

**CHIPS Newsletter Vol 7**

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Topics

Maker Faire Detroit**PICkit 2 GUI Trick****Embedded C Book Volume 3****Conclusion**

Maker Faire - Detroit

The Maker Faire in Detroit (actually Dearborn Michigan) was a great success for everybody involved. The Faire was in the Henry Ford Museum parking lot and also inside the museum. I was setup inside so I had a nice air conditioned booth which turned out to be an advantage because it was a hot weekend in Michigan. Figure 1 below shows my booth and I had many readers stop by along with many more who just wanted to learn what a microcontroller was and how to use it. I offered a simple demonstration of both PICBASIC using the CHIPAXE products and C Programming using the PICkit 2 Starter Kit. It was a lot of talking and the crowd was continuous but I enjoyed it. In the background is the Dymaxion house (Figure 2) which is an all metal house designed back in the 50's to help with the housing shortage after the war. It never caught on and we were told this is the last one standing.



Figure 1 - Maker Faire Booth

Clearly though I needed a more flashy display as there were some amazing gadgets outside that people had built and were showing off at the Faire. You can catch many of the gadgets in various YouTube videos. Just search on Maker Faire Detroit.



Figure 2 - Dymaxion House - Henry Ford Museum

Needless to say, being inside and busy didn't allow me much time to see all the projects running at Maker Faire on the outside. The night before the opening, they had a meet and greet for all the presenters and the Fish Car was running around showing off the singing fish and lobsters. It was an amazing example of how to control a bunch of motorized fish and lobsters that appeared to be singing together while a computer inside controlled the action. The fish were those Billy Bass singing fish remounted on the car. I sold one of those singing fish on EBAY many years ago and wondered who would buy such an old useless thing but here is an example of just how creative people can be at Maker Faire.



Figure 3 - Fishcar

If it comes to your town, make sure you visit Maker Faire.

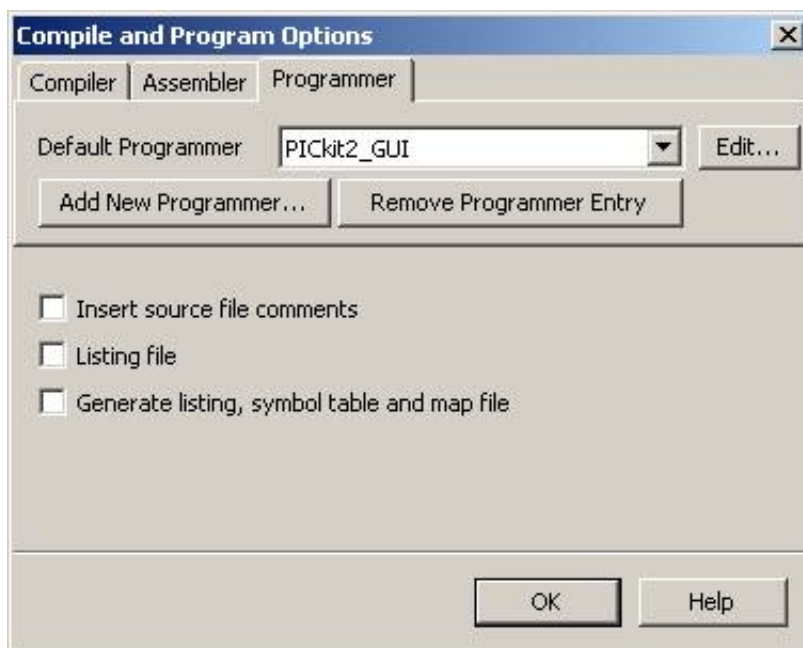
PICkit 2 GUI Trick

For years I've searched for a way to launch the PICkit 2 GUI from a command line

but could never find a way to do it until now. While scanning a forum on sourceboost C compiler I found an old post for Timothy Weber's website where he described how he had created a way to launch the PICKit 2 GUI from a command line. His website is:

<http://timothyweber.org/autopickit>

He actually created it before the PICKit 2 command line was offered by Microchip. I tried it out in the Microcode Studio for PICBASIC and it worked great. You download his .zip file and unzip it to your hard drive. The main command file is BurnPicKit.exe and the visual steps to install it in Microcode Studio is below. This works so great I recommend it to everyone. By using this method you now have easy access to the PICKit 2 UART and Logic Tool. Plus you can easily control the power to the board connected to the PICKit 2. Try it out and let me know how you like it compared to the command line option.



Step 1 - Select the Compile and Program option



Step 2 - Enter the command file BurnPickKit.exe



Step 3 - Click on Find Manually and locate the BurnPickKit.exe file



Step 4 - Enter the \$long-hex-filename\$ option and click finish

When you click on the compile/program icon it will compile the code and then launch the PICKit 2 GUI software (shown below). The GUI will then sense the PIC in the board connected to the PICKit 2 and load the .hex file you created. It will then automatically program and verify the part. The window will stay open so you can use the logic or uart tool.

