producing jaggies? **Power Goo's** output is smooth as silk, both on screen and when sent to a printer. You can even turn out high resolution images for commercial work. Another miracle.

When you start **Kai's Power GOO,** you must have the CD in its drive. Your screen goes dark, and GOO opens in its only mode—full screen. You cannot multitask or even switch to another program from GOO; in fact, the only way I could get back to my desktop was to shut GOO down.

You can use your GOO output for presentations, web pages, t-shirts, greeting cards, in fact, anything designed to get a laugh. It did strike me, however, that GOO might be an excellent tool for anyone considering facial plastic surgery. A result can be seen on your screen in a matter of moments, assuming the availability of a digitized photograph. (There's a coupon in the box that will get you a 12-exposure role of film put on a CD-ROM for only

$15.)

Recommended configuration for good results with **Kai's Power GOO** are a Pentium, Windows 95 or NT, 16- or 24-bit video, 8MB RAM, a CD-ROM drive and 20MB hard disk space. Actually, if you've already got video capability installed on your machine, you'll need far, far less hard disk space.

MetaTools has licensed a scaled-down version of GOO to other manufacturers (see the *Presto! Print Suite* coverage on page 5), but if you want the full product, the list price is $49.95. That's not too much for a barrel of fun. ∎

BEFORE

AFTER

MAKING PAGES

by Sy Ribakove

Our newsletter has always been child's play for PageMaker, which is designed to turn out anything from a brochure to a coffee table book. Like several other Adobe products—Illustrator and Photoshop in particular—the necessary tools are provided, but few templates are offered to get the new user started. Working with these programs is like making soup starting with plain water rather than canned broth.

I've got pleasant things to say about this new version, **PageMaker 6.5,** but let me get the sad tidings out of the way first. Waiting for it to install, I watched my life slowly pass before my eyes. There was no sign of activity for eight minutes after the screen announced that information was being gathered about my system. Just as I was about to give up, the screen sprang back to life, only to pause once again after I selected the options I wished to install.

Documents created in previous versions have once more been rendered somewhat incompatible with this new version. This seems to happen with each Adobe release. Among the most irritating "improvements" are the dozens of traditional PageMaker shortcuts that no longer work. F11 used to display the previous page and F12 the next. Now I have to remember to use PageUp and PageDown—more logical, granted, but for a longtime F11/F12 user, an unnecessary nuisance. Another example: Ctrl/Shift/= used to produce my beloved em dash; now it's Alt/Shift/Hyphen. Was this change really necessary?

An old problem that remains unsolved is the parsimonious single level of Undo. Lesser applications provide virtually unlimited levels of Undos, why not PageMaker? (Yes, Adobe, and why not Photoshop?) At upgrade prices of between $100 and $150 for these professional-level applications, this failing should have been addressed several releases back.

The most startling break with PageMaker tradition in this new version comes in the form of frames—non-printing rectangular or elliptical containers of various shapes and sizes that can be placed on a page and then filled with text or graphics. Professional-level designers will appreciate this additional capability.

PageMaker is also beginning to look and act like Photoshop, many of whose plug-in filters can be accessed directly from within PageMaker. Redesigned palettes now sport a distinctly Photoshop look and PageMaker designers can now work with "layers"— stackable levels of text and graphics, each of which can be manipulated without affecting the others.

Anyone designing with color will be delighted with PageMaker's improved tools. In this respect, Adobe has leap-frogged way past QuarkXPress, its chief rival. Other major improvements are refinements in PageMaker's ability to convert documents into HTML code for the Web and its really strong tools for exporting them as Acrobat PDF (Portable Document Format) files for viewing and printing on many platforms (Windows, DOS, Mac, Unix). The last three issues of **Computer-Connection** in PDF format can be viewed, downloaded and printed by visiting the newsletter page on the RPCUG web site (http://www.rpcug.org). You'll need the free Acrobat 3.0 Reader, which is available via a link on the RPCUG web site.

I ran into an interesting display problem when I increased video resolution from 800x600 to 1024x768. At the higher screen resolution everything on my desktop got smaller so I had to adjust my desktop icon sizes and font settings in Windows 95's Display Properties (right click on the desktop and choose Properties/Appearance/Item.) All font sizes had to be increased a couple of points to keep menus, message boxes, title bars, etc., legible at the higher resolution. But there was no way to enlarge the tiny font PageMaker uses for its own palettes and for the essential shortcut charts available from the Help menu. A call to Adobe Tech Support produced a shrug and a concession that, yes, it was a problem.

