The New Orleans Personal Computer Club Newsletter

MotherBoard

Inside this issue:

Editor's Notes for May 1999

David Freedman is deeply enthralled in his annual passion, The Jazz Fest at the Fair Grounds again this year and announced at the BoD meeting that he couldn't submit a column this month for the newsletter. Hey, I can't blame him. Work at the job that feeds your household has to come first over voluntary endeavors. Good luck with Jazz Fest, Dave. Don't forget to come back!!! Until then, since no one has jumped forward with a yen to write on the front page, I'll offer my limited talents to bringing you some good news and information.

I may have told this story a few years ago in the newsletter but since it is relevant to what I want to say today and because some of you may not have seen it the first time, I shall relate it again. About 40 years ago, I received a battery powered radio for my birthday. It was about 3' thick, 8" tall and 12" wide and required 8 "D" sized batteries to work without the wall cord. I was so proud of that radio, I rode all over the neighborhood with it in my basket on my bike listening to music and annoying neighbors with the noise. About two weeks later, while sitting on the porch with my Dad after cutting the grass, the paper boy walked up to collect for our monthly subscription to the Times Picayune. There was music emanating from his shirt pocket and when my father inquired about the source, the paper boy produced a radio about the size of a pack of cigarettes. We looked at it as he proudly proclaimed he had saved for two months to get it. As he left, I remember looking at my radio in despair. Suddenly, it wasn't as attractive as it was before. My Dad noticed and told me, "Don't worry, Babe. Someday, they'll be giving those away with a tank of gasoline. A few years later, when I had a car of my own, I remember laughing the first time I got a free radio with a fill up. As a senior in high school, I remembered what my Dad had said 5 years earlier.

In college, as a junior, my room mate returned from Christmas vacation with a hand calculator. He bragged, as I carefully used my slide rule on a chemistry problem, that now he could work faster and easier and that it had only cost $300. I lamented what my father had said earlier, "Someday, they'll be giving those away with a tank of gas." The year was 1970.

I don't think Exxon or Texaco have a plan to give away PCs just yet, but they are getting pretty cheap and extraordinarily powerful. We have gone way past the stage where Word Processing and Spreadsheet performance can be improved by adding RAM or a faster chip. Even the most demanding office or home jobs can be done on a Pentium 100 PC with 32 Mb RAM and adequate disk space of about 2 GB.

A Gist of the Board Meeting

Treasurer Tom Ford reports Club membership and liquid assets are holding steady.

The Board is mulling the idea of special introductory half-year memberships designed for computer merchants to provide help and support for customers purchasing personal computers.

As an instance of the Club's concern for new computer owners, Zeke Zimmerman continues his series of New User SIG meetings introducing folks to using their Windows 95 and Windows 98 computers. Session 3 will be on May 20.

A little bonus for the Club's members at our general meeting on May 5: Free trial CDs of new Quicken Deluxe 99.

J.D. Meisler school principal found cigarette butts after our last meeting. There is a SMOKING BAN on school grounds.

Donald McCune

SIGnificant News

New SIGs are up and running: The Genealogy SIG held its first meeting with a fine turnout and good response to Aubrey LeBlanc's leadership; will meet again May 11 and every second Tuesday. If you aren't on the Genealogy mailing list, you can simply drop an e-mail note to sig@nopc.org and you'll receive messages on the SIG activities and discussions.

Zeke Zimmerman continues his series of New User SIG meetings held every third Thursday, introducing folks to using their Windows 95 and Windows 98 computers. This month's session is May 20. John Souvestre leads the Small Business Internet SIG directed at topics related to doing business on the Internet and making the most of a commercial web presence for the small business. The third meeting will be on May 18.

Manny Dennis is considering expanding his programming SIGs to including topics on Assembly language and on Microsoft Certified Solution Developer. These are supported by mailing lists set up on the Listserv at nopc.org. Manny now supervises seven mailing lists in support of his SIGs and groups. Meetings for all these SIGs are generally on Mondays. Pick from the list on page 7 in every MotherBoard and get involved!

Contact Chris Lagarde for details on his SIG supporting users of the ACT! contact management software. May meeting is scheduled for May 13.

