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Letter to the Editor of Datafile

Message #1 Posted by [Eric Smith](#) on 7 July 2007, 5:22 a.m.

The following is a copy of a letter I just emailed to the editor of Datafile, the HPCC club journal:

It has been reported that an HPCC member has criticized the arrangement whereby Valentin Albillo (#1075) was given a free membership in exchange for the many articles he has written. As a result, that free membership has been eliminated.

Both Valentin and the member making the complaint have contributed dozens of articles to Datafile over the years. Rather than asking for Valentin's free membership to be revoked, perhaps a request for a similar deal could have been made. Even if that were not possible, it would have been more constructive to try to propose other possibilities, such as getting other members to contribute the membership fee.

I would like to see more articles from Valentin (and from the member who made the complaint, for that matter). I don't have any idea what Valentin's financial situation is. I have been unemployed for the last three months, and consequently am not exactly awash in loose cash. However, I have just sent £28 to the secretary to pay for a one year membership for Valentin, in the hope that he will continue to contribute articles.

Eric Smith #1028

Re: Letter to the Editor of Datafile

Message #2 Posted by [Steve Borowsky](#) on 7 July 2007, 6:14 a.m.,
in response to message #1 by Eric Smith

Geez, that's pathetic.

Re: Letter to the Editor of Datafile

Message #3 Posted by [Howard Owen](#) on 7 July 2007, 1:42 p.m.,
in response to message #1 by Eric Smith

Good going, Eric!

I hope the HPCC and Valentin can come to terms that will allow his continued contributions to Datafile. There are few authors whose articles I enjoy more. It would be a major loss to the community if this situation were the final state of affairs.

Regards,
Howard

[OT] Some pertinent explanations [LONG]

Message #4 Posted by [Valentin Albillo](#) on 7 July 2007, 2:49 p.m.,
in response to message #1 by Eric Smith

Hi, Eric:

First of all, thank you *very* much for your interest in my HP-calc-related 'productions' and your kind support, which goes so far above and beyond 'the call of duty' that where other interested people just lurk in silence, in your case goes as far as to write a sympathetic letter to Datafile's editor, make it public here, and spend £28 of your hard-earned money in order to pay a subscription for me.

This leaves me with a bittersweet feeling. On one hand, I really *do appreciate* your extreme willingness to try and help.

On the other hand, I'm *saddened* by your taking the initiative to try and pay for a subscription for me without first getting in contact with me so that I would tell you the details of the initial arrangement and of the present controversy. This would have saved you from sending the money in the first place, because *this is not a matter of money*, at all. This being so, I expect that Datafile's Secretary will return you money uncashed, as I won't accept a membership for me at anyone's personal expense no matter how much I'm obliged by your gesture. So, I'll immediately contact Mr. Secretary and Mr. Editor via e-mail, formally asking for the money to be returned to you and to do likewise should other such attempts be made.

This said, and as I very much appreciate the kind and continuous support of my HP-related activities that many HPCC members and MoHP frequent visitors have demonstrated in the past, I think all of you deserve to be given a complete picture of the situation as I see it, which will be necessarily long but completely to the point, except I won't name names nor will I attempt to guess underlying personal motivations, let's everyone make their own minds on this. Here we go:

About my *commitment* to regularly provide articles and the 'membership offered in return', some people really have taken this arrangement so much at heart that it seems they won't stop at *anything* to see it *undone*. Initially they simply *anonymously* posted frequent public criticism in a most *unpolite* way each and every time I tried to promote Datafile or post about some new articles published there. It was really *unfair* to me and certainly attempted to *sabotage* my well-meant efforts to promote Datafile, but they were anonymous 'trolls' and that was it, nothing for me to do except stand it as well as I could.

Then the offensive scaled up one bit when I was told that some HPCC members had *violently opposed* this arrangement at public HPCC meetings, and some of them even went as far as to oppose in written form, by sending letters to the Chairman. This resulted in the topic being voted upon, and the majority decided to keep it as it was. It was even debated at some AGM, with the same result. That should have ended it all.

However, I was greatly surprised when one of my latest Datafile promotional posts at the MoHP was suddenly attacked *in the very same style and nearly the very same words* by some person which, far from being anonymous, is one of the most well-known HPCC members and further, *he's a member of the Committee !*

Thus we have the strange and unprecedented case of a member of the HPCC Committee who publicly *doesn't abide* by the very Committee's decisions and arrangements, and feels free to *ignore* their democratically voted decision and continue to publicly and unpolitely harass some other member who is just trying to help, and further, utterly sabotage his Datafile promotion attempts.