So, to sum up, here's a PageMaker upgrade that is worth its $99 price for the current user who needs the increased color and Web page functionality. It's a worthwhile but costly (over $525) purchase for the new user who needs to turn out sophisticated documents. For the user making pages less complex than these, **PageMaker 6.5** is definitely a luxury item. ∎

Quarterdeck

exactly what changes an installation has made to your computing environment. Later, should you wish to remove all traces of the application, CleanSweep can do the job far better than you could do it yourself.

On June 10, a Quarterdeck representative will walk us through CleanSweep's many modules and explain the product's safe and proper use. He'll also introduce QEMM 97, which uses memory compression technology to increase the speed of Windows 95 and produce "more memory" for Windows 95, 3.*x* and DOS. We'll also find out why Windows 95 might need an add-on memory manager.

Quarterdeck has an aggressive sales staff. If you've ever registered a Quarterdeck product, you've received phone calls about the company's newest products. Here's a chance to hear about some of their latest and greatest without having your dinner interrupted, and also to get answers to your uninstalling and memory questions. ∎

MAKING PICTURES

by Sy Ribakove

Windows Draw Graphics and Print Studio (WDGPS)from Micrografx is absolutely the best buy around. For forty-nine bucks you get a treasure house of goodies: a versatile drawing program, a sophisticated but easy-to-use photo editing program, a 3D rendering program, 20,000+ pieces of clip part, 250+ fonts, and a clearly printed catalogue of all the clip art pictures and type-faces. But wait, there's more! WDGPS can open and convert virtually any graphics file to a format that's right for the target application. It can also compress images for speedy download-ing on Web pages. And you can catalogue your own images in the included Media Manager's thumbnail collection.

This steal of a program is the little brother of Micrografx' Graphics Suite 2, which was reviewed in the May issue. Our reviewer, John Iurica, suggested that the Graphics Suite would keep you discovering features for years. His comment applies here. The WDGPS manual's tutorials introduce you to each module, but the gold is really buried on the Help menu where you will find hands-on tutorials for Windows Draw, PhotoMagic and Instant 3D. These fine tutorials show you all kinds of ways to use this suite of programs. Once you get your feet wet, you'll find many projects that are ready to print in glorious color or black and white along with instructions that are as concise as they can be. You are literally held by the hand from a project's open-ing screen to its completion.

A final word. This group of programs executes snappily. Click on OK and, whaap!, the task is done, at least, on my 133 MHz Pentium. Not at all like Adobe's applications, which seem to labor at whatever they do, no matter how small or large the task. This might be because Adobe came to Windows late, porting its applications from the Macintosh platform. Micrografx, on the other hand, developed for Windows from the start and speaks the Windows language like a native.

If you have a yen to work with graphics on anything but the "for idiots" level, run right out and grab a copy of Micrografx' **Windows Draw Graphics and Print Studio.** It's the best under $50 bargain in town! ■

President *(continued from page 2)*

as a product reviewer, as a general and SIG meeting presenter, as a meeting setup/breakdown participant, as a general facilitator at meetings, etc. He has also stored and transported to both general and SIG meetings our overhead projector and our LCD data display panel for the last four years—a significant task. He can be found at all board and general meetings and many SIG meetings—I can't remember any meeting that he has missed. And he always arrives early and leaves late so that he can assist in any way required. Phil is another first-rate asset to RPCUG.

Thanks Jim and Phil for your exemplary participation. Next month we will identify even more great volunteers.

Year 2000

Is your computer ready for the turn of the century? Will your system properly display and handle years that begin with the digits **20** (as in year 2000) rather than the digits **19** (as in year 1997)? If your computer is recent, it probably will pass this part of the "Ready for Year 2000" equation. If it is several years old, it might not pass!

And what about your applications? Your databases? Your spreadsheets? What about home, personal and business? (Remember all of your home-based businesses, small- and medium-sized businesses.) Those things that your daily comput-ing (and perhaps financial life) are about. This is a serious issue for all of us. You might not have a job if your employer fails because they didn't plan for this change. It is predicted that some major (and perhaps many minor) businesses will fail when their computers fail to properly recognize and process dates containing years beginning with **20**.

This discussion will be continued in future issues of **ComputerConnection**.

Meeting Notes

Steve Weinberg did double duty at our May meeting. He expertly navigated us through the many offerings on our Web site (http://www.rpcug.org), and then he demonstrated both remote con-trol of a computer and file transfer between two computers using LapLink 7.5 for Windows from Traveling Software. Next, Jane Treubig presented many of the reasons for and benefits of using a Bulletin Board System (BBS). Thanks Steve and Jane.

