Ottawa IBM-PC Users Group

3 Thatcher Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K2G 1S6

August, 1988

Survey results inside

OPCUG will purchase and operate BBS

by Mike Luckham
OPCUG

Well, the BBS survey forms are in and have been tabulated. The executive extends its thanks to everyone who participated and returned a completed survey, and especially to those of you who took time to add your own

Music maestro...

Computer-generated music is the theme of the August 31 meeting. Guest speaker Hugh Chatfield will cover this subject and demonstrate some of the possibilities that can be achieved in synthesized music.

comments both in writing and in person.

The survey's most important result is to confirm to the executive the value of continuing the BBS service.

The executive has decided to use some of the OPCUG's reserve funds to purchase its own BBS equipment. The position of SYSOP will be a volunteer position in keeping with regular Club practices.

We feel that this move wilt substantially reduce BBS operating costs over the long run. Also, it will not be necessary, at this time, either to increase membership dues or impose a surcharge on BBS users.

The survey responses have also given us an estimate of the 'shape' of

the BBS service in terms of disk capacity and the number of telephone lines required.

The executive would like the BBS service to be more easily accessed (even during 'peak' periods), to carry more downloadable software, and (hopefully) not require such a heavy time commitment on the part of the SYSOP.

To accomplish these goals within the budget we have set, and satisfy the needs of the membership as shown by the survey, we are preparing a rather 'bold' BBS system.

All we'll say at this time is that our new BBS will be a three-line system with a substantial increase in disk capacity.

Details of the system and the date we will put it into service will be found in a later edition of this newsletter.

Flea market planned

The annual Ottawa User's GROLIP flea market will be held on Sunday, November 6, 1988 at the RA Centre, 2451 Riverside Drive, Ottawa. If you have computers or computer-related equipment or software that you want to sell or trade, then this is the place for you... To reserve space or for more information, you can contact Gord Hopkins at 828-3834 (evenings or weekends).

Inside . .

More that meets the eye

ECHOMAIL: opens many doors for users

by Bruce Miller
OPCUG Librarian

There is a truism of BBS users that few users ever go beyond The first, general message area. That's a pity because there is a wealth of material available in other areas... but how to use it?

By the same token, many people leave private messages for the SYSOP (SYStem OPerator) on questions of detailed usage of hardware, and applications. Often, I am totally unfamiliar with both the hardware and The software involved. Such questions at a minimum should be in the general message area; some are so obscure that they really belong in the EchoMail areas.

What is EchoMail?

One of the major benefits of the amateur Fido/Opus network, of which The Bureau is just one part, is the EchoMail facility. This is usually a group of message areas which are not limited to one BBS but are carried on many... the messages you enter here are automatically 'echoed' around the network using the Fido/Opus inter-system mail facilities... hence the name EchoMail.

The great advantage of EchoMail is that if you have a question which is beyond the scope of one BBS to answer, you can get the distilled expertise of several hundred other systems to help. This is a similar system that users enjoy on CompuServe conferences, except that you don't have to pay CompuServe $20 to 30 an hour!!

The problem is with the distilling. It came out at a recent OPCUG meeting that a lot of users are discouraged from using EchoMail because of the daunting volume of mail, and the difficulty of sorting out what may be valuable for the user.

In a word, we solved this problem on The Bureau ages ago, but after the initial publicity, it has once again become a little known secret. Look in File Area 1: you will see a whole series of files called 'CHEAD.LST', 'COMMHEAD.LST', 'DBASHEAD.LST', 'DRDBHEAD.LST', etc. These are 'flat ASCII' text files, and they contain, in descending order, a list of the message header information for every message in the area including: person FROM, person TO, date, and subject. You can use the Type command to read The file online, or you can download it in text or in .ARC format and examine it offline.

If you want the lists for all areas, download 'HEADERS.ARC': that will give you header information for all of the roughly 2,000 messages that we have on the system at any onetime.

Once again, we owe Duncan Murdoch our gratitude for his effort in writing the header list utility for us.

Try the header listing facility: let me know how you take it.

DISK-53: lots of programs

by Chris Taylor

OPCUG Librarian

NOTE: The source code for the programs 'MORE', 'PUZZLE', 'S', and 'SETMODE' has been archived in The file 'SOURCES.ARC' to save disk space. If you are interested in the source code to any of these programs, use 'ARCE.COM' to extract the files. See 'ARCE.DOC' for instructions.

DI.EXE 6368 (***) A replacement for DIR. Returns information on the cluster size, file sizes in bytes, file sizes in clusters, total bytes and clusters used and the number of free clusters and bytes . Related file - DI. DOC.

EMOTICON.TXT 11763 (***) Dozens of ways to express emotion in electronic messages.

GAPPER.EXE 40369 (C**) An arcade game. Cover the entire grid while being chased. Related file -

Calendar ...

Meetings of The Ottawa IBM-PC Users Group are held on the last Wednesday of the month except in July and December. The Meeting are held at the National Research Council Auditorium, 100 Sussex Drive (Gothic Building facing King Edward Avenue). Memberships and club disks are available at 7:30 p.m. with the regular meeting starting at 8 p.m. Free parking is available at the rear of the Gothic Building,

The next meeting will be on:

September 28.

