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FEATURING ARTICLES BY COMPUTER CLUB MEMBERS

"GETTING MORE OUT OF YOUR COMPUTER"

## I Want To Make A Statement

By Trev Beard PCCT

This is the cry from the heart that flows from every artist, in fact from every sculptor and even every composer. Come to think of it—from every writer, hairdresser, quilt maker, cabinet maker, gardener and ... in fact the list includes every creative soul that lives.

Life can be enjoyed so much more if you pursue a hobby and, if you also have a creative bent, videography is a wonderful candidate. Armed with a camcorder, VCR and membership in a Video club you have the basics. Add a little more equipment for easier editing and you're halfway up the ladder. What's this about a Video club you say? Well, you need the members of a club to form the audience, don't forget that "creativity and I Want To Make A Statement" are part of the same fire that burns.

If you have a high end computer, a capture card and suitable software, you can produce results that are nothing short of remarkable. And each day things get better. With DVD round the corner (the stuff that's here, we'll let it settle down first), we'll be able to use CD disks for storage. Will it ever end?

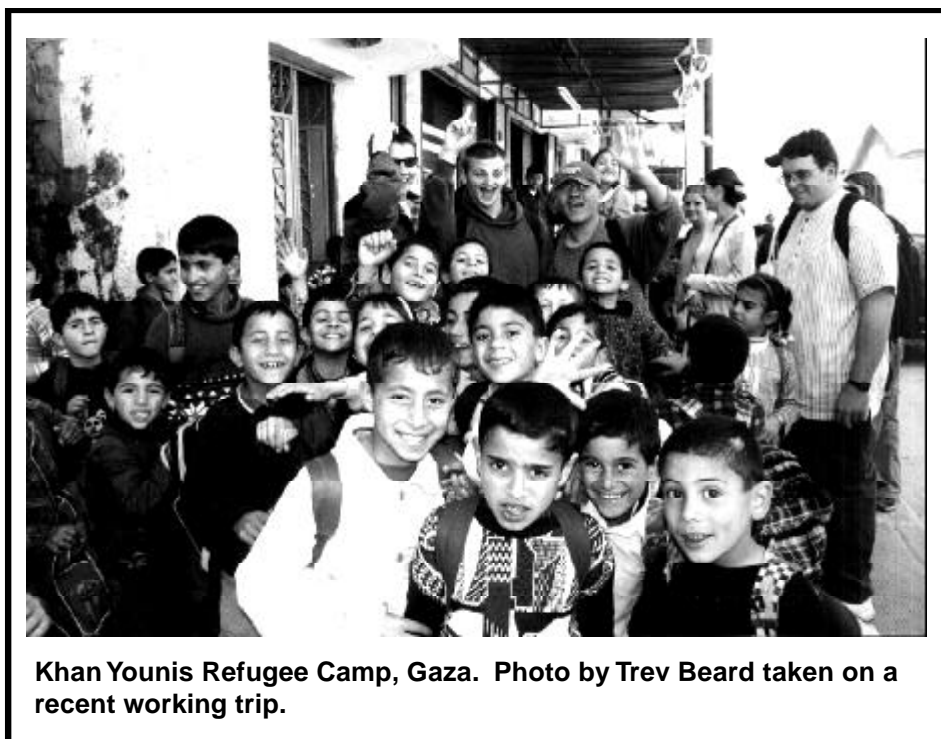
In my experience hobnobbing with members of my own video club, the common thread is "What Shall I Shoot?" Another is "I don't think I can do it." Still another is "I'd be wasting the audience's time with my junk." These are problems that can be overcome.

Here are some thoughts that might get you moving.

Although it's OK to think that Videography is all about babies and weddings, it's developed into something a little different along the way. In my club we do a lot of "five minuters"—shorts that tell a story. Put another way, this is storytelling that uses a camcorder, like the difference between a "radio play" and a "TV play." Just think of the creative acts involved. You start by dreaming of an overall story, then there's the planning of the shooting, the camera work itself, the editing, the adding of narrative, choosing background music, creating a title and adding visible dialogue. There's even the social interaction if you join a group movie-making event. There's more if you want it, like transitions, special effects and animation. Like Topsy, you can grow and grow with Videography.

If you are like me—a thwarted actor, you can be part of the "talent" in a movie. If you are like me—a thwarted Steven Spielberg, you can concentrate on the directing. And if you are like me—a thwarted Michael Angelo—you

In the "Beautiful Music" movie you take some dreamy shots of nature, add "The Blue Danube" background music and it will bring tears to their eyes.



Khan Younis Refugee Camp, Gaza. Photo by Trev Beard taken on a recent working trip.

can "paint" a beautiful story as a script writer. And if you are like me—a thwarted musician, you can spend challenging hours selecting appropriate music. And if you are like me—a thwarted handyman you can do any of the hundred jobs every club has to offer.

Let's wind up by describing just what a video or movie is (I much prefer the term "movie", being a romantic).

In the "Standard" movie you take all the shots yourself, add some narration and music and there it is.

In the "Travelogue" movie you shorten your holiday shots, add some cute comments then some non-sensational music and you have an offering most will enjoy.

In the "Borrowed clips" movie you use clips from tapes you pick up from the library, add well thought out comments to a well thought out story connecting these clips and you have a show. I did this once, feeling rather guilty that not one of the shots was mine. To my surprise it scored high and was well

*Concluded on page 6, column 2*

## May Meeting

### Canon will showcase their new multifunction machines

*Colour printing—at the beginning of the 90's it was expensive and slow. Technology has marched on to a point where inexpensive and fast colour printing has become the norm with Canon being one of the main printer, scanning and multifunction machine manufacturers.*

*Join members and guests for an informative presentation by Canon representatives on their latest colour printing, scanning and multifunction machines. The May meeting takes place in the regular meeting location of North York Community Centre, Burgundy Room beginning at 7:00 pm on Tuesday May 18th.*

May 1999 Volume 17 Number 5

## PCCT

Join us at the PCCT on May 18th. See back page for Free Coupon!

