

PPCUG NEWS

This Month (Third Monday! ! !)

Monday October 19, 1998

System Maintenance & Troubleshooting Utilities for Windows 9x

Vic Laurie

Learn about various Windows Utilities
including a demonstration on
Noton Utilities latest version.

7:00-7:45 PM:

Tech Corner is Open
Social Time

7:45 PM

Meeting Comes to Order

8 PM

Featured Presentation

At

Lawrence Library

Meeting Rooms 1 & 2

US Route 1 South & Darrah Lane, Lawrenceville, NJ

☆☆☆☆☆ Our New Meeting Location ☆☆☆☆☆

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

*Meetings of an organization at any of the facilities of the
Mercer County Library System in No Way implies endorsement
of its programs*

Calendar

General Meetings

Second Monday of the month
7:30 P.M. at Lawrenceville Library
Route 1 and Darrah Lane.

Telecom SIG

Last Wednesday of January, March, May,
July, September and November -- 8 P.M.
Plainsboro Public Library, Plainsboro
Municipal Complex.

Windows SIG

Last Wednesday of February, April, June,
August, and October -- 8 P.M.
Plainsboro Public Library, Plainsboro
Municipal Complex.

Board Meetings

Third Monday of the Month
8 PM at Lawrenceville Library
Route 1 and Darrah Lane.

Board meetings are open to All.

Newsletter Deadline

Articles for the newsletter are due the
second Friday after the General Meeting.

Articles are accepted all month on diskette,
sent to kurivchack_p@compuserve.com
(ascii only), handed to the editor at
meetings, or sent to the PPCUG PO Box
(see below),

in the following on-disk formats:

**Word for Windows 6.0, 7.0 or 97;
Ami Pro / WordPro, or Ascii Text**



Joe Kennedy speaking about Digital Photography at the September meeting.

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New Members Only: after February, the rate is \$2 per month times the number of months remaining in the year.

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Voice Mail System

For information about SIGs, meetings, etc. call 908-281-3107

To contact Board Members, use the E-Mail Addresses on page 7.

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<http://www.ppcug-nj.org>

Coming Events

October 19, 1998 Note: Due to Columbus Day Holiday and the Library closure, the General meeting will be held on the 3rd Monday.

November 9, 1998 - Multimedia & the PC

December 14, 1998 - Board Elections / Holiday Party

January 11, 1999 - First Meeting of New Year.



Presidents Message

by Paul Kurivchack

Isn't technology great? Joe Kennedy's presentation on using digital cameras proved that. Just think, in the past year or so the prices have fallen and the capabilities risen to new heights for both still and video photography. Despite the meeting reminding me of the old days, viewing some relatives vacation slides in their living room, the ability to make 360-degree panoramas gives vacation slides a whole new meaning. I wish I had a digital camera with me during my recent trip to the Pacific Coast. The scenery on both sides of Highway 1 is spectacular. What a way to remember the view. Just like being there again. Thanks Joe, you did a great job!

As I have been mentioning over the past few months, I was hoping to find a person who would like to continue the work Chris Banister started and that I have continued during the past 3 years. The growth of the Princeton PC Users Group into the next millennium. Unfortunately, for the board and I, we have come up empty handed. Unless someone comes forward at the October meeting, who would like the post of President, I will remain for a fourth term.

While I enjoy the responsibilities of being President, the fact is that I need additional help. Our growth has continued throughout the year to close to 100 members. The only way to continue the growth is with our member's contribution of their time. It could be as little as one to two hours per month, but we need your help.

We will need two to three members to post monthly flyers at the local supermarket, libraries and other public bulletin boards. If you have the desire, you can help create the monthly flyer too. That would even be better!

We are also going need one or two members to help with Hospitality during Bill Hawryluk's absence. Members that can be at the meeting by 7 PM to get the water boiling and the cookies out would be most helpful.

As you can see, the tasks are not hard, but are important to all our members and guests. We can always make room for one more person to help. Please e-mail me if you would like to join us, and how you can help the group.

One last note. I will be unable to attend the October general meeting due to work conflicts, so Sol Libes will be officiating at the meeting. I will see you all in November.

NEW MEMBERS

Albert Axelrod

**THANK YOU FOR JOINING US IN
1998!**

WELCOME TO THE CLUB!