Even though we had a member-based presentation rather than an outside vendor, we had fifteen door prizes, including LapLink, a Microsoft Ergonomic Keyboard, and several other valuable and worthwhile goodies. Meeting attendance is rewarded with valuable knowledge and sometimes a valuable new piece of hardware or software!

In June, Quarterdeck will be showcasing several of their popular products. See the front page for details.

See you on Tuesday, June 10 at 7:30 P.M. at the Rockland Conservatory of Music, 7 Perlman Drive, Spring Valley, NY. ■

PC TO MAC TO PC

by Jim Mullins

Conversions Plus ($99 from DATA VIZ) is a utility that makes PC and Macintosh files compatible and bridges the differences between incompatible PC file formats. The utility also allows you to read, write and format virtually every kind of disk—hard, floppy, external SCSI devices such as Iomega, SyQuest and Bermoulli drives—anything, in fact, but read-only CD-ROMs.

This is accomplished not by mirrors or magic, but by the pairs of read and write translators that exist in **Conversions Plus**. These readers and writers make it possible to convert a Mac MS-Word file to a PC Ami Pro file or a PC Ami Pro file to a PC WordPerfect file. Most major word processing, spreadsheet, database and graphic formats can be made compatible with your favorite application. Macintosh files can be read from within a PC program as if they were PC files. For instance, if you had a Mac PageMaker file on a Macintosh floppy disk, you could open it directly in PageMaker for Windows 95 with the File/Open command.

Why might you need a program like **Conversions Plus**? Let's say your résumé is on Mac diskette and you need to update it on a PC. Or your son is getting married and the bride's family asks for the names and addresses of your wedding guests on a Mac floppy disk. Or your Aunt Mary had the old family photo album scanned onto Mac floppy disks and you want to use them on your PC. Or you've found the perfect piece of clip art but its format is not compatible with your publishing program. All these situations are bread and butter for **Conversions Plus**.

The program interface opens with side-by-side dialog boxes. When you select one as the source the other defaults to destination. The one on the right can be designated PC or Mac format. After selecting one or more files you can preview them, ask for file information, or go directly to Copy and Convert.

Conversions Plus requires a system running Windows 3.*x,* Windows 95 or Windows NT, and at least 4MB of RAM. It is easy to install and the manual and help files make it easy to use. I recommend this product to anyone who must share files with Macintosh users. ∎

Editor   *(continued from page 3)*

If all this seems too complicated you might go back to formatting everything as if it were written on a typewriter. Avoid Times Roman or Arial or any other proportionally-spaced font. Choose instead a monospaced font such as Courier, hit the space bar twice between sentences and three times to start a new paragraph. Now your document will look like a well-done typewritten document rather a poorly-done typeset document.

Parenthesis

When the text inside the parenthesis is simply an aside or clarification, the punctuation goes after the closing parenthesis. When parenthetical text comes at the end of a sentence and is part of it, put the period outside the parenthesis. *It was a spreadsheet document (Quattro Pro, evidently).* If the parenthesized matter is itself a complete sentence requiring a period, a question mark or an exclamation point, begin the sentence with a capital letter and place the final punctuation inside the closing mark. *The disk was infected with a virus. (It was identified as the common Turner.3276 variety.)*

Never place a comma before an opening parenthesis mark. If a comma is needed after the material preceding the parenthesis, place it outside the close parenthesis mark. *The computer (an IBM Aptiva), he said, would not take up much room on my desk.*

Quotation Marks

The rules are fairly simple for placing punctuation next to quotation marks. Periods and commas go inside closing quotation marks. *Always.* Colons and semicolons go outside. *Always.* Question marks and exclamation points can go either inside or outside, depending on whether or not they belong to the quoted material. Here are some examples:

He said, "The presentation was terrific!" (The exclamation point goes inside because it belongs to *terrific.*)

Did he say, "The presentation was terrific"? (The question mark goes outside because it belongs to *Did he say...?*)

She asked, "Was it terrific?"(The question mark goes inside because it belongs to *Was it...?)*

So there you have it. There will be situations these few rules will not cover. Answers to more complicated punctuation problems can be found in the back of many dictionaries and in reference books such as *The Chicago Manual of Style.* ∎

Three guys are car pooling. One's a mechanical engineer, the other an electrical engineer, and the third a Microsoft engineer. The car breaks down, so they get out. The mechanical engineer starts checking out all the fan belts, the electrical engineer starts checking out the electricals.

