



North Texas PC NEWS
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Deadlines:

All material for publication in PC NEWS (articles and ads) must be received by the NEWS staff no later than the fourth Friday of the month prior to publication.

Articles:

Column width is 56 characters. Article submission is preferred by modem or disk (ASCII format). Double-spaced, typewritten copy is acceptable.

North Texas IBM Personal Computer Users Group

A non-profit, independent group, not associated with IBM Corporation. The Group meets on the second Saturday of each month. See page 1 for meeting time and place.

Officials:

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Business Applic.	Sharlene Talbott & Ricky Burke	(214)386-5596
	& Ed Fries	(214)276-5003
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Disk of the Month	Doug Windham	(214)278-5321
Programmers	Dr. Neil Bennett	(214)238-7650
Assembler	open	

Telephone (during business hours) (214)361-0304
 Bulletin Board SYSOP: open

Dues: Regular Membership - \$24.00 year
 Student membership - \$12.00 year

Dues are payable for full-year increments only. PCN mailing label shows your membership expiration date. Renewal must be received at least six weeks before that date for uninterrupted mailing of PC NEWS. Mail payment to: Treasurer, NT IBM PC UG,

10400 N. Central Expwy #210
 Dallas, TX 75231

PC NEWS Financial Report
 21 January 1985

July through December 1984 Issues
 (December Printing 650 copies)

INCOME:

Balance from June 1984	\$ 282.60
Adv, Labels, Misc	769.70
Cash from Treasury	2800.00

Total Income \$3852.30

EXPENSES:

Office Supplies	\$ 46.60
Copies & Misc	28.38
Print, Dist & Mail	3593.83
Telephone Calls	29.77
STARTEXT (through 1985)	143.10

Total Expenses \$3841.68

BALANCE 8 December 1984 10.62

\$3852.30 ✓

Presentation Graphics Users Group Forming

If you are interested in participating in a Presentation Graphics User's Group in the Dallas area contact Ricky Burke at (214) 276-5003. The group is forming now and will probably meet monthly.

Primary charter for the group will be the exploration and discussion of techniques for producing high quality graphics presentations. The main focus will be on the creation of business graphics, and means of display, i.e. paper copies derived from plotters or printers, slides made from image recorders, video "slide shows" (computer monitor or saved on videotape), etc.

Although the group will be primarily for creating business graphics on microcomputers, other topics may be covered, such as graphics techniques used on mini or mainframe computers, or techniques used to create interactive game or educational graphics programs. The group will not be connected with the North Texas IBM PC Users Group.

Ricky Burke

Sixteen Color Dot Graphics for the PC

by Sid Nolte

The PC junior is the only member of the IBM PC family that can produce the 16 color all points addressable 320 by 200 graphics without the recently announced but scarce enhanced graphics boards. It seems at best that the PC will produce only a choice of two sets of 4 colors in an all points addressable mode. I was working on a program that required graphics and wanted it to work on all IBM PC machines and found a compromise that I would like to share with you.

I found that the Junior has a mode that displays all 16 colors in 160 by 200 resolution. It requires 16000 bytes of display memory since each byte contains two 4-bit nibbles of color data to display two such elongated dots. In order to make anything look well with that mode however, the dots must actually be displayed two at a time to produce square pixels thus reducing to a 160 by 100 display mode of 16 colors. With a little experimenting I was able to do this on the PC as well and in so doing, utilized the same code on both without using the ROM BIOS support provided on the Junior.

It seems that the only way to get 16 colors with the color display adapter is to be in one of the color text modes. This is the only clue you need to proceed. Notice that there are some special non-ASCII characters displayed with code from 80 to FF hex. One of those codes is DE hex or 222 decimal and will display an 80-column character with the left half that of the foreground color and the right half the background color. Fortunately both colors are defined in the attribute byte so that the left and right halves can be controlled separately. This produces a 160 by 25 display that is dot addressable with 16 colors. Notice that we have used two bytes for each adjacent pair so that only one fourth of the display memory is used.

