LUCKY REPORT

1997

Welcome to

The Greatest Year in the History of Commodore!

COMMODORE PHILOSOPHY
It May not Be Sexy, but It's Still Controversial!

Will This Be the Year that LUCKY Makes Provision for Advanced Users?

Will LUCKY Become a Multi-Platform User Group?

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TREASURER'S REPORT
by Bill Bunch
---December 1996---

Beginning Balance	**$ 803.26**
INCOME:	**$ 39.28**
Library	11.00
Raffle	25.00
Refund recieved	2.00
Interest	1.28
EXPENSES:	**$ 96.78**
Newsletter	32.93
BBS	30.00
Small Newsletter	23.85
Ending Balance	**$ 745.76**
Variance	$ 57.50

An itemized statement of the above is posted at each monthly meeting.

LUCKY, INC. is a Non-Profit Organization whose pupose is to unite and educate users of Commodore computers and related equipment.

LUCKY in no way condones nor allows copying of copyrighted materials at any group function. Guilty parties will be subject to dismissal.

GENERAL MEETINGS are held the second Tuesday of every month at the Beechmont Community Center from 6:30 to 9:00 pm. Demonstrations are given on both hardware and software at these functions, with occasional guest speakers and a regular question and answer session. Also available to Members Only are Public Domain Program Disks from the Club's Library for a small copying fee.

BOARD MEETINGS are held at the Central Jefferson County Government Center, 7210 Outer Loop, from 7:00 to 9:00 pm. on the Wednesday of the week following the General Meeting.

MEMBERSHIP is $20.00 a year, per family, which includes access to the LUCKY BBS, the LUCKY Library, a monthly newsletter, and special drawings.

The *LUCKY REPORT* is published monthly and is available at the General Meetings. DEADLINE for submissions to the newsletter is two weeks prior to the General Meeting. It is "published" from a C128 assisted by a 40MB CMD HardDrive, an FD-2000, and a 1571 disk drive. Occasionally graphics are captured by a HandyScanner 64. Printing is done on a PostScript compatible Hewlett-Packard LaserJet IIP.

The LUCKY BBS is operated 24 hours a day and is designed with Commodore Users in mind. Special access is granted to LUCKY members, but all callers are welcome. The phone number is: (502) 993-5397. You can also E-mail LUCKY at 3050@iglou.com

DISK LIBRARY
by Steve Grassman

To avoid confusion, please direct all questions to the Library Assistants at the other end of the table. **PLEASE DO NOT BOTHER THE COMPUTER OPERATOR!!!** This will minimize mistakes on backups being made. *Thank you.*

To order diskettes, fill in the order forms provided by the Library Assistants. Make sure you **PRINT** clearly the information requested on the form. This will speed up the filling of orders.orders.

Today we decide if we will allow a Multi-User format. However, the question is really deeper than that. We must also decide how or when we will make suitable provision for advanced users. It is important to note that the Multi-Platform proposal developed as one solution to this problem.

No matter what the future holds, we should thank those who have given long service to this club. Dan Koleski and his corps of officers are listed over on the left. Most have worked faithfully and well for four years. They have earned our accolades. Thanks, ladies and gentlemen, for jobs well done!

Nothing peaks my admiration of Dan Travis and Jim Walters more than publishing this first issue of the *LUCKY REPORT*. I look back through their December issue, stuffed full of all kinds of good stuff, and wonder if I will ever match it. Thank you, Dan and Legacy, for the great job you did for two years. The down-side for me is that you left such big shoes to fill.

I ask that the members of LUCKY will be patient with me as I grow into this job. I doubt that my spelling or grammar will ever be perfect. I find that I have not "dressed up" the articles with as many graphics and such as I might have wished. But on the whole, I hope this issue challenges and inspires us to believe in what we do in this computer family, known as the Louisville Users of Commodore of KentuckY.

The next issue already promises to be special. It will include an article called "The ACS Lives!" In this article, I will make my case for new Advanced Commodore System. What is it and how is it different from anything Commodore users have ever had?

I also hope to open a discussion on the topic, "Is It Time for LUCKY to Reward Competence?" The Boy Scout and Girl Scouts encourage members by giving badges. Many adult organizations also offer levels of advancement in order to motivate members. Should LUCKY also offer some program of education to spur our members toward a well-rounded knowledge?

