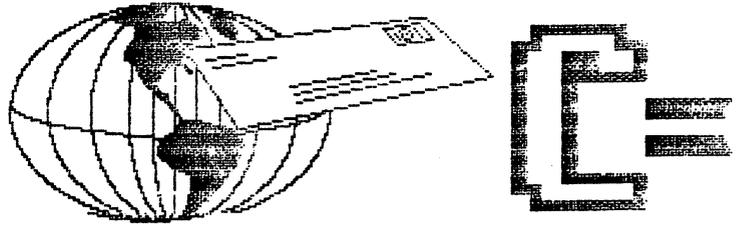


COMMODORE MAILLINK

NEWSLETTER OF —
MEETING 64/128 USERS
THROUGH THE MAIL

FRANCIS REDMOND, PRESIDENT

MAY 1996



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

FRANK REDMOND

This message is my swan song as your president. I won't actually swan until July when Tom Adams will take over as president. Effective with the July Mailink he will be the person to increase your knowledge, stimulate your imagination and convince everyone that belonging to the "Meeting 65/128 Users Through The Mail", is the best thing that could happen to a Commodore user. Tom also issues the mailinks and if he does as good a job presidenting as he does distributing, you are all in for a treat,

To give beginners a bit of a morale boost let me state that when I took over as president, my knowledge of the computer was comparable to driving my car. I could make it go but if something went wrong, I'd be in trouble. To convince me to accept the position, a number of people offered to give me whatever assistance I needed. I also felt that if I received benefit from an organization, (which I certainly did), I should at least make some sort of contribution. Reluctantly I agreed to give it a try. I felt that if the bad came to worst, I could always holler for help. I wish to thank all you folk who helped me in my hours of need. I don't think I would have made it otherwise. Also all of you who were patient while I managed to misspell your name or forget your address. I hope I was able to answer many of the questions you asked, even if only to refer to you to someone else.

As a result of all the excellent advice and the experience gained from the job I now feel like an expert. IBM and Microsoft are after me to act as a consultant. Bill Gates is constantly calling me for advice. Naturally, I refused all offers. What could be a better job than being president of this fine organization?

I, like many of you, have been ridiculed for staying with a so-called obsolete computer. From what I've seen, most of those the people who have the latest upgraded PC's or Mac's do not get any more use from their machine than we do with the Commodore. For the average person, their efforts on the \$3,000 machines limit them to wordprocessing, home budgets and games. Those don't work any better or faster than a Commodore. In fact I have won a few bets comparing operating speed. With the Ramlink, I can call up my word processing program and have a letter written while they are still chasing their mouses around the screen and waiting for little squeals, and dings telling them that this or that device is finally linked up.

I know you are all eager to find out who won the coupons for the free issues of Loadstar. I sent them to a judge to make the award anonymously and I don't even know who won. We will make the announcement in the July issue. Incidentally, this award will not be like a Publisher's Clearing House Award. There will be no television cameras or speeches, although I did briefly think of asking Fender Tucker to make the awards.

We now have two new greeters; Richard Savoy and Jolene Ehret. We are starting them at an annual salary of \$0.00. As they get experience and work a while, I am sure that we can give them a salary increase. However, I would advise both of these fine people not to go in hock based on our salary base or potential increases.

The July issue of The Commodore Mailink will be edited by Walter Johnson. Submissions should reach him by June 17. Anything over a few lines should be on disk in Pet ASCII, TWS, or Speedscript files.

This issue was produced with "Illustrator II" version of The Write Stuff, and printed on a Star LC1011C printer. Thanks to Brian Vaughan who provided the mailing labels and Tom Adams who had it photocopied and mailed it out.

This time we received more material than would fit in 20 pages. Apologies to those whose submissions couldn't be used. We will hope to use them in July.

NEWSBREAK: ESCOM SELLS CBM?

Here is an Internet message from George Noel, Tue Apr 16, 1996, on the comp.sys.cbm newsgroup.

Max Devlin wrote: "A local press report says ESCOM has sold the CBM/Amiga licences to a US company, Visual Information Services. Anyone know who they are?"

They are a Set-Top Box maker in the US which are full of Amiga lovers and ex Commodore hardware and software engineers (mainly for the Amiga). They were after Escom since they bought out Commodore to licence the Amiga OS, technology and chipset to incorporate it into their Set-Top Box but since Escom lost \$125 million DEM in 1995 and their CEO resigned (who wanted the Amiga in the first place), the new CEO decided to get rid of the CBM part (but keep the Commodore name and logo) and get some of the money back that they invested in the daughter company they set up (Amiga K Technologies) so they can better concentrate on PC's again.

What this possibly means is that VISCorp in the deal also gets the rights to the C64 technology (which they are not really interested in) and could be much more willing to license it out to CMD (Creative Micro Design) to make C64 clones. This is not confirmed yet though as to the full extent of the buyout and the deal is not finalized.

MEETING 64/128 USERS THROUGH THE MAIL ADDRESSES, OFFICERS, AND POLICIES.

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NEW KID ON THE BLOCK (HELP FOR THE INTERNET NOVICE)

JOE FENN (AKA KILROY)

OK, so you guys are tired of landline BBS systems and TV hype has got you upset because you're being left out. Well do you have a C64 or a C128, a modem and a good TERM program that fits any of the above? Here we go on a fast trip.

C64 Users: Get Nick Rossi's Novaterm 9.5 (I think its Public Domain). C128 users can use any of the following, DIALOGUE, DESTERM, DAVES TERM. They are all excellent for use on Internet. You can do just fine with the following configuration for your software.