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Please Note:

York Public Library

has been renamed

**Maria Shchuka Library**

It is identified on the back page map and Calendar of Events by the initials MSL.

The Location remains the same at 1745 Eglinton Avenue West.

## Publication Mail Agreement

1464248

### General Meeting Tuesday, May 18th, 1999

Admission for non-members – \$5.00

**6:30pm: Meet and discuss** - your ideas for PCCT with some of our Board members and volunteers.

**7:00pm: General Meeting** - starts with a Question & Answer session.

### The Personal Computer Club of Toronto

# PCCT

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The Personal Computer Club Of Toronto (**PCCT**) is an independent, not-for-profit association for people who use PC microcomputers. Our philosophy: *Users helping Users.*

"read.me" is the newsletter of the PCCT, published 11 times a year, featuring articles by club members and members of other user groups from around the world. Opinions expressed are those of the writers and not necessarily of the PCCT.

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## Special Interest Groups

### The Basics SIG

Leader: Frank Latchford (416) 340-0999

Learning Windows 95/98 SIG. This SIG is intended for those who are new to Windows 95/98. We will discuss how Windows works and how to use it on a daily basis. The intention of this SIG is to teach — not to entertain. We will start at the beginning and go to the end. You should have learned to use some aspect of Windows by the end of the evening.

### Daytime SIG

Leader: Bob Matheson (416) 222-4628

This is a discussion group that covers a wide range of topics relating to IBM and compatible computers. It is for novice, intermediate and advanced users.

### Digital Imaging SIG

Leader: Ron Caine (ron\_caine@msn.com)

Interested in scanners, photography, digital cameras and the software to run all that? Then this SIG is for you. We will go over all facets of manipulating pixels to give you the results you want.

### Genealogy SIG

Leader: John Mahler (jmahler@globalserve.net)

The Genealogy SIG is for anyone who is interested in the search of the past. We delve into the family tree and cover the tools, means and resources available to those who search. If you have an interest in your past and want to learn more, come on by and sit a spell.

### Hardware SIG

Leader: Clive Apps (416) 510-0020

Installing and fixing your computer hardware can be fun, a learning experience and can save you money. Find out what goes on under the hood and what you can do about it. Bring your machine and do it there.

### Internet SIG

Leader: Avnish Kashyap (905) 671-1736

This SIG concentrates on how to access and utilize the various resources of the Internet. If you are having difficulties using the Internet or simply wish to learn more, then this SIG is for you. The first 15 minutes of the SIG are used to answer general communications issues.

### Investment SIG

Leader: Ken Morgan (416) 491-1932

Analytical techniques, use of spreadsheets, graphical display of investment analysis all play an important part in these meetings. Also, considerable use is made of video training tapes on investment subjects.

### Microsoft Office SIG

Leader: Jonathan Hines

Learn how to use the Microsoft Office suite of programs: Word, Excel, Access and Powerpoint. A SIG geared to helping small business make effective use of this software.

### New User SIG

Leader: Henry Crane (905) 884-5443

This is a group arranged specifically for novice computer users. It holds informal friendly discussions on the essentials of personal computing. You will get clear concise explanations of computer terms on your personal level of understanding, help with what to learn and how to learn it quickly and cheaply, purchasing, upgrading and problem solving advice that can save you many hours and dollars.

### Visual Basic SIG

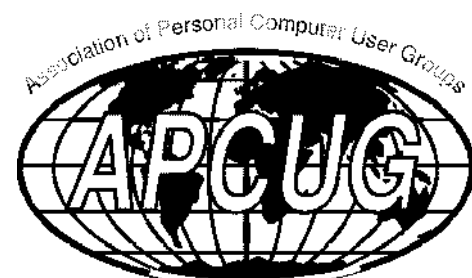
Leaders: Trevor Pedley & Jim McIntosh

Learn Visual Basic, a popular programming language. This group follows a beginners level text with a structured learning environment. Easily learn sophisticated ways to program applications in the Windows environment by attending this group.

### Windows / Win95 SIG

Leader: Karl Stanley 1-905-836-5222

Here is where you can learn how to get and use the maximum from MS Windows. You will enjoy an information-packed, entertaining evening while you learn how to use all the Windows tools, and make Windows run more efficiently on your machine. You can participate in the monthly training session and become an expert user in less than a year. You will learn tips and tricks that will save you hours. You will meet many power users, see the latest Windows products and perhaps win a valuable door prize.



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# Notes From The Board— April 1999

By Robin Wright (PCCT)

The Directors continue to meet as a board once a month.

The administrative database designed by Peter McMartin and operated by Craig Faichney is providing reliable information in a timely manner. This administrative tool is not well known to members. The database has always taken a significant amount of time and effort. All of us are grateful, both to those currently involved, as well as to those who have contributed in the past.

The club has had a booth at both Computer Fest shows this year. Our Vice President Doug Colquhoun is our Shows Manager. Staffing the booth requires a large number of volunteers. We appreciate those who have helped, and encourage all members to offer some of their time to promote the club. Doug is seeking some other show venues for exposure to a new audience. We will have a booth at COMDEX (14-16 July), your help is needed.

After leading the Windows SIG for many years Karl Stanley has announced that he will not continue in this role after June this year. Karl continues to volunteer as the facilitator during the Question & Answer period at the General Meetings. He also is a Director, serving as the club's Corporate Secretary, with special interest in our correct legal operation as a not-for-profit company. Many of us have benefited from Karl's SIG leadership, please remember to express your personal thanks for a job well done.

Craig Faichney as SIG coordinator would be pleased to find a volunteer to lead the Windows SIG starting in September. During March we held one special interest night for those interested in the LINUX operating system.

This was well enough attended that we will schedule some more nights on this subject. If there continues to be sufficient interest a LINUX SIG can be added to our regular calendar. This would need a leader, who would not need to be the 'teacher', but would have to coordinate the equipment and the program on a regular basis. There is an added expense for renting space, this will need to be met with an increased revenue from new members joining.

