

HHC 2021 Conference Report

Richard J. Nelson

Introduction

HHC 2021 resumed after skipping HHC 2020 in terms of our normal in-person Conferences. The hotel was very accommodating and the only short coming was the lack of a sound system. The 22 attendees were a small enough group that it worked out fine. As usual the presentations were varied from one of Richard Schwartz's presentation on "Starting a Fire" to David Ramsey's presentation on (exotic & historical) keyboards. Like anything else you may spend a few dollars or many hundreds of dollars on one. The incredible depth of knowledge of the attendees guarantees the educational value of the Conference. We had a normal and fun Conference and it was good to see old friends after skipping a year.

Attendance

President Biden didn't allow our normal Canadian, UK, and German attendees into the country because of COVID-19. This reduced our normal number which was in the low to mid 30's. COVID-19 also caused a few previously registered attendees to cancel very close to Conference time. We required COVID-19 vaccinations to register and that was a non-issue. We provided hand sanitizers, and masks to everyone who needed one and social distancing was practiced in the room layout. Because of our reduced attendance numbers our expenses were not covered by the \$60 donation. See the details in the Finance section.



Back Row. L to R: Kim Thompson, Jim Johnson, Eric Rechlin, Dan McDonald, Bob Prosperi, Gene Wright, Brian Walsh, Jake Schwartz, Joey Shepard, Craig Bladow.

Front Row: Joseph Horn, David Hayden, Peter Marschall, Richard Nelson, Roger Hill, Richard Schwartz, Mary Boetcher, David Ramsey, Eric Smith, Stephen Thomas, Jim Wild. Missing: Lora Marschall. Photo: Joseph Horn.

Fig. 1 – HHC 2021 attendees. Lora had just left to take a cell phone call.

Presentations

Our Conferences are all videoed. Eric Rechlin did “real time” videos in addition to Jake Schwartz’s more formal videos. Here is Eric’s report.

HHC 2021 Videos

On Wed, Oct 6, 2021 at 1:17 PM Eric Rechlin <rechlin@gmail.com> wrote:

HHC 2021 went very well as expected. Even though we only had 22 attendees, we still had plenty of great presentations. Everyone seemed to have a great time and we are all looking forward to next year, when hopefully there will no longer be travel restrictions and many more will be able to come. A huge thank you to Richard Nelson for organizing the conference and to Gene Wright for hosting and doing lots of behind-the-scenes work.

As in past years, I recorded the talks. Unfortunately, I had some technical difficulties. I do a dual-camera setup, with one powered by AC power and one on batteries. A few weeks ago I checked the 5 batteries I had, and I discovered 2 were totally bad and 3 seemed OK, so I ordered 2 new batteries. However, upon recording at the conference I discovered the “new” batteries only had about half the usable capacity that the old ones had when new, and the 3 old ones I had were only able to provide perhaps 10% capacity. This means my secondary camera was frequently running out of battery power, even with charging multiple batteries simultaneously. Also I had a few issues when a camera would unexpectedly stop recording and I wouldn’t notice for a bit, so in a few cases I am using images of the slides with the video of the presenter to fill in the gaps.

Thankfully, I still ended up with some good recordings; just the second angle was not always possible. I don’t think I missed more than a total of maybe 30 seconds of presentations throughout the whole conference, and that was mostly due to some presenters unexpectedly starting too quickly for me to have my camera ready. And I am also grateful to Gene Wright for manning my cameras (and maneuvering battery swaps on one of them!) while I gave my talk.

The recordings are now all uploaded to YouTube here:

- 1 Calculator Bibliography Update - **Felix Gross** (27:55) **This was remote from Germany.**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sK-0CzTOx9w>
- 2 Calculator Challenge - **Bob Proseri** (27:35)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1_RTAZoye-A
- 3 What's on the HHC 2021 USB Drive - **Eric Rechlin** (25:42)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2N45fQQphDc>
- 4 Computing Logarithms by Integration - **Richard Schwartz** (17:02)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H5dOWhpMoXo>
- 5 The HP 9808A/B Unicorn - The Product that Almost Was - **Chuck McCord** (28:02) **Remote from Oregon.**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tq9QaeAN_2c
- 6 Starting a Fire - **Richard Schwartz** (10:10)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Di84nmvgGdI>
- 7 What's New in the PPC Archive Version 2.39 - **Jake Schwartz** (23:29)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xHXu1_xH1r4
- 8 Techniques for Digitally Preserving Technical Manuals and Other Books - **Eric Rechlin** (99:09)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8TCSNG24bT0>
- 9 Calculator Ad Price Analysis - **Gene Wright** (2:34)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1C5CstNLdOY>