The C64 can handle up to 2400 baud speed if your modem is capable of it. Nick's Novaterm 9.5 is the only one that would be suitable for Internet use as it has a 40/80 col screen toggle even though its done with pixels instead of the normal 128 80 column video screen. You should set your terminal emulation to "VT100" or "VT102". Set screen to 80 col mode. Set your modem to 8, 0, 1 (that is 8 bits 1 stop bit and no parity). This modem setting however will depend on what your server is using. Call your server administrator and ask them. Some (such as compuserve) use 7 E 1 (7 bits, even parity and 1 stop bit) which is not the norm. Most of the "Local Servers" use the more common 8, 0, 1. Set your TERM for CR only. If you don't you may get double spaced lines.

Once you get a password and a "shell account" you're ready to rock. When your server says "Oh we only support MAC and PCDOS", just tell them you will be using DEC (pronounced DECK) VT100 terminal emulation. They will know what that is and not give you a hassle. Some may say you need VT200, but the VT100 will do just fine. I don't think anybody wrote VT200 emulators for the CBM machines. Once you've connected on line for the first time, here are some things you will need to know as soon as you connect and receive the "log on" prompt. Type as follows at the shell prompt:

pine (cr).....takes you to the excellent easy to use phone book mail box. Once you get there the menu type screen is simple to use and has many help files. It includes sections on your server's system to contain your own saved messages, both sent and received. It also offers an "address book" in which you can enter, edit and add internet addresses you frequently use. Also it uses space on the server's system, not on yours.

lynx (cr).....all servers will have a UNIX type browser or searcher. Mine is called "lynx", yours may be something else.

YAHOO, ALTAVISTA, ARCHIE, VERONICA are other common browsers or searchers. You can search around in the WWW (world wide web) with these tools. You can also FTP files (thats FILE TRANSFER PROTOCOL) using these tools. You will have to query your server as to which they use.

tin (cr).....This is the news reader on my server. Its purpose is to permit you to join usenets and user groups. These strongly resemble the phone line BBS' that we are all familiar with, except these are spread out all over the world, and while you are using them you are using "UNIX" type command structure to edit, post, thread etc, and UNIX cmds follow no logic at all for CBM users. Due to these strange syntax commands, this may be the most difficult part of Internet for you to master. My server has over 3000 of these groups listed.

finger (cr).....This is a unique command that will show who is logged on to your own server at any particular time. It also will work throughout the Internet system for you by adding the domain to the command. Example "finger@aol.com (cr)". The only problem is many systems and webmasters on the net will lock out use of this command for security reasons. They just don't want distant people seeing into their membership lists. Your local server, though, will let its own subscribers check activity at any time.

Another useful command is "whois". You can enter any name after this command, and get a list of all those Internet users on an extensive database who have that name. For example, "whois fenn" would get a list of all the Fenns, and some information about each. As with "finger", it doesn't list everybody on the Internet.

Remember that the names "tin", "lynx", and "pine", may vary from server to server. Pine however is widely used now. All the above apply to C128 mode as well, its just that the 128 has superior software to deal with the Internet. If you have Desterm, Dialogue, or Dave's Term you can use any of them to good advantage. Remember though they must be set to VT100 emulation. I don't think anybody ever wrote a VT200 emulation for CBM term software.

If you have the BOCA type modems with the proper adapter cable for your user port, and the cartridge to drive it, so much the better. You can get right up there with the "BIG BLUE" guys on modem speeds. Say 34.4 kbaud. Ninety percent of them are now using 28.8 Kbaud modems for the net.

Now for some of the negatives for us 8 bit people using our beloved CBM's. You won't be able to see the GRAFIX or hear the music that comes on most of the WWW site pages. You will just stare at a blank screen for a few seconds while those things are whizzing by, then up pops your text and you know your computer is still alive. Even the Email generated on your PINE mailbox will some times come in with part of the screen blank, because someone used the "attachment" feature to attach a binary type graphic or musical file to your mail. You could however create your own keyboard type graphic signature to use on all the mail you originate. You would have to insure that it uses all TRUE ASCII type characters however. Well now that I have "piqued" your interest, come on in, the water is fine and the surfing in Hawaii is great. Get your URL and FTP yourself into CYBERSPACE.

jfenn@hula.net

Editor's note: Don't let Joe scare you off newsgroups. Some servers, like mine, run on UNIX but have a menu that allows easy access to "usenet". The thousands of newsgroups cover almost anything you might find of interest. Included is "comp.sys.cmb" which stands for "computers.systems.commodore business machines". It is a source of help and important information. Our own Jim Brain moderates.



MAY FLOWERS

UNDERSTANDING TRACK 18

ROGER DETAILLE

Data are recorded magnetically to disk on tracks and sectors. The procedure is almost like recording a tape, except that data are stored in concentric circles instead of a continuous track. These circles are numbered starting from the outside towards the inside. The outside circle is track 1, whereas the innermost circle is track 35. Each sector contains 256 bytes of data.

Since the outside tracks are longer, they contain more sectors than the inside tracks. Tracks 1 to 17 have 21 sectors, 18 to 24 have 19 sectors, 25 to 30 have 18 sectors and 31 to 35 have only 17 sectors. If we count all of them, we arrive at 683 sectors, each one being able to hold 256 bytes of information, resulting in 174 848 bytes or 170kB.

However, we won't be able to use all of them to record our data. We need some place to register the names and addresses of all those files, like the index of a book. This index, or directory, is on track 18. This track also contains the BAM, or Block Availability Map, and for GEOS, some additional information for the operation of this system. Track 18 has 19 sectors, and deducting these from the total of 683, we arrive at 664, the number you see after you have formatted a disk.

