GUN Gotham Users of NeXT

BULLETin

Gotham Users of NeXT: *the New York NeXT users group*

Welcome to the GUN BULLET*in*!

First issue for our one-year-old group

Welcome to the first issue of the BULLET*in*, the newsletter of the Gotham Users of NeXT users group. Although it wasn't intended that way, the appearance of this newsletter coincides with the first anniversary of GUN, which met for the first time last September at Roulette Intermedium, a Soho avant-garde music performing studio. Interest at that meeting was hot (nearly 100 people showed up!), and has remained strong (with occasional variations in intensity) since. Our average meeting attendence is thirty, even though we have moved the meeting locations around the city, from Wall Street to Columbia University.

Meeting topics have ranged from demonstrations of custom Mathematica applications to NeXT-synthesized music performances, from previews of front-end products for Improv to discussions of the workstation-based office of the future. Although we don't always have access to a NeXT computer at each meeting, we generally do, and can frequently demonstrate products or utilities. In the future, we plan to emphasize more administrative- and user-oriented topics, such as security, communications, inter-platform data transfer, etc.

GUN volunteers have been busy, too, assembling some interesting benefits for members. We have commitments from a number of manufacturers for discounts on hardware and software (contact Ed Wright at Ed_Wright@gun.com for details). Even more, we are examining means to allow members full access to the Internet (thus permitting them to ftp files directly rather than have to email them from email servers).

But the best news is that NeXT Computer has awarded us a "Golden Nugget" grant of $4000 to underwrite our activities and to encourage us to explore new services and benefits. We owe a lot to NeXT for their early support with machines and technical expertise, as well as their ongoing bombardment of members with technical and marketing information. NeXT has a lot going for it, and we are delighted to help contribute to its success.

Given that this is our first issue, we decided to include some material from the Internet and other sources in case some of our members are out of touch with these media. If you've already seen these, we're sorry for the repetition. Let us know, however, if you find it useful, and we'll continue to print this kind of information in future issues.

– Robb Aley Allan

NeXT TECHNICAL ALERT

NeXTdimension Configuration Alert

NeXTdimension systems configured in a particular way result in diminished performance. The "bad" configuration is a two-headed NeXTdimension system (e.g., one configured with both a MegaPixel monochrome display and the NeXTdimension color display) with the monochrome screen set as the zero, or default, screen. For optimum performance with two-headed NeXTdimension systems, NeXT strongly urges you to set the color display as the zero screen. To configure a two-headed system with the color display as screen zero, start-up the Preferences application. Choose Screen Preferences and drag the login window icon to the color display.

NeXT PRICING UPDATE

Price of 68040 Upgrade Board to Increase

To date, most 68030 NeXTcube owners have upgraded to the 68040 Upgrade Board. On October 1, NeXT will raise the price of the 68040 Upgrade Board to reflect its true cost. The suggested retail price of the 68040 Upgrade board will be increased from $1,300 to $2,495. Higher Education discounts, of course, still apply. We strongly encourage 68030 NeXTcube owners to place orders for the 68040 Upgrade Board by September 31, 1991, before the price increase takes effect.

NeXT SUPPORT AND TRAINING UPDATES

Summer Support Bulletin available at public archive sites

The Support Bulletin, a regular publication of NeXTedge, provides in depth explanations of software and hardware support issues of particular interest to NeXT system administrators and service technicians. The summer issue of the Support Bulletin is available via anonymous ftp at nova.cc.purdue.edu from the pub/next/docs directory. Annual hardcopy subscriptions are also available. For more information, contact NeXTedge, Inc. at 1-800-848-6398.

NeXT offers new training courses

NeXT is offering several new courses of interest to NeXT users in higher education. These include:

o System Administration for UNIX Experts — A two-day course covering the administration of a network of NeXT computers for experienced UNIX system administrators.

o Administering a NeXT Classroom — A one-day course for instructors who will be teaching classes using a network of NeXT computers.

o NeXT Computers in a Mixed UNIX Environment — A two-day course that enables experienced UNIX system administrators to incorporate NeXT computers into an existing network of UNIX-based computers.

For more information, contact NeXT Computer, Inc. at 1-800-848-6398.

