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**MAY 1994** 

JUNE JULY AUGUST

MARCH APRIL MAY

### Coming Up

By Bob Ward, Secretary

IF YOU DIDN'T ATTEND the meeting last month you missed the multimedia event put on by Lynda Orban from Knowledge Adventure. Unfortunately her color CD panel was on the blink so we had to settle for the monochrome panel along the overhead monitors. I wish I had a picture of the audience as they dawned their 3-D glasses to watch the dinosaur foot walking through the jungle. Who says older people can't act like kids. Lynda kept us thoroughly dedicated to what was on the screen for over an hour and we would have seen even more if she didn't have to catch a 5 pm flight back to L.A.

The next two months are double headers. That is to say we will not have a typical early meeting where George will field Q's from the audience. Because we have so many companies that want to demonstrate their software we are going to give June's early meeting to CyberMedia. At 1:00 pm, Srikanth Chari, VP of strategic marketing will be showing a couple programs that I stumbled across last year at Comdex.

Here's a short description of what you will see:

Continued on page 5

### AutoWorks

Review By Dave Richmond **SLO Bytes PCUG** 

#### **AUTOWORKS IS ANOTHER**

release from Software Marketing Corporation of Phoenix Arizona. This is the company that produced BodyWorks for DOS and Windows, as well as Computer-Works, B.A.B.Y, ZodiacSigns, ChemistryWorks and Orbit. It was my pleasure to review BodyWorks (DOS) and ComputeWorks and now to study AutoWorks.

To start this review let's take a look at the manual that comes with this software program: In the Introduction, the manual lists the system requirements that are needed to operate AutoWorks, they are:

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WEALENGIAP

LOOpm—CyberMedia

will demonstrate PC911 &

First Aid for Windows.

2:30pm—Dwight Huffman

will demonstrate OS/2

#### July 3

1:00pm-Bob Ward on How to Navigate SLO Bytes BBS. 2:30pm-Phil Wagner -Access the Internet through **SLONET Service.** 

#### August 7

2:30pm—AskMe Multi Media will present SST Software.

### September 4

**OPEN** 

#### October 2

MySoftware

BER DECEMBER JANUARY FEBRU

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# WinSense Makes Sense Out of Window's Nonsense

By Bob Ward, SLO Bytes PCUG

PERHAPS THE TITLE FOR THIS ARTICLE should also be the conclusion. But before I jump the gun, let me tell you what SoftLogic's Win-Sense is all about. As most of you know, if you have used Windows for any period of time it's all a big mystery. INI's, GRP's, ICO's and the like make little sense but are necessary if Windows is to run correctly.

WinSense does as the title describes; it give us an understanding of what's under the hood in Windows. One of the main objectives of WinSense is to fine tune your Windows program so things run more efficiently and faster. This is the only disappointment that I found with WinSense. No matter what recommendations I accepted from the program only rarely did things pick up in speed.

When the program is first installed you are asked for the classification of your primary applications in Windows. You can choose from a large set of general program bases such as accounting, publishing, word-processing, database, spreadsheet, etc. You can also pick a secondary application or leave the space blank. I chose desktop publishing as my primary Window's use with drawing as secondary. Your computer profile includes other things; are you working in a network, what's your modem speed, do you use DOS games in Windows and do you want concurrency. That is do you want to run two or more applications at the same time? You can go back into WinSense any time and choose different applications or even restore a previous set of INI files.

After completing the profile you ask the program to make recommendations based on your use of Windows. It reads your INI files, compiles the data and provides a list of keywords found in your WIN.INI file. This is followed by current settings in WIN.INI and recommendations for change. Many times it will say "leave unchanged" if a particular line is OK. You can lock out any of the recommendations before accepting the WinSense list. For instance I like AutoArrange off. The programs recommends it be on. Click on the accept box and that will be locked out. Follow this with implement and your WIN.INI file will be rewritten to show the changes.

Since one of the main reasons for owning WinSense is to make your Windows programs run faster and more efficiently, I thought I'd take a pseudo-scientific approach to this program and time several different applications in Windows, both before and after recommendations were implemented. Like I said, I chose Publishing as my primary application and Drawing as my secondary. I tested the following using a stopwatch: opening Windows, loading speed of Corel Ventura Publisher and a file in VP, opening Corel Draw, loading a Corel CDR file, opening Microsoft Word for Windows and a Microsoft Works spreadsheet. I also rebooted the computer several times to flush the Windows buffer to obtain accurate results. Otherwise when loading an application two times in a row,

### **Library News**

By Bob Ward, Secretary

IT SEEMS LIKE the Windows and game world are taking over the shareware industry. Most of the better programs are now written for Windows so you'll probably be seeing more and more of them in our library.

