SEMCO

Official Newsletter

SouthEastern Michigan

Computer Organization

DATA BUS

Dues increased to $25 begins May 1

EXPO TICKET INSIDE
(See Page 20 for more info)

| Volume **22** | **MAY 1997** | Number **5** |

IN THIS ISSUE

The SouthEastern Michigan Computer Organization (SEMCO) is a non-profit group dedicated to providing information, education and a forum to computer users (professional and amateur) and other interested individuals. Membership in SEMCO is open to all individuals 18 years or older. Persons under 18 years may become members through the sponsorship of a parent or guardian. Dues $25/year include monthly DATA BUS, access to SEMCO's Message Service, and free personal ads.

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Your mailing label and membership cards list the month and year your membership expires. A DUES DUE message may appear on the newsletter back cover page two months before your subscription expires. Newsletters will not be sent after the month of expiration. Back issues may not be available. Renew your membership as early as possible to avoid missing any newsletters.

Present: President Steve Yuhasz, Vice-President Jerry Comptois, Secretary Pat Kreiling, Treasurer Roger Gay, DATA BUS Editor Beth Fordyce, SIG-IBM Co-Chairman Tom Callow, SIG-IBM Co-Chairman Warner Mach, SIG-Advanced chairman Franz Breidenich, SIG-MAC Representative Harold Balmer, Internet Co-Chairman Richard Jackson, Past President Bob Clyne

CORE BUSINESS

SIG-Timex-Sinclair: Tom Callow moved that a letter be sent to SIG TIMEX/SINCLAIR stating that they are decertified. The motion passed.

Budget: Roger Gay stated that the budget is balanced to date. The dues increase will take effect on May 1, l997. We currently have 168 members, with an increase of 7 members in

SEMCO dues increase
(to $25) begins May 1

SEMCO MEETINGS
Sunday,
MAY 11, 1997
SCHEDULE

SEMCO has adopted a new meeting schedule for the meetings held on the 2nd Sunday of the month, and added a Social Period:

Board Meeting	**12:00pm**
General Meeting	**1:30pm**
IBM/MAC SIG Mtgs	**1:45pm**
Social Period	**3:15pm**
IBM New Users SIG	**3:45pm**

March. Tom Callow moved that the new wording regarding the dues increase be approved for use in the bylaws. The motion carried.

SIGs

SIG-IBM: Tom Callow stated that the topic for May will be Office 97.

SIG-ADVANCED: Franz Breidenich reported that the group will be losing its meeting place. The group will discuss whether to change locations or meeting time.

INCREASE MEMBERSHIP/PUBLICITY

Printed Material:
The flier revisions have been completed and new fliers are available for distribution.

Steve Yuhasz will prepare and print a one-page flier which he hopes to have ready for the May meeting. These fliers will be used to publicize our group on bulletin boards and any other place where easy readability is necessary.

Web Site: The Internet Committee is still working on improving the WEB site. Many improvements are already in place. Updated information will be in place as soon as possible.

Meetings: Steve Yuhasz asked for a volunteer to be greeter at the General Meeting. Jerry Comptois volunteered.

Steve Yuhasz provided name tags for use at the general meeting in the hope that it will provide a friendlier atmosphere.

Steve will be making tapes of meeting highlights, capturing photos, and displaying them on the WEB page.

Newspapers: Steve Yuhasz has been successful in having a meeting announcement appear in the Rochester Community-Oakland County section

of the Observer. Al Adler from the Oakland Press has been contacted and hopefully we should see the results in May. Volunteers are needed to help place meeting announcements in local community papers.

Radio, Television, & Internet:
Eleven members turned out to help WTVS Channel 56 with their fund-raiser by manning phones. Photos from this event are on the WEB site. Information regarding our organization was announced and President Steve Yuhasz was interviewed. The board offered its thanks to those members who participated.

President Steve Yuhasz was interviewed by Mike Wendlund on his radio show PCTALK at WXYT 1270 on Sunday afternoons. Steve reported that Mr. Wendlund was very gracious and allowed him ample time to speak about SEMCO.

Faxes have been sent to WDIV, WXYZ, WJBK, WWJ, and WKBD giving information about SEMCO. Hopefully we will get some positive responses and SEMCO information will appear on their community bulletin boards.

Community: Art Laramie is working with Computers for the Disabled. Art will see if SEMCO might be able to take a more active part in this organization. Bob Clyne is checking with the National Christina Foundation to see if we might be able to offer our services. Internet seminars and helping high school students solve computer problems were also discussed as community support activities.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

President Steve Yuhasz opened the meeting at 1:30pm with introductions of SEMCO members who had participated as volunteers serving TV Channel 56 on March 19 by answering telephones to take donations to the station. These were:

Art Dries
Bob Clyne
Richard Jackson
Betty MacKenzie
Sandra Woods
Nancy Dugmovich
Pat Kreiling
Farhat Kahn
Betty Keenan
Harriet Mathers
Steve Yuhasz

Pictures on the SEMCO Web Page (www.semco.org) show most of these people in action. Steve, himself, was interviewed on camera at 11:30 p.m.

Steve described the PC Radio Talk Show on WXYZ 1270 AM, put on by Mike Wendland from 3 to 5pm Sundays, and on April 6 Steve himself was interviewed by Mike on the telephone. The interview lasted for 5 minutes or more, allowing Steve to describe SEMCO and its upcoming meeting. It was good publicity for SEMCO.

Steve then introduced Jim McVickar who regularly answers called-in questions at 4:30pm on the radio show and was present at the meeting.

The President announced the fact that Bill Gates was to give a presentation on April 28 at Cobo Hall at 8am

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on the subject of "Leveling the Field for Small Businesses with Technology." Steve had some tickets that were made available to user groups. He expected to attend himself, and so did several other SEMCO members.

It was announced that the Computer and Office Technology Showcase would be held at the Novi EXPO Center on May 7-8.

The meeting adjourned at 1:59pm.

GENERAL MEETING
4/13/97
Bill Agnew

The general meeting was a combined meeting of SIG-IBM and SIG-MAC and consisted of a multimedia lecture and demonstration of a CD-ROM entitled "Critical Mass - America's Race to Build the Atomic Bomb." It was put on by Bill Agnew, a SIG-MAC member, who worked at Los Alamos during development of the atomic bomb in 1944-46. Bill described how he was drafted into the army and sent to Los Alamos in 1944, and his first assignment there to accompany a convoy of military vehicles bringing plutonium to Los Alamos for construction of the bomb. His permanent assignment then was in the Explosives Division where the high explosive trigger mechanism for the plutonium bomb was developed.

The CD-ROM was a product of the Corbis company which Bill said was an outstanding example of an interesting story, some excellent interactive graphics with simple virtual reality, and demonstrated the immense potential for education that can be offered by computer technology. The Corbis company was founded by Bill Gates in 1989 and claims to have the largest collection of digital images in the world, used by people doing desktop publishing. It also currently has five CD-ROMs available in addition to the one on the atomic bomb project: Leonardo Da Vinci, FDR, Paul Cézanne, Volcanoes, and Passion for Art. Anyone interested in these CDs can contact Corbis at 1-800-246-2065 or check their WebPage at www.corbis.com. The WebPage includes an order form.

Bill then sampled a number of sections in the "Critical Mass" CD for the audience, and the presentation was greatly enhanced by the computer operated projector borrowed for the occasion by Steve Yuhasz. This offered excellent clarity on the screen and good sound from the speakers on the projector.

The CD presentation began with "The Los Alamos Story," an 11-minute documentary of the history of the bomb development. Then the Los Alamos site, as it was in 1944-46, was shown in virtual reality, and Bill pointed out the computing facilities available at the time (originally adding machines operated by a large group of women, and then a whole wall of primitive wired connections) and his office location. Another section of the CD described the construction of the plutonium bomb, in which a large shell of conventional high explosives was used to create an imploding detonation wave that crushed the central plutonium sphere into a critical mass and held it together until the full energy of neutron fission was released. It was in this area that Bill's work was devoted, using high speed

photography and fast electronics to record the degree of sphericity of the detonation wave leaving the inner surface of the high explosive shell.

Bill then sampled one of the dozen or so scientists' biographies included on the disk. He chose Robert Oppenheimer, the leader of the project and his admitted hero. This was followed by a look at the "Atomic Atlas," which illustrated where in the world atomic detonations, accidents, civil reactors, weapons programs, and nuclear fuel deposits have been located each year since 1944. Then there was a sampling of the "Timelines" for atomic science, scientists, popular culture, politics, and warfare. Each of these timelines had numerous milestones with detailed descriptions starting B.C. and up to the present.

The CD "Archives" included numerous letters, memos, and other documents preserved from days of bomb development; also a 40-second film that Bill showed of some test detonations with their destruction of houses, buildings, tanks, etc. Impressive!

During a question and answer period Bill turned on a series of images from the CD that showed nuclear energy events since the first atomic bomb. These played randomly from a list of 300 pictures at 10-second intervals on the screen (with accompanying music muted) and occupied the attention of some in the audience while others asked questions.

One impressive moment in the presentation was when Oppenheimer's voice near the end of his career described his thoughts when the first atomic explosion occurred at the Trinity test site:

"We knew the world would not be the same. A few people laughed. A few people cried. Most people were silent. I remembered the lines from the Hindu scripture, Bhagavad Gita: 'Now I am become death and destroyer of worlds.' I suppose we all thought that in one way or another."

The meeting was adjourned at 3pm.