The Post Office has changed our mailing rates for *read.me*. The new costs are difficult to determine, but are being reviewed by Craig Faichney. It will be some time before any changes to our current newsletter design and distribution takes place. This is still our main communication channel to current and potential members. Keith Reighton is coordinating the volunteers who distribute *read.me* to various locations. If you can carry a few copies into your favorite Computer store or other community gathering place, please let Keith know so that we can ensure sufficient quantities.

Now that warmer weather is here Murray Dobbs is searching for a good location for the summer picnic, scheduled for Saturday, the 21st of August. The date and location will be confirmed. If anyone knows of a suitable site please let Murray know. Last year we had a great informal time, allowing members enough time to get to know one another and their families. This year we hope more members will come to enjoy themselves. ❖



Murray Dobbs is searching for a good location...

# Club Focus

By Karl Stanley (PCCT)

When the club was established, many hours were spent defining the purpose and goals of the club. These were enshrined in the Articles of Incorporation.

Article 6 of the Articles of Incorporation of the Personal Computer Club of Toronto:

6.) The objects for which the corporation is incorporated are:

(a) to promote interest in, and the use of, computer hardware and computer software generally;

(b) to foster educational activities, and to organise and sponsor special events, to encourage public awareness of computer hardware and computer software;

Simply stated, the focus of the club is in the use of the computer, software, education in the use of same, and promotion of public awareness of same. There, I got it into one sentence.

The club carries out its objectives by holding meetings including meetings of Special Interest Groups, publication of the club newsletter, participation in shows, and more recently, the implementation of the Web site. In addition, the club has participated with international user groups. The club has sponsored in the past special training programs for members and guests.

Since its inception, the club has continued to evolve reflecting the changes in the industry. In the beginning there was C/PM and later DOS. We saw the advent of Windows, and Windows' own evolution. We saw IBM enter the field with O/S2, and its most recent departure.

When I joined the club, there were three prominent flavors of DOS—Microsoft/IBM DOS, DR DOS, and a third whose name presently escapes my memory. (Otto lang or Andy Hagan will refresh it.) Windows had just come on the scene, and the bulk of the members hated it with a passion. The Windows SIG got started and the merry group of members who comprised this SIG were at times ostracized by the membership at large. Now about 90% of our members are using some version of Windows

One of the strengths of the club has been its diversity. This is reflected in the variety of the SIGs. Over the years, we have seen SIGs come and go. We used to have a spreadsheet SIG with Lotus 1-2-3 as its basis, then we added Quatro Pro. This evolved into the "MS Office" SIG.

The club has never "stood still", but some members have felt it has stood in one place too long. The club's BBS seems to have lost out to the Internet in popularity; but BBS continues to provide service to the members. The BBS has not been found wanting on the Y2K issues either. Arthur Robertson has assured me that the equipment and software have been tested and not found wanting. At times I have felt that only Otto Lang and I have been "talking" but every once in a while, we hear from other members.

I have in front of me the February issue of *read.me*. There are articles written by members covering hardware (Craig Faichney's article on building his own computer). An article by Bernard Nottage on Copernic 98, a search engine for the Internet. Promotion of the upcoming general meeting featuring CanTax's Personal Tax Preparation program. On page three we find President Robin's Board of Director's report, as well as an article by Ken Fermoye on "Stopping Spam" and so on. The *read.me* truly meets the objects of the club and it's diversity. It promotes, educates, and "sells" the clubs diverse interests.

My own participation in the various SIGs is presently limited to the Windows SIG and the Genealogy SIG. But if I could find the time, I would also participate in the Office SIG. I would go to the Hardware SIG as well. (Clive might wish otherwise!)

You have been working together with your committee on developing the Web site. The site to date has reflected the varying interests of your committee. I have not logged on to the site without gaining some information on the club and its activities. In continuing to develop the site, do not fall into the trap of focusing on a particular aspect of the club and in so doing lose sight of the values of the evolving diversity as outlined above.

You get all this and more for only \$65.00 per year !

Karl Stanley CGA, General Meeting Q & A Leader, Corporate Secretary, Windows SIG Leader < (:~) >

# PhotoDraw 2000

By Bob Fancy (PCCT)

Microsoft is rolling out a new graphics program as part of its forthcoming Office 2000. PhotoDraw 2000 is expected to sell for around \$150, which makes it less expensive than PhotoShop, and a little more expensive than a lot of no-name photo/graphics/publishing programs that are on the shelves now.

PhotoDraw packs a lot of things into one program, with basic draw and paint features, special effects and design galleries, a huge photo and clip art gallery, as well as templates for numerous applications, and photographic capabilities that imitate PhotoShop quite competently. It's almost overdone, like the CorelDraw suite, as an attempt to be all things for all people, but the combination of many features has some practical advantages.

PhotoDraw's goal as stated in the user book is to be "One program for all your graphics projects". Not only can you do all kinds of nifty things with one program, you have the advantage of being able to import and export your creations seamlessly to and from all other Microsoft programs. Plus, everything you create can be saved in web friendly formats, which makes PhotoDraw a versatile web design tool.

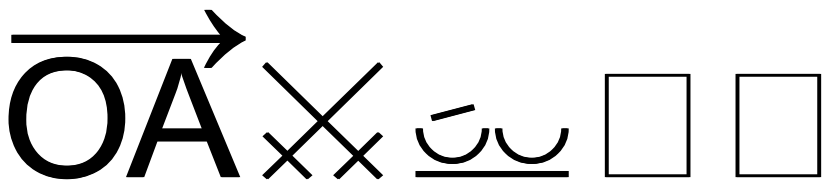
It's not a small program, using 100 to 200 MBs depending on desired options, plus you must access two CD's for photos and clip art and to make the program operate fully. But its many capabilities make PhotoDraw a bit of a graphics playground. A simple function like drawing a line can occupy a few hours as you explore the PhotoBrush Gallery options, with its different brush strokes and textures, or use Designer Effects by turning the

line into line-like pictures of a flute or a string of beads.