To examine the data we need a program that offers this feature. Di-Sector and Maverick are excellent tools for this purpose. The first sector on track 18 is sector 0, which contains, besides the name and identity of the disk, also the BAM. The first two bytes indicate the link to the next sector, in this case 12 01 in hexadecimal or 18 01 in decimal. The third byte is the format of the disk, indicated by the \$41 (65 or A). This is the normal format for the 1541 disk drive. The fourth byte is 00, normally empty. Bytes 5 to 8 are the block availability for track 1. On an empty disk this is 15 FF FF 1F. If all the sectors of a track are occupied they will be 00.

As an aside, if you lock the disk with a utility program, the \$41 is being changed, indicating a different format. You will no longer be able to write to this disk, although you still can load a program without any difficulty. Don't go out of your way and play a dirty trick on a "friend's" disk by changing this byte, easily done with a track and sector editor.

To get back to the BAM, the 15 indicates in hexadecimal the number of sectors on that particular track, in this case 21 sectors. The next three bytes, FF FF 1F, indicate the status of each sector. Each FF, in bits, equals 11111111, while 1F equals 00011111. If a sector becomes occupied, the corresponding bit is changed from 1 to 0. When you save a file to disk, all appropriate bits are changed to indicate an occupied sector. When you erase a file, the bits are changed back to a 1, indicating a free sector.

However, when erasing a file, the sectors still contain the information, only the links are destroyed and the BAM is freed. Therefore, it is still possible to retrieve a program after you have scratched it. If you subsequently saved another program, it may no longer be possible to retrieve the scratched file.

Starting at \$90, or 144 decimal, you find the name of the disk, with a maximum of sixteen characters. If the disk name has less than 16 letters, it is padded with shifted spaces, indicated by the A0 bytes. The two bytes represented by \$32 \$41, are the format of the disk, or version of Basic, the 2A you see when listing the directory. This is preceded by the ID of your disk and a space. A popular trick is to change these five bytes, so when you list the directory, you see a five-character ID.

GEOS uses a few more bytes on sector zero of track 18, indicating the format of GEOS, and in case of versions 1.2 and 1.3, also contain the serial number. This is no longer the case with version 2. It also contains the off-page directory, the

Now move the cursor up to line 100 and over past the quote mark to begin typing text, being careful not to exceed 80 characters per line. Press RETURN when each line is completed. If the 80th character is typed, the cursor will drop to the next line number. Move it back up onto the typed line and press RETURN. It is noted that a quote mark is not needed at the very end of a line. The line number and print#4," uses 13 characters. That leaves 67 characters per line for text, which nicely allows sufficient margins. As I set about to program an article in this fashion, I frequently saved in-progress results out of respect for the power pole climber.

Editor's note: Rolf's program will appear on the May "MaiLink on Disk".

UPGRADE YES OR NO?

LINDA TANNER

I got my first C-64 in 1983, It was another five years before I had a disk drive. now in 1996, i can't imagine life without my three C-64's.

The truth is my husband tried it a few times a few years ago, for word processing, but he became somewhat disenchanted with GEOS. So, in 1991, he bought an IBM compatible, a '286, now of course considered obsolete in IBM circles. Having tried and used his laptop, i can say "yes, it is fun and yes word perfect is nearly perfect". Because of the incredible speed with which IBM and its clones become extinct, it is nearly impossible, only five years later, to purchase software for his '286. We have discussed "upgrading" to something for which software would be available, and with which the ultra-high-speed modems would work. but we always come full circle to the realization that whatever is purchased by this household in the way of IBM or Apple/MAC, will in a few short years be a dinosaur. Yet, the trusty little commodore still keeps on humming, with its very versatile sid chip, color screen that is variable and programmable, and the absolute ease of loading and saving programs.

For those who enjoy writing their own software, programming the commodore is fun and easy. While I'm not an "expert" programmer, i do write much of my own software. One program I've written and use daily is a stockwatching program (I call it stockwatch), that produces screen or printer output in the form of color candlestick screen graphs, or corresponding hard copy bar charts, showing the trend over a one-month period.

Another program I use daily is a budget watching program. This software accepts inputs of expenses and income; producing tallies at month-end, with the printout showing expenditures in red, while the income prints in green. this program, which I periodically upgrade and debug, also prints an abbreviated annual report, showing total annual expenses and total annual income.

Last but not least, I edit a newsletter for a group with which I'm involved. I wrote the word processor/desktop publisher I use in editing, and although it is somewhat primitive by IBM standards, or probably by anyone's standards, it does manage to print newspaper-column style.

Being of the old school, "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" still applies, meaning the wonderful little commodore is so much more versatile and capable than most IBM'rs will admit. it is probably more capable and versatile than we owners realize! The real question in this household is not whether to upgrade to IBM or Apple/MAC. but when we go from C-64 to something more powerful, Should it be the C-128 or should it be the present C-64, to which we'll add the soon-to-be-released (by CMD,inc.) super cpu with its 20 megahertz speed, and "rocket socket"? Decisions, decisions...can't wait...can't wait...for the new super cpu.

5 1/4 DISKS? WHERE?, HOW?

DICK HEADLEY

I am sure a lot of you have found that the 5 1/4 inch disks are getting hard to find. For several years now the new machines have only 3 1/2 inch drives and so only the poor Atari and Commodore owners have a need for such disks. When you find them, they are not on sale anymore. Full retail, that's what. There is only one solution. You must catch all the garage sales, sidewalk sales and computer club meetings. The majority of the disks you will find are IBM formatted. The Commodore will not reformat these disks because they are 40 track format and we are only 35 track. Therefore you must invest in a BULK TAPE ERASER, such as Radio Shack #44-233A. With this tool you CAN strip all the formatting from the disk. But it will take several tries and checks to be sure they are clean. Then you can format them on your C=64 without any problem.