This, of course, was the last straw as far as my patience was concerned, so I formally requested an official, public statement by the Committee endorsing our agreement and supporting me against the unfair detractors. The Committee discussed the matter and the results were that they would do **nothing**. They would **not** reprimand the offending members, despite they unfairly attacking a fellow member and sabotaging his efforts to promote Datafile and despite they not abiding by an official Committee agreement, and they would also post or publish **nothing** in my support, not even simply just saying that it was true that we had an official, voted, approved arrangement and I was properly fulfilling my part of it. They would do **nothing** of the sort, of any sort.

I was profoundly disappointed to realize that I had no support at all from an organization to which I had contributed so much (more than 30% of each issue on the average for a number of years), not even from some of the people who should be most grateful for it, and I certainly wouldn't *suffer* being treated like that, so I withdrew from the agreement and called it null, stopping my contributions to Datafile as a result.

How came this arrangement to be in the first place ? Well, it's quite simple. I've been a member of HPCC for *seven* years, and three years ago I saw that the club was heading *extinction*. It was losing membership at an alarming rate (already under 100), and besides the contents of Datafile were extremely poor, IMHO, with small 24-page issues which did only cover RPL models and scarcely at that, to the point where Palm coverage was attempted as well, in an effort to have something to fill those meager 24 pages with.

Seeing this, I decided this kind of contents were not of my interest, and further decided to *cancel my subscription*, as many of my friends had already done, because I didn't want to pay for those uninteresting contents that I wouldn't even read.

However, this saddened to me no end, as HPCC was practically all that was left of the golden PPC times, and I was very sore of seeing it go to extinction too. So I came up with the idea that the best way to help wasn't keeping an unwanted subscription for some unwanted materials, Datafile would decline all the same, but rather *contribute by developing, writing, and submitting good-quality articles for publication*, which would provide both quantity and quality, the kind of articles I loved to read back in PPC times, *the kind of articles I would love to read now*.

However, these articles of mine would be precisely the only ones who would interest me among all of the contents, the rest being uninteresting to me, and I would certainly not pay a subscription just to read an exact facsimile of my own articles (!), so I thus intended to cancel my subscription at once all the same. But this brings the problem that I certainly need to see how my articles appear in print, because a number of times errors do crept in during the editorial process, and I would have to warn Mr. Editor about them (formatting and such were the most common).

In order for me to be able to see the printed article, it would be utterly necessary for me to be sent a *printed copy of the relevant issue*. But I certainly didn't want to pay for it: after taking the considerable trouble, effort, and time to write 10-16 page quality articles, having to pay to get to see them in printed form would be like we in Spain say, "*hacer de p*ta y poner la cama*", which roughly translates as one acting as a prostitute for free and, on top of having to perform that arguably disgusting activity, having to pay to do it. This obviously wasn't acceptable to me, so I contacted Mr. Editor and made him a proposal, namely I would *commit* to send *long, quality* articles on a *regular* basis, and I would get a free printed copy of each issue featuring one of my articles, for checking and reference purposes.

He thought it was a very good idea, which would alleviate a whole lot his continual, cronic *need* to try and get articles from whatever sources he could, thus making his already hectic editorial life much more pleasant to bear. He consulted the proposal with the Committee, which also agreed, and considered the arrangement as a "free subscription" in exchange for articles. Most probably, wording the arrangement that way was what prompted some people to *violently* oppose to it, on the basis that other people submitting articles weren't expected to receive any "payment" at all.

The truth, in a nutshell, is that I was about to end my subscription to Datafile in any case: I wasn't going to pay to read uninteresting (to me) contents, nor would I pay just to read my **own** articles, so they would never get my money no matter what. I just offered them a solution to their problem, out of a desire to help, though I knew it would be a **lot** of work and there would be times when I wouldn't feel like writing anything because of workload, or grave familiar situations, or health problems. All I asked in return was to have a printed copy of each issue containing one of my articles, that's all I asked for, and that seemed reasonable enough to me.