The Effects Gallery can turn almost any graphic image into something else, with 3-D, blur and sharpen, a variety of shadows and distortions, and special effects like stained glass and other media filters. Color control options are extensive and you can fill any object with solid colors, gradients, textures or even a picture. PhotoDraw can also change the edges of a drawing object or picture from plain to soft or to apply artistic touches or photobrushes to the edge lines.

PhotoDraw's photographic capabilities easily stand up to the high standards of PhotoShop and CorelPhoto. You can fix red eye, remove dust and spots, despeckle imperfections, remove scratches from a picture, and clone parts of a picture. Then you can use the Picture List display menu to combine pictures or parts of pictures, add drawing elements, and label the whole creation with awesome text effects. This photo montage capability will be especially appreciated by anyone obsessed with creating ultra-original greeting cards, business cards and publicity fliers.

All in all, PhotoDraw is a terrific combo plate program, with a rich smorgasbord of effects, and an endless buffet of things you can do. Because it tries to do so much, it's slow at times, and the Workpane Gallery interface is a bit of a pain. This small inconvenience can make one appreciate CorelDraw's smoothly operating interfaces, but CorelDraw is more expensive, so maybe PhotoDraw is a good buy at the lower price. You certainly get a lot for your money. ♦



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# CanTax— Personal Income Tax Software for 1998

By Frank Latchford (PCCT)

*Filling out Tax forms can be fun.*

I never thought I would ever say anything like that. One of the things I hate most is sitting down and filling in the annual tax form. This year I bit the bullet and filled in our forms on the day I received our last "T" slip. Filling out those forms was definitely not fun.

Last week my daughter said "Please, please, Dad, would you fill out my Tax form for me. I never get it right".

I was about to say "no, no" when I remembered the CanTax presentation I had attended at the PCCT general meeting in March. I was given a Demo disk that allowed you to do everything but save your work and print out the forms. Normally I don't review crippled software, but using it was such a pleasant experience that I decided to make an exception.

I could tell you about all the neat things it does and contains, but I would need more space than *read.me* has to do so. Suffice it to know that it has all of the Tax Forms and incorporates the changes in taxes from 1997 to 1998. The Tax program is released annually containing these changes. The core of the program contains the four pages that must be filled in for the return. Beside most lines there is a small magnifying glass. Click on this and you are taken to the form (or as I like to think of it—the scratch pad) that lets you to work out the figure that must be inserted on the line in question. As you fill in the four pages the program does all of your adding,

subtracting, multiplying and dividing for you. When you fill in page one it picks up your age and Province so that all the forms you are exposed to are the ones you need. You can go to CanTax's website to get the latest update if Revenue Canada makes any changes after the software is released.

There is a multimedia aspect to the CD that walks you through the forms. You need Internet Explorer 4.0 or later to use this feature. I looked at it, but I didn't use it to prepare my daughter's return. Because she is both a student and a teacher and works at different things during the year, she had income from four different sources plus bursary and scholarship income. I could see why she "never got it right". But CanTax took it all in its stride. As I clicked on each magnifying glass in the form, up popped the scratch pad to enter the information that needed working on before you could enter it in the main form, did all the calculating for me and inserted it in the main form. If you make a mistake in entering information—simply re-enter it. No messy rubbing out, re-entering and recalculating. One handy feature is that as you access each form/scratch-pad a little red pencil check appears beside that form—making it easy to see and go back to. Although this isn't a program that gives full play to raging hormones, it does what it is supposed to do—takes the drudgery out of filing your Tax return each year. ♦

CanTax for Windows 95/98/NT  
[www.cantax.com](http://www.cantax.com)  
Price \$29.95

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assorted  
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# Clean Install—ha!

By Joan Latchford (PCCT)

When Win98 was released pundits were unanimous in claiming “a clean install” was the way to go. In the November 1998 issue of *read.me*, I described the challenge I had deliberately subjected this operating system to by installing it over the OSR2 version of Win95.

I never had any reason to quarrel with that installation. It rocked.

Still, the ideal of a Clean Install had a certain seductive appeal—how much faster/better could my Pentium 200 MMX be made to run? So ten or so days ago, the installation of a 20 GB hard drive seemed the logical occasion to go for it.

Motherboards of a certain age need a BIOS upgrade to handle hard drives larger than 8 GB. My Tyan Titan Turbo ATX-2 was no exception. The Award BIOS version 1.01 on it claimed to be software upgradeable. Going online to search Award for the update, I learned that BIOS companies direct you instead to the manufacturer of your motherboard, since each company makes its own modifications to these essential chips.

The Tyan site was well-laid out, and it did not take too long to find the right software (Award 1.06 beta, for large hard drives) and download it with its installer to a floppy.

Apart from some dire, soto voce mutterings about the risk factor involved in *flashing* an unfamiliar BIOS, the installation went without incident and Roger, from whom I had bought the drive, even drove me home.

I then did the fabled clean install, made the “rescue” disks and began installing the gazillion software, shareware and freeware programs and utilities that have become essential to me over the years. To my surprise WIN98 recognized all my peripherals, even my somewhat legacy scanner and the new PCI 56K US Robotics Winmodem.

Now I do not remember if my system crashed, or if I absent mindedly switched it off, rather than closing down my system in the appointed fashion. I had noticed previously that on the “shutdown” choice WIN98 displayed a Windows splash screen saying “Windows is now closing down” without ever arriving at the orange banner that claims it “is now safe to close down your system.”

## Doctor Tips

By Steve Rakus (PCCT)

### Windows 95/98

Active Programs, Minimizing All

Click on the desktop item located on the **Task Bar**. Click on the desktop icon again to restore all active programs. Shortcut: Hold down the **Windows Key** and press “**D**”.

