



The Newsbyte

THE TRI-COUNTY COMPUTER CLUB

November 10, 1998 Issue

Editor: Brian Powell - (330) 828-8365

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EDITOR'S CORNER

What a turnout! We had 22 members and 3 visitors at our October meeting! Lots of things happened at our meeting. Many people bought and sold things in the TCC Garage Sale. It was interesting to see what everyone had for sale.

It was also a night of firsts, too! Our first-ever raffle was a success, too. A total of \$48 worth of tickets were sold. At most meetings, the raffle money will be split between the winner and the club. Earl McGaha won \$24, and so did the club! Also, we're now having a free raffle for club members. A name is selected from all of the club members. If the person is present, they get the money in the "pot". The pot is increment by \$5 each meeting. Our winner wasn't present, so it's for \$10 this month.

Also, we sold a copy of Lotus SmartSuite 97. We also inaugurated our Beginner's Corner idea. The raffle and the Beginner's Corner will now be at every meeting. Hopefully it will help all members, not just beginners.

I'm looking for volunteers to run the Beginner's Corner. If you're interested, e-mail me at programs@tricountycc.org or call me at (330) 828-8365.

While I'm on the topic of volunteers, I've got something else for interested members. If you'd like to be a club officer next year, contact either Willis Troyer, Tom Zimmerman, or Brian Powell. Their e-mail address and phone numbers are on Page 2. We'll pass along your name in consideration to the Nominating Committee that will be appointed at the November meeting.

NEXT MEETING

November 10, 1998 - 7:30pm
OSU-ATI Skou Hall Room 101

Membership Raffle: \$10

TCC 50/50 Cash Raffle

Q & A Session

Lotus SmartSuite 97 Auction

More Editor's Corner

In case your wondering, the web site redesign is finished. It's now TCC Online v3.02. (I changed a couple of things after I completed the redesign.) I scrapped the "Your Start Page" idea.

Finally, if you want to place an ad in the Newsbyte, e-mail me at newsbyte@tricountycc.org. It's free for members. Have something that you didn't sell at the Garage Sale, we'll then place an ad!

I promise not to be so long-winded in the future... I had so much to let you know about.

Visit TCC Online!

<http://www.tricountycc.org>

CLUB OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Willis Troyer - (330) 669-3925

VICE-PRESIDENTS

Brian Powell - (330) 828-8365

Tom Zimmerman - (330) 264-5521

SECRETARY/TREASURER

Pat Johnston - (330) 264-8726

LIBRARIANS

Joe Luster - (330) 682-7815

Phillip Crosby - (330) 264-1444

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Brian Powell - (330) 828-8365

TREASURER'S REPORT

Submitted by Pat Johnston

Previous Balance as of 10/13/98 - \$273.14

Income - \$81.00

Expenditures - \$89.14

CURRENT BALANCE as of 11/10/98 - \$265.00

CLUB MEMBERSHIP

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP -----> **44**

MEMBERS JOINING IN OCTOBER

None

MEMBERS RENEWING IN OCTOBER.

None

The Tri-County Computer Club meets the second Tuesday of every month. Dues are \$10.00 for the year running from January 1 to December 31. The treasurer is Pat Johnston, 709 Quinby Ave, Wooster, Ohio 44691. (330) 264-8726. Benefits of joining include the Newsbyte, club notices, and other members-only privileges.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

October 13, 1998 Meeting Minutes

Submitted by Pat Johnston

The October 13, 1998 meeting of the Tri-County Computer Club was called to order by President Willis Troyer at 8:00pm.

Minutes from the September meeting were read and approved. The treasury has a balance of \$273.14. The following items were approved for payment: \$8.88 to Brian Powell for Newsbyte costs and \$5.26 to Pat Johnston for raffle tickets. \$75 was also approved for joining the Association of PC Users Groups.

The Orrville Public Library will have a session on the Web and web pages for beginners. It will be on October 14 from 7-8pm at the Orrville High School Computer Lab.

The Greater Cleveland PC Users Group will have a meeting on November 7. The program will be a demo of Quicken 99 and the Microsoft Office 2000 Tour will stop.

There was a discussion of what the club could do for the community. One suggestion was to donate computers, 386 and 486 models, to needy families or non-profit groups.

Brian Powell brought up joining the Association of PC Users Groups (APCUG). The fee is \$50 per year and a \$25 one-time initiation fee. Brian motioned we join, and Pat Johnston seconded it. Motion passed.

A membership for the TCC was also discussed. A form is a requirement for joining the APCUG. A motion to accept the form was made by Amy Besancon and seconded by Brian Powell. Motion passed.

