

# No more tedium

## Here's what computers can do for us

Secretaries are dumb! Not only that, their time isn't worth anything. At least that's what an awful lot of companies must think about the folks that put just behind the (company) receptionist in importance (the receptionist is the first person you talk to when you call the company. How you view the company is in her or his hands. That's pretty important, in my book).

I have frequently observed this attitude with a mixture of wonderment and disgust. But a couple of weeks ago I got a panic call from a woman who had gone to war with her office computer and was losing big time. That surprised me a bit. This gal has her act together and works for a local megacompany in the computer biz.

Apparently being a computer company doesn't mean you know your head from a three-penny nail about why people use computers. Here's an example. Our young woman does file transfers from her company headquarters about a million miles from here.

These file transfers take around an hour, and she does them fairly frequently. Do you think the company she works for would set her up with a serious PC that can do the file transfer in the background while she does something else? Not on your



### the computer insider

#### Peter Stephenson

life! It would cost too much. Now, I ask you... which costs more, an hour every couple of days or so of completely, 100-percent wasted time, or \$500 worth of upgrade to her computer?

Here's the point. Computers can replace many of our tedious tasks... if we use them intelligently. Once this secretary gets the file transfer started, she has no reason to mess with the PC again until it's finished. She could type a report, set up a spreadsheet, analyze sales figures, all sorts of things. The computer certainly doesn't need her help for the file transfer job. That's what computers are for: to do the things they do well, so people can do the things they do well.

People should have every tool available to make their jobs easier. Listen to me: **THEY COULD DO MORE WORK!** Not only that, you wouldn't have to pay any more than you would anyway (I know, that's another discussion). And if you have any idea that clerical types can't

handle all this high technology, you haven't been listening.

Companies of all sizes need to give serious thought to why they use computing machinery. They need to learn what computers can do well, left pretty much to their own devices, and configure the machines accordingly. And, for goodness sake, remember who uses PCs. You'd be surprised at the talent sitting right under your nose if you provide the right tools to get the job done. And that's the inside scoop.

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## around Oakland

### B'ham man heads Camp Oakland

The directors of Camp Oakland Youth Programs have elected Dale E. Johnson of Birmingham chairman of the board.

He replaces Robert A. Dearth, who resigned but continues as a board member. Johnson is president of DJ Associates Inc., Bloomfield Hills. He formerly served 11 years as president of Camp Oakland Youth Programs, an Oxford-based private non-profit agency serving children and adolescents.

Newly elected to Camp Oakland's board of directors are Cary Wieting of West Bloomfield, Donald O. Barlow of Royal Oak and Richard M. Halsted of Bloomfield Hills. Wieting is a financial consultant with Shearson Lehman Brothers, Southfield. Barlow is president of Power Materials Co., Lathrup Village, and Halsted is president of Halsted-Johnson and Co., Troy.

Also named to the board is Julie Candler of Birmingham, author and public relations consultant.

Gary J. Bauman of West Bloomfield was re-elected to Camp Oakland's presidency. Wieting and Halsted were named to the executive committee.

Re-elected to three-year board terms are Charles Kirkpatrick and Mary Denison of Birmingham, Bloomfield Hills residents Lee B. Durham, David Fischer, Phebe Goldstein and B. James Theodoroff; Carolyn Murphy of Sylvan Lake, William Patterson of Oxford and Daniel Allen.

### Let's hear it for our beauty roads

It's been 20 years since Lansing approved the Natural Beauty Road Act, securing beautiful and environmentally significant roads for the future.

Nine of the 25 townships in Oakland County have such roads within their boundaries, including 14 Mile Road between Franklin and Inkster roads in Bloomfield Township and Halstead Road in West Bloomfield Township. Dutton Road, on the border between Rochester Hills and

Oakland Township, received the designation this year.

"The Road Commission for Oakland County takes great pleasure in celebrating the 20th anniversary of the passage of the Natural Beauty Road Act by the Michigan Legislature and subsequent signing by the governor," said John L. Grubba, managing director of the road commission for Oakland County.

"It is particularly meaningful to me and the staff of the road commission, since the act was drafted by our former general counsel, the late LeRoy McEntee, and has been administered for the road commission since 1976 by his son, William McEntee," Grubba said.

Since the adoption of the legislation, the Oakland County Road Commission has received 47 valid petitions seeking to designate 53 county local roads as Natural Beauty Roads. Of the 53, 17 roads with a combined length of 22 miles have received Natural Beauty Road designations.

Men, if you're about to turn 18, it's time to register with Selective Service at any U.S. Post Office.

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