WINDOWS 9X TIPS: AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT: HARDWARE

By: Vic Laurie

Normally, I limit my writing to software topics and leave the hardware subjects to more knowledgeable folk like Tom Canavan. Lately, however, I have come across some interesting articles and websites on that subject that I feel are worth passing on. Also certain concepts keep cropping up in my discussions with students in computer classes and are worth mentioning.

Drivers

Drivers are not hardware *per se* but they are intimately involved with the control and use of devices. Problems in this area seem to be the one of the most common sources of difficulties with Windows. For example, many of the problems with installing Windows 98 reported on the web seem to be driver related. There isn't room here, but a whole book could easily be written on this subject. If you are considering putting in Windows 98, check with all your hardware vendors first to make sure your drivers (and your BIOS) are compatible. Some tips specific to Windows 98 can be found at <http://www.zdnet.com/pccomp/features/excl1098/superguide/hardware.html> or

<http://www.winmag.com/library/1998/0901/Fea0053.htm>.

In any case, it is good practice to check periodically for driver updates at the websites of the manufacturers of your components and peripherals such as video and sound cards, modems, hard drives, etc. Some general websites for information about drivers or for getting updated driver files are:

<http://www.conitech.com/windows/upmenu.asp>
<http://www.windrivers.com/>
<http://www.bmdrivers.com/>
<http://www.mindspring.com/~d7dot/drivers.htm>
<http://www.drivershq.com/>
<http://www.driverzone.com/>

Hardware in General

For FAQ's on various hardware components try <http://www.faqs.org/faqs/pc-hardware-faq/>.

Tom's Hardware Guide at <http://www.tomshardware.com/> is a very popular comprehensive reference site. All sorts of information and links

are here. Another good place to search for information on a whole gamut of devices is System Optimization Information at <http://www.sysopt.com/>.

For do-it-yourselfers or people just curious about how things work there is <http://pcmech.pair.com/>

Also there are many tips on hardware problems and installation at http://www.zdnet.com/zdhelp/dl_help/dl_inside_help.html and at http://www.idg.net/cgi-bin/special2.pl?special_id=8&top_level=1%20. Alfred Poor answers questions at <http://community.zdnet.com/cgi-bin/podium/show?ROOT=762&MSG=762&T=index>

RAM

If you are confused by the plethora of RAM types and their alphabet soup, not sure, whether you have EDO or SDRAM, DIMM or SIMM (not to mention pipelined burst), join the crowd. For some clarification read the excellent article that was published in the 10/21/97 issue of *PC Magazine* as one of their Tutor series. It can be found on the web at <http://www.zdnet.com/pcmag/pctech/content/16/18/tu1618.003.html>.

There is also a short but informative article in the September, 1998 issue of *Windows Magazine*. The website is <http://www.winmag.com/library/1998/0901/Fea0061.htm>.

Another good source is the RAM Guide at Tom's Hardware, mentioned above. Go to <http://www.tomshardware.com/ram.html>

If you would like to install additional or newer RAM in your own system, the PC Mechanic site, mentioned above, is very helpful at <http://pcmech.pair.com/memory.htm>.

Chipsets and Motherboards

Do you know how many pins your motherboard has or what a Deschutes chip is? For the answers to these and other questions, go to <http://www.winmag.com/library/1998/0701/Fea0080.htm>. For more technical details of motherboards, go to <http://www.motherboards.org/> or <http://www.sysopt.com/mboard.html>.

For the latest chip news try <http://www.cpu-central.com/>.

If you want to change your motherboard, you can get help at <http://pcmech.pair.com/mbindex.htm>.

Scanners

One of the more commonly added peripherals these days is a scanner. However, more than one person I know has encountered glitches with their scanner. One place to go for help is <http://www.scantips.com/>

One tip from there that I would like to pass on concern scanners that are connected by SCSI. As you may have discovered, SCSI devices have to be turned on *before* the computer or they are not recognized by Plug and Play. If you decided to scan something in the middle of a computer session, but had forgotten to turn on the scanner, simply turning it on at that point would do no good. Rather than turning off the computer, turning on the scanner, and starting over, there is an alternative. Turn on your scanner, go to the setting Control Panel - System- Device Manager. Expand the SCSI CONTROLLERS list and highlight your scanner's SCSI board entry. Click the REFRESH button. Give the system a second or two to recognize the scanner.

