



OTTAWA PC NEWS

Vol. 14 No.8

The newsletter of the Ottawa PC Users' Group

October 1997

Coming up

Intel *by Harald Freise*

If you ever wanted to know anything about processors, chipsets and the past present and future of PC's, then Jon Coxworth, Architecture Manager for Intel of Canada, Ltd will be able to answer some, if not all of your questions. Mr Coxworth is our featured speaker at the October 1st General meeting of the OPCUG.

Processors are gaining more and more functions and growing in complexity. Never before have we had processors that work so fast and do as many things. It seems that every time that you turn around now that there is a new processor demanding attention for the "must have" PC.

Processors have accelerated in development. It seems that a new processor is announced every six to eight months. John Dvorak, in a recent article in PC Magazine, wondered why the repairable nature of the new Pentium processors was never mentioned. He surmises that maybe, with the complexity of the modern processor, a perfect chip is no longer possible. It cost Intel \$475 million dollars to rectify the last problem chip and shows Intel's commitment to customer satisfaction.

Intel has charted the course of the development of the PC. With competition from other manufacturers, it's quest is never ending to produce faster and more capable processors and supporting chipsets. The current offerings are of several distinct families. Ever wonder what those MMX processors with 57 additional multimedia instructions do? Why the Pentium Pro doesn't run windows 16 bit applications well or the Pentium II family is considered to be the first Win '95 friendly processor? How about those Intel supporting chipsets on your motherboard? What is the difference between a TX 97 and a VX and why should I care?

Jon Coxworth is an excellent speaker. Come out and hear about the past, present, and learn about future of our PC. At the National Museum of Science and Technology, October 1st at 7:30 pm. See you there.



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Club news

Help needed *by Bob Cross*

If anyone is interested in helping OPCUG maintain a supply of our publicity pamphlets within local computer stores, please contact Bob Cross through the pub or email at cross@fox.nstn.ca.

Your assistance would involve regular visits (every two weeks should do it!) to a computer store near your home to check/replenish the supply of pamphlets on their counter.

"Many hands make light work!" Please consider helping out. Many of you probably stop in to your local store on a regular basis anyway so this would be a small task of great benefit to our club!



Next meeting:

WEDNESDAY, October 1st, 1997

See above

Microsoft Office 97: caveat emptor *Bob Walker*

Microsoft Office 97 looked great when it first came out. All the magazine reports were positive, and people were keen about features like the great Web integration. Then some disturbing problems with Office 97 came to light.

One problem is that the Word 97 file format was incompatible with earlier versions of Word. That should not be a problem. When we needed to communicate with people using older versions of Word, we'd simply save the documents in Word 95 format. Right?

Wrong. When you save a Word 97 file in Word 95 Compatibility mode, the program writes a generic RTF (rich-text format) file and disguises it with a DOC file extension. But it's not a DOC (Word) file, it's a generic RTF file. It's fine for the native Word 97 files to be incompatible with earlier versions of Word, but passing off generic RTF files as supposedly native Word 95 files is something else. At the least, you lose formatting information; at the worst, you get strange error messages and other incompatibility problems.

Microsoft released a separate file-converter program that Word 95 users can run to let Word 95 read Word 97 files. But this is backward: the small installed base (Word 97) should provide compatibility with the large installed base (Word 95), not the other way around.

It gets worse. Outlook, Office 97's e-mail/PIM/schedule application, is very cool, unless you use Microsoft Exchange for e-

mail. Then Outlook overwrites entries in the Registry Exchange used, and the results aren't pretty. Your system can slow to a crawl and become unstable. You can get out-of-memory errors and system lockups.

Microsoft suggests reinstalling the Exchange client to reset the Registry back to its pre-Outlook condition. But that's a Band-Aid fix that doesn't let Outlook and Exchange fulfill Microsoft's promise of having the products work interchangeably on the same e-mail files. Top-tier products shouldn't break each other, and this serious flaw knocks Outlook down a level from other well-behaved contact managers and excellent standalone e-mail clients.