Marc Lewis has been implementing telnet ability to his BBS and the current Communication SIG meetings are linked to that; May 26 and every fourth Wednesday.

Ray Paternostro is following the browser wars and will be talking to the membership this month about the newly released Microsoft Internet Explorer. Ray's Internet SIG meets May 27 and every fourth Thursday.

All the above mentioned SIGs meet at McCann Electronics in the Conference Room upstairs at the corner of Airline and Division. Meetings begin at 6:30 p.m. except for the Internet SIG which starts at 7.

Gary Shurman is in the midst of his Visual FoxPro SIG to assist users in making the transition from FoxPro to the now-current Visual FoxPro. Meeting (and pizza) on May 26 and every fourth Wednesday, held at Software and Stuff on Metairie Road.

The friendly NOCK SIG group meets twice each month at Albert Fox's home on Broadway in uptown New Orleans. Meetings this month are on Monday, May 3 and Wednesday, May 19.

There's been so-far casual discussion about forming a SIG around the free and open operating system Linux. Interested? Phone me or e-mail sig@nopc.org for news of future delelopments.

Finally, our interest in the infamous Y2K Problem has a mailing list for it, but few postings. If you have thoughts or news, run them by Manny or me.

Donald McCune

Your Article for the Newsletter

Just think. If someone in the NOPCC wanted to get the word out to the membership about his or her SIG, they could have sent me an Email and be reading their words here, right now. Of course, if they are waiting for me to call or Email them to not forget their article…..

THE OLD RAMBLER

Well, fellow club members, the days of May strike us differently depending on our individual life styles but the old clock on the wall measures the same for all of us so it appears at times like we were literally racing toward the Y2K, suddenly, an unexpected milepost of the Personal Computer revolution.

The April meeting of the club started off with a lively Q&A session, one of, if not THE most popular feature of our monthly meetings. Dave Freedman and John Souvestre shepherded this part of the program with their normal display of technical know-how. This was followed by a lively demonstration of ACT!, Contact database manager, by Christopher LaGarde of Computer Information Associates.

Ed Jatho then took the platform to present a detailed analysis of the do's and don'ts of installing a motherboard. The Old Rambler was tempted to purchase one recently and perform his own upgrade at home but wisdom and better judgement took the helm at the last moment and saved him from himself. We wonder just how many thousands of these Ed has put together in the course of an active career in his computer hospital. From what we could gather from his presentation, however, he still doesn't dare to do it "in his sleep" because there are pitfalls demanding both skill and alertness in such an endeavor. We purchased a battery from Ed recently in the course of helping a friend "rev" up a machine that had been stored and when we couldn't be certain of just where the battery went, we took the motherboard and plopped it up on Ed's counter. "It goes here," affirmed the old master as he deftly reached in and plugged it into a place the OR could barely see!! Most of us have enough trouble just learning to use the machine, much less daring to assemble one. One thing that Ed mentioned should be taken to heart by any of us who plug attachments such as printers, scanners, keyboards, monitors and such into our machines. DON'T SCREW THE THING IN SO TIGHT!! After all, it isn't going anywhere and if good contact is made that's all you want. You wouldn't take a ball peen hammer and knock an electrical plug into a socket to connect an ordinary appliance!!!

One of us who was present for the April meeting was graciously introduced to the OR by his friend and fellow member, Charlie Pate. This relatively new member of the club (he joined last Autumn) only acquired his computer in May, 1998 so he is coming to the PC revolution in its later stages which can have both advantages and disadvantages, the latter probably far outweighing the former. We speak of Louis G.Dutel, Jr, an attorney, who the OR hopes has already become a new friend. Louis is thrice welcome to THAT group because we discovered that we were born in the same year. It is amazing how useful the PC is to an individual in almost ANY business or hobby. Louis' consuming hobby through the years has been still photography, so, naturally, he is anxious to become proficient with his scanner so that he can tie this in with his communication on his computer. We didn't ask the speed of his computer but we're certain that in 1998 (grin) he DIDN'T buy an 8086 with DOS 6.22. Louis is a perfect example of what the OR has been preaching, evangelistically, since he acquired his own computer (it really WAS an 8086 but state-of-the-art for 1986), to wit, that this machine helps to keep us young and looking forward to more things than we could ever master in a lifetime. It's either that or become a philosopher (smile), hopefully never BOTH!! Louis has been practicing law in New Orleans through his entire career and is native to this area.