THIRD PARTY UPDATES

Agog, Inc. ships Squash 1.0

Squash is a compression and backup utility that uses a lossless compression scheme. Squash lets NeXT users compress data and backup files and folders to floppy disks. Squash is specifically designed for the NeXT platform and has an easy-to-use interface. Files can be compressed from within the Workspace Manager with one keystroke. Compressed files can be decompressed and opened in their original application with a double-click of the mouse. A companion utility, UnSquashOnly, which UnSquashes Squash files, is shipped with Squash and may be freely distributed. For more information, contact Agog, Inc. at (517)-627-2186.

SoftPC 2.0 Now Shipping in Volume

Insignia Solutions, Inc. announced last month volume shipments of SoftPC 2.0. SoftPC 2.0 emulates an IBM PC AT's hardware allowing NeXT users to run MS-DOS applications. SoftPC is priced at $499 retail and $299 to higher education. For more information contact Insignia Solutions, Inc., 254 Geronimo Way, Sunnyvale, CA 94086 (408) 522-7600.

WordPerfect offers Academic Discounts

Faculty, staff, and post-secondary students at accredited schools are eligible for $100 off the purchase price of WordPerfect. To receive the discount, purchase WordPerfect at any WordPerfect dealer. You will be given a form to fill out and return to WordPerfect Corp. which will rebate $100. The purchase must be for personal use. For more information, call WordPerfect Corporation at 1-800-526-5295.

WordPerfect Offers Schools a Deal: Buy One Get Seven Free

When an accredited school buys one copy of WordPerfect, WordPerfect Corp. will donate a license to use the software on seven additional school machines. For 5- and 20- packs, WordPerfect will donate seven times the number of licenses included in the packs. This offer is good through December 31, 1991. For more information, call WordPerfect Corporation at 1-800-526-5295.

Lotus ships Improv Application Programming Interface (API) Toolkit

The Improv API toolkit provides developers with the ability to create custom Improv applications. It includes a collection of C-callable functions that can be used to automate Improv tasks, navigate through Improv models, connect Improv to external data sources, and access Improv from independent applications. Unlike traditional spreadsheet macros, the Improv API toolkit allows developers to work with standard C programming tools, the rich system resources provided with NeXTstep. The Improv API toolkit is available free from Lotus Customer Support at 1-800-345-1043.

UNINET Slat-1 available

The UNINET Slat-1 is a high performance serial and parallel port expansion unit for NeXT computers. The Slat-1 attaches to the NeXT's SCSI port and offers up to 56 serial ports and up to 7 parallel ports. Retail prices start at $575. For more information, contact UNINET (714) 546-1100.

Adobe Systems, Inc. ships Illustrator 3.0, TouchType, and Type Sets

Adobe Illustrator offers unprecedented flexibility in desktop color illustration, including the ability to perform real-time edits in preview mode. Illustrator for NeXT computers has capabilities unavailable on other platforms. These are summarized below:

o Editing is available in all display models, including preview illustration and preview selection.

o Industry standard TIFF and EPS files can be imported, "dragged and dropped", or placed as art.

o Color or grayscale TIFF images may be used as templates for tracing with the Autotrace tool. Each shade and hue in color images can be traced independently.

o User-definable grids with independent horizontal and vertical snap-to-point may be overlaid on the screen to aid in precision placement of artwork.

Adobe TouchType is a program for performing precise kerning, placement, coloration and other graphical type manipulation effects. TouchType software is designed to facilitate the use of type as a design element and is especially powerful when used with programs such as Adobe Illustrator and other graphics, word processing and layout programs.

Adobe Type Sets are collections of PostScript fonts for NeXT computers. In addition to the Adobe Plus Pack, Adobe is now shipping:

o Type Set 1 — Bodoni Poster, Cottonwood, Freestyle Script, Hobo, Linotext, Trajan, and VAG Rounded Bold.

o Adobe Type Set 2 — Cooper Black, Copperplate Gothic 31AB, Franklin Gothic No. 2 Roman, Juniper, Lithos Bold, Peignot Demi, and Present Script.

o Adobe Type Set 3 — Adobe Garamond Regular and Italic, Adobe Garamond Semibold and Semibold Italic, Helvetica Light and Light Oblique, Helvetica Black and Black Oblique, Helvetica Compressed, and Tekton and Tekton Oblique.