Microsoft has released patches that address some of these problems. If you downloaded the first patch, go back to their site and download the latest version, since the first version had problems or wasn't complete.



Calendar

Meetings	Date	Time and venue
OPCUG General Meeting	October 1 st : Intel	7:30 pm - Museum of Science and Technology, 1867 St. Laurent Blvd.
Desktop Publishing SIG	October 14: Corel PhotoPaint 7	7:30 pm - Griffin Computer Training Centre, 275 Slater St. (at Kent)
Internet SIG	To be announced	7:30 pm - Keefer Room, RMOC, 111 Lisgar St.
Ottawa Paradox Users Group	To be announced	6:15 pm - Inly Systems, 1221a Cyrville Rd.
FOX SIG	To be announced	7:30 pm - Sir Jean Talon Building Conference room, Tunney's Pasture, Holland Ave. (north of Scott St.)

September meeting review *by Bert Schopf*

H. "Clem" McClemens gave a superb presentation Sept. 9 on the publication "The Military Mapper" that he produces for the Mapping and Charting Establishment at DND. Clem outlined the process of gathering the text and images, and assembling them, first as individual pages and then as signatures. Clem brought in press sheets, negatives, and proofs for everyone to examine. He had some problems initially with the photos turning out too dark, but later discovered that some PageMaker 6.5 print features did a better job when disabled. Group discussion followed on image resolution, sizing, and tone curves adjustments. Having just received three new pieces of "kit" (hardware and software) in the office, the deadlines were made even tougher for

Clem by having to integrate new software while laying out the publication. The

new stuff did, however, come in handy for some mapping work required during the spring floods in Manitoba! Clem also produces the "Carlington Summit", a community newspaper. Thanks very much Clem for a great meeting!



October meeting: Corel does PhotoPaint!

Join us October 14th as we welcome Corel PhotoPaint specialist Dennis Van Staaldhuizen to the DTP SIG. Mr. Van Staaldhuizen will demonstrate the strengths and unique features of Corel's full-featured image editing software. Many of you who own CorelDraw or WordPerfect suites already have this powerful program tucked away as part of the package—unleash its power!

The DTP SIG meets monthly (every second Tuesday night) at the Griffin Computer Training Centre, 275 Slater Street (at Kent), suite 340. For further details, contact SIG coordinator Bert Schopf at 232-8427 or by e-mail at blackbird@cyberus.ca.



Product review

Road trips: Door to Door *by Harald Freise*

Ever wanted to go somewhere and to find out if you can get there from here? Not enough time for a Trip-tik from the CAA? I may have found a product for you.

As some of you already know I'm a gearhead, and as often as possible I try to attend various shows and conventions. I never know where I'm going at the best of times and **Door to Door** from **TravRoute Software** makes the task of planning my route a little easier. The program contains a complete mapping of the USA road system on one CD-ROM. Interestingly enough it knows where Ottawa is and the major highways connecting our city to the USA.

The set-up was flawless and the interface is easy to use. A minimum amount of time was spent "learning" how to get from A to B. Fine tuning to your driving style is easy because you can select the type of routes you like to drive. Don't want to hit major highways? No problem. Just adjust the program to avoid them. No toll roads? Adjust for that as well. Want the quickest route through states, cities or from "Door to Door"? Just set the controls and the route will be to your liking.

Plug in the trip start and final destinations, as well as any intermediate stops, adjust the options for your driving style and the program spits out a detailed set of instructions to get there. In

addition a map of the route is highlighted on an actual map of the vicinity. The instructions are usually clear and feature odometer readings and time spent on that section. The detail of the map can be adjusted to various degrees of complexity. If I have one criticism of the maps, it is that the indicated route obscures most of the detail and that the intermediate stops obscure virtually all of the surrounding detail with text that is way too large and bold.