30 % of membership answer BBS survey

by André Cyr
OPCUG

Almost 30 per cent of the Ottawa PC User's Group membership participated in the recent BBS survey. Approximately 70 forms were deposited at the June meeting, and about 40 forms were submitted by mail to the OPCUG. About six forms were sent to the club via the BBS for a total of 118 responses. The OPCUG executive wishes to thank the members who took the time to answer the questionnaire.

THE RESULTS

On the question: which aspect of OPCUG is more important to members, we obtained the following ranking, by adding all the scores entered.

Monthly meetings and speakers	235
Library / Disk-of-the-Month	234
Newsletter	314
Bulletin Board	315
Bulk Purchasing	420

On the question on ownership or regular access to a modem we found that 76.8 per cent of the members own or have access to a modem and 13.2 per cent do not. The survey also showed how frequently users access the BBS. The number in parentheses is the actual number of respondents.

Daily	8.4 %	(10)
Twice weekly	22 %	(26)
Weekly	22.3 %	(20)
Monthly	23.7 %	(28)
Never	23.7 %	(28)

OPCUG members also told us when they want to gain access to the BBS. In many cases, respondents gave more than one choice. Here are the results to that question:

Midnight to 6 a.m.	16
6 a. m. to 8 a. m.	22
8 a.m. to 4 p.m.	32
4 p. m. to 8 p.m.	38
8 p.m. to midnight	65

Uploading and *downloading files* appears to be the most popular activity on the OPCUG's BBS. Here's the results:

A = Usage, B = Very important, C = Important
D = Not important, E = Not Needed.

	A	B	C	D	E
Local Messaging	36	15	35	28	6
Electronic Mail	19	9	31	27	11
Conferences	15	5	27	25	18
Upload/Download	74	73	14	4	1

The numbers do not equal the number of survey entries because multiple answers were offered by some members while others did not answer to all questions.

On the issue of *annual membership* fees and access to the BBS there is a very close split between those who see access to the bulletin board as part of the membership fees (56) and those who see it as option like the disk of the month (62).

On the general survey questionnaire, the following results on member's preferences on meeting subject is were:
A = Very Important, B = Important, C = Not Important, D = Not Needed.

	A	B	C	D
Member presentations	44	40	21	5
Suppliers	63	37	11	3
Educational nature	62	30	14	7

In addition to the *information requested in* the survey, *many* members took the time to write additional comments expressing in more detail their views on many subjects. We have read these comments with great interest.

DISK-53 is fully loaded for August

GAPPER.DOC.

KBFIX2.COM 5760 (***) Provides many basic services: extended keyboard buffer, adjustable typematic rate, display of toggle keys state, single key pausing, beep when toggle keys pressed. All options may be disabled. Related file -KBFIX2.DOC.

Intel 8086/88, 80186/188 instruc-

tion sets. Makes assembly language programming a little easier. Related files - LW86UP.DOC.

MORE.COM 1158 (***) Replacement for the DOS command MORE. VERY fast! Pages forward by line, half screen or *screen*. *Related* files -MORE.ASM, MORE.DOC.

NEWPROMP.BAT 117 (***) Use The PROMPT command to provide date and time on the top line of the

screen, current directory on the second line, and control foreground and background colors. Related file -NEWPROMP.DOC.

NORTSRCH.PRG 2965 (***) How to use Norton's Text Search program with dBASE III Plus to do quick searches through your database. Related files -NORTSRCH.DOC.

NYET. EXE 23872 (C**) Clone of the arcade-style game TETRIS from Spectrum Holobyte. Move blocks into position and score points. Related file - NYET.DOC.

PUZZLE.EXE 39379 (***) Solve "find-a-word" type puzzles. Maximum 24 by 24 matrix with up to 50 words. Related files-PUZZLE.BAS, PUZZLE.DOC.

QFRESH.SCR 108 (***) Get more performance out of your computer- At a cost of only a second or two when booting up! Related file -QFRESH.DOC.

S.EXE 8744 (***) Search and replace on files with 13 wildcard types. Very powerful. Related files -S.C, S.DOC.

SETMODE.COM 2092 (***) Pop-up utility to change mode settings. Change video mode as well as COMM port settings. Related files -SETMODE.ASM, SETMODE.DOC.

SPEED.COM 26624(***)Measures the speed of your computer. Compares it to a stock PC and 6 Mhz. AT. Related file-SPEED.DOC.

ZANSLSYS 2264(***) Replacement for the DOS ANSI console driver. Faster. Related file -ZANSLDOC.

1988 IBM - PC Club Executive

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	Mike Luckham	832 3829
	Marc Riou	733 2092
	Mike Roy	744 0047
BBS Sysop	Bruce Miller	745 1151
Bulk Purchasing	Terry Mahoney	226 2615

Special Interest Groups

PCjr		
Enable	Bob Laidlaw	995 3708
PC/AT	Gord Hopkins	828 3834
Packages	Eric Clyde	7492387
Whole Bit TV Show	Sandy Shaw	733 5088