Last, but not least, I hope to have some of your input concerning "Commodore Philosophy." Please let me know how you feel about the six areas of interest discussed in that article. I hope these responses will help make the next newsletter more intriguing to us all!

---K.D.S.---

LEAVE THE GOOSE ON THE NEST!

There is a story in folklore about a family who had a special goose that could lay golden eggs. Every day, regular as clockwork, the goose would deliver one golden egg to enrich the family's fortunes. Apparently this was not enough. The farmer, tired of waiting, killed the goose in order to get all the eggs at once. But, alas, there were none!

This story illustrates how waiting can be beneficial and impatience can work against us. This applies not only to "golden gooses" but to CMD, as well. Because they provide so many goods and services, many of us think of them as a large company, employing hundreds. We envision them having thirty people in a phone bank with nothing to do all day but answer our calls. The realities are quite different.

CMD has only fifteen employees, and only six of those work full time! Yes, they do provide a great variety of goods and services, but one employee confided in me recently that each of them has to do the work of *three* everyday! Perhaps this is an exaggeration, but the fact remains that no one has time to chit-chat.

Their problem is that, because they have so many wonderful products in development, Commodore users just naturally want to know about them! But imagine what would happen if all our members called CMD regularly to ask about the computer CMD is planning, the progress on SuperGEOS, the shipping date of the 128's SuperCPU, or more information about the "Rocket Socket." No, this isn't "killing" the goose that's laying our golden eggs, *but it's not helping either!* I think of it as "pulling the goose off the nest!" If they are talking unnecessarily to us, then they have less time to produce those "golden eggs."

As the LUCKY editor, I feel it my duty to call them on your behalf for progress reports. Please keep in mind that your *LUCKY REPORT* was one of the first newsletters in the nation to discuss CMD's plans for a new computer. You have a need to know, and it is in their best interests to keep you informed. So if you have any questions about CMD or would like to know more about a particular matter, you can E-mail me at [luckykds@otherside.com] or you can call me at (812) 951-3588.

What happens at CMD is important to all of us, but let's keep the goose that's laying the "golden eggs" off the phone and on the job (nest).

Thanks.

Meanwhile, if you want to request a catalog, write P. O. Box 646, East Longmeadow, MA 01028. If you want to order their products, you can call toll free (800) 638-3263.

The Bored Room

by Dave Snyder
Vice President and Sysop of the LUCKY BBS.

It hardly seems more than a couple of days since I last did this...well such is life. A lot has happened since the last time I was here. Let's see, we had Christmas or at least most of you did. Mine turned out not to be so merry. I came down with a killer case of the flu, and totally lost all of Christmas Eve day and night as well as Christmas Day. Actually the rest of the week is more of a blur than anything. By Thursday I was back at work however.

Making matters worse by far, my wife had a horrible ashma attack on Christmas Eve and I was so sick that all I could do for her was to call 911 and let them cart her off to the emergency room. It was bad enough that she was in critical condition and immediately placed on a respirator. They ran tubes down through her nose and into the lungs and a machine was doing all of her breathing for her for eight days. They took her off the machine and out of ICU after ten days. She finally made it home on the evening of January 7. She is still bedridden and has to have someone with her day and night. I hope that by this next weekend we might be able to have Christmas.

Enough of the personal stuff, what about theBBS!

Not much to say here. Its still up and running. Not much posting though. I fear that the internet is taking its toll on many of the local BBS's. This is not good for us at LUCKY. I'm afraid its just one more nail in the coffin of fate. I don't even think that the online game is doing much business these days. There has been a lot of illness out there though and that may have had some impact on the board as well as the holidays.

I had hoped to be able to put together some other internet sites that catered to the Commodore users, but with all the action this month and the illness and business booming, there hasn't been time to sit down in front of the computer and spend any more time than just what was absolutely essential. Matter of fact, there were some pretty essential things that didn't get done either.

Here's hoping for the best for everyone in 1997. Long live LUCKY and long live the LUCKY BBS! Remember its up to you. The users will be the ones that make or break the bulletin board and the club itself for that matter.