The program is admittedly USA based but was useful to plan trips from Ottawa to the States or from and to border towns along the Canada/USA border. In a recent issue of PC Magazine they said that TravRoute has announced Door to Door Copilot which works with a Global Positioning System (GPS) to give you vocal driving directions while you are on the road. Check it out at www.travroute.com.



Tiny computers or toys? *Jerry Gault*

Choosing a hand-held PC wasn't very difficult for me. I chose the two I felt would suit me: the Psion Series 5, because I really wanted it, and the HP320LX, because my boss says I need it. Both have unique features, and faults.

Psion Series 5

On June 16th, Psion announced the new Series 5. My heart started pounding, my palms became sweaty...I had to have one. No, I'm not a gadget type person, I truly feel I can use it. Really. The Series 5, unlike Windows CE devices, has a keyboard that slides forward showing its large keys for big fingered people. I was able to touch type on the laptop-style keyboard without a problem even with my big fingers. It works with Windows and a Mac, offers loads of bundled software, and comes in a 4MB and 8MB configuration. You can easily add compact flash memory disks to boost total memory to 18MB or more. I purchased the 8MB machine figuring more is better with a 4MB memory disk. The Series 5 premieres Psion's latest 32-bit version of their operating system called EPOC32. It uses the 32-bit ARM 710 RISC processor, amazingly fast and takes up little memory.

Besides the impressive technical specifications of the Series 5, I liked the user friendly interface, stylus input, and the PC



Free: 2.6M	Documents	Spreadsheets	Jane's first words!	System
	Fax	Draft to David (lease notes)		Control panel
	Meeting notes	Taxes		Sort
	Personal stuff	Directions to the club		New folder
"Internal"				New file
				Clock



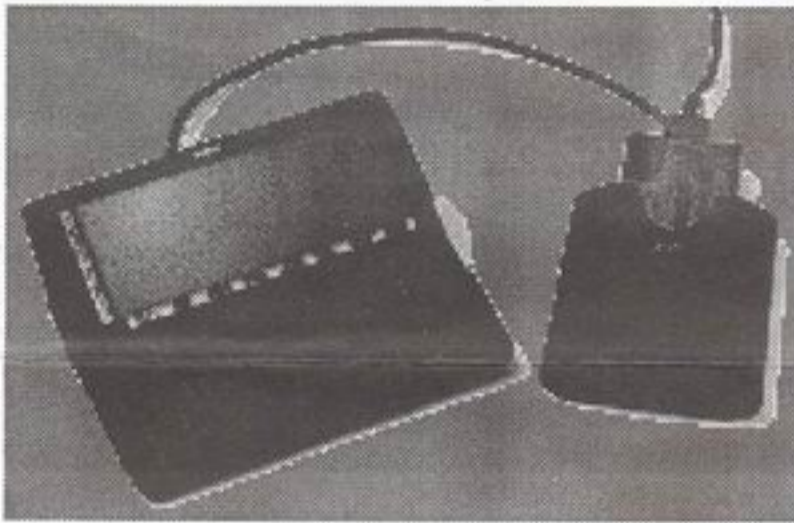
connectivity using Psion's PsiWin software. The Series 5 offers seamless connectivity with Microsoft, Lotus, and Corel office suites, and synchronizes with PC schedulers. Psion has built into their new release a full set of applications including a very functional word processor, spreadsheet, database, agenda, and other programs to help you in your day to day business.

Continued on page 5

HP320LX

The other hand-held computer I use is the HP320LX, mainly for form input at work. Hewlett Packard is the only Windows CE hand-held computer maker that offers a 640-by-240 pixel screen. The keyboard is not nearly as functional as the Psion's. I found the keys to be too small for touch typing with my large fingers. The Windows CE operating system is familiar if you currently use Windows on your desktop, but don't expect it to do everything your desktop does. I found Win CE to be a scaled down version of Windows 95 without many Win95 features.