- 10 Lines and Graphs - **Gene Wright** (32:00)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uGw-oWk6Bv8>
- 11 Diagnosing Problems with the HP-19C With Focus on the Printer - **Jim Johnson** (29:00)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ASshqrGtb5Y>
- 12 Remembering Thomas M. Whitney - **Jim Johnson** (2:54)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QcXfGd7V5Gs>
- 13 CC41 A Touch Typist's Calculator - **Craig Bladow** (27:53)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CUvFmkcpVys>
- 14 Something About Keyboards - **David Ramsey** (39:40)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vwxp3b8utWI>
- 15 Rockwell Calculators - **Gene Wright** (22:58)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oF2mRhx6IVM>
- 16 Make Your Own Slide Rule - **Richard Schwartz** (25:26)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uhyof_e9XNc
- 17 What We Started - **Richard Nelson** (65:24)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-rfjxqxOkJA>

SUNDAY

- 18 6502 Calculator Projects - **Joey Shepard** (27:09)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fNx0s4iwssQ>
- 19 History of Floating Point Processors - **Eric Smith** (38:11)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BUYLzXFNS7w>
- 20 Accuracy Comparisons, 7 Methods & 30 Programs - **Richard Nelson** (22:53)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pa0WFzSHklc>
- 21 Another Perspective of the Scanning Projects - Content - **Bob Prospero** (39:20)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5G-iZr2yjH0>

AWARDS

- Award Winners - Gene Wright and Richard Nelson (6:34)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jE-Rlx_1U8k

That's a total of 10 hours, 41 minutes, and 6 seconds of recordings!

Additionally, for those who were wanting a copy of the 128 GB USB drive included in the conference registration packet, that can be purchased here for \$45 plus shipping (\$5-18 depending on destination):

<https://commerce.hpcalc.org/hhcusb.php>

Eric Rechlin

RJN Note. The cost of attending the Conference was \$60 donation which included two lunches and a dinner. The collected donations, \$1,320, was about \$1,000 short to meet costs and the balance for hotel costs etc. was drawn from the HHC reserve.

If you scan the topics you will notice the large technical variety. The remote presentations were courtesy of Gene's Zoom account. #1 - Felix's Q&A starts at 20:34. You may also see the group during this time. #5 - Chuck McCord's Q&A starts at 24:11.

If you have any technical questions related to scanning technical documents you will find Eric's presentation, #8, extremely detailed and informative.

Conference 128 GB Drive

Eric Rechlin did a superb job of assembling the 128 GB USB Drive. It is so comprehensive that I can't delve into it here. Watch Eric's video presentation, #3. Essentially it is the HP Calculator Internet "in your hand." See the orange text above to obtain one.

A Few Words of Caution from Eric: Because the 128 GB HHC 2021 drive is over 99% full, with over 800,000 files, it can be difficult and time consuming to duplicate it. Copying the files individually can potentially take an entire day, so duplicating the drive as an image with software like ImageUSB is recommended. Because not all "128 GB" drives are the same size, even from the same brand and model number, a "128 GB" target drive may not even be big enough, so a larger drive may be necessary to fit everything.

Some user software will indicate false reports of viruses, etc. The drive you get from Eric is clean and it has been examined and verified to be virus free

Best speaker

The attendee voted best speaker was Gene Wright. He picked the Workslate Laptop from the calculator door prize table – Fig. 9 cardboard box.

Programming contest

Two programming contests were held. The RPN Programming Contest was won by Dave Hayden. He picked the Handheld Calculator Program book from the regular prize table.

The RPL Programming Contest was won by Roger Hill who picked a Keyboard prize from the regular prize table.

Here are the winners of the Premium Door Prizes.