Louis calls himself "an old real estate lawyer" and owns a real estate title company. He is eager to learn, with the help of his computer, a new technique for copying court records which evidently was not fulfilled satisfactorily with the old microfilm technology. He speculates that a combination of the computer and the digital camera might well prove to be the needed answer in some manner.

We are very happy to add Louis to the growing band of friends who have made their way into the circle of his life and recommends that you get to know this very pleasant and personable fellow club member as well. Thrice-welcome to our midst, Louis. Don't hesitate to ask when you need help. SOMEBODY can help you. Much success, joy and happiness in the rest of your personal life and career and ENJOY that computer.

Perhaps we ought to have a get-acquainted session from time to time when both longer-term and shorter-term (note (grin) how skillfully the OR avoided the terms "older" and "younger") members are either made known to or make themselves known to their fellow members. The Alma Mater of the OR's undergraduate degree had a slogan that ran "Everybody is Somebody." There were those who thought this was a rather ridiculous phrase but it made sense to the OR who was not known as the Old Rambler in those jejune days of summer!! Ones are fine but what would they be without the zeroes?? Takes two to tango - especially on the PC!! Holds true even with Windows!

Frank Masingill

Picture of the Month

Rush 'em! Dese two guys can't possibly stop us all!!!

Got a good photo of NOPCC folks in action? Submit it to: ejatho@bellsouth.net

Direct Access from Microsoft : News Briefs

** Let Microsoft buy you lunch and show you how to make more money selling web-based solutions using the Microsoft Commerce Platform. Join us for the Upcoming Direct Access Quarterly Briefing! Microsoft has created a winning solution for doing business on the Internet. In this session you will learn how select Microsoft products contribute to a winning web-based solution. The Microsoft strategy for Internet Commerce depends on Value Added Providers, like you, to pull these solutions together. *http://www.microsoft.com/directaccess/localnews/southcentral/web0331.asp*

**Direct Access Technical Mixers: Building Intranet Sites with Frontpage 2000 coming to a city near you! Learn how to build an Intranet Site with FrontPage 2000 and take it to the next level with IE5. In this session, you'll learn how to use new capabilities of Microsoft FrontPage 2000 for improved management and deployment of web sites. The capabilities you will learn about include Microsoft Office integration, site-management, and database integration. Additionally, you will learn how Microsoft Internet Explorer 5.0's support for the latest open Internet standards will help you build advanced Intranet sites faster with greater ease.
For complete information, go to: *http://www.microsoft.com/directaccess/localnews/southcentral/mix0331.asp*

** Join us for Pizza and Tech Talk
Learn about Microsoft Office 2000 Solution Development by joining our Technical Services Unit for the upcoming MCS Direct Access Mixer.
Microsoft Technical Services will be holding an interactive session in Dallas and Houston on May 12th discussing the rich set of solutions you can build with Office 2000 Developer Edition and BackOffice. Office 2000 Developer Edition will enable you to easily build your solutions as COM Add-Ins so you get the high performance of compiled code.
http://www.microsoft.com/directaccess/localnews/southcentral/o2k0414.asp

** TIP OF THE WEEK
Microsoft is committed to assist Partners and Customers acquire and use Microsoft software in the most efficient and effective way. To that end, Microsoft and License Online have partnered to deliver you an easy process for you to purchase and deploy Microsoft software licenses. A special web site with local information, promotions and more is now ready for you to visit! We encourage you to start taking advantage of License Online's service by registering at the Microsoft SouthCentral/License Online web site: *http://www.microsoft.com/directaccess/localnews/rdr/sclo.asp*
When you register, your name is entered into a random drawing selection for FREE Microsoft product! We'll email the winners and post their names to the special LicenseOnline web site.