Finding e-mail Addresses

Click the Windows 98 **Start** button. Select **Find: People**. Select one of the directories in the left hand column and fill in as much information as possible in the right hand column. Click **Find Now**. Select from the names in the lower section of the dialogue box.

ClipBook, Make It a Permanent Feature

If you find ClipBook program useful, you won't want to access it off the Installation CD every time you want it. It's much easier to install it on your hard drive. With the installation CD in your CD-ROM drive, click **Add/Remove Software** (or open **Control Panel** and double-click **Add/**

**Remove Programs**). Click **Have Disk** then click **Browse** and navigate your way to **D:\Other\Clipbook** (assuming your CD-ROM drive is “D”). The **Clip-Book.inf** file will appear in the box under **File Name**. Click OK twice, select **ClipBook Viewer** under Components, and click **Install**. Click OK when the installation is complete, and from now on, you'll be able to launch ClipBook by clicking **Start, Programs, Accessories, ClipBook Viewer**.

Find your path

By default, Windows 95/98 hides the paths of files and folders from you. If you want the full path spelled out for you in the title bars (the coloured area at the top of all open file and folder windows) double click on **My Computer**, select **View/Options**, click on the **View** tab and select “**Display full MS-DOS path in the title bar.**”

For latest Free Tips check Dr. Tips Web Site at <http://drtips.com> While there



What I do know, is that on Good Friday I was faced with a blank screen and a system that was impervious to all my new and tested boot and rescue disks. Switched on, the motor and the hard drive would run but there was no reassuring beep at the POST (Power On Self Test) and not even a C:\ on the screen.

Over the Easter weekend Frank and I spent a great deal of extra time on our knees (over and above our Easter Duties) as we tested and reconfigured drives and cables, cleaned and reseated cards—to no avail.

With nothing to do over the next two days I spring cleaned my office, tried out some new recipes and generally cogitated on the problem until it occurred to me, that if we were dealing with an intermittent electrical problem, leaving the power supply running might heat up the system and resume the electrical connection. Nothing to lose, I left my system running, even forgetting about it as I tidied my desk. So I was surprised when I heard a welcome beep after an approximately 30 minute interval. This has happened on subsequent occasions and I now know that after a crash (or even leaving my system shut off for some time after a normal exit) if I go away and leave the monitor and power supply running it will ultimately result in the POST completing itself and a restored working image on my screen.

It also occurred to me that the problem might be related to the new shutdown process. Using “Find” on the start menu to search for all file instances of *start\*.\**, I arrived at a trouble-shooting screen that suggested I turn off *rapid shutdown*.

I have still not arrived at a satisfactory explanation of this behavior—is it the beta BIOS or the Power Management? I haven't yet found where (or if) I can turn off a possible rapid startup that corresponds to the shutdown. Or even if this will provide a solution to my computer's contrary behaviour.

Nor do I have any more time for research and trouble shooting this week before getting back to work on *read.me*.

But I promise, when I do, you'll be the first to know of the solution! ❖

## Wipe Out! CD Repair Kit

By Frank Latchford (PCCT)

I almost didn't write this article. I tried this product and it didn't work. Was I amazed! I put it on the shelf for a couple of months and then went back to it. Tried it again and it worked perfectly. I'm rambling. Let me start at the beginning.

Wipe Out! Is a product that claims to be able to make unplayable CDs playable and unreadable CD-ROMs readable. I borrow music CDs from the public library. Every so often I come across one where one or more tracks refuse to play. Go to the next track and it plays perfectly. On examination of the disk the offending area has a circular scratch or even dozens of scratches. Normally you just have to accept the inevitable and not hear those tracks that are scratched. Wipe Out! solves this problem.

Quoting from the box, *Wipe Out! is a polishing compound, specifically designed to repair CDs, CD-ROMs, DVDs etc. With a little elbow grease Wipe Out! will remove the scratch and permanently restore the disc for you to use.*

The mistake I made was not applying enough “elbow grease”. Once I did, everything worked as claimed.

What I did find was that sometimes you had to treat the offending area more than once. If you have a CD-ROM that you have paid a few hundred dollars for and that cannot be read, this product could be a godsend.

It is important to follow the directions on the box to make it work. One bottle will treat approximately 80 CDs. You can even go on their website and see a demonstration as to how to do it. For my part, I will use this product for years. ❖

*Wipe Out!*  
Esprit Development Corporation  
[www.cdrepair.com](http://www.cdrepair.com)  
Price US \$25.00

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# Intel's Steam Roller Hits Speed Bumps

## How Will This Affect Grass-Roots Users? by Ken Fermoye & Linda Gonse

The Intel juggernaut appears to be slowing recently. For roughly two decades the company forged ahead, flattening opposition, amassing huge profits and delighting stockholders. Its strategy: develop ever-more-powerful microprocessors, sell them initially at high markups, then drop prices gradually as new generations come online.

Speed bumps in its profitable progress apparent by spring 1999 range from legal woes to new Pentium III chips that may be ahead of their time (and pose privacy threats). For virtually the first time in its history Intel faces real competition from other chipmakers and serious defections in the ranks of computer manufacturers.

How will this affect the average, non-corporate computer user? Let's look at the facts.

First, Intel appeared to lose momentum when the computer market changed drastically. Prices of entry-level computers plummeted rapidly. Since the late 1980s PCs selling for over \$2000 dropped from a 40% market share to less than 10% in 1998. Under-\$1000 systems became common and ads now tout sub-\$800 boxes routinely.

Intel attempted to fill the low-end gap in its CPU (Central Processing Unit) lineup, but critics uniformly panned the first Celeron chips. AMD and Cyrix offered chips that equaled, even out-performed, Intel's economy models. A growing number of computer manufacturers, striving to meet the demand for lower-priced models and still make a profit, abandoned their Intel-only policies and began using AMD and Cyrix products also.

The result: Intel's market share in PC microprocessors dipped from 87% in fourth-quarter 1997 to 76% in 4Q 1998.