Note: I see our President is considering the purchase of "GEOS". I hope he will write an article about his reactions to this system. I was, I think, the first to buy the old 1.0 here in North Central Texas. I was then a member of the Mid Cities Commodore Club (MCCC) which, at that time had five chapters and a total membership of about 625. There were NO AMIGA'S at that time, all were C=64 and C=128. Ahhhh the good old days! Anyhow, I was Mr GEOS then. I toured the chapters with my disk and was a "star". That was the only GEOS disk that I paid full price for.

Note II: Thank all who took the time to welcome me into this club. What an unusual thing to see in this world of "who cares". Again, Thanks

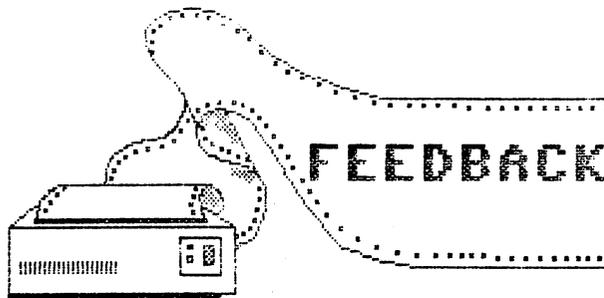
GOLLY! WHERE'VE YOU BEEN? (OR A SKEPTIC'S CONVERSION)

ED HARLER

When Tom Adams offered to send sample copies of "Commodore Mailink", I said "OK" even though I have much too much to read and really had no interest in adding to my postal bill. The issues arrived. Nothing really earth-shaking I thought, but there are Buy/Sell/Swap and Question/Answer sections, so why not give it a try? Off went an order to the wilds of Texas.

Then the first mailing arrived (the March 1996 issue and membership directory). OK, I thought, I'll file the list and skim thru the newsletter. That was my undoing! Richard Savoy's article about Mastertype's WRITER grabbed my attention. What kind of animal was his word processor that made it so incompatible? I decided to drop Richard a post card and find out. That meant I had to look up his address: a really fatal error. As I read his address, my eye continued across the line and into the next: "Richard is retired. Hobbies: Traveling". Hmmm, we have a couple of things in common.

What's the next person's interests? Ah, another retiree who likes to travel. And here's a programmer/analyst. And a CPA and... hmmm, no women? Oops! Here's one who founded a local computer club. And a fellow interested in genealogy ... and a woman from Stone Mountain GA, and she's a traveler too. Whoa! Hold on! Let's go back to page one and start from the beginning. So I did, and an hour past my bedtime I had read every single "bio". What a great group of people! And friendly! I've received welcomes and answers to a couple of my letters. And Jean Nance and I have been "clogging" the Internet with e-mail messages. There's a lot more to be said, but I'm going to stop here for now. I have more post cards to send out and a couple of e-mail messages to answer. P.S. Yes, I finished reading the March *Mailink*, but you should see the pile of other publications I have. ;-)



PRODUCING PET ASCII FILES WITH POCKET WRITER: This is one of the easiest of things to do: Assuming that a SEQ petascii file is what is wanted:

- 1) With the file loaded, press Control A
- 2) In response to the requestor "Switch to SEQ file?"
- 3) Press Y <CR>
- 4) Then save the SEQ petascii file in the usual way, Comkey S.

(If true ascii is wanted, after pressing Comkey S as above, Press Control A. "ASCII" will appear in the upper right screen corner, informing the user that the file will be saved as SEQ true ascii.)

If there is concern for saving any particular formatting, then the alternative is to Install the "commodore.pf" printer file. This is done by pressing Comkey I, and responding to the requestor. Then "printing", by pressing Comkey P (capital P), and replying to the requestor that you want to Print To Disk. Alternatively, I have found that most publishers want text in "spillable" format, so the editor can configure things to his/her liking. In other words: No CR's within paragraphs, and 2 CR's seperating paragraphs. (And, in the case of true ascii, two sets of CR/LF's.) To accomplish this, the user should use Pocket Writer in the usual (TEXT, not SEQ format) way. Then when it comes time to save:

- 1) Hit the clear/home key twice, to get to top of article.
- 2) Press F5 to open the Formatting screen.
- 3) Cursor to (or click mouse on) "Right Margin" option.
- 4) Change its setting to 9999 (maximum line length). (each paragraph will now be on one long line.)
- 5) Change to SEQ file and Save, as described above, as either petascii or true ascii.

There really is very little in word processing that Pocket Writer is not capable of doing.

HOWARD HERMAN

Editor's note: A couple of members told me that there is no way to produce Pet ASCII files with "Pocket Writer". In an "Editor's note" on page 5 of the March MaiLink, I stated this as a fact. I apologize to "Pocket Writer" and its users. I put a question about this in the Commodore "newsgroup" on the Internet. Above is Howard's reply.

