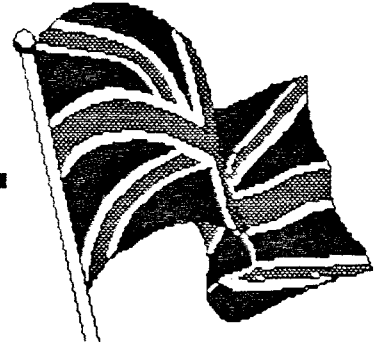


geoNEWS



JOURNAL OF geoCLUB

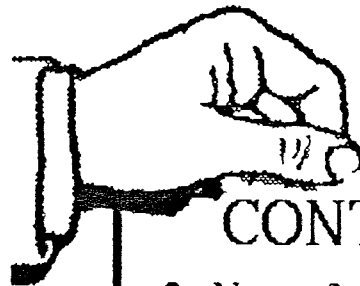
ISSUE 8

APRIL 1992



EDITOR'S COMMENT

Well, geoNEWS time caught me well behind with my work load this month. If there's anyone out there owed a letter please accept my apologies. Unfortunately we discovered that a virus had crept onto the hard disk of our PC and it has been a devil of a job to get rid of it. I think we have managed to rid ourselves of it off the hard disk at least but it looks like many of our floppy disks have become infected and corrupted, it's bad news. The C64/C128 is not as far as I am aware susceptible to virus's so we can count ourselves very lucky. No doubt most if not all of you will have received a flyer from USA Direct saying they are selling up all their C64/C128 stock as they were no longer going to stock these items with the exception of GEO64 V2.0. Some of you will also have seen a half page advertisement in this months Commodore Format by USA Direct advertising everything for the serious C64/C128 user, confused? aren't we all. But help could be just around the corner, or rather in the old county town of Lincoln in the shape of A W Software, if it arrives in time I hope to reproduce a list of goods available from this source. We have had a few more members join us this month bringing the total to 36. I had intended to print this



CONTENTS

2. New 3.5" Disk Drive
4. Guide to Fault-Finding
4. Icontroller the GEOS Joystick
5. New Desk Top CLI
7. Reduction PrinterDrivers
8. Readers Letters

issue with PERFECT PRINT but because I use a serial printer it is quite slow and as I mentioned earlier I decided that if I used P.P. on this page, you could compare it with the other pages a see for yourself the difference in print quality, and wether it was really worth \$55.

Happy GEOS-ing Frank

A New 3.1/2" Drive for the C64/C128

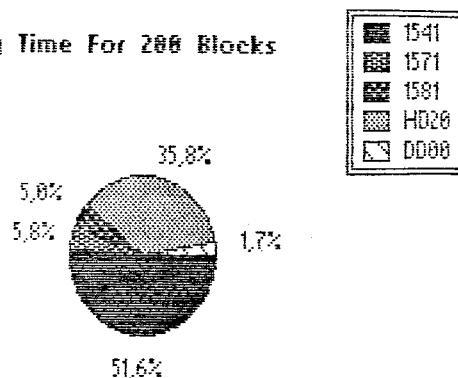
by Roy McIntosh

The largest barrier hindering the exchange of data between a Commodore C64/C128 and the IBM-compatibles in the PC-World, ie. the difference in disk formats, has finally been totally removed. The C64 writes it's information to a single sided disk, using 35 tracks with a varying number of blocks. The PC, on the other hand, uses both sides with 40 tracks and a fixed number of blocks, this is the main reason that neither machine (C64/C128 or PC) can either understand or read each other's data.

Strangely enough, a great deal of computer owners have both types of machine in use. More often than not the PC is used at work (sometimes also at home) whilst the C64/C128 is mostly to be found in the home. If in the past something had been written on one or other of the machines, to transfer the information for use on the other computer entailed either the use of a serial interface + adapter cable, or in the case of the C64/C128 a program called "The Big Blue Reader" could be put to use , but as in most cases it is time consuming.

With the use of the latest addition to the C64 hardware-line this obstacle should now be a thing of the past. The drive was developed by a British company, called T.I.B., and hails from Bradford. The latest

Loading Time For 200 Blocks



hardware addition is a 3.1/2-inch drive called the DD-001. The drive itself is a modified drive which stems from the company "CITIZEN", and promises a high standard of quality. The drive is incorporated in a plastic housing and is connected by means of a flat-band cable directly to the control board. This is situated together with the driver-software in an EPROM, which fits directly into the serial port of the C64/C128.