Cache

Unfortunately, the word "cache" is used in a confusing variety of unrelated senses. There is the cache (vcache) that Windows sets aside in RAM for storing recently accessed files. Then there is the swap file on the hard drive that is used to supplement RAM and is sometimes referred to as disk cache (but then, so is vcache). There is the Internet cache on the hard drive that the browser uses for storing files from Internet sites that have been accessed. There also is cache for the CD-ROM to help speed up its reading. Then there are two types of cache associated with the CPU and the motherboard, L1 or Level 1, and L2 or Level 2. These SRAM caches are involved in facilitating the efficient transfer of information between the CPU and the main RAM and can be important considerations in choosing which computer system to buy. For

Windows 9X tips continued on page 4

Minutes for the General Meeting September 14, 1998

By: Len Clerke

President Paul Kurivchack opened the meeting at 7:50 with several announcements.

Bill Hawryluk, our Hospitality chairman, will be out for several months and one or more volunteers are needed to assist with Bill's work.

The September meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on Monday, September 21, 1998. All members are welcome to attend Board meetings. The September SIG meeting will be held at the Plainsboro Library.

The October regular meeting will be held on the 19th due to the Columbus Day closing of the Library. The feature presentation will be on Win 98 utilities.

Paul encouraged guests and members to visit our Web site regularly. It is updated constantly and houses a complete copy of the current newsletter as well as archives of previous issues.

Sol Libes, Program Chairman, has tentatively planned to present a program on "New Developments" in multi-media at the November meeting. Sol also announced that the TCF '99 is scheduled for May 1 & 2.

Details to be announced as soon as they are available. Watch the Web site for late news.

Following a very brief Q&A, Joe Kennedy gave a fine presentation on digital photography. He had several digital cameras to show and discussed the features of the models as well as many tips and tricks for preparing digital pictures.

The meeting closed at 9:25 p.m.



Minutes for the Board Meeting September 21, 1998

By: Ed Weiss

Attending the board meeting tonight were Tom Canavan, Paul Kurivchack, Sol Libes, Vic Laurie, Ed Weiss and Wayne Hardy.

Paul opened the meeting and asked for the state of the treasury. Tom Canavan reported that there was \$3358 in the checking account. This year we have spent just over \$1000. The bill for the insurance coverage was due, and Tom was going to write a check to cover it.

Sol asked about the clubs' commitment to work at the 1999 TCF. Paul

and the board committed that PPCUG would participate again, but that it should be discussed with the new board in the very beginning of the year so that the club could properly schedule all the coverage's needed in a timely fashion.

Following that discussion, the schedule for programs at the general meeting were discussed.

The board discussed new forms to be used in places like the library and computer stores where we could leave them for dissemination to interested people in an effort to grow the club.

APCUG was discussed, and the board decided to continue membership. Sol Libes will be the clubs delegate to the APCUG conference for the remainder of 1998.

The next item discussed was the officers for the new year. The time to step up and support your club is now. There are going to be several openings on the board. Currently there are no names on the ballot.

Paul closed the meeting at 21:50.

Windows 9X tips continued from page 3

some facts about L1/L2 cache, go to <http://www.sysopt.com/cache.html>

Modems

If you are thinking of upgrading your modem or are wondering what *flex*, *X2*, or *V.90* signify, try Modem Central at <http://www.56k.com/>. For a modem FAQ and much other information go to the Navas Group site at <http://www.aimnet.com/~navas/>. In addition, do not forget to keep your driver up to date.

Hard Drives

Want to know how hard drives work or what some of the commonly used terms mean? Try <http://www.tomshardware.com/hdd.html> or

<http://pcmech.pair.com/hdindex.htm>.

Want to format or partition your drive, or change your FAT? Go to http://www.zdnet.com/zdhelp/howto_help/hdisk/diskmgmt_1.html or

<http://pcmech.pair.com/hdindex.htm>.

Want to install a new hard drive? Go to <http://pcmech.pair.com/drives.htm>



“Office 97 Annoyances”

by By Woody Leonhard,
Lee Hudspeth, and T. J Lee
Reviewed by John Heckman*

Woody Leonhard must be a thorn in Microsoft's side. Author of numerous best-selling books on Microsoft products, including *The “Hacker’s Guide to Word for Windows”* and *“The Mother of all Windows 95 Books.”* He is nevertheless merciless when it comes to what he views as the “annoyances” of the most recent Microsoft products.

