hAng ON!

The Monthly Newsletter of the Houston Area NeXT Users Group

Volume 1, Issue 1 August, 1991 Nearly Free

Welcome!

John Glover, President

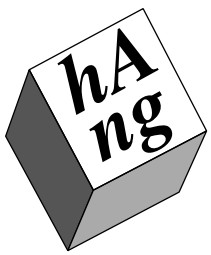
Welcome to the first issue of the hAng newsletter! The Houston Area NeXT Group has been meeting for exactly 1 1/2 years, and we finally have a newsletter to proclaim our existence. For that we owe a great deal of thanks to Steve Sarich, Andrew Loewenstern, Steve Nasypany, and Bob Boeye who volunteered to write, edit, and publish hAng ON!

For this inaugural issue, it seems appropriate to look back at how the group came together, and to reflect on where we want to go with it from here.

hAng grew out of a two-day NeXT developer's seminar held at the Engineering College, University of Houston, in January 1990. The seminar was taught by NeXT, and although it was not an official Developer's Camp, it served to kick-start a number of NeXT enthusiasts in this area. After that seminar, Mike Mezzino went on to write his award-winning PhaseScope program, and attendees from Texas A&M went on to establish a group of their own.

At the end of the seminar, we all agreed that some sort of user group would be desirable. So we planned to come back the next month at UH for an organizational meeting to start things off. At that meeting and the next couple we decided on the name hAng. Writing it as hAng was to complement the way NeXT is written, and to avoid copying BaNG!, the Bay Area NeXT Group in California.

In a similarly complementary way, we developed the hAng logo:



When the name and logo were voted up at the third meeting, we finally had identity!

Since that beginning, our group has been a mix of users and developers, academic and business. Our meetings have ranged from information for developers, to program demonstrations for users, to object-oriented programming for everyone. We have had representatives from WordPerfect and from Lotus demonstrate their products. And we have had many of our own members volunteer to demonstrate a program or teach a topic.

NeXT has always been prominently in attendance at our meetings. NeXT has been handling the mailing of meeting announcements and has frequently rented the video projector for the meetings. For that we owe many thanks to Mark Meinrath, the only NeXT representative in Houston!

And now that we have a newsletter, we enter a new era of enthusiasm and activism in the group. Many ideas for group direction have been knocked around at recent meetings. We are proposing a new, well-defined structure for each meeting; a new policy and procedure for access to the group's software library; minimal membership dues; and, of course, the newsletter. All of these new ideas will be discussed at the August meeting (and, I am sure, at subsequent meetings).

So come to the meetings of the "new, improved" hAng and help us make this the kind of user group you have always wanted and needed!

See you August 7th and every first Wednesday.•

Inside This Issue...

The All Seeing, the All Knowing, the Amazing Schlepkin! 2
Just Rumors 2
The NeXT Meeting 3
From the Editor 3
Mezzino to Demonstrate Awesome Application 3
Top Draw vs. Illustrator - Review 4
Them Old Developer Blues - Editorial 5
ClickArt - Review 6
"Open" Systems - Editorial 6
Our Top Ten List 6
Golden Disk Award 7
It's There for You Too 8
Help Wanted 8
Special Thanks 8
Closing Miscellanea 8

The All Seeing The All Knowing The Amazing Schlepkin!

No doubt about it, NeXTWorld is a quality publication that brings you everything you ever wanted to know about the NeXT... Right?

Wrong RISC breath!

Only the Amazing Schlepkin has REAL inside answers on new NeXT products and peripherals obtained through the use of his psychic powers augmented by occasional flashbacks. He is NEVER wrong![1] So here's the real scoop on what you'll see from NeXT and third party developers in the next few months.....

Cheap third party RAM for the NeXTstation Color and the Dimension, as well as the bargain prices for the Cube and mono station. You're probably looking at early September on this one...

A superfast, upgradeable, data and fax modem using the internal DSP. A US manufacturer will introduce a 9600/9600 product in the next two months. The price will be less than half of the new Neuron fax-modem, less than the I.link product, which is only 24/96. It will be upgradeable to 14.4 v.32bis by phone!

A new "lossless" image compression that will offer 40:1 compression, over 10 times faster than JPEG. If that's not enough, this compression will be compatible Macs, NeXTs and PC's. I know you think I'm kidding.

A 16-bit 64x oversampling digital and analog input/output for the DSP. Will have analog inputs and two kinds of digital inputs and outputs. For under $500.