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| 1. HP-32s 50 th Anniversary calculator | Kim Thompson |
| 2. HP-50G calculator | Richard Schwartz |
| 3. Modern Model M Keyboard | Bob Prosperi |
| 4. DM-10L calculator | Eric Smith |
| 5. DM-42 calculator | Lora Marschall |
| 6. Modern Model F Keyboard | Craig Bladow |

The door prizes are divided into two groups. A normal group and a premium group. All awards and contest winners get first pick (best speaker first) from this group. Door prizes are donated by attendees (sometimes sent in if unable to attend), calculator suppliers, the Committee, etc. The premium group is selected by the Committee for the rare or more expensive donations. Everyone gets a chance at these prizes at the end of the drawing. As usual each attendee went home with four prizes each.



Fig. 2 - HHC 2021 USB3 128 GB drive.

A numbered ticket (same a registration number) is randomly drawn from a container. Many Conferences ago (in Chicago) we discussed using a calculator random number generator (selection without replacement) and the idea was rejected for obvious reasons.

Conference photos



Fig. 3 – Left end of normal door prize table.



Fig. 4 – Moving right for more door prizes.



Fig. 5 – Moving further right for more door prizes.



Fig. 6 – Far right of non-calculator door prize table.



Fig. 7 - Left end of calculator door prizes table.



Fig. 8 – Middle of the calculator door prizes table.

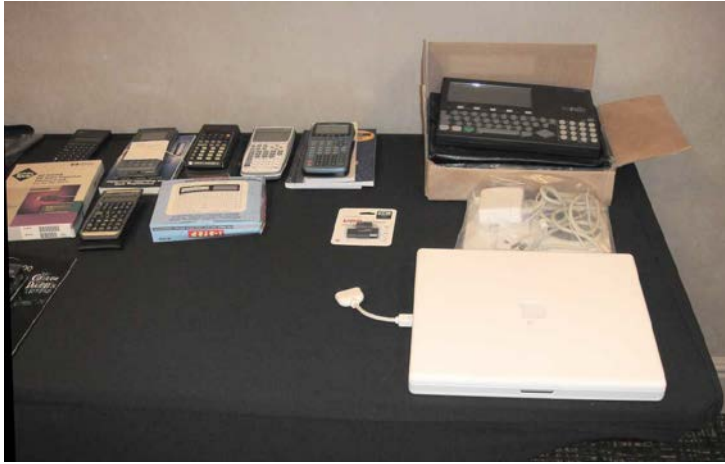


Fig. 9 – Right end of calculator door prizes table.



Fig. 10- Door prizes at front left and right tables.



Fig. 11 – Left end of the premium prize table.

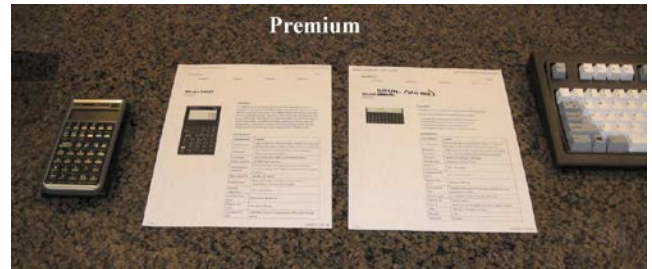


Fig. 12 – Two Swiss Micro donated calculators.



Fig. 13 - Right end of the premium door prize table.



Fig. 14 – High quality computer (expensive) keyboard.

Conference finances

The Conference donation was set at our “maximum” of \$60 knowing that we would have to draw from our HHC funds.

Income: 22 paid \$60 for a total of \$1,320.00 collected by Bob Prospero at registration.
 USB Drive sales \$3,250.79 collected by Eric Rechlin to date* - 211116.
 Total HHC income \$4,570.79 since last Conference.

* Quote from Eric’s email with a summary of all drive sales to date. “Total raised since HHC 2019 through November 16, 2021: **\$3250.79** from 155 drives sold outside conferences”

Expenses: Hotel Meeting Rooms	\$1,075.52
Saturday Lunch, Panera	\$ 336.69
Saturday Dinner, Cheddars	\$ 261.87
Sunday Lunch, Jim N Nicks	\$ 310.83
Walmart drinks & supplies	\$ 160.33
Registration packet supplies	\$ 19.05
Total expenses:	\$2,164.29

Less Conference income and drive sales \$ 844.29 is the amount drawn from our reserves for HHC 2021. The balance carried over from HHC 2019 was \$3,805.85.