It goes without saying that I could'nt care less for the few sterling pounds a yearly subscription costs, I spend twice as much twice a day, each and every day, just to get a taxi from home to work, so that is no money to me, it's peanuts. But, out of respect for myself, I'm *not* going to spend *80 hours each and every two months*, time and effort which I detract from my other hobbies and my family, to submit a publishable article for Datafile, then having to **pay** to get to check it. No way I'm doing that. I'm the one helping them, not the other way around.

In fact, you've probably noticed the impact: the previous Datafile issues were 40- and 44- pages long, if I'm not wrong, with some long articles and all. The current issue, which features no article from me, is just 24 pages long, and most "articles" are extremely short and mostly focused on RPL models or obsolete hardware, with the one and only exception being an 8-page financial article for the HP-12C. I very much doubt Datafile will be able to subsist on that kind of contents for long, though fortunately for them the release of the new HP35S will mean a wealth of publishable materials which will help alleviate the situation for a while.

As for committing to write good-quality articles on a regular basis, you can't really know just *how much effort* some of them require. The latest one, "**Identifying Constants**", took me more than *4 hours a day, *each* and every day* for a whole month (that's about 100+ hours) to create, from the idea, to the programming, to the many, many well-chosen examples I had to laboriously create, to the setting and typesetting of the nearly 50 very

complicated mathematical expressions, then writing it all in MS Word, checking it all by *typing by hand every line of code* and running every example on the actual calculator, etc, etc. There's no way a single, free 40-page printed issue (of which 16 pages are my own !) can pay for so much work. Not at my professional hourly rate anyway. :-)

Finally, after this nasty turn of events, I was very sorry for those people who might have joined HPCC after reading my promotional attempts, with the idea of getting first hand my articles, and felt morally obliged to lessen the impact on them of a situation they had done nothing to create and could do little to solve (I can only think of they *politely* writing the Committee expressing their opinion on this).

Thus, I fully intend to write the very same 4 articles I would have written and submitted to Datafile for publication this year, with the same formatting and quality, then send those articles in PDF format to each and every person who newly subscribed this year. All 4 are already written, in the sense of the corresponding program and examples already existing, but still need to be set up in MS Word and be exhaustively format-checked and run-tested.

Well, sorry for the extreme length of this post but I felt that all of you deserved a thorough explanation. It's been useful to me as well, I feel better now.

Thanks and best regards from V.

Re: [OT] Some pertinent explanations [LONG]

Message #5 Posted by **Eric Smith** on 7 July 2007, 4:06 p.m.,
in response to message #4 by Valentin Albillo

Thanks for the detailed explanation. I would still prefer to pay for a year's HPCC membership for you than to get a refund, even though you've explained that the money is not the issue. However, if you're insistent on not accepting it as a gift, I will of course respect your wishes.

Eric

Re: [OT] Some pertinent explanations

Message #6 Posted by **Walter B** on 7 July 2007, 4:22 p.m.,
in response to message #4 by Valentin Albillo

Buenas tardes, Valentin,

though I know only your side of the story now (audiatur et altera pars!), I must say the result is a real pity. I didn't check the archives for any names, which would be done easily. But what for? Well, I can only hope both sides (whoever is on the other side personally) may settle this matter like adults (by experience, such debates between men tend to end in kindergarten very often). Speaking for hopefully many of the members of this forum, a living Datafile is far better for all of us, the readers, than a tombstone claiming "I was right" (hope my limited English is sufficient to express my feelings).

Thanks for your promotional activities, and good luck for the necessary negotiations,

best regards,

Walter

Re: [OT] Some pertinent explanations

*Message #7 Posted by [Steve Borowsky](#) on 7 July 2007, 5:57 p.m.,
in response to message #6 by Walter B*

I know this is really none of my business, and i'm not a significant contributor to this community, but I do consider myself a long-term member of the HP community here; i've probably been registered on this site for over ten years, so I feel justified in trying to express something of how I feel after hearing about this situation. When I posted my first response, I thought afterwards that perhaps I had been too harsh and quick to judgment, and that maybe there were other factors I wasn't seeing. But after reading Valentin's eloquent explanation, sadly I feel my criticism was inadequate. It's not only the behavior of the original HPCC member that I find pathetic and reprehensible, but the resulting actions of the HPCC leadership as well. I'm telling you, if I was walking around with that kind of head I think i'd have to kill myself.

Re: [OT] Some pertinent explanations [LONG]

*Message #8 Posted by [Fernando del Rey](#) on 7 July 2007, 5:59 p.m.,
in response to message #4 by Valentin Albillo*

Hi Valentin!

