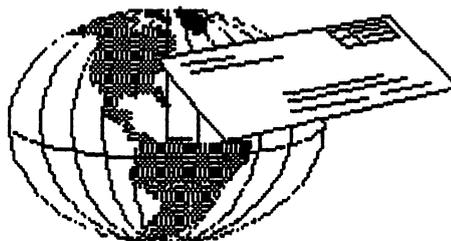


COMMODORE MAILINK

NEWSLETTER OF MEETING 64/128 USERS THROUGH THE MAIL



MEETING NEWS, March 2002

This month brings an apology and a thank-you. Only one month at the helm has really opened up my eyes. There is a very industrious crew working behind the scenes to make this group and newsletter work. Their only recognition is in the page two listing of officers' names, so I want to say a genuine apology for all the years I belonged (paid my dues), but never contributed and never thanked any of these volunteers. Hopefully, I can "give back" a little by serving as an officer. My sincere thank you goes to **Frank Redmond, Tom Adams, Emil Volcheck, Jr., David Mohr, Richard Savoy, Brian Vaughan, Joe Fenn, Jean Nance**, and any other previous officers who have served so diligently.

Our membership is down somewhat, hovering somewhere near 100. Considering what local Commodore groups are experiencing around the world, we should count our blessings. According to Guinness World Book of Records, 2001 and 2002 editions, the Commodore is listed as **MOST SUCCESSFUL COMPUTER**, stating there were 30 million Commodore 64 computers sold during its heyday. Commodore is STILL a winner.

One change I have instituted may encourage members to volunteer to edit an issue. From this issue forward, I'll supply the entire first and second pages; the editor will only have to gather articles, programs, etc. for pages three through 18, 19, or 20. That will relieve a new editor from having to ascertain all officer data are accurate, and free him/her to just edit the issue. Further, there is an abbreviated **Editor's Guidelines** on page two, and the expanded version, if needed, can be obtained from our Managing Editor, David Mohr.

As always, we are always looking for volunteer editors. Ideally, we like to have a different editor for each of our six issues--it gives six different perspectives on our community. Some like GEOS, some hate GEOS, some like games, some like programming imaginary trajectories to Pluto, using hand-coded ML, some like reading about new software such as WINGS, while others like to delve into hardware hacking, such as building one's own parallel printer cable interface from scrounged parts costing a dollar or so, while others just like to read anything Commodore. Wannabe editors contact either David Mohr or Linda Tanner. Last but not least, check out the **COMMODORE RESOURCES** section, a "Commodore Yellow Pages" of sorts, which we hope to enlarge every year.

Happy reading, **-Linda Tanner**

BUSINESS OFFICERS:

PRESIDENT: Linda Tanner, R1 Box 120T, Black, MD 63625-(5732694415); handles group business;

VICE-PRESIDENT: Tom Adams, 4427 39th Street, Brentwood, MD 20722-1022; assist President.;

VICE-PRESIDENT: Francis Redmond, 219 AN CO RD 4413, Palestine, TX 75803; sends "late" reminders;

TREASURER: Emil Volcheck, Jr., 1046 General Allen LN, West Chester, PA 19382-8030; receives dues/ donations; balances account, disburses monies;

MAILINK-ON-DISK EDITOR and MAILER: Richard Savoy, 250 West St. #9, Ware, MA 01082.

MANAGING EDITOR: David Mohr, 623 29th Street, Astoria, OR 97103-2803; backup editor;

MEMBER BIO EDITOR: Brian Vaughan, 2101 Shoreline Dr, #352, Alameda, CA 94501-6207; edits member addresses/biographies; at member request, denotes member a "Friendly Correspondent" in semi-annual listing;

E-address Editor: Joseph Fenn, 3612 Puuku Makai Dr., Honolulu, HI 96818-2815 (jfenn@lava.net); main- tains email addresses of members;

RESOURCE EDITOR: Linda Tanner; compiles lists of members having expertise in various Commodore fields; also lists products/services specifically geared to Commodore users.

COMMODORE MAILINK POLICIES

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ADVERTISING IN COMMODORE MAILINK: Members may place free advertisements in the Mailink. Text should be sent to the editor of the next newsletter. Very short ads may be hardcopy, but most submissions should be on disk, in the format required by the next editor. Ads should be about Commodore stuff, such as "BUY", "SELL", "TRADE". If list is long, ask for S.A.S.E., and send list via SASE. In "FOR SALE" ads, be clear about shipping costs. Your name will appear in ad and members can find your address in the bi-annual BIO listing.

EDITOR GUIDELINES-abbreviated version:

Editing a newsletter involves merely collecting articles, programs, and other items, and placing those items in printed newsletter form. The editor may opt for the "cut and paste" approach, where articles, once printed are literally cut out and pasted onto each "master page". Or publishing software may be used.

Options include Table of Contents, Vendor Watch, Questions, and Feedback. Many of the requirements are provided by the President (Meeting News, Officer names, addresses, Mailink Policies, Advertising Policy, Editor's Guidelines, front page banner). The Editor must provide details of computer system, software, and printer used in production of newsletter, as well as name, requirements and deadlines of the next editor. This could be in two separate columns: "Editor's Desk", and "The Next Editor". A "BUY/SELL/TRADE" column is a must, assuming there are ads. Treasurer's Report, obituaries, announcements, and new member names constitute group business, and should be included if received. In other words, if as editor, you receive more than enough to fill 18-20 pages, you will forward on to the next editor only those submissions not deemed "requirements".

The editor should edit each item as it arrives, creating a diskfile and backup diskfile. Diskfiles should be placed on disk in the order in which they appear in the Mailink. A good, clean "master copy" on single sheets (printed on one side only) on unfolded paper, protected by cardboard, should be sent to the "Mailer" by the first day of the month you are editing. A second copy, not having to be a "clean" copy, should also be sent to the President by the first day of the month. This copy may be printed on recycled junk mail, as long as the Mailink sides of the paper are legible. After the editor receives OK from either the Mailer or President, then the diskfiles of the entire Mailink should be sent to Mailink-on-Disk Editor. If you are certain your edition is perfect, send the diskfiles and master copy together to Richard Savoy who wears two hats: Mailink-on-Disk Editor and Mailer.