You'll see a new major vendor in the NeXT mail-order business that should help bring down prices even further and may give us a few new products as well.

A high-powered graphics board for the cube. Providing a 1280x1024x32bit double-buffered display, it will be powered by a TMS34020 and four TMS34082 floating-point processors. It's rated at 160 MFLOPS. For all you horsepower junkies, it *will* be programmable, unlike the NeXTdimension. (sounds like the old Daewoo card, huh?)

Last, but certainly not least, two new machines from NeXT. A HA, you say! Everyone knows about the new RISC machines! **WRONG!** I predict that NeXT will introduce two new '040 machines! One will be a 33MHz version that may replace the old 25MHz models. The other, a 50MHz cube. Yes, you heard it here first. (Never doubt the Schlepkin!)•

1. Disclaimer: The Amazing Schlepkin has been wrong only once, but he was only eight years old. His mother took away his toy stethoscope, sent Jennifer home, and he hasn't been wrong since.

Just Rumors

The New $1,000 NeXT

To those of you who bitch *constantly* on the "net" about NeXT needing a good $1000 machine I can tell you that *I* have the first one...the NeXTstation-BS. I keep it in the garage of my $800 villa in St. Tropez, right next to my new $3,000 Rolls Royce Corniche convertible.

MIP of the Month

There was a rumor floating around that Debbie Guy, the lovely assistant at our local NeXT office, had suggested that we have a monthly centerfold (MIP of the Month) and that she personally volunteered for our next issue. Let's put this rumor to rest right now....well maybe later.

NeXT Videos

Rumor has it that NeXT will run out of boring promotional videos from NeXT, featuring Steve Jobs, to show at future hAng meetings. (No Steve, you're anything but boring...it's just the *video* that's boring!)

Amiga Emulator

This product only works on the new $1000 NeXTstation-BS with no more than 1Mb of RAM and comes standard with its own game accelerator.•

"The Schlep"

The NeXT Meeting!

Steve Nasypany

Will occur on Wednesday, August 7th, at 6pm.

This month's meeting will be held at the Lecture II Hall, which is on the east side of the Old Engineering Bldg., which is itself attached to the New Engineering Bldg., which is where we usually hold our meetings. Those of you not having compasses will find the sun (and not the Lecture II Hall) on the west side of the Old and New Engineering buildings.

The Agenda

Previous meetings have lacked the discipline we feel is necessary for the effective communication and dissemination of knowledge. Developers asking obscure Unix internal questions during the user demonstration will be hAnged. Users asking about Windows 3.0 compatibility during the developers session will be tortured.

The Not Completely Arbitrary Schedule

6:00pm Current business and announcements
6:15 User Topic: NeXT Dimension Video
6:50 User Topic Question and Answer Session. NeXT Employee Interrogations, Pronouncements
7:05 Short Break (execution of bad developers)
7:10 Developers Topic: Objective Technology Palettes
1. The Chooser Palette
2. The Smart Fields Palette
3. The Graph Palette and Dr. Mezzino's 3D Object

7:45 Developers Technical Q & A
8:00-8:20 Adjourn to Informal Lab (or user executions)
8:30 Go home (user executions not allowed to exceed 20 minutes)

From the Editor

Steve Sarich

We decided to name the newsletter hAng ON! because it seemed to represent the situation many of us find ourselves in. Don't get me wrong, you won't find anyone more dedicated to the NeXT platform than our staff here, but it isn't easy breaking new ground. The name isn't the comment of a cynic, but rather a rallying cry. No, I'm not another "Mr. Happyface", that's Conrad's job (no offense Conrad, you do it very well). But, when NeXT has problems we'll point them out. It won't be meant as a "flame", but merely constructive criticism aimed at solving problems that may be overlooked from "inside the fishbowl". We're dedicated to seeing NeXT not only survive, but prosper.

Our motto is "all meat, no filler".

What you won't see:

1) You won't see 15 pages of code. It's available in other forums.

2) Letters from Conrad Geiger (unless he flames us...just kidding!)

3) Recycled news from the NeXT PR department.

4) You won't see the same list of current software and peripherals that's available from NeXT or NeXTWorld.

What you will see:

1) A newsletter that won't take itself too seriously...we all need a smile now and then.

2) Inside information from "The Schlep" on new products long before you hear about them elsewhere....and he's always right!

3) Reviews on software and hardware products that you can trust! We pull no punches and reward those that give us great products.

4) News that you won't find elsewhere on new technology.