#### #603 BOX3A.EXE

What's in that Box? Here's a good tutorial on the computer. FISHY99—Great screen saver. You even get to set up your own aquarium.

J\_SP120—Jurassic Spelling. Learn to spell, hear the words through your sound card... neat! TIMEFLYS—boy, doesn't it. How about this for a personal calendar. Reminds you of upcoming events; birthdays, anniversaries, taxes!

#### #604 WINDOWS PROGRAMS

TASKPL—Infoware Professional task manager for Windows.

MILLIE—Expert expense planner.

ADMAKER—create display ads with graphics, fonts, and more (from OSOSOFT).

PPBOOK22—practical phone book for Windows.

MAYHEM—marble mayhem (puzzle).

XN4WIN—Windows uninstaller. UNSTAL01—another Windows uninstaller.

COLFUNIO—color fun for Windows (youngsters learn their colors).

PARWIN—Parents for Windows is a genealogy program for family members.

#605 TSCDIIIA, B, C, & D
CAD draw program for Windows.

# An Interesting Problem and It's Solution

By Dave Richmond SLO Bytes PCUG

THE OTHER DAY I RAN INTO A PROBLEM that might interest some readers of *Hard Copy*. I have recently been working with computer parts that I have acquired from Computer Center of Los Osos. These component parts are bits and pieces left over when Jim Thacker and Norm Cook, who operate the shop, upgrade and modernize customers systems. Most of these component parts come with no pedigree or documentation. It isn't always easy to get them to function in their new environment. But when I am able to make something useful from these leftovers it gives me a feeling of accomplishment.

To get to the point: This incident occurred when I brought home on a used case with a 386SX 20 mhz motherboard a 40 meg hard drive. Once I had the system running I thought any data on the hard drive would be useless to me so I formatted the drive using DOS 6.2. Without shutting down the machine, I installed two of my favorite programs starting with DOS 6.2 and then XTGOLD. I wrote conventional AUTO-EXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS files and re-booted the computer.

Hey! What Happened? I was greeted with unfamiliar error messages:

"Unable to control A20 line"

"XMS driver not installed"

"HMA not available: loading DOS low"

"SMARTdrive cannot be loaded because the XMS drive-,
HIMEM.SYS is not loaded. Check the CONFIG.SYS
for a DEVICE=HIMEM.SYS command line."

What had I done wrong? For the rest of that day I muddled around checking the WINA20.386 file, comparing it to other WINA20.386 files in my other computers. This didn't help, they were the all same. Where was the problem? At wits end I gave up for that day. The next morning at breakfast I studied my DOS 5.0 manual. On pages 610, 611 and 612 in the section that deal with HIMEM.SYS I found a possible solution. Like most DOS commands HIMEM.SYS comes with:

- 1. Syntax—Which governs how the command is written.
- 2. Parameters—Which located the HIMEM.SYS file;
- 3. Switches—

/hmamin=n Specifies the amount of memory a program must use before HIMEM.SYS permits the program to use the high memory area. Valid values for n are 0 through 63. the default value is 0.

/numhandles=n Specifies the maximum number of extended-memory-blocks (EBB) handles that can be used simultaneously. Valid values for n are in the range I through I28. The default value is 32. Each additional handle requires an additional 6 bytes of resident memory.

Continued on page 8

### Bit's n' Bytes

#### From Bob Ward, Secretary

- ✓ Remember there will NOT be a neophyte SIG meeting this coming month. All meet in Fisher 286 at 1:00pm to see Cybermedia.
- ✓ Sam is continuing to convert the library over to 3.5" format. This should diminish our vast number of library disks to around 150. We're hoping to finish some time this summer.
- ✓ Please look at your newsletter mailing label. If your membership needs renewing please do so before I have to send out reminders. Besides the expense (it all adds up) you can save me some time by paying at the meetings.
- ✓ Did anyone find 25 disks stuck next to a seat last month? Virginia Sawyer left without her disks last month. If you found them, please contact Bob Ward so we can get them back to her.
- ✓ I have a copy of Peachtree Accounting 2.0 for Windows that needs a review for the newsletter. If anyone would like this program, it will only cost you a good review for SLO Bytes.