Always keep your backup disk in a secure place until the Mailink is in the hands of members. If you suddenly realize it is near the first of the month and you are not nearing completion of newsletter, notify the President. It is much easier to deal with a problem if it is made known. Editing can be fun; it can be mentioned in your resume' so what are you waiting for? Contact us now!

TREASURER'S REPORT for the period 11/01/01 -> 2/15/02

Submitted by: Emil J. Volcheck, Jr., Treasurer

As of this writing, it appears that the "renewal" season for our new "fiscal" year is over. We are still getting a trickle of renewals, but it now looks like we have got only about 2/3 of last year's members renewing. We stand at 102 members for 2002, compared to 146 members for last year.

The numbers are:	10/31/01	Balance forward	\$ 503.95
		Total debits	\$ 199.97
		Dues credited	\$ 1686.29
		Int/charges	\$ -2.35
	2/15/02	Balance	\$ 1987.92

Hopefully, it will be possible to identify some new members to fill in some of this large gap. If you know a fellow Commodore user, point out the value of MUTTM and the CML as a resource for folks who want to continue to get value from their systems. Remember, when sending in your dues or any other funds for the treasury, please make the check or money order payable to: Emil Volcheck, Treasurer; then send the funds to me at: 1046 General Allen Lane, West Chester PA 19382-8030. If you have questions, mail me at this same address, call me at: (610) 388-1581, or email me at: emilv@ccil.org

* * * * *

Co-Editor's Desk by Jean Nance

This newsletter is a joint effort between Paul Berry and me. I received all the submissions, edited them a little if it appeared appropriate, and saved them to a disk as The Write Stuff files. My equipment was a C-128, two 1571 disk drives, and a Magnovox color monitor. I own a hard drive but it was being repaired. I found that using the slower drives was no handicap.

Paul and I kept in almost daily touch over the internet, and received a lot of help and advice from Linda Tanner and other officers. I mailed a disk with everything I had to Paul, he put the issue together, printed it out using an Epsom inkjet, and sent it on to Linda for her approval and to Richard Savoy who was in charge of getting it copied and mailed. At every stage, Paul and I communicated through Email, and all decisions as to what to use and how to handle it were made jointly.

I urge anybody who would like to edit an issue of the Mailink to consider co-editing. It divides the considerable work of gathering material and putting it into a finished newsletter between two people, so neither is seriously stressed. It is especially helpful if one person has a good printer and is expert in its use, and the co-editor doesn't have a printer that can turn out a good clear, dark, master copy.

May Editor

I can accept articles which are dictated, handwritten, typed, datasette, 5-1/4" or 3.5" DD commodore (including GEOS) disk and even 3.5" DD DOS format; but please no MS Word files. Include the name of the file along with the name of the program used to create the article. This really helps me in translating the file. I am planning on using TWS 128 and GeoPublish to publish the May 2002 Mailink.

Email submissions are also welcome. Just include the text in the body of the letter. If you find attachments the handiest, use them. Just put in the body of the letter the name and type of file attached.

Your phone number or email address would be helpful to answer any questions quickly. Please mail articles by April 15th, tax time. If you are a late tax filer, be sure to write your article early.

My address is: Bob Snyder
 P.O. BOX 296
 METAMORA, OH 43540

and my email is; arsnnyder@toast.net

my phone is: 419-644-6391 (after 3 and before 9 p.m. please.)

A Plea to members

As for the type of articles I am leaning towards this issue, I had a few long articles in the last issue I edited; it would be refreshing to have DOZENS of short articles from MANY members. Call it an EVERYONE INCLUDED ISSUE. Jot down a quick tip or way you use your commodore right now and send it in NOW. It is never too early to mail in an article to your commodore publication-- The Commodore Mailink.

* * * * *

Thanks from the Managing Editor

Lord Ronin From Q-Link <M.K.A. Sensei: David O.E. Mohr>

What words to say? Thank you, just seems so inadequate. The plea for help for our Newsletter streamed out in messages after the late January issue. Paul & Jean volunteered for this one, when I was ready to do two back to back. Knowing that last year Jean wasn't interested in doing any more issues. All I can add is that this type of action is the Commodore community way of things.

The Ballad of An Old Commodore

by Jean Nance .

Some of us heard from Joe Powell, with the news that he was not planning to renew his membership in "Meeting 64/128 Users Through the Mail". He hadn't used his Commodore in three years, and realized it was time to give up. Joe was a active member of our group for many years, he served as treasurer and was a frequent contributor to the Mailink. He compared his Commodore to the little toy dog in a poem by Eugene Fields. I don't imagine many of the "young folks" in the group are familiar with that poem. It is a Victorian ballad that can still bring tears to my eyes.

Little Boy Blue

Eugene Fields.

The little toy dog is covered with dust,
But sturdy and staunch he stands;
The little toy soldier is red with rust,
And his musket moulds in his hands.

Time was when the little toy dog was new,
And the soldier was passing fair;
And that was the time when our Little Boy Blue
Kissed them and put them there.

"Now don't you go till I come," he said,
"And don't you make any noise!"
So, toddling off to his trundle bed,
He dreamt of the pretty toys;

And, as he was dreaming, an angel song
Awakened our Little Boy Blue
Oh! the years are many, the years are long,
But the little toy friends are true!

Ay, faithful to Little Boy Blue they stand,
Each in the same old place,
Awaiting the touch of a little hand,
The smile of a little face;

And they wonder, as waiting the long years through
In the dust of that little chair,
What has become of our Little Boy Blue,
Since he kissed them and put them there.