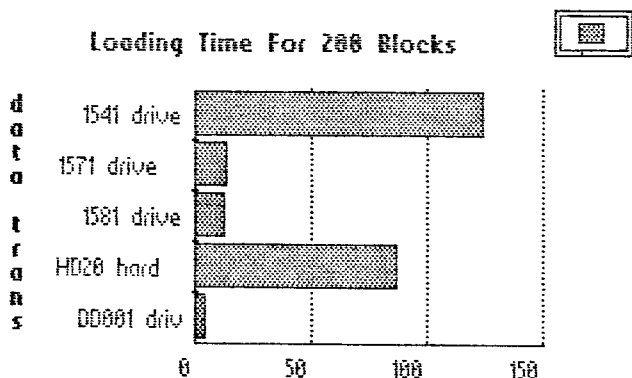
Along with the drive and permanently connected eprom connecting-lead comes a disk containing a variety of programs, games and tools for working with ASCII and HEX-files.

After the DD-001 has been connected to the C64/C128 and the computer has been switched on, the computer will attempt to go through the boot-sequence. If the monitor now emits a multitude of noises and humming sounds from the integrated speaker as soon as the motor in the drive starts to work. This is because the complete setup is provided with power via the expansion port. This can cause a maximum of 1100 milliamperes of current to flow where only 500 mA are needed. This power-surge can lead to a complete breakdown in the usual flow of power through the power-pack (in Germany only) and could lead to a loss of power to the C64.

According to the supplier this does not happen to the models sold in England due to the difference in the type of power source used; ie., England has alternating current and The Mainland (that's the rest of EUROPE) has direct current. The problem is with the direct current!

Once the power problem has been solved by the use of a transformer or regulator of some description (this is not necessary for England -

Loading Time For 200 Blocks



you lucky people !!) the drive can be switched on and either a program may be started straight away or a menu will be shown and a number of choices can be made. If a disk is not already in the drive, the C64 switches directly back to basic. There should now be 30 K-Byte of memory free for the programs to work, unfortunately Geos does not recognize the drive and cannot be used together with it.

However, the drive does have its advantages; ie., the transferal and conversion of data from the C64/C128 for the PC. This happens very easily and without the use of cable and interface. Text-files can be copied from the 1541 drive onto a disk in the new 3 1/2" drive. The 3 1/2" disk is then inserted into the PC-Drive and a text program such as Word can then be loaded. As the text has already been converted by the DD-001 you can get down to work straight away, and that is it!!

You can also transfer files back in the opposite direction without any problems at all. All programs that allow ASCII files to be either manipulated or read can also be used to transfer or read information to and/or from each other. If a text program does not work together with the new drive, then the easiest way around this problem is to go via the 1541 and transform the files into ASCII files first!

The new drive does have its setbacks though, for instance; a loss of about 8 K-Byte RAM as well as the already well known drawbacks of both systems. These are as follows: From the PC-side, there is the restriction to only 8 characters for each file name. From the C64/C128-side, there is the lack of sub-files that have always existed with these 8-bit machines. This leads to the following problems; if the name of a program to be loaded is either in a subfile or the name is longer than 8 characters it will not be able to be loaded.

Naturally it must be taken into

consideration that the drive is primarily a second drive. It is therefore mainly for data transfer, to archive the various files and or to work on your own basic programs. This functions without any problem providing that one or two basic rules are followed. The, under normal circumstances, often used possibility of including a drive command within an "OPEN" command (ie.: OPEN 1,8,15,"1") often leads the DD 001 to an abrupt breakdown of the task in hand and to an error report! This small problem can be solved by separating the various parts of the command, ie.: **OPEN 1,8, :PRINT #1,"1"**

The actual list of drive commands is not quite complete, due to its PC compatibility. More important is the speed, in which programs and files can be loaded to the computer. This is where the drive comes into its own and transfers about **200 Blocks in under 5 seconds**. The 1541 can just about reach this transferal speed providing that it is backed by one of the more regal drive speeders of the more expensive type. See the additional graph(s) for more information.

All in all, a more easier and safer means of data transferal would be hard to find. In fact the DD 001 could be described as the ideal second drive for the User with both a PC and a C64 in use. Further to this add the included disk containing tools and other programs for use with the DD 001, which leaves the new owner lacking for nothing. In fact all he/she needs to do is to get on down and try it out!!