Dave Snyder

"VIEW FROM THE RED ROOM"
January 1997

By Dan Koliski
President

Well, this is my last articles as president of L.U.C.K.Y. and the last "View from Red Room". I am running late this month and have what I feel are two pretty good excusses. I fell behind in things with all the holiday activities going on plus I had to work some days that I had expected to be off. Plus, my monitor has been acting up and I am still trying to get it going. Fades out on me when it warms up. I have to wait for it to cool down some so that everything inside settles back into place. I don't lose any data, but it is frustrating.

We had a very good meeting for our Christmas party and some good discussions. As you know, we held nominations for Officers of L.U.C.K.Y. and we will vote on them tonight. If you missed the meeting, well, shame on you. You were the loser for that.

As mentioned, we had more discussion on the possiblility of the club going to a multi-platform club. We allowed everyone to have a voice on this issue and it has been decided that we will vote on this resolution tonight at the meeting just prior to voting on new officers. The reason for this is that if it is voted down, several names on the ballot will be pulled at the nominee's request. Should make for some interesting times, for sure.

This meeting not only will usher in several new officers, but we will take on a new newsletter editor. Dale Sidebottom has taken over this task and this is his first newsletter, *per se*. He use to put out a quarterly publication for the club. We really need to thank Dale for doing this for us as this is no little chore.

We had twenty-eight people present at the meeting and all seemed to enjoy themselves with all the refreshments and fellowship. As for our raffles, William D. Hack won the attendance raffle which was up to $20.00. Congratulations, William! Bill Pullen won the regular raffle, Calvin Schindler won the door prize, and Cliff Swihart won a pair of tickets for free disk from the club's library.

Need to close this up now. Not only am I done, my monitor is fading on me, again.. Take care and best wishes to you all no matter how things turn out..

Sincerly
Dan

COMMODORE PHILOSOPHY
by K. Dale Sidebottom

I remember back in 1964 when I was a freshman in college. It was not only the first year that I experienced college life, but it was also the first year that anyone ever showed me the inside of a PLAYBOY magazine. I confess that it was much later before I learned why this publication was different. It seems that PLAYBOY had a "PHILOSOPHY." The editor, Hugh Hefner, expounded upon it in each issue, and this seemed to set his magazine apart from all others.

I think that we in the LUCKY Club also need a "PHILOSOPHY." It probably won't be as sexy as PLAYBOY's, but I bet it will be controversial! In view of the possibility that we may become a multi-platform club, Commodore users need to be aware now, more than ever, of who we are and where we are going.

This is my first stab at it; so if I stumble, be *kind*. I intended this to be a springboard for a discussion of what we believe and why. No matter what computer we represent, I believe that there will always be a little of the Spirit of Commodore in everything we do. Please write and tell me how you feel about the six areas of discussion which follow.

CMD has replaced CBM

Steve Murphy has been a member of LUCKY for nearly four years. I remember the night when he came to the meeting, his eyes glowing. "I just bought Jiffy-DOS 5.0 for my 64!"

Not only for Steve, but for thousands of others, Jiffy-DOS is often the first step to upgrading their Commodores. For ten years, it has been generally considered to be the best non-GEOS operating system. Would it surprise you to know that it is also the very first product that CMD ever sold?

CMD has not only continued to develop an improved array of products over the years, but they are now studying the possibility of creating the next Commodore-compatible computer. Purists will argue that CMD can never replace CBM. Unless they can figure out some way to pry the Commodore trademark, patents, and copyrights from Escom AG of Germany, CMD will always be limited to those products for which they own the rights. So what do they own?

For starters, they own everything it takes to covert your Commodore into an advanced home computer. (Next month's issue will give you all the details in an article called, "The ACS Lives!") For ten years, CMD has sought to plug the holes and fill the gaps in the good ship *Commodore*. Now with the completion of the SuperCPU, they have earned the right to pick up and carry the torch. CBM is dead! Long live CMD!

The Commodore world today is dynamic and vibrant!

This is the part of my Commodore Philosophy which may actually spark the most disagreement. I have spent nearly all of 1996 listening to serious users ask, "Is the Commodore dead? Why is nothing happening?"