IBM & COMPATIBLES

SIG-IBM MEETING
4/13/97

NEXT MEETING TOPIC: OFFICE 97: Chairman Tom Callow will demonstrate the improvements in the latest version of Microsoft's best-selling office suite.

SIG-IBM NEW USERS
4/13/97

SIG-IBM NEW-USERS MEETING TOPIC: Downloading files PART II: Tom Callow will demonstrate how to download files from on-line services, the Internet and BBSs.

NEXT MEETING TOPIC: SIG-ADVANCED will have a wide ranging discussion of computers and computing.

Until further notice meetings are suspended and the group is inactive.

IBM REVIEWS
and Other Neat Stuff

Partition Magic v3.02 Updated to v3.03
by Franz Breidenich

Partition Magic is a utility to do "hard-disk partitioning on the fly" as stated on the cover of the user guide and on the CD-ROM and included a 220-page detailed user guide. There have been many new features added to version 3. In this review I will concentrate on the newest features. See the October 1996 copy of the DATA BUS for Dave Grossman's excellent review of Partition Magic v2.03.

The user starts Partition Magic like he would another program in Windows95. When selected, a screen tells the user that the program will be run in MS-DOS mode and all other programs will close if you choose to continue. When you click yes the computer does so and brings up Partition Magic. The main window display by Partition Magic shows partitions that exist on the selected physical drive,

disk one being the default. This window looks and is used like a window in Windows95. You navigate it with your mouse and keyboard. The user guide stated you do not need a mouse, but I would not want to use this program without a mouse.

All partition functions are done in this window. You click on the partition you wish to change and all the options you are able to perform are highlighted in the lower part of the screen. The partitions are color-coded as to which type they are. This program supports all the popular partition types including FAT32 used in the new OEM version of Windows95. For example if I click on my C: drive and it is bright Green, therefore it is a FAT partition and I have three options to highlight—Info, Cluster, and Resize. Info has all types of information on the partition selected including space used, space free, cluster wasted, cylinder information, and error in the partition. Cluster information shows how much of the partition would be wasted by the different cluster sizes and their recommendation for the cluster size. The program recommendation always seems to be smaller than the cluster size you have set. Resize is the action to resize the partition and change the cluster size. If I click on a Grey non-partition area the options are Info and Create. Create allows me to create a partition, select the type of partition and size of the partition. Also it allows me to label this new partition. If I click on a partition that is smaller than the free area on the drive I have two more options: Move and Copy. The move option moves the partition to anywhere in the free area making

more free space and allowing other partitions to be made bigger. The copy option allows the user to make a copy of the partition and all its data and applications and place it on another physical drive or even on the same drive. This could be used if you add a new large hard drive to your system. You copy the entire small drive to your new hard drive.

Chapter Two of the user guide has 3 different scenarios on how to use Partition Magic. Scenario Three is running multiple operating systems. This scenario begins with the user resizing his C: partition so he has space for his new partition. He then selects Installing Boot Manager from the menu. This action creates a new 2MB partition, installs IBM Boot Manager in it and makes the partition the active partition. This new version of PowerQuest provides IBM Boot Manager with the Partition Magic CD-ROM. The user then clicks on his existing C: partition and chooses Add to Boot Manager from the menu and then enters the operating system name on it. Next, one creates a partition for the new operating system by selecting the size and type of partition, in this case FAT. The partition is added to Boot Manger and given the name of the operating system to be installed on it. The next step in this scenario is to add additional partitions by selecting the remaining free space and selecting Extended from the Partition type menu. I created three additional partitions out of this area, made them FAT and labeled them Applications, Data, and Games. The final step is to install the new operating system according to the provider information.

After doing all the steps above there is one more to be done. Since I have added several logical drives to my computer my CD-ROM drive is no longer D: but has changed to G:. To redirect your programs so that they find the CD-ROM at its new location PowerQuest provides a program called DriverMapper. This is an easy-to-use program following the progression steps where you have to provide the original drive letter and then the new drive letter. The program then searches the registry and the disks for all locations that need changing. After finding all the changes required, it asks if you want the changes to be made. This completes additional changes of several logical drives.

Every time you start Partition Magic or use an option in the program it checks the disk integrity. If it finds a problem it displays an error message and prevents you from performing your task. You must fix the error before continuing your task. In addition to the integrity check at startup, the program performs two integrity checks while performing its task. The first check tests the integrity of the file system on the partition being changed; the second test is made to validate the disk's data after the operation has been completed. All these integrity checks are displayed in a progression window, which show how much of each test is completed. This window also has a cancel button that is highlighted only when you can safely use it. If the cancel would leave the partition in an unusable condition it is not highlighted.

Another program that is included with Partition Magic is a program called UnInstaller Mover and is a stripped down version of UnInstaller 4

from MicroHelp, Inc. In fact there are two versions of this software on the CD-ROM, a 16-bit version for Windows 3.1 and a 32-bit version for Windows95 and Windows NT 4.0. This program allows you to move a program from one partition to another without having to reinstall it. I tested this program by moving my dictionary program from my C: drive to my newly created E: drive. After the move was completed I was able to run the moved program at its new location. Included with this are demos of how the full version of the program can help you.

PQ Boot is still another program included on the CD-ROM and is installed with the installation of Partition Magic. This is another boot program for those who have more than one bootable partition. I have not tried this program since I installed Boot Manager on my computer. Power-Quest states in the user guide that this is for users who only occasionally change to another bootable partition.

For diagnostic purposes there is still another program in the PQMGIC directory and that is Partinfo.exe. This program must be run from a DOS prompt. It will create a text file of your partition information, which can be saved as a file or printed to your printer. This information is most helpful if you contact PowerQuest for help. This program is also available on their WEB site for free download.

I have a WARNING for users of Windows NT operating system who are using the NTFS file system. Do not use version 3.02 without getting the upgrade to version 3.03. The version 3.02 may cause your bootable partition to become unbootable. The patch is available on their WEB site as a free download.

In closing I have to say that it is a great program, and anyone who has a new big hard drive really needs this program. The street price is about $50 and it would be well spent. The recommended hardware requirements are 486 or above, 16 MB of RAM, CD-ROM drive, Super-VGA monitor and a mouse. The operating systems supported are Windows, Windows 95, OS/2 2.1 or above, DOS 5.0 or above.

Herb's Hangout
Herb Huey
TO MMX OR NOT?

submitted by Betty MacKenzie

Intel recently unveiled in January its exciting new Pentium, the P55C or officially the Pentium Processor with Multimedia Extension (MMX) Technology. In this new generation of CPUs, MMX adds 57 new instructions for speeding up multimedia tasks. This the first major change for the X86 instruction set since the introduction of the 386 chip over a decade ago. The conversation at my office turned to the issue of whether to buy now or not.

The evolution of Intel's micropro-cessors has been linear up to now. The 8086/8088 led to the 286, the 386, 486 and the Pentiums. Each new CPU model was faster than the previous generation. The debut of the Pentium Pro forever muddied the CPU waters. It used to be easy to gauge CPU muscle by just checking out the clock

speed. The arrival of the Pentium with MMX Technology has further complicated our CPU choices. Now the first decision a user must make in purchasing a new system is whether to get an MMX or not. There is still the Pentium Classic (P54C), the Pentium Pro (Pentium Pro with MMX), AMD's K5 and Cyrix's 6X86 which do not support MMX. Intel's P55C and Klamath, AMD's K6 and Cyrix's M2 will support MMX. As far as MMX availability goes, Intel's P55C is out but Klamath will not arrive until mid-year 1997. AMD expects to start shipping its K6 in the first quarter and Cyrix will ship limited quantities of M2 in the second quarter.

MMX processors will initially command high prices due to limited supplies. In 1000-unit lots, the 166 MHz P55C goes for $407 per chip while the 200 MHz version runs for $550, causing some interesting price disparities. A 200 MHz Pentium Pro with 256K of onboard 1.2 cache outperforms a 200 MHz P55C or the Pentium Classic. However, the Pentium Pro sells for $l25 less than the P55C or only $16 more than the Pentium Classic. This is not well reflected in system prices. Micron and Gateway already advertise MMX systems with a modest premium of $50 to $100 over the Pentium Classic systems. Pentium Pros go for $100 to $150 more than the P55C. What does MMX give you in performance? The P55C has 32K of Level 1 (L1) on-board cache versus 16K for the Pentium Classic. This means that the MMX chip spends less time consulting the slower external L2 cache and main memory.

Intel expects this to give you up to 10 to 15 percent improved perfor-

mance on non-MMX applications. But what is MMX? The 57 new X86 instructions were developed with multimedia applications in mind but these instructions allow the P55C to perform digital signal processing (DSP) applications such as telephony.

MMX uses a technique that other DSPs have adopted called single instruction, multiple data (SIMD) which allows the CPU to perform one simple calculation simultaneously on multiple data elements. MMX does this by packing 8-, 16- or 32-bit values into a single 64-bit register and operates on the 64-bit register in parallel. One example is to shift the median of eight color pixel values by adding 20 to each value and thus brightening that portion of the image.

Power consumption on the P55C is lower because Intel has abandoned the Bi-CMOS design of the Pentium Classic & now uses a 0.35 micron CMOS process that eliminates the need for power hungry bipolar transistors. The P55C inputs and outputs operate at 3.3 volts but internal voltages run at a lower 2.8 volts for desktops and 2.45 volts for portables. This will be the first time dual voltages are used in a desktop design.