This report was written by Roy McIntosh; the contents of the report were translated from a report which was published in the German **C64'er**: The C64-User's magazine in Germany. The article appeared in the January 92 issue, and is a result of trials run by the magazines staff. The additional graph(s) included with this report was (were) made using GeoChart and is a copy of the original graph from the C64'er. The address of the company marketing the **DD-001** is as follows:

T. I. B. P.L.C.
36-50 Adelaide Street
Bradford
305 OEA

A GUIDE TO FAULT-FINDING ON YOUR C64

by ALAN MORRIS

Here is a list of checks to try to help determine the fault when you are confronted with a blank screen after switching on your C64. It is not intended to be a complete repair document it's just a guide to help those who may be able to repair their own machine once pointed in the right direction.

1. Check the external supplies from the P.S.U. there should be +5Volts DC and 10Volts AC.
2. Check the internal supplies. The 10V AC provides the 5V DC regulated supply and the +12V DC. (This regulated +5V DC is in addition to the +5 DC 'Nominal' in 1 above).
3. If all the supplies are OK, switch the C64 on and leave for about 5 to 10 minutes. Check by careful touch, the heat of all the IC's, nothing should be hotter than the SID CHIP (6581) or the VIC CHIP. If RAM, ROM, or CPU are excessively hot then replace.
4. Check pin 40 on the CPU (6510) with a DVM This is the reset line and should go high approx. 5-8 seconds after switch on, ie. +5 V. if not, suspect the NE555 timer chip or associated components.
5. Remove the SID CHIP (6581 Sound IC). Then switch on, the C64 will run without this chip but if it is faulty then it gives a blank screen. This test therefore checks the SID chip.
6. If the PLA chip is U/S it will also keep the screen blank about 90% of blank screen faults are due to this chip going U/S. If it is socketed then replacement is the simple solution to prove this IC.
7. If the CPU is U/S, this will stop the initialisation routine which is another 'Blank Screen' fault Substitute the 6510 to prove.

8. If any RAM is U/S this will also give 'Blank Screen'. 'scope pins 2-14 of all RAM chips (the data lines) these should all look very similar, pulses of around 4.5 to 5 V amplitude. If you have no 'scope then check with a Voltmeter levels should be loaded to about 3 Volts.

Basically what happens at switch on is, as the supply is produced a reset is sent to the CPU chip which in turn kicks off the housekeeping program stored within the PLA chip. This in turns checks all the RAM, ROMS and ancillary chips. If this is all successful then the screen is enabled allowing the usual ' WELCOME MESSAGE' to be displayed.

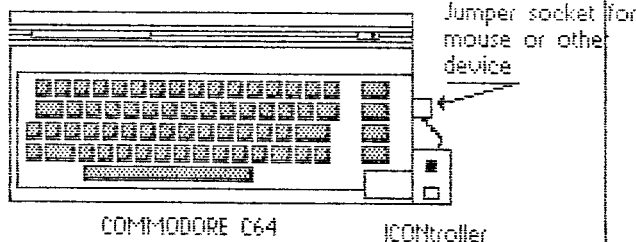
The ICONtroller a GEOS users Joystick

Most serious computer users these days use a mouse mainly because of it's ease of movement which gets easier with practice. For the GEOS user with their point and click environment nothoing could be faster or better and for anyone who does not use a mouse they do not know how easy it makes movement around the system. Only when we come into the geoPAINT arena do we hit problems, it's not quite so easy to draw with a mouse and in pixel edit harder still so here a joystick may well be preferred. Most users will already have a joystick and it's a simple matter to unplug the mouse and switch to joystick use but there is a far better method, and thats the use of the ICONtroller. . The ICONtroller is in effect a miniature joystick that fastens on the side of the keyboard with a self-adhesive pad and believe you this is an excellent device. It's major advantages are that it never goes "missing" as it is fastened to the keyboard, it takes up hardly any room at all, and it's response is in many respects far better than the average joystick, it's an item made for GEOS. It comes with a short lead which for most people except 128D users will be plenty long enough, it also has a 'jumper plug ' attached so

that when it is plugged into the joystick port the mouse can then be plugged into the jumper plug and so both can be used without the need to swap them over physically although they will need to be changed by selecting GEOS from the Desk Top and doing a device change. The product made by Suncomm Accessories is available from TENEX at a price of \$17.95 at an exchange rate of \$1.70 to the £1.00 that's just over £10 quite a good price even though there will be exchange rate fluctuations. If you are interested you can drop TENEX a line and check out carriage charges or contact AW Software of Lincoln and see what help they can offer to obtain one. Please remember that enclosing and S.A.S.E. often speeds up a reply.