Joe had written a version of the poem, with apologies to Eugene Fields. I tweaked it a bit and added a verse. and here it is.

The Ballad of an Old Commodore.

Joseph Powell and Jean Nance

The C-64 is covered with dust,
But sturdy and staunch it stands.
The old disk drive is red with rust
And the disks are not at hand.

Time was when the 64 was new
And the drive was passing fair,
And that was the time when the Tired Old Man,
Admired them and left them there.

"Now don't turn on 'til I come", he said,
And don't you make any noise."
So, hobbling off with his walker to bed,
He dreamt of his wonderful toys.

But as he was dreaming, a siren song,
Reached him from William Gates.
Oh! the days are many, the days are long,
But the Commodore still waits.

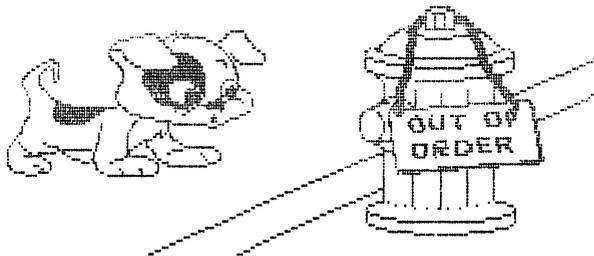
Aye. faithful and true as ever before,
In the dust of that lonely shelf.
It longs for the current to flow once more.
But it can't turn on by itself.

* * * * *

TRUBLE WITH DISK - A TIP

Fender Tucker had a tip as to how to retrieve a Loadstar disk that arrived and apparently wouldn't load. I think this is worth reminding people about. First, put two fingers in the disk hole, and be sure that the disk revolves freely inside the cover. Then rub each side of the disk firmly against the edge of a desk, back and forth a few times. This will often make it possible to load from a troublesome disk.

Jean Nance



My Commodore by Paul Berry

I first learned about computers in the '70s, at work where we put our inventory control and a few other tasks on our business computer which stood about six feet high and occupied a floor area of about three feet by four feet. We did our own programming in basic and stored our work on huge reels of tape about 10 inches in diameter.

I got my first Commodore 64 in '83 and when I hooked it up to a 13" black and white TV, turned on the power, the screen said "READY". My owners manual said it was ready for Basic so I tried a few short routines in Basic and they worked. I wrote several longer Programs, in Basic, they worked well but I had no place to store them, so I bought a Commodore cassette deck.

Soon it was apparent that I needed a printer to make printouts of the work I was doing so, I bought a Commodore dot matrix printer. Now I was in business! I could even write documents (letters, etc) using my knowledge of basic, so I was in good shape. When I retired in early '84, some of my colleagues gave me a 1541 disk drive and a dozen 5-1/4" disks as a retirement gift. I thought, well I know a disk drive is faster than a cassette, but I will never fill up 12 discs as long as I live. That was then, little did I know.

A friend suggested I subscribe to Compute's Gazette. Wow! Type-in programs in machine language that really worked. One of the first was Speedscript, the word processor, and it was a very good one. I also subscribed to LOADSTAR, and here was another source of programs, programming tips, graphics, and a whole lots of things that kept me quite busy.

One day I noticed a spreadsheet program in a computer store in a mall (they had a commodore section in those days) and I bought my first piece of commercial software. It was called Swiftcalc and I used it for years. One project was to analyze the play of golf at our country club. I got the monthly cash register summary and the daily log-in sheets, recorded the data, and was able to determine how many rounds of golf were played each day, whether they were 9 or 18-hole rounds, whether the golfers were members or guests, and whether they road carts or walked. I constructed charts for each month and from this information our golf professional and greens superintendent were able to better plan their work because we were able to predict with good certainty what patterns of play to expect.

I also purchased GOES 2.0, but soon learned that I really didn't like to chase a cursor around the screen with the arrow keys (I didn't know what a mouse was then) and except for GeoPaint, I didn't use GEOS very much.

I soon joined a local Commodore Users Group and MUTT and began to hear about other software that users said were better than what I was using. I purchased The Write Stuff, Microsoft's Multiplan, and Pocket Filer II. I soon confirmed what my friends had said, they were superb software and I still use them to this day.

Somewhere along the way I acquired a C=128 and began to use it as my primary computer because of 80 column screen capability. I also acquired a 1581 disc drive which became my primary drive for obvious reasons, and I have moved to an Epsom Inkjet printer.

Reading the January 2002 copy of our MUTTM, I had to sit down and turn on my flat 128 with two 1541s as 8+9. It also has two 1581s connected by an A+B switch for 8+9. It was pleasing to read the different ways our members are using the good old Commodores! I figured by now I am one of those lonely persons running my C= PC as a trustworthy computer, at least here on Long Island, NY.

Back in the mid 80s, I tried to work with GEOS, but found it complicated. Sure enough, back then I knew nothing about computers, but was busy typing in programs from RUN and the COMPUTE!S GAZETTE magazines. Back then in college they were still punching cards on the IBM machines. It took overnight to get a printout, then find the errors and re-do the cards for the next day.... Oh well! Those were the days. Back to the above mentioned magazines.

As soon the Gazette came out with the disk edition, I subscribed until the last issue. In the magazine was a short note about Meeting Users Through The Mail. Jean Nance was listed as President, so I sent my application to her address. Jean welcomed and encouraged me to MUTTM and the CML, of which I am still a happy member. Jean and a few members really helped me with C= problems.

As the years and decades went by, I started going to garage sales and picked up extra hardware and hundreds of programs on disks. At the beginning it was somewhat expensive, later it became cheap, and harder to find. I learned how to use the C= and "The Write Stuff" (TWS) word processor. Let me assure you, it was a pleasure to learn and use TWS after Fleet Writer II, Speed Script and some others! TWS is one of the best and easiest Word Processors (WP) on the C=. At work we used a 386. it was slow, next to the TWS.