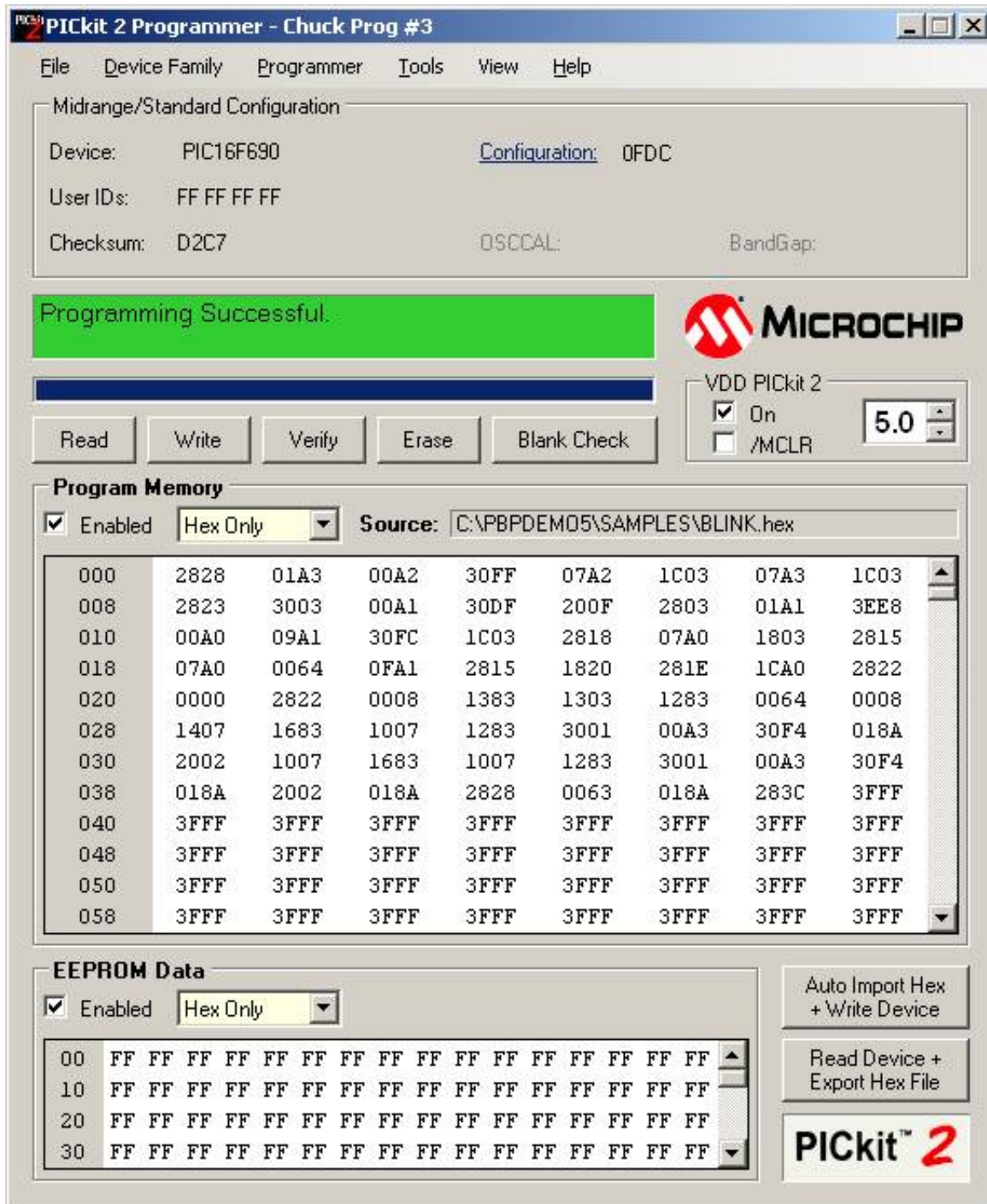


Figure 4 - PICkit 2 GUI Software

Embedded C Book Volume 3

I introduced the cover for my Beginner's Guide to Embedded C Programming - Volume 3 book at the Faire. It's still a work in progress but it will focus on more useful functions with the intent of creating a library of useful functions. The book will definitely use the PIC16F886 and at least one chapter will feature the CHIPINO module from CHIPAXE.com. I'm hoping to have the book released by the end of the year but time is running out fast.



Figure 5 - Volume 3

Conclusion

It was a busy July and its already been a hectic August. I'll be attending the Microchip Master's conference on July 23-28. If you are going, shoot me an email so we can meet. I'd like to meet more of my audience in person.

Please send me any feedback, questions and comments on anything discussed here or any ideas you have for future topics to chuck@elproducts.com. I do read them all.

See you in the next release which is scheduled for September 1st.

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