### Sharing Printers <:-(

By Doug Betts, Computer Age Consulting

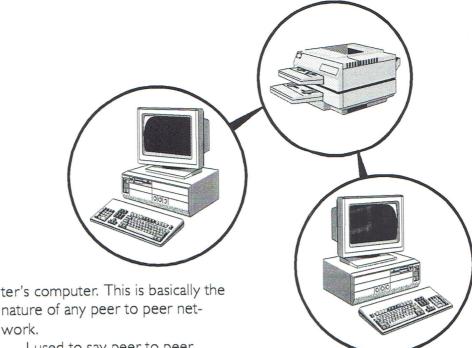
> Reprinted from RAM Pages, Fresno PCUG, March 1994

AS I SEE IT THERE ARE two safe solutions when you have more computers than printers. The first and safest solution is to buy printers for each computer. The second safest solution is to install a Novell Netware server based network (there are limitations however). The rest of this article is dedicated to reporting on the lesser expensive solutions that I have worked with.

These economical solutions consist of Novell Netware Lite (a peer to peer network), Windows for WorkGroups (a peer to peer network), CoActive (a peer to peer network), manual AB switches. automatic electronic AB switches, parallel cable signal boosters, and serial printers with AB switches.

Note: all the names in the following paragraphs are fictional, any resemblance to actual persons is purely coincidental and unintended :-}

Each of the peer to peer networks provide for printer sharing by using a TSR program on Trixie's computer, which has the printer attached. When Sylvester sends a print job to Trixie's printer. Trixie will notice a sluggishness or temporary lockup on her computer. If there are fonts or complex graphics being sent then the lackluster performance can last 10 minutes to an hour. Even if Trixie is not working on her computer, the print job will take noticeably longer than if the printer were attached to Sylves-



I used to say peer to peer networks should not be used to run programs over wire but would be OK for small data file sharing and printing. I no longer consider printer sharing as acceptable on peer to peer networks due to the great number of programs that send graphics and fonts to the printer.

work.

There are several headaches with manual AB switches. First, the most obvious and expected draw back is that someone has to turn the switch. The switch is usually located near the printer. If the printer is at someone else's desk, you have to go flip it or intercom them, which may interrupt their phone call or meeting.

Some programs will not allow you to "retry" if the printer is not "online". If the processing time required to prepare the print job is excessive, then you can have situations where you have to tell other people not to flip the switch until your process has finished.

Some manual AB switches will intermittently prevent soft fonts from working right.... some of the time. Clients who have experienced this have reported that

some days the system works fine and some days... "it's just cranky". The first step in troubleshooting a printing problem is to remove the AB switch. Sometimes an AB switch will cause the printer to spit out a piece of paper with a few strange symbols at the top before some of the print jobs.

Some programs send initialization codes to the printer the first time you print after entering the program. The second time you send a print command, those initialization codes would not be sent again. If someone else sends a print job between your first and second print jobs then your second print job might not come out right because the initialization codes are no longer in effect. Peer to peer networks and Novell networks share this problem. Automatic electronic AB switches experience all the same problems as manual AB switches except that no one has to flip a switch. The automatic switch senses the incoming print job and locks on to

Continued on page 8

#### Coming Up— Continued from page I

#### PC911

PC911 is a software product that has three main features:

- I. It creates and automatically maintains an emergency disk with all critical data regarding a PC, such as CMOS, boot sector, partition table, shell, AUTOEXEC.BAT, CONFIG.SYS, etc. The disk can be used to restore a PC in case any of this data is lost.
- 2. It automatically keeps track of changes in the PC's configuration and maintains a history of previous configurations. This feature can be used to restore to a previous working configuration or to trouble-shoot problems.
- 3. It detects many cards in the PC and their IRQ, DMA, and memory settings. PC911 also allows the user to enter and maintain a complete database of the cards in the PC so that IRO, DMA, and memory conflicts can be avoided. The product is easy to use and works with disk compression software such as STACKER, and DOUBLESPACE with non-standard shells such as 4DOS and NDOS., and with MS-DOS, Novell DOS, and IBM DOS.