I have a cartridge Quick Brown Box 64 (QBB), that is plugged in the back of the 128 and it holds every keystroke as I go along. If there is a glitch, QBB's lithium battery will hold it in memory. All I have to do, turn on the C=, and the previously typed letter comes back in 3 seconds! Not a dot lost! I'd like to see this on a "PC". Even the newest IBM takes a long time until you can get your current letter loaded. If you had a glitch, forget it! All current entries are lost.

I must confess, a couple years ago, when I finally retired, my family surprised me with an eMachine, Pentium II as a Christmas present and a year later with a Kodak digital camera which fully fits my interest. I used to have my own dark room processing black and white pictures. (Long, long ago).

Back to "How I use my Commodore." At the beginning all my records were on Multi-Plan, but after a while it slowed down. It might have been that I was using it incorrectly. In the January 1989 Gazette Disk was a "HANDY FILER" (HF). A data base manager, to keep track of baseball cards, expenses, magazines, anything at all. HF is an easy-to-use file manager that allows you to enter, sort, and print your data. It's clear menus and prompts make the program a joy to use. "For the 64 with a disk drive." Ever since, I use this program for all my records, and I'm proud to say, it still runs fast, it is a Machine Language program. Back then I started entering my license plate collection with ten columns, which may be sorted any one of ten different ways. It prints straight down many pages in "portrait" mode.

My Handy Filer setups have many disks, each disk for a different purpose. The most important is for Due Dates! The best example is Bank accounts. You enter Bank name, type (Checking, CD, MMA..) Acct.#, due date, Amt., %, notes and so on. You can sort it in any way you need it. Sort by one or several ways at the same time. You may add, edit, load, define, print, hunt, save, delete, validate, sort, change, and finally quit program. It is a good idea to make a back up copy once in a while as we are always cautioned by the experts. My computer knowledge stops at basic.

TWS and the Handy Filer are the ones that pulled me through tough times, when I had to find some info from several years ago. It was just a stack of 5-1/4 disks to be loaded and the titles and dates came right up on the screen.

This is how I use and love my Commodore!

* * * * *

GEOS TO TWS

by Linda Tanner

When it was time to send diskfiles to Richard Savoy of all the articles in CML I was editing, I discovered what most Commodore users probably already know. There is no fast and easy way to start with GEOS files, and with a few keystrokes, end up with TWS files. There were many helpful suggestions from folks, but they weren't what I was wanting.

First, I tried TWS' own file conversion abilities. While in TWS, there are several ways to accomplish some things. For example, with a non-BB (non-TWS) disk in the drive, hit CTL, then 4, and you will be presented with a screen listing of the directory of that disk. If you try to load the GEOS usr files, you will be returned to the main screen, and be presented with a message across the bottom line: "file not found". Another route to the same thing is to cursor home, hit CTL, then "l" ("ell"), enter the desired file name, and press SHIFT/RETURN. Again you will be presented with the "file not found" message. So, GEOS files, in my experience, cannot be directly converted from GEOS usr type to TWS prg type files, while running TWS.

Next, I tried PostPrint2/3. This program has a feature which lets you create a geoWrite ASCII PostScript diskfile from a geoWrite file. I did this several times, each time trying to load this ASCII file in TWS; each time I got the same "file not found" message. I tried each and every one of the fourteen different file types with no luck. Back to the drawing boards.

Then I decided to try geoZip, although I am not sure why. I knew that once zipped, the file would have to be unzipped, and it would unzip back to GEOS format. In geoZip, I used "2.1 format" as the source. I did two separate experiments here: in one, I picked a true ASCII as my destination, and in the other, I selected Pet ASCII. In essence, I zipped, then unzipped the GEOS files. Somehow I had been fantasizing there would be some magic way to take the zipped file and make it a TWS file. No luck again.

Next, it was time to try WrongIsWrite. This file is included in Dale Sidebottom's Laser Lovers Disk. It is listed in the directory as WW81 (WrongIsWrite 81), but the actual file on my disk is WrongIsWrite 8.0. With WW81, one has the option of converting GEOS to Pet ASCII or true ASCII. I went through WW81 trying each option, using "2.1 format" as the source. In both cases, I ended up with ASCII or Pet ASCII files that TWS could not read. David Mohr upon hearing about this said that the first time he tried WW81, he had no luck. But on his next try, he successfully converted GEOS files; he knows he was successful, because outside of the GEOS environment, he was able to read the ASCII/Pet ASCII files.

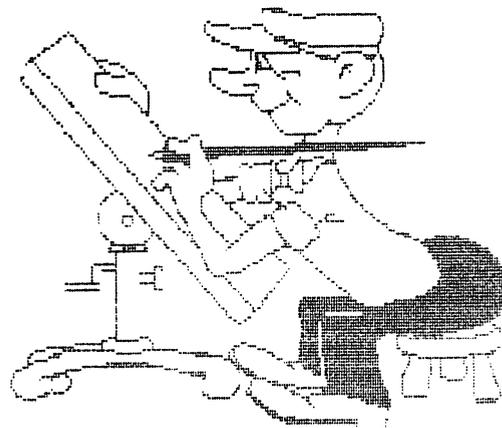
Finally, I had what I was sure would work: CONVERT.BAT 2.5 or CONVERT 2.5. I first tried one lonesome geoWrite file, having no luck at all. Then I tried a whole slew of (batch), and when I took these files to TWS, then used the CTL/4 option, then the SHIFT/RETURN operation, I did see and hear disk drive activity. But on the screen appeared what looked like a whole lot of gibberish. I went back and tried one file at a time, again with no luck. Then when trying CONVERT.BAT 2.5 again, I discovered that after you have loaded your "converted" files, you must scrutinize each one. You must scroll down quite a way through a considerable amount of what appears to be gibberish, but actually may contain some needed control codes. But after scrolling down through several screens worth of gibberish, then one finds recognizable text.