Woody's new series (written with co-authors Lee Hudspeth and T.J. Lee) can be grouped under the rubric “Microsoft Annoyances.” Titles include “Office 97 Annoyances”, “Word 97 Annoyances”, “Excel 97 Annoyances” — you get the idea.

Woody's preface to *Office 97 Annoyances* sets the tone: “Microsoft keeps asking us all, ‘Where do you want to go today?’ Are they kidding? You know where you want to go today, we know where you want to go today; the only group that seems to be unclear on this issue is Microsoft. You want to get your work done, flip your PC's power switch to that lovely OFF position, call it a day, and go home!”

The series provides concrete suggestions and workarounds that will let you “get your work done” faster and more efficiently by fixing some of the shortcomings of the Office 97 products.

When Microsoft released Office 97, there was little if any provision for backward compatibility. This problem led to a brouhaha that eventually caused Microsoft to publicly “apologize for the inconvenience” it had caused end users. *Windows* magazine went so far as to remove Outlook [Microsoft's TKTKT-KTK], from its WinList of recommended products.

The Annoyances books tell you where to download the most recent patches and where to look for patches issued after the books were published. In particular, Microsoft has issued a converter that allows users to save Word 97 files in previous formats (wrdcnv97.exe at <http://www.microsoft.com/word>). The authors strongly recommend that you check [freestuff regularly for new patches and download all patches for products you use. Other sites are listed in the box concerning Microsoft sources.](http://www.microsoft.com/office-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

Vital Changes — Each book in the series has an early chapter on “Vital Changes” that describes what default settings work best and which ones to turn off. These include:

- Disable Fast Find in Win 95. We've had nothing but trouble with it.

- Turn off FastSave in Word 97. It leads to bloated files and can cause text to disappear.

- Get some third-party anti-virus software (Norton, McAfee, Dr. Solomon's, IBM). The anti-virus warning that Microsoft provides does nothing to prevent or fix viruses.

- How to avoid some of the vagaries of the AutoCorrect and Autoformat features.

- Turn on the Paragraph and Tab markers. This is strongly recommended; in Word, all formatting markers are hidden in the paragraph markers.

- Customize your startup folder, menu, and work through various default settings so you can choose the ones you like (which may not be the same ones Bill Gates likes).

- Change the very useful Office Shortcut Bar to reflect options you use most often, including adding (gasp!) non-Microsoft products to the bar.

Useful Suggestions —The books walk the user through modifying what they call the “demoware” toolbars that ship with Office 97 products (good for flashing demos, not much good for working) so that the options you use most frequently are displayed. They also include sections on realistically assessing the danger from viruses (and how to combat them) and give you detailed suggestions concerning specific features. For example, the Office 97 book describes exactly how to run a Word mail merge against Outlook information (it's easy to make a mistake). It lists the programs and items contained on the CD-ROM that are not installed with a standard installation, as well as all ValuPak items.

The only way to disable pop-up tips for toolbar icons, we are told, is to do so from Excel. If you disable them in any other application, they are re-

enabled any time you open Excel. If you've ever tried to do this without knowing this particular glitch, it can drive you crazy.

All suggestions are interspersed with running commentary, featuring expressions like “bunk,” “relatively brain-dead,” “utterly useless, but very sexy, marketing garbage,” and so on. No doubt your favorites (once you get used to the style, which takes some doing) will correspond to the parts of Microsoft products you find most annoying. My personal favorite is the comment that VBA/Word “harbors more bugs than a Louisiana bayou.”

Visual Basic for Application (VBA) Routines— Why bother with it? As usual, the authors are quite up front about this: “That's an awfully good question,” they say. “The answer is, simply, that VBA/Word is so powerful—so capable of overcoming Word's most annoying problems—that everyone stands to benefit from using it. Leonhard et al. have a Dr. Strangelove approach to Office 97: Stop worrying and learn to love Microsoft.

Some of the VBA routines that are included in the books are powerful and extremely useful. More of them, available free on Woody's wopr.com site, include a “ShowAll” routine that lists all of Word's built-in command names. A way to disable Word's “float over” default; a macro to toggle between Excel's formulas and results display; a “shape grabber” macro that allows you to select more than one shape in PowerPoint.

For all Word's power, if learning a programming language (which is what VBA is) is a prerequisite to making it truly productive, I'm not at all convinced that this is an acceptable tradeoff for most users. But if you are using Office 97 or any of its pieces on a regular basis, these books can make your life a lot easier.