Now for the tricky part. By getting into debug and experimenting with the 6845 video controller registers I was able to get some rather interesting effects. I have been told that you can cause damage to the video system by doing the wrong thing here so I was cautious. What I wanted was a squish in the vertical direction by a factor of four. Therefore, after setting up for the 80 x 25 color graphics text mode, I knew that something might be done to the 6845 registers that controlled the vertical characteristics of the display if it were possible at all. These are R4, R5, R6, and R7. Then too, there is R9 which has something to do with the scan line count per character. In the 80 character mode, register 4 contains 31, meaning that there is provision for 31 rows, not the

25 that we might expect. This means simply that there are 6 rows to provide for the vertical retrace time. Register 6 contains the expected 25 and register 7 contains 28 which is the vertical sync position. This setup allows for 3 undisplayed rows, 25 display rows and finally 3 undisplayed rows at the bottom. Meanwhile register 9 contains 7 which actually allocates scans zero to 7 for a total of 8 scan lines per row. The total count on the scan lines is 248 with only 200 of them actually displayed.

Thus assign 124 to register 4, 100 to register 6, 112 to register 7, and 1 to register 9. There will be 124 rows with 12 at the top and bottom. Each row has two scan lines for a total of 248 scan lines with only 200 of them actually displayed. While in debug I tried this and found that all of my 80-column text showed only the top two scan lines but that I could display about four times as many of them. So that is the solution. Actually, I coded it in assembly language but to communicate here, I will include a short segment of BASIC which does the same thing. The assembly language program is much, much faster than this routine.

```

10 WIDTH "SCRN:" 80      ' 80 COLUMN MODE
20 SCREEN 0,1,0,0      ' COLOR MODE
30 OUT &H3D8,9         ' DISABLES BLINK BIT
40 DEF SEG = &HB800    ' COLOR DISPLAY AREA
50 FOR I = 0 TO 80*100*2 STEP 2 ' FILL "SCREEN"
60 POKE I,222
70 POKE I + 1,0       ' HALF AND HALF CHAR
80 NEXT I             ' BLACK ON BLACK
90 OUT &H3D4,4        ' R4 SELECTED
100 OUT &H3D5,124     ' R4 VERTICAL TOTAL
110 OUT &H3D4,6       ' R6 SELECTED
120 OUT &H3D5,100    ' R6 VERTICAL DISPLAYED
130 OUT &H3D4,7      ' R7 SELECTED
140 OUT &H3D5,112    ' R7 VERTICAL SYNC
150 OUT &H3D4,9      ' R9 SELECTED
160 OUT &H3D5,1      ' R9 SCAN LINES (2)

```

Statement number 30 is necessary to disable the blink, else color codes larger than 7 produce a blinking display. Now you have all of the screen filled with black foreground and black background "dots". To draw a line of yellow dots in column 24, write:

```

1000 FOR I = 0 TO 100
1010 A = I * 160 + (25 \ 2) * 2 + 1 ' LOCATION OF ATTRIBUTE
1020 N = PEEK(A) ' GET ATTRIBUTE BYTE
1030 POKE A, (N AND &HFO) OR &HOE ' CHANGE DOT TO YELLOW
1040 NEXT I

```

When you exit this program you will not be able to read the display messages because of being in this strange graphics mode. Just set the width to 40 to see what you are doing.

Sid

Impressions...
The IBM PC-AT
 by John Keohane

Here are some more impressions of IBM's newest offering in the personal computer marketplace, the PC-AT. Mine has a 20 megabyte hard disk, a 1.2 MB floppy drive, and a 360 KB drive to write files to the PC or XT.

With the Intel 80286 chip microprocessor, the AT is reported to be 2 to 3 times faster than the PC or XT. I have been so involved in other work that I haven't been able to run any kind of speed checks, but I have been using it quite a bit, and do like its speed. I'm using it to write C programs for a Lattice compiler. PC-WRITE, which I purchased from the club's Disk of the Month, works well on the AT, I'm using it to write this article.

The keyboard furnished with the PC-AT is a definite improvement over the PC / PC-XT keyboard. Although there is only one additional key, the system request key, five keys are moved, and the enter key is much improved, larger and easier to hit. The function keys, basic typewriter keys, and arithmetic keypad retain the same positions they had on the earlier models.