The first consumer MMX systems lack the new 430TX core logic chip set scheduled for introduction on Feb. 18. The 430TX includes support for faster hard drives, improved power management and synchronous DRAM (SDRAM).The latest IDE drives are 10 percent faster and Dell has proved that SDRAM is faster. It is important to look at the total system solution. MMX was designed for 2-D graphics so if you are into 3-D graphics, you will still need an advanced graphics

card. Faster DRAM and hard drives are also essential to improved MMX and system performance.

The situation for Klamath is just as bad. When Klamath comes out in mid-year, Intel will only have the 440FX chip set, which lacks SDRAM capability, an Accelerated Graphics Port (AGP) for 3-D graphics capability and faster 33MBps disk drive access. The next generation 440 LX chip set will not appear until the second half of 1997.

Historically, prices for the first wave of new technologies are at a premium for the privilege of being first. In both cases of MMX technology, full performance will not be unlocked until new motherboards with the latest MMX chip set support becomes available. The Klamath systems will not enter into the mainstream until 1998. Right now I am quite happy with my Pentium Pro system.

from README.DOC, newsletter of the Orange Coast IBM PC User Group (OCIPUG)

DEALS COLUMN
from the Deals Guy
Greater Orlando Computer UG
by Bob Click

It was nice to get feedback from last month. I'm not the only one who has major problems with tech support from some companies. I'm also the Software Review Chairman for another Club and gave a member Winfax Pro to review. That person had some problems and tried to contact their tech support several times with no success. Even his e-mail to tech support was never returned. He finally gave Winfax back.

And did you read about people who purchased Compaq machines having to pay for their tech support to resolve their problems, even though the machine was brand new? So much for tech support. I'm glad to know those things before I make my choices buying a new machine or software. Let's get on with the deals:

Broderbund support: I said the Broderbund User Group special offer would run out the last of February but many readers either called or e-mailed telling me they called in on the 800 number with no problem, and indication from the order taker was that the offer was still good. However, I know most Vendors will still honor a special for a short time after it expires. I've had no response from my message left to the Broderbund Users Group rep, I missed her call and can't get her to call back. I'm glad you all had a good response when ordering. Some folks called in on their 800-548-1802, or 800-474-8696 numbers instead of using the form. If it worked for others, try it. They can only say no.

Adobe specials still good—no deadline for Adobe specials published a while back, but a reminder: the Adobe order number is 1-800-888-6293; be sure to mention offer # 4-70-43-6 which I may have left out last month.

EXTRA - EXTRA: I also noticed something else from Adobe; you can extend your person-to-person support with a FREE 60-day introductory "Alliance Support Agreement" for one Adobe product. You get 60 days worth of toll-free, priority-routed access for your Adobe product on either the Windows or Mac platform. Call 1-800-685-3652 and mention your User Group to get the FREE 60-day Alliance support (or information). You'll receive an invoice near the end of the 60-day trial period for the option of purchasing the full year agreement. Good in US and Canada. I wonder if

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they'll help me with my config.sys and autoexec.bat!

Science for Kids offer still good: If you haven't already taken advantage of the User Group special for one of the "Science for Kids" CDs, by all means do it. $3 S&H for a regular program is such a good deal and is to expose you to their software and its features. I think May is the last month for this offer. Call them at 910-945-9000; mention your Users Group to order one of the titles for just $3 S&H.

Dr. Shueler's offer is good for a while so call them at 407-639-9985 to order.

Book discounts: Last month I featured the book "Crash Course in Windows 95" from Mike Murach & Associates at a great price. Perhaps I should have mentioned that if you are actually upgrading from Windows 3.1, you may not get as much help from it since much of the basics for both OS's are similar. Not that you wouldn't learn something, but it might be limited. However, if you are a new user, you'll like the book and the $5 price is certainly right whichever person you are.

Something I also should mention is that all Mike Murach books are always available to Users Group members at a 40% discount as standard procedure. The latest releases are "Work like a Pro" (one for Word and one for Excel) and "Crash Course in Windows 95." However, they have many other fine books available.

I recently reviewed "Work like a Pro with Word 6" and liked it. On the down side, that book only teaches you the 30% of "Word" that the Pros mostly use, but does it well. If you think about it, most of us only use 30% at most of our software's capabilities. Books to be released in

May include "Crash Course in Word 95" and for "Excel 95." To order or for information, call them at 1-800-221-5528. You must be a User Group member so mention your User Group.

Special offer on Lotus SmartSuite: This one isn't as good as the last one, but remember, the latest version of SmartSuite is just out. "Lotus SmartSuite 97" is now available to User Group members for a limited time at $146.00. Just to remind you, you get six full-featured easy-to-use 32-bit applications. Lotus 1-2-3 (spreadsheet), Lotus Word Pro (word processor), Lotus Approach (database), Lotus Freelance Graphics (presentation software), Lotus Organizer (time management software), and Lotus Screen Cam (multimedia). When you check the price of the other office suites, $146 beats them all since we have no special offer on them. I had great fun with Freelance Graphics and have heard several favorable comments about ScreenCam which I haven't looked at as yet. This offer expires May 31, 1997 and you must use the sku # 293186 to order. Call Lotus at 1-800-888-4830 to order. On the other hand, I received a catalogue from Tiger yesterday and saw SmartSuite for $129 after a $20 rebate. The Tiger number is 1-800-888-4437 to order.

Internet Software: Doesn't everybody have Internet software of some sort these days? I hate rebates but sometimes a person might bite the bullet and buy a rebated product to get an exceptional buy, if the rebate is big enough, although I mostly avoid them. ForeFront is offering four programs for Internet people: WebSeeker 2.2, Windows 95/NT, $49.95; WebWhacker 2.0, Windows 95/NT/ Mac, $49.95; WebPrinter 2.0, Win-

dows 3.1/95, $24.95; and Click-Book2.0, Windows 95/Mac, $49.95. **WebWhacker** automatically down-loads your favorite Web sites to your desktop—including text, graphics and HTML links—so you can view them off-line at your convenience and at highly accelerated speeds. I wonder if it will accelerate my ambition! **WebSeeker** will hunt down exactly what you're looking for as an advanced meta-searcher that combines the results from 23 Internet search engines to deliver one, unified and comprehensive report.

Speaking of **search engines**, I need one to find the things I carefully put away so I'd know where they are. I'm still looking for a software I put away a while back.

Anyway, the **WebPrinter** and **ClickBook** products transform any Web site into professional looking, double-sided booklets. There's much more explanations.

ForeFront also features server-side solutions, including "RoundTable," a real-time multimedia group conferencing program, and a full suite of PC/Networking applications, including "the Troubleshooter," "Rescue Professional," "ForeFront Anti-Virus," and two CFT programs for CNE and A+ certification.

This software should be available at most major retailers. There is a problem; I have no way to distribute this rebate sheet to you so see if your User Group still has it in a mailing they received from "User Group Connection" (where I got it) to copy. You might also visit their web site at http://www.ffg.com/usergroup/html for more info.

You can also order the product online or fax/mail your order with the form. The rebate form gives a $10 rebate, except for WebPrinter with a $5 rebate. This offer expires April 30, 1997 so be fast. S&H is $7.50 for one product, less for more pieces.

There is also a phone number, 1-800-475-5831. Use the code UGM. They take plastic.

How about a free game from Microsoft! Do those monster trucks fascinate you? This may be old news to many of you, but I found it interesting. You can actually race your own monster truck across the internet competing with other racers. Sounds like you really need a joy stick, but you can download a free trial version of Monster Truck Madness from www.microsoft.com/games/monster/ and while you're at it, check the tips and support options online.

When you feel ready, go to the gaming zone at www.zone.com/ and find your opponents across the internet. In fact, Microsoft Press even publishes a book teaching you all the tricks of racing those Monster Trucks for $16.95. Does racing need a fast machine?

Spice up your Presentations, or Web Page: Here's a program that can be so much fun you won't want to quit. 3d Choreographer helps you create Eye-Catching Animations without even breaking a sweat. Easy? It should be when you can choose from hundreds of pre-designed actors and hundreds of built-in actions.

Even attach photos to your characters. Attach your boss's picture to something you always thought about (just don't sign it, of course you might have a good boss). Put your own head on any actors body (actors in the software of course, not Marilyn Monroe or Tom Cruise).

Add animations to PowerPoint or other presentation software you use, or just plain make them for other

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projects, and fun. Design your own ani-mated videos. Just typing this up got me interested! Best of all, you can get 50% (you read right, 50%) off the fol-lowing retail prices. $149 MSRP for 3d Choreographer Full Version 2.7. Full version has over 60 actors: Men and women in casual dress; animals; "toons"; geometric shapes; alphabet letters; and dragons. Also includes 4 actors with replaceable bitmap heads.

$349 MSRP for 3d Choreographer "Deluxe" version 2.7. Over 250 actors including all the above plus men and women in business suites, doctors, police, globes, arrows, vehicles, talking heads, dinosaurs—27 types, unicorn, Pegasus, centaurs (what's that), monsters and actors from all the above categories with replaceable bitmap heads. Now also includes 55 AVI files and animation templates.

3d Dojo, $149 MSRP. Create mar-tial arts animations with 60 built-in stances, kicks, blocks and arm move-ments—men and women of all races including replaceable bitmap head actors—Karate and Kung Fu outfits. Optional Dojo troupe, $49 MSRP. Add the Dojo actors to 3d Choreogra-pher regular or deluxe versions. Again, just 50% of the MSRP prices + $10 S&H. Call them at 1-800-949-4559, mention me and he was very specific about mentioning your Users Group. Offer good for May and June.

That should do it for May. I hope I found something you like. I like feedback so I can be contacted at 407-273-7499, my fax # is 407-382-2781. My e-mail is RobertC204@aol.com. Can't remember that e-mail address, try dealsguy@aol.com.