The Office 97 Annoyances series is published by O'Reilly and is available in (some) bookstores, from amazon.com or from oreilly.com.

John Heckman is president of Heckman Consulting, a Norwalk-based systems integration firm that specializes in the legal industry.

* Reprinted from “Orange Bytes”, the newsletter of the North Orange County (CA) Computer Club Newsletter

On The Web

By Paul Kurivchack

I want to start off this new column "On The Web". With this column, I will pick a web site that may be of interest to our members.

This month I will look at our own web site: WWW.PPCUG-NJ.ORG.

The Princeton PC Users Group has had a web present for close to two years now. During this past year we obtained our own Domain name. This has made visiting our site much easier than in the past. One of the things that I find annoying is the round about navigating you have to do to reach some sites along with remembering long convoluted names. Having our own domain name eliminates all the troubles are current and prospective members have reaching our site.



Our Home Page gives a brief overview of the upcoming meeting, meeting schedules, directions, and the ability to download our newsletters in PDF format. At present we have all of 1998 newsletters on-line. No longer do you have to worry about not finding your printed copy for that software review or article, just download it. If you need to reach a member of the board, all that info is included in the newsletters, maybe we will include a board page.

Besides the information about our group is a page of Links to other user groups, vendors and individual members. We are working to update many of the links to various vendor sites that make special offers to our user group members instead of waiting for the monthly newsletter. As time goes on, the web site will be a integral part of our groups communications to our membership and it

will become important to check the site more often. In fact I hope that many of our members have visited our site already.



Jon Abolins has worked very hard in setting up our site. Now, Jon along with Wayne Hardy and Tom Canavan will continue to maintain it and help it grow. If you have ideas for additional content or see omissions, please let us know.

SIG Notes:

By Paul Kurivchack

The Telecom SIG was held on Wednesday September 26 at the Plainsboro Library. Three members attended to see a demonstration on Compuserve 4.0 for Windows. We were able to log onto Compuserve and navigate from its home page to various Forums (Compuserve's original technical strength) to the Web using both Compuserve's Web browser and Yahoo.

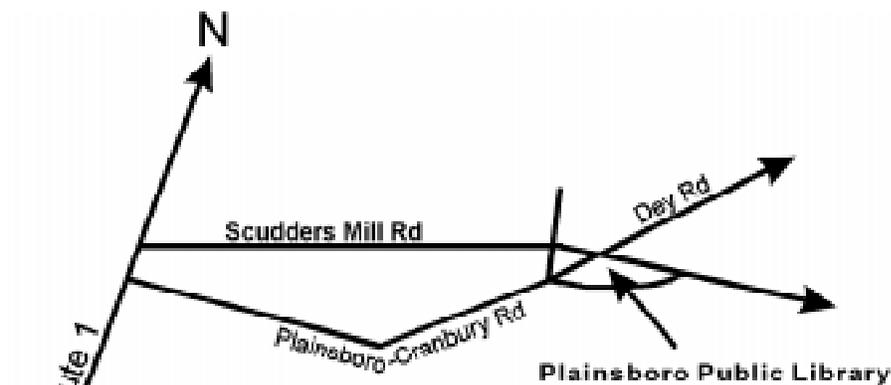
The meeting of the Windows SIG scheduled for Wednesday October 28 at 8 P.M. has been canceled.

1998 SIG Meeting Schedule at the Plainsboro Library 8 P.M.

October 28 - ~~Wed.~~ (Win)

November 25 - No Meeting

December 30 - Wed. (Telecom)



The Plainsboro Library



PRINCETON PC USERS GROUP

<http://www.ppcug-nj.org>

PPCUG Member E-mail Directory

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(Last Update: 4 October 1998)

Send Updates to kurivchack_p@compuserve.com for inclusion in this listing.

Consultants Corner

Cascade Media Group, Inc.

Jon Conant

335 Wall Street

Princeton, NJ 08540

609.430.9080 Fax: 609.430.9086

Voice Mail, Win/NT Networks,

Phone Systems & Wiring

Provider of PPCUG Voice Messaging.



Brite Consultants, Inc.