Brian also gave a short program on using Disk Defragmenter and ScanDisk.

In the 50/50 raffle, \$24 went to the club and \$24 to Earl McGaha. The winner of the members' raffle wasn't present.

Lotus SmartSuite 97 was auctioned and sold to John Grayson for \$55.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30pm. The next meeting will be on November 10.

Respectfully submitted,
Pat Johnston
Secretary-Treasurer

Browsers: Version 5.0 Betas

It's that time of year again. No, not fall. It's browser-beta season. Both Microsoft and Netscape have available for download on their sites betas of their v5.0 browsers. In the world of the web, 14 months between versions is a long time to wait.

Internet Explorer 5.0 is still currently in the Developer Preview stage. This means that the current version is intended for web designers, and may still be buggy. A final version is expected near the end of the year. Also, many new features have still yet to be implemented. Among some of IE5's new features are improved Favorites, better support for CSS2 (Cascading Style Sheets v2) and Dynamic HTML (DHTML). It also sports a new engine to display tables much faster. PC World magazine reported that they ran IE5 for a couple of days and it didn't crash once.

Netscape currently has just v5.0 in beta also. Netscape has been pretty quiet about what to expect, but I'm going to guess something along the lines of what's happening in IE5. I imagine it will expand on its "Smart Browsing" features, which are included in the just-released Communicator 4.5. I imagine it will improve its support for CSS and DHTML. Their DHTML support is ok, and I expect it to get better. The CSS support is something else altogether. The first version to support CSS1 was version 4.0, while IE 4.0 supports CSS2. And Netscape's support is only partial. View TCC Online (www.tricountycc.org) with both IE 4.0 and Communicator 4.0x and see. Our new design uses CSS for formatting the pages. Version 5 will also, as always, load pages faster. It's supposed to have very few bugs, too. We've all heard that before.

If you've used beta versions before, give them a try. Don't run them on primary or mission-critical systems, though. Wait until the final version, or at least the final beta, to come out before you do that. Personally, I haven't checked out the beta versions of either yet.

If any of you try either beta version, e-mail me at newsbyte@tricountycc.org and I'll put your comments in the next edition of the Newsbyte.

Site of the Month

Ohio Department of Transportation

<http://www.dot.state.oh.us>

Our site of the month for November is the Ohio Department of Transportation. You can find construction info in OTIS (Ohio Transportation Info System), constructions plans and specs, and upcoming projects. A great site!

Area ISPs

Below is a listing of the 3 actual Internet providers serving Wayne County. AOL is not an ISP.

[bright.net - NE](#)

(800) 535-6423

Flat Rate: \$19.95/month

High speed access supporting V.90 standard. Has unlimited tech support via 800 toll-free number.

[SSSNet](#)

(888) 899-4777

Flat Rate (Wooster): \$17.95/month

Wooster currently doesn't support 56k, as far as I know. Massillon has dedicated 56k line, but doesn't support V.90 standard.

[Valkyrie](#)

(330) 263-6782

Flat Rate: Unknown

Serves Holmes and Wayne Counties. Has 56k x2 modem support.

Win Money!

Play the TCC Raffle
at Club Meetings!

AOL 4.0: An Old Online Service Learns New Tricks

by Lisa Moskowitz, PC World Magazine

The latest revision of America Online's software--version 4.0, in case you're counting--is about to hit the virtual streets. And while AOL's ongoing success may have more to do with in-your-face marketing than savvy software design, the new interface's improvements confirm that AOL's engineers aren't just sitting around resting on their stock options.

The question is, are these changes enough? Everything from log-in scripts to e-mail has been tweaked, making AOL easier to use and more powerful. But don't expect too much. While the new options provide many of the features found in popular stand-alone e-mail and browser programs, advanced users will still be compelled to surf elsewhere.

If anything on AOL needed attention, it was e-mail. Previously, you could attach only one file to a message, and when you did, the transfer was excruciatingly slow. You could not sort Address Book entries, and to check spelling, you had to open a separate dictionary and type in the suspect word. With AOL 4.0, spelling is checked automatically, and you can now change text colors and fonts and alphabetize your Address Book. You can also attach multiple files and even embed pictures in your e-mail messages.

Predictably, such enhanced messages take longer to transmit than their text-only counterparts. But AOL 4.0 seems to perform such transfers faster than AOL 3.0. For example, in my informal testing using a Pentium II-266, connecting over the company LAN via TCP/IP, a message with a 50KB attachment took about 7 minutes to travel from mailbox to mailbox; in version 3.0, that same message took approximately 13 minutes.