Before you run out and buy a PC-AT, you might consider the following items. For one thing, they're hard to find. For another, strangely enough, they are not completely IBM PC compatible. By now, you have probably read about problems with various commercial software packages. Although PC-WRITE works marvelously, I have had no success with PC-FILE. Friends have had some success with STSC APL, but Flight Simulator will not run.

John

Room Assignments

Room #	9	10	11	Noon	1	2	3	4
AUD.			IBM Main Meeting		Apple MAC/LISA		Apple Main Meeting	
105		IBM Beginners		Apple Geneology	IBM Business Application			
106		Am. Lan. OPEN		Apple Education	IBM Advanced Prog.			
107		IBM BASIC		Apple Education	Apple Pascal			
108		IBM C.A.I.		Apple Adv. Topics	IBM Engineering/Sci.			
109		Apple Beginners		Apple Business				
111		Apple BASIC		Apple Apple III	Apple Communications			
113		Apple CP/M		Apple 6502	Apple Graphics			
114		Apple Stock Market/In.		Apple Games	Apple Spreadsheets			
116				Apple Hardware	Apple Beginning Apple Corp.			

BDS Basic Development System (BetaTool Systems)

by John Pribyl

BetaTool Systems claims their BASIC Development System (BDS) will greatly increase your BASIC programming efficiency and productivity. I believe it will!

In use, BDS is co-resident with BASIC, and adds a little to the memory space required. For the added space, you get an enhancement to the editing features of IBM BASIC, a single step trace function, and a compression capability that reduces memory size and running time of your BASIC programs. BDS operates as an overlay to the native BASIC editor giving you access to your program "variable" listings and values at any point in the execution of a program. Running the program BDS.COM sets BDS in place to operate from disk or memory, your choice.

BDS allows you to execute common functions with a single keystroke. This is not unusual in itself, but in this program these short commands make moving around in your program a natural, almost instinctive action. For example, you can list line 1000 of a program by giving the command L1000 from the Ok prompt. Or enter the letter C to clear the screen, E for EDIT, D to delete, A for AUTO, etc. Use caps or lower case, either one works. After listing or editing a line of code, hitting the + key will display the next line. You can walk your way right down the listing... or back up, using the - key. You can even show half a screen before, and half a screen after the current line by simply typing a comma. If you'd like to see 20 previous lines of the program listing, PgUp gives the preceeding screenfull; PgDn shows the following screen... This is like walking on stilts! You can cover a lot of ground in a hurry. But unlike stilts, you can stop at any time. By the way, all these "scrolling" commands must be entered from the Ok prompt before any other keystroke. This took a little getting used to, but not much. If you forget, nothing happens... just hit the enter key on a blank line and then type the "shorthand" key.

To find your program glitches, the system trace function is easy to use. Command format "SYSTEM TRON LINE nn" executes your program at full speed until line nn, where it displays the program line across the top of the screen, stops, then allows stepping through execution of the lines one at a time. You see the commands and the results of these commands (without having spent 160K bytes) as the program executes. You have to follow the program fairly close however, because you can't go back without re-running. You can, if you don't trust your

eyes, cause the stepped execution of the program to be output to the printer.

Another feature that helps isolation of the "bug" is an easy-to-use cross reference (variable to line) that can be called while you are editing. For example, you may want to know whether you've used C\$ and, if so, where. The "X" series of commands will tell whether you've used this variable and isolate it to specific lines if you have.

Variable/Line Number/Numeric Constant Cross-Reference

```
-----
X .      List all references to the screen.
X ,      List all references to the printer.
X .pppp  List references starting with pppp to screen.
X ,pppp  List references starting with pppp to screen.
X pppp   List references to pppp to the screen
X        List to the screen the 'next' program line
          which contains a reference to the last X pppp
          command.
-----
```

The above listing of "X" commands is typical of other BDS commands for "(F)ind" and for "(V)ariable Dump", although the latter two series have more variations, and slightly different syntax. The "V" commands list any or all variables at a selected point in execution of the program.

Super Renum is a great feature of BDS. To renumber any section of code without affecting any other lines, specify the new starting line, the line number increment, and the beginning and ending line numbers on which to operate. Shades of Full Screen Edit on TSO! And Super Renum will not let you accidentally overwrite existing lines of code. I tried!