The most important key in all of this is that it appears that neither CONVERT.BAT 2.5 nor CONVERT 2.5 will successfully convert a stand-alone GEOS file to something readable by TWS. However, CONVERT.BAT 2.5 will convert multiple GEOS files, done in the same conversion session, into ASCII files that can be read by TWS. A project for a later date would be to next examine carefully the resulting ASCII file to see what is truly usable, and what is truly gibberish. In the end, at least, I was able to send ASCII files to Richard Savoy for his Mailink-On-Disk.

Maybe someone else has had an experience in trying to convert GEOS files to something usable by TWS. If so, it would add to our knowledge by writing an article about it. Also, it may encourage a potential editor who is a gung-ho GEOS user, but who has never had occasion to convert the files for use with TWS, which is the WP format needed for the Mailink-On-Disk.

I COULD NOT RESIST!

Paul Berry, had left a little extra space, so before taking the newsletter to the printers I just had to add a few of the TWS Illustrator Clip art that I've been including with the Disk version of the Mailink. Richard Savoy-Mailer



What is Programming

by William R. Kennedy

Someone asked "what is programming?" in the January issue. Well let's give a short demo that all of you can do. Suppose you want to print an address label for yourself. Here's how you can do it just on the screen:

```
open1,4,7:cmd1:rem (opens command channel 1 to printer so all goes to printer instead of screen. Screen is 3 and printer is 4)
```

```
print#1,"W. R. Kennedy" :rem or use your name
print#1,"341 Orchid Road":rem or use your address
print#1,"Birmingham, AL 35215": rem or use your city, state and zip
print#1:close 1
```

If you do this just as written you will get this:

```
W. R. Kennedy
341 Orchid Road
Birmingham, AL 35215
```

Well now, suppose you want another copy. You just cursor up to the beginning and press return after each line. But if you want to do this again tomorrow, you will have to type it all out again.

Now, what is programming? Well, you merely put a number in front of each line, like this, and hit RETURN at the end of each line.

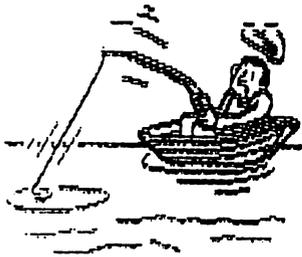
```
10 open1,4,7:cmd1
20 print#1,"W. R. Kennedy" :rem or use your name
30 print#1,"341 Orchid Road":rem or use your address
40 print#1,"Birmingham, AL 35215": rem or use your city, state and zip
50 print#1:close 1
```

Now instead of having to cursor to each line, just type "run" and return. You will get the same as you got before and that is programming. If you want more than one you can type another line to the program and say, 60 goto 10. It will print until you turn off the printer. (But you could write a line or two more to ask how many and then a test to see if that many have been printed. I'll let you figure out how to do that in Basic).

Isn't that simple? You just have to know what to tell your computer on each line. When you know that you are a programmer guru! You can save your program to disk, and load and run it whenever you have need of labels.

RENEWAL MISSED THE MARCH MEMBER LIST:

MICHAEL BEVERAGE, Box 92166, Henderson, NV 89009 Michael is a computer operation supervisor. Hobbies: Model rockets, and Star Trek collecting. System: Two C-64 & three C-128s, 1581 & two 1571 disk drives, REU clone, and two 9-pin printers. Interests: Forming a national user group clearinghouse.



ARE YOU MISSING THE BOAT?

By:Richard Savoy

My first issue of Commodore Mailink (CML) on disk as editor was the November 1999 issue, that issue used the same format as Fred Knerr had been using in the past, I wasn't a subscriber to Fred's disk, but did send him programs to use several times. When he asked for material in the CML newsletter, he did send me a 3.5 inch disk once so I could have a better idea of how he used the material. The format has not changed much in relation to putting the current issue of CML on the disk so you can read from a computer screen, and do all sorts of things with the material. That's the object of having the disk in the first place, but that isn't where it ends!

Back in the beginning in 1987 they used a single sided disk and the CML newsletter was all that was on the disk. As time went on the editor added some public domain programs in the 1/3 of space that was free on the 1541 disk, expanded edition in March 1990. By 1991 they were using double sided disks, Did you buy or receive a sample issue of the CML disk during those years or anytime before 2000, and discover it wasn't for you? I can understand, maybe it wasn't at that time. But **YOU MAY BE MISSING THE BOAT,now!**

When Fred Knerr passed away suddenly in September 1999, I felt that I could do the job with my experience as disk editor and librarian for the Capital Region Commodore Computer Club in Vernon CT.(CRCCC). Membership was slipping there, as in clubs elsewhere, as the price of those other computers dropped in price. I had lots of disks and software that I had been collecting over the years,(some that I hadn't even had time to try out). I didn't need it all for myself so this was a way to share it.

Starting with the January 2000 I sent with that issue two extra disks to help promote Chris Ryan's Commodore Gazette, at my own expense. Then I started to add a "free Disk" every other month and found the postage was no different. In 2001 I started sending a club "Disk of the Month", from the Melbourne Commodore Computer Club Inc. Yes, it was from Australia, the largest group in that country and it has a flavor of that part of the world of Commodore. Thanks to the good folks down-under, we have their disk every other month and one from the good old USA "Clark County Commodore Computer Club (5 C's) in Nevada, on the in-between months. Now, if you are saying software for Commodore is hard to come by and you don't have a local club from which to get the "Disk of the Month" **YOU'RE MISSING THE BOAT!**

If you haven't seen the CML disk issue in the last two years, let me know and I will send you an issue free with the free disk!

Richard Savoy, 250 West Street Apt 9, Ware MA 01082-9783 or Email:
rjsavoy@earthlink.net



MAILINK on DISK

BY: RICHARD SAVOY, EDITOR

FROM THE DISK EDITORS CORNER!