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created by Paul Cervano

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* Change or addition

Look for the

SEMCO BOOTH
May 7 and 8

Computer
and
Office Technology
Showcase

Novi EXPO

Be sure to bring your free ticket (worth $15) included in this newsletter!

See you there!

COMPUTER RESOURCE PEOPLE

This is a list of members willing to be resources for other members to call when they have hardware or software questions. Are you willing to help members learn? Which software programs are you familiar enough with? It is not necessary to be an expert, but just have some familiarity with the program and be willing to help someone starting to learn it. Please give this some thought and volunteer at the next club meeting.

AutoCAD	Roger Gay	810/641-8245	9am—10pm
Form Tool	John Diller	810/540-4382	evenings
Genealogy	Stephen Cook	313/272-7594	evenings
Hardware-DOS	Bob Clyne	810/387-3101	9am—10pm
Hardware-DOS	Roger Gay	810/641-8245	9am—10pm
Harmony Accounting	John Diller	810/540-4382	evenings
Harvard Graphics	John Diller	810/540-4382	evenings
Modems	Bob Clyne	810/387-3101	9am—10pm
M.S.Publisher	Rick Kucejko	810/879-6180	6pm—10pm
M.S.Word	Bob Clyne	810/387-3101	9am—10pm
PUBLISH-IT!	Rick Kucejko	810/879-6180	6pm—10pm
Quicken	Bob Clyne	810/387-3101	9am—10pm
Quicken	Roger Gay	810/641-8245	9am—10pm
Lotus 123	Bob Chmara	810/540-6885 (Pager)	

SIG-MAC
4/13/97
Beth Fordyce

Beth Fordyce opened the Copy Session after joining SIG-IBM for a demo of Critical Mass, America's Race to Build the Atomic Bomb, presented by Dr. William Agnew, a Mac member. See Minutes of that meeting on Page 5.

May '97 Shareware
compiled by Phyllis Evans

We have more utilities this month, hopefully something for everybody. **Disk Copy 6.1.2** is the latest disk image handler from Apple. If you download software updates from the internet, many of them are in disk image format. This will take those images and either copy them to a floppy or mount them on the desktop so that your system thinks that a floppy disk is in the drive. Starting with System 7.6.1, all Apple update files on the net will be in this format. **File Buddy 4.0.2** is a general utility for working with files and folders. It can obtain and set a wide range of file and folder information, find files using an extensive set of search criteria, modify a batch of file names (e.g., remove ".txt" from several file names at once), and perform many other tasks.

MasterCarpenter is for the do-it-yourselfers among us. Want to pour a cement slab but don't know how many bags of concrete mix to buy? Tell **MasterCarpenter** the dimensions and it will instantly give you the information you need. Need to frame in a new wall? This gem can tell you what materials you'll need and proper amounts. All in all, this is a very clever piece of shareware.

TileCity is a control panel that adds a tiling menu to the Finder's menu bar. It tiles, stacks or stripes the Finder's windows which makes it much easier to find things on your desktop. The control panel allows you to assign any hot key sequence that you desire to any of **TileCity's** commands. There is also an auto-tiling feature for some of **TileCity's** tiling modes which automatically stacks Finder window's as they are opened.

TomeViewer has only one purpose, and that is to extract specified pieces of software from those miserable Apple Installer tomes. If your Chooser becomes corrupted, the standard solution is to do a custom install from your system disks. This usually results in other unneeded things being installed at the same time and wastes a lot of time. **TomeViewer** allows you to scan the disks to find the item you need, then extract just that item. You may never need this one, but it's nice to have on hand.

TrashPicker1.0 is a control panel that automatically empties your trash. Set it to empty on startup, once a day, once a week, whatever you like. While this has been around since 1992, it still

functions flawlessly with System 7.5.5.

TypeIt4Me 4.7.0 has been in our library before, but this is the newest version. Use it to correct your standard typos or enter your boilerplate text, such as letter headings, addresses. "Yvt" can translate to:

> "Yours very truly,

> Phyllis M. Evans"

The best part is that **TypeIt4Me** works in all applications, from word processor to emailer to web browser or spreadsheet. It's one piece of software that I cannot do without.

As always, if you have any specific needs, let me know. I am always open to suggestions for additions to our shareware library. You can reach me by email at *pmevans@cris.com* or by phone at *(313) 532-3634*.

P.S. Phyllis says she'll have another disk (two total) with a demo of Conflict Catcher 4, plus some other managers, but we don't get a writeup about those, at least not right now. See May Meeting, below.

MAY MEETING

Phyllis Evans will demo Conflict Catcher, with emphasis on How To Troubleshoot and Control the Load Order of Extensions. You already know that Harold Balmer and Beth Fordyce will get their 2-cents' worth in there somewhere! You should bring any questions that you have, too. **After:** Public Domain copying. **Disk-of-the-Month:** See above for details of Phyllis Evans' DOM. Bring (2) 1.44K preformatted disks.

REMEMBER; This is the time of year that we cannot predict the temperature of the meeting rooms. Dress with layers!

JUNE MEETING

In June, we'll be joining IBM to learn how to construct Web Pages and Web Sites. YOU could have your own! Watch for announcements in next month's DATA BUS.

MAC REVIEWS
and Other Neat Stuff

FileMaker Pro 3.0 v1
for the Mac
review by Jean Blievernicht

I've been using FM Pro 2.1 for some time now on both the Mac and IBM clones. It's a database I prefer for the Mac and easier to use than Access under the Windows operating system. So I was eagerly looking forward to the upgrade with its relational and other new capabilities.

The program comes on disk or CD. The CD version has many additional templates, but the disk version has useful templates to get you started (messages, names and addresses, certificates, student records, home inventory, and a check tracker). You can use these as is, learn from them, or modify as desired.

It usually takes a while to learn how to use a database, I was happy to see familiar items on the menu. Of course, there were new items, and some items had been moved under a different heading. But I could immediately make a db from scratch without having to do a lot of searching for help.

To create a db is as simple as giving it a name, then naming the fields and selecting the type of data to go into each field. Do you want the field to contain text, numbers, dates, calculations, summary info, or be a global

field or a container. The first 4 items are fairly self explanatory. Summary info refers to getting totals or subtotals for a field based on a group of records. You can also compute averages, counts of items, find the lowest or highest number, earliest or latest date, calculate standard deviations or compute ratios. A global field contains one value that's used for all records in a file such as a figure for sales tax calculations. The container field is very interesting as it can hold a graphic, sound, or QuickTime movie. To put something in the container field all you have to do is select the field, then go to Import/Export under the File menu and find the graphic (or sound or QuickTime) file in your computer or on a floppy, click on Open and now it's in your database. Or to save space you can choose to just put a reference to the file so it is looked up each time you are in that record. However, if you move the original file, you'll lose it in the database since the pathname is what is stored.

While you are setting up your field and determining what type of data will go into each one, you can also select options for auto entering and validating data. Say your address list contains mostly Michigan residents. In the State field, tell FM Pro to automatically enter MI each time you work with a record. Yes, you can change this info when necessary. Or perhaps you have friends all over the USA but can't remember the abbreviations for all of the states. Create a look-up table for state abbreviations. If you already have a file with this info in it, you can link it to the state field (it must be a FM Pro file). It's easy to copy info from the previous record without retyping it. Or assign a series of sequential numbers automatically starting at a number you designate. You can also prohibit users from changing automatically entered values.

Validation rules make sure the data is correctly entered. If you only want numbers, dates, or times entered, specify this. If you don't want a field left empty, select Not Empty as a validation rule. If a value list is provided, you can force the data to be info on the list (no override allowed). Maybe you sell only items between $100 and $1000. You can set this range and anything that doesn't conform will be rejected. If info is rejected, you'll want to display a message saying why or what to do. Your message can be up to 255 characters long.

If you create a field based on a calculation, you have to enter a formula. These can do a wide variety of things. The formula's result can be a number, text, date, time, or container.

One new feature I liked immediately was the ability to format text on a record by record basis. This meant I could boldface a last name on one record and change the last name to another color in another record. Before I could only boldface ALL last names or change the color for all records collectively (which you can still do by making the change in layout mode).

There is a one-level undo or revert after you change a field in a record, but you can't undelete a record you've deleted.

It is now easier to do finds and modify them. Finding records that match the criteria you set has always been a strong point for FM Pro. But

you do have to learn to handle a few quirks dealing with commas and periods while using wildcard characters. Note also that the wildcard character for one letter is the @ symbol as opposed to the ? which many databases use. While there are some examples in the manual, there could be more dealing with commas, periods, and question marks.

One of the Find features I really like is the ability to list some criteria, look at the results, then go back and click on "Omit" which lets me see all the records that do NOT match the criteria. You don't have to redo all the criteria. It's a quick and easy way of bouncing back from looking at your found set of records and all the others. To get all of them back, choose "Select All" from the Select menu. Multiple criteria lines let you do OR searches such as all people living in MI or CA.

Since making FM Pro a relational database is one of most important and best new features, I played around with it. I did something I've been wanting to do for some time. I created a name and address db and a graphics db. Each db contained an ID number for a graphic. I used container fields in the graphics db and had to add a container field in the addresses db. Then I told the address db to look up the graphics ID in the graphics db and send back the graphic from the graphics db that matched the graphics ID number in the address file. Frankly, the manual did not do a great job of explaining how to do this, so I winged it and made it come out right pretty quickly. I created a label layout and put the names and addresses on it and added the graphic container field and

now I can put a different graphic on each label by changing the graphic ID number in the address file. Or if I get tired of a graphic I can quickly change graphic number one to a different graphic in the graphics file and all the records in the address file will reflect the new graphic. Neat!