If that isn't enough to get you to run down to Wildcat and buy your very own copy of BDS, read on McDuff, there's more...

BDS also has a code compression utility. In an early issue of PC World,* when Andrew Fluegelman was writing about the COMPRESS utility of BDS, he stated, "...the features exceed anything I've seen on the market." ...and that statement was made about Version 2! The Compress mode will squeeze your code as much as possible without altering the syntax. As with the other tools within the BDS toolbox, there is flexibility in this command also. For instance, if you do not want to merge multiple lines into multiple-statement lines when compressing, just include NC in the command line and no combination will take place. Other choices for compaction include removal of remarks, unnecessary blanks and colons, removal of LET and GOTO keywords where they are not required... ►

BDS (continued)

and... well, you get the picture. The complimentary feature is Uncompress. As you can guess, this expands compressed code into something resembling that with which you started, and makes reading/updating the code a little easier.

The small manual that comes with BDS is deceptive. You'd think that with all those features you would need at least 195 pages to adequately explain what to do. But that's not the case. BetaTool packages Version 3 of BDS in the standard 3-ring binder with 30 pages and four short Appendices. That's all you need. They do, however, provide a customer hotline for registered users. And they offer an update at any time to the latest version of the software for a \$20 handling fee and return of your original distribution disk. You can't ask for much more than that.

If you've read this far, you probably get the impression that I like the product. That's true. I haven't used it for very long, but it provides a number of the needs I have unconsciously wished for every time I began a new BASIC program. If you do much programming in BASIC I think you'll like it too.

BASIC Development System, Version 3.0 requires an IBM PC, XT, or AT with disk drive and PC-DOS 1.xx, 2.xx or 3.00. A separate PC compatible version is available for the COMPAQ with BASIC 1.13, 1.14, 2.00, or 2.10 and the CORONA with GWBASIC 1.12. Although BetaTool does not list minimum memory requirements in their spec sheets, I recommend a minimum of 128K if you'll be using BDS with the IBM PC.

SPECIAL OFFER

Retail price for BASIC Development System is \$125. BetaTool offers BDS to our User Group members a discount price of \$99 individually, or for \$75 each in orders of ten or more. Mike Durbin, our BASIC Applications SIG Leader is acting as focal point for anyone interested in combining orders to get the Group discount. To get the individual discount, include your membership number in North Texas IBM PC Users Group.

A BDS demo disk will be available through our Disk of the Month. The demo version is fully functional, but operates only with BASIC programs under 6500 bytes in size. You'll get a definite "feel" for the program and what it can do for you, but... Beware! After you have used it to get your program to the 6500 byte size you'll feel awful when it cuts out and you have to finish the program with plain old vanilla BASICA!

John

How to Decode the memory Chip Error Message

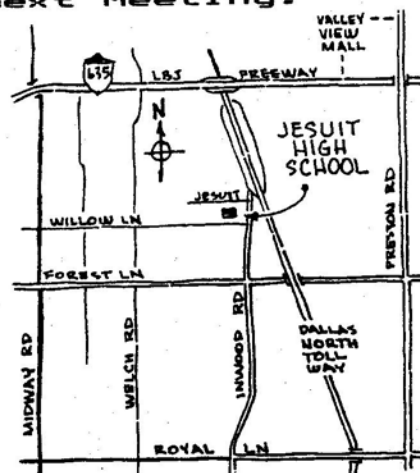
(Reprinted from Southwest PC Users Group Newsletter for January 1985)

If you have a failing ram chip you will briefly see a message on your screen like 1080 210, which is quickly followed by PARITY CHECK 1, or PARITY CHECK 2. The 201 indicates you have a memory problem, the four digit number 1080 indicates which chip it is. The ram chips on your system board are arranged as follows:

BANK	CHIP BIT								
	00	01	02	04	08	10	20	40	80
00	chip	chip	chip	chip	chip	chip	chip	chip	chip
10	chip	chip	chip	chip	chip	chip	chip	chip	chip
20	chip	chip	chip	chip	chip	chip	chip	chip	chip
30	chip	chip	chip	chip	chip	chip	chip	chip	chip
40	chip	chip	chip	chip	chip	chip	chip	chip	chip

Four banks of nine chips. Each bank is 64k bytes, each chip is one bit of those bytes or a parity bit. Remember, one byte is 8 bits. Each chip has 64k bits in it and each bank has 64k bytes plus a parity bit in it. Each chip contains all of the information for one bit in the byte for 64k bytes. So the code 1080 indicates that bank 10 has a bad parity bit or the bad chip is in bank 10 and column 80.

