Bits and Pieces
By Dorman L. Bullard

System 7.0 Floppy Filing System

Here's the tip of the month (maybe the year) from Graham Sanders found on the System7 Fidonet conference. On a floppy disk, make aliases of files you are likely to want to access. Copy the aliases to your hard disk, then delete the aliases from the floppy and unmount the floppy. Then double-click any of the aliases. The Finder will prompt you to insert the floppy, giving you the floppy's name! Naturally when you insert the correct floppy, the appropriate action is taken without further action by you. That is, if the alias was of a document, it will open in its application. If the alias was of an application, then the application will open.

You can do this with various floppies. The aliases copied to the hard drive can be filed however you like. You don't have to file them by floppy name. In fact you don't even have to note the floppy name; The Finder will remember for you. So you can organize the aliases in whatever manner suits you. Note that aliases take up only 2 K each at maximum, so your filing system will not have much overhead. If you want to see the "Path Name" to one of the floppy aliases, then do a "Get Info" on its icon.

Temporarily Disable Virtual Memory

If you hold down the Command key on startup, Virtual Memory will be disabled until you restart.

Help from Helsinki

Shown below is a tip I picked up from the Usenet, specifically from the comp.sys.mac.system Echo available on the AMUG II Bulletin Board System. Universities from all over the world are major users of Usenet. This tip came from Juha HyvInen of the Helsinki University of Technology in Finland:

Several comm programs (including ZTerm 0.85) no longer allow you to hit any control characters. As Juha points out, many communications programs redefine the keyboard using the KCHR

resource in the program. Unfortunately system 7 uses only the KCHRs that are in the system file. To create a "keyboard layout" file (with ResEdit):

1. Copy the "KCHR" resource from *** program
       into a (new) file (e.g. "*** keyboard").
2. Change the file type   to 'kfil'.
3. Change the file creator to 'movr'.
4. Save the changes and quit ResEdit.
5. Quit all applications (except the Finder).
6. Drag the "*** keyboard" file into the System file.

*** = the name of your communications program.

Corrupted System File

There have been cases in which one cannot open the System File. Here is a tip from an Apple rep on America Online: "The new Font/DA mover 4.1 .... can sometimes reopen a "damaged" system suitcase. You might just have a bad or duplicate font bitmap inside.   A version of SAM virus software before 3.0 may also cause this problem. If you are using an older version, I suggest you contact the publisher for an upgrade. If this doesn't work or apply, might I suggest a "clean" reinstallation of system seven. Rename the system folder "old" system folder. Take the Finder out and move it to the desktop. Then use the Apple Installer utility (on Install 1) to reinstall system 7. When you restart, you can move stuff from your old system folder to your new one. If any of your Extensions doesn't pass the Compatibility Checker, I would suggest you add them one at a time, restarting each time, and checking that no problems have arisen. Peace, AFC GeneS3." End of quote. This problem is another reason to continue to use Suitcase. It is much easier to handle a corrupted font in a suitcase being accessed by Suitcase II than it is to have to reinstall System 7.

Norton Utilities Update & Tip

The Norton Utilities update to version 1.1, a version compatible with System 7, is now out. The upgrade price of $19 plus $5 shipping has taken a lot of flak, particularly as there are no new features. In fact, some features no longer work with System 7. Some of us are wondering if soon there will be an "Amazing new version" with a large upgrade price again. Regardless of those feelings, it is nice to have some crash protection that works again.

Speaking of Norton, here is a useful tip from the Norton Reps on America Online: "Whenever Norton Disk Doctor finds a problem you should always run it immediately after again, even if it reported fixed. In fact you should running over and over until all problems are solved or until the same problem reoccurs. This is necessary because NDD fixes things linearly. When it fixes a problem it continues from the point of the problem and doesn't backtrack. A problem can hide others, a problem is in such a state that it cannot be fixed, or a problem appearing fixed is not. This can be due from being reset by the machine (a cached value for example) or the correct value is not clear." Scott Roberts; Peter Norton Product Support

Changing Volumes

Last issue I reported that Command-Left/Right Arrows would change volumes (hard drives or floppies) in a file dialog box. What I forgot to mention was that for some strange reason this does not work on a MacPlus. Look for this bug to be fixed in a later version of System 7.