5) Letters to the editor that allow you to get out all that aggression...we may not answer them, but you'll feel better.

6) Rumors...look out Enquirer!

7) Some serious articles (hopefully from some of you) on the direction of NeXT computers.

8) Lots of other cool sh..!

It was actually suggested that we have a "letters to the editor" column in the first newsletter (thanks John). I tried it, but the questions I asked myself were way too difficult. Maybe you'd like to try. So send us your thoughts (if you only have one you should probably keep it!). You can reach/flame us at *hang_on@cubetech.com*.

This is your newsletter! We want to hear from you.•

Mezzino to Demonstrate Awesome Application

Steve Nasypany

Dr. Michael Mezzino, professor and chairman of the University of Houston - Clear Lake's Mathematics Department, will demonstrate a prototype of his general purpose drawing object at the August meeting. Mezzino is also the developer of PhaseScope, a NeXT application which graphically depicts the solutions of systems of differential equations. Like PhaseScope, the new object will take user inputs, pass them to Mathematica for computation, receive the results, and generate a two- or three-dimensional graph. Users can rotate, zoom and animate the graph, or plot in special formats. Unlike PhaseScope, however, the new object is more than a calculus tool -- it will be able to accept a wide variety of data types input from virtually any source.

The development of this new object is an extension of his previous work. "What we've needed on the NeXT for a long time is a general purpose Mathematica drawing object," says Mezzino, "[I] started with a skeleton of PhaseScope, since all the drawing methods are already there." When the new object is finished this fall, NeXT developers will be able to use it like any other object available to Interface Builder. Mezzino is a typical NeXT disciple/evangelist, referring to time in terms like "before the NeXT." He had thought an application like PhaseScope "for about ten years" but hadn't seriously thought of implementing it until he saw a demonstration of Interface Builder, and later, Mathematica.

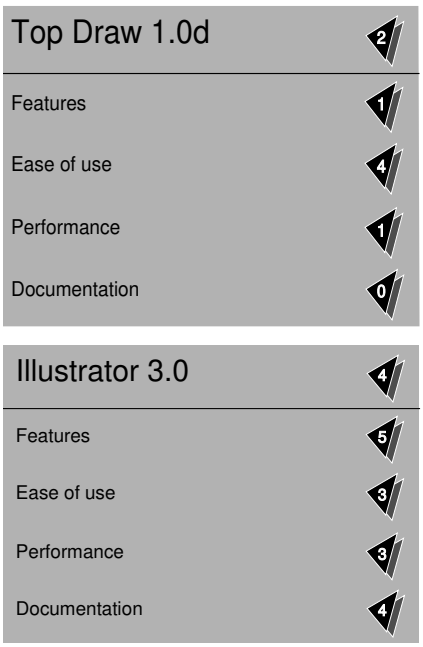
PhaseScope is currently licensed to Wolfram Research (developers of Mathematica), and IMPACT Publishing, which awarded Mezzino first prize in a competition for the most innovative NeXT application. "Modern technology is great," says Mezzino, "I have never seen these guys, or even talked with them on the phone." His relationship with the New York firm and licensing of PhaseScope has consisted completely of correspondence made via electronic and written mail.

A national Science Foundation proposal submitted by Mezzino and the UH-CL Mathematics Department was approved for funding in July. The project calls for

the creation of a mathematics lab consisting of 15 color NeXTstations. Use of the lab, along with applications like PhaseScope and the general purpose drawing object, will be integrated into the curriculum of many of the UH-CL mathematics courses during 1992.

Top Draw vs. Illustrator

Andrew Loewenstern



When one thinks of the NeXT, sooner or later, they think of graphics. With it's Display Postscript and great color capabilities, it's definitely one of the best graphics workstations for the price. However, at this time, there are only two drawing packages available, Top Draw and Illustrator.

If Illustrator is a bargain at $695, Top Draw is a complete rip-off at $595. Top Draw is sold as a "2.0 compatible" application but it is by no stretch of the imagination compatible with system 2.0. Although Top Draw actually runs under system 2.0, it supports none of the new features added to the operating system since 1.0.

Top Draw supports color but does not use the standard color panel. Instead, Media Logic has provided it's own color panel which only allows you to enter cyan, magenta, and yellow values (no black) and then assign a name to the newly created color. There is no way to preview the color! You must start drawing with the selected color to see it.