Next Meeting:





DISK OF THE MONTH

by Doug Windhaas

FEBRUARY HIGHLIGHTS

FEBRUARY 1985

(Double-sided)

PC-FILE III Version 3.0 has arrived!!! The new version of Jim Button's database program is available now. New high-speed screen I/O, max. records up to 32,767 from 9,999, wildcard search, and use of all available RAM are just the highlights of the more than 25 improvements made since version 2.0.

DEMO#2

(Double-sided)

Demonstration versions of the following programs:

BDS (BASIC Development System) by BetaTools
See review by John Pribyl in this month's PC-NEWS.

TENKEY by Photon Software

Tenkey is a ten key calculator you can load and use with any other program. The demo works with only two digit numbers.

MEDIA MAGICIAN by Photon Software

Media Magician is a disk utility that allows you to view and modify any byte of any sector on your diskette or hard disk. Demo version has the write feature disabled.

SPEED READING from the Bureau of Business Practice Speed Reading is a demonstration of a computer based speed reading course.

PD0028

(Double-sided)

C Language Source, ASM, and DDC files

CSYSINT	ASM	3728	
CB&SAMPL	BAT	825	
MEMCLEAN	C	4662	
CASync	ASM	10544	
CC	C	2432	
CLS	C	1857	
GREP	C	14695	
GREP	C86	14737	
KERMITPC	C	31290	
XC	C	21836	
LOCATE	C	2178	
USQ	C86	6172	
LUMP	C	1099	
MOVMEHL	ASM	1618	
RANDOM	C	296	plus others

PD0029

(Double-sided 9-sector)

LOTUS 1-2-3 worksheets

FEDTAXB4.WKS The LOTUS worksheet for computing your 1984 federal income tax, has been updated to use Dallas MTA, and Texas Sales tax rates and well as several bugs fixed by Anthony J. Nagy of our club. (Includes schedules A-W)

- CBB.WKS Check Book Balancer
- CDB.WKS Cash Disbursements
- CFM.WKS Cash Flow Manager
- CFP.WKS Cash Flow Projection
- LNA.WKS Loan Amortization
- LNP.WKS Loan Payoff Calculator
- LCT.WKS Line-of-Credit Tracker
- ADC.WKS ACRS Depreciation Calc.
- IRR.WKS Internal Rate-of-Return
- ARC.WKS Acc. Rec. Tracker
- EIO.WKS EOQ Inventory Ordering
- FFS.WKS 5-in-1 Financial Statement
- RAR.WKS Ratio Analyzer
- IIB.WKS Interactive Inc-Statement
- STC.WKS Statistics Calculator
- GCC.WKS Growth Capacity Calc.
- QAI.WKS Queue Analysis (single)
- QAM.WKS Queue Analysis (multi)
- NVB.WKS New Venture Budget
- PVA.WKS Price Volume Analysis
- QGN.WKS Quote Generator

LT0004

(Double sided)

LETUS A-B-C database for the first quarter of 1984 covering Byte, PC Age, PC Magazine, PCjr, PCjr World, PC Tech Journal, and Softalk.

LT0005

(Double sided)

LETUS A-B-C database for the second quarter of 1984 covering PC Magazine, PC World, PC Tech Journal, and Byte.

LT0006

(Double sided)

LETUS A-B-C database for the second quarter of 1984 covering PC Age, Softalk, PCjr, PCjr World, Peanut, and PC Products.