Addresses..... **AW Software, 104 Hollywell Road, Lincoln, LN5 9BY**

Tenex 56800, Magnetic Drive, Mishawaka, Indiana, 46545-7481, U.S.A.



MOVING

Please let us know your new address as soon as possible so we can keep your copy of the newsletter coming to you without delay. Send your new address to.....

geoCLUB

Manchester

The New DeskTop Replacement: CLI

by Roy McIntosh

Another "STAR" on the Geos horizon is the new replacement DeskTop for Geos, from Juergen Eckel of the GUC in Germany, called CLI. The abbreviation CLI stands for **C**ommand **L**ine **I**nterpreter and is not a usual DeskTop replacement which uses graphics, such as the normal DeskTop or TopDesk (which also stems from the GUC in Germany), but is based on the PC keyboard-commands which originate from the DOS world. CLI presents the user with a **very fast** and effective programme environment, which is also very easy to use and has a number of similarities with various PC commands.

CLI only functions via the keyboard. There is not a mouse program incorporated. However, as soon as an application has been started the mouse pointer is back in full swing.

Many of the commands from the IBM compatible "DOS Computers" have been intentionally incorporated. This means that it was not necessary for a new list of commands to have been thought out, and the often clumsy and longwinded C64 syntax (commands + parameters) have been avoided.

The use of DOS commands has many advantages: they are simple, easy to remember and to understand and can be mastered quickly. A further point to be mentioned is that, should at a later date you wish to swap your C64/C128 for one of the larger, more expensive, and completely overrated PC's, the groundwork in learning many of the commands has already been covered, and you can get straight down to work - wasting all of that money will not have been completely in vain....!

CLI is on offer in two versions: One for the C64, and one for the C128, which runs in the 40 and in the 80 character mode.

There is no need to replace the normal DeskTop on your BootDisk. The new replacement DeskTop CLI is loaded via a small desk accessory called Init_CLI, and automatically reloaded after exiting an application. If the desk accessory Init_CLI and

the CLI system file are located on the BootDisk the program will be automatically installed after the boot sequence has finished. The complete program is then installed in the computer memory and does not have to be reloaded on each access. After the program has been loaded an empty screen with the prompt in the top left hand corner will be seen. The prompt consists of the Drive letter, a colon (:) and a > shaped character followed by the cursor:

A> _

CLI works together with a maximum of three drives (A - B - C), it is necessary for one of the drives to be a RAM-expansion (REU). The active drive can be swapped by entering "b.". Now all that is required is the entry DIR or DIR/W to be made which either shows the directory in the usual format or (/W) in the wide format. On entering the name of the document required, the document including the appropriate application, will then be started.

Here are some of the commands that have been taken from the DOS-World:

- **Type:** allows all texts to be shown on screen, a page at a time. It is **not** necessary for the application to be on the disk.

- **PRT:** (print) allows a document to be printed; the appropriate application **must** be in either drive A or B!

- **Backup:** allows the contents of a disk (or RAM-Disk) to be copied as a **single** (!) file on to another disk. By activating RESTORE the file can be copied back again.

- **XDEL** erases a complete disk; apart from the 3 Boot files on a BootDisk!

There are eight (8) function keys which come preprogrammed. And if the Key_Manager program is put to use (it comes complete on the CLI-Disk) each of

the keys can be redefined. A small program, which allows a list of all of the appropriate key-commands to be blended in, is also part of the new CLI DeskTop. This program must be present on the disk in the active drive.

As the CLI Program is fairly small (it's only 18 KBytes), more memory area can be used for the copying of files.

CLI is compatible to RAM-PROCESS, the CBM-RAMS and the geoRAM

CLI will be included in the GEOS Professional program-line and can be obtained for **DM 23.-** from the **GUC** in **GERMANY**. The program is still undergoing it's Beta-Tests at the moment and an English program manual has not yet been written.

Program Source:

Martin Sauter

Weingarten

GERMANY

This article is a translation of an article which appeared in the GUP, the GUC'S bi-monthly magazine. The article appeared in the February 92 publication.

