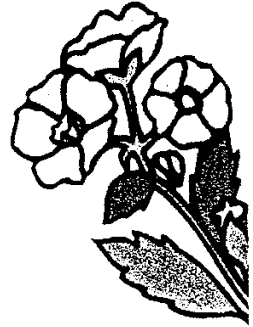


The Voice of **FCUG**



**July
2002**

Volume 23 No. 2

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**Meeting 2nd at New
Canaan Historical
Society**

BOILERPLATE

"The Voice of FCUG" is the monthly newsletter of the Fairfield County Computer Users Group, Inc., a registered non-profit organization dedicated to helping members use their PC computers.

FCUG Members can exchange their ideas and opinions through this newsletter, at a monthly meeting held the first Tuesday of most months, occasional SIG programs, and on a bulletin board reached from the Club Internet Web-site at www.fcug.org.

FCUG Meetings and SIG groups are open to the public. Membership costs \$30/Yr, prorated. For information and payment contact

**Ed Congleton, Treasurer: 203-966-4854,
251 Weed Street, New Canaan, CT. 06840**

To submit articles or letters for The Voice send an e-mail message to thevoice@fcug.org, hopefully with article attached, or mail paper, or even a diskette in ASCII, Word, or WordPerfect format to:

The Voice, 280 Main Street, Westport, CT 06880

Keep those card and letters coming, folks!

SPECIAL NOTICE AND PLEA

As we go to press, about half the membership have paid their dues for 2002/03. Please do not forget to send your hard-earned cash to Ed. Before too long he will probably be pruning the address list and I am sure you don't want to miss any of the material printed here, or the really useful stuff presented at the meetings



Program for 2nd July 2002

- Call to order Fearless Leader – Charles Bryk 7:30**
- Novice Topic: Power Point – Bill Hart 7:40**
- Q and A: Moderator – Ed Congleton 8:00**
Ask and it shall be revealed
- Epicurean Break Chef du Soir – Jerry Zelinka 8:20**
- Main topic: Graphics – Alan Abrahamson 8:30**
More than you ever wanted to know about PC Graphics! Showing the most popular graphics types in use today, including the Internet. In addition, an attempt to explain how different types are used and created for display on your screen.
(Possibly followed by a raffle)
- Adjournment 10:00**

LOOKIN' FOR A RIDE?

If you want to attend meeting but have a problem with transport, please mention it at our next meeting and together we will look for a solution. You can also make contact with Membership Chairman Dick Booth (dick.booth@juno. com or phone 203-847-8047). He can tell you who lives near you, or might pass by on their way to the meeting.

LEFT? --- RIGHT, LEFT!

Did you leave a green windbreaker after the June meeting? If you haven't picked it up by now, it's still at the Historical Society. Pick it up.

**As We Were - from
Voice of the '80
July 1982 . . . Vol 3
No. 2**



May Minutes – by Dennis Palmiero

“...missed our deadline for June. Sorry 'bout that. ... Following the Q&A session we went into our first presentation . . . by our very own Editor and Chief Alan Abrahamson. . . [a] demo of a mail label program . . . designed with all the foresight and professional understanding . . . that you would expect from a reputable author Alan. Mike Ciferri made a short announcement . . . Bob Jackson had a few golden nuggets . . . concerning turn-key packages. . . Following Bob we held our second round of nominations and elections that went like this: Prez – Sid Gross; Vice-Prez – Pat Todd; Treasurer – John Roy; Secretary – John Webb; Publications – Lenny Bloom and Humpfrey Udall; Mod III Disk Librarian – Vic Kayfetz.

“After the break our club prodigy, John Todd, presented his latest creation, a graphics generator he calls 'bug' . . . each [of John's four presentations] is more than the last. By the way, John is 12.

“Following John, which is hard to do, but done well by Roger Giler with a continuation of his lectures on string manipulations. . . . I guess when your title is Chief Wizard you have to continually show why and Roger certainly does that.”

“Preserve those connections” by Donald J. Simons showed how to bolt your keyboard and expansion interface to a plywood base with old coat-hangers.

“Defined Functions” by Alan Abrahamson discussed the use of DEFFN.

“Awards – The time has come for the annual Voice of the '80 awards. In

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lieu of the 'expensive' gifts like the Prez handed out at the last meetings, due to the fact that the 'Voice' has no discretionary budget, recognition will be the just dessert.

