

The Nicer Side of the 'Net

by Jonathan Davis

This week -- Windows 95: Start it up or turn it off?

I held off announcing this until now, because it has only been recently that I have been able to experiment with the program in question. Simply said, I hate Windows 95. It is the great "could have been" in recent programming history.

Basically, what Windows 95, and Windows in general, has been developed to do is to turn the PC into an Apple Macintosh (Mac). A Mac is a computer that evolved with the intention of a graphical interface, and the hardware has been designed around that. The IBM-style PC was born as a text-based computer with arcane little incantations for you to type in to do anything. When the PC was first designed, intense graphical operations, such as Windows and most current games, were not being considered and were not even being dreamed of.

Over time, computers progressed, and the commercial market for computers switched from governments and mega-corporations to the general public. But, the general public would not want them if they were hard to use. So was born MS-DOS, and then Windows, which runs a graphical interface on top of MS-DOS. MS-DOS, compared to the operating systems of the era it was born in, was amazingly user-friendly, with commands like "copy", "delete", and "rename", instead "cp" and "mv" which were (and still are) used on other operating systems like Unix.

One problem with Windows was and is that the PC was designed for simple text displays. To make a long story short, graphical programs demand much more attention than text programs from the computer, and because they need all this attention and time, they are very slow programs to run. Windows 95 cannot fix this, as the problem lies in the hardware. There is some talk of

new hardware being developed to try to fix this, but to allow for backward compatibility (that is, able to work with earlier software and hardware) is very difficult, and may be impossible.

File names in MS-DOS and therefore Windows have always been a pet peeve of mine. How do you accurately name something when you only have eight characters to play with? "Newspaper Column, Jan 18 1996" has to become something like "nc-j1896.doc". If I'm doing some house cleaning next year, and I find a file on my hard drive named "nc-j1896.doc", will it tell me what it is? Windows 95 has changed this a little, but their changes to allow supposed 256 character names leave much to be desired. The idea they have used is very old and inefficient, and present in the Norton command.com replacement as well as 4DOS, a MS-DOS enhancer program that has been around for years. To properly improve the filing system on PCs would require changing it so deeply that it can not be compatible with previous versions of MS-DOS or with any previous MS-DOS programs.

In simple terms, Windows 95 just stinks. It is slow -- slower than the old MS-DOS 6 and Windows 3.1 we had on the newspaper office computer, and has no real improvement in the file system. It needs to be so thoroughly configured that you have to specify what brand of modem you have. And, if you don't happen to have the kind of modem that they, in their benevolence, have provided a compatibility file for, you are up the creek. Windows 95 frequently crashes on me, mostly because I actually want it to do things other than the most obvious programs -- trying to install a faxing program, for example. This was a program not present prior to installation of Windows 95, and it crashes every time we try it. Every single time. It doesn't even get along with the mouse, the program will frequently ignore mouse commands (especially button clicks), whereas 3.1 worked fine with it.

If you want a computer with a nice, pretty, easy to use graphical interface, get a Mac. If you want to run *Doom*, and all the games that are developed exclusively for the PC, get a PC. If you want both, your best bet would be getting a computer with OS/2 pre-installed on it. Windows 95 is just a load of garbage.

Business Society

This is an information letter concerning the Business Society's day of events planned for January 26, 1996. We are currently in the beginning of the annual tickets sales for the annual dinner. This year we will be trying the luncheon concept in an attempt to breathe new life into the old evening dinners. We have managed to acquire a Canadian business leader. I am assured by Mr. Dave McKenna that Mr. Beresford is a very dynamic, interactive, and crowd-pleasing speaker. This year we have also planned a day long schedule of events for students and local business people to participate. This is scheduled for Friday, January 26.

Kelley Building 9:30-10:30

Room 237: The PEI Canada Business Services Centre will be conducting a presentation on financial assistance with starting a business (Targeted at the 4th year class, may assist with policy).

Room 211: Student Services has found a representative from Employment Canada who will be holding a resume and interview skill seminar.

Room 210: Allan Savident, FCGA from Certified General Accountants of PEI will be conducting a seminar on Interprovincial Barriers.

10:45-11:45

Room 237: Mr. Peter Beresford will be addressing as much of the business school as can fit into 237. This is to be a very interactive session and we require a maximum turnout.

12:00 At the CP hotel.

Lunch will be served in the Prince Room with Mr. Beresford's address to follow.

1:30-2:30 Reception planned for those able to stay in the wings of the Prince Room

6:00-11:00 Business Pub at the Barn -- all Business Society members and attendees of the dinner are invited. Entertainment by Vintage and sponsored by Moosehead Breweries.

It would be appreciated if you could mention this event to fellow students so we can get a maximum attendance for the first ever Business Society Day. Thank you for your support.

Greg J. Quinn, President

What's Up At the Panther Lounge?

by Cara Hedefine

Things are in full swing around the Panther Lounge this week as we are heading into winter carnival week. Thanks to all who turned out to last week's movie pub. *Showgirls* and *The Net* were a success. Our movie pubs are held every Friday, starting at 2:00 pm. Following the movies, the Barn holds pool tournaments which have lots of prizes. Be sure to come down and show us your skill.

I would like to congratulate Cindy MacPhee for winning \$500 with the Moosehead cash giveaway and also thanks to all who showed up for this successful event.

For winter carnival, the Barn will host such acts as **Sandbox** on January 24, and **Jimmy Flynn** on January 25.

On January 26 the Barn will be hosting **Simon Cotter** and **The Rik and Norm Show**. Be sure to get your tickets early at the Student Union office between the hours of 9:00 am and 4:00 pm. For the winter carnival week, trivia with Jen is on Tuesday, but will be back on Wednesdays next week. Be sure to drop in and win some great prizes.

I would like to take this time to thank the winter carnival committee and Brent for all their hard work in promoting school spirit. Be sure to get involved this week and show support.

One last note -- on **Super Bowl Sunday** be sure to drop by the Barn and cheer on the Cowboys. That's all for this week. See you at the Barn.