EX0012

(Double sided)

The IBM EXCHANGE diskette #13, dated January, 1985 has not been received yet. Check for it at the meeting. ➤

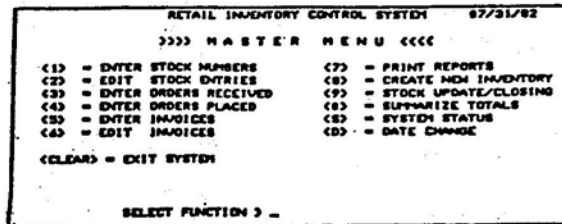
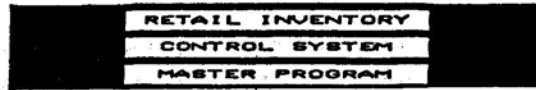
The Professional

RETAIL INVENTORY CONTROL SYSTEM

*For
Professional
People*

With Invoicing

\$300.00



COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS:

For IBM and IBM compatible computers.
 IBM-PC COLUMBIA COMPAQ
 IBM-XT CORONA EAGLE
 TAVA CHAMELEON AT&T
 For monochrome or color video.
 Requires 128K memory.
 80 or 132 column printer.
 Two disk drives or hard disk.

INVOICES:

Four programmable sales tax rates.
 Distribute sales to three sale types
 (CASH, CHARGE, LAYAWAY, etc.)
 Track sales for 30 sales people.
 Accounts for sales tax, taxable, and
 non-taxable sales.
 Prints shipping info. and comments.
 Up to seventeen lines of invoicing.

GENERAL FEATURES:

2000 stock entries on S/S drives.
 4100 stock entries on D/S drives.
 10,000 stock entries on hard disk.
 1000 invoices with eight lines each.
 Field capacities:
 Stock numbers 12 characters
 Description 19 characters
 Vendors 6 characters
 Storage location 8 characters
 Date 8 characters
 Quantities 99,999
 Stock item entries \$999,999.99
 Recap totals \$99,999,999.99

REPORTS:

Listings by stock number prefix.
 Listings of entire inventory.
 Listing on items out of stock.
 Listings by vendor.
 Listings on items due to be ordered.
 Suggested purchase orders.
 Writes purchase orders.
 Sales register by sales persons.
 Listing of all system totals.
 Over 20 selectable printouts.

***** NEW ITEMS APPEARING IN MARCH *****

** BAR CODE READER FOR THE RETAIL INVENTORY CONTROL SYSTEM **
 SCANS CODE 39, 2 OF 5, AND UPC. - FAST AND EFFICIENT FOR RETAIL BUSINESS.
 ENTERS STOCK NUMBER FROM BAR CODE SCAN ONTO INVOICE.
 PRINT YOUR OWN BAR CODE LABELS FOR CODING YOUR OWN STOCK MERCHANDISE.
 USE TO UPDATE INVENTORY AND DO STORE INVENTORY.

** ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE SYSTEM **
 RETRIEVES CHARGE SALES FROM RETAIL INVENTORY CONTROL SYSTEM SALES FILES.
 POST MANUAL ENTRIES, SERVICE CHARGES, INTEREST RATES.
 PRINTS STATEMENTS, AGES TO 120 DAYS+. - MAINTAINS CUSTOMER CREDIT STATUS.

FREEMAN SOFTWARE 334 FIELDSTIDE DR. GARLAND, TX. 75043 (214)-270-0625

DISK OF THE MONTH (continued)

EXCHANGE

All members of the club are encouraged to contribute copies of public domain programs to the club library. For each new diskette of software contributed, you may select any diskette in the club library in exchange. The contributions will be reviewed before credit is issued at the next meeting.

MAIL ORDERS

As long as the members use it, I will fill mail orders on the following basis. All orders must have payment enclosed and addressed to: Doug Windham, DOM Chairman, PO

Box 475205, Garland, Tx, 75047. Postage and handling must be enclosed per the following: \$.50 per diskette ordered with a \$2.00 MINIMUM charge, and \$1.00 postage for each catalog.

DISK DETAILS

Price: \$6.00 (except 2-diskette pack) Catalogs: \$3.00

Available at the meeting, in the cafeteria at the specially marked table, before and after the general meetings. Media: DSDD 5 1/4" diskettes formatted without DOS (320k). Public domain software only, standard full disclaimers. Call disk of the month chairman Doug Windham at 278-5321 any time (have answering machine) to contribute new programs for future Disk of the Month issues. All back issues are be available at the meeting and by mail order (see note above).