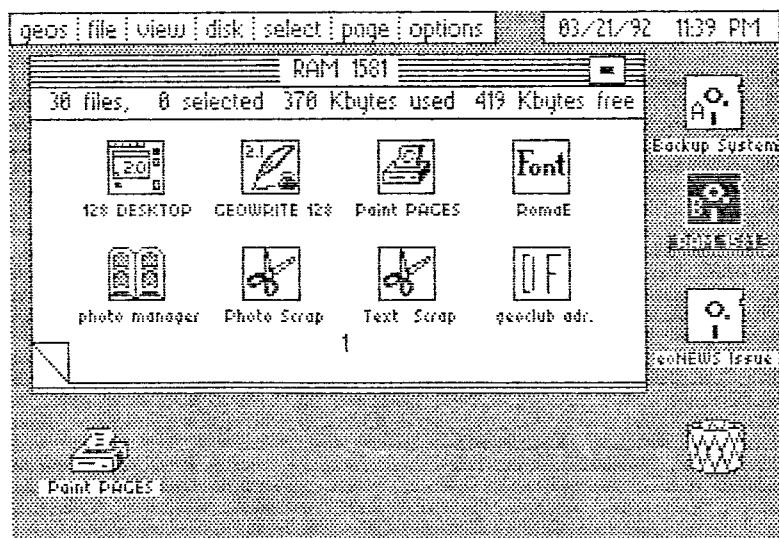
:-) Roy McIntosh

INFO	
NAME	FRANK CASSIDY
STREET	
TOWN	
CITY	MANCHESTER
ZIP	
TEL	
PACKET	
<input type="checkbox"/> WRITE PROTECT	
Producer and Editor of this newsletter	

REDUCTION PRINTER DRIVERS

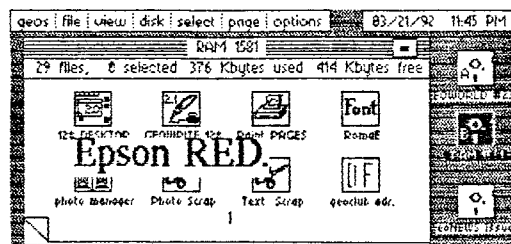
Those of you who have purchased Dweezil Disk 3 and used DweezilLabel will no doubt have seen in one of the drop-down menu's in the Print Mode, Printer Reduction. Maybe like me you wondered what that was, tried it and found it didn't work, the reason for this is the need of a special REDUCTION Printer Driver. The results of using this utility can be very useful, I use it for Disk labels with a screen dump of the DeskTop and the disk title in large letters where the icons would normally be. Fig 1. shows a sample with a normal printer driver. The screen dump being

FIG 1



Standard desk Top screen dump using GeoWIZARD by Jim Collette

obtained by using one of the options when utilizing GeoWIZARD. (This can only be used by people with Ram Expansion Units). Fig 2. shows a screen dump using a Reduction Printer driver from within DweezilLabel. The menu option within DweezilLabel allows for a reduction of



Screen Dump using Epson RED and utilising DweezilLabel by David B Ferguson

either 33% or 66% but to use these the correct driver must have already been selected from the DeskTop. These Printer Drivers can be used with all other programs as far as I am aware, I have printed out reduced geoPAINT files using them to good effect. Unfortunately that is all I know about Reduction Drivers, I do possess only

two, one is the Epson RED. and the other Cltoh RED. As I use a Star LC 10 Commodore I can use the Epson Red only, if anyone would like copies of these to play around with they would be more than welcome. Anyone who may be capable of re-writing printer drivers could find a worthwhile application of their talents here. Please send a GEOS formatted disk with return postage. See address in info box on Page 6 of this issue (it's usually on the front page).

NEW MEMBERS

This month are.....

Brian Kinghorn - Newcastle Upon Tyne
 Margaret Foster - Scarborough
 Jean Parmentier - Dilbeek BELGIUM
 Barbara Hodgson - Hull
 Paul Milner - Spangenberg GERMANY

WELCOME !!

A few edited extracts from my geoMailBag.

Dear Frank, Do you think it would be a good idea to include in the next geoNEWS a questionnaire to find out exactly what members want. For example, Do You think you are getting value for money from geoCLUB, if not, why not?