Fonts are a particular problem with Top Draw. Top Draw, of course, does not recognize the new 2.0 font format where all of the files for a particular font are kept in one directory. I called Media Logic and was told that the solution to the problem was to create symbolic links from all of the font files to put them into 1.0 font format (all of the afm files in the afm directory, etc...). I would hardly call this 2.0 compatible.

Top Draw also has extensive on-line help. However, our copy of Top Draw crashed the Window Server whenever we tried to use it, forcing us to log back in.

Despite Top Draw's flaws, it does have a few nice features. Top Draw has a very nice set of transformations that can be applied to your graphics. Rotation is a snap as Top Draw either lets you rotate in two ways: either by specifying the angle in a panel, or "eye-balling" it. Scaling is the same way. Top Draw also lets you "skew" graphics to create some interesting effects. Top Draw also lets you crop imported EPS graphics faster and easier than any other program I've seen. Because Top Draw lets you import PS files and save them as EPS, it is excellent for printing things to disk from applications that don't let you export, and save them in EPS format for import in any application.

Unfortunately, because of all of it's shortcomings, Top Draw is much better for making quick size or cropping adjustments to EPS graphics created in other applications than for actual drawing. Top Draw is also extremely over priced and just a few simple adjustments (using the color panel, recognizing 2.0 fonts, etc...) would have made it a much better product. When I asked the people at Media Logic why those adjustments were not made, the response I got was "we just got lazy." I sincerely hope that Top Draw 2.0 is quite a bit better than the current version.

In contrast, Adobe Illustrator is an incredible product. Adobe has taken great pains to make sure that NeXT Illustrator is the best drawing package currently available on any platform. NeXT Illustrator is much like Macintosh Illustrator except that you can work in preview mode. This is, of course, because of Display Postscript. It is also much faster than the Macintosh version, but this can be attributed to Mach and the 68040. Screen redraws, however, were not very peppy on our 16mb NeXTstation Color and got annoyingly slow with complicated drawings.

Illustrator's greatest strength has always been it's powerful tools for creating and editing bezier curves. You can draw curves using the traditional method of clicking on anchor points and dragging the handles or you can use the freehand tool. Illustrator's selection tool has three modes which either let you select a single object, a group of objects, or a single point.

Illustrator's custom color palette is also a nice touch. You create a color using the standard color panel, then assign a name to it. If later you change the named color, every object in the illustration using that particular color is automatically updated.

Illustrator has great text handling tools. Although it doesn't have the vast array of built in special text effects like Create, it has a few powerful features that aren't available on any other package for the NeXT. You can constrain type along a path or within a shape. You can also take a text selection and convert it to editable paths. This is a very powerful feature that lets you create some interesting text effects.

Illustrator brings a long needed tool to the NeXT platform - an autotracer. It is FAST. Even on fairly complex graphics, the auto-tracer generates an outline within a second or two. Besides being fast, it also does an excellent job of creating an nice and easily editable outline.

As an added bonus, Adobe ships Separator with Illustrator. Separator generates crop marks and registration marks, and separates EPS files into their Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, and Black components. Separator also converts Pantone inks into process colors.

Illustrator only has a couple of minor flaws. You cannot align a group of selected objects very easily. On-line help is limited to a couple of panels that tell you if you've made a mistake and a small status box that tells you what the current tool is. However, the manual is extensive, very well written, and very easy to understand, especially for such a complex program. Adobe also includes a handy laminated quick reference card.

If you need to produce quality Postscript graphics, Illustrator is perfect. It may seem a bit bewildering to novices at first, but the excellent manual helps im-

mensely. Converting over from Macintosh Illustrator to NeXT illustrator is no big deal as the programs are nearly identical. Although Illustrator isn't an innovative program, it certainly does satisfy a lot of NeXT users' thirst for a great graphics package.•

Them Old Developer Blues

Steve Sarich

Thanks to Paul Vais and Donna Simonides I have a much better understanding of NeXTs predicament on developer support. The concept, as I understand it, is that developer camp helps NeXT eliminate the flood of questions that could have easily been answered by reading the documentation that came with the machine, and at the same time, it provides NeXT with some funds to pay the folks that have to answer real problems faced by developers. It sounds logical, but, unfortunately, it ignores some realities.

What's the biggest complaint you hear regarding the NeXT platform...you guessed it...lack of software. This, on a platform that was brilliantly designed (yes, you heard it from my mouth) as a "developers" computer.

We're all grateful, or we should be, to those software giants like WordPerfect, Adobe, and Lotus, for turning out outstanding "flag-ship" products on a fledgling platform. They took a big chance and gambled some serious money. But *they* could afford to gamble.