New Printer Drivers for the Personal LaserWriter LS and the StyleWriter

Apple is releasing updated drivers for these printers. The driver for the LS will provide a significant increase in printing speed. Up to a 3-fold increase for background printing (depending on the material being printed).

The driver for the StyleWriter will not provide a speed increase, but will allow background printing, something that users of this printer have been yearning for.

I have not seen an official announcement from Apple, so the above should be taken as well-founded rumor. I assume they must be released, though since the files are available for download on America Online. I'm sure AMUG will have them available in due course.

System 6.0.8

System 6.0.8 has been released by Apple. Before you start clamoring for it, note that the only change from 6.0.7 is that the addition of the printer drivers provided with System 7 (with changes two the two noted above). All the other files are the same.

System 7.0.1

With the new macintoshes to be announced this month a new version of System 7 is rumored to be forthcoming. One rumor said that the new version will perhaps fix a few bugs, but not add major functionality. The purpose is to support the new 68040 machines. Another rumor said that there were not even any bug fixes. Since the only System 7 bugs I am aware of are very mild indeed, and since this next version may not fix them anyhow, I would not wait for this new version before upgrading.

Now Utilities 3.0

Let's go from a questionable update value to an absolutely outstanding one: the update of Now Utilities. I consider this package an unquestionable **must have**. Now software has added new utilities, and greatly improved the old ones. The hierarchical submenus of folders (or aliases) under the Apple Menu will likely change the way all System 7 users organize and use their files. Well, sorry there's not time enough for full review here. Just get it, now (Now).

The Now Utilities installed easily on my Mac IIci running System 7, and I have experienced no problems in their use (although some features I haven't used very much yet). However, here are a couple fixes for problems others have reported:

Here's a bug only if you use version 3.0 of SuperBoomerang AND StartupManager: If you rename CEToolbox to anything other than "CEToolbox" such as "CEToolbox 1.6.2" then whenever you try to select SuperBoomerang in the StartupManager, you will bomb!!! It's a strange combination of factors. Also, if these conditions are present, StartupManager will prevent SuperBoomerang from loading. Strange, since v2.03 of StartupManager does not present these problems.

As some of you may have already noticed, there is a conflict between Adobe Type Manager and Super Boomerang 3.0. This conflict causes the finder to spontaneously abort when trying to launch an application. The solution to this conflict is to use Start Up Manager to force Super Boomerang to load after ATM. This should solve the problem.

Speeding up The Finder

In an earlier issue I mentioned the possibility of increasing the Finder partition as a means of speeding up the Finder. I stated then that there were people who said it worked, and those that said it didn't. Since then a reliable source (I would say who, but he would just

edit it out) said he had seen references to the fact a speedup is possible in both of the major Macintosh Magazines. Then I ran across this from Scott Ostrander who performed some actual tests:

"Recently there were a few posts about booting from a System 6.x disk and setting the Finder memory allocation in System 7.0 to a value higher than the given 295k. Well, if anyone is interested, I played around with this idea, setting the value higher in increments of 10k, rebooting and so on and so forth...

If you are running a stand alone Mac, I found that a setting of 330K significantly increased the speed of window redraws and Apple Menu scrolling. 350K if you have a color Mac.

On a networked Mac, a value of 350k seemed to do the trick, but I had a shock when my friend with a Mac II said that he could not get the same speed increase on his networked machine until he set the memory to 410k. I don't know what INITs might be doing in this digital soup, but appearently color icon information across a network takes some RAM.

Higher values than what I wrote here, certainly won't hurt anything, but I could not see any increase in speed with values that were higher. One more interesting note, though not at all surprising: file copying speed does not change at all. I'm still using DiskTop for major shuffling!" End of quote. For those that did read the prior article, and who find the above instructions incomplete, here is clarification. After starting up from a System 6.0.X disk, select the icon of the System 7.0 Finder you want to change, and do a "Get Info" from the File menu (or use Command-I). Then change the "Current" value in the "Memory" box to that indicated above.