As a long time friend of yours, and recent member of HPCC (per your recommendation), I'm really sorry for the state of affairs that has led to your decision.

While understanding and sharing your point of view on this matter, I can only ask you to reconsider your decision for the benefit of the HP calc fan community.

Keep in mind that there is always some reason for others to think or act differently from what we would expect. Please be forgiving when judging people's behavior.

Not being a contributor myself, nor practically active as an HP calc fan, I have nevertheless enjoyed and really appreciated reading your Datafile articles over the years. I wish to thank you for all those fun and interesting materials, which surely you have dedicated long hard-working hours to produce.

If your decision with respect to Datafile if firm, may I suggest that you publish your future articles at the Articles Forum in this MoHP, or even better, why don't you think about gathering enough material for publishing a book.

Thanks for all you do for this community.

See you soon!

Edited: 7 July 2007, 6:26 p.m.

Re: [OT] Some pertinent explanations [LONG]

*Message #9 Posted by **Wayne Brown** on 7 July 2007, 10:10 p.m.,
in response to message #4 by Valentin Albillo*

This whole situation is very distressing. I guess I can see both sides (somewhat), and we *are* getting only one side of the story here. But it's hard to imagine that there could be any other information that would justify the way Valentin has been treated. If I put as much time and effort as he does into preparing free articles for publication, then the idea that I'd have to *pay* for the "privilege" of proofreading my own material would be not only ludicrous but offensive.

The thing I find most disturbing is the Committee's refusal to support -- or even *acknowledge* in public -- a good-faith agreement they made. The whole thing is unpleasantly reminiscent of the disrespect shown to Richard Nelson in the last stages of his involvement with PPC.

My first impulse on reading all this was a desire to resign my own HPCC membership immediately, but upon reflection I decided to wait and see what other facts, if any, come to light. However, I can promise that whatever happens will have a significant bearing on my decision at membership renewal time.

Re: [OT] Some pertinent explanations [LONG]

*Message #10 Posted by **DaveJ** on 7 July 2007, 11:27 p.m.,
in response to message #4 by Valentin Albillo*

Hi Valentin Although I have never read any of your articles or Datafile for that matter, but I am also a contributor of articles to other magazines, and I can certainly agree with how much effort goes into producing such articles. Those who haven't done it themselves can never appreciate just how much work is actually involved.

I agree that you should stand your ground on principle alone, and anyone who does not agree and has such spite as what is being displayed, simply does not deserve to be part of the "community".

I wish you all the best, and remember, there are always other ways to get your work out there *and* get some financial reward for it.

Regards Dave.

Re: Letter to the Editor of Datafile

*Message #11 Posted by **Bruce Bergman** on 8 July 2007, 1:35 a.m.,
in response to message #1 by Eric Smith*

What's really pathetic here is that certain people just can't act like adults, and are either overwhelmed with jealousy and ego, or merely have a need to be petulant children. Sometimes I really wonder if there is some sort of brain damage in our geek-full industry; I can't otherwise imagine why people can't just get along and act like mature adults and be considerate. Really.

I understand much of what was said, and I'm sure there is still a lot I don't understand. However, it's considered common practice -- literally common *courtesy* - - in the USA to send authors of published works in periodicals, free copies of the actual periodical once it is published. You write an article, long or short, and they send you at least one copy gratis, if not more. I have LONG worked in the publishing industry, and have not only written for journals and magazines, but also have written a monthly column in a major industry magazine for several years. While I DID get paid for my work, I *also* received free copies of the magazines and journals; that's expected and normal. I can't imagine what the hubbub is about simply doing something like that for Valentin. Like he said, it certainly doesn't make sense to write something and then have to pay for it -- that's idiotic. Granted, it's a different country, and maybe there are things I don't understand, but it certainly doesn't make sense to me.

Valentin, you're a stud for taking the high road. I personally think someone (else) needs to get their face slapped a few times and hopefully shake out some of that arrogance and jealousy.

Good luck,

bruce

Edited: 8 July 2007, 1:49 a.m.

Re: Letter to the Editor of Datafile

*Message #12 Posted by **Tony Duell** on 8 July 2007, 5:13 a.m.,
in response to message #1 by Eric Smith*

As one of the people who objected (and still objects) to the arrangement between HPCC and Valentin, I feel I have to respond.