In reply to John DeWolfe's question in the March MaiLink, on using a Fast Load cartridge to load 64 programs from a 1581 disk, I wrote him the following:

"The only cartridges offering fast loading of a 1581 are SuperSnapsho V3-V5, Action Replay, V. 4.2-V6, and Warpspeed V2. Of these, only Warpspeed V2 operates in both 64 and 128 mode. Alternative speedup systems accessing the 1581 include JiffyDos and Burst Rom (once offered by Chip Level Designs). The universal hardware solution appears to be WarpSpeed, or JiffyDosing the computer and the 1581

My best guess as to what an Epyz Fast Load for the 128 is supposed other do is that it is meant for owners of a 128 and a 1541 drive. It is NOT going to be accessing fast serial mode nor burst mode of a 1571 or 1581. Different routines are employed to do so than what is on its ROM chip. Frankly, I'm curious as to whether it works with a 1571. There may be problems with interleaf differing between the 1541 and 1581.

There are routines developed allowing a 64 to make a 1581 load fast. These are effective on single module programs. I have public domain versions of fast loaders that work in such ways, on my "Grassroots #1" disk. If you have "Zapload" on your 1581 demo disk, it loads 64 mode. The program on my disk is called "Haste", and loads faster yet. I offer it as a single disk support system to hobbyists for \$3."

DONALD AYERS

Another good program for viewing and converting dd, gg, jj, Koala or OPC files is "Autograph", by "Fuzzy Fox". It is in the public domain. I think it was on one of the last Gazette disks before they stopped publishing, and is available in many user group collections.

HUGH MOMENAMIN

In line with the question about commands changing in Illustrator II, I have had some crazy things happen. For instance, I used the "condense" command and had to extend page width to 160. Even though I went back and eliminated the command, it seemed to be imbedded in the document and the printer kept using that command and printing in condensed. I went back and put in the command to go back to page width 80 and everything straightened out.

J.H. (ZEB) LARRY

Regarding "Headers & Footers" page 9. Well done. Two additional notes. 1. Be prepared: a footer will cause the preview to go directly to the bottom of a page without stopping at the end of your typed message, causing you to miss your page message if there are only a few lines at the top of the page. Keep in mind that you can stop the preview at any time with a shift key press. If you have many pages and only want to see the last page you can use the print menu to "Start at page number". REMEMBER to change the number back to page 1 before you print.

"THEY" call it "Pagination". It allows you to print page numbers on opposite corners like a book. If you have a long document that you plan on making copies of on both sides of the paper like a book this is great. "THEY" charge hundreds of dollars for a word processors that will do this. TWS simply calls it footers. See the TWS manual, "Footers odd & even."

"OLEY" OLSON

Regarding the problem of margins getting out of line with TWS and some printers, try setting the page length to something other than 66 lines per page. Try 65 or 64.

ED HARLER

To Frank Redmond, in regard to his comments in the "President's Message" column. Thanks. I thought I might have been the only one that noticed the similarity between Apple's current problems and those that arose in Chester Pa. a few years ago. A "CommIntosh"? I had visions of a "COMMOMAC". Regarding the "Loadstar Giveaway". Does that mean that we will be getting large brown envelopes with Fender's picture on the out side in place of Ed McMahon stating that we are a WINNER?

Regarding Greeter "Joan Melton". This lady has done a fine job. those of us that she has welcomed remember well her talented personal touch in her welcome letter.

To Joe Powell regarding his "Treasurer's Report". "Meeting 63/128 Users Through the Mail" 63? Oh well, as we used to say in the post office "That's close enough". And another thing, who are you calling "OLD". ALL kidding aside. Thanks for a super job. The simplicity of your "Treasurer's Report" makes it easy to see why our dues are so stable.

In reference to "Your Bios & Mailing Labels", by Brian Vaughan, in the March issue: This was a shock to me. I was one of those that thought that Brian was

surely using a big fancy database like LOTUS on a IBM high powered machine. My mind said that a database would be the only way that he could command all of that data. And I am sure that there are a few that will say that a database may be a better idea. BUT the final word is the SUPER results that we see. Thanks Brian.

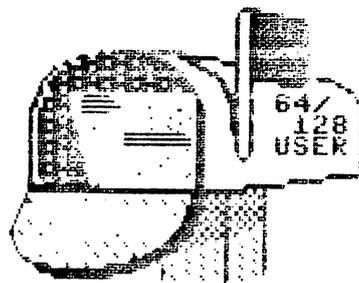
I am reminded of the U.S.POSTAL Bulk mail center in Richmond California some time ago. They had about 800 employees working around the clock 7 days a week. To gain entrance to the facility each employee was issued an ID card that included a strip that could be read by a device at each entrance. The card reader determined if you were an employee and would only unlock the door if your ID was proper. They also used this system to monitor access to certain restricted areas. Pretty impressive. But maybe not so if you consider that most of this facility was computer dominated. A huge main frame that utilized a 40 x 20 air conditioned, sound proofed, suspended room controlled most of the operations, but NOT the card reader. Upstairs in one corner of an office on an old typewriter table, a Commodore 64 and a 1541 disk drive handled the chore, and to the best of my knowledge still does.

"OLEY" OLSON

In reference to "Up Grade, Yes or No?" by Arvid Nelson in the March MailLink. WOW ! This article sure sounded like some of my experiences. And I'll bet a few others too. I too use one CPM program, the P.A.F. genealogy program. And it is really different. You feel like you are on someone else's IBM. And you wonder if they are all like this. And you think about the fact that parts and repairs are getting harder to find for your Commodore. And you start "JUST LOOKING". I too came up with the \$2000.00+ figure. Arvid is also right on the mark about the price of software, it is considerably higher than Commodore. His current list of NEEDED equipment is about what the latest "Good User" wants. BUT most important is his statement that the old Commodore is doing what he wants and needs. WOULD I CHANGE ?. In a New York minute. IF, I had the money to support my habit. IF, I had the time and energy to relearn new programs and a new operating system. IF, I really needed it.