For more information on these and other Adobe products, call Adobe Systems, Inc. at (415) 961-4400.

Impact ships Gdb, PhaseScope, PhrasePlayer, and SpinDoctor

Impact Software Publishing, Inc. provides distribution and sales services for small developers. Impact currently publishes the following software:

Gdb, a graphical front-end to the GNU gdb debugger; PhaseScope, a general graphical display program for qualitatively analyzing the stability characteristics of dynamical systems; SpinDoctor, a program for visualizing three-dimensional experimental data; and PhrasePlayer, a voice-controlled digital dictation program that can play back a message with varying speed and pauses.

Demo versions of all four programs are available from anonymous ftp at nova.cc.purdue.edu in the pub/next/2.0-release/demos directory. Demos can also be obtained by sending a blank floppy disk to: Impact Software Publishing, Inc., Attn: Impact Demo Programs, 210 Lake Street, Ithaca, NY 14850.

Oracle Corporation ships Oracle Financials and Oracle Government Financials

Oracle has announced the availability of its complete accounting and finance packages, Oracle Financials Release 8.3 and Oracle Government Financials Release 4.3. For more information contact Oracle Corporation at (415) 506-2524.

NeXT IN THE NEWS (excerpts)

The NeXTstation: A High-Performance Graphical Workstation with a PC Price Tag

by Steve Carpenter [From Byte Magazine, June 1991]

From this user's perspective, the NeXTstation lives up to the workstation performance I've come to expect. So it's safe to say that NeXT laid to rest the performance problems of the original NeXTcube.

After adding high-quality audio, Unix, and Ethernet, the best current Apple system costs more than twice as much as a base Nextstation and offers less performance.

Sun's low-end systems fare relatively well, performing only slightly worse than the Nextstation. But Sun systems lack the bundled applications and general ease of use of the Nextstation.

The NeXT and Former King. The Boy Who Cried, "Insanely Great!"

by John Perry Barlow [From MicroTimes, Thursday, May 30, 1991]

If you're looking to buy a computer for almost any purpose, buy a NeXT! And do it now before everyone else discovers they really are insanely great!

After 40 minutes of watching one of the world's great demonstrators put the New, Improved, NeXT through it's lightning paces, I staggered away with one thought in mind: I must have one.

Processing capacity is less important than the feel of the machine. The NeXT interface is still a lot of equipment to haul around, but between the 68040 and the suite of fundamental improvements which went into NeXTstep 2.0, this thing feels faster than bugs on fire.

Everything, whether it's launching a program, opening a window, or running a search and replace, happens with a crispness that is almost sexually arousing.

Software Meeting Chock Full of Surprises

by Ellen T. Corliss [From Mass High Tech - New England's High Technology Newspaper, Volume 9, Number 14, May 20 - June 2, 1991]

A captivated audience watched with amazement for over an hour as Vais demonstrated the capabilities of NeXT's Cadillac version of the NeXTstep. He showed that 1990s computing style had arrived in Redwood City, CA — interoperability and portability were evident almost from the word go.

NeXT Inc. Is Enjoying Comeback, But Competitors Lurk in Wings

by G. Pascal Zachary [From The Wall Street Journal, June 27, 1991]

REDWOOD CITY, Calif. — Next Computer, Inc., with widening support from computer buyers, is making a surprising comeback...

Next...said it expects to post sales of $45 million to $50 million for its quarter ending Sunday. That puts Next on target to achieve $200 million in 1991 sales. 'This is a very respectable accomplishment,' said Richard Shaffer, editor of Computer Letter.

Mr. Jobs is gaining the respect of computer experts and, more importantly, starting to ring up significant sales, mainly at the expense of Sun. Next....recently beat out Sun for a big order for 250 computers from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and won a 500-unit order from advertising-agency Bozell Inc.

It also won sizable orders from the influential Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency and from First National Bank of Chicago.'The Next computer, off-the-shelf and out of the box, does everything we need,' said Ricardo Merrick, chief of technical services for the Los Angeles County Sheriff.