My reaction has always been bewilderment. How can anyone say that nothing is happening? I saw the Commodore world as a sort of big bear in hibernation. Admittedly, the developments of 1996 were slow, and even the careful observer might miss the seeds germinating beneath the snow. But "bear" in mind that 1996 will go down in Commodore history as the year of the SuperCPU! Suddenly, we are tuned up to enter the Twenty-first century on a high note!

I was eating at Dinah's Diner (better known as the Little Chef) in New Albany the other day when a stranger whom I never saw before commented on my reading material. I had been reading a Commodore newsletter, as I often do when I

take a break, and I explained that I was a Commodore enthusiast.

He surprised me by saying, "I hear Commodore is experiencing a revival!"

"Yes," I answered, "we now have a SuperCPU that enables us to go 20 times faster than before."

"I've been thinking about getting into computers, but I only have about $200 to get started."

"That's all you need to get started with Commodore. Let me show you how...."

The above conversation is real. It has not yet culminated in a sale, but that's not really my point. When your computer generates such excitment that it begins to filter down to those who have never even seen a Commodore, then you know that you are part of a dynamic computer community.

Enjoy!

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Will We Decide to Allow a Multi-Platform Format?

I have had a front row seat here in the LUCKY Club for nearly 14 years. What I and others have seen is the steady exodus of the best and the brightest of our compatriots. The Commodore family, in general, and the LUCKY group, in particular, have always done a wonderful job of nurturing new users. However, we have forever, and I mean *forever*, failed to make suitable provision for advanced users.

Consider those who stand now on the threshhold of leaving this club. These are not malingerers or parasites who suck all they can get from an orgainization and returned nothing. These are trusted friends, upon whom we have come to rely, who have "busted their butts" for four years to make us successful. What do we say to them now? *Don't go away mad, just go away?*

What kind of image will be in the minds of those who follow? Do we tell them not to grow because this club has no provision for it? It has been that way since the beginning. The names change and the faces change, but they are always our best leaders and brightest talents. Call them Dan Koleski or Dave Snyder. Call them E. J. Woidich, Ray Martin, Dave MacIntosh, Dennis Skelton...the list goes on and on. Must this pattern persist? Is there no other way?

Many feel that there is! And many feel there is not! I only ask one thing, that we refuse to make a judgment based on fear.

Let's not vote *for* a multi-platform policy because we are afraid we may die if we don't. Four years ago we rose from the ashes and we can do it again. Let me assure you that the club will be around many more years one way or the other.

Similarly, do not vote *against* a multi-platform policy because you are afraid we will be swallowed up by a non-Commodore platform. I firmly believe that the same *stubborn independence* that has characterized LUCKY will continue to distinguish every platform we sponsor. We will need to make special provisions to defend and protect the Commodore's important place in this club.

That can be done by emphasizing our Commodore Philosophy. If all platforms within the club have philosophies compatible to ours, then our union should remain compatible.

Dave Snyder, for instance, has always sought to get "every last drop" out of his equipment. I see no danger of an MS-DOS group within LUCKY suddenly "chasing the fastest chip" during his tenure. I believe he and the others will continue to nurture new users, even as they join us in nourishing older ones, too.

I do see the need for a little *sensitivity training.* For instance, I would not be surprised to hear that some of my statements in this issue of the *LUCKY REPORT* may be troubling to those who use other platforms. It's not because I intend to be insulting. As long as the Commodore was our only platform, this problem wasn't even considered. Perhaps that was wrong!

On the other hand, the first time that another platform user tells a Commodore user that their 64 doesn't need a hard drive, I will go ballistic!!! Perhaps in honor of our out-going president, I should say that I may be going "postal!" It is true that prior to August of 1996, the Commodore did not need a hard drive *because there was no advanced computer system* available. NOW, with the advent of the SuperCPU, all that has changed. In the words of sacred song, "Time makes ancient good, uncouth!"

A little sensitivity training might prevent us from rubbing each other the wrong way. Learning to become more aware of other platform users' feelings is a positive thing, helping to make room for diversity. I see nothing but good coming from this.

Meanwhile, each of us must today vote our consciences. I hope that we will do so in a way that moves us toward a better future. I simply ask you to keep in mind: "There are many good reasons to do something, but fear is never one of them."