THANK-YOU: In the course of a year, I don't usually hear from those that subscribe to the disk version except at the time of renewal, some say they like the extra disk idea, others like the directory that I sometime enclose, and some include extra in the check, and then there are the letters that come with the check, I "thank-you,all" So far the renewal of the membership is about 66%, I don't know if the reminders have gone out yet, but for the disk version, with reminders sent and returns I stand at 75% Thank you very,very, much it makes it all worth while.

WHAT'S NEW FOR MARCH

Side 1: This issue of Commodore Mailink (CML) newsletter will be on the front side of the disk. Whatever space is left, I will continue to fill with Fun Graphics Machine type Clipart. which is already to use with Illustrator II which permits the incorporation of graphics into the text of The Write Stuff, word processor, but remember that the clip art with the dots in front must be on the same disk as the other material you want to print. You can see one of these clip arts from the series that started in the September 2001 issue, else where in this issue at the top of the article "Are You Missing The Boat", which was done using Illustrator II.

SIDE 2: The BIO's list will be first, and we will have the Information & Group Resource List (where you can get information about buying Illustrator II), space permitting, I'll have an assortment of C-64 programs.

FREE BONUS DISK with the MARCH ISSUE. Will be the September 1999 "Disk of the Month". from the M.C.C.C.Inc. Australia. This issue has a selection of game programs on side A, BULLSEYE or ZAPP HOUSEN, a darts game with instructions CICNCO is a card game, DEFENSIVE DRIVIN, DRAGON ISLAND, MAH-JONG, yes I've got to check that one out myself, I still like to play that game! I count at least seven more games. On side B there is Educational, Novelty and some graphic programs.

PRICES FOR THE COMMODORE MAILINK ON DISK ARE AS FOLLOWS:

United States.... \$ 8.00/year
Canada \$ \$9.00/year
Everywhere\$11.00/year
Single back copies \$1.50
U.S.A. FUNDS ONLY

PAYABLE TO: RICHARD SAVOY, 250 WEST STREET Apt.9, WARE MA 01082-9783
USA.

Re-Inking Dot Matrix Printer Ribbons - by Chris Fite

As editor of the newsletter for a local computer club, I was using up lots of ribbons and was exposed to a greater need for lower cost inking systems, plus I was exposed (from other newsletters) to other peoples attempts to find a lower cost way of bypassing those high priced printer ribbons and any other problems with printer ribbons.

Now, all the following info is about CLOTH RIBBONS used on DOT MATRIX IMPACT PRINTERS. That is the kind of printer that was dominant about fifteen years ago, and it is the kind of printer that I still use today.

Some people would find a big national ribbon company and buy ribbons in bulk at a lower cost.

Many of those national ribbon companies also offered re-inking services or re-ribboning services. You would send them your old gray ribbons, they would reink them for about half the cost of a new ribbon.

Then some people noticed that even "new" ribbons sometimes are dried up, won't print dark. The new ribbons were not really new because they had been sitting around in a warehouse for a long time.

Some people began having difficulty finding any place to buy a new ribbon, because fewer and fewer people were using the dot matrix impact printers, so stores simply stopped selling ribbons for those printers.

One person passed the printer ribbon over an inked stamp pad. He tried different kinds of ink, stating that "Carter's Neat-Flo stamp pad inker" ink was the best.

Another person bought a small plastic squeeze bottle that DID NOT HAVE a hole in the tip, then, using a fine needle, he made a very small hole in the tip, filled the bottle with printer's ink, then carefully and uniformly squeezed a thin stripe of ink onto the ink ribbon while a variable speed drill moved the ribbon along.

Another person pried opened his old ribbons, and then sprays them with WD-40 oil to rejuvenate the ribbons.

Another person said that by wedging something small under a ribbon cartridge, that causes fresh unused darker parts of the ribbon to be printed on.

I myself designed and built a "roller" type reinker to get extra lifetimes out of my ribbons.

Some people bought and use the Eponize Printer Ribbon Ink spray from Upwego. I heard that it is expensive, but one can of it goes a long, long way.

Some people bought a commercial reinking machine.

So, if your dot matrix impact printer is not printing dark enough, many solutions exist, but all cost some money and some time and some effort, and the quality of the results will vary

If you choose to reink your old ribbons, then you will have three fundamental obstacles to overcome:

- 1) What kind of ink to use and where do you get that ink?
- 2) How do you get that ink onto the cloth ribbon?
- 3) Eventually, the fabric of the ribbon will wear out (tear), so eventually....where do you get new ribbons?

ANSWERS TO THE ABOVE THREE QUESTIONS:

1) I have used V-Tech's oily ink and Carter's alcohol/water stamp pad ink. The alcohol/water inks dry up on the ribbon after about two weeks, then the ribbon dries crinkly, not smooth, making it almost useless...so alcohol/water inks are best used if you have so much printing to do that you will reink at least every two weeks (that way, the ribbon doesn't get a chance to dry out). The oily inks (like the original ink on the ribbon) are hard to find. Commercially, those inks usually are sold in five gallon buckets. One person had a friend in the printing business who gave him some left over ink in a bucket. Professional art stores sell ink for stencils (but I have never tried that kind of ink). The V-Tech company sells smaller bottles of oily ink for reinking ribbons. That is the kind I am presently using. As for rejuvenating a dried out ribbon, I have used WD-40, other possibilities that I have not tried would be mineral spirits or kerosene. One person said not to store the oily ink in plastic containers, it reacts with the plastic, changing it to goo.

2) Application of ink to the ribbon: You either make a gadget as described above or buy a gadget to help you reink ribbons.

3) As to replacing worn out ribbons, I bought a life-time supply of ribbons (two dozen) for my NX-1000C printer. I can get about three life-times (before they began to tear) from each by reinking them. So I have about a twenty year supply.