Now I just have to play around some more creating relationships and figure out the exact steps necessary so I know what I am doing. Not bad if you can get the result you want without being sure you took the steps needed in the correct order.

Something I haven't mentioned yet is the ability to create and use scripts. Scripts are commands that tell FM Pro to carry out one or a sequence of actions. For example, create a script that is attached to a button in a layout called All Information. This script could automatically take you to an invoice layout where you might see the total of items purchased. Or a script could be made to dial a person's phone number (assuming you have a modem hooked up). Scripts can get quite complicated and even run other scripts or pause to let you enter information and then resume running the script. It's a way of automating a series of actions to simplify working with data. FileMaker Pro makes it pretty easy to set these up without being a full fledged programmer.

Installation went smoothly. I liked that you are given information as to where files are stored on your hard drive and what's in the file. There is an update (free) already available for downloading. The manual is adequate, but I wanted a lot more examples. The help files within the program are more complete than the book. I prefer the

other way around. In the previous book I could look up label sizes and related info in an appendix. It was only available in the help files here. The chapter on creating relationships was almost at the end of the book as though it were just tacked onto the previous manual.

There are a lot of new features in this version making it a full fledged upgrade, not a bug fix. If you have a previous version of FM Pro, here are some of the enhancements. Of course becoming relational tops the list. There is improved networking, more than 45 new and improved functions, new ScriptMaker enhancements (dialing phone numbers, better control of script execution including If/Else and looping procedures and much more), improved ways of working in browse and find mode, more field definition auto-entry and validation choices, more flexibility with value lists, new options in layout mode, and more powerful file handling (can have 50 db files open at once). Another neat feature is the ability to automatically create a new FM Pro file from a db created in another application (must be a tab-separated text file). Importing was always a strong feature of FM Pro and you can now import and export in additional file formats, create field definitions while setting up an import and apply auto-entry options while importing data. Finally you have more ways to limit user access (keep employees from getting at sensitive information in files).

I particularly liked the way Layouts are used both to enter data and as reports. Other databases make you create separate reports, a time consuming process. Finds act as queries and are easier to use for novice database users. I consider FileMaker Pro to be relatively friendly (as friendly as a db can be) with only a moderate learning curve while still being quite powerful.

Customer support is free (you pay long distance charge) for 90 days after your first call. After that there is pay-as-you-go service or you can use on-line services including AOL, CompuServe, Applelink, and the Claris bulletin board.

APPLE A DAY
IS THE DOCTOR'S WAY
by Bill Agnew

I had a perfectly good StyleWriter 1200 printer on my Performa that operated just fine for over a year. Except it was black and white. I gave it to my son and bought a refurbished Color StyleWriter 2500 from the User Group Store. Within a few days after delivery I discovered I had a problem The printer would stop in the middle of a page and freeze the computer. The thing occurred randomly, not always, but I threw away a lot of half-printed paper. Sometimes I could get the computer going again with the Command-Option-Escape, sometimes Command-Control-Power, and sometimes I had to cut the power. Sometimes a message said "The serial port is in use by another application" (it wasn't); sometimes it said "Desktop Printer Spooler not

Connected" (it was); sometimes it didn't say anything (right!).

The manual described my problem under "Troubleshooting" and said to reinstall the software. So I did, with no improvement. Then it suggested custom reinstalling the software with no fonts. So I did, with no improvement. I started removing some of my goofy extensions—like Eclipse, Intermission, Random Trashcan, and Zounds. No improvement.

Apple Day 1

I decided I needed a doctor, a computer doctor. So I called the Apple Doctor, 1-800-SOS-APPL. After listening to pretty music for about half an hour, I got a guy who listened to all my troubles. He said it didn't sound like a software problem, and I should get the User Group Store to replace the printer. Now, the people at the User Group Store are very nice, and they agreed immediately to have UPS pick up my printer that very day and have a new (refurbished) one to me in two days. And they did. That was better service than I had from them previously when I bought a refurbished Performa 6116 with a defective CD-ROM drive. That time they told me to get Apple to send a local service man to fix it. The service man put me on his backlog list of 300 calls, and in 30 days he came and replaced the drive in 15 minutes.

So I had a new replacement printer. It seemed to be OK, except for the black ink cartridge smearing ink all over the page (the User Group Store replaced that quickly). But in a day or two that printer was doing the same thing the first one did—stopping after printing a few lines and freezing the computer. It must be a software problem after all.

Apple Day 2

Another day, another call to Apple. This time the technician immediately said with great confidence "Oh, I can fix that." And he had me Zap the PRAM! Wow! That sounded scary. And it was, when I had to start up while holding down four keys: the Command, Option, R, and P. It takes a contortionist to hold down the Command, Option, and R with your left hand while you hit restart and then grab for the P with your right hand. Supposedly, Zapping the PRAM uncorrupts a small battery-sustained memory where the Mac stores some Control Panel information. When you do it you then have to reset some of your Control Panel items. After Zapping the technician—I mean, after Zapping, the technician said try to print something. I did, and it was OK, so he hung up. An hour later the printer stopped in mid-course and froze the computer.

Apple Day 3

The third call to Apple got me a technician who sounded very savvy. Having already tried everything else, he told me to use the Extension Manager to bring up the set of Extensions called "System 7.5 Only," and then add to it only the ones needed for printing. We called that set "Printerset." Now we tried printing a page, and it worked. He said I could then start adding extensions back in until I found the culprit. And he hung up. The next day the printer hung up again too.

Apple Day 4
With reams of wasted paper now overflowing my office, the symptoms of my problem had settled down to about every other printing. The printer stopped, the computer froze, cut the power, restart, no messages (except "you ninny, you shut down incorrectly"), and after startup the printer, without any further request, prints fully the document it had stored but refused to print before. What changed its mind?

This time I got a female technician at Apple after only about 20 minutes of music I could by now do karaoke with. After asking a few other questions, she asked if I had upgraded my StyleWriter 2500 software. I said I had reinstalled it three times. She said, no, had I upgraded it? I said no, I had just received it. So after putting me on hold for another ten minutes of music, she told me to go to the Apple Web Site on the Internet and download the latest StyleWriter 2500 software. And she hung up.

Well! I've been on the Internet for a few months, but I don't know much about this downloading bit. Nevertheless, I gave it a try. First, the URL address the lady gave me brought up a message that there was no such server. She had told me www.apple.info.com, but by experimenting I eventually found it was www.info.apple.com. She was close. Then I wandered through the Web Site, punching first "Software Updates," then "Macintosh," then "Printing," then "Other Printers," and finally found "Color Stylewriter 2500, Disks 1 through 4." They

added up to about 3 megs and took me about an hour to download. But first I spent another couple of hours trying to figure out how to find an ftp site that wasn't busy (I don't even know how to spell ftp). The one they took me to first was busy for a whole afternoon.

When the disks downloaded they decoded automatically and my Stuffit expander expanded them, but I still couldn't read them. Back on Apple's Web Site I learned that I needed Disk Copy 4.2, which I could also download. With that I could copy my unreadable four disks to floppies (it insisted on double density, not high density), and those I could read.

So I installed the upgraded printer software. I then printed a document in fine shape, but the next day—same old problem.

Apple Day 5
This time the Apple service technician came on in 5 minutes. He had me switch the printer cable from the printer port to the modem port, and I printed two documents with no trouble. He suggested the printer port was bad. It sometimes happens, he said. I'd have to take the computer to a service man to have it repaired. In the meantime I'd have to switch the cable back and forth between the printer and the modem if I wanted to use both. But Glory Be! After several days and numerous documents, my printer seems to be working fine.

Somehow, though, apple pie doesn't seem to have the appeal it once had.

The Cookie Trade

by Tom Negrino
LAMG Digest

"Click." A thousand miles away, a Web server responds. Electrons flow through the phone lines, arranging themselves on my screen as words, sounds, pictures.

"Click." A different server this time halfway around the planet. More information appears. I smile.

"Click." Yet another site, but there is something very different about this one. Along with what I see on my screen, a snippet of data has been written to my hard disk, without my knowledge and beyond my control.

I've just been handed a cookie.

So what's a Cookie?

A cookie is a unique nugget of information that a Web-site server gives to your browser when the two first meet and which they then share with each return visit. The remote server saves its part of the cookie and the information it contains about you; your browser does the same, as a plain text file stored on your Macintosh's hard disk, usually in the Preferences folder.

Most Web sites don't use cookies, although a growing number are beginning to. And not all browsers support them, although the two most popular browsers, Netscape Navigator (version 1.1 on) and Microsoft's Internet Explorer, do. The most commonly used browser that doesn't support cookies is America Online's browser, at least up to version 2.7.

The information that this mirrored cookie holds can include a number of things. With sites that require registration, the cookie can hold your user name and password. Cookies usually store some information about where you've been in the site in past visits, & this can be updated with each visit. A cookie always includes the address of the server that sent it. That's the primary idea behind cookie technology: identification. Think of it as Caller ID for the Web, with variations on the theme—each Web site gives you a personalized ID of some sort so that it can recognize you on the next visit.

