



# The Newsbyte

THE TRI-COUNTY COMPUTER CLUB

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October 13, 1998 Issue

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## EDITOR'S CORNER

Welcome to my first edition as editor of the Newsbyte. As my first duty, I would like to thank our former editor, Harry Geiser, for seven years of service. Harry retired after the July edition due to health reasons. There was no September newsletter due to the transition of the editorship of the Newsbyte.

I plan on keeping the same basic format as Harry had, but I do plan on making some changes. Features new to the Newsbyte include secretary's and treasurer's reports, and software reviews. We will be adding more articles that are not from magazines. We aren't able to have any software reviews in this issue.

I invite you to check out our web site, TCC Online. The site is currently in the process of being redesigned to add more features and make it easier for you to use. All club information, plus the Newsbyte is available online. We are adding a new section called "Your Start Page" that will allow you to create a customized gateway for access to the web.

If you have any suggestions for the Newsbyte, I'd be glad to hear them. You can send me an e-mail at [newsbyte@tricountycc.org](mailto:newsbyte@tricountycc.org) or write me at:

Brian Powell  
669 West Main  
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## NEXT MEETING

October 13, 1998 - 7:30pm  
OSU-ATI Skou Hall Room 105

Bring Things to Sell in TCC  
Garage Sale at Meeting!

Free Cleveland ITEC Show  
Tickets for Members

Lotus SmartSuite 97 Auction

## CLUB OFFICERS

### PRESIDENT

Willis Troyer - (330) 669-3925

### VICE-PRESIDENTS

[Brian Powell](mailto:Brian.Powell@tricountycc.org) - (330) 828-8365

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### SECRETARY/TREASURER

[Pat Johnston](mailto:Pat.Johnston@tricountycc.org) - (330) 264-8726

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### NEWSLETTER EDITOR

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## SECRETARY'S REPORT

September 8, 1998 Meeting Minutes

Submitted by Pat Johnston

The September 8, 1998 meeting of the Tri-County Computer Club was called to order by President Willis Troyer.

Minutes from the last meeting were read and approved. There was no library report. The treasury currently has a balance of \$273.14. Expenditures for the last month were \$7.81 for newsletter postage to Harry Geiser and \$70.00 to register the TCC's Internet domain name, <http://www.tricountycc.org>, for the club's web site.

Problems with hardware and software were discussed.

Mr. Bob Coppedge, President of the Greater Cleveland PC Users Group and the Cleveland Computer Society attended and talked about ideas to revive our club, including having raffles, manufacturer demos and other ideas. He donated a copy of Lotus SmartSuite 97 to raffle or auction at the next meeting. He also gave us some reasons to join the Association of PC Users Groups. Also, he provided free tickets to the ITEC Show at the I-X Center in Cleveland on October 13 and 14. The show is like a miniature COMDEX show. He said that membership in the APCUG would allow us to network with other clubs and possibly increase membership.

Brian Powell gave a program on upgrades to add Windows 98 features to Windows 95.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10pm. The next meeting will be on October 13, 1998.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Johnston

Secretary-Treasurer

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Submitted by Pat Johnston

Previous Balance as of 9/8/98 - \$273.14

Income - \$0.00

Expenditures - \$0.00

**CURRENT BALANCE as of 10/13/98 - \$273.14**

## CLUB MEMBERSHIP

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

MEMBERS JOINING IN

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER

None

MEMBERS RENEWING IN AUGUST/SEPT.

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.

## OPL Wednesday with the Web

The Orrville Public Library will be holding a special "Strictly for Beginners" session of their popular Wednesday with the Web series. This program is designed to teach newcomers to the Web how to explore the Internet with hands-on experience. "Strictly for Beginners" will be held on Wednesday, October 14 from 7-8pm at the Orrville High School Computer Lab, located on N. Ella St. in Orrville. This program is free and no registration is necessary. For more information, call the OPL at 683-1065.