While such enhancements are welcome, AOL's e-mail still has some holes. It'd be nice, for example, if AOL supported automatic message replies and signature files and had better sorting capabilities.

The overall navigation of AOL 4.0 is much smoother than before, due in part to tighter integration with Internet Explorer. A single address box lets you enter either AOL's internal keywords or URLs. And the main AOL toolbar now sports Forward and Back buttons and a drop-down History list (courtesy of Internet Explorer), so it's easier to navigate among AOL Channels and move around on the Web.

The toolbar is also more intuitive in AOL 4.0. For example, the People button (which gives you access to chat, Instant Messaging, the member directory, and member profiles) now shows a group of waving stick-figure people, instead of the two bland faces found in previous versions. If you still can't divine what a button represents from its picture, AOL has added text labels. And you can now add up to three toolbar buttons of your own; previous versions didn't let you add any.

AOL has also improved its setup and access options. Modem detection is better, the registration process simpler. And thanks to a new dial-up engine, connections are more reliable. The service has been plagued in the past with clogged lines and fumbled connections, but I have yet to encounter either problem in testing the new version. (Of course, that has as much to do with AOL's beefed-up modem banks as it does with the new software: AOL officials report they're adding 20,000 to 25,000 modems a month.) You can add as many as four additional screen names (for a total of five) and switch among them without logging off. The software will also automatically redial your local access numbers up to 25 times.

In sum, AOL 4.0 is still a fine option for Net newbies. But seasoned customers probably won't find the improvements alluring enough to keep them from checking out cheaper ISPs and the myriad of more powerful tools available on the wide-open Net.

To download AOL 4.0, users of AOL 3.0 should type the keyword AOL 4.0. For AOL 3.0 users who want to keep using IE 3.02, the installation file measures 8.5MB; AOL says it should take roughly 57 minutes to download over a 28.8-kbps modem, 37 minutes at 56k. If you want to upgrade to IE 4.01, the file balloons to 24MB.

Pentium II's Keep Getting Faster

As you know if you've been following processors at all this year, Intel Pentium II's just keep getting faster. The PII-300s that were top of the line last Christmas aren't even on the charts today. The Pentium-MMX 233's have been discontinued, and the same is about to have to the fastest of the MMX systems, the 266.

What dominates Intel's lineup today is the Pentium II in 350-450mhz models. All feature the faster 100mhz buses. The 350mhz handles the midrange, and the 450 handles the fastest systems and servers. The new PII Xeon line is targeted at fast servers and workstations.

At the other end of the spectrum, the Celeron is a low-end PII. The 333mhz model is targeted at economy systems, and features the old 66mhz bus. It is nothing like the original Celerons, though. It features a built-in cache for much faster operation.

You can't rule out the clone makers, though. Cyrix's chips are for very low cost systems. However, they don't have a chip running at high enough of speed today to compete against the Pentium II's released this year.

AMD released a 350mhz version of their K6-2 chip earlier this year. It contains a new technology designed for rendering 3D images. It will be seen if this is used in any main programs. It is doubtful because many people are still going to run Intel chips. The K6-2 is a good bargain though, because of its low cost compared to the Intel chips.

Coming on the horizon is the fastest PC chip yet, the 500mhz PII. It's due out in the first quarter of 1999. Also, faster K6s are due out, and new Cyrix systems are long overdue.

If you are looking at buying a system, particularly a PII-350, watch for prices to drop near Christmas due to the 450 and 500 models.

Computer Trivia

The answer to this question will be given at the meeting on November 10.

What is the name of the first modern computer?

TCC Online Poll

You can vote in the TCC Online Monthly Poll at our web site, www.tricountycc.org. The results of the poll will be given at the November meeting. This month's question has two parts. They are "What do you think should happen in the US v Microsoft case?" and "What do you think will happen in the US v Microsoft case?".

One vote will only be counted per person. The deadline for voting in this poll is 5pm on Tuesday, November 10.

The New Dues Schedule: Explained

Due to the new membership dues schedule, all memberships will expire on December 31, 1998. All membership privileges end then, unless you renew your membership for 1999.

You can renew your membership beginning at the December meeting, or you can send in your dues to Pat Johnston, 709 Quinby Ave, Wooster OH 44691.

Under the new schedule, if you join before or during January, you pay \$15. If you join after January, you pay \$1.25 for each remaining month in the calendar year plus the current one. For instance, you pay \$7.50 if you join in July.

Also, because the club is now a member of the Association of PC Users Groups, we now have a membership form. The form must be filled out and returned when you pay your dues. If you have any questions about the new dues schedule, call Secretary-Treasurer Pat Johnston at (330) 264-8726 or e-mail us at membership@tricountycc.org.