K. Dale Sidebottom

From the Room Down Under
by Larry Bailey

HELPFUL HINT'S

PRINTER AGOGO

Power Supply Repairs: Commodore power supplies are subject to self-destruction, because of a weakness in the 3052P voltage regulator inside. Not only is it unreliable, but the 3052P isn't available in the United States. If your power supply fails, chances are that the porblem is the 3052P. But you're in luck if your power supply is of the type that can be opened for servicing, because there's a widely available replacement regulator, the Philips ECG-7805. (Equivalent to the Radio Shack 276-1770).

The pin configurations of the two units are different. So take care how you solder in the new regulator.

Video Audio: Many TV's have an annoying speaker buzz even when the sound is turned to its lowest setting. If you're using such a TV for a monitor, just plug a headphone into its headphone jack, and the buzz should disappear. Sometimes you can use just a plug, with nothing connected, and achieve the same effect.

Modem Intercom: This little trick has helped solve many modem problems. If you have two computers and two modems, you can get them to talk to each other over two phones on one line in your home. With both ends of the link in one building, broubleshooting becomes a snap.

Simply pick up the phone and wait for the loud beeping to stop. It will take a minute or two, but it will eventually stop. Plug that phone into your modem (or switch from T to D if you have a 1650). Then pick up an extension phone and do the same for that. You should now be able to converse between two computers on a single line!

Beware of HUMIDIFIERS: The new ultrasonic humidifiers can be hazardous to your computer's health. Some of the manufacturers are including a small warning that they may deposit harmful mineral films on disks and computer equipment. Unlike other humidifiers, which depend on evaporation and leave the minerals behind in the tank, these new ones physically spray the water-minerals and all-into the air. Distilled or specially filtered water is one solution to the problem.

I believe I have discussed every thing in this column except printers. So lets take a some solutions to maybe some of your problems.

Printer Switches: When you set up a non-Commodore printer to work with your Commodore system, two things are important. First, your interface must allow full emulation of all the Commodore printer commands: most of the available interfaces do this with no problem. Second, the little Dip swiches on the interface and on the printer must be properly set.

The interface switches are often properly set at the factory and are usually well covered in the documentation. The printer switches, however, often are not set properly for your Commodore, since most printers are made to function with a more industry-standard type of interface. The printer manual usually tells all about the DIP swiches and their function, but the information may be hard to dig out. Just persevere, and everything will work out in the end.

Most printers and interfaces, as well as many other computer peripherals, have a group of DIP swithces to configure them for different types of operation. These are tiny switches, often seen in groups of eight or so, that must be set with a penpoint, paperclip or other small instrument. Usually their settings determine the behavior of the device when power is applied, in the case of a printer, one of the DIP switches may determine the number of characters per inch, and another may determine whether or not the printer requires a separate linefeed character to advance the paper.

The various switch settings are always covered in the manual, but the brief descriptions can be cryptic to the newcomer. Ofter, the parameters that the DIP swithces control can be changed later under software control, say by sending a special control character to the printer.

People often wonder why they're called DIP switches. It's because they are made with the same pin size and spacing as IC chips, they'll fit perfectly into standard IC sockets. The standard IC pin sheme, a dual line of precisely spaced connections, has a name. It's called the Dual In-line Package, or DIP. Since the switches are made to the same maeasurements, they've taken on the name.

ARTIFICAL OBSOLESENCE
A game in which we distinguish ourselves by refusing to play.

I remember growing up during the war protests of the 60's. In particular, I recall a bit of wistful wisdom that went like this: "Wouldn't it be wonderful if somebody decided to have a war and nobody came!"

I think of that phrase often when I consider the current state of American "computer affairs." Everything seems to be based upon "Artificial Obsolescence." It is defined as the process of becoming prematurely out of date, out of fashion, or descarded.

Let me explain the rules. (1) You buy a computer which may cost you thousands of dollars. (2) Immediately, computer and software makers conspire to make you unhappy and dissatisfied with it at the earliest possible moment. (3) You must soon upgrade at a cost of several hundred dollars to make your equipment and/or softward current. (4) Now the game begins again.

How does this "game" affect the lives of real people. Let me tell you about two of my friends who have played the game. (The names are changed to protect the innocent.)