Alliances validate NeXT philosophy

by Tom Quinlan and Lisa Picarille [From InfoWorld, August 5, 1991]

The company's founder, president, and CEO, Steve Jobs — who last week announced record second-quarter revenues of $46 million — cheered the re-planning object-oriented-based systems.

Those alliances are proof, he said, that his company had the right idea all along with NeXTStep, its object-oriented operating system.

Jobs delights in pointing out that, based on the most recent quarterly earnings reports, NeXT is now bigger than Mips. Jobs, whose company is privately held, strongly hinted that NeXT is in the black.

An interview with Stewert Alsop

[From Upside Magazine, June 1991]

"...I think NeXT has already made it. They're already a successful company, but people haven't figured it out. It's already where Apple was in, sort of, May 1986, when they were beginning to be successful but the industry hadn't figured it out."

Illustrator Draws on NeXT System's Strengths

By Christopher Stetson [From PCWeek, July 7, 1991]

The superior speed of Illustrator for NeXT's drawing tools alone could entice graphic artists to make the switch to the NeXT platform.

Illustrator for NeXT... also capitalizes on the multitasking capabilities of Unix and the graphics power of Adobe's Display PostScript.

One major feature of Illustrator for NeXT that will make Mac users green with envy is the capability to edit in preview mode. [NeXT computers] allow users to edit rendered images, eliminating the need to jump back and forth between view modes.

WordPerfect Takes a Powerful Next Step: WordPerfect's professional word processor may bring the Next system into the mainstream.

By John Lombardi, Review Board [From InfoWorld, June 24, 1991 (Vol. 13, Issue 25)]

Summary: A strong professional word processing program for the NeXT computer, WordPerfect translates DOS 5.0-level functionality to the NeXT GUI. For NeXT users this is a strong product that works well with other NeXT utilities, especially the dictionary, thesaurus, and quotation library.

PUBLICATIONS

NeXTWORLD Magazine

The third issue of NeXTWORLD magazine will be available on newsstands nationwide July 30th. You'll find it at chains such as B. Dalton's, Walden Books, and Crown Books. Articles in this issue include some of the following:

1. Special report on NeXT Color, including: color machines, color standards, alpha channels, color theory/color picker; Adobe Illustrator reviewed/Adobe Separator; The Ins and Outs of Color-Color peripherals for the NeXT; Tips/Service bureaus, etc.

2. Product Reviews: Wordperfect, Frame, OCR Servant, Co-Xist, PLI

3. Features: NeXT on Wall Street, Improv Development Profile, and Photo Tour — The NeXT Labs

4. Vanishing Point: Deja-Vu — Guy Kawasaki takes a look at NeXT's advocate program and style of evangelism.

5. How-to: This section focuses on user needs, hints and tips, and system administrator needs.

As announced last month, the magazine will communicate more frequently with its subscribers by launching a monthly newsletter in the late-summer time frame. The magazine is now a quarterly publication and will continue to be mailed to subscribers and distributed on newsstands. The newsletter will be mailed to subscribers during the months in which the magazine is not published; in other months it will be slipped into subscribers' copies of the magazine. To subscribe call 1-800-745-7002 or write: Subscriber Services, P.O. Box 56429, Boulder, CO 80322-6429. If you are having trouble with a subscription call 1-800-755-6398.

NeXT on Campus

The Spring 1991 issue of NeXT on Campus is now available. If you're not a subscriber to NeXT on Campus, you may receive it free by sending your request to NeXT_on_campus@NeXT.com Please include the following information: Name, Title, Department, Institution/Organization, Street Address, City, State, Zip, E-mail Address.

The Fall 1991 issue of NeXT on Campus will be available in early October. If you'd like a subscription to NeXT on Campus, send your request to NeXT_on_campus@NeXT.com. Please include the following information: Name, Title, Department, Institution/Organization, Street Address, City, State, Zip, Country, E-mail Address.

The AppWrapper

The AppWrapper is a digest of products and services available for NeXT computers and NeXT computer users. To subscribe contact Paget Press, Inc., (206) 448-0845.

Mathematica in Education

A quarterly newsletter focusing on issues surrounding the educational uses of Mathematica. Subscriptions are $15 a year and article submissions are welcome. To subscribe or submit an article, write: Paul Wellin, editor Mathematica in Education, Department of Mathematics, Sonoma State University,1801 E. Cotati Avenue, Rohnert Park, CA 94928 or send e-mail to: wellin@sonoma.edu.