“The CPU (Cookie Providing Unit) Award goes to Herb Kanter for turning us all on to Freihoffer's Chocolate Chip Cookies.

“The RAM (Roving Auxiliary Maven**) Award goes to Robert Jackson for filling us with all those software and hardware tips, not including unsolicited quips.

“The ROM (Ready On Monday) Award goes to Alan Abrahamson for always providing the Newsletter copy to the Printer on time.

“The MID (More Interesting Diversions) Award goes to the group that collects at the rear of the meeting room and always talks louder than the presenter.

“The LET (Lots'a Entertaining Topics) Award goes to Sid Gross for setting up the best demonstrations of any users' group anywhere.

“The ABS (Absolutely Beautiful Screens) Award goes to Roger Giler for his continuing series on STRING manipulation in BASIC.

“The LOG (Logically Organizing Gelt**) Award goes to John Roy for keeping us in the black and blue.

“The PRINT (Protection Removal Investigative Theory) Award goes to Mike Ciferri for being the 'buster' that he is.

“[Footnotes:] ** Maven is a Yiddish word meaning expert of authority; Gelt is a Yiddish word meaning money.”

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“Mailbag” containing a message from Marvin Kronenberg with a program fragment.

Alan Abrahamson reviews two books: “Basic Faster and Better” by Lewis Rosenfelder and “The Custom TRS-80” by Dennis Bathory Kitsz. Dennis Palmiero reviews a number of newsletters from other groups.

“Rom Check” by John Roy performs a cumulative check sum of the ROM.

“The Mystery of the Varying Varptr” by Humpfrey Udall solved a strange problem which had arisen after he had listened to Herman Parks' talk and article the previous month. He also provided some patches for Tape Scripsit.

---o-O-o---

WINTIP DRIVER SITES for W9 8 by Jim Sullivan

If you can't find the driver you need on the manufacturer's web site, here are some places to try:

http://www.drivershq.com/main_home.html
<http://totallydrivers.com/driver/index.asp>
<http://driverzone.com>
<http://www.windrivers.com>
<http://www.driverguide.com>

---o-O-o---

Next Generation Internet

By Ben Wilson

(Ed.Note: This is a fascinating look into what is also known as Internet2 --- how the real information transfers are going!)

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In the 1990s University Administrators and U.S. Government agencies recognized the need to upgrade and enhance the Internet to make it ultra-fast for University and Government researchers and to improve security and quality of service. As a result, two ultra-fast networks have been formed. They are:

Internet2-

University led, privately funded to develop a network where research facilities could collaborate on projects using interactive Video conferencing and infrastructure for advanced research and education applications. In 2002, this network now has 10,000 miles of fiber optic cabling that allows for communication 400 times faster than the old Internet. Annual cost to Universities: \$500K -- \$1,000K.

Next Generation Internet.

Federal Government funded and led. Recognizing the needs of the medical community, the project was assigned to the National Library of Medicine, a division of the National Institute of Health. Goals were to improve quality of service, improve security, nomadic computing and infrastructure technology as a means of collaboration. Thus far, 45 million dollars has been spent on the project.

Both organizations recognized the need to increase bandwidth networks of fiber optic cabling as the medium for increasing the speed and reducing the possibility of Electro-Magnetic Interference.

Bandwidth.

Defined as the speed that the data flows on a given transmission path and the width of the range of frequencies that an electronic signal occupies. This is proportional to the

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complexity of data; for example, it takes more bandwidth to download a photograph in one second than it takes to download a page of text in one second. Large sound file, animated videos and computer programs require much more bandwidth for acceptable quality with virtual reality and full length audio/visual presentation requiring the most bandwidth of all.

A typical voice signal has a bandwidth of 3 KHz.

An analog TV broadcast signal has a bandwidth of 6 MHz (or 2000 times as wide as the voice signal).

Fiber Optic cables.

A key part of the improvement. This technology uses light impulses along a glass wire or fiber, carries much more information than conventional copper wires and is subject to less Electromagnetic Interference. Most telephone companies' long-distance lines are now fiber optic.

