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Welcome!

Judy Acosta, CEDPA President

Welcome to the 1993 CEDPA Conference. I'm sure that you will all enjoy networking with your peers at this "meeting place". It's not often that so many of us are in one place at the same time.

This year's Conference promises to be one of the best ever. The breakout sessions are relevant to "what's happening" in information processing shops across the State of California. There is so much knowledge to be gained by hearing what other people have experienced in their individual endeavors. This sharing of information is what the Conference is all about. In addition to the many breakouts, there is a great vendor show where you can see all the latest and greatest. The vendor show is always a lot of fun—door prizes, refreshments, and lots of good company. It's fun to meet with all of these people that we do business with.

This year's Conference is better attended than last year. I'm going to attribute that to the Conference program and not to the fact that the hotel room rates are less expensive. I hope the trend to "bigger" conferences continues as the economy improves in California. We, the CEDPA Board, will continue to present you with the best conference that we can put together.

I would to take this opportunity to thank the Board for a job well done. This past year, 1993, has been a busy one for all of the Board members, but they have managed to donate considerable time to bring this conference together. It has been my pleasure to have worked with all of you. Thank you!!!!

Enjoy the Conference!!!!!!

Speaker Update

Phil Branstetter, Speaker Chairperson

We have covered the Internet from the basics to advanced uses—including a pre-conference workshop for those who have truly insatiable appetites for wandering electronic highways. We have client-server presentations that cover a wide variety of hardware platform implementations (from Macs to PCs running several operating systems) and an update from the Gartner Group on trends in technology in implementing client-server. We have excellent speakers on imaging and major events or projects taking place with the California Department of Education. For those who are not up to the rapid changes in technology we also have a presentation by Zuk and Associates on retirement planning.

One of our featured speakers, Louise Kirkbride, had to cancel because she will be out of the country during our conference. In Louise's place, and with her assistance, we were able to get Natalia Corres to speak on the topic of "Support Strategies for the '90s." Natalia manages support for The GAP stores and has experience in implementing a help desk and support program, and is most anxious to share her experiences so that our members at least know where the block walls are and how they might be avoided.

There is a tremendous amount of information available through this speaking program about current and emerging technology, and the issues facing all of us in the technology business. There are also the issues and opportunities emerging in California with CSIS, IMAC, the potential direction towards standardized accounting codes, and connecting LEAs with Sacramento. This conference provides a great forum to be informed and involved.

Letter From the Editor

Addison Ching, *The DataBus* Editor

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those that contributed articles to *The DataBus* this past year. The sharing of your experiences and opinions has helped to make *The DataBus* a journal that can truly serve our membership.

I would also like to encourage you to continue to submit articles to *The DataBus* for publication. While many of the articles that appear in the newsletter are authored by members of CEDPA's board, your articles are important and serve to make *The DataBus* your newsletter.

What's in store for next year? Look for continuing progress reports from Kathleen Alarid Barfield on the development of CSIS and from Carole Teach on the Golden State Education Network. I'll contribute a series on our district's implementation of connectivity to the Internet. And Tracy LaQuey Parker, author of *The Internet Companion*, will be sharing some of her Internet expertise and writings with CEDPA.

Vendor Update

Ken Jones, Vendor Chairperson

This year's vendor show is looking great! We have many companies which cross several categories, but generally speaking we have:

- Nine Student Administrative Software vendors;
- Eight Financial/Accounting Software vendors;
- Nine Data Communications/Networking vendors;
- Four Scanning Solution vendors;
- Four "Software Tools" vendors;
- Four major hardware vendors; and
- Many others in various service and support categories.

The show this year is in the same format as years past. We will open the doors at 10:30 AM on Thursday; you will have one and a half hours of browsing time before lunch. The doors are locked during lunch to allow the vendors to join attendees at lunch. At 1:00 PM the doors will open again so you can search out those companies you missed before lunch. Make sure to be present at 3:00 PM for the door prize drawing. We have some great prizes to give away this year, but you must be present to claim

Connecting to The Internet

Addison Ching

Thinking about connecting one of your schools to the Internet? Are you wondering what the costs are, where to connect, and the kind of equipment you'll need? Wonder how you'll be able to justify the connection?