What may have been forgotten is that the majority of the software that made the Mac what it is today was developed by the part-time developers working out of their garage (ring any bells?). The total cost of camp, including airfare and hotel, for many of us could reach $2,500. Now, add in a weeks' lost wages (providing your employer will even consent to your absence), and the cost of the computer you'll have to buy (including NeXT's "bargain" 400Mb hard drive to get the developer tools you'll need), and now you're up to a whopping $8,000 just for the privilege of developing for one of the smallest installed bases in the computing world.

This isn't "flame", it's fact. We're in the business of developing and marketing NeXT software and hardware. Some of these products we develop in house, but many we will be marketing for smaller developers. Many of these developers haven't been to camp. We haven't been able to spare one of our programmers to send him to camp (that will change this month) and we know first hand just how frustrating it is trying to get any help out of NeXT if you haven't spent the $995. You can forget any help from our local S.E.

NeXT management is not unaware of the problem. I've spoken with Donna Simonides and Paul Vais who assure us that they are looking for a solution to the problem (besides the $2,500 for NeXTedge support).

The Rocky Mountain Users Group has actually made arrangements with NeXT to have a "certified" NeXT instructor teach a developers camp in Denver this month. We contacted rmNUG, as well as Conrad Geiger, to find out if this camp would qualify developers for NeXT support. The response from rmNUG was "yes", while the response from Donna Simonides, Mark Meinrath, and Conrad Geiger was "definitely not". After many requests, over a three week period, that an official clarification be posted on the net, we still don't have an "official" answer. We have to question why a class taught in Redwood City results in support, while a class taught by the same instructor in Denver doesn't. If the three day class needs two more days, so be it, but it loses half its value without that support.

At last report, a three day developers camp being offered by our own John Glover was having difficulty in lining up applicants. While there is no question that John is more capable than most when it comes to teaching NeXT development, his class will not qualify the participants for NeXT developer support. I know that this will keep me from sending my programmers.

If you don't provide a solution, you're just bitching. So here's my solution:

1) NeXT should provide a developer camp instructor training program in Redwood City...free to qualified applicants from various regions of the country. John Glover, for example, would certainly qualify. This will eliminate the need for NeXT to put more instructors on the company payroll.

2) Donna Simonides explained that a portion of the developer camp fee goes to paying the support personnel. No problem! The independent instructor receives a portion of the fee with the balance going back to NeXT for support.

3) Cube Technologies will supply a training facility in Houston, to be used as a "hub" city for Texas and the surrounding states. (I've already spoken with developers as far away as Oklahoma City that have indicated that they'd send their programmers here.)

4) Computers for the class could be handled in any/or all of three ways:

a) Because many of the participants would drive to the camp they could certainly bring their own machines.

b) Those who do not own a machine are currently required by NeXT to purchase one as a qualification for developer camp. Their machines could be shipped to Houston for the class and the developer could take the machine home after camp.

c) (NeXT will love this one!) NeXT could actually provide a few machines for the camp. This expense can be justified by additional computer sales.

5) This camp could be offered as often as needed without over-taxing instructors on the NeXT company payroll.

Advantages:

A) Participants could drive to the camp rather than fly and wouldn't have to rent a car.

B) You can get a room in Houston for $19.95 per night (if you mention "The Schlep") verses $100 plus a night in Redwood City (if you mention NeXT..."The Schlep" has connections!).

C) Cost of camp would be affordable to all but the poorest developers (We'll deal with them in a later newsletter, so no nasty letters from poor developers please. We have to take this one step at a time.)

D) NeXT gets more trained developers, creating more software, and selling more computers.

E) The only additional employees NeXT will have to hire will be support folks. This cost will be covered by the additional enrollment fees.

Bottom Line

Everybody Wins! Well NeXT, what do you say?

ClickArt

Andrew Loewenstern

ClickArt, from T/Maker, is a collection of EPS graphics for the NeXT computer that you can use in your own documents. The graphics come on four 2.88 meg floppies or on an optical disk and include a booklet containing pictures and filenames of each graphic.

Overall the art is high-quality, and is editable with Illustrator. ClickArt is divided in two major categories, Business Art and Illustrations, and each major category has about a dozen sub-categories. Business Art included categories such as Computers, Corporate, Equipment, Desk Items, Industry, People, and Occupations. The Illustrations disks included categories such as Animals, Leisure, Foods, States, Symbols, Transportations, and Maps. My only complaint is that T/Maker included the name of each image on the actual image. However, this was easy to remove with Illustrator, but could prove more annoying if you don't have anything to remove or cover-up the name.