## Lotus SmartSuite 97 Auction

At our October meeting, we will be auctioning off a copy of the Lotus SmartSuite 97 office suite. SmartSuite includes '97 versions of Lotus 1-2-3, Word Pro, Approach, Freelance Graphics, Organizer, Screen Cam, LotusMail v4.52, plus IBM ViaVoice for Lotus Word Pro and printed and online versions of the documentation. SmartSuite requires a 486-50 running Windows 95 or Windows NT 4.0, and 8mb of RAM.

## Turn It Off or Leave It On?

By Jim Dunmyer  
Reprinted for Toledo's TBBS

The question of arises, "Should I turn my computer off when I'm not using it, or leave it on all the time?" Here's a bit of discussion:

I have computers that have been running pretty much continuously for several years, and they seem to be doing fine. So, it doesn't appear to hurt them significantly. There are a couple of observations; most of my continuously operating computers have extra fans mounted in the cases to keep the innards cool, and most of the monitors do NOT run continuously.

On the other hand, a computer that's off is cool, and there's ZERO wear on fan and hard drive bearings. So leaving it off all the time would make it last "forever", and one might think that the best thing is to turn it off every time you leave the room, just like you do with the lights. After all, it does cost about \$10 per month in electricity to run a computer 24 x 7.

The problem with turning the machine off and on frequently is the power surge on the components at startup and the CHANGE in temperature. Both are nearly as harmful as constant power and heat, as long as the temperature isn't too elevated. Besides that, a Windows 95 or Windows NT machine seems to take FOREVER to get going again.

A compromise is in order: my personal rule of thumb is, if I'm likely to use it later today, leave it on. If it'll be at least 8 hours before I need it again, shut it off. Machines that operate 24 x 7 have the monitors shut down at night or if I'll be gone all day, otherwise I leave them on.

## ITEC Show Tickets

The Tri-County Computer Club has tickets for the ITEC Show in Cleveland on October 13 and 14. These tickets admit two people each and are valued at \$20 each, but are free to TCC members. We'd like to thank the Greater Cleveland PC Users Group for donating these tickets. Tickets will be distributed to members present at our meeting on October 13.

## Video & The Internet

By Richard Seltzer  
B & R Samizdat Express

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I am not a great fan on multimedia on the Internet. I don't go for flash for the sake of flash. I keep looking for applications that justify the expense. And, let's face it, up until now the audio and video on the Internet has been a sideshow a curiosity, something you demo to newcomers, but something that you don't really use. That seems to be changing. RealAudio (<http://www.realaudio.com>) is easy to use, and the sites being created by their customers are becoming increasingly tempting. And now VDOLive looks promising on the video side (<http://www.vdolive.com>). (See comments above).

VDOLive seems to have the same sound quality as RealAudio, only you see pictures too (cf. MTV).

Real Audio seems to be designed for prepackaged content (with the neat feature that you can embed URLs in the audio stream and hence create slide shows or something analogous to the film strips that were used in schools back in the 1950s, with the pictures in synch with the sound). VDOLive seems like it can be used for live broadcasts as well as later playbacks.

With RealAudio the emphasis is on "real" as in "real-time" the fact that you start to hear the sound shortly after you click (not having to wait for the file to download). VDOLive is also "real-time", but the emphasis seems to be on "live". It looks like you have here the opportunity for live broadcast interviews, in addition to prepackaged content. With poor video resolution, this medium feels better suited for programming that looks live and spontaneous rather than edited and polished.

## Video & The Internet (Cont.)

On the server side, RealAudio lets you set up the equivalent of a radio station, without a government license. Now, appearing on the market just a short while later, we see VDOLive providing the rudiments of what could let you set up your own basement television station. This would be tempting stuff to play with, if you could afford expensive toys.

But the "live" aspect also points toward important, business-related applications. Surprisingly, two-way audio/video videoconferencing software isn't market ready yet. CU-SeeMe from Cornell (<ftp://gated.cornell.edu/pub/CU-SeeMe>) is available with two-way video and audio for the Macintosh, and just video (no sound) for the PC. But it looks about as user friendly as a Heath kit for building a bomber.