Estelle and her husband purchased a 286 computer 1989 for $4600. At the time they were told that is was the newest, most modern computer ever! It came equipped with WordPerfect 3.0. Within six months, everyone said that 3.0 was out of date; so they got WordPerfect 5.0!

Soon 5.0 was out of date, and they decided to buy WordPerfect 5.1! Not long after that, Windows by Microsoft hit the market, and naturally they just had to purchase Windows and WordPerfect 6.0. Since the computer only had 4MB of RAM, it was now so full that she could not put anything else on it but a couple of small games.

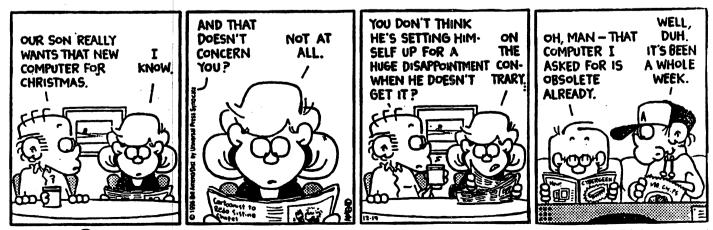Today she is upset for several reasons, not the least of which is her divorce! She also feels cheated by a computer marketing system that continually replaces good software with marginally better software until she now has no room on her computer for anything but WordPerfect and Windows! She has gone back to college to better herself but finds she will have to scrap this computer and basically buy an entirely new one. To add insult to injury, she realizes that her $4600 computer is now worth about $100!

She tells me that the first thing she and her former husband purchased when they got married was a $400 refrigerator. Her ex has it now, and it still works perfectly. She has the computer, and it is nearly worthless! She says bitterly, "Thank God, Americans don't buy refrigerators in the same way they buy computers!"

Gary works with me at the post office. He said that his parents bought a computer for himself and his family as a Christmas gift in 1991. At the time it was a 286SX computer with a 16-bit processor. As time went on, of course, he saw that it was becoming out of date, so he upgraded it two and a half years ago to a 486DX with a 32-bit processor. He had to replace the motherboard and the processing chip at a cost of $450. Quite recently, he upgraded again to a 64-bit pentium chip. Again he had to replace the processor and the motherboard for a total cost of $610.

Since he received his computer as a free gift, he considers spending $1060 over a five year period to keep it current is really just "the cost of doing business." He is happy with his computer and is not at all concerned that a new, more advanced pentium chip potenially renders his obsolete only a month after his last upgrade. He is happy and content, accepting all this as "SOP" or standard operating procedure in his computer world.

FOX TROT BY BILL AMEND

One of the basic tenents of Commodore Philosophy is that we as Commodore users have the right to keep what we have until WE decide it's obsolete. These decisions are generated internally, relatively unmolested by outside forces.

You may wonder then, does any Commodore product ever become obsolete? Of course! In my opinion, a 300 baud modem is a good example. On the other hand, the old and honorable 1541 disk drive is still serviceable, because it is still an effective way to store and transport most programs. The day may come when our entire LUCKY library is on the internet. Perhaps then the 1541 will be obsolete, but *no one is pushing* to make it happen!

Another difference found in Commodore Philosophy is the importance of "backward compatibility." For instance, when CMD introduced the SuperCPU, my C128 sprinkled garbage all over the screen while in 64 mode. It was really weird! I called CMD and they told me that I was the thirteenth person to report this problem. (Now wasn't that "lucky.") Although the problem was produced by a flaw in the computer, they found that by making an almost insignificant upgrade to the SuperCPU, the problem could be avoided. I sent them my SuperCPU and CMD upgraded it for free. Almost any other company would have told 13 people to get another computer, but in *our* community, support for "backward compatiblity" has become the custom, rather than the exception.

What effect does this have on our Commodores? The best example I can give you is a recent exchange I had with Gary at work. I showed him a laser printed copy of the article you read in the October issue of *LUCKY REPORT*, entitled "Commodore's Major Distributor." He looked at it and started to say, "I wish I could do that," but he stopped in mid-sentence.

He is an intelligent and thoughtful person. He knew that his computer could do what mine could do; he just didn't know how! He finally found his words. "I have four publish program at home, but...well...I wish I knew as much about my PC as you know about your Commodore."