Legal problems occurred when the FTC (Federal Trade Commission) filed an antitrust action against Intel. A tentative settlement had been reached, but details were sketchy as this article was being written. (Almost simultaneously, Motorola filed a suit charging that Intel stole trade secrets by hiring Motorola chip designers.) Industry analysts did report that the result would be a "kinder, gentler, less aggressive Intel", which would be good news for competitors and other technology firms (including computer makers).

Ultimately, grass-roots users at the bottom of the food chain will benefit from freer exchange of information, an end to "blacklisting" of firms that refuse to enter overly-restrictive licensing agreement and the greater competition that should result.

The Pentium III has raised problems, too. Many industry critics say it's a solution to a problem that barely exists right now. Some cautioned business buyers that PIII chips offered few pluses chips in desktop machines running most current software applications. *PIII Advances Aren't Enough*, proclaimed PC Week in a cover story headline, adding: "The chip shows only marginal performance improvement over Pentium IIs—no more than 8%—when running most business applications."

A PC enthusiast site, Ars Technica, tested a 500-MHz Pentium III against a 450-MHz Pentium II and found the increase to be a meager 11%. Of course, a few applications, especially those involving 3D graphics, do take advantage of certain PIII features. But if you're not a serious game-player, don't look for much bang from the high-priced new Intel chips.

Then there is the privacy issue, which could be the most critical of all for us end users.

Computers based on the new Pentium III chips that run at 450 and 500 MHz began rolling out on February 26. These chips feature the Processor Serial Number (PSN), an embedded 96-bit ID that identifies the user's PC to any software that knows how to ask for it.

(Recent reports indicate that Pentium II 333 and 366 chips with 256K integrated cache and Celeron 266 and 300 chips for laptops were shipped with prototype PSN enabled beginning January 25, 1999. One anonymous Intel employee has

been reported as claiming that all 25-micron Intel chips have PSN ability.)

On the positive side, Intel claims PSN technology will help keep stolen credit cards from being used online, aid in discouraging CPU counterfeiters, and enhance some computer services.

Groups concerned about users' privacy being compromised voice loud opposition to the PSN. They say it allows user movements to be tracked, data to be collected about specific users, and eliminates user anonymity.

Intel attempted to answer privacy advocates' concerns with a software fix that turns the ID off when desired. However, the ID does not remain permanently deactivated. Instead, rebooting activates it again. Early on, groups called for a hardware fix, insisting a software fix will not work.

In addition, cryptography expert Bruce Schneier discussed with CMP Media's Electronic Engineering Times the possibility of serial numbers being forged or stolen.

In mid-February in an online article, Fred Langa of Windows Magazine, described the anger and frustration he saw during an informal online poll of users' opinions about the PSN. "I think we're seeing the start of a strong anti-Intel backlash, analogous to the anti-Microsoft fervor that's changing the operating system landscape." The latter reference is to the sudden swell of interest in Linux by business users, which has not yet made any impact among grass-roots users.

The latest news is Dell, Gateway, Compaq, and IBM will ship Pentium III IDs turned off in the BIOS. But, a German magazine, C'T, reported that software, quickly crafted by a techie staffer as an experiment, remotely switches the ID on and allows others to read it!

In the meantime, privacy groups have complained to the FTC and are boycotting the Intel chip. National Semiconductor (parent of Cyrix) and Advanced Micro Devices (AMD) say they have no plans to create chips with the PSN feature.

For links and details go to [www.orcopug.org](http://www.orcopug.org), click on Hot News. If you have another viewpoint, please send it to: Linda Gonse [editor@orcopug.org](mailto:editor@orcopug.org) or Ken Fermoye, [kfermoye@earthlink.net](mailto:kfermoye@earthlink.net).

Does all this mean Intel will fade away? Hardly! Called the "amazing profit machine" by Forbes Magazine, the company has used its profits well, acquiring or investing in a variety of technologies that not only add new products to its lineup, but spur demand for its core business.

Mike Elgan, Windows Magazine editor, pointed this out in an April 1999 editorial. "The company funnels billions into technologies beyond the microprocessor: PCs, RAM, videoconferencing, CAD software, networking, Internet plumbing, graphics, e-commerce, even toys. It does this to crank up the performance of software and peripherals so buyers have a reason to buy expensive new Intel chips."

Our advice: stay at least six months to a year or more behind the cutting edge. If your Pentium 166 or Pentium II machine does the tasks you ask of it, don't upgrade just for the sake of having the latest and greatest on your desktop.

Things may change somewhat by the time you read this, but we hope the background information will put them in perspective. ♦

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### ***I want to make a statement... concluded from front page***

received. You can never tell, can you?

In the "Stills" movie you use old family stills to tell a story about an ancestor, use spectacularly appropriate music and it just might bring the house down.

In the "Modeling Clay" movie which, being animation takes a lot of ingenuity, you use models of some kind to take the place of the talent. If well done, this will always be greeted with great hand clapping. We still have a challenge outstanding in the club to do something like this using eggs.

In the "Nature" movie, you borrow a microscope and take pictures of dust mites wandering around like aliens from another planet. Always appreciated, but not easy to do.

In the "Commercial movie", you show

how Lady Olive bashes the used car salesman with her broly and successfully sells an old wreck to some overly particular bean counter. If the acting is above average, this might be good for a yearly resurrection.

From this incomplete list, you will gather that the focus is on entertainment as the purpose of your movie. As you progress through the fun of making shorts, you will quickly improve if you work at it. The members in our club are tolerant of movies that bomb because they have all been there themselves.

