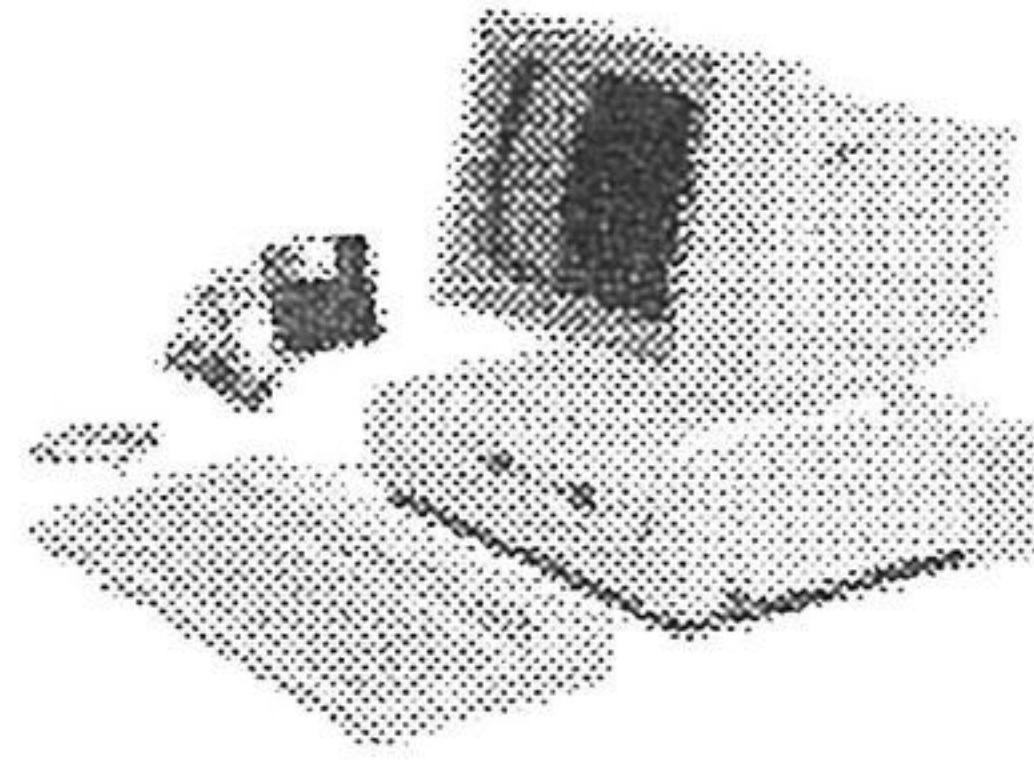


# Computer Tips

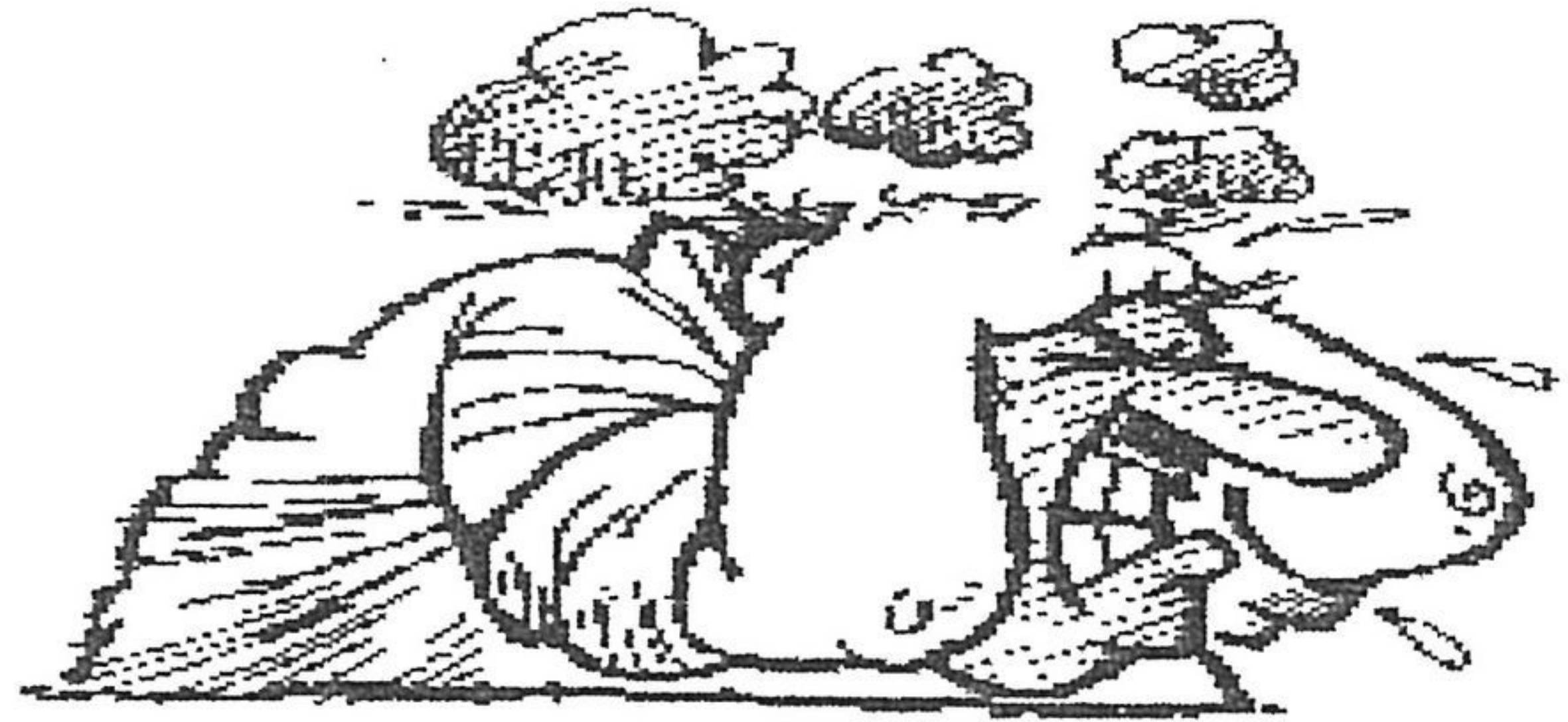


Summertime and the living's easy....well for some. Welcome to our column for July. Ah fair July, the flowers are blooming, the kids are jumping off the bridge and we're fixing and building computers. We've had quite a few questions about purchasing new computers recently and this month I will attempt to help answer a few of them here.

There are some questions that a client needs to ask themselves, the first being what exactly am I going to do with this machine? If you need it strictly for email and web browsing then some of those terrifically low price machines are right for you. Just don't expect to do much more than web and email. These machines are meant to be priced very low and therefore are easily replaced but not so easily upgraded. Computers are like cars, you get what you pay for. If you are trying to do some more advanced things, like play 3d games, burn cds, or use multiple programs all at once, look at the machines that are priced in the mid range. Currently you can step into a new system for close to \$1000 and middle of the road machines are priced at \$1500 and up, high end machines are \$2000 and up.

The next thing that confuses most people is all those weird numbers and letters that represents what is in the machine. There is no easier way for a computer salesperson to confuse a customer than to list off all the stats on a machine with no explanation. So here goes....The first number usually quoted is the processor speed, such as 1.8 gigahertz, this is the speed which a computer will process the information it is working with. You need to make sure this number matches up with an equivalent motherboard. The number from the motherboard that you should be concerned with is the front side bus speed or fsb. This number should be in the 266 range these days. The next thing is RAM or read access memory. This is the memory that the computer will use to open your programs with and is not to be confused with the size of you hard drive. RAM size does not mean that you have greater space on your computer it means that you have more space to use for opening programs and performing functions. Again, more is better.

*Continued on page 10*



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