Perry Weaver

1 Barnard Place

Princeton Junction, NJ 08550

609-716-1880 / 888-318-BRITE

Fax: 609-716-1825

Email: brite4@juno.com

<http://www.brite-consultants.com>

Meyda Online

John Abolins, Sysop

BBS: 609-883-8124

World Wide Web Home Page:

<http://www.meydabbs.com/~jda-ir/>

Consultants Corner

You can advertise your consulting business for \$25 per year in addition to your normal membership fee. The text space is your or your company's name plus five lines.

Membership Card Discounts

STM Robotics/Computers

825 State Highway Route 33

Hamilton, NJ 08619

Phone: (609) 587-3335

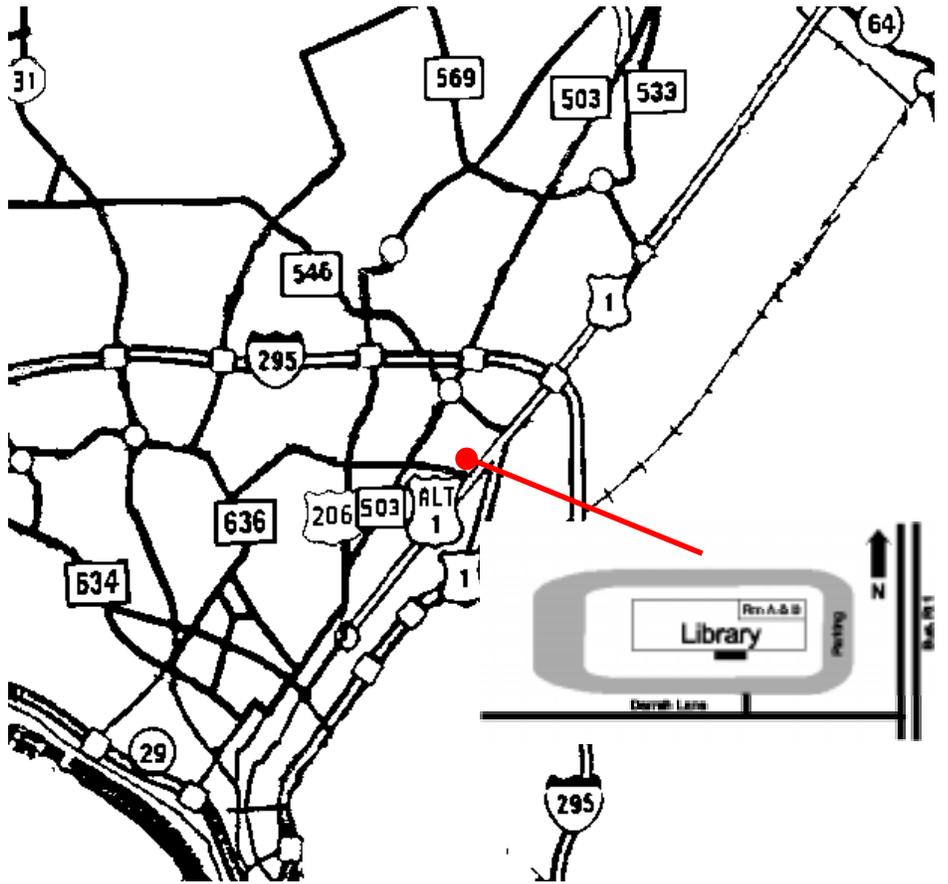
5% off all products and services.



The Lawrence Library is at the corner of Business Route 1 South and Darrah Lane.

From Princeton and North: Take US Route 1 South, past the Quaker Bridge / Mercer Shopping Centers. Continue on approximately 1 3/4 mile past I295 to the Route 1 split, stay to the right to Business Route 1(Brunswick Pike). First traffic light is Darrah Lane. Library is on right side. Park in lot towards Route 1 and to the rear. Enter Library at main entrance in front. Meeting rooms A & B are located through glass door on Route 1 side of building.

From Trenton and South: Take I295 North to US Route 1 South. Library is approximately 1 3/4 miles south of I295. Continue south to Business Route 1(Brunswick Pike). First traffic light is Darrah Lane. Library is on right side. Park in lot towards Route 1 and to the rear. Enter Library at main entrance in front. Meeting rooms A & B are located through glass door on Route 1 side of building.



**Windows 9x Utilities
October 19, 1998
Lawrence Library**

**Princeton PC Users Group
P.O. Box 291
Rocky Hill, NJ 08553**