Yes, I am on the HPCC committee. But when I post here, I only speak for myself. I don't claim to represent HPCC, I don't represent HPCC. And while I feel constrained to carry out club policy in as far as I asked to do so (a trivial example of this is that when the Datafile journals as posted, I would not have done anything to prevent Valentin's from being sent, even though I disagreed with the way he got membership), I do not feel I have to agree publicly with everything the committee says or does. I would not remain a member of any club that expected that sort of behaviour from its members or committee members.

Eric mentions that he's been unemployed for 3 months. I've been essentially unemployed for, not 3 months, not 3 years, but 10 years. I'm a self-employed consultant, but very few people consult me. And yet I've paid my membership fee every year without question. I've been a member of HPCC for 15 years now....

In that time I feel I've contributed to the club. 10 years ago, shortly after my employment contract ending, I presented that HP48 I2C interface at the HPCC conference. To get that working, to be sure it was reproducible, to do all the demonstrations cost me, I estimate, over £1000. Since then, as some of you know, I've traced out schematics of many older HP calculators. In some cases (particularly handhelds), I borrowed the machines from trusting HPCC members. In others, I've had to buy the machines myself. I have given HPCC permission to sell CD-ROMs of said schematics, please note that I don't get a penny from this. All profits go to the club. I have no idea how many such CD-ROMs have been sold, but I believe it's enough to have easily covered my membership for the next 10 years or more.

And producing said schematics takes time. Valentin said he spent over 100 hours on one of his articles. Well, maybe I'm a slow worker, but producing schematics for the HP9100B took not 100 hours but, I estimate, over 10000 hours. It's a very difficult machine to make sense of.

You may not feel those schematics have any value. You are, of course, entitled to that view, but I don't think it's universally held. Just as views on the worth of Valentin's articles vary between people.

Other people contribute to the club in other ways. Or perhaps you think that accounts keep themselves, conferences organise themselves, journals edit themselves, other articles write themselves, and so on. As far as I know, none of them get any financial reward from the club. We all pay our membership fees every year.

And let me point out that while it may be common to give a free copy of the journal containing an article to each author, there is a big difference between getting Datafile and being a member of HPCC. The latter has considerably more perks.

Which brings me to my complaint. If it was HPCC policy that contributing to the club was rewarded by a discount in membership, I'd have no problem with that. If it was agreed that one form of contribution to the club, namely writing articles for Datafile, was rewarded (say 1/6th off the subscription for each article published), I'd have no problem with that. What I have a problem with is rewarding one person for his contributions while the rest of us put time and money into the club for no financial reward.

Re: Letter to the Editor of Datafile

*Message #13 Posted by **James M. Prange (Michigan)** on 8 July 2007, 6:09 a.m.,
in response to message #12 by Tony Duell*

Quote:

Yes, I am on the HPCC committee. But when I post here, I only speak for myself.

Of course; when anyone posts here, I expect that, unless otherwise stated, he's speaking only for himself, and not for any organization that he happens to belong to.

Quote:

And let me point out that while it may be common to give a free copy of the journal containing an article to each author, there is a big difference between getting Datafile and being a member of HPCC. The latter has considerably more perks.

But as far as I know (and I am an HPCC member), actually using those perks (other than receiving Datafile) would require travelling to London, which usually isn't feasible for many members. But that's okay with me; I was aware of it before I joined.

Quote:

Which brings me to my complaint. If it was HPCC policy that contributing to the club was rewarded by a discount in membership, I'd have no problem with that. If it was agreed that one form of contribution to the club, namely writing articles for Datafile, was rewarded (say 1/6th off the subscription for each article published), I'd have no problem with that. What I have a problem with is rewarding one person for his contributions while the rest of us put time and money into the club for no financial reward.

Well, I do understand your viewpoint, and of course Valentin's as well, but I don't think that this forum is an appropriate place to discuss internal HPCC matters; wouldn't it have been better to discuss this only within HPCC or published in a Datafile "member's letter"?

Regards,
James

Re: Letter to the Editor of Datafile

*Message #14 Posted by **Wayne Brown** on 8 July 2007, 1:21 p.m.,
in response to message #13 by James M. Prange (Michigan)*

Quote:

Quote:

And let me point out that while it may be common to give a free copy of the journal containing an article to each author, there is a big difference between getting Datafile and being a member of HPCC. The latter has considerably more perks.