The Newport-Mesa Unified School District is in the process of connecting some of its schools directly to the Network of Networks. As one of the first districts in Orange County to achieve connectivity throughout our County office, I've agreed with Carole Teach, manager of K-12 Network Planning for the California Department of Education, to share our connectivity experiences (and horror stories!) with other districts and interested parties. The idea behind this is to make connectivity to statewide networks and the Internet as painless as possible. Cookbook approaches rarely work (especially with technology!) but it is hoped that our implementation might be used as a working guide for other local agencies interested in providing Internet connectivity to their schools and departments.

Why connect to the Internet? The answer to this question can be obtained at any one of the many breakout sessions being offered at this conference that deal with the Internet. Be sure to catch the California Department of Education's presentation by Carole Teach to find out about K-12 networking in California and how it impacts your agency. Also, be sure to catch Keith Vogt's presentation of *The Guide*, a graphically-oriented program that works on both Macintoshes and PC-compatibles that allows users to navigate (surf) the Internet with ease. And be sure to hear Tracy LaQuey Parker, noted author of several publications including *The Internet Companion* talk about the Internet's impact on K-12 education.

Future issues of *The DataBus* will carry articles of our implementation process from wiring a school to connecting with our county office. Watch for these articles, starting in the next issue of *The DataBus*.

your prize. Cocktails and other refreshments will be served in the exhibit hall starting at 3:00 PM. The show will conclude at 4:00 PM.

Don't forget the hospitality suites generously offered by supporting vendors, starting at 6:00 PM on Thursday.

Enjoy the vendor show!

MIS Managers SIG Meeting Summary

Art Perez, MIS Managers SIG Chairperson

The MIS Managers SIG meeting was held at the Red Lion Hotel in Costa Mesa on Friday, July 16, 1993. The meeting was well attended and included staff members from the California Department of Education and Far West Labs. A big thanks to Perry Polk for getting the word out about the meeting.

The morning session, a roundtable discussion, was entitled "A Changing Role for MIS Departments from Administrative Technology to Instructional Technology." There were many interesting views shared on this subject.

Some large school districts have limited participation because Instructional Technology is handled by a separate department in the instructional division. Other MIS shops became active participants either directly by having the responsibility assigned to them or by actively seeking out involvement in Instructional Technology. Still other MIS departments have been drawn into participation by requests from schools for recommendations for micro-computer configurations, printers, modems, and networking.

Regardless of the catalyst for the transition into the instructional technology arena, most felt that it would be to the advantage of MIS departments to actively participate in the planning of technology at the school site level. This would allow MIS to share its expertise in network design, standardization of equipment and software, negotiating skills with vendors, and developing policies and procedures for implementation, operation and maintenance of software and hardware.

Other advantages included:

- MIS getting involved at the planning stages of a project to avoid having to retrofit hardware and software in order to make everything work;
- Reduction of user frustration levels by having support within reach in the MIS department;
- Reduction of labor costs for updating software, maintaining licenses, warranties and maintenance of equipment; and
- Improved image for the MIS department as a direct contributor to the instructional program, thereby providing justification for additional staff or to maintain existing staff.

Another topic of discussion was the use of the CD-

ROM for archiving student records. Although no one at the meeting was using that technology, interest was high. Vince Madden from CDOE reported that CD-ROM technology was not presently a State-certified media for storing archival student records. This topic needs to be addressed by the legislature. Vince offered to initiate action to inform staff in Sacramento about the desire to use CD-ROM technology for student record archival. Vince can be contacted at the California Department of Education, P.O. Box 944272, Sacramento, CA 94244.