Join Us for the Product Launch of Microsoft Office 2000! Steve Ballmer, president of Microsoft, will be unveiling the latest version of Microsoft Office via satellite from San Francisco on June 7, 1999. See how other customers have adopted Office 2000 and witness the vast industry support behind this exciting new version. Join in the action and attend a free launch event in a city close to you! To register for the event, go to: *http://www.microsoft.com/directaccess/rdr/0428/office2000.asp*

Coincidence?

"The Five Commercials Aired During The *Lewinsky Walters Interview"* (and yes, these really did air during the interview)

1. Victoria's Secret lingerie.
2. Burger King - featuring the song "It's My Party, and I'll Cry if I Want To."
3. Oral-B Deluxe.
4. A promo for the TV movie "Cleopatra," with the following voice-over: "When she was only 20, she seduced the most powerful leader in the world."
5. Maytag's Neptune washing machine -- "It has the power to remove stains!"

NoBullNO

Editor's Notes Continued

A PC of this sort that is Y2K compliant should last many years to come if kept in good operating order and no new demands on its performance are applied. Just last week a client of mine asked me to fix an IBM XT he's had for over 10 years. When I explained that it was not worth fixing and wasn't Y2K compliant, he retorted that all he ever used the XT for was to write his "book" that he had been working on for over 8 years using Word Perfect Ver 5.1 ! This may seem extreme BUT, he said, it still works for me!

I am not advocating keeping old PCs until they drop dead. I am advocating not playing the new machine every year or so game. If I had to put a finger on the point when a new machine became a luxury and not a necessity, I would aim at the PCI bus Pentium 133. This machine with 32 Mb RAM and a 2.1 GB hard drive with a 56.6 FAX Modem will so most anything a small business needs as far as record keeping and satisfy most home needs as well. There isn't any commonly used software outside of a few games that this PC won't run with aplomb. Internet access and speed are determined for the most part by your ISP and your modem. The machine itself contributes very little to internet performance.

The PC I built for the last general meeting is a perfect example of what I am driving at. That was a 300 Mhz Pentium with 64 MB RAM and a 4.3 GB Hard Drive, CD ROM, Sound Card, 56.6 FAX Modem and the trimmings (Speakers, Mouse and Keyboard) for around $890 and tax. Add a 17" SVGA Color Monitor and the total comes to about $1180 and tax. There are some brands configured exactly like this one that are cheaper. The differences are in the component parts and ease of modification and/or upgrade. Most proprietary machines are cheaper but offer little if any ability to be upgraded when necessary. Modular machines like the one shown are totally upgradeable and relatively easily modified to suit one's needs.

Why not just buy the latest Big Name machine and be done with it? I can give you about 3500 reasons at a buck apiece. You show me the home user or small business owner who NEEDS a 500 Mhz Pentium III with 128 Mb RAM, 13.1 GB hard drive space and the ability to watch movies on a 21" screen at the same time as using the internet and I'll show you a guy who probably has two Lexus automobiles in his garage. The analogy goes like this: If you need a $70,000 auto to go get groceries, you should have a Pentium III bone crusher PC. However, if you view your PC as a working tool for a small business or as an educational adjunct for your children at home and do some late night web browsing, consider a down to earth Ford or Chevy.

Used PCs? Bargains abound with all the hoopla around. Check the local papers. A good solid two year old Pentium 233 with 32 Mb RAM, 2.1 GB Hard Drive, Color SVGA, CD ROM, Sound Card, Speakers and 56.6 Fax Modem should cost about $500 to $600 dollars.

No Daddy, they aren't giving them away with a tank of gas yet. But, we are very close…

Ed Jatho

NOPCC Directory

Elected Officers

President	David Freedman	president@nopc.org	david@wwoz.com	482-7070
Vice President	Zeke Zimmerman	vp@nopc.org	zim.family@sstar.com	456-2991
Secretary	Donald McCune	secretary@nopc.org	dcm01@gnofn.org	288-1852
Treasurer	Tom Ford	treasurer@nopc.org	103116.550@compuserve.com	643-3172
Director At Large	Ed Jatho	director1@nopc.org	ejatho@bellsouth.net	834-4386
Director At Large	John Souvestre	director2@nopc.org	johns@sstar.com	888-3348
Director At Large	Ray Paternostro	director3@nopc.org	ray.paternostro@sstar.com	737-9099