The National Library of Medicine (NLM) saw a need in the Radiology area as more and more Radiology images were being interpreted remotely in a centralized hospital or reading facility. The difficulty the Department of Defense has in acquiring and retaining qualified Radiologists dictates a need to centralize the reading and interpretation of images. "Desert Storm" was an example wherein DoD field hospitals in Saudi Arabia were generating images on the CAT scanners and transmitting them to Mass General Hospital in Boston for reading, interpretation and expedited return of diagnoses. This approach is expected to increase in the future. The size of the images dictates a need for high speed.

Digital Chest X-ray	200 Mbytes
Mammography	1600 Mbytes
MRI study	2000 Mbytes
Echo-cardiogram study	40,000 Mbytes.

Thus DoD, as well as NASA, CIA and other departments would be expected to utilize this network in addition to the research facilities.

Comparison of the Internet2 land speed records.

Download of “The Matrix” DVD (heavy graphics)

56 K Modem	171 hours
ISDN	74.7 hours
T-1 line	6.37 hours
Internet2 line	11 seconds

Abilene Network.

The NLM established the Abilene project/network with the University Corporation, Quest Communications, Nortel Networks, Cisco Systems and Indiana University to provide the backbone for the enhanced Internet. The network is now in operation across all 50 states with 195 Universities and 20 commercial partners. Abilene is currently operating at 2.4 Gigabits/second as a backbone and has a goal of 10 Gigabits/second in the future. Abilene and vBNS (Internet2 network with MCI Worldcom) are cooperating and limiting new participants to ensure that high performance is not affected. It is expected that some time in the future schools and libraries will be given access. Only about three million users can access Internet2, versus several hundred million on the public net.

European Network.

Twentyseven countries are in the process of establishing an ultra-fast network which will connect to their 3,000 Universities and research facilities. It is anticipated that all of these facilities will participate in advancing medical research pro-

grams. Full cooperation is expected between the US and all of the other countries on the project.

What is expected in the future?

It is expected that the Government, the Universities and selected partners that are willing to invest in this project will continue to work on enhancing Internet2 for the immediate future. End-to-end performance must also be considered by developing advanced programs and applications to take advantage of the raw speed of the two ultra-fast networks. As indicated above, the Government will be pressured to expand access to facilities such as schools, libraries and other organizations needing a secure and reliable connection. While computer clubs are very worthy of consideration, it is not likely that F.C.U.G. Or CT.P.C. Will be connected to Internet2 in the near future.

Addition information on this subject can be found on <http://www.internet2.edu>, <http://searchnetworking.com> and www.nlm.nih.gov.

---o-O-o---

Next Generation Internet Glossary

Abilene -- A railhead in Kansas that opened the Old West to settlers and the name given to the high speed backbone used by the Internet2 traffic.

Bandwidth -- The amount of data a network is able to transmit over a given period of time. (usually not enough)

Diffserv -- Differential services. A way of ensuring that the high-priority data (i.e.: mine) gets better treatment than low-priority data (e.g.: yours).

Fiber -- Short for fiber optics: super-fast connections employed in

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Internet backbone – what most netizens want more of in their diet.

Gigapops -- Regional centers where different networks share a bandwidth-rich connection to the backbone. (as in my gigapop beat up your gigapop)

Internet protocols -- Rules of the road for the infobahn. Theoretically, any device that follows these protocols – computer, cell phone, refrigerator – can communicate via the net.

Jitter -- What happens when the data packets arrive at irregular intervals, or you drink too many lattes.

Kilobit – 1024 bits. Typically used to measure the forms of Internet access available to most mortals. EG: a 56 Kilobit-per-second modem.

Multicasting – A set of technologies designed to speed delivery of video and audio to multiple destinations across the net; may prove useful for the next Victoria's online fashion show.

Net generation Internet – Uncle Sam's version of Internet2, similar in many ways but funded by U.S. tax dollars.

OC3 – Geekspeak for transmission rates of optical carrier networks. An OC3 connection transmits data at 155 Megabits-per-second.

Packet -- On the Net, information is chopped into packets which are then shuttled across the network and reassembled at their destination . . . most of the time.

Quality of service – Schemes designed to prevent packet loss and delays, making Internet2 somethings Internet1 isn't – reliable.

Routers – The traffic cops of the Internet; powerful computers stationed at the thousands of points on the network that tell the packets where to go.

Super Computing Grid – Staggeringly powerful machines that use high-speed networks to collaborate on matters from long-term weather forecasting to high-energy physics.

Tele-immersion – Bandwidth and processor-intensive technology that offers the illusion that other people are in the room with you when they are really miles away. (Similar to your average business of computer club meetings.)

University Corporation for Advanced Internet Development – The non-profit group that oversees Internet2 and Abilene.

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Very high performance Backbone Network Service (vBNS) – Blazingly fast backbone operated by MCI Worldcom and used by some Internet2 sites. Big network, silly name.

Extensible Markup Language (XML) – A way to expand the types of data that can be structured and shared on the Net.

Yottabit – A theoretical measure of data transmission equaling 2 to the 80th power (a 1 followed by 24 zeros). To give some perspective, the Congressional Institute has calculated that downloading a 1-Yottabit file over a 56K modem would take approximately 140 billion years.

---o-o-o---



Cookies and Ways to get rid of Them (without putting on weight)

Marylou Wilkinson

Assuming you are using Internet Explorer:

Each week in the Circuits Section of the New York Times there are very interesting Questions and Answers in a column by J.D. Biersdorfer. Here is what he said this week about getting rid of cookies:

- Go to Internet Explorer
- Select Internet Options
- Click on the General Tab
- In the Temporary Internet Files area, click Settings
- Then click on View Files
- In the View Menu select Details.

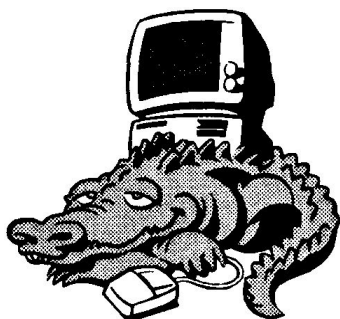
This way you can browse through all the cookies that are currently on your computer, select the ones you want to get rid of and keep the rest.

Actually there are some you would want to keep because they allow you to go into various web sites without the need to log on each time. [Ed.Note: Not if you can type!]

----oOo----

Ed.Note: As an addendum to this useful hint, if you are using Netscape 4.X you can simply go to your Netscape | Users directory, then change to the particular User directory you want (mine is WDHART, of course). There you will find a file called COOKIES.TXT. The first three or so lines (through a line saying "Do not edit!") should presumably be left as they are, but I have often just deleted the rest of the file without trouble.

----oOo----



KLEZ

Ogden Douglas

Copied with permission from AMSI

As in the biological world, the cyber world is suffering more and more virulent virus attacks. One of the latest to hit the headlines, though it has been around a while, is known as WORM_Klez.H, or simply Klez for short. This virus, once executed, places entries calling on itself in the AutoRun key of your System Registry, so every time you boot up it will start again.

The trouble is that it takes advantage of a hole in Internet Explorer, Outlook and Outlook Express which allows what is known as an “Incorrect MIME Header” to bypass the normal safeguards. Ordinarily, a virus attached to a message is not activated unless you try to “open” it (which effectively becomes an execute command), but in this case the virus program will run if you look at the message at all. You will also get no warning that this is happening. Nice. . . .

The most complete description I have found is at www3.ca.com/virus/. Just press the pointer to “Win32.Klez.H” (another alias). The way I see it, the virus has two executable pieces: an “installer” and what one might call a “breeder”. Roughly, what happens is that on first running, the installer plays with some of the key programs in your system. It compresses the originals, alters their name tags, and changes their attributes to Read-only, Hidden and System. Then it copies itself, with the breeder active, over the original programs, filling out the file lengths with garbage, or just zeros, so that the file length still looks valid when you examine the directory. Thus you cannot tell by a

simple Explorer examination of your disk that anything untoward has occurred.

When you run the original program, of course you are executing the breeder instead. But it also temporarily decompresses and runs the original program, so again you do not know anything is wrong. Each time it sends itself by e-mail to another person 8in your address book, but the messages it sends vary widely, with differing content, and possibly with a “source address” made to look like another of your friends. So only a few messages are sent each time to a few of your contacts, and thus a spam alert is avoided. And what is worse, the “from” addresses on these messages are changed, so you do not know which friend to warn about having the virus.

There is a way you can find if you have been infected, though getting rid of it will obviously require the help of an anti-virus program. Run Regedit and check two places in your registry. At “HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE>Software>Microsoft>Windows>CurrentVersion>Run” look for any entries in the form

"Wink***"="[System]\Wink***.exe", or

"WQK"="[System]\Wqk.exe"

and delete them; and at “HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE>System>CurrentControlSet>Services” check for a subkey Wink*** and delete any you find. (Here, the three asterisks imply any group of characters of any length.) Of course you still have to clear out all the “breeders” and their victims, which is why I suspect a professional cleaning job would be best. Still, you can make the check to see if that is going to be necessary. I have, and luckily this machine is clean – so far!

There are also reports of variants which will overwrite all .DOC files with zeros, thus destroying all your personal documents. I don't know. . .

How do they think of these things? And why?

FCUG MEETING 4th JUNE 2002

At 7:35 President Charles Bryk called the noisy gang to some sort of order and asked how many were here for the first time. Five hands went up; two said they had seen John Sponza's article in the Westport paper, and three that they had learned about the club from Roger Giler. Never underestimate the power of the Press! And well done, John! More people attended this meeting than for many a moon. An exact count was hard to make as late-comers kept drifting in, but 49 or 50 people were there at the peak – and there were still a few chairs unused.

It was Election Time. Pete Fuller was voted Temporary Fearless Leader to conduct the voting. By agreement, a single vote was cast for the slate promulgated in last month's Voice – which means the same crew will be running things for yet another year! Charles, having sat down among us for a couple of minutes, stood up again and things proceeded.

Roger told us novices about Microsoft's PowerToys, and particularly Tweak, or TweakUI.exe. This is an extremely powerful program for adjusting the settings of your Windows 95/98/ME/XP machine. Written by MS people, it is so powerful that MS does not officially recognize it. There are several sub-menus, one even called "Paranoia". Roger suggested you go to www.aumha.org/a/power_toyz.htm to find it.

Ben Briggs conducted the Q&A session, which generated quite a few mini-discussions.

Q: When I send a JPG to friends they receive an empty file.

A (after some discussion): Since you can receive it, the problem is with the other end. Companies often filter out attachments to e-mail for employees.

Q: Using Excel97, my name-and-address file disappears, only to re-appear after a couple of days. Even 'Find' cannot find it.

A: Search to '*.XLS'. Browse to find the file. Do not rely on the 'Recent Files' list.

Q: My Paint program can open JPGs but not GIFs.

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A: GIF is actually a proprietary format and the owner demands royalties, so many programs do not handle GIFs. Try Irfanview, a free program written in Croatia, where foreign royalty problems have been ignored!

Q: I need AOL on floppy disks. (No overt reply.)

Q: I have a cable modem and a router using Internet Explorer. From time to time I lose the connection and my guru tells me to turn the whole thing off for five minutes.

A: This happened when CableVision changes your address, as when a new user is added to your circuit. The cable modem will pick this up quickly, but the router is not clever enough. You only have to turn the router off for a few seconds. Also Linksys routers have a maximum-connect-time setting. You can reset this and reconnect. Also Linksys have a very good free 800 phone number.

Q: When my computer hibernates I have to power off, hold the Start button down for five seconds and then power on.

A: Power conservation settings may be causing this. Check your Control Panel settings, or your BIOS power control settings.

Q: I installed Netscape 6.2 on my Windows95 machine. I can not delete received messages.

A: From SNET you can download earlier Netscape versions up to 4.7. Fedex also offer free download of 4.75.

Q: What is a “router”? Explain jargon for us beginners, please!

A: A router is a switchbox which allows several computers to connect to the Internet simultaneously. The Internet sees a single connection, but the router sends inbound traffic to the right machines.

Q: Should I turn off my computer in a thunderstorm?

A: Unplug your machine from the power system and from the telephone or cable lines.. Electrical surges can come down any external wire.

Q: I have been told that my (older) Lucent modem driver is worn out.

A: A driver is software, thus cannot wear out. But you may need a new driver if you switch to a different operating system. Check Lucent for updated driver programs.

Q: I want to save output from Find/Search as an ASCII file.

A: There is no way. You could use a Print Screen or screen saver routine to save the window contents.

Food and conversation were both plentiful at the break, the former thanks to Duane Watts, who was rewarded with a hearty and well-fed round of applause.

The Main Item of the evening, “Treasure Trove of the Internet – Ebay!” -- was then introduced by Martha Fleischer and presented by Lenny Bloom. In response to initial questions it seemed that six people had already bought things, and two sold them, on this fantastic site. From then on Lenny's intriguing and informative presentation was peppered with questions from a fascinated audience.

To get to Ebay, go to www.ebay.com. Items are classified for easier discovery. There are many categories, from “Airline Tickets” (!) through “Everything Else”, which included the sub-classification “Weird Stuff” as well! Lenny cited a lock of Napoleon's hair as a sample of the material offered in this area. [Ed.Note: A check on the morning after the talk found an offer of 24 fake bullet holes for 99¢ -- described by the seller as a Blowout!]

To search for particular items you can enter words in a Search box prominent at the top of the website page, or you can simply browse through the categories and sub-categories. If you go to the Site Map (one of the four options at the top of the main page), items on offer are split between “Current” (the whole caboodle – millions of items), “New Today” (tens of thousands), “Ending today” (a similarly large group) and “Going, going, gone” (those with five hours or less left to go).

The length of time allocated to an auction is set by the seller, though Ebay does have limits. All auctions are in “proxy bid” format. This means that your bid is a maximum; the actual amount bid on your behalf will only be enough to put you at the head of the bidding. Of course, if you do not bid enough to replace a previous bidder with a higher maximum, you will not be put at the top; your bid will be set at your maximum and the bidder's I.D. (displayed on the item page) will not change. If maxima are identical, the first takes the favorite's position. This concept took a while for the audience to grasp.

To bid, or to sell, requires that you register with Ebay. There is no charge for this. You will be issued with an ID and a password. Write these down immediately. It is hard to get them back if you forget! As a

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seller you can set the rules for payment, which is arranged between buyer and seller outside Ebay.

“Shill bidding”, that is, making an arrangement with others to force the bidding up artificially, will lead to all participants being banned from Ebay once it is detected. Bid increment steps and the percentage taken by Ebay from the seller vary with the value; the former get larger and the latter smaller as the price rises. Tables on the site show the numbers.

An indication of the honesty of a seller or buyer can be gained by looking at the ID on the item page. Alongside is a number in parentheses. This is the number of comments received about the person, either as seller or buyer, by others. Click on this number and you can see a listing of the comments, and counts of positive and negative ones.

Payment can be made through Paypal (<http://www.paypal.com>), or Billpoint (<http://www.ebaypayments.com>), Ebay's own payment scheme. Or the seller may prefer a cashier's check, for example – though this may not have the security of other methods if the buyer is dissatisfied.

If you win an auction, contact the seller immediately by e-mail, pay up, give your address and discuss things like packaging and mode of delivery. Then enter feedback comments to Ebay to show if you were satisfied or not.

The largely interactive nature of this talk made it hard to keep track of the total flow of information, of which there was so much that your reporter's pen, let alone writing hand, will probably never recover! Anyway, to finish up, Lenny gave a few other auction sites you could check:

yahoo.com

amazon.com

ubid.com

and gsaauctions.gov (watch the double 'a'), where comments suggested a used tank or two might be available for sale!

Finally, as the curtain was forced down due to time limits and calls were heard for a possible return of the speaker and the subject, the famous Picker was put into motion. Charles Bryk had provided three good presents: of course, the picker offered him first refusal on the first roll! But he declined, and finally after a few missing members were polled, Clyde Hinman won PrintPerfect (5 CDs), Lloyd Plehaty went home with LabelsPlus, and Ed Gutt received a huge collection of Clip Art. The rest of us closed the windows, returned things to a

proper state, and snuck off into the night.

----oO+Oo----

“Thumbs” does it again!

Nasty shock the other day, but luckily I think it's solved. Remember the A.A. Milne story of Pooh, Piglet and the Woozle? Piglet found Pooh walking in the snow checking footprints in from of him, Not knowing what they were, Pooh hypothesized a Woozle. Piglet joined him, and soon after the now-two Woozles had been joined by a different creature; they guessed a Wizzle. Took a while before Christopher Robin pointed out they had been walking round a spinney following their own tracks. . . .

Anyway, on the rare occasions that ME needs loosening up, I press Ctrl-Alt-Delete and recently have been seeing a mysterious program in the displayed list. It is called E_S101C2.EXE. So each time I would just close it and forget it. The other day, trying to print the Voice for the printers, the machine really acted up. This time there were four E_S10??? programs running. Began to think of Infection. . .

Christopher Robin in my case was a reboot from power-off, followed by a REGEDIT search for 'E_S10'. Turns out there are four or five E_S10??? programs connected with the new Epson C80 printer I acquired a few months ago. Sigh of relief. Still, you cannot be too careful these days, I guess.

* * * * *

More shocks. Turned on the Linux machine one morning; the power light came on but there was no corresponding dipping of the toes into each floppy drive and the monitor remained unpagged. Its indicator light remained

resolutely Red.

Some hours later I rang one of the club's more renowned Gurus and asked for help. What he suggested may help you if you get into this sort of bind some time: under instruction I first disconnected everything except the video card. Power off, of course. Unplug the mouse, unplug the keyboard, remove the sound card, remove the internal modem if you have one, or unplug it if it's and external. Remove both floppies and the hard drive (Yes! This machine still has a 5-1/4" drive!). Anything else as well if you have more (Joystick? USB connection?) and then turn on the power. If the monitor comes on (mine did) the problem is somewhere in one of the things you've removed. If not, remove all the memory strips except the first and try again. Luckily it worked before this choice hit me. Turn the machine off, connect one piece and re-boot. Keep doing this until it doesn't work.

So, slowly, one by one, the two floppy drives, the hard drive, the CD, the modem and finally the sound card were re-inserted. When it booted with the sound card, which it did this time, the mouse buttons didn't work! So the sound card is waiting to be replaced next time I get to a Fest. I can live without the SuSE Linux Wakeup call, attractive though it is.

* * * * *

Acquired another old computer the other day. Just the basic box; no monitor, no mouse, no keyboard. It ran, slowly, but only had 16MB of RAM. There were 64MB lying around there after a recent upgrade, so I plugged them in. No change. Then I realized I had somehow put them in backwards.

Turned them round. 80MB registered – but the system could not find the hard drive. Guess something burned out, New motherboard at the next Fest, I guess, or another boat anchor to the dump. Stupid. Even a few measly volts are

enough to damage these things if applied badly.

* * * * *

More on that: found an old I/O board which takes care of the hard drive and the CD, but the floppy still did not work. So opened my Windows box, disconnected its floppy drive and put the suspect on the wires. It did not work – but then neither did the good one when I restored it to its proper place! Two days of fiddling – nothing. Gave up for another few days.

Then one day on a whim tried once more. The Windows machine is back to normal, with a floppy drive again. Don't ask me what happened; just be thankful the Prodigal Son has returned. . . .

* * * * *

My Lindows CD arrived the other day. Heard of Lindows? If not, take a look at www.lindows.com. (Also, you haven't been reading your Voice! Hang your head and check Page 8 of the March issue. . .)

Anyway, put it in the CD drive and ran SETUP. After a few seconds of nosing around, the program announced it would be re-booting, at which point the system would boot from the CD and install Lindows. Didn't happen.

Two things: I don't have DOS on this machine and something it wanted to do apparently involved DOS; and it seems as though ME just grabbed the system and wouldn't let anything else get a look in. Then broken machine mentioned above may yet prove useful if I can load it there (but it needs a working floppy drive!). Then I can see if I can actually run Linux and Windows programs side by side – and without resorting to YAMP (Yet Another Microsoft Product).

* * * * *

Talking of Microsoft, it seems the court case is easing to a close. When it does it will be interesting to see whether the new judge sees the problem any differently from the original. If she does let MS off with a wrap on the knuckles I must admit I for one will suspect political foul play.

Meanwhile, the European Union is nowhere near settling with MS, and is itself investigating what to force them to do over there. Also, if you follow the news on ZDNet, you will know that an internal MS e-mail has surfaced, showing that, even as they were being castigated by Judge Penfield Jackson, MS were continuing their same old strong-arm tactics. Some of my friends think there is nothing wrong with this, but I still consider MS to be bullies in the manner of the acknowledged Robber Barons of the late nineteenth century. Those gentlemen (using the word loosely) finally had their comeuppance as forced breakups and anti-trust legislation were put in place; IMHO, as they say (or is that a popular restaurant chain?), today's similar "gentlemen" (even more loosely!) need similar treatment.

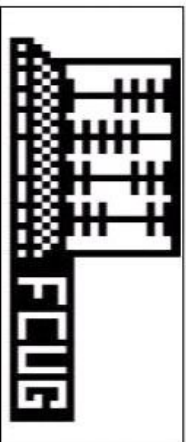
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THE VOICE OF FCUG

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