Every few years, the Consumer Reports magazine studies computer printers and how much it costs per page of printout (paper, ink, wear and tear on printer head). For printing black & white text, printing costs as little as 2 cents or as much as 14 cents per page of text. The normal range is two to four pennies per page.

The main problems I have recently had with reinking is having to thin the too thick oily ink (I thin it with WD-40), getting too much ink on the old ribbon (then it smears when printing), or not getting the ink uniformly onto the old ribbon (darkness of print various over the printed page).

Red Light, Green Light: by Charlie Colwell

I have been an auto mechanic for years. In the past one of my favorite tools has been the automotive test light. A test light is a device with an alligator clip attached to a length of wire and a clear plastic tube with a small light bulb and sharp probe on the other end. Clip the alligator clip to a ground and probe a wire or connection with the sharp point. The light will glow if you have "juice", or voltage. If the light does not light up, you don't have voltage and could have a blown fuse or a break somewhere in the connection.

In 1980 Detroit started using on board computers in vehicles to control ignition timing and air/fuel ratio. Today almost every vehicle has an on board computer that controls many things, and may even control the temperature of the seat! We were warned not to use a test light on these vehicles because the "draw" from the light could damage the on board computer, so I made a test light that is inexpensive to make and won't damage the computer.

About this time you are probably wondering "why is this nut case talking about test lights?" The buzz word here is COMPUTER. Automotive computer, Commodore computer. They both use D.C. voltage. You can use this test light to check for D.C. voltage in your Commodore. It won't tell you how much voltage you have, but it will tell you if you don't have any! What happens when the 5 volt power for the printer interface goes away? Things don't work well do they? Is the power loss at the computer, a break in the wire, or at the interface? With this test light you can probe different places to find out where the power loss is.

Here's what you need to build this thing, and just how to build it: One inexpensive automotive test light. (I paid \$1.98 for mine.) It should be the type with a small spring holding the bulb in place, and the top unscrews. One bicolor L.E.D. (red/green) from Radio Shack, Cat. No. 276-012. One package metal-oxide resistors from Radio Shack, Cat. No. 271-153A. These are 1K ohms, 1 watt resistors that come 2 to a package.

Unscrew the top of the test light and remove the light bulb and spring. The bicolor L.E.D. will have 2 wires or "legs". Spread the legs apart 180 degrees and twist the LONGER of the two legs into a small circle. Solder the metal-oxide resistor to the SHORTER of the two legs. Twist the other end of the resistor wire into a small circle. Place this combo into the space where the spring and light bulb lived. The long leg of the L.E.D. should be facing the probe end of the test light, and the resistor should be touching the cap with the wire attached. You may have to trim the resistor wire, but take care not to cut it too short. This combo must fit into the plastic housing snugly to make connection at both ends. To test it, connect the clip to the negative (-) side of your car battery, and probe the positive side (+) of the battery. The light should glow green. If it doesn't glow, it's not making a proper connection inside the plastic tube. If it glows red, you have the guts in backwards. Next, reverse your set up to the battery and probe the negative side of the battery. The light should glow red. This will warn you of a reverse polarity situation. Enjoy!!!

WCOPY: Maurice Randall's new copy program

On February 15, Maurice posted a message about testing his new and versatile copy program, WCOPY. Although he tested the program with a C64C equipped with a SuperCPU, RAMLink, and FD2000, he did not indicate that SuperCPU or RAMLink were required.

According to Maurice, WCOPY makes heavy use of the FD's resources to get its seemingly incredible speed. He tested WCOPY against geODOS, but made special mention that the purpose of such comparison was not to show geODOS in a negative light, because geODOS is an excellent program. But, he wanted to show how truly fast WCOPY is.

WCOPY makes heavy use of the FD's resources to get its speed. It reads data from the FD to the computer at the rate of about 9K per second. It can write data at 7K per second. This is when a 1.44M disk is being used. With a 720K disk, the speed is about 1.5-2K per second slower. The 1581 is just as fast with the 720K disks. The 1571 is slower because it doesn't have enough ram to cache any more than a single 512 byte sector. Data is transferred from the 1571 to the 64 at the rate of about 2.5K per second. This performance could be improved if a cache was set up in the computer but he doesn't feel it is important enough for the 5.25" disks.

WCOPY supports all the standard IBM disk formats. The 1571 can use 160K, 180K, 320K, and 360K disks. The 1581 can use 720K disks. The FD-2000 can use 720K and 1.44M disks. The FD-4000 can use 720K, 1.44M, and 2.88M disks. Each drive will also handle non-standard formats provided the boot block of the disk is not corrupted and contains the correct disk format information. Unfortunately, we have no way of reading and writing to high-density 5.25" disks, so the 1.2M disks cannot be used.

Maurice included some extras suggested by others: Windows' long filenames are supported in both directions. Filenames can be translated between ASCII and PETASCII automatically during the copy process if the user chooses.

The testing performed by Maurice, as described using the equipment described in the first paragraph above, used the FD as a source device, with the target drive being the RAMLink. The file to be copied was a 325K (1311 blocks) PDF file. It was copied from the FD to RAMLink by both programs. Results are:

geODOS	4 minutes, 45 seconds
WCOPY	52 seconds

Maurice plans to distribute beta test copies to anyone who attends the next scheduled geoProgramming seminar in late February. We hope to hear more about WCOPY.
Linda Tanner, 2-15-2002

CINCINNATI COMMODORE COMPUTER CLUB
Official Users Group Number 292
Meets at Norwood Plaza Bingo Hall
c/o 31 Potowatomie Trail
Milford, OH 45150
513/248-0025

The Cincinnati Commodore Computer Club has 1000's of used commercial COMMODORE items for sale at very reasonable prices. The lists include computers, disk drives, monitors, some printers, books, manuals and accessories at bargain prices. Because of the low prices, postage will be appreciated. Separate lists are provided on a 5 1/4" floppy disk as sequential files. The files can be accessed directly using sequential file readers for the 64 and 128 on the same disk. Send a floppy mailer with your return postage and address to:

Cincinnati Commodore Computer Club
c/o Roger Hoyer
31 Potowatomie Trail
Milford, OH 45150
phone: 513/248-0025

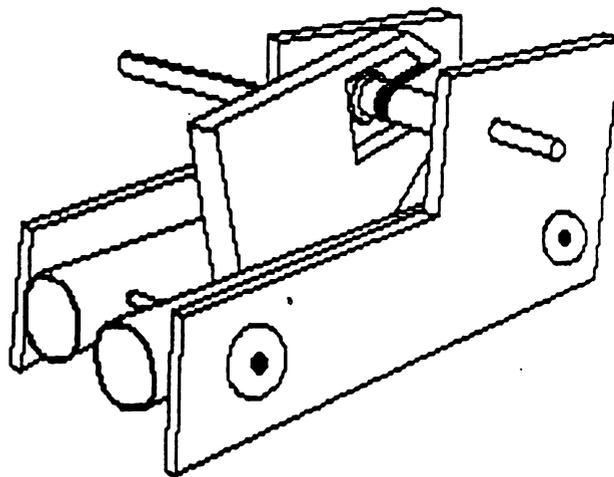
FOR SALE

Commodore hardware, software, accessories and books on individual lists. Send SASE for copies of the lists to Roger Hoyer at 31 Potowatomie Trail, Milford, OH 45150.

FOR SALE BY CHRIS FITE

RIBBON RE-INKING KIT
\$35 (includes postage)

I ran out of good printer ribbons, so I designed and built my own ribbon re-inking machine (later I built many copies of it). It will work on any ribbon cartridge that uses the cloth type of ribbon that dot-matrix impact printers use, even spool-to-spool ribbons. You can get at least two additional lifetimes out of each ribbon until the ribbon fabric begins to wear out and tear. It uses common low cost stamp pad ink, or you can add WD-40 oil alone to invigorate a dried out ribbon. Kit comes with the inking machine, three bottles of inking fluids, instructions, extra parts, and a nice box with a lid. RE-INKING KIT, \$35 total in the U.S.A.



UNIVERSAL PRINTER RIBBON RE-INKER
designed by Chris Fite, Aug 1998

Chris Fite
1742 South Poplar Avenue
Broken Arrow, OK 74012

Lord Ronin from Q-Link <M.K.A. Sensei: David O.E. Mohr>

"There's a Place where I can go, when I feel low..." Nice lyrics from the Beatles long ago. Also a way of thinking about www.lemon64.com. An Internet <Inet> site for Commodore lovers. Let me change that, a very LARGE Inet site for Commodore lovers.

Some one about two years ago turned me onto the site. I went there and was amazed at the intro statement. That they had over 2400 Commodore files for down loading. Being the addict that I am, I started to grab things. Ah well I didn't know that some of what I was grabbing was just screen shots. What the graphic browsers see when they look at the game. I just saw the title and went crazy. Bad news is that I was on a different server than I have at this time. Using DesTerm 3.02, running through the lynx method. Over 45% of what I down loaded turned out bad.

In 2001 I moved to another server and connected to Videocam <VCS>. Started using Wave B2.9 eventually and have had fair success with the Inet. I say fair as there are still problems and I must state that the major cause is the ancient phone lines in my town. Point is that my success rate is higher on files now than before.

Back to this Web Site. Late January and early February 2002, I tried to return to the site. Used my old bookmark file to enter the site and was not able to connect. Tried a few times. All met with failure. Had my son one day early in February use his A4000 to hunt for "lemon". he found it and gave me the web address. Next time I was on at VCS. Gave it a shot and I connected. OK must let you know that there are frames there now. Not as easy to navigate as before.

This is because Mr. Lemon rebuilt the site from "scratch" in December 2001. Bigger and in some ways more understandable. The site has a nice highlight history of itself from 1998 to current. Mentions that it was noted in some non Commodore magazines and a T.V. show. As of the first week in February. The current listing of files is around 3,900. There are games of course, note writers, utils, applications, cartridges and much more.

The negative side of this site. First understand that I am a novice at going to sites. I make a lot of mistakes in looking for things. Especially when a site is set up for specific browsers and screen size. As this one mentions that it is set up, at least part of the work was one on a Commodore Amiga. The disk files here are all in zipped .D64. that being the compressed disk image files. By using Errols Smith's unzipper. These can be restored to normal 1541 format. There are also programmes for the Geos users that will do the same for us.

My hardest part at this site was to figure out on the new setup how to find the areas I wanted. Takes a few extra 1351 mouse clicks. Though I would love to tell all that I found the areas by logical deduction. Truth of the matter is that I accidentally clicked on one highlighted area more than once. This took me from a thing that looked like "°games§" to another screen of the alphabet and numbers. Here I was on more familiar ground.

I picked a letter a letter and was taken to a screen of entries. This runs down the center of my screen. Must read carefully. As the gif images are also highlighted when you cursor over them. Great for game shots for your collection. Not great if you thought it was the game. They are listed as ".gif"

Can you find what you want here? Maybe, if you want technical materials like the I/O and ROM stuff for the 64. That is in the manual area. I was looking for a manual on Eternal Dagger. Didn't find it, found a lot of technical things for my BBS to put up. The biggest negative side to this site, being the fact it is made for those that use emulators. A point that is something any prospective user of the site should be aware. On the other hand. The fact that the files are here and can be down loaded. Then reverted back to the Commodore system. That is a positive factor. The user of this site on a Commodore, needs to understand also that it will take a bit to learn their way around. As this is not the same set up as the one I used last year. Making me have to learn my way around again.

Fast addendum: I tried out the site in Wave B2.9. All I got was a white screen with the words "Lemon Madness starts here". I would have to say it is not Wave friendly.

* * * * *

March 2002 MaiLink

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