When you return to the Web server that first passed you a cookie, the server has the ability to query your browser to see if you are one of its many cookie holders. If so, the server can then retrieve the information stored in the cookie the two of you originally exchanged. It's important to note that your browser will only share its cookie with the server that originally passed it along. There's a tight bond between an entry in your cookie file and the server that created it: other servers can't rifle through your cookie file. There's been a fair amount of disinformation about cookies, so it's worth mentioning what cookies can't do. Since a cookie is just a small text file, not an application, it can't search your hard drive for information. It can't upload any information to a Web server that the Web server didn't put there in the first place. It can't make a profile of your documents and applications. And it can't act like a computer virus.

At best, a cookie makes for a user friendly Web world: like a doorman or sales clerk who knows who you are, a cookie provides entry and service based on your ID. At worst, cookies represent a potential for a loss of privacy. Individual cookies can be programmed not only to identify who you are but what you do, page by

page, as you cruise through a site.

It's this potential for Web surveillance that concerns people like Scott Wyant, A Los Angeles-based information systems analyst and designer. "There's probably not a whole lot of user profiling going on right now," Wyant says, "but the potential for abuse is enormous."

That Said, Why Do We Need Cookies Anyway?

Since cookies are designed to col-lect a limited amount of information and pass it back and forth between you and a server, they can be used for lots of helpful reasons. Example, a site that lets you order goods or services could store your shopping list in your cookie file as you make your selections. If your shopping session was interrupted for some reason, you could return later and pick up where you left off.

Some sites let you personalize what they offer, based on your interest. Your preferences are then stored, like the shopping list above, in a cookie file. A useful example is search.com, which offers links to dozens of search-able Web sites and search engines. Search.com lets you choose your 20 favorite search places; the next time you visit the site, you'll see a new link called "Your Page," which is just that: a personalized page that displays what you chose as your top 20 picks.

Cookies are making the sometimes irritating process of logging-in passé. Many sites require visitors to register with both a user name and a password. In the old days, say a whopping six months ago, visitors had to sign in each time they came back to these sites. Not only did that take time, it meant that you had to keep track of all your passwords. Cookie technology

has streamlined the registration process. At places like the New York Times and Hot Wired, cookies are used as entry IDs. Once the server recognizes you as a local cookie holder, you just slide in the door.

Once you're inside, cookies can be used to track which pages you visit. That watchful cookie eye is good news for the site's designers/administrators and its advertising/marketing department. By tracking a visitor's motions through a site, the designer can determine which parts of the site are most popular and which pages lead users to bail out. The same is true for the advertising crew: Popular pages are the ones advertisers will want to post their banners on.

So far, cookies appear rather harmless. Let's turn up the heat.

Keeping Things Private

The idea of servers bring information to your hard disk vis-a-vis a seemingly innocent tool like a Web browser, and not even letting you know the deed has been done, is enough to raise anyone's hackles, let alone those of privacy advocates.

It's a legitimate concern: just what kind of data can a cookie contain? You certainly wouldn't want a remote server to have the ability to reach in and snatch your stored e-mail or be able to read the contents of your hard disk. As it turns out, cookies alone cannot provide servers with those capabilities. But cookies can have partners which may be able to discover more personal things about the user.

It's possible, for example, to embed and receive mail. The e-mail address can then be written to the cookie file and retrieved by the server that placed the cookie.

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JavaScript programs are included with the HTML code that makes up a page, and the Netscape browser interprets and runs the JavaScript program as the page loads. Page designers can use JavaScript to do all Sorts of things, from animated banners, to live digital clocks on the page, to opening new windows when you click on a link. That's the cool part.

The not-so-great thing about JavaScript is that it is still very much a work in progress, and has a number of well known bugs. One of these bugs was a security loophole which allowed JavaScript to snatch the e-mail address from within Netscape's mail module and then write it to the cookie file. Netscape says that they have closed the loophole in Navigator versions 2.01 and later, but sources report that JavaScript is still far from bug-free, and it's possible that other security problems are as yet still undiscovered.

One consequence of e-mail retrieval is obvious: you could become part of a direct marketing mailing list, which means your electronic mailbox could pile up with junk e-mail. Yes, even more than it does already.

Once someone has your e-mail address, it's easy to discover more about you. The most direct way is by querying one of many Internet white-page databases. These freely available Web databases store millions of people's names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses. Try a quick search, using yourself as a guinea pig, on the Internet Address Finder, Four11, or Switchboard. You might be surprised to find out how much information is already available for the asking.

Possible Intrusions

E-mail is just one piece of your private life that could be affected by cookies. A profile of your buying habits is another.

Doubleclick, a New York City-based ad placement service, is designed to eventually provide clients with the information needed to send targeted advertisements to people surfing the Web. "Target" is the key word here: the idea is that if I'm interested in buying a car, and you're a photographer, we can go to the same site at exactly the same time, and I'll see a Honda ad and you'll see a Nikon ad. Of course, Doubleclick charges advertisers for providing them this profile-rich adviewing scheme.

Here's how it works, in brief: You are on your way to a site that happens to be a Doubleclick client (there are many, including the Web magazine Salon and the Quicken Financial Network). While the site is sending you its home page, it is also connecting to Doubleclick "behind you back," so to speak. What that means is that you are, for a moment or two in cybertime, connected to Doubleclick. You didn't choose to go there, yet while you are, Doubleclick checks its database to see if your browser is in its database. If not, it passes you one of its cookies.

Once this cookie is shared, Doubleclick begins to log information on ads you are seeing as you blithely cruise the site. Each time you load a new page, the invisible handoff to Doubleclick occurs; with each handoff your cookie is updated with information on the new page or ad you're checking on

If you've already been to the site before, Doubleclick will recognize your cookie and send an ad to the page you're on that's tailored just for you, based on information previously saved

in your cookie. It all happens in a blink of the eye. Sometimes.

If you happen to have a slow connection to the Web, and you keep your eye on the status line at the bottom to the Netscape window, you can sometimes see the request to Doubleclick.

At the moment, the main thing that Doubleclick is selling to its customers is the ability to prevent a particular cookie holder from seeing the same ad too many times. It turns out that a big problem with Web advertising is that people get bored and annoyed if they see the same ad banner again, again and again. By tracking how many times you've seen a particular banner, Doubleclick can promise to show you an ad a specified number of times, hopefully preventing banner burnout.

Doubleclick isn't targeting people, it's targeting the browser that has a particular cookie, and the company claims that it isn't interested in personal information. "We have no way to correlate cookies with people's names," says Doubleclick CEO Kevin O'Connor. "I'm totally opposed to grabbing e-mail addresses. We provide frequency control for advertisers. We're logging the total number of clicks on an ad within a site so we can tell advertisers which ads are getting good responses, but we don't correlate those clicks with individual cookies. I see the use of cookies as a 3-way win. Advertisers know that their ad budget is well spent. Web sites get the money they need to survive; users don't have to see the same ads over and over."

Big Bang Theory

Once advertising hit the Web, it was expected that advertisers would try to get the most bang for their ad buck.

Nothing new or sensational about that.

Mike McCarthy, publisher of JavaWorld and SunWorld magazines, plans to implement cookies on the magazines' Web sites in near future. He'll use cookies to bypass the log-in process for registered users; people who don't want to register will still be able to read the magazines online. McCarthy sees cookies as essential tools for business. I need to track my users so that I can tell my advertisers who's reading the magazine," he says. "This helps me make money, which lets me invest in the magazines and provide my users with a better product."

For people like LAMG member Scott Wyant, the idea of a storehouse of information on individuals innocently surfing the Web is an Orwellian nightmare. He ponders the scenarios, especially if such information stored in these profile databases begins to be seriously correlated and disseminated.

"Imagine if you Browsed a site promoting an AIDs conference, and then you bought plane tickets over the Web to the city the conference was being held," he asks.

"If those two bits of information were sold to your health insurance company, you could find yourself deemed a high risk, and your insurance could be canceled."

This scenario is chilling, but how likely is it to occur, and is the danger greater with cookies and Web than it is with other online media? Consider the online services, such as America Online and CompuServe. For years, they've had the ability to track, in intimate detail, the paths taken by every one of their users throughout their service. And the online services know a lot more about you than a Web site

does, including your full name, address, phone, and even a credit card number, because you had to give all that information to the service when you first registered. So, presumably America Online knows if you spent three hours in the "Ready to Cheat On My Spouse" chat room, and CompuServe knows when you've been hanging out in the Bungee Jumping forum. Theoretically, the services could sell this information, and you could receive pitches for divorce lawyers and life insurance. However, there's no evidence of that happening.

On close examination, cookies just don't seem that threatening. But if you're worried about your privacy, there are ways to keep your cookies to yourself. The easiest way is to simply trash your cookie file (MagicCookie in Netscape, cookies.txt in Internet Explorer) after each Web surfing session. Or you can automate the process by using Cookie Monster 1.5. This shareware program (available from the LAMG BBS [also CMUG BBSj and other online file archives) dumps the cookie files for you.

Additionally, if you're using Netscape 3.0, there's a preference to alert you whenever a cookie is handed to you. You'll get a dialog box that tells you that the site wants to set a cookie, and you can allow or deny the server that privilege. If you don't care if you get cookies or not, you can turn off this notification. You can also turn off Java and JavaScript in this version of Netscape. Of course, if you turn off these features, you'll have to weigh the value of more privacy versus the loss of the positive things you can get from Java and JavaScript. Java applets can enrich the surfing experience by

adding animation or special features to a site, and JavaScript is often used by Web designers to let the user open extra windows or create a palette of control buttons.