The Pocket Word program did not meet my expectations, lacking many features. If you're looking for basic applications without any fancy features then the HP320LX would fit your need. I did like the Pocket version of Internet explorer, and surfing the web was effortless with a PC card modem. (Psion has yet to release its web or e-mail applications, something many devote Psion user's are not happy about: these apps are due out this fall.) The HP320LX offers some clever touches: a PC card slot and an infrared port.



Like the Psion Series 5, the HP320LX is compatible with windows applications. Equipped with 5 MB ROM and 4MB RAM, and weighing in at 15.6 ounces, this hand-held PC would make a good addition to your mobile arsenal.

For more in depth information on hand-held computers, visit the following WWW sites:

Psion

www.pSION.com



www.pSIONinc.com

<http://homepages.enterprise.net/livewire>

Hewlett Packard

www.hp.com/handheld

Microsoft Windows CE

www.microsoft.com/windowsce/default.asp

Computer ESP (fast way to locate best buys)

www.uvision.com

Cassiopeia A-10

www.casiohpc.com

Velo 1

www.velo1.com

NEC MobilPro

www.nec.com

Compaq Companion

www.compaq.com



Have you ever felt you could contribute an article that would be of interest to most of us?

Why not start now?



Ottawa PC News is the newsletter of the Ottawa PC Users' Group (OPCUG), and is published monthly except in July. The opinions expressed in this newsletter may not necessarily represent the views of the club or its members. Deadline for submissions is four Saturdays before the general meeting.

Group Meetings

OPCUG normally meets on the first Wednesday in the month, except in July and August, at the National Museum of Science and Technology, 1867 St. Laurent Blvd, Ottawa. Meeting times are 7:30 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Fees

Membership: \$25 per year.

Mailing Address

3 Thatcher St., Nepean, Ontario, K2G 1S6
Telephone answering machine 723-1329

Bulletin board—the PUB (BBS)

Up to 28.8 kbps v.34 228-0665 (5 lines)

Chairman

Harald Freise hfreise@fox.nstn.ca 828-3411

Treasurer

Willem (Bill) Vandijk
Bvdijk@igs.net (819) 671-0401

Secretary

David Reeves dlreeves@hotmail.com 723-9658

Membership Chairman

Mark Cayer cayermar@statcan.ca 823-0354

BBS Sysop

Chris Taylor ctaylor@nrcan.gc.ca 723-1329

Newsletter

Chris Seal (editor) cseal@fox.nstn.ca 831-0280

Julie Dustin (assistant editor)
micropro@fox.nstn.ca 823-1552

Mr. Jean Vaumoron (layout)
vaumojav@magi.com 731-7847

Public Relations

Bob Cross,
cross@fox.nstn.ca 595-1002 (after 6 pm)

Facilities

Bob Walker skywalk@istar.ca 489-2084

DTP SIG coordinator

Bert Schopf blackbird@cyberus.ca 232-8427

Fox SIG coordinator

BobThomas@msn.com (voice/fax) 596-3313

Internet SIG coordinator

To be announced

OS/2 SIG coordinator

Mr. Jocelyn Doire Please contact via PUB

Paradox SIG coordinator

Larry Chop chop@magi.com 236-8761 (days)

Windows SIG coordinator

Chris Taylor ctaylor@nrcan.gc.ca 723-1329



Help needed *by Andre Cote*

I am looking for literature or other material on running computer programs using only the keyboard. I will use the information to help quadriplegics at Saint-Vincent Hospital. Any suggestions from club members are welcome. Please contact me at 820-7609 after 9 pm. Thanks.



Reuse, recycle

Bring your old computer magazines, books, or any other computer paraphernalia you want to GIVE AWAY to the general meetings, and leave them in the area specified. If you don't bring something, you may want to TAKE AWAY something of interest, so look in on this area. Any item left over at the end of the meeting will be sent to the dumpster.