I know from what my children have taught me that the switch would not be difficult. However, like member Nelson I am satisfied with my results. I have unlimited space without a hard drive. Granted I change disks a lot. I can't go anywhere near as fast as they can. But sometimes that gets me the potty break that they don't. If I want the cute little Icons from their "95" I can always use GEOS. I can't do as much with commodores PRINT SHOP as they can. There are lots of pros and cons. The only thing that "THEY" have that really interests me is the CD. That is a real plus. Thank you Arvid for a super thought provoking and humorous article.

"OLEY" OLSON



VENDOR WATCH

WALTER JOHNSON.

BIBLE STUDENT'S DISK. Robert Dallman, 31-65 46th St, Long Island City, NY 11103

COMMODORE COUNTRY. 1420 County Rd 914, Burleson TX 76028. Phone. 817-295-7658. FAX 817-447-6974. New and used software and hardware for the C-64/128 and Amiga.

COMMODORE NETWORK. 9 Wadeson St. Cobram, Victoria 3644, Australia. FAX (03) 9803 6498. Newsletter, 24 to 36 full pages. Game reviews, Geos news, with an Australian slant. 12 Issues a year. Edited by Warren Naismith.

POWER USER. P.O. Box 1817, Shelton, WA 98594. Sixteen pages of articles, reviews, and mainly ads. Edited by Thomas Gosser, published quarterly.

LOADSTAR LETTER. Available only with a subscription to Loadstar. Edited by Jeff Jones. Eight pages of provocative prose and important news about the Tower.

MORE VENDOR SOURCES.

CYBERGUYS", 11345 Sunrise Park Drive, Rancho Cordova, CA. 95742, claims to have the lowest prices on printer ribbons. They offer an extensive listing and the prices appear to me to be about like prices from MEI Micro. However, Cyberguys offer these prices on packs of 3 ribbons. Phone 800-892-1010. Any comments on service from members who have dealt with them?

"VTECH" 2223 Rebecca, Hatfield, PA 19440, offers inks, ribbons, including specialty ribbons, ribbon inkers, reloading for ink cartridges, and auto-ink cartridges for several popular printers. Phone 215-822-2989. They have been in business for some time and we have never heard complaints about their service.

RAMCO COMPUTER SUPPLIES, P.O. Box 475, 455 Grove, Manteno, IL 60950, offers a large selection of printer ribbons, also laser printer supplies, print head cleaner ribbons, rebates on empty cartridges for a few printers. Prices appear a little higher than the two previous sources. Phone 800-522-6922, or 815-468-8081.

MIDWEST MICRO offers a good selection of ribbons, both from printer manufacturers and printer compatible ribbons; also ink cartridges and toner cartridges. Again, slightly higher prices than the first two sources. No address was given. Phone: 800-413-9856.

From EDWARD ROHAN.

"THE INTERNET FOR COMMODORE USERS" Gaelyne Moranec has been writing about Commodore computers and modeming for three years with columns in Commodore World and BBS Magazine. She is now working on a book for Commodore users who want to take advantage of the Internet. "The Internet For Commodore Users" has a probable release date of mid-summer and will be packaged with Nick Rossi's Novaterm 9.5 (shareware) term program. "The Internet For Commodore Users" is expected to cost \$25.95.

Provided by TOM ADAMS from the Internet.

DISCLAIMER

Let us remind you that Commodore providers of services and products come and go. We list these vendors for your information but we don't vouch for any of them. (Well, your editor will go out on a limb and vouch for Loadstar and "Loadstar Letter"). See "Vendor warning" below.

VENDOR WARNING

In regard to getting poor response when ordering programs from individuals, it appears that some of these people decide to sell the product they have created but have no organizational skills to keep track of business. I sent Joe Buckley \$20 for his disk which includes his "Wrong is Write" program for Geos. I asked for help from Dale Sidebottom, after months went by with no response to notes and cards. Six months after I sent the order, I received a disk with the program, and my check! No note of explanation.

A year ago last February I downloaded a demo copy of "GeoFax" by Maurice Randall, and it was great. I sent \$45 for a copy. Weeks went by with no response to cards and follow-up letters. Finally Maurice contacted me and said there were problems with the program. He offered to return my money. Since I now had a PC with a FAX card, I asked him to do so. More weeks went by. Finally in September I received a money order refund and no explanation.

EDWARD ROHAN



In my 12th year as a C= user, I am impressed with MailLink's support for novices and veterans alike. I publish my own 28 page C= newsletter and am extending a special invitation to all Meeting 64/128 Users Through the Mail members to try a sample issue for \$1, which is less than it costs to produce! I am confident that you will want to subscribe, which costs \$11.00 per year for 6 issues. Long live the lower-case 'c' machines!

Bryan Pease
% the Gatekeeper
610 First Street
Liverpool, NY
13088

WANTED: A print head for my Star NX 1001 printer.

JOE GARRISON

WANTED: I need a manual for a 1902 monitor. I would be willing to copy and return if some one would lend one to me, or would buy it outright.

J.H. (ZEB) LARRY

FOR SALE: I am cleaning up my playroom and getting rid of items I simply don't have the time to use. The list is presently nine pages long. Send a dollar to help with the postage for a listing of the books and software. All for the C-64. These are priced to sell (at least in my opinion).

REX WHETZEL

TRADE CMD JiffyDOS ROM for external 1571 disk drive. Or, FOR SALE at \$17.50 shipping included.

RODGER JARVIS

WANTED: EASY BOOKS I, (or later version). I am also looking for a very good genealogy program.