PAWS FOR GREAT DEALS

EPSON NEWS

Big changes in the RX & FX printer lines! A new "plus" series will offer faster throughput and all the features of the Dresselhaus "Fingerprint" board built-in.

NLQ boards for RX-80 F/T+ and FX series only will offer near letter quality with a matrix up to 15 x 18. Two fonts are available; Roman and Sans Serif.

COLORED LABELS

Pink, Green, Blue, and Yellow mailing labels packages 1-up, 5000 per box. Color code your files or mail-outs at only \$38 per box.

BORLAND

We now stock "Sidekick" and "Turbo-Pascal" at competitive prices!

CHEAP CHIPS

64k chips 150 nano \$31/set

First cut selection; no Malaysians.

256k chips for AT expansion boards now in stock at reasonable prices.

SPEED KEY SYSTEM

Koala's latest solution to the "multiple keystroke" problem. Preprinted overlays for each supported IBM

program allow you to substitute with a mere touch of

the finger for up to 80 keystrokes. Based on their graphics tablet, this one is strictly business.

HANDY GADGETS

Monitor turntables, glare screens, switchboxes, surge suppressors, dustcovers, templates, and many items to help you organize your space efficiently are all in stock.

WILDCAT COMPUTING, INC.

Wildcat Computing, Inc.

1830 Avenue K
Plano, Texas 75074

(214) 424-3582

1168 West Main
Lewisville, Texas 75067

Metro 436-7322





SOFTWARE REPORT

by Dick Gall

PC-FILE III VERSION 3.0

Jim Button claims that his latest version will set new standards for indexed database programs for micros. In his \$49 price range as user-supported software, he's certainly right. And club members can try out a fully functional evaluation copy as a disk of the month for \$6. The evaluation version is complete except that detailed descriptions of some of the more advanced features is not included in the documentation file.

With its new maximum of 32,767 records per database (up from 9,999), PC-FILE III is now applicable to the larger jobs. Other improvements include a wildcard search capability, "snapshot" mailing labels, and automatic sequential processing of record FINDs, UPDATEs, and DELETEs. Duplicated data from previously viewed, added, or modified records is displayed automatically.

The new SETUP procedure guides a user step-by-step in entering the initial parameters for a database. This is especially helpful for new users. The capability for printing mailing labels has been enhanced, and performance is significantly improved for systems with plenty of memory because the main program and the sort function will utilize all available memory. Several new report options increase printing flexibility.

The improvements in this and the previous version show that Jim Button is listening and responding to user comments, and with Version 3.0 the program has reached a level that can be called refined. One can also expect a high level of continuing interest in the program because it runs on so many compatibles. I run it on a TIPC, and the Version 3.0 documentation lists 23 other compatibles in addition to the entire IBM micro family that run the program.

TRANSTOK Version 1.20

A Software Tool for Investors

This program may be the leading edge of a new wave in special-purpose user-supported software. It is targeted directly at the investor who wants to run analysis on selected downloaded stock quotations. TRANSTOK converts the downloaded quotations into selectable data formats that can be imported into most of the popular spreadsheet programs.

TRANSTOK currently operates on data downloaded from the SOURCE Unistox/StockCheck electronic databases. Expansion to cover other stock databases is planned in future versions. The SOURCE was selected for the initial issue because of the minimal cost of its stock information services.

The 133K-byte documentation file includes helpful information for communicating with the SOURCE and for setting up a selected stocks list for automatic downloading. TRANSTOK currently provides output data in three selectable formats: .SLK files in the Symbolic Microsoft Format used by such spreadsheets as Multiplan, files that can be imported into Lotus 1-2-3 and Syaphony.

The user-supported program is published by StockBridge Software, PO Box 2470, Redmond, WA 98073-2470. It is available with user registration including SOURCE or mail-in support for \$25, and a sample version is supplied for \$5. The sample version is being provided to the club's disk of the month committee for consideration as a club diskette release.

Dick

Copy deadline for next month's PC NEWS is February 22!