What would you like to see covered that isn't? What do WE do that YOU don't like? What don't WE do what YOU would like? Something along those lines. When you first came up with the plan of a PrintShop graphics Library it looked like a good idea but reaction has been slow to say the least, maybe it's not what members want. So what about giving a GEOS Fonts Library a try that may be much more to members taste. I am having difficulty obtaining a Ram Expansion Unit even from a source you suggested in the USA, it has been recommended that I think about a RamDrive, what's one of these?. I look forward to your reply in due course. Best wishes. *Terry Watts, Derby*

Dear Terry, Of course you can have a questionnaire in the next issue of geoNEWS as soon as you have it finished please send it on a disk in geoWRITE, geoPAINT or geoPUBLISH format and I will faithfully reproduce it, thanks for another good idea. As for a GEOS Font Library, I'm afraid that idea has been shelved for the time being, please understand it takes time to get these disks together and if there's little interest then it's not worth it. As for the REU, if you want to do anything serious it really is an item that should be aquired, but as you have discovered, even in the USA they are like hens teeth. As for the RamDrive, this is produced by CMD of Massachusetts. It is a fresh approach to Ram Expansion, it's battery backed and can be either 512K, 1 Meg or 2 Meg. and incorporates RL-DOS, an ultra fast operating system similar to that found in the CMD Hard Drives. The

price is quite attractive at \$149.95 although shipping would have to be added to this and the fluctuating exchange rate could alter the price somewhat.

Dear Frank, Could we have a problem page in geoNEWS where we can either air our problems or tell of problems solved so it may well help others with the same difficulties. Also we could have a list of companies that other members have had good service from or where they have obtained the cheapest disks and other accessories. Could we also have prices in advertisements stated in both currencies. *Sharon Chambers, Stoke*

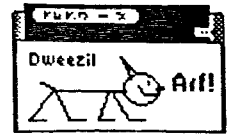
Dear Sharon, Thanks for your letter and idea's WE can indeed have a problem page and I will try to include one in future issues. As you know, I usually answer all letters with a personal reply and if I can help out with a problem I do, I think it would be a good idea to include these letters for other members benefit. As for a list of companies, well there are very few that deal with C64/C128 items these days but I am looking into a name given to me recently and mentioned elsewhere in this issue. As for disk prices, well if I shop around I can usually obtain disks for around 23p each, if anyone want's me to get them some I can but do not forget there will be postage charges on top of this price. Finally US\$ prices, if you buy direct from the US you will need to send \$'s not £'s. Also the exchange rate differs almost every week. The exception is Dweezil Disks, I sell these for Dave Ferguson who is a friend of mine, at a fixed Sterling price and when I exchange the £'s to \$'s he accept's what the exchange rate is at the time I make no profit from these though 10% does go to geoCLUB funds.

Dear Frank. Would it be possible to have an 'INSIDER KNOWLEDGE' page in the newsletter. *Mark Cooper Glamorgan*

Dear Mark. Almost everything I write about is what I think other users will want to know, if I do not cover a subject you want to read about write and ask me, if I know anything about it I will tell you what I know. If you have any items that you think other would be interested in hearing about let me know and I will endeavour to pass it on.

Something
New
From.....

Quincy Softworks



The Mammals Who Make GEOS Better!

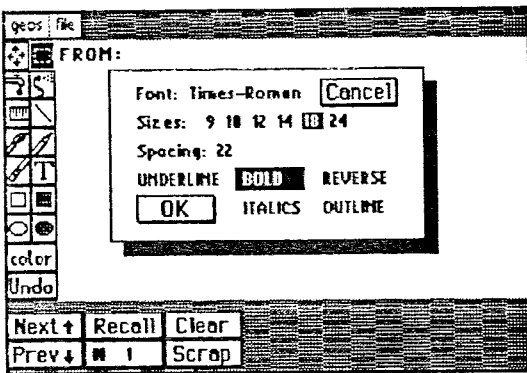
"Dweezil Never Bytes!"

DweezilDisk 3!!

Public Domain Revisited

Yours For Only \$15.95!! **

Selecting a font for layering label text over a scrap containing the geoPaint toolbar icons.