Thanks to NeXTstep, ClickArt is a snap to use. Simply find the image you want in the included booklet, find it in the file browser, and drag it onto the page. I tried using ClickArt in several applications from different vendors and experienced no problems. Plus, it really works great with Diagram.

There is quite a bit of clip-art included in the package, over 400 images, and there is something for just about every use. We used several images from ClickArt in the newsletter and we really appreciate T/Maker's generosity in promptly sending us complete copy. If you do a lot of newsletters or diagrams, or just want to liven up your documents, ClickArt is the way to go. Although the $295 list price seems a bit steep, it will dramatically improve the quality of the documents you produce - which makes you look good and that makes it worth it at any price.•

"Open" Systems

Andrew Loewenstern

Nobody can deny that NeXTstep is an incredible piece of work. It's object oriented design and API is revolutionary. NeXT is understandably protective of NeXTstep after the considerable investment made to create it. However, I feel that NeXT is *too* protective.

To give you an example of what I mean, take a look at the color graphics situation for the expandable Cube. The only option currently available is the NeXTdimension card - from NeXT. Now don't get me wrong, the NeXTdimension is a great card, but not everyone needs the kind of power that the Dimension offers. It's very hard to justify buying a $5000 Dimension card and monitor when you only need 8-bit color. NeXT badly needs a third-party to provide an inexpensive 8-bit or 16-bit (or both) graphics card for the Cube. From a hardware standpoint this is not difficult - there are quite a few NuBus cards that can be modified to work on NeXTbus. There is one major hitch - NeXT has not provided a way for a third party to implement a graphics card driver into the window server. I am sure that creating an interface to the window server for third-party graphics cards is no small task, but I feel the reason NeXT has not provided this is political and not technical.

NeXT must have an abundant supply of third-party peripherals to survive in the Professional Workstation market it created. As we all know, Sun, Silicon Graphics, and other workstation manufacturers have already begun to move in by offering low-cost workstations comparable to the NeXT. If NeXT wants third parties to develop peripherals like graphics cards, keyboards, digitizing tablets, input and output devices, and other specialized devices, it will have to provide an way for them to support their products at the operating system level. •

Our Top 10 List

Each month we'll have our TOP TEN "wish" list, the ten things you'd most like to see from NeXT. Since we don't have yours yet, we'll give you ours. Please send us yours. If you can't come up with 10 we'll understand, please send what'cha got.

1) We'd love to see a developer conference.

2) Developer support for the financially disabled (most of us)

3) Pressure sensitivity code for the Wacom Digitizing Tablet

4) Unbelievably bad sales on Quark for Windows and three successful new page layout programs for the NeXT (bad karma Fred-we never forget!)

5) Just a enough advertising by NeXT so that people will know they exist. We got a kick out of the announcement in NeXTWorld that NeXT's advertising agency, Ammirati & Puris, had dropped them due to a conflict of interest with Nikon. Is Nikon making workstations now? Anyway, we figured that it took them three years to realize that NeXT was actually their client, let alone that there was a conflict of interest!