I thanked him for the compliment. Yet, I was tempted to tell him, "I know my mine so well is because I have been using it, relatively unchanged, for fourteen years!"

He might have exclaimed, "No wonder you know your Commodore!"

And I would have replied, "I know my Commodore because I belong to a computer family that doesn't play "Artificial Obsolesence!"

1997 should be the year that the ACS comes alive!

I believe that an Advanced Commodore System (ACS) did not become available until August of 1996. As soon as CMD completed the SuperCPU, we had everything we needed to create an advanced Commodore home computer system. Next month's issue should describe the ACS in detail. But be warned, it is so new that we have few products which can actually take advantage of it. We also have no graphic operating system able to fully implement it.

As with all developments, not every phase moves at the same rate. So although 1996 became the year that the ACS was "born," 1997 will hopefully be remembered as the year that an advanced operating system was developed so that we could fully utilize it! For instance, any ACS will require the ability to format and use disks or "disk partitions" larger than 1MB. In order to make maximum use of their hard drives, CMD developed the "CMD Native Mode Partition," which can vary in size from 1 block (256 bytes) to 16 megabytes (over 16 million bytes). These native mode partitions are necessary to any ACS because they allow for the flexibility, size, and speed needed to accomadate even the largest programs and files.

Currently there is no operating system that can properly manage these "larger-than-life" partitions except Jiffy-DOS. Unfortunately, this leaves a lot of GEOS users, like me, up in the air. CMD tried to make provision for us by developing GateWay. It was supposed to be a GEOS operating system that could properly handle native mode partitions. Some like it and some

don't. I tried it and found it too buggy for my taste.

I have a friend in England named Allan Bairstow. He has ALL of his GEOS applications placed in a single 3MB partition. That means he is working from a partition which holds 3000K, as compared to about 800K storage on a 1581 disk. He loves it, but he confesses the partition sometimes becomes corrupted and must be restored from scratch. I know many people who agree with him, that using native mode partitions in GateWay is wonderful, but I, for one, will wait for a better way.

The big news is that a better way may be arriving soon! Maurice Randall has successfully disassembled and then reassembled GEOS 2.0. This required approximately 300 pages spread over seven geoWrite documents. Obviously he profited from the time-saving speed of his SuperCPU!

Now he is busy upgrading it to GEOS 3.0, sort of. GeoWorks (formerly Berkeley Softworks, who owns the copyright) has already produced a PC GEOS 3.0 for palm-held Casio computers. Therefore, instead of GEOS 3.0, we may have to call it SuperGEOS or MR.GEOS, using Maurice Randall's initials. As Shakespeare would say, "A rose by any other name will smell as sweet!"

"SuperGEOS" will likely be a combination of GEOS, geoSHELL, and GateWay, as Maurice tries to bring the best features of each into one advanced package. His project is so much bigger than the original, that the data files alone consume 2MB. Therefore, he operates his GEOS applications from a **16MB partition**. Nothing small about his computer!!!

Meanwhile, GEOS needs improvement in several areas. GEOS 2.0 contains the "millenium bug." It has only five drivers for data storage devices becuase it was developed before the CMD HardDrive, the RAMLink, and the FD-2000. It makes no provision for "CMD native mode partitions" or the SuperCPU. GEOS 2.0 is still a good program for beginning and intermediate users, but advanced users will need much, much more!

The new GEOS from Maurice will not only fix the millenium bug, but it will also provide **sixteen** data storage drivers! It will make special optimizations for the SuperCPU. A SuperCPU will not required with this first version, but an REU or RAMLink *will* be necessary to provide extra memory.

Many GEOS users get upset when they get these little messages that say, "Insert a disk with DESKTOP 1.5 or higher." SuperGEOS will never do that because the entire DESKTOP will always be stored in the REU (or RAMLink) where it will be immediately accessible. The desktop screen will display more than eight files at a time. It will also allow access to as many as eight disk drives. **Remember, do not call CMD!** They know no more details on this than you do! When a product is near, you'll be able to read about it in *Commodore World*, not to mention your own *LUCKY REPORT*!