Since taking up Videography I've had to drop bungee jumping and bull fighting, just no time for them. Oh, Yes, the Club ... Drop in any 1st and 3rd Thursday, Oct, Nov, Feb, Mar, Apr, May, June. North Toronto Memorial Community Centre, 2nd Floor, 200 Eglinton Av. W., Toronto. 7:00-9:30 PM. Ages 20 through 90. If you don't like the shorts, you'll like the people. ♦

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# Palm Pilot Resource Kit

**Robert E. Matheson (PCCT)**

After watching my wife enter the (almost) paperless world of the Palm Pilot for about a year, I decided to do so myself. She had purchased a Personal Palm Pilot but by the time I was ready to buy one, the Palm Pilot III was out, so I opted for one of those. Subsequent to the purchase, we left the city for a month and I was without my computer but did have an opportunity to rely exclusively on the Palm Pilot as a replacement. I have a carrying case that fastens to my belt and found that handy for carrying the Palm Pilot everywhere.

Shortly before leaving I was handed the above kit and asked to produce a review. The book part of this kit consists of nine chapters and one appendix. This entire book plus seven more chapters and three appendices is on the CD in Adobe Acrobat PDF format. Also on the CD are more than 300 Palm Pilot applications, mostly shareware. These applications are described in some detail in the final eleven chapters. There are hundreds of shareware applications that have been written for the Palm Pilot, all readily available on the Internet. In Chapter eight of the book the author lists many of these sites.

Because the Palm Pilot is not complicated to learn it is difficult to assess how much better this Reference Guide is than the Manuals that come with the Palm Pilot itself. The style of writing is "breezy" and some of the tips provided are useful. Some of the explanations are more clearly set out and easier to follow in Brown's book.

There are four sections that cover the basics of operating the Palm Pilot—the initial set-up and parts, the built in applications: date book, address book, to do list and memo pad, learning the Graffiti input system, and the Hot Sync procedure. Other areas that I have not had time to explore are downloading e-mail from a PC and beaming information to another Palm Pilot.

As I have written, learning to use the Palm Pilot is not difficult. One area where I found Glen Brown's book useful was the chapter on the Graffiti system the Palm Pilot uses for input. Although you can call up a keyboard to tap in the letters, the faster and more efficient method of input is the handwriting recognition system called Graffiti. This is very intuitive and easy to learn. Some of the hints and shortcuts given in the Resource Kit were of additional help.

The Resource Kit has also been of significant help in suggesting and reviewing some of the hundreds of shareware programs that are available.

I currently use the Datebook to keep all my appointments, commitments, and birthdays in order, as well as attaching notes to some of the meetings as they happen, for future reference. In the Address Book I have a complete list of telephone numbers for quick reference, particularly while we were travelling. I keep a To Do list for a number of different categories like house, Daytime SIG, books to reserve at the library, etc., and instead of scraps of paper in my pocket or wallet I'm trying to train myself to keep miscellaneous notes in the Memo Pad.

In addition to these basic programs I added three pieces of shareware, Tiny Sheet, a spreadsheet on which I kept my golf scores, RIF information, etc., Datebook3, an upgrade to the datebook, and Traveler, to keep track of the cost of everything in the States in relation to the Canadian dollar (bad). These additional items all came from the CD that come with the Palm Pilot III.

If you are interested only in the basic operation of the Palm Pilot and the programs that come with it then this kit is an added luxury. The manuals that come with the Palm Pilot are excellent and easy to follow. This Kit becomes the icing on the cake and is also useful in the exploration of additional programs. ♦

*Palm Pilot Resource Kit*  
(Book and CD), Glen Brown, \$42.99

# Ken's Korner Bulletin

## No Bill Pending on Internet Access Charges; Other Developments May Have Triggered Warning

**By Ken Fermoye**

During February I received several doomsday e-mail messages like the this one:

Subject New Internet Usage Charge There seems to be another of those "quiet" bills that go through Congress and come back to bite us later. You may wish to reply or pay higher phone bills in the future. Congress will be voting in less than two weeks. CNN stated that the Government would, in two weeks time, decide to allow or not allow a Charge to your phone bill equal to a Long Distance call EACH time you access the Internet.

I've seen reports similar to this three times in the past 14 months or so, and they have all been hoaxes or the result of misunderstandings. I checked with several sources, including my local congressman and some major computer publications, and there is no basis for this one either.

What might have triggered it is the current hassle between cable companies and ISPs (Internet Service Providers) over use of cables for access to the Internet. Simply put, the situation is this.

The ISPs, joined by America Online (which is an online service with its own gateway to the Internet, not a true ISP), want to provide cable access to the Net for their customers. They argue that they should be able to buy this access from cable companies and resell it to their customers. This is essentially how they provide dial-up access via telephone lines now.

Cable companies contend that they have spent billions to install the necessary cable infrastructure and they should not be required to share it with competitors.

Both sides have a point. Cable companies have spent a great deal on their systems, but they would not be giving away access for free. ISPs would have to pay them for use of the cable systems. They also claim that opening up their cable systems to ISPs would reduce the value of the service to their customers. Internet cable access is somewhat akin to the old "party line" type of telephone service; the more people you have using a given service, the slower that service becomes, due to bandwidth limitations.

ISPs argue that allowing cable companies sole use of the cable systems would give them a monopoly on a type of Internet access that is expected to become very popular because it is much faster than dial-up telephone access.

However, another technology promises to become a major player in the Internet access free-for-all currently brewing.

(Have you noticed all the recent major acquisitions and mergers of telephone, cable and other communications giants? All of them are driven by efforts to get a major share of the huge new market evolving with the convergence of telephone, cable, computer and digital technologies.)

The new technology is called DSL (Digital Subscriber Line). It brings high-bandwidth information to homes and small businesses over ordinary copper telephone lines. xDSL refers to different variations of DSL, such as ADSL (Asymmetric DSL). Assuming your home or small business is close enough to a telephone company central office that offers DSL service, you may soon be able to receive data at rates up to 6.1Mbps (millions of bits per second), enabling continuous transmission of motion video, audio, and even 3-D effects. More typically, individual connections will provide from 1.544Mbps to 512 Kbps downstream and about 128 Kbps upstream.

A major DSL line advantage is that it can carry both data and voice signals and the data part of the line is continuously connected. And, of course, it makes use of the telephone lines that blanket the country.