### CyberMedia's First Aid for Windows

First Aid is a Windows product that detects and fixes Windows configuration problems. The product has an extensive knowledge base regarding the following:

- I. Entries in WIN.INI and SYSTEM.INI
- 2. Entries in AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS
- 3. Driver files needed for printers, multimedia and other hardware;
- 4. Application INI files and DLLs need for running these (for the top applications).

First Aid currently supports all applications in the major software suites as well as several others.

The product works in two modes. In the proactive mode, a user can use First Aid to detect configuration problems and to fix these automatically before running into problems. In the second mode, a user can run First Aid in the background. First Aid runs with no impact on a user's normal operations.

However, when it detects an error (a non-zero return code), it checks its knowledge base for a solution. If it finds one, it offers to help with a diagnosis of the problems and a proposed solution. If the user approves, First Aid automatically corrects the problem by modifying INI files, changing PATHs or locating DLLs as needed.

I gave this company a 10+ at Comdex last year. Since then they have developed new versions which we will see even before they are introduced to the public.



Since Bob Hunt wants to see this demonstration we will cancel the neophyte meeting for this month only unless someone volunteers to take his place.

After a short break at 2:30, Dwight Huffman will show us what else is out there in operating systems. Microsoft DOS and Windows isn't the only game in town. IBM developed OS/2 several years ago which Dwight will be showing us. There has been much controversy between the Microsoft and IBM rivals for sometime. Come and see OS/2 in action and decide for yourself.

The July meeting will be held the day before the fireworks. We're dedicating that month to modems and telecommunications. Again George will not be fielding questions during the early meeting, although the neophyte meeting will be held as usual. Instead, I will be demonstrating the use of modems and access to our club bulletin board. We do this every couple years to generate interest in telecommunications. It's amazing the number of people who have modems and never use them. This might give you incentive to try it out.

During our regular meeting, Phil Wagner will demonstrate a new service that was conceived by him about 16 months ago. Most of have heard of Internet but really know nothing about it. Many of us who do know about Internet are frustrated because there hasn't been a means of accessing it until now. Phil will show us the latest Internet access which is available to EVERYONE for a small monthly

Bring your notepad to this meeting and take notes. It will save you frustration later on when you fire up that modem.

## AutoWorks— Continued from page I

- An IBM PC or comparable VGA graphics display
- a hard drive with 7MB free
- a 5 1/4 or 3 1/2 floppy drive
- 525K memory free
- DOS version 3.3 or later
- A mouse is highly recommended.

Now we know what we need to operate, let's install AutoWorks: No problem, takes about fifteen minutes. During installation, we are reminded, on the screen, of the many benefits of registering our program. They never mention the downside. When you register a software program your name is automatically placed on a mailing list. From this day forward you will be inundated with offers to purchase, through the mail, more software than you could ever use.

AutoWorks is an interactive information system designed to let you explore the world of the automobile. These concepts are illustrated in both text and pictures, beginning with a full view of an automobile, then digging ever deeper and deeper into the major systems of a car.

Now to do this AutoWorks comes with all kinds of bells and whistles. You have the, image view window, a tag list, a good old menu bar and of course all those little icon buttons that you click on. These all work together to present the information and to control your session with AutoWorks.

The tag list, displays the items relating to what is currently on the screen. Click on one of them you will get more in-depth information

on that item by displaying the text covering the entry. Here also here you can access text of related items. Like, if you are looking at the radiator, there is the related water pump, part of the family that makes up the cooling system of an automobile.

In the graphic displays of the major automotive systems you are offered a dual-view both of the profile and the overhead views which will give you a better perspective of the placement of the parts.

Your little old mouse can have a field day with it's cursor roving around the screen clicking on flags that

will bring up information associated with the item flagged. Hey if you don't have a mouse, and I can't imagine anyone not having one, you can move your cursor around the screen with the ever faithful cursor keys. You got your "Hot Keys" these are <ALT>+ keys that perform various functions, like Printing, file export, the setting of the bookmarks and zooming in and out of the displayed graphic images.

Now your pull down Menus are accessed, like in most programs, by pressing the <ALT>+F key combination, or by clicking on them with the mouse. There are five of these drop down menus which cover Files, Systems, Topics, Animation and Help.