(The following article is a reprint from the IBM Exchange diskette for December, 1984. Ed.)

More On the SHELL Command

Mel Lasala

Long Island Computer Association

The BASIC SHELL command is a very useful command. It permits the user to execute DOS commands while in BASIC. Unfortunately the command is not well documented in either BASIC 2.0 or 2.1. Apparently, when the command is executed in 2.0, a pointer to the BASIC program is destroyed. However, through the use of a peek and a poke, a short BASIC program can be used to save the pointer before the SHELL command is executed and to restore the pointer after the SHELL command is executed.

The pointer problem has been resolved in DOS 2.1, but there is another bug which locks up the entire system if you respond to the SHELL interrogation with just an <ENTER>. The following program is a great way to add this SHELL command to just about any BASIC program wherever you may have a use for any internal or external DOS command. Please note that if you use DOS 2.1, either delete lines 10020 and 10040 or "REM" them.

The program below can be used to save and restore the critical pointer in DOS 2.0 (see lines 10020 and 10040). The BASIC program using the SHELL command is placed in an area which should not, in most cases, interfere with your program. Renumber it to meet your needs if necessary.

To implement the program I would suggest the following: Enter BASIC and key in the program. Test run it and when the program is working to your satisfaction, insert the line "9990 END" and save the program as "SHELL.BAS".

A method I have found to work well when writing a new program in BASIC is to load the SHELL.BAS program immediately after entering BASIC or BASICA. Then key in your own program. To enter DOS commands, just key in "RUN 10000 <ENTER>". Running the program will now execute the SHELL command and allow you to enter DOS commands. When you return to BASIC, the program you were working with will still be active.

Assuming you have finished entering your program and wish to save it, you may do so while the SHELL program is still in the active area with your program. The 9990 END statement will assure that the programs are kept separated. Whenever you load your BASIC program the SHELL program will be appended and ready for use.

An alternative method may be used to invoke the SHELL program at selected times. You may make use of the MERGE command to append the SHELL program to your BASIC program. However, when using the MERGE command, the SHELL program must be in ASCII format. Thus, when you initially save the program, use the form

```
SAVE "SHELL.asc",A
```

To load the program, use

```
MERGE "A: SHELL.asc"
```

Caution: Bugs other than the pointer may also exist in the SHELL command. Test out the command before you do some real serious work with it. The novice programmer will enjoy using the SHELL command. The experienced programmer will have other suggestions to offer in the use of the SHELL command.

SHELL UTILITY PROGRAM by MEL LASALA

```

10000 CLS : KEY OFF
10010 INPUT "Enter DOS command:",DOS#
10020 P1 =PEEK(&H30) : P2 =PEEK(&H31)
      'use this line in DOS 2.0 only
      'remove for DOS 2.1
10030 SHELL DOS#
10040 POKE &H30,P1 : POKE &H31,P2
      'use this line in DOS 2.0 only
      'remove for DOS 2.1
10050 LOCATE 25,1 : PRINT "press any
      key to continue";
10060 WHILE INKEY$="" : WEND

10070 CLS
10080 PRINT " Enter a D if you wish
      to enter another DOS command"
10090 INPUT "or Enter a B if you wish
      to return to BASIC.",A#
10100 IF A$ = "D" GOTO 10000
10110 IF A$ = "d" GOTO 10000
10120 IF A$ = "B" GOTO 10150
10130 IF A$ = "b" GOTO 10150
10140 GOTO 10080
10150 KEY ON
10160 END

```

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North Texas IBM PC Users Group

February, 1985

All members may order any diskette from the club library, and have it mailed to them. CATALOG DISKETTE available with description sheets for all diskettes listed below (\$3 each).

PRICING: \$6.00 per diskette (\$5.65 + .35 sales tax) plus \$.50 postage and handling for each diskette. (\$2.00 minimum postage and handling.)

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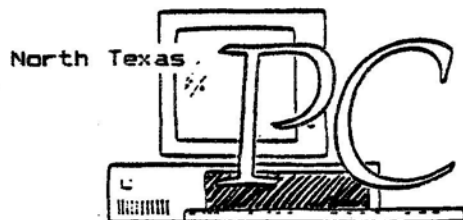
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