Adding the drive sales and subtracting HHC 2021 expenses leaves a current balance of \$ **4,892.35** for future Conferences.

Our “system” of using an HHC debit card and charging all expenses to that card for a clean accounting done by the bank was seriously messed up this year because the card was “damaged” because it was carried in my wallet and doesn’t scan very well. I have since replaced the card and I will NOT carry it in my wallet. Our payments were made by Gene and I sent him a personal check which I would balance from my account to the HHC account. Our simple and clean accounting system failed this year.

Special David Ramsey thanks

David drove to Nashville from Reno in his large 4-door hatchback. He provided transportation for attendees and Conference supply runs, often “picking up the tab” himself. He spent endless hours using his 3D printing (AKA additive manufacturing) capability to manufacture items for attendees (offer made on the HHC List). He made several different calculator stand designs as door prizes. I have one I use for my new Fluke palm sized digital multimeter because it doesn’t have one. He has done this for several Conferences. From a past HHC I have an elaborate ball bearing three circular “racing tracks” demonstration. See Fig. 15. In the background is Jake Schwartz with his “network” of cameras with Brian Walsh looking on during a Conference break. “73” in the Amateur Radio community means “Best Regards.” David was the local host for HHC 2014 and HHC 2019 and he is currently the HHC webmaster. Thank you David.



Fig. 15 - David Ramsey & wife Mary, just simple apple folks.

HHC List Usage (A Google Group)

With the rapidly changing and unpredictable COVID-19 situation the Committee needed to know the desires and concerns of potential attendees. This ranged from estimating the potential number of attendees in order to officially announce a Conference, to requiring vaccination for registration. The list served us well and thanks go to Eric Smith for setting this up. Information on joining the list is at the bottom of the opening page of the HHC website (see below). Here is a link. <https://hhuc.us/2021/hhclist.pdf>

HHC 2021 Website

David Ramsey took over the HHC website from Joseph Horn when he retired from the HHC Committee. David did a great job and if you didn’t know this you would not have noticed any changes (there were a minor few). The Attendee Page is the most critical as it keeps everyone in the Community up-to-date on

the Conference. This is an unusual challenge because it has been patched together for two decades and in terms of computer advancements that is more than a lifetime. Here is a link to the page that allows you to link to all HHC Conferences this century – HHC 2020 excluded. <https://hhuc.us/>

HHC 2022 discussion

Several people offered local help for next year and their locations were discussed. The dates per our “formula” from Jake: “The first “clear” date is Sept 17-18 (3rd weekend). We mostly discussed this one during the conference. Other potential dates are October 1-2 (1st weekend) and October 8-9 (2nd weekend). I think that since HPCC will be planning their 40th-anniversary conference in October and also the Swiss Alschwil (every-two-year) conference will also be in October, we’re basically hoping the September 17th-18th is chosen.” We should have at least two possible dates for better hotel choices.

Here are the four possible locations, in what I perceive to be, the most popular order.

Orlando, FL.	Steve Thomas
Denver, CO	Eric Smith
Reno, NV	David Ramsey
Nashville, TN	Gene Wright

I usually suggest that discussions (on the list) of the next Conference NOT start until well after the Holiday season to avoid Committee “burn out.”

Observations and conclusion

It seems recently that each year has offered unusual challenges for a fun, informative, and low cost Conference. It is during these special years that I have come to believe that we actually have our own guardian angel that watches over us. This COVID-19-influenced year was an especially trying year and still we had another successful, happy, and fast paced Conference. Our single minded dedication to a well-defined format and the working principles we have followed since the first Conference in 1979 is working very well. These guide us happily forward. Our continued sharing in knowledge and “toys” is amazing in that the door prize tables always get filled - for four “new” toys for each attendee. Our financial resources grow, especially because of the dedicated USB drive work of Eric Rechlin. Thanks to you all. We look forward to HHC 2022.

For the HHC 2021 Conference Committee

Richard J. Nelson
November 18, 2021