

The Storm Front

August 27, 1990

Limited Circulation

Eric's Weekend of Bliss Lots of Fun and a Complimentary Whip

Investigative reporters working for StormCo International's Ethics Evaluation Team have uncovered some unnerving information about Founder and President, Eric Storm. According to a classified internal memo, Mr. Storm spent the majority of last weekend in **San Francisco**, a city full of people with questionable moral values. Further damaging evidence surfaced in a tape recording of Mr. Storm telling a **high school friend** that he had "had more fun than he had had in years." He further went on to say that he would hang his **new whip** in his room to remember the weekend by.

As if that wasn't terrible enough, imagine this reporter's amazement when he heard the "leading figure in alternative publishing" (according to the Society of American Publishers) say that he had such fun because "they" gave him "so much for free." While we applaud Mr. Storm's business sense, we have to join with society-at-large in condemning his obvious lack of moral fiber in participating in a weekend of personal gratification.

When confronted, Mr. Storm claimed that he had just attended a series of "seminars" (wink, wink) put on by "software manufacturers." Sure, no one doubts that there were vendors there showing some "soft wear."

Mr. Storm went on to display six new computer programs that he claimed were the "free stuff" referred to in the tape recording. These included: dBase IV release

1.1, Multimate, Publisher's Powerpack for Windows, Facelift, Formtool, and PC Tools Deluxe. We find this hard to believe since such programs represent a combined retail value of well over \$1,800. That does not even include the six new t-shirts, two book bags, two baseball caps, innumerable pens, coffee mug and whip also displayed.

To make matters worse (yes, it gets worse), Mr. Storm completely forgot that his close and personal friend, Chris Von Sonn, had a birthday on August 25th. All the morally sound employees at StormCo Publishing would like to extend our warmest and belated birthday greeting to Mr. Von Sonn, star of television and film. We hope you had a happy 29th birthday and that your acting career enjoys the critical success that we feel is long overdue. We would also like to remind our reading public that StormCo Publishing has secured the feature film, television movie and series, Saturday morning cartoon, and computer adventure game rights to Mr. Von Sonn's life story.

Mr. Storm, you have a lot of explaining to do.

Editorial Response

Never before has The Storm Front participated in the kind of sensationalist (and highly profitable) journalism typically exhibited by such filth-mongers as the National Enquirer and New York Times.

The slanderous article that appears on the front of this, normally, fine publication bares little or no resemblance to the true events of August 25th and 26th (ok, except for the part about Von Sonn's birthday. I'm sorry, leave me alone). I was attending the annual "Softeach" put on by Merisel Corporation (their name used to be Softsel, does the name of the convention make more sense now? Meriteach would have sounded stupid). Sixty different computer hardware and software manufacturers demonstrated their products to thousands of dealers from all over the western United States. It was a hoot. Chris Nielsen was carrying so much free stuff by the end of the first day that his complimentary canvas bag tore apart. He even won a copy of Turbo C++ by Borland (this language is so big that the box weighs 14 pounds).

I won the Multimate word processing program which comes on twenty-three disks. This isn't software, this isn't even big-ware, this is huge-ware. All the other things mentioned in the article were free to everyone who attended certain vendors' demonstrations. In fact, Practical Peripherals gave \$5 to everyone just for coming, and Chris got \$10 extra for jumping out of his seat and yelling "Bang! Bang!" Go figure.

Oh yeah, the whip was given to me by Western Digital. Their demo had an Indiana Jones theme because they're doing a promotion with LucasFilms.

Getting a "Facelift" Improving My Look and Feel

[Warning! This article contains technical computer and software terms. Be advised that novice users (techno-peasants) will find the following confusing and weird]

By now you may have noticed that this issue of The Storm Front contains new and exciting fonts never before used by StormCo Publishing. We are pleased to announce we have once again advanced to the leading edge of software technology. This issue has been produced under Microsoft's wonderful new Windows 3.0 graphical-user-interface (GUI, pronounced "gooey") using their Word for Windows word-processing program and Bitstream's Facelift font enhancement add-in.

This combination allows a regular (and inexpensive) dot matrix printer to produce output similar to the (very expensive) laser printers (I said we were on the cutting edge of "software" not "hardware"). All the fonts you see appear on our computer screen and can be sized in half-point (a point is 1/72 of an inch) while we are designing this fine publication thanks to the innovative font management system that is part of Windows. Also, all fonts are available in all software applications regardless of their manufacturer. Extra fonts (nearly 1,000 typefaces are available) can be added at any time, but since they cost about \$100 a face, don't hold your breath.