Standing Committies

BBS SysOp	Lanny Goldfinch	sysop@nopc.org	lanny@nopc.org	482-5066
Membership	Joseph Chafetz	membership@nopc.org	joseph.chafetz@cwix.com	835-6240
Newsletter Editor	Ed Jatho	editor@nopc.org	ejatho@bellsouth.net	834-4386
Public Relations	(open)	pr@nopc.org	---	---
Publicity	Jackie Elliott	publicity@nopc.org	jte01@gnofn.org	455-6203
SIG Coordinator	Donald McCune	sig@nopc.org	dcm01@gnofn.org	288-1852
Webmaster	Manuel Dennis III	webmaster@nopc.org	md3@gs.verio.net	835-7656

Special Interest Groups

ACT!	Chris Lagarde	act@nopc.org	clag2884@bigfoot.com	283-8712
Communications	Marc Lewis	commun@nopc.org	marc.lewis@sstar.com	837-7272
FoxPro	Gary Shurman	foxpro@nopc.org	gshurman@software-stuff.com	838-9999
Genealogy	Aubrey LeBlanc	genealogy@nopc.org	aubreyl@ix.netcom.com	889-2094
Internet	Ray Paternostro	internet@nopc.org	ray.paternostro@sstar.com	737-9099
N O C K	Albert Fox	nock@nopc.org	albertf@sstar.com	861-1630
New Users	Zeke Zimmerman	new-user@nopc.org	zim.family@sstar.com	456-2991
V Basic Learn Grp	Manuel Dennis III	vblg@nopc.org	md3@gs.verio.net	835-7656
Windows Apps Dev	Manuel Dennis III	wad@nopc.org	md3@gs.verio.net	835-7656

Other Important Numbers / Addresses

Club Hotline	Recorded messages. Meeting Information. Open 24 Hours	454-6166
NOPCC BBS	Bulletin Board System for members. The original way to PC communicate.	486-7261
NOPCC Web Site	On the World Wide Web. Our own home page and club information.	***www.nopc.org***

NO-Bull-NO

A student at Eagle Rock Junior High won first prize at the Greater Idaho Falls Science Fair, April 26. He was attempting to show how conditioned we have become to alarmists practicing junk science and spreading fear of everything in our environment. In his project he urged people to sign a petition demanding strict control or total elimination of the chemical "dihydrogen monoxide." And for plenty of good reasons, since:

1. it can cause excessive sweating and vomiting
2. it is a major component in acid rain
3. it can cause severe burns in its gaseous state
4. accidental inhalation can kill you
5. it contributes to erosion
6. it decreases effectiveness of automobile brakes
7. it has been found in tumors of terminal cancer patients

He asked 50 people if they supported a ban of the chemical. Forty-three (43) said yes, six (6) were undecided, and only one (1) knew that the chemical was water. The title of his prize winning project was, "How Gullible Are We?" He feels the conclusion is obvious.

NoBullNO@aol.com

May 1999

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	*3 NOCK SIG @ Al Fox's 7:00pm*	*4*	*5 NOPCC General Meeting Meisler 6:30pm*	*6*	*7*	*8*
9	*10*	*11*	*12 NOPCC BoD Meeting, McCann 6:30pm*	*13*	*14*	*15*
16	*17*	*18*	*19 NOCK SIG @ Al Fox's 7:00pm*	*20*	*21*	*22*
23	*24*	*25 Newsletter Lick & Stick at McCann's 6:30pm*	*26*	*27 Internet SIG McCann's 6:30pm*	*28*	*29*
30	*31*		*June NOPCC General Meeting Meisler 6:30pm*			

NOPCC is a private non-profit organization Chartered under the State of Louisiana. Its purpose is to provide an open forum for discussion and education of the membership in the use and application of PCs and peripheral equipment and software. Annual Dues Schedule: Regular Member, $40/yr.; Family Membership, $60/yr.; and Students (under 21) , $20/yr.

New Orleans Personal Computer Club
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