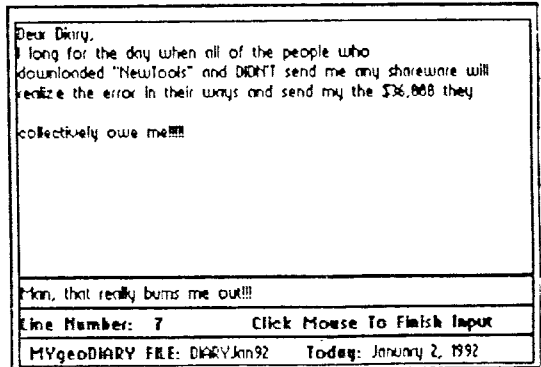
DweeziLabel!!

The hottest GEOS label program to come along in years!!

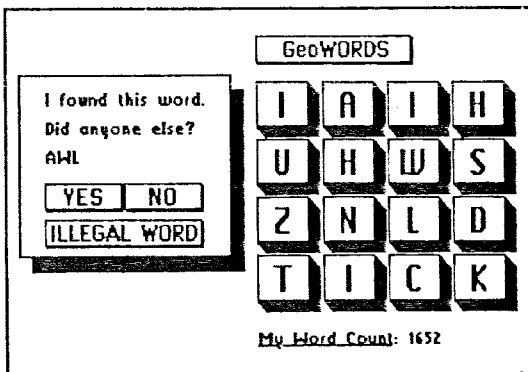
- * Print high resolution graphic labels or standard text labels!
- * Save label data in files that hold 50 labels each, 6 lines per label!
- * Sort labels 7 different ways, like a data base!
- * Import paint scraps to be used as labels, or use them as backgrounds for labels you create using almost any font you choose.
- * Select form sizes from 1" to 11"!
- * You chose which of the six lines to print!
- * Print multiple copies of one label, or one each of a range of individual labels!

MYgeoDIARY!!

How would you like to keep track of your exciting daily life just like Doogie Howser does? Well, now you can, with MYgeoDIARY, our completely revised auto-exec diary application! Each time you boot GEOS MYgeoDIARY will run, allowing you to make short entries of your daily happenings! These entries become part of a monthly geoWrite file which you can edit with.....geoWrite!! And if your life is boring, use it to save recipes or keep track of someone else's life that is more exciting! This new version works in 40 or 80 columns!! Get a life!! Then record it for posterity with MYgeoDIARY!!!



How many words can you find here?



geoWORDS!!

You may have played this game in the "REAL" world! You may have played it in the Commodore world! But you've never played it in the GEOS world!!! GeoWORDS, the most exciting interactive word search game ever developed for GEOS. Play against the computer and up to four others! GeoWORDS comes with a ready-made list of *over 1600 words!!* Or start from scratch and watch the computer learn new words each game it plays. Let the computer pick the letter tiles, or enter your own letters!. Print out the game results and word lists. A GREAT learning tool for the whole family! *Once you start playing GeoWORDS you won't stop!!*

Please Read: DweeziLabel has been tested successfully on the printers most commonly used with GEOS. However, it has not been tested on printers which only use 7 pins and may not have satisfactory results. Earlier versions of the programs on DweezilDisk 3 are part of the public domain. GeoWORDS is only slightly different from the original. MYgeoDIARY and DweeziLabel are completely revised programs. The new versions are NOT part of the public domain. All of the products advertised for sale in this publication are Copyright (C) 1990, 1991, 1992 by Quincy Softworks and David B. Ferguson.

If you're serious about using GEOS to produce laser printed documents, but you don't own a laser printer (or even if you do), then you need:

The geoPublish Compendium!!

The best \$4** the serious "geoPublisher" will ever spend!

This ten page pamphlet--and supplement sheets--includes:

- * How to find someone to do your laser printing, locally or by mail!
- * How to set up your document for laser printing!
- * Pitfalls and problems to look out for!
- * Tips and tricks to create professional laser printed documents!
- * Sample sheets of laser printed fonts!
- * A laser printing resource guide!
- * Tips on using Jim Collette's new Landscape Combo Disk!
- * Much More!!!

** (U.S. funds only. CA residents add sales tax. Overseas add 15%.)

Quincy Softworks

9479 E. Whitmore Ave.
Hughson, CA 95326-9745



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**ALL QUINCY SOFWORKS PRODUCTS ONLY
AVAILABLE IN THE U.K. FROM geoCLUB**

DWEEZIL DISK 1	£9:00
DWEEZIL DISK 2	£8:50
DWEEZIL DISK 3	£9:00
geoSTAMP	£3:00
BIG STAMP	£10:00
geoSTAMP Up-Grade	£3:00

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