Another way to avoid cookies is to use a service called The Anonymizer, which insulates you from cookies by redirecting all of your page requests through the Anonymizer server. Here is how it works. After you activate the Anonymizer, every time you click on a link, the request goes first to the Anonymizer site. It takes your request & adds it to the end of its own URL. So if you wanted to go to MacWorld Online after anonymizing yourself the request would look like "http:// www.an onynnzer.com:8080/http:// www.mac worldcoml." As far as the server you are hitting knows, it's sending all its pages to <w.anonymizer.com>, which then passes the pages along to you.

One Last Bite

On balance, cookies turn out to be more help than harm, more of a convenience than a pillaging of privacy. In the end, you, the user, will still be in control. If you're unafraid of the small chance that cookie information could come back to haunt you, you can take advantage of cookies to make your Web browsing easier. If you have your paranoia level ratcheted just a bit higher, you can use the feature in Netscape Navigator 3.0 to approve or deny servers whenever they want to hand you a cookie.

And if you're adamantly against your cookie information being shared, you can use programs like the Cookie Monster to toss your cookies before the data exchange takes place. The Internet is all about choice, and the tools are now available to let each of

us choose for ourselves.

Tom Negrino is a contributing editor for MacWorld magazine and Vice President of LAMG. His latest book is MacWorld Web Essentials. A somewhat different version of this article was previously published on MacWorld's Web site at <http:N www. macworld.com>

A Utility for
Drag-and-Drop Fanatics
from Mouse Droppings

I love drag and drop. In fact, whenever I find an application which does not support drag and drop, I phone them and urge adoption of drag and drop. So when I found the shareware utility, Copy/Paste, I was in heaven. Copy/Paste gives me drag and drop anywhere.

Let me give you a few simple examples. I have a Netscape document on screen and I want to save dozens of paragraphs, or listed items, but not the entire document. I highlight a selection and press a hot key (in my case Command/Shift/6). The screen blinks and a sound alerts me. On my desktop appears a file named Clippings.

I go to the next selection and press my hot key again. The screen flashes, sound alerts me, and my second selection is added to the existing Clippings file with separator line—Clip—separating the two clippings. I continue until I have all the paragraphs I need. Now I can open my Clippings file in Simple Text or my word processor and edit it to suit me.

There (dusting my hands off) that should be reason enough to get this wonderful shareware program. Ahhhh, don't go away, there is more.

Right now you have one Clipboard. CopyPaste gives me ten clipboards. Mac users know how to use Command/C to Copy and Command/V to paste. But using CopyPaste, I can type Command/C and then strike a number from 1 through 9 and Copy to any one of nine additional Clipboards. Then, I can paste using Command/V followed by a number from 1 through 9 and Paste the specific Clipboard I need. Simple Copy and Paste commands work as they have always worked, pasting to Clipboard 0, the original Mac Clipboard.

Wait! there is more!
• copy sounds or pictures the same way.
• automatically convert two spaces for one throughout any text you copy
• insert long date, short date or time
• convert any selected text to all caps, all lower case or initial caps
• convert double carriage returns to single
• convert tabs to four spaces or four spaces to tabs
• swap Clipboard locations easily
• sorts return separated selections alphanumerically
• Command/C/E repeats (executes) last Copy/Paste action

Of course there is much, much more. To give an example, you can convert the date to the Bahai date, if that is of interest. You can change Japanese Roman text into conventional Roman text. These two capabilities are listed to show you the breadth of this little application. The Help... Menu item gives you an excellent manual, and there is a pro-vision to automatically turn the Help file into a Simple Text document.

You can get Copy/Paste from most shareware sources, and to register it, send $20 to Julian Miller/Script Software, PO Box 634, Kings Bead, CA 96143, Phone: 916.546.9005, e-mail: julian@sierra.net.

STRAIGHT FORWARD!
from the President
Steve Yuhasz

It's all about community—that's what SEMCO means to me. The heart of SEMCO is people. Without people, SEMCO does not exist. One of the top goals of SEMCO is what WE can do for the community to make it a better place. Losing sight of this, we will lose sight of what our organization is all about—people helping people.

SEMCO was founded 21 years ago by people from our own community at Wayne State University and people who were enthusiastic about the MITS Altair Computer—people like you and me who wanted to come together to share ideas, have fun, and most of all, help one another. This is the true essence of SEMCO—helping people and having fun while doing it.

How can you as a SEMCO member help? In my first president's column I outlined the top goals of SEMCO, I stated that simply helping SIG-IBM chairman Tom Callow carry his computer to his car, would be helpful or community service, and I mean this. Anything you do to help SEMCO is helping the community, but I would like to see us as a group do more than this. We already have a fantastic start. Betty MacKenzie took up SEMCO's call to community service by contacting WTVS, Channel 56 to see how we can help. That way turned out to be 10 SEMCO members and one non-member (if you can believe that!) answering phones and taking pledges for the WTVS fund raising effort on March 19th, 1997 from 6P.M. until 12A.M. (You can see pictures of this event on our web site at www.semco.org). Those members were Farhat Kahn,

Internet Committee Member Betty MacKenzie, Nancy Dugmovich, Art Dries, Sandra Woods, Betty Keenan, Secretary Pat Kreiling, Past President Bob Clyne, Internet Committee Chairman Richard Jackson, myself, and friend Harriet Mathers. A big round of applause to these people who helped not only spread the existence of SEMCO to viewers on Channel 56, but the community as well. Many thanks to Betty for not only thinking of this idea, but actually pursuing it and following it through to its fruition. We hope to do this again in the Fall with even greater success.

How can YOU as a member of SEMCO help?

Help SEMCO member Art Laramie who is involved with the Rochester Lions Club and provides donated computer equipment to the physically challenged. I want us as a group to help Art. Please approach him at the next meeting or call him at (810) 398-7191 and ask him what you can do to help. It doesn't have to be big or really time consuming. Simply donating power cords, mice (not the real ones!), keyboards, or old copies of MS-DOS can really make a difference!

Call Art, see if he is coming to a meeting, and hand him that extra power cord or old copy of MS-DOS. Many times Art will receive systems without these necessities and has to use grant money, which is very limited and running out (up to $100 a machine!), to get these items back to working computers.

How else can you help Art? Give a few hours of your time by helping power up some of these older computers, lifting these computers onto the table so they can be evaluated, come

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out with some SEMCO members on a Saturday to help Art, or give any knowledge of computers you have whatsoever to help Art.

Also, Art needs help with answering calls from physically challenged people who have received these computers—be willing to be added to the SEMCO Computer Resource List of people willing to take phone calls or just tell Art you'll be willing to take a few calls!

Donate 286's, 386's, 486, 586, Macintosh Computers, or old Software to the Rochester Lion's Club and receive a tax break, as the group is 501c3 certified. Art estimates that 25,000 to 30,000 physically challenged people within the Detroit Metropolitan Area are in need of computers.

We as a group must step up to this challenge and help! We can! We have the talent, and the Channel 56 effort has proven that we can! What can be the results of helping Art? He gave me an example of a physically challenged child with illegible penmanship. His teacher couldn't read his work. Art got him a computer with WordPerfect 5.1 for DOS; now the teacher can read the child's work. Won't you help a physically challenged child or adult make their life better?

Many people say that Americans are self centered and self serving, not caring about their neighbors, but I don't believe this to be true. We are a nation of volunteers and besides, one of the neat things about helping the community is that you are also helping yourself, because you are a member of this community!

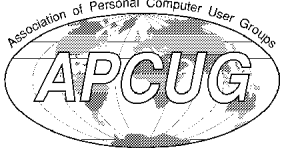Just think of SEMCO standing for "Serving Every Member of the Community Omnipotently" and spread the word that "SEMCO is a Community Organization Helping People for the 21st Century!" Until next month, just keep on looking STRAIGHT FORWARD!

The meetings at Oakland University are sponsored by OU's Academic Computer Services (ACS) whose Senior Computer Resource Administrator is Jeff Marraccini, and the student chapter of the Association of Computer Machinery (ACM). SEMCO thanks OU, ACS and ACM for their assistance.

This publication was created entirely with Macintosh technology using: Apple Laser-Writer Select 360, Apple's Performas 600 & 6200, Aldus' PageMaker 5.0a & FreeHand 4.0, Microsoft Word 5.1, Adobe Photoshop LE2.5.1, Canvas 2.1, Iomega ZIP Drive, Epson ES600-C Scanner.

MAY 1997 DATA BUS DEADLINE

SEMCO & SIG DATA, & MEMBERS' ADS - Deadline: Wed, May 21.
Members' personal ads free. Upload articles to Editor but call 810/626-5105
first (modem to be turned on). If mailing, use Editor address on Page 2. For
e-mail address, beth_fordyce@mgdmug.org and PLEASE send to arrive sooner
than deadline if possible.

BUSINESS ADS - Deadline: Second Friday monthly. Mail **unfolded** camera-
ready copy; payment in full made out to SEMCO, to the Editor (address Pg 2).

Ad Rates and Rules

Full pages are 5-1/2" wide x 8-1/2" tall; Make allowance for 1/2"margins;
Halftones to be screened at 85 dpi; Offset press used; No agent pricing;
Full-page/1-issue=$30;Full-page/6-issue=$150;Full-page/12-issue=$240
Half-page/1-issue=$20;Half-page/6-issue=$100;Half-page/12-issue=$160
Qrtr-page/1-issue=$15;Qrtr-page/6-issue=$75; Qrtr-page/12-issue=$120

CALENDAR OF EVENTS
Beth Fordyce, Fill-In Chairman

Contact Special Interest Group (SIG) chairpersons (listed on inside front cover of
newsletter) for information on a particular SIG meeting. SIG chairpersons with meeting
information or members who have current events information are invited to contact the
calendar editor.

May 11 - SUNDAY (Meet 2nd Sunday) Location: Dodge Hall/Eng'g,
OAKLAND UNIVERSITY in ROCHESTER. (Map: inner back page)

SEMCO **Board** Meeting at 12:00 pm, Room 203 - For Officers and SIG
Chairpersons. Other members are invited to attend.

SEMCO **General** Meeting at 1:30 pm, Auditorium. **Pgm:** Business Meeting
only (15 minutes in length).

SIG-IBM (for IBM & compatible users),1:45 pm, Auditorium. **Pgm:**
Chairman Tom Callow will demonstrate the improvements in the latest
version of Microsoft's best-selling office suite.

SOCIAL PERIOD, 3:15 pm, Auditorium lobby

SIG-IBM NEW USERS GROUP, 3:45 pm, Auditorium. **Pgm:** Downloading
files PART II: Tom Callow will demonstrate how to download files from on-
line services, the Internet and BBSs.

SIG-LOTUS (for business program users), 3:45 pm, Auditorium. **Pgm:**
General discussion and Q&A on business programs. Now is your chance
to learn how it's supposed to be done! Chairman Roger Gay will be on hand
to provide direction

SIG-MAC (Mac/Performa/Power MAC), 1:45 pm, Room 203. **Pgm:** Phyllis
Evans will demo Conflict Catcher, with emphasis on How To Troubleshoot
and Control the Load Order of Extensions.. **After:** Public Domain copying.

May 15 - Thursday, 6:45 pm (Meet 3rd Thursday)
SIG-ADVANCED, Pgm: Wide ranging discussion of computers & computing. Place: Troy Public Library, 500 W. Big Beaver Rd in Troy, at the I-75 exit. Details: Franz Breidenich 810/398-3359.
May 21 - WEDNESDAY, 6:30 pm (Meet 3rd Wednesday)
SIG-MAIN.MNU, AutoCAD User Group, Pgm: Until further notice, the meetings are suspended and the group is inactive.
June 8, 1996 - SUNDAY (Meet 2nd Sunday)
SEMCO Topic: Joint meeting of all SIGs on Constructing Web Pages and Web Sites.

OTHER GROUPS AND EVENTS

May 6 - Tuesday, (Next: June 3) 7:30 pm (Meet first Tuesday: not July/Aug)
SHCC (Sterling Heights Computer Club) Capathia Club, Utica Rd, Sterling Hts, Rick Schummer 810/997-1451.
May 10 - Saturday 7:00 pm (Meet 2nd Saturday)
*.DOS (Computer Users Grp of S.E. Mich.) Bryant Public Library, Downtown Dearborn, NW Cor.Mich.Ave.at Mason St., rear parking/entrance. All MS-DOS, IBM-DOS, M.S. Windows PC-based software/hardware. Open/public. Info: Dennis Leclerc 313/255-2060.
May 10 - Saturday 10:00-12:00 Noon (Meet 2nd Saturday)
Wayne State U.Mac User Grp at Standard Data Sys, 21042 Laurelwood,Frmgtn 48336 . Info/directions:Lorn or JoAnn Olsen 810/612-4914 or Denny MeLampy 810/477-0190.
May 15 - Thursday, 7:00 pm (Meet 3rd Thursday)
MCUG (Michigan Computer Users Group, Inc) at South Lake High School, 21900 E. 9-Mile Rd, St.Clair Shores, MI, (E of I-94, on S. side of 9-Mi. Park in rear lot, enter thru rear door) Pres. Steve Skinner 810.412.8241 Ext 2075.
May 17 - Saturday, 9:00 am to Noon (Meet third Saturday)
MacTechnics, MAC Users Grp. Main: 11:00am Eng'g I bldg on UM N. Campus; SIGS & copy: 9:00am. Call 313/971-8743.
May 18 - Sunday, 3 pm to 6 pm (Meet third Sunday)
MacGroup - Detroit Southfield Civic Center for monthly meetings.Contact Terry White Voice 313/571-9817; fax 313/571-0104; www.macgroup.org
May 24 - Saturday, 10 am to 12:00 (Meet 4th Saturday) (except December)
AAIICI (Amer. Assn of Ind'l Invstrs, Computerized Invstrs) Huntington Bank,Orchard Lk Rd,S.of Maple,W.Bloomfield. Jack Lockman 313.341.8855.
May 27 - Tuesday, 7:00 pm (Meet last Tuesday) (no Dec meeting).
Michigan Apple Computer Users Grp (+Macintosh) Southfield Lathrup HS, 19301 W 12-Mile Rd, Lathrup Village, MI, E of Evergreen on So. side. Carl Pendracki 810/647-8871.

SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN
COMPUTER ORGANIZATION

SEMCO MEETING - Sunday, May 11, 1997

Dodge Hall of Engineering, OAKLAND UNIVERSITY in ROCHESTER

SEMCO Board Meeting at 12:00 pm, Room 203 - For Officers and Chairpersons. Other members are invited to attend.

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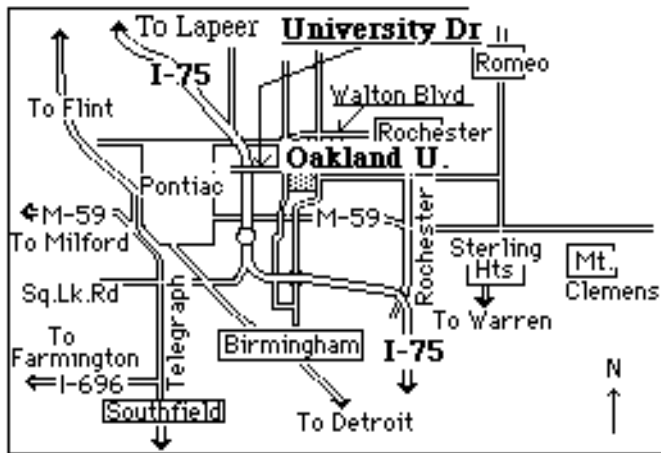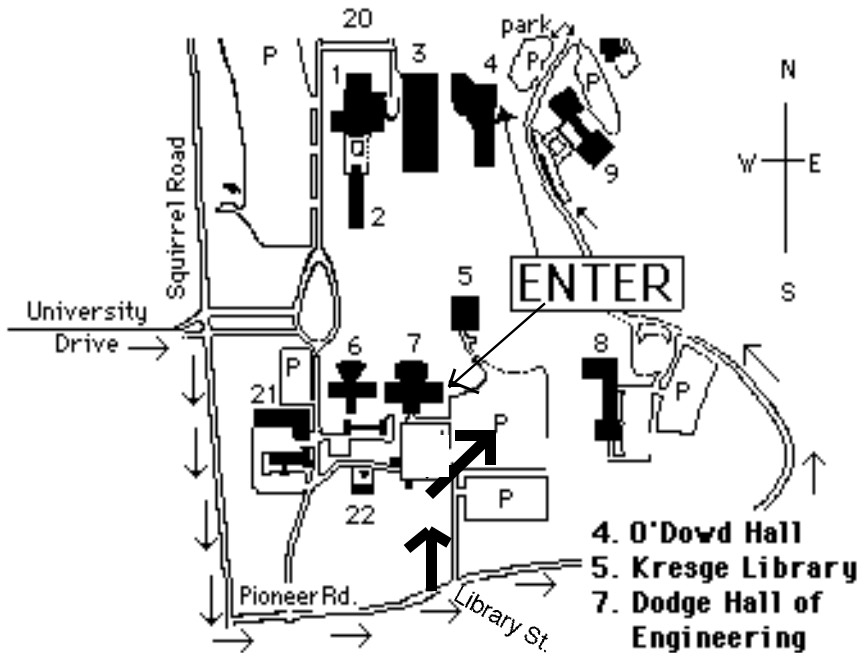
SIG-LOTUS (for business program users), 3:45 pm, Auditorium. **Pgm: General discussion and Q&A on business programs of general interest.** Now is your chance to learn how it's supposed to be done! Chairman Roger Gay will be on hand to provide direction.

SIG-MAC (Macintosh/Performa/Power MAC), 1:45 pm, Room 203: **Pgm:** Phyllis Evans will demo Conflict Catcher, with emphasis on How To Trouble-shoot and Control the Load Order of Extensions. **After:** Public Domain copying.

PUBLIC INVITED
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MAIN CAMPUS OF OAKLAND UNIVERSITY

20
P
1
3
4
park
P
P
2
Q
Squirrel Road
5
ENTER
N
W · E
S
University Drive →
6 7
8
21
P
P
P
22
P
Pioneer Rd.
Library St.

4. O'Dowd Hall
5. Kresge Library
7. Dodge Hall of
   Engineering

To Lapeer University Dr
I-75
Romeo
To Flint
Walton Blvd
Rochester
Oakland U.
Pontiac
M-59
← M-59
To Milford
Sterling Hts
Mt. Clemens
Rochester
Sq.Lk.Rd
To Farmington
Telegraph
Birmingham I-75
To Warren
← I-696
Southfield
To Detroit
N ↑

This map directs to both Dodge Hall (#7) and O'Dowd Hall (#4):
Driving north on I-75 (from Detroit), get off Exit 79 (University Drive),
right on University Drive up to campus entrance. Turn right on Squirrel
Road (at traffic signal); take left onto Pioneer Drive; take next left on
Library St. to Dodge Hall (bldg 7); it's on your left from the parking
lot—Library is straight ahead. Park in lot at right. (For O'Dowd Hall,
continue on Pioneer Drive to bldg 4.)