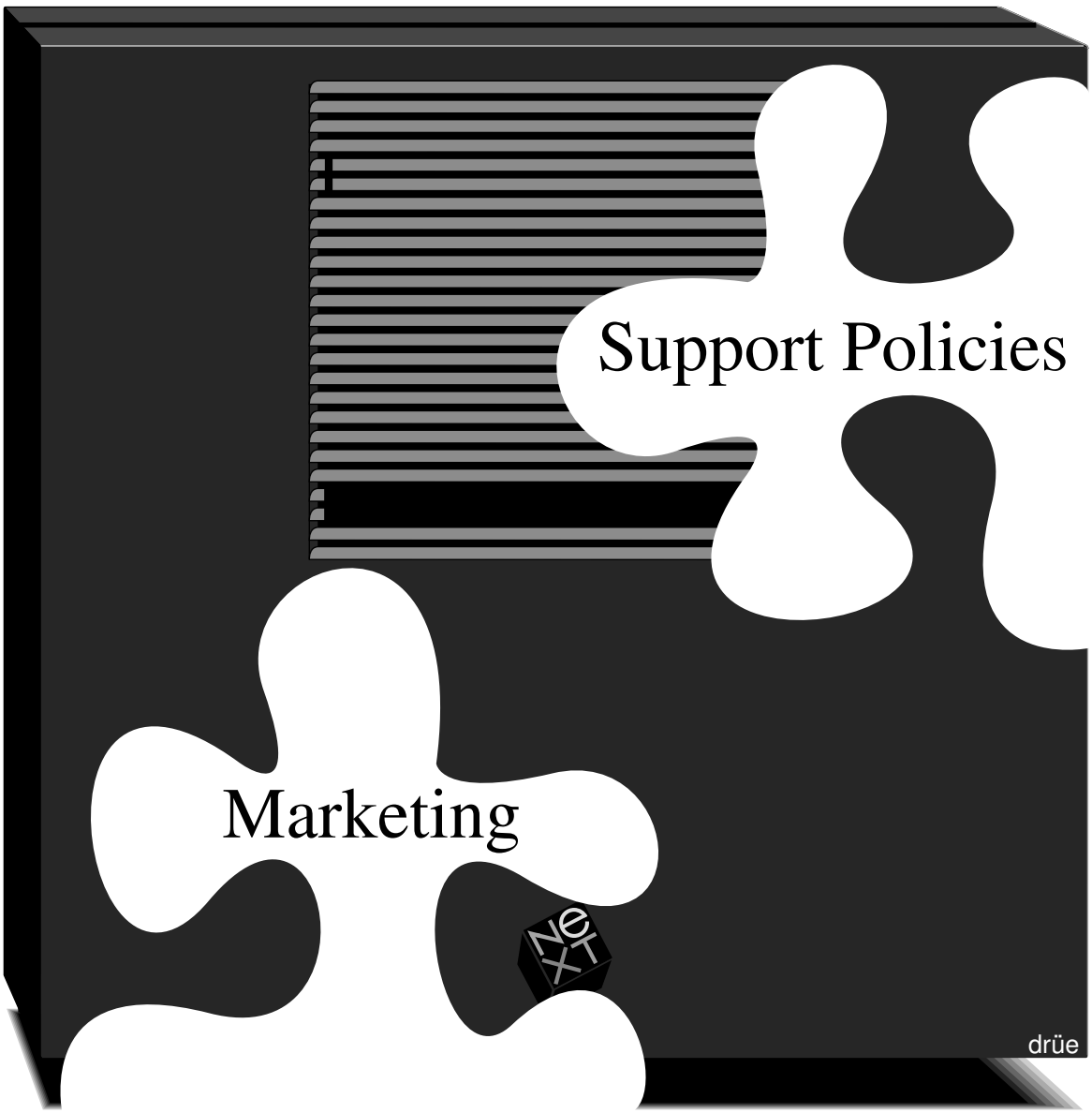
6) Adobe Photoshop

7) A great CAD program

8) Hardware and documentation delivery run by a former Dominoes Pizza employee...

9) An inexpensive color printer

10) Free beer at the users group meetings (It was Schlepkin's idea...).•



Golden Disk Award

Andrew Loewenstern

NewsGrazer, for those of you who do not read Usenet News, is a NeXTstep newsreader. Written by Jayson Adams at NeXT, it is a free program and is not supported by NeXT.

NewsGrazer brings to Usenet news what NeXTMail brings to Internet mail. It is the news-reader "for mere mortals" so to speak. Not only does it provide a great interface to news, it allows rich text postings just like NeXTmail. You can change fonts, drag in TIFF and EPS graphics, and drop in sound. NewsGrazer is an extremely powerful tool that brings comp.sys.next.* to a new level.

Unfortunately, not everyone shares my enthusiasm for NewsGrazer. NewsGrazer puts the plain-text version of the message at the beginning and then repeats the message with text formatting, graphics, and sounds in a uuencoded block at the bottom. Many people shriek "BANDWIDTH WASTER!" at the sight of a NewsGrazer RTF message and a huge flame war has developed.

I, and many others, feel that the advantages of NewsGrazer outweigh the extra bandwidth required to support those advantages. For example, someone recently asked a question about how to do something with Icon. Immediately, someone posted a screen grab of a panel in Icon with an arrow pointing to the proper button to click. Rather than saying "Click on the third button with the two thingies that stick straight up..." the message was conveyed quickly and easily.

If this were a review, I would give NewsGrazer all fives. It is probably the slickest application I've seen for the NeXT. It does what it's supposed to in an elegant way, it's quick, it has tons of features like filtering, it's innovative, it's inexpensive (free!), and it's well supported (Jayson somehow finds the time to answer all of his mail).

