

Bits and Pieces

By Dorman L. Bullard

A Riddle About Programming:

Here's a riddle the answer to which will appear (if you've been nice to me in the meantime) at the end of this article. A friend asked me to locate for him a utility that predicts the dates when the moon is full. He said he needed it for a program he is writing. No, the program is not a game, or one about astronomy or astrology. In fact it is a program dealing with the New York stock exchange. And no, it does not have to do with some system for investing based on phases of the moon or any such thing (although I offered to buy a copy if it was!). The riddle is why did he need to know the dates of full moons. If you get the answer, you will be entitled to absolutely no prize whatsoever.

How Guy Kawasaki got his 170

The following was posted on EchoMac by Bruce Tomlin: "I'm sure you all are aware of the Apple/Microsoft suit. Well, it seems the judge wanted to be shown that it takes less training to learn the Macintosh than Windoze. So Apple and Microsoft both chose people to train hizzoner on their respective GUI's. Guess who Apple chose? That's right. Mr. Macintosh Way himself. Gee, he goes cheap, all he wants is a Powerbook 170!

Well, D-day approaches with no 170 in sight. He gave Apple an ultimatum: No 170, no training for hizzoner, and Apple has to explain why their man didn't show up. The morning of the event a 170 got FedExed to Guy. It was meant to go to someone on the Apple Board of Directors. The moral? "Don't fight with someone who has nothing to lose."

System 7.0 Memory Shortage Mixup

I spend a lot of time reading message bases on Fidonet. There is almost a continuous stream of messages from people who claim to be having memory problems due to a shortage of system heap. Many claim that this problem was fixed by using one of the utilities designed for increasing System heap size (utilities such as HeapTool or HeapFixer). Every Apple engineer or techrep, or other people that seem knowledgeable state that using these tools is futile and unnecessary, since under System 7 heap memory is dynamic, that is, it changes as necessary to handled memory. Still, there are those who say increasing heap size has reduced crashes.

One problem that I've seen is confusing heap memory shortages with application partition sizes. I have seen many posts on BBS where people complain of memory shortage problems and often someone will recommend increasing the heap with a utility even though System 7 is being used. I feel sure that in many of these cases the problem is insufficient application heap size. This is an easy mistake for people that did not use MultiFinder under System 6 to

make, since the problem of application partition size didn't occur. In fact, although I hate to admit it, even though I used MultiFinder continuously under System 6, I made the above error twice within a 6 week period fairly recently.

For those not familiar with this subject, do the following under System 7: Click (once) on any application to select it (make sure the application selected is not open). Then select the "Get Info" choice under the File menu. The "Suggested size" entry is what the application programmer recommends as the normal amount of memory to be reserved for the application's use. You can change the "Current size" entry yourself. Under normal circumstances you should not have to do so. But sometimes you may. An example is if you opening many documents, perhaps some complex color paintings in a paint program. The error message you get is not very helpful, and could lead the newcomer (or forgetful dolts like me!) to thinking it was a System heap (and/or overall RAM) shortage when all that is necessary is to quit the application and increase its memory size. Hope this keeps someone from feeling silly as I did when I made this error some time ago.

PowerBook Floppy Problem

From MacWEEK, 12/10/91 - "Sick PowerBook floppies can get Rx from Apple" (excerpts): Apple last week acknowledged that some PowerBook 140 and 170 users have experienced sporadic problems with their floppy drives but said the problem is already being corrected. The problem is covered by the notebooks' one-year warranty, and users who have reported problems said they were given the choice of returning their PowerBooks to their dealers or having them picked up by Airborne Express for shipment to a repair facility. A technician on Apple's PowerBook repair hot line recommended that users experiencing problems restart their notebooks with backlighting off as a temporary solution...Sources said insufficient shielding allowed magnetic interference with the PowerBooks' floppy drive; repair reportedly involves the installation of additional shielding. Apple spokeswoman Kate Paisely urged users to call the PowerBook repair hot line at (800) 767-2775.

Don't read this if you are still trying to solve the Riddle.

'Tis the Christmas season (or was when I was writing this) and I'm feeling generous so here's a tip. My friend's program needs to know what days the stock market is open.

Installing Nubus Cards

I recently received the upgrade to version 2.2 of HandOff II. Connectix Corporation, which has taken over this product, sent along with the upgrade a 32 page booklet titled "The Macintosh Memory Guide." Nice touch!