JOHN CASEY

WANTED: I am looking for reasonably priced software to run a bulletin board system.

LUKE BAARS

OFFERS

(Programs, information, manuals, etc. at cost).

INFORMATION ON TESTING AND REPAIR: From JOE GARRISON. If you are interested in testing or repairing your C-64, send me a formatted double sided disk with an envelope and postage, (or \$1.00 for disk and postage). I will send you some test programs and text files on what I have learned during the past several years about repairing the C-64.

GEOS AIDS: From H.L. (ZEB) LARRY. Loadstar issue 140 carried a note on using several aids for use with GEOS. However there are many more excellent programs. I would like to share a few of them with you. Incidentally, any of these are available from my library and a formatted disk and postage will get them for you. Some contributions are required for the Author. I have two disks with about 100 selected programs. They are available for the cost of disks and shipping—\$3.00, or send me two disks and postage—\$1.00

SCRAPEEK: One of the most useful. Lets you look into Photo Scrap or into albums without the use of PhotoManager. Works with 80 column up to 8 inch.

BIG CLIPPER: Will make most any size PhotoScrap. Uses pixel sizing to select any graphic from clip-art programs. Simply open GeoPaint, open the clip art program, select the Ruler and measure the graphic in pixels. It will be put into PhotoScrap

GET GRAPHIC3: Converts huge collections of Print Shop. Lists graphics for selection— one or all. It will convert 3 block PS graphics

GRAPHIC STORM & IMPORT RUNNER: Imports Koala, Doodle! etc to Geos. Many drawing programs will convert to Doodle!. It is then simple to convert the graphic to Geos.

FONTDUMP III: Creates font sample sheets. Make font selection easy. Print out the fonts and make a visual catalog of your font collections

FONTVIEW: Lets you look at a font in various forms—italics, shadow, bold etc. Open this program and there is a bar to let you select this particular font into the various forms

ALBUM COPY: Copy photoscrops up to 16K from one photo album to another, even if the albums are in separate drives.

SCRAPGRAB: Manipulates small photo scraps up to 8K. Lets you work with photo albums in a second drive, without leaving the application you are using

PHOTOGRAB: Has larger viewing screen. Will handle graphics up to 16K. Can be only opened from Desktop

NEW TOOLS: This is a graphic manipulating program that lets you reverse, mirror, tilt and other functions. It is available for the C64, 128 and has docs to support.

BLUE PENCIL: If you are into a lot of writing, this program will count words, sentences and paragraphs for control of your missive.

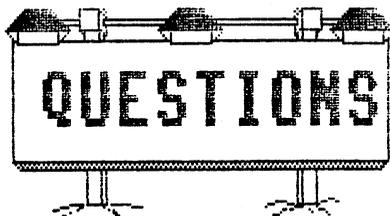
DIRMANAGER: A great directory tool. It will alphabetize and rearrange the directory for you. Docs for this are available.

DUALTOP—QUICKTOP: Two programs to replace the desktop. Speeds up application handling. Docs for both are available.

CONVERT 2.5: Will convert Sequential files to Geos or vice versa

TO GIVE AWAY: Various operators manuals, programming manuals, non-working disk drive. For shipping. Send me a stamp for a list, I will furnish the envelope.

WALTER JOHNSON.



Can full-size graphics be reduced and used as clip-art? What software works best for med-res (Koala) clip-art?

DONALD SQUIRE.

Has anyone tried using a color ink-jet printer for graphics from a C-64? What are the results?

DONALD SQUIRE.

Does anyone know of any word processor other than GEOS which will print to screen in extra large text? Does anyone know of a telecommunication terminal program that offers the option of reading material on the screen in extra large text?

JOHN SHAVER

Editor's note. With "Large Sequential Print" you can write text to screen in large characters, print it out in double wide font, save it to disk, or load SEQ files and print them to the screen in large characters. It is on the January, 1991 "Mailink on Disk".

Next to Geowrite, my next favorite word processor is Pocket Writer 3. Unfortunately, I can't figure out how to print files directly to my laser printer from PW 3. Have anyone been able to change one of the printer files to make this possible?

EDWARD ROHAN

My Xetec Hard Drive served me well for many years, but now, when I attempt to update or download files, the light blinks but the drive is not purring! I have been told the drive motor may be dead. Has anyone had a HD problems like this? Is there a way to get it resurrected for a while to copy some of the files before oblivion?

CSABA CSASZAR

I've read the Swiftlink ads and reviews and was left with the impression that my Commodore 128 could do a blazing 28.8. Then I read an article that assured me that 9600 baud is the limit. From the empirical evidence, I'm forced to agree with the article because 9600 is the most I've achieved with my 14.4 Robotics Sportster. Is this true? Is there anyone who has pushed to the limit of their 14.4 or 28.8 modem? If so, which modem and program are you using? What are your settings? Thanks for your help.

ED HARLER

Does anyone use "The Write Stuff" with a printer via a parallel interface connected to the C64/128 User port? I have been unsuccessful in modifying the BB file as explained by Eric Lee on page 45 of the TWS 128 reference manual.

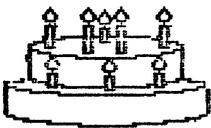
RODGER JARVIS

I have problems with loading from my 1571 drive, mostly files I haven't used in some time. Things I use regularly seem to load with no problems. I am also having trouble formatting new disks, some brands seem more difficult than others. Anyone have any suggestions?

JOHN SHAVER

10 YEARS OF MEETING 64/128 USERS THROUGH THE MAIL

HAPPY
10TH
BIRTHDAY



64/128 USERS

The May 1986 "Compute's Gazette" had "The 64 User Group of America" in the list of user groups. The president was Kirby Herazy. Members corresponded with one another but there were no regular mailings, no newsletter, and no dues. The following year the name was changed to "Meeting 64/128 Users Through the Mail." and Jean Nance became president.

A membership list with "bios" was sent out and a small newsletter was started; donations covered the cost. Dues of \$5 were instituted for 1988.

Elly Carey became treasurer; and Brian Vaughan was responsible for membership records. Bill Robinson was editor of the newsletter in hardcopy and disk versions. Since 1990, we have had a series of guest editors for the hardcopy Mailink. Jim Green produces and distributes the disk edition, Tom Adams gets the newsletter photocopied and distributed. Jean Nance is managing editor.

In July, 1994, Frank Redmond became president and Jean Nance became vice-president. A year later, Tom Adams took over as vice-president, and in July of this year, he will be president and Frank will be vice-president. Joe Powell is our treasurer and Brian Vaughan continues with membership records. Membership for the last several years has run between about 200 and 300, rising through each year, but dropping in January when some choose not to rejoin. Present membership is 242.



KENNETH W. BROKAW SR., 73402 Holzworth Rd., Flushing, OH 43977 Kenneth is a land surveyor. Hobbies: Hunting, and the Ruritan Club. System: C-64, C-128 & C-128D, two 1541 & 1571 disk drives, Seikosha SP-1000VC, Sears SR-3000 & MPS-803 printers, and 1902A & 2002 monitors. Interests: Survey calculations.

BILL DAVIS, 114 Charlotte Dr., Shelbyville, TN 37160 Bill is a musician & laborer. Hobbies: Music (composing, arranging, performing), writing, reading, artwork, science, and science fiction. System: C-64, 1541, 1541-II & 1581 disk drives, MPS-803 printer, 1502 monitor, MIDI interface, and a 1200 baud modem. Interests: MIDI sequencing, hires color art, utilities, and telecommunication (Bill Davis@MoodyBlue.Com).

HALE G. ENGSTROM, 147 Western St., Freeport, FL 32439 Hale is a retired USAF fighter pilot/engineer. Hobbies: Working with a volunteer fire Dept. System: C-64, C-128, C-128D, SX-64 & a 386-SX, 1541, 1571, 1581, & FD-4000 disk drives, HD-40 hard drive, RAMLink +4 Megs., all with Jiffy-DOS, 1750 REU, Panasonic KX-P5400, Star NX-2420R, NB-15, 15-X, 802, 803, 1525 & Action 5000 printers, and 1701, 1902, 1084S & 2002 monitors. Interests: Productivity software, desktop publishing, and telecommunications. He is on Genie (H.Engstrom@genie.com).

DICK ESTEL, 3487 E. Terrace, Fresno, CA 93703 Dick is a social service program supervisor. Hobbies: Collecting music, camping, reading, writing, and family. System: C-128, 1541, 1571 & 1581 disk drives, CMD HD-40, 1 Meg. REU, Star NX-1020 Rainbow & Okidata 120 printers, 1084 & 1902 monitors, Hayes 2400 baud modem, Handyscanner, and a Super Snapshot V5 cartridge. Interests: GEOS, TWS, scanning graphics, and writing for newsletters and other publications. He is on Genie (R.Estel@genie.com).

ROGER GAUGLER, 5675 Spyglass Ln., Citrus Heights, CA 95610 Roger is retired. Hobbies: Ham radio, photography, and commercial 2-way radio. System: Three C-64-Cs, 386, 486 & XT, six 1541-II disk drives, C=802, Epson EX-800, Star NX-2420, and two Star Rainbow printers, and two 1702 monitors. Interests: Swapping PD & shareware software, and games.

DENNIS KRALL, Box 507, Plumsteadville, PA 18949 Dennis is self-employed. Hobbies: Guns, and fishing. System: Two C-64's, FD-4000 and two 1541 & 1571 disk drives, RAMLink +8 Megs., 1750 REU, Canon BJ-200e printer, Xetec Super Graphix interface, and 1702, 1802 & 1902A monitors. Interests: Games.

GEORGE R. MONTGOMERY, 1043 Magnolia Dr., Washington, PA 15301-2817 George is retired. Hobbies: Fishing, hunting, and amateur radio. System: C-64, two 1541 disk drives, Star printer, and a 14" BMC color monitor. Interests: None listed.

LATE RENEWAL FROM 1995

WILLIAM MACIUKENAS, 17847 S. Harlem Ave., Tinley Park, IL 60477-3605 William is a Mental Health Specialist III (Treatment Coordinator/Counselor). Hobbies: Collecting comic books, and reading, especially science fiction. System: C-64, C-128, SX-64, Apple II-C, Apple II-E & Atari 800, and various disk drives, printers, monitors, and modems. Interests: Games, and collecting disks, tapes, and cartridges for the 64/128.

ADDRESS AND OTHER CHANGES

Joey Holman, Rt. 1 Box 243-D, Chilhowie, VA 23319

Kenneth Grim's name was spelled correctly in his bio, but was misspelled in the March introduction.

Tom Adams - Add his E-Mail & telephone number to the end of his bio: (tom.adams@neteast.com), (301) 927-8826

John E. Andersen - Correct the spelling of his last name.

SAD NEWS. Those who knew former member George Frainey will be saddened to hear of his death in February. George had acquired "the other computer" and dropped out of the group, but was still corresponding with members. He was a long-time member and had been helpful on technical problems. The cause of death is still uncertain, it may have been due to a faulty gas heater. Local authorities have not been able to find any relatives.

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