Jayson does a great job of supporting NewsGrazer, but I think it should be carried much further. NeXT made a mistake by overlooking news when it put in NeXTmail. The NeXT is supposed to be an interpersonal computer, right? News software and NewsGrazer should be bundled with the extended OS release. Jayson has a great program that can benefit all

NeXT users and NeXT is ignoring it.

NewsGrazer is an excellent and innovative application, and Jayson is making an extra effort by improving and supporting NewsGrazer while he does his normal duties as a NeXT developer advocate. Because of this, I'm giving Jayson the hAng ON Golden Disk award for this month.•

It's There for You Too

Members of the user group may visit the University of Houston NeXT computer Laboratory at the end of Wednesdays meeting. This facility may be used by hAng members to obtain public domain software and access software provided by vendors for the user group. We hope to have a complete listing of software held by the user group in the next issue of hAng ON!

Members needing access to the lab are encouraged to visit between 5 and 6pm Monday through Friday. All visitors should contact Charles Chambers (in advance) at 749-2531 to confirm that facilities will be available.

hAng Needs You!

For the user group to be able to manage the public domain software and demonstration software available at the UH NeXT Lab, we're looking for an individual to serve as Software Librarian. This individual would need to update, record, and archive the user group's software on a monthly basis, and would need to serve as a contact point for hAng members. If you're interested, contact Dr. Glover.

Future Meetings

In previous meetings, NeXT has rented the video projector used for demonstration purposes. This rental is costing NeXT approximately $300 per meeting. Obviously, this is not a cost NeXT is going to be able to afford for each meeting, and UH projection equipment in the Lecture II Hall will not be available in the fall due to evening class schedules. If you work for, or know a company that has this type of equipment and would be willing to accommodate our meetings, please contact Dr. Glover or the newsletter staff.

About the Money

We shall all soon decide about the collection and amount of dues which will fund future issues of hAng ON! This will be an outrageously low amount, so low that you'll probably feel guilty about it. Upon the creation of an official hAng member list, only hAng members will be able to receive the newsletter by mail and utilize the software which has been licensed or provided for hAng use.

Help Wanted

(hAng ON! Needs You!)

We'd like to have all of you involved in hAng ON! We don't care if you're in Houston or out in B.F.E. It may be (too) obvious to you that we need some good humor. We could also use some people with other talents too, namely:

1) Cartoonists (please submit in EPS format)

2) Writers with experience in various fields

3) A multi-media reporter

4) A reporter to cover the medical field

5) Experienced beta testers

6) Experienced NeXT users/developers looking for work!

7) Businesses looking for experienced "NeXTies".

8) Third party developers who would like to give us inside "stoosh", just get the word out on what they're working on, or would just like to keep in contact with other developers.

9) Experienced volunteers to answer technical questions that are WAY too difficult for our editor.•

A Special Thanks To...

Rick Reynolds...

Probably the finest advocate NeXT doesn't employ...and we wonder why!

Anterior Technologies...

Who put us in touch with the rest of the NeXT world....and especially to Jerry Sweet for his almost infinite patience.

Robert Nielsen and Andrew Simms...

For putting us *back* in touch with the NeXT world.

Paul Vais and Donna Simonides...

Thanks for your responsiveness-*don't stop!*

Mark Meinrath...

For just surviving the pressure.

Sarah Benson...

For nothing.

Adobe...

For Illustrator!

T/Maker...

For ClickArt

Jayson Adams...

For writing NewsGrazer and being a cool guy.•

Special Compliments

NeXTWorld Magazine

We loved the new look (especially that great cover)...but rehab may be in order for whoever designed pages 6 & 7...our eyes are still crossed! Keep up the good work. We hope to see it more often!•

How to Reach Us

General comments and flames:
hang_on@cubetech.com

Steve Sarich, Editor: steve@cubetech.com

Andrew Loewenstern, Assistant Editor:
andrew@cubetech.com

The Amazing Schlepkin:
schlepkin@cubetech.com

John Glover, President:
glover@tree.egr.uh.edu•

Who Dunnit?

Editor: Steve Sarich

Assistant Editor: Andrew Loewenstern

Resident Psychic: The Schlepkin

Staff Reporter: Steve Nasypany

Layout: Andrew Loewenstern

Printing: Bob Boeye

hAng ON! is produced entirely on a Macintosh Plus using Quark XPress. Just kidding... actually, we do it all on a NeXTstation Color using FrameMaker.•