One of the entries in the booklet confirmed something I had heard bits and pieces about before: Memory fragmentation due to Nubus cards. According to the booklet, you can arrange your slot cards to minimize fragmentation. On a Mac II, IIX, ILCi, or IIfx you should right-justify your cards so they are all together towards the floppy drive. If you have a Mac IICx, left justify the cards away from the power supply and disk. Thanks Connectix for the booklet and this tip!

Zoom Rects Defeat for System 7.0.1

The term "Zoom Rects" refers to the animation that occurs when you open or close windows. The bit where the outline tracks of the window either zooms open, or recedes from the closing window to the closed icon. Some have complained that this slows things down. Shown below is the ResEdit patch provided by Eric Apgar to eliminate the zooming.

NOTE: THIS ONLY WORKS FOR SYSTEM 7.0.1 !!

- 1) Open a copy of the Finder with ResEdit 2.1
- 2) Open the Code resource 3) Open Code ID 4 (yup, you need to decompress it) 4) Find hex 4E56 FFE0 48E7 1F38
- 5) Select these bytes
- 6) Replace with 205F 700A DEC0 4ED0
- 7) Save the copy of the Finder and close ResEdit.
- 8) Put the real Finder in another folder and replace it with your hacked up copy. Reboot.

Zoom Rects Defeat for System 7.0

Since I brought this up, I might as well repeat how to defeat Zoom Rects under System 7.0. Using ResEdit, open Finder's CODE resource ID#4 and change "48E7 1F38" to "6000 00E6".

Wild Magic / After Dark Conflict

After Dark should be loaded after the Wild Magic Cdev that comes with QuickTime 1.0. The symptom I got was that when I tried to access the After Dark control panel I was advised that it was not installed. Even so it seemed I could turn on a screen saver module. To make it run after Wild Magic, rename it to (say) "yAfter Dark" so it will load after Wild Magic. Another way in System 7 is to put Wild Magic in the Extensions folder, since Extensions are executed before Control Panel items. You can put an Alias of Wild Magic in the Control Panels folder so you can access it there if necessary. Of course i you have an Extension utility such as INIT Manager you can accomplish this much easier. Incidentally, although QuickTime will work under System 6.0.7 or higher, Wild Magic requires System 7.

Speaking of QuickTime.....

Turn on Balloon Help and point to the QuickTime Extension. How is Apple ever going to get along with the suiters at IBM if they allow these kinds of hijinks?

MicroSoft Word TrueType INIT

Someone quoted Microsoft as saying that the TrueType INIT that was provided with one of their updates is not needed for System 7. Someone quoted a MicroSoft representative as stating the MS Word TrueType INIT is needed only with System 6. On the other hand, someone over in the SYSTEM7 echo of FidoNet has just written that he was told by someone from Microsoft that the MS Word TrueType INIT is necessary under System 7. I took it out of my System 7 setup and printing seems fine. Great, one more INIT out of my System. Only 167 more to go for me to have a lean, mean machine! I guess the bottom line is: if TrueType works for you in Word without the INIT in System 7, then you don't need the INIT. If it doesn't work without the INIT, try it with the INIT.

Speaking of TrueType....:

I don't fully understand what I have heard, but apparently those who purchased the Apple LaserWriter LS or the StyleWriter can pick up a coupon from their dealer that allows them to order some 22 additional TrueType font typefaces. These are Zapf Chancery, Zapf Dingbats, and various styles of Palatino, New Century Schoolbook, Helvetica Narrow, Bookman Light, and Avant Garde Book. Someone who has them said they look good (not great) on the screen, and "awesome" when printed with the StyleWriter. The price for these fonts is \$18.00. Seems reasonable, particular as I understand 4 diskettes are involved. What I don't understand is whether (as is reported) this deal is available only to LS and StyleWriter owners, and if so, why.

Answer to the programming riddle

My friend's program automatically does some things on days the stock market is open. So, he needed to program in stock market holidays, one of which is Good Friday, the Friday before Easter Sunday. Well, Easter falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon on or after March 21. It cannot come before March 22 or after April 25. In case you think this is archaic, then go complain to the first Nicene Council who set up this method in 325 A.D. By the way, the first utility I gave him was flawed, and gave many wrong dates. How did he know? He checked it against an Almanac for a couple of years. Now, aren't you much more appreciative of all the things a programmer needs to know?

And that is a most fitting end of Bits and Pieces for this month.