The Files menu controls the bookmarks, reports and printing. The System menu covers the ten systems of the automobile, like the Transmission, Exhaust, Cooling, Fuel, Engine, Suspension, Brakes, Chassis, A/C and Heat, and the Electrical. The Topics menu enlarges on five subjects, The Automobile it's History, Racing, Fuel and Trivia.

Perhaps the most interesting of the pull down menus is Animation. Through it eight of the systems are graphically animated to give you a better understanding of just how the automobile works. (Must be why they called this program AutoWorks!) There is a Game icon on the Menu Bar that leads to an interesting quiz on information you might learn using

AutoWorks. Last is the ever present Help Menu. Don't know what we would do without this little button! You may create and Export PCX image files from AutoWorks for use with other software Packages, such as a paint program. Select Export from the File Menu and at the prompt, name the file in the normal DOS language with up to eight characters and your PCX file will be save in the Auto-Works directory. You can then move it to where you wish to use it.

AutoWorks has an index search that you can use to search through the data to find information on a subject of interest. Hey that about sums up AutoWorks.

Conclusion: I found this to be interesting program that would be informative if you had little or no knowledge of automobiles. If you have spent your lifetime using a car and dealing with it's care and maintenance, I don't think you will

#### WinSense— Continued from page 2

the second load would be faster. My Corel Ventura Publisher application loaded in 16.5 seconds before using WinSense and 11.5 seconds after WinSense rewrote my WIN.INI file. In all other instances programs loaded and ran at the same speed before or after the WIN.INI change by WinSense. I reran the test setting Spreadsheet as my primary application. The WinSense recommendations were almost identical compared to Publication as my primary Windows application. I didn't see where this program could help me in that category too much.

Before saying WinSense can not speed up Windows in general let me say there is a whole other set of options in the WinSense Main Menu. You can checkout Windows option settings by subject, file or program affected. Under settings by subject you can fine tune Windows appearance, performance, communications, memory use and more. Under settings by file you can edit the WIN, SYSTEM, PROGMAN, CONTROL and WINFILE.INI. There is adequate help along the way. Think of this part of WinSense more like a menuing system for editing your INI files directly. Options by program affected include changing one or more of your many Window's manager files such as file manager, program manager, print manager and more.

WinSense has a massive help menu called Knowledge Base. If you want to become an expert in Windows just read this file. Actually it does make interesting reading and answers many questions that occasionally pop up when rummaging around in Windows. Despite the fact that I could not get most of my applications to run faster, this program has merits just in the fact that you can learn so much about Windows and what makes it tick.

SoftLogic Solutions One Perimeter Road Manchester, NH. 03103 800-272-9900

#### **Special User Group Pricing** for SoftLogic Programs List Price **UG Price** 89.95 39.95 WinSense 49.95 **Disk Optimizer for Windows** 19.95 29.95 49.95 Disk Optimizer Tools (DOS) Software Carousel 49.95 89.95 49.95 19.95 Cubit There will be a drawing for one copy of WinSense at the next meeting.



#### **New Members**

Hi new members. Welcome to SLO Bytes. We are sure you will enjoy the club.

Elizabeth Bonneville	467-3555
Reina Diaz	481-0469
James Good	489-1581
Ben Hansen	545-0344
Clint Keller	773-2257
Eugene Rheingans	528-5826
Jim Thacker	528-6822
C.W. Wilson	528-0647
Julia Wright	528-1344

### AutoWorks— Continued from page 6

learn how to avoid being ripped off by the Doctors of Motors and Mr Goodwrench's that are lurking out there in the cruel world preying on that "Little old lady from Pasadena" and "Mr Average Motorist!" Still there is a lot of merit in this program. At it's reasonable cost you can't go wrong.

AutoWorks Software Marketing Corporation 9830 South 51st Street Bldg. A-131 Phoenix AZ 85044 Telephone 602-893-3377 Fax 602-893-2040

#### Printer Sharing— Continued from page 4

that computer until a certain preset amount of time passes with no data coming through. Then the switch resumes scanning all connected computers for incoming print jobs.

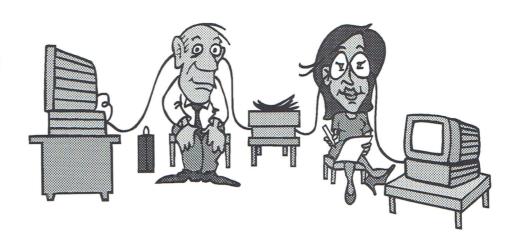
This introduces another problem. Some programs (databases, accounting, desktop publishing and graphics programs) will process print jobs and send chunks at a time to the printer. While your computer is processing the second or third chunk of the print job, the automatic switch will allow someone else to send a print job which then gets mixed in on the same page as part of your print job.