After an hour they still can't figure out what's wrong, so they get back in the car and ask the Microsoft engineer if he has any ideas. He suggests that they close all the windows, get out, get back in, and open the windows again...

Submitted by Jerry Morton

WINDOWS TIPS 'N TWEAKS

There's a hidden program on the **Windows 95** CD-ROM for creating an emergency recovery program that can restore your system to the way you've configured it.

Place the WIN95 CD-ROM in your drive, browse to the d:\other\misc\eru folder (where d is your CD-ROM drive), copy the ERU folder and contents to your HD, then double-click eru.exe. Choose "other directory" to back up to and type in the path to a subdirectory off of the ERU folder you just copied over. (I name the sub-directories in a way that indicates the date the backup was made, like C:\ERU\0531. This would indicate I created this backup on May 31. In the event of a problem, you can access the backup on your HD via DOS (press F8 when Windows is starting and select "Command prompt only") if necessary and run the ERD.EXE restore file in the sub-folder created when the backup was done. Doing so will restore a previous copy of your Registry and other system files.

If you use the Emergency Recovery Utility to create an emergency boot disk, be aware that some of the configuration files can be huge, making it impossible to fit them all on a floppy (ERU can't handle multiple floppies). When ERU shows the files it will back up, click Custom to see the files it will skip. You can choose to skip other files, or you can make a note of the ones not being copied and back them up manually.

This one can be a lifesaver! *Sondra Coulter*

In **Windows 95**, whenever an application doesn't close properly, or the systems locks up, or if for any reason you have to push the Reset button before Win95 closes down properly, there are probably between six and a dozen TMP files left in your Windows\Temp directory. You can empty this directory of these pesky, useless files automatically whenever you start your computer by adding a line to AUTOEXEC.BAT.

Go to Start/Run, type SYSEDIT and hit Enter. A bunch of windows containing your system files will cascade. Activate the one titled AUTOEXEC.BAT, put an insertion point on a blank line, and type the following command (substitute the name of your Windows directory):

ECHO Y | DEL C:\WINDOWS\TEMP*.*

Be sure to save the file (File/Save/Exit).

The Echo Y(es) responds to the inevitable Do You Really mean It? confirmation dialog box. The | symbol is not a slash. On many keyboards you'll find it on top of the backslash. Be sure to type the command accurately with spaces after ECHO, Y, |, and DEL. Now you'll start your computer each time with a clean \TEMP directory. *SR*

For easy backups, keep all of your data files in a single directory. To organize your data, put it in subdirectories within that directory, by project or whatever other division makes sense to you.

Once you're keeping your data in a single directory, tell your applications that's the default location where they should save new files. How you do this varies from application to application, and it may take a bit of looking to figure it out. For instance, in Microsoft Word for Windows, select Tools/Options, click the File Locations tab, and modify the Documents option. In Excel, it's again Tools/Options, but you click the General tab and enter the correct path into the Default File Location field. In Lotus Approach, you select File/User Setup/Approach Preferences, click the General tab, click Default Directories, and fill in the information.

If an application doesn't offer a way to change its working directory, try telling Windows to open it where you want it to save files. In Windows 3.1, switch to Program Manager, select the application, and press Alt-Enter. Type in a new working directory, such as c:\data, and click OK.

In Windows 95 or NT, right-click the Start button and select Explorer, then find the Shortcut to the application. (If the Shortcut is on the desktop, you don't have to open Explorer.) Right-click the Shortcut, select Properties, go to the Shortcut tab, and type the desired working folder in the 'Start in' field. *Sondra Coulter*

Want a super fast way to restart **Windows 95**? Open Notepad and type @exit. Name the file RESTART.BAT and save it to any convenient directory. Then, in Explorer, navigate to the file you created (RESTART.BAT) and drag it onto your desktop to create a shortcut there. Right-click the new shortcut, click on Properties, type Restart for the label and choose an icon. That's it. Next time you want to restart Windows 95 without going through a series of dialog boxes, just double click your Restart shortcut and you've done it. *SR*

WANT TO JOIN THE GROUP?   HERE'S HOW!

Annual membership in the Rockland PC Users Group includes a subscription to COMPUTERCONNECTION. Bring your completed application and a check payable to RPCUG to a meeting or mail your application and check to RPCUG at 169 South Main Street, Suite 384, New City, NY 10956-3358.

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