I got somewhat afield from my original point (reassuring readers about Net Access Charges), but perhaps this brief summary will give you a better idea of what's happening in today's seething cauldron of mass communications brought on by the Internet explosion. ♦

# PCCT Family Membership Application Form

SEND TO  
**PCCT**

The Personal Computer  
Club of Toronto  
Membership Director  
P.O. Box 5429, Station A,  
Toronto, Ontario,  
Canada M5W 1N6

Annual Family Membership Fees:  
\$65/year (per household)  
BBS: (416) 636-6394

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street: \_\_\_\_\_ Apt/Suite: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ Prov./State: \_\_\_\_\_  
Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal/Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
Res. Ph: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Bus. Ph: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
Profession: \_\_\_\_\_ Company: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Cheque enclosed:  Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ **I WANT MORE INFO:**   
VISA  VISA Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Where did you pick up this copy of read.me? \_\_\_\_\_

## FREE ADMISSION . . . the night is on us !!!

SAVE \$5 with this coupon at a PCCT General Meeting

**WHERE:** North York Memorial Centre  
5110 Yonge Street, one floor below  
the Central Library.

**TIME:** 7 p.m.

**WHEN:** Third Tuesday of the month.  
see the calendar below.

Where did you pick up this copy of read.me? \_\_\_\_\_

## ADMIT ONE



## PCCT Family Membership Benefits

With your family membership you get:

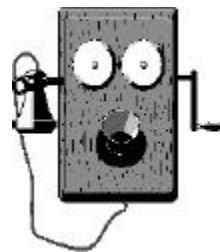
- Expert help from knowledgeable computer users;
- Special deals on Internet service, software and hardware;
- A monthly draw and an auction for great products;
- Demonstrations by leading software and hardware companies;
- 11 monthly Special Interest Groups (SIG) meetings;
- Access to a software library with the best of shareware and freeware programs; communications software;
- Access to the club BBS (for a one-time set up fee of \$20);
- Monthly issues of the club newsletter you're holding right now!

# Calendar of Events

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
MAY 99				
	3	4 Windows SIG MSL 7:30 pm	5 Investment SIG MSL 7:00 pm	6 Win Basics SIG MSL 7:00 pm
	10 Hardware SIG St. A at 7:00 pm	11 Daytime SIG St. A 1:00 pm	12 Digital Imaging SIG MSL 7:30 pm	13 Visual Basic SIG MSL 7:00 pm
	17	18 General Meeting NYC 7:00 pm	19 New User Group MSL 7:30 pm	20 MS Office SIG MSL 7:00 pm
24	25 Daytime SIG St. A 1:00 pm Internet SIG MSL 7:30 pm	26	27 Genealogy SIG MSL 7:30 pm	

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
JUNE 99		1 Windows SIG MSL 7:30 pm	2 Investment SIG MSL 7:00 pm	3 Win Basics SIG MSL 7:00 pm
	7	8 Daytime SIG St. A at 1:00 pm	9 Digital Imaging SIG MSL 7:30 pm	10 Visual Basic SIG MSL 7:00 pm
	14 Hardware SIG St. A at 7:00 pm	15 General Meeting NYC at 7:00 pm	16 New User Group MSL at 7:30 pm	17 MS Office SIG MSL at 7:00 pm
	21 SIG 7:30 pm	22 Daytime SIG St. A at 1:00 pm Internet SIG MSL at 7:30	23	24 Genealogy MSL at
	28	29	30	

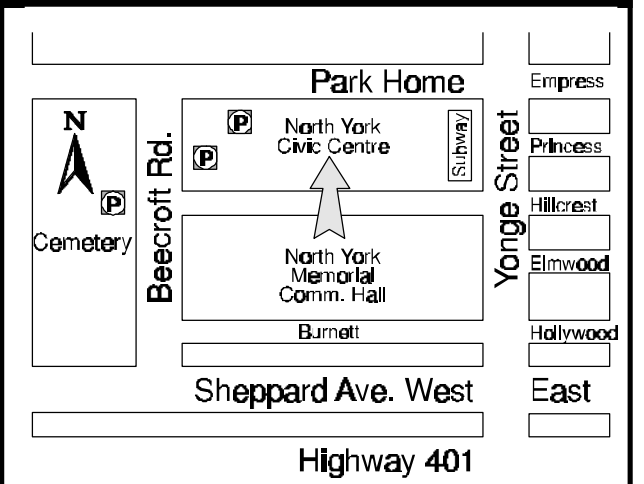
## INFO LINE!



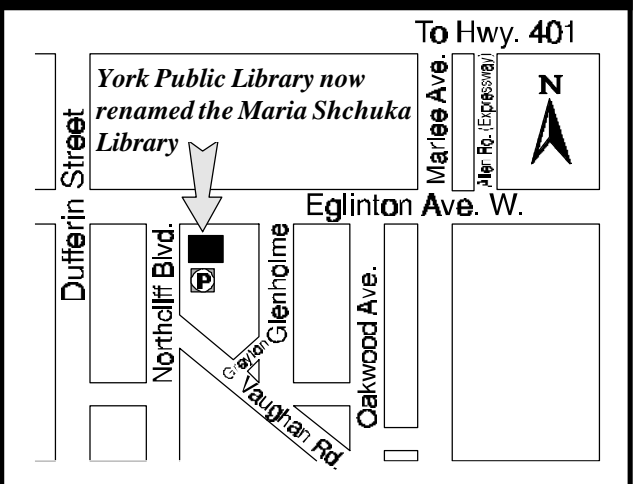
Find out what is going on at the PCCT each week by calling the club hotline at: **(416) 633-6971** for the latest news on meetings.

The new message is changed on Sunday for the following week. Check for last minute changes. If there is a cancellation of a SIG meeting, the message should be on our phone line or BBS.

## NYC North York Memorial Comm. Hall, 5110 Yonge St.



## YPL York Public Library 1745 Eglinton Ave., West



## St.A Church of St. Andrew 2333 Victoria Park Ave