The afternoon session was a briefing on Client/Server technology presented by David Dubis, senior account executive from American Digital Technologies, Inc., of Costa Mesa. His briefing described the different components involved in Client/Server systems. He described six critical factors for a successful Client/Server implementation:

- Technical education for MIS; staff should receive technical training in client/server development (relational databases, SQL language, and GUI front-end tools);
- Use of a mission-critical database; employ database engines that can handle the large volumes of transactions such as Sybase, Oracle, SQL Server, etc.;
- Use of robust front-end development tools such as PowerBuilder with a Graphic User Interface (GUI);
- Integration of tools with your system development approach;
- User involvement and commitment; and
- Ad hoc user access to information; use report writer tools that are user-friendly and that employ point-and-click operation.

Another critical factor pointed out by Mr. Dubis was to configure a high-speed file server that could support robust mission-critical databases. His recommendation was a computer with multiple processors.

**What Happened to the CENet?
Hear Carole Teach's Presentation
for More Information!
Thursday, 1:30 PM
San Jose Meeting Room**

Microcomputer SIG Meeting Summary

Warren Williams, Microcomputer SIG Chair

On July 14, a Microcomputer SIG meeting was held at the Costa Mesa Red Lion. The meeting featured "The Desktop of the Future" as envisioned by three of America's largest computer companies. Microsoft Corporation Dell Computer Inc., and Apple Computer, Inc. each participated in a one and one half hour panel discussion. There was surprising consensus among the three corporations and their respective visions of the workplace environment of the near future. According to them, the desktop computer will become the primary information manager in a non-proprietary, open systems environment. Object programming and event tracking will allow users to self-define the desktop to fit work patterns and to cooperate on project design and implementation. The information stream to the desktop will not suffer from bandwidth constraints as new technologies and standards come into the mix. Data will be redefined to include visual and auditory information and the teleconference will become commonplace.

At the end of the panel discussion, each company took forty-five minutes to explain in detail their respective strategies. Microsoft had an elaborate interpretation of their vision of the network of the future and its impact on the desktop. Their representative painted a picture of a seamless environment where data passed from operating system to operating system with no need for translation. According to Microsoft, object oriented programming will make obsolete the massive programs of the past. End users will be able to stream together their own applications from graphical equivalents of functions.

Dell Corporation focused on their new server technology. Long known for its desktop computers, the company is aggressively pursuing the server market. Attendees were impressed by the robust design of the Dell machines. Dell also discussed their educational program and how Districts could participate.

Apple Computer demonstrated file sharing on desktop computers and described how information might flow in a collaborative environment. The real eye-catcher was the presentation of the Newton Personal Digital Assistant. Everyone in attendance was non-disclosed and given a look at the latest in personal information management.

After the presentations, members in attendance discussed future topics for discussion. There was a request for a Northern Microcomputer SIG meeting and details of the fall conference were discussed.

SIG Chairpersons to be Appointed by CEDPA President

CEDPA Bylaws call for the association president to appoint chairpersons for the various Special Interest Groups (SIGs) the association sponsors. In past years the chairpersons of the Microcomputer, MIS Managers and SISNET special interest groups have been selected by popular vote of those attending the SIG meetings at the annual conference. The selected chairpersons then served a one-year term and were responsible for the various SIG activities sponsored by CEDPA. As SIG chairpersons, they also served on the CEDPA board of directors and assisted in planning the annual conference.

Beginning with this conference, SIG chairpersons will once again be appointed by the CEDPA president. This will give the president and the association's board of directors more flexibility with the planning of the regional SIG meetings and the annual conference.

Special Interest Group chairperson appointments will be announced in the next issue of *The DataBus*.

See the Mobile Technology Vehicle on display! The MTV is located in the parking lot adjacent to the Red Lion Ballroom

FUTURE CONFERENCES

- 1994 (South)
October 19-21, 1994
Sheraton Hotel, Long Beach
- 1995 (North)
November 1-3, 1995
Fairmont Hotel, San Jose
- 1996 (South)
October 16-18, 1996
Burbank Airport Hilton and Convention Center