Today we see an ACS is now available, but an advanced Commodore operating system evolves even as we speak. Many questions have yet to be anwsered. How many programs developed for the old system can be transported to the new? Will we be able to find ways to share the best of both worlds comfortably? I simply don't know the answers. But I share these things so you will know that this Commodore community is still alive and well, and that the ongoing development of an ACS operating system may be the best proof of it!

Obey the LAW, the Universal Law of Computers

We all know that ignorance of the law is no excuse. Please allow me to state the LAW in its simplest terms, "Computers do one job; they 'push' electrons."

This "dummied-down" version may be unsatisfying to LUCKY members, so I'll state it more definitively.

"Given proper time, program, and peripherals, any computer can perform any computer task!"

In early times, I heard myself saying, "Gosh, I wish my computer could do that!"

I was rather ignorant of the LAW in those days and very inexperienced. Today I am a little more savvy. I know that, in fact, my computer can do anything that any other computer can do. Why? It's the LAW!!

Today, when I see something that I want to do that is unavailable to my Commodore, I try to skip the "dumb" question posed previously and go right to the heart of the matter. I set about to determine what I am missing. Do I lack the necessary time, program, or peripherals, or all the above?

Through the years, I have discovered that problems most often stem from the unwillingness of hardware and software manufacturers to consider the LAW. I sometimes wonder if they feel that they are a law unto themselves.

Why should ABC Software Company care about the needs of your Commodore? My question is, "If ABC Software Company doesn't care about my needs of my Commodore, why should I do business with them?"

When I wanted to begin laser printing from my Commodore, I decided that I was willing to invest $1500. Hewlett-Packard had made a LaserJet IIP printer that was compatible to my computer. That they may have done so by accident is immaterial. They sold a compatible product, and I was willing to make a substantial investment in their favor.

Now let's look at the other side. Recently, Roger Lawhorn and I priced InkJet printers. For less than $400, it appeared that we could purchase an EPSON Stylus Pro with color and PostScript capability. However, on closer investigation, we discovered that the "PostScript" compatibility required an Ethernet card which only IBM's can use. In other words, Epson seemed to be telling me, "If you will buy a $3000 computer that you don't want, we'll provide you with a PostScript color printer you do want!. We have intentionally made this product unavailable to Commodores."

From my point of view, the EPSON company is breaking the LAW here. They are not alone. I am amazed at how many hardward and software companies say dumb things like, "You can't do this from a Commodore."

Instead, they ought be telling us why they failed to make provision for ALL computers!

I am constantly being bombarded by seductive messages that say, "Ignore your Commodore! Complete freedom will be yours if you will just invest $3000 in a new computer. Everything will be glorious!"

Then I wake up to hear the radio announcing, "If you bought a pentium computer before Christmas, it is already out-of-date. A new superior MMX pentium chip is now available rendering yours obsolete!"

The bottom line? *You can't trust people who have no respect for the LAW!*

The Spirit of Commodore

The years between 1997 and 2000 will be challenging to us in many ways. Perhaps the greatest challenge for many of us will be to understand that Commodore, the business, had little to do with Commodore, the experience! Think about it. Over and over again, CBM failed to give us the support we needed. Their marketing department, the last bastion of the brain-dead, continually failed to recommend the products needed to support the serious user. Remember the aborted C65? CBM seems to have acted capriciously and selfishly, and it has paid the price!

We, the Commodore enthusiasts of the World, must understand that something very magical and good has developed in our computer community. Commodore, the business, profited from it and, occasionally, supported it but they were NEVER really a part of it. We must comes to terms with the idea that CBM's demise **in no way diminishes us!**

As Commodore computer systems evolve slowly into the future, what were once Commodore products will more than likely become CMD's. Our Commodore systems may eventually be converted to CMD systems. This makes perfect sense to the head. CBM represents the past and now CMD represents the future.

What we must understnad in our hearts is that Commodore, the experience, is something that WE brought to life! It emanated from US! No one has the patent on that baby! We have been successful because this spirit has been healthy and good. Our tribe has "lived long" because what unites us has been worthy of our fellowship.

Our challenge this year and always is to find positive ways to blend the old and the new in order to benefit as many as possible. I anticipate that this will not be easy, but it is also *necessary* if we are to march strongly into the 21st Century. 1997 promises to be a pivotal year in that process.

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