NeXT Users' Journal

Issue 13 of the NeXT Users' Journal is available via ftp from nova.cc.purdue.edu. Jon Bennett is the journal's new editor.

NeXT ON TV

L.A. County Sheriff's S.A.N.E. Kids Say No Telethon

The telethon raised $485,000 to support L.A.'s Substance Abuse Narcotics Education program. A network of 12 NeXT computers running Lotus Improv tracked pledges and displayed running totals on a "Total" board. The NeXT computers had the spotlight when an interview was conducted in the computer area. Organizers said this year's telethon had "the smoothest behind-the-scenes operation yet."

P.S.I. LUV U

P.S.I. LUV U, a new series premiering September 14 at 10:00 pm on CBS, features a computer monitor room and crime/forensics lab equipped with NeXT computers. The computers will be used to help solve crimes.

NEW BULLETIN BOARD SERVICES

CompuServe NeXT Forum

The CompuServe NeXT forum gives users who do not have access to the Internet a chance to join the electronic NeXT community. The forum has three sections: Message Section, Library Section, and Conference. For more information contact CompuServe at 1-800-848-8199.

Portal NeXT Special Interest Group (SIG)

Portal also offers access to the NeXT electronic community and to archived software and documents. For more information, contact Rodger McBride at rmcbride@cup.portal.com.

EVENTS

The NeXT Super Seminar, September 28-29, Washington D.C.

Originally scheduled for June 11 - 13, 1991 at The American University in Washington, DC, this meeting has been rescheduled for Friday, September 28 thru Saturday, September 29. The location will be at the offices of MITRE Corp. in McLean, Virginia (about 30 minutes from Washington, DC). For more information, contact, Hugh O'Neill at (301) 224-3116 (after 8 p.m. EDT) or Chris Walters at walters@grebyn.com.

Seybold Computer Publishing Conference, October 1-4, San Jose, Calif.

At Seybold, NeXT's booth will focus on solutions for color graphic design and business publishing. NeXT will have a hands-on demonstration center in an area of the show called "Gutenberg's Garage" where attendees will be able to use NeXT computers to create and print color pages.

EDUCOM, October 16-19, San Diego, California

Now in its 27th year, EDUCOM is a forum for leaders in higher education to present up-to-date issues effecting computing policies, communications and networking, instruction, research, and development. NeXT will display its latest solutions for scholarly productivity in teaching and research.

International Computer Music Conference, October, Montreal, Canada

Julius Smith, NeXT software engineer and associate professor of music at Stanford's Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics (CCRMA), has been selected as the keynote speaker for the 1991 International Computer Music Conference, to be held in Montreal in October. Previous keynote speakers have included composers such as Iannis Xenakis and John Cage, as well as leading researchers such as Andy Moorer.

CONTESTS

Third IMPACT Software Contest

The deadline for the third IMPACT software contest is October 15, 1991. The writer of the best program (based on creativity, originality, and marketability) will be awarded a $1000 prize and offered a contract to have the software published. For more information write: Impact Software Publishing, Inc., 210 Lake Street, Ithaca, NY 14850. Or send e-mail to contest@impact.shaman.com . The winner of the third contest will be announced on comp.sys.next.announce on October 25,1991.

Computing to Assist Persons With Disabilities

A national search for computer-based applications to help persons with physical or learning disabilities is being conducted by The John Hopkins University with grants from the National Science Foundation and MCI Communications Corp. A grand prize of $10,000 and more than 100 other prizes will be awarded for systems, devices and computer programs developed by professionals, amateurs, and students. For an entry blank write to:

Computing to Assist Persons With Disabilities
P.O. Box 1200
Laurel, MD 20723

Diagram! Document and Palette Contest

LightHouse Design is looking for interesting Diagram! documents and palettes. Diagram! users can send their documents and palettes to rock@lighthouse.com. The three best entries win Diagram! t-shirts.