Donations to the StormCo Font Acquisition Fund are now being accepted. We're aiming for a nice Century Schoolbook or Zapf Chancery.

On the Road Again, Travels with Eric

Once again, I have spent a good portion of my summer on the highways, byways, and airways of America. Travelling around to bring the latest vacation information to my loyal readers.

This year I went east to see how the other Coast lives. Let me tell you, it was an eye-opening experience.

I flew Delta Airlines (actually, their own pilot flew the plane, that was just a figure of speech) to LaGuardia Airport in fabulous New York City, the city that never sleeps. Roger and Susan (alphabetical listing) met me at the airport and took me on my first New York cab ride. Eight dollars later, we were at Roger's house in Queens.

That night, Susan and Randy (reverse alphabetic order) took Roger and I out to a really great Italian restaurant a couple of doors down from where Joe Jackson lives. We had a most excellent meal, and the company was scintillating.

The next morning found me travelling again: Roger and I took Amtrack to Washington D.C., the city that never stops talking. We saw everything. Four days going to the Smithsonian Institutes (there are now about 8 different buildings) and seeing

the monuments. We even got to hear the Air Force Orchestra for free. What more could I have asked for?

Full of national pride, we headed back to New York. I walked around in a little part of Central Park, and spent all of one day in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In those ten days, I saw so much great art, I couldn't believe it. There were more Rembrandts, and Van Goughs, and Matisse's than you could shake a stick at (but if you did, you'd probably be killed by a guard).

I also got a chance to see "The Heidi Chronicles" performed on Broadway. A wonderful play that has nothing to do with the Alps or a little Austrian girl.

Let me mention that Roger's roommate, Kathy, made us dinner one night (actually, she ordered pizza). It was very good. And the next evening we all went to a Greek restaurant where we nearly had to beg our waiter to bring us our check. Instead, he brought us complimentary watermelon.

Thank you Clint, Kathy, Randy, Roger, and Susan for the wonderful time you all showed me. Next time you come out to California, give Chris Von Sonn a call, I'm sure he'll be glad to put you up.

Questionable Facts and Unsubstantiated Claims

Chris Nielsen is getting ready to do his "Phase Two" work at EDS. This means more \$ and a better position.

Chris Von Sonn will appear as an extra in an upcoming episode of "The life of Rosie (something or other, I forgot)"

Stephanie Fisher has just returned from an extended vacation in Maine.

She had a lovely time despite the complete lack of Mexican food.

Wendy Wood will spend the next couple of months singing on a cruise ship in the Bahamas or was it the Caribbean?

Jim Tribble's Army Reserve Unit is on alert over this Iraq thing.

Tina Halstead is never home. Draw what conclusions you want.

*You wouldn't let ignorant peasants design
your house.*

Then why let them design your government?

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So Eric, what can we expect in the near future?

Well, I'm glad you asked. Most everyone knows that I've finally graduated from the California State University at Sacramento. It's only logical to assume that I should have plans for my future. I don't know how to tell you this, but graduating was my plan for the future. So I guess I should get a new one.

For now, I'm going to settle with a change of employers. Starting September 15th, I go to work for Will Lewis' company, SFL Services Incorporated. I'll do all sorts of cool computer type stuff (gosh, bet you didn't see that career choice coming). I'm already working part-time there. I've done a little bit of general computer support, and I've done a fair amount of dBase programming. In Fact, just today I was working on a repetitive billing system. I think it came out rather nice. The screen displays still need some work, but not very much.

I know what you're thinking, "But Eric, dBase isn't as flexible as Paradox, and it certainly isn't as friendly as R:base 3. Is there really that much demand for new

applications?" Well let me tell you, you bet there is. Sure they slipped from a 60% market share down to 30%. Sure, they were two years late coming out with their new update, but look at the functionality.

Here is some sample code:

```
M_INVDATE = CTOD(STR((M_MONTH-1),2) + '/20/'
+ SUBSTR(STR(YEAR( DATE ( ) ),4),3,2))
```

Now, isn't that straight-forward? It takes a numeric variable (M_MONTH) and converts it to a special date string like "08/20/90" while putting on the year automatically. Nifty, huh?

Now, don't you go and use that in anything. That's copyrighted material.

That's just about all for this issue. Sorry if I seemed out-of-touch the last couple of months. It's nothing personal, I've just been very, very busy.

As always, StormCo Publishing appreciates your comments, suggestions, and just plain letters. This issue took over eight hours to produce, tell me what you think.

Remember, no matter where you go, there you are.