The promising features of VDOLive seem to indicate that clever compression techniques, line speed -- even at just 14.4 -- might not be the major barrier it looked like a year ago. In other words, we don't have to wait until nearly everyone has through ISDN lines or TV cable lines in order for useful videoconferencing to become widespread. And I'd be very surprised if we don't start seeing products of that kind from professional, commercial sources, rather than university labs, very soon.

When video and audio are live and two-way, they can serve as a means to extend the ways people relate to one another, and they also can become very efficient means for communication conveying all the nonverbal information that is essential in negotiating and building relationships.

In Neal Stephenson's cult-classic novel, *Snow Crash*, it is the ability to recreate subtleties of facial expression in "avatars" (on-line alter egos) that makes virtual/alternate reality take off.

I suspect that there will be three stages in the development of video for the Internet tied to developments in visual quality (resolution) and speed (frames per second). What we have now is little better than mailing somebody a still photo, or having a still photo on the screen while someone

talks (for instance, with Internet Phone). Yes, there's a recognizable face, but there's no connection between the expression on that face and what the person is saying.

The first stage will probably be the achievement of natural-looking movement (through even greater compression or just widespread availability of high bandwidth at low cost), so gestures seem natural, and the person at the other end seems more like a human being than a poorly programmed robot.

Next will come the very high levels of resolution which are necessary to capture all the subtleties of human expression. (If we were going to be limited to today's speeds, I suspect that detailed analysis a myriad of facial expressions could lead to low-bandwidth approximations focusing on just those aspects of the face that seem to convey the most information about a person. But we won't be limited, and hence that kind of research isn't necessary.)

But the real winner -- the Holy Grail of personal videoconferencing -- will be eye contact. How do you (given that you have solved the above two issues) mount and synchronize the cameras to create the compelling illusion that you are looking someone in the eye and that person is staring right back at you? Then you will be able to communicate a full range of emotion, with all the associated messages of sincerity and credibility; and video over the Internet becomes a major, indispensable, business tool.

Visit TCC Online!

<http://www.tricountycc.org>

Read *The Newsbyte* Online!

## Adding Windows 98 Features to Windows 95

From Last Month's Program

You don't have to buy the Windows 98 upgrade, retailing at \$89.90, to get some of Windows 98 key selling points. In fact, you may already have some of them, and many other can be downloaded for free from Microsoft's web site. Below is a list of some key features and where you can find them.

### FAT32 File System

FAT32 is included in Windows 95B or newer. Hard Drive must be FDISKed to take advantage.

### Active Desktop / Internet Explorer 4.01

IE 4.01 and its Active Desktop component can be downloaded from <http://www.microsoft.com/ie/> to improve your browsing experience. Active Desktop makes your desktop act more like a web page.

### Support for New Technologies

Normally, drivers disks come with Windows 95 drivers for new hardware that Windows 95 doesn't support. Newer version of Windows 95 do support more technologies. For instance, Windows 95C support USB without external drivers.

### Dial-Up Networking 1.3

DUN 1.3 allows better, more secure connections to the Net, and support for new protocols such as Point-to-Point Tunneling Protocol. Download DUN 1.3 at <http://www.microsoft.com/windows95/>.

### Windows Media Player

Built in support for the most common multimedia formats on the Web today, including RealAudio/RealVideo. Requires a Pentium 90. Download at <http://www.microsoft.com/windows95/>.

### DirectX 6.0

DirectX is the graphics layer commonly used by Windows-based games. DirectX 6.0 is the newest version, adding many new features and other enhancements for Windows games. Download at <http://www.microsoft.com/windows95/>.

### Windows Update

You can't download a Windows Update-program, but you can do the same thing by yourself, manually. Windows Update essentially just places all of the updates available on the Microsoft web site in one place. Two good places to check for updates and patches online are <http://www.microsoft.com/windows95/> and <http://www.microsoft.com/ie/security/>.

### Some MS-Plus for Windows 95 Features

Some features of MS Plus, such as DriveSpace 3 compression, are now included in Windows 98. Also, the desktop themes from Plus are now standard in Windows 98. Some features are already available in Windows 95B or newer, or you can purchase MS Plus for Windows 95 at a computer store.