But as far as I know (and I am an HPCC member), actually using those perks (other than receiving Datafile) would require travelling to London, which usually isn't feasible for many members. But that's okay with me; I was aware of it before I joined.

That's the way it is for me, too. I had two reasons for joining HPCC:

1. HPCC is a close relative of PPC, and having an HPCC membership number gives me a symbolic connection to the PPC legacy. That was, and remains, my primary reason for wanting to be a member.
 2. I like having a subscription to *Datafile*, though I seldom read any articles that don't directly involve the HP-16C, HP-41 or HP48.
- So if there are any other "perks" for a being member outside the UK, I have never noticed or taken advantage of them.

Re: Letter to the Editor of Datafile

Message #15 Posted by **Eric Smith** on 8 July 2007, 5:39 p.m.,
in response to message #13 by James M. Prange (Michigan)

Quote:

I don't think that this forum is an appropriate place to discuss internal HPCC matters; wouldn't it have been better to discuss this only within HPCC or published in a Datafile "member's letter"?

I suppose most of the blame for having a discussion in this forum is my fault, for posting my letter to the HPCC editor here. I did that because I knew that many HPCC members do read the forum here, and because Tony had criticized the arrangement between Valentin and HPCC in this forum on multiple occasions.

I'm not trying to pin blame on anyone. I think it should be possible for HPCC to adopt policies that should satisfy both Valentin and Tony, and that helpful suggestions have already been made in this discussion thread. That is exactly what I was hoping for by posting here; if the discussion had been restricted to member letters in Datafile, it would drag on for years, rather than helping to reach a solution in a timely manner.

Eric

Re: Letter to the Editor of Datafile

Message #16 Posted by **Tony Duell** on 9 July 2007, 1:18 p.m.,
in response to message #13 by James M. Prange (Michigan)

Unfortunately, Valentin seems to think I was speaking for the club when I commented on his free membership. I was not.

As regards other perks from being a member, there is nothing to stop HPCC holding meetings other than in London. If there's a sufficient number of HPCC members in another place, then a 'local' meeting would seem to be a good idea.

And finally, yes, this should really be discussed at HPCC. But when I am flamed publically, I feel I have the right to respond.

Re: Letter to the Editor of Datafile

Message #17 Posted by **Howard Owen** on 8 July 2007, 9:17 a.m.,
in response to message #12 by Tony Duell

I'm sorry, but this just sounds like obsessive and childish adherence to unwritten law at the expense of the HPCC membership, and of the larger HP calculator community. And that's the best interpretation I can put on the matter.

My HPCC membership will lapse at renewal time. My four page paper (with 7 pages of associated Mcode) will be published here (after HCC 2007) rather than in Datafile.

Howard

Re: Letter to the Editor of Datafile

Message #18 Posted by **Wayne Brown** on 8 July 2007, 1:17 p.m.,
in response to message #12 by Tony Duell

Quote:

And let me point out that while it may be common to give a free copy of the journal containing an article to each author, there is a big difference between getting Datafile and being a member of HPCC. The latter has considerably more perks.

According to Valentin's account, all he asked for was "a free copy of the journal[s] containing [his] article[s]." Was he ever offered that *instead* of a free membership?

Re: Letter to the Editor of Datafile

Message #19 Posted by **Eric Smith** on 8 July 2007, 4:52 p.m.,
in response to message #12 by Tony Duell

Quote:

I've been essentially unemployed for, not 3 months, not 3 years, but 10 years.

I was aware of that general situation, though not the details. Had I been asked to do so, I would have been just as happy to pay your membership fee, as I certainly value your your contributions. I'm not going to debate how much value your contributions have relative to Valentin's or anyone else's. Each reader will

get different value from different articles.

At this point, though, I won't pay for your membership while you are taking actions that, however justifiable, are preventing Valentin from receiving the author's copy of the publication he has requested. It seems that there should be a way for HPCC to adopt a uniform policy for authors that would address both your concerns and Valentin's, and if that were to happen I would certainly be willing to pay for any remaining membership expenses for you for the indefinite future.

Quote:

What I have a problem with is rewarding one person for his contributions while the rest of us put time and money into the club for no financial reward.

I understand your position, and it certainly has some merit. I generally respect people that take a principled stand on issues they consider important. But I think most of us would have been more willing to compromise on this issue, as getting a complimentary printed copy of each issue that one of his articles appears in (which is apparently what he requested) does not seem like a "financial reward" to me.