NeXTWORLD announces icon contest

NeXTWORLD will be making back issues of its magazine available electronically for use with Digital Librarian. The files will be placed on the Internet ftp archive servers and will be freely redistributable for non-commercial purposes. The only thing that is holding back the initial release is the icon that is needed for use with Digital Librarian.

So, NeXTWORLD is having an icon contest. Please submit entries, by NeXT mail, to icons@nextworld.com and NeXTWORLD will pick the best one. The winner will receive a free subscription to NeXTWORLD magazine.

Include your name, e-mail address, U.S. Mail address, and a daytime phone number. You may submit as many icons as you wish in your submission, but please, one submission per person.

AWARDS

Zilla Wins Smithsonian Award in Science

NeXT Computer chief scientist, Dr. Richard Crandall, has been awarded the 1991 Computerworld Smithsonian Award in the Science category. Crandall received the award for his application "Zilla," a "community supercomputer," which bestows supercomputer capability onto pre-existing networks of workstations. The Computerworld Smithsonian Award Program honors individuals "who have achieved outstanding progress for society through the visionary use of information technology." For more information on Zilla, see "Tales of zilla: Adventures in distributed computation," NeXT on Campus, Fall 1990; and "The lure of very large numbers: Further adventures in community supercomputing," NeXT on Campus, Spring 1991.

University of Houston - Clear Lake, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, and MediaView Also Nominated for Smithsonian Awards

Michael Mezzino, Jr. of the University of Houston - Clear Lake was nominated in the category of "Education and Academia" for his NeXT PhaseScope, a tool to graphical display and qualitatively analyze the solution and the stability characteristics of systems of first order ordinary differential equations. PhaseScope is available from Impact Publishing. For more information, see Third Party Product Updates.

The Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology (RHIT) was nominated in the "Education and Academia" category for its "Integrated First-Year Curriculum in Science, Engineering, and Mathematics." RHIT is uses an installation of more than 60 NeXT computers to implement the freshmen curriculum. For more information contact Jeffrey Froyd at froyd@nextwork.rose-hulman.edu.

Richard Phillips of the Los Alamos National Laboratories was nominated in the area of "Mixed Media" for his NeXT application MediaView, a general multimedia digital publication system. For more information contact Richard Phillips at rlp@rust.lanl.gov.

POLL

Would You Use Linda?

SCA, Inc. is interested in writing a NeXT version of the C-Linda parallel programming environment. They would like to know if NeXT users are interested in using Linda. If you would consider using Linda on your NeXT computers, please send e-mail expressing your interest to Mr. Leigh Cagan at: cagan@sca.com.

ABOUT GUN

The group

GUN is a non-profit organization dedicated to exploring and promoting the use of NeXT computers in academia, business, and the arts. Many of our members are developers, musicians, and corporate users. We enjoy substantial assistance from NeXT Computer, Inc. and from local dealers and VARs who share our vision of the NeXT as the best computer on the market.

Board

Robb Aley Allan, *founder* [Robb_Allan@gun.com]

Tim Reed, *founder* [Tim_Reed@gun.com]

Paul Murphy, *president* [Paul_Murphy@gun.com]

David Bressler [David_Bressler@gun.com]

Catherine Pavlov [cpav@gun.com]

Ed Wright [Ed_Wright@gun.com]

John Vincenzo [John_Vincenzo@gun.com]

Email

The main email address for GUN is gun-members@uunet.uu.net!-gun.com or gun-board@uunet.uu.net!gun.com. Individual members (if they have access to email) can be reached by addressing mail to them using the following format: First_Last@gun.com.

Call for volunteers

GUN needs the benefit of volunteers to help prepare this newsletter, arrange special events, present topics at meetings, etc. The group can give only as much as it receives! If you have solved UNIX or NeXT system problems or coded a particularly interesting program, the group would probably like to hear about it.

Contact me (Robb Allan) at 212/ 605-0135, or call Paul Murphy at 718/ 260-9848 and let us know what you'd like to do. Whatever it is, we'd appreciate it.

Meetings

GUN meetings are (usually) held the second Wednesday of each month at Electronic Directions, 220 East 23rd Street (between 2nd and 3rd Aves.), Room 503,, in New York City. "Schmooze" time begins at 6:30pm, and actual presentations run from 7:00pm to (around) 9pm. No entrance fees are charged at this time.