Some peer to peer networks have this problem. Novell networks do not have this problem.

Some offices have headaches with server based Novell networks. Most of these problems are due to incorrect configuration settings or software that is not designed well for networks.

All of the solutions in this article do work well for some people. Some of the problems described can be dealt with by changing configuration settings or

establishing office protocol. If the office layout is compact, the programs being used are simple, the needs of the users involved are simple and low volume then these solutions can work well. If the situation does not meet these criteria then you could be in for a struggle. In some cases it just doesn't pay to cut corners on the basic tools for the job.



## Problem— Continued from page 3

/int I 5 = xxx Allocates the amount of extended memory for the Interrupt I 5h interface. Some older programs require this switch.

And here is the kicker!

/machine:xxx Specifies the A20
handler to be used. An A20
handler is a part of your
computer that gives access to
high memory area. The xxx
can be any of the following
codes or their equivalent
numbers. (Then followed a list
of 14 codes which I won't
bore you with.)

Here proved to be the answer to my problem. During the previous afternoon my computer had given me an error message suggesting that I contact it's manufacturer. Being tight-fisted, as long distance costs money, this would be my last resort. With the clue, to contact the manufacturer, and seeing the list of codes, was indeed a list of manufactures, I decided to experiment by trying each code. The second code on the list proved to be the touchstone that allowed my computer to load the A20 handler and proceed to boot up with all systems go.

As It says in the manual: "Typically, HIMEM.SYS detects which A20 handler is being used. You might have to specify a value for this setting if the A20 handler reports problems or you have problems using MS-DOS in the high memory area."

Hey what a good feeling to have. Using patience and a bit of

study, I had solved my problem.

I think I learned two lessons from this experience. First: Never throw anything away! You never know when it might come in handy. Never burn your bridges behind you! You might have to return to the scene of the crime. Had I made a SYSTEM DISK and copied the AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS files from the used hard drive before I performed the FORMAT /s operation, I might have avoided the problem.

Second: When all else fails READ YOUR MANUAL. It is surprising how many problems you can solve through the relentless study of the ever present but seldom used manual. As they say, All is well that ends well!



### Club Information

HARD COPY is a monthly publication of SLO BYTES PC User's Group located in San Luis Obispo, California. Information in this Newsletter is derived from both our own membership and other PC User Group Newsletters. The purpose of this publication is to inform our members of meetings and provide information related to the use of IBM PC's and compatible computers.

Membership: Dues are \$20 per year. Newsletter only is \$12 per year. Full membership entitles you to our monthly newsletter, full use of the public domain software library and discounts at local computer stores.

Article Submission: Deadline for submission of articles is the 15th of each month. Articles should be provided in ASCII format without any type of formatting from your wordprocessor including tabs, indents, extra spaces, or highlighting. We prefer articles on disk but will accept hardcopies if necessary.

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Direct all correspondence and newsletter submissions to:

BOB WARD, SECRETARY 2100 Andre Ave. Los Osos, CA. 93402 (805) 756-2164

### Meeting Times

General meetings are held the 1st Sunday of every month, unless noted otherwise in the newsletter calendar, at 2:45 pm in the Cal Poly University Biology Department, Fisher Hall 286.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGS) meet at 1:00 to 2:30 pm.

GENERAL INFORMATION SIG: Fisher Hall 286

NEW COMPUTER USER SIG: Fisher Hall 292



Page layout compliments of Teri A. Sorgatz Computing Assistance

#### Slo Bytes Officers

President	Geo. Campbell
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Editors B	



### Treasurer's Report

Beginning Checking Balance		2141.32
Expenses:		
Newsletter 04/93	-	124.95
Bulk Mail deposit	-	200.00
EXEC-PC BBS subscription	-	94.90
Floppy disk purchase	-	303.06
BBS Phone Bill.(04/94)	-	10.26
Club Long Distance 04/94	-	16.72
	-	749.89
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#### Sio Bytes BBS

(805) 528-6172 14,400 / 8 / N / I PC Files (10,500+) and Message Section

#### Floppy Disks 4-Sale at the meeting

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