Did you ask (as an individual member, not as a committee member) whether you, or other authors, could have the same deal as Valentin?

Quote:

If it was agreed that one form of contribution to the club, namely writing articles for Datafile, was rewarded (say 1/6th off the subscription for each article published), I'd have no problem with that.

That seems like a reasonable plan. Did you propose that to the committee? Were the other committee members opposed?

I respectfully request that you and the other committee members try to adopt that plan, or something similar that will address both your concerns and those of Valentin.

Eric

Re: Letter to the Editor of Datafile

*Message #20 Posted by **Walter B** on 8 July 2007, 6:19 p.m.,
in response to message #12 by Tony Duell*

Tony,

I'm aware of you weren't posting as representative of the HPCC committee. So feel free to forward my following opinion to your colleagues as one vote of a simple HPCC member:

IMO it is a matter of course to send a complimentary copy of an edition of a magazine to all the authors who contributed. As far as I understood Valentin, that's all he wants. No more. So it shall be easy to settle this matter, and there shall be one problem less in this world.

Regards, Walter

P.S.: Ref. to your post: 1) Also I can't see any perks for me as a HPCC member on the continent besides receiving Datafile. Of course I would be glad to visit any meetings, speaking face to face with some of the famous people I know from their writings only so far, but I will certainly not travel to London just for that - too expensive in many ways. If there are more perks, please specify.

2) 1E4 ENTER 8 / 365 / 7 * 5 / results in 4.8 - so 1E4 hours correspond to almost 5 years working 8 hours a day (but weekends) on this topic. Hmmmh!?

Re: Letter to the Editor of Datafile

*Message #21 Posted by **Thomas Radtke** on 8 July 2007, 6:33 a.m.,
in response to message #1 by Eric Smith*

I wonder if it isn't possible for an author outside HPCC to contribute and in return receive a voucher upon accepting the article. Sorry if I missed this information on hpcc.org.

Re: Letter to the Editor of Datafile

*Message #22 Posted by **Forrest Switzer** on 8 July 2007, 9:07 p.m.,
in response to message #1 by Eric Smith*

There are some clubs and non-profit organizations that have established rules (be they written or just understood) that no one is to be paid in any manner for any service without the approval of the Board. It seems to me that this may be one of those cases where someone decided to give out a membership without Board approval. (Just guessing.)

I belong to a club and have produced a monthly newsletter for over 600 members for approximately 5-years. The only help has been from volunteers that helped apply the labels and tape the newsletter closed. The only thing done by outside help was the copying and the posting (US Mail). I personally composed, all the content and folded every one of the 3,4, or 5 sheets in each issue. When I started that project, I did so to make sure the Club had a means to help it survive, and I understood the commitment. I didn't expect any remuneration, and I have never received any. I pay for my wife's and my memberships.

The absolutely only time when a member receives a free membership is when the member has contributed something material, like wood, steel, or something that would have cost the Club much more than the \$35 yearly membership that they are given.

But, in all cases that requires a Board action.

MY 0.02

Forrest

Re: Letter to the Editor of Datafile

*Message #23 Posted by **Eric Smith** on 9 July 2007, 9:18 a.m.,
in response to message #22 by Forrest Switzer*

Quote:

It seems to me that this may be one of those cases where someone decided to give out a membership without Board approval.

As I understand it, the "free" membership for Valentin was approved by the committee, though clearly not unanimously.

I assume that HPCC holds elections in which the membership votes for the committee positions, so the final recourse for members that disapprove of committee actions is to try to vote in a new committee.

Re: Letter to the Editor of Datafile

*Message #24 Posted by **Tony Duell** on 9 July 2007, 1:15 p.m.,
in response to message #23 by Eric Smith*

Quote:

As I understand it, the "free" membership for Valentin was approved by the committee, though clearly not unanimously.

Correct. It was voted on, IIRC, at the end of an AGM by the members present at the AGM. There was a majority in favour of giving Valentin free membership, but it certainly wasn't unanimous

Quote:

I assume that HPCC holds elections in which the membership votes for the committee positions, so the final recourse for members that disapprove of committee actions is to try to vote in a new committee.

Indeed it does. There is an election for the committee members at the AGM every year. IIRC, any member of HPCC who has renewed their membership at least once can stand for any committee post. I believe